

ILLAWARRA MERCURY

SINCE 1855

Wednesday, December 16, 1998

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**NAUGHTY
NICOLE
GETS TOP
BILLING**



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**LIGHTNING
STRIKE
KILLS
JOCKEY**



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**CROWNING
GLORY
AS ASHES
RETAINED**



SPORT - BACK PAGE

Matthew De Gruchy bludgeoned to death his mother, sister and brother, but ...

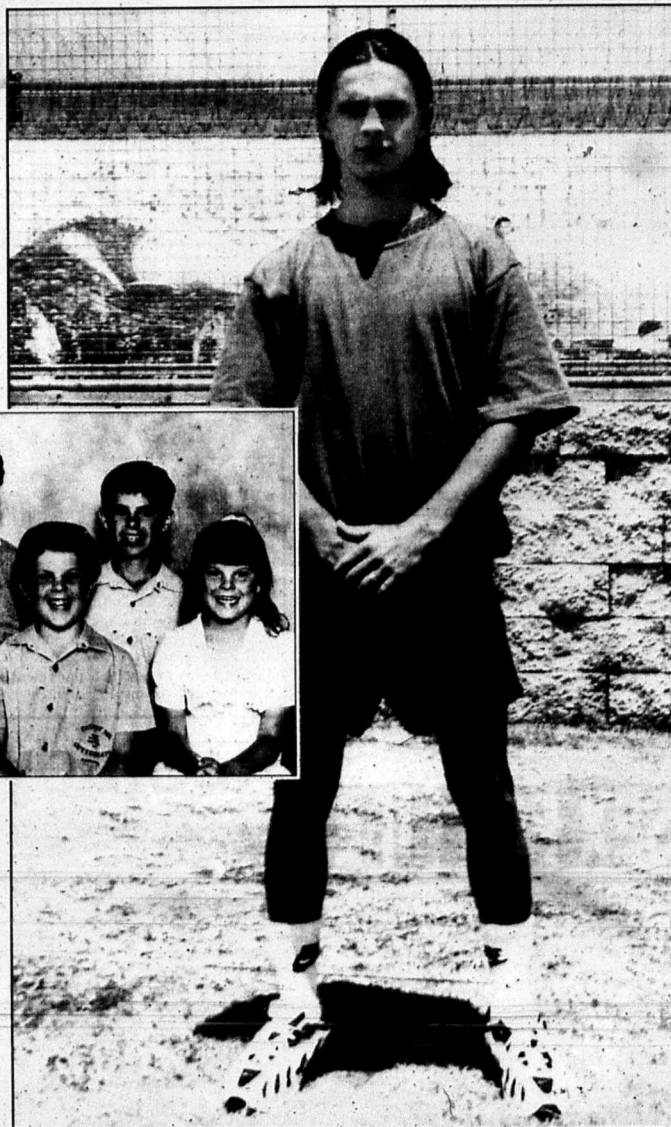
HE

**Albion Park
Rail killer
awaits fate**

WON'T

GET

LIFE



By LOUISE TURK

Murderer Matthew De Gruchy would not be jailed for the rest of his life for savagely bashing to death his beloved mother and two siblings, a Supreme Court judge said yesterday.

Justice Michael Grove said he did not propose to sentence De Gruchy, who has been in custody for the triple murder since he was 18, to a maximum life imprisonment.

The judge was responding to an application by De Gruchy's barrister Malcolm Ramage, QC, not to impose a sentence that would "crush this young person's life".

Justice Grove will sentence De Gruchy tomorrow for the murder of his mother Jennifer, 41, his brother Adrian, 15, and sister Sarah, 13. He was convicted by a Supreme Court jury in October.

The three were bludgeoned with metal objects in their Albion Park Rail home on March 12, 1996, and died from horrific head

and facial injuries. Mr Ramage asked Justice Grove to take into account that De Gruchy, now 20, was unlikely to reoffend and there were good prospects for his rehabilitation.

He said he could not place any material before the court that could explain the murders and no motive had been established.

"I have nothing before me which can provide any explanations as to why it happened," Mr Ramage said.

However, there was no doubt De Gruchy loved his mother and shared a "very close bond" with her and loved his teenage siblings.

"It was not a killing committed for a benefit to him because he will suffer that loss for the rest of his life," Mr Ramage said.

"No (court) sentence can punish this man greater than he has been punished."

The barrister said De Gruchy would continue

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Matthew De Gruchy pictured in prison and (inset) second from the right in a happy family photo with his father Wayne, mother Jennifer, Adrian and Sarah.