

'Minority group' blamed for problems at bowl

# Skateboarders in bid to polish up image

By NICK EVANS

CONCERNED skateboard riders have formed an action committee in a bid to stamp out problems associated with the new Lewis Rd skateboard bowl.

And the young riders have hit back at critics of the popular facility claiming the problems are caused by a minority group.

Police have claimed that teenagers are sleeping at the track on weekends and many parents will not let their children go to the track for fear of their being beaten up by thugs.

The committee of seven working under the guidance of Knox Council's youth worker, Mr Mick Turner, has identified areas causing concern.

They say vandalism and violence is caused by other groups who come to the bowl looking for trouble.

Many of the regular skateboarders can recount tales of being beaten up or chased by gangs of older youths at the bowl.

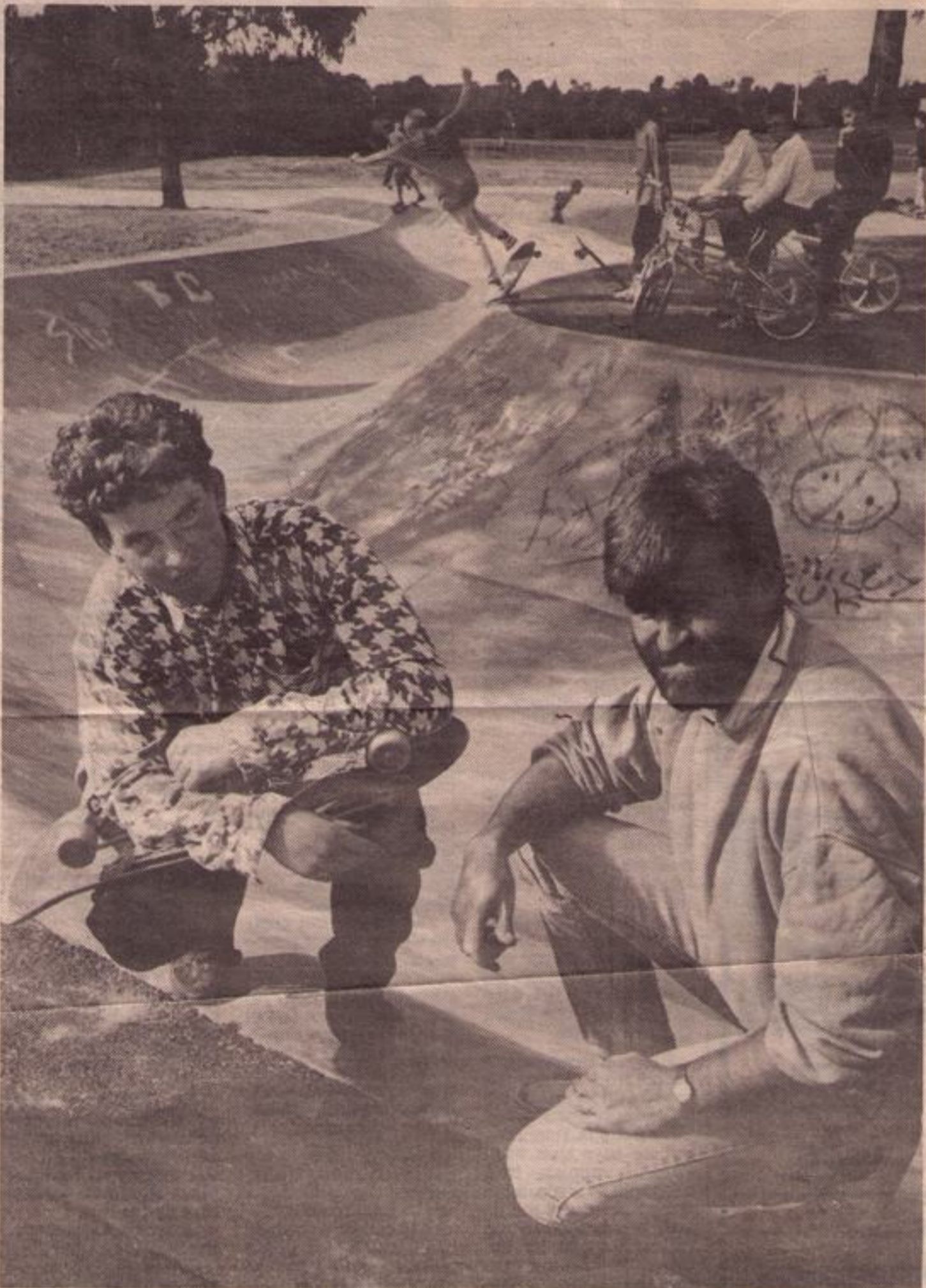
"It's our own place, why would we want to bust it up and vandalise it?" asked several skateboarders.

The skateboarders claimed that they usually had to clean up the bowl before it could be used. The committee has many innovative plans to improve conditions around the bowl, including a tuckshop to sell food and drinks to raise money.

Because of the popularity of the skateboard bowl, they say overcrowding is becoming a problem and the planned extension of the bowl needs to be completed quickly.

Knox Council's acting city engineer, Mr Lloyd Arnott, said more funds were needed for the proposed extensions.

"We are very pleased the way the skateboard bowl is developing and its popularity with the kids," he said.



MR MICK Turner with Matt Hill, one of the youths trying to clean up the problems at the skateboard bowl.