



Twiggy makes an impact on junior miner

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There is precious little happening on the minerals exploration front. The collapse in commodity prices and the flow-on effect it is having on the ability of the juniors to raise fresh equity funds has made sure of that.

Christmas being just around the corner is an added dampener on activity levels, not that much merriment was expected anyway given the recent survey of the industry's professionals by the Australasian Institute of Mining and Metallurgy put the unemployment rate at 16.2 per cent.

But amid all the gloom there are some juniors plugging away. **Impact Minerals (IPT)** is one of them, with the help of Squadron Resources, part of Andrew "Twiggy" Forrest's private Munderoo group no less.

Squadron has lined up to inject as much as \$7.3 million into IPT in staged support of its hunt in NSW for platinum out the back of Broken Hill, and copper-gold in the Lachlan Fold Belt, with a nickel-copper play over in Western Australia also part of the mix.

It represents a small diversification for the Fortescue chairman and one-third shareholder away from iron ore. But for tiny Impact — it has a market capitalisation of \$20m at yesterday's 2.9c share price — it obviously has a much bigger err ... impact.

Germany's Bunnenberg family is also on board, and assuming the funding deal with Munderoo comes to pass in its entirety, Impact's share register will have two of the richest families around with holdings of about 25 per cent apiece.

At last count, the first stages of the Munderoo funding had in-

creased Impact's cash balance to a handy \$5.5m.

It means that while most others are going in to what could be a long hibernation because of a lack of funding, Impact can get busy, with drilling already under way at the Broken Hill platinum play, and the copper-gold play to be hit with the drill rig come the second quarter of next year.

The Broken Hill project is not looking for the silver-lead-zinc style of mineralisation that gave birth to one of the world's great mining operations more than 30 years ago. It is targeting a 40km long belt of ultramafic rocks (800 million years old compared with the 1.8 billion years age of the Broken Hill rocks) in which previous drilling by the company yielded the highest platinum group metal grades ever seen in Australia.

Having said that, recent drilling at the Red Hill prospect about

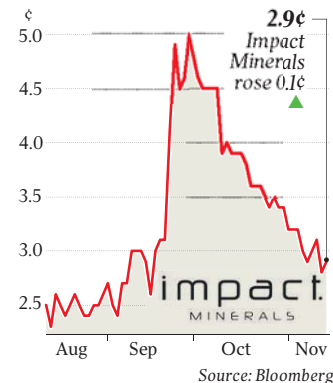
20km southeast of Broken Hill did in fact yield some impressive silver-lead-zinc results, which need to be followed up, along with the decent platinum group metals hits also encountered there.

Near-term though the attention turns to the drilling rig now whirring away at the Platinum Springs prospect some 20km northeast of Broken Hill. It is testing a strong electromagnetic conductor and given previous drill results there returned platinum equivalent intercepts of up to 52 grams a tonne, it could be worth watching.

The same could be said for the drilling to come at the Commonwealth prospect in the Lachlan Gold Belt, already home to the mighty Cadia-Ridgeway gold-copper operation of Newcrest and

a host of other sizeable operations. Technically, the prospect is the one which piqued the interest of the experts advising Munderoo

on which metals exploration projects are worth a shot. Apart from anything else, there is a certain fuzziness that comes from co-investing with Germany's and Australia's rich and famous.





The Tanami Gold operation on the West Australian-Northern Territory border