

# Truckie backs desert

By DAVID FISHER

THE Knowles family was telling the truth about seeing a UFO last Wednesday, according to the first person to see the terrified family after their encounter.

Melbourne truck driver Graham Henley yesterday said the family was now upset that people could think they made up or imagined the encounter on the Nullarbor Plains.

Mr Henley said "shell-shocked" members of the Knowles family received medical treatment for a "nervous condition" at the weekend.

He said theorists aimed at debunking Wednesday's encounter near the W.A.-S.A. border were "a lot of rot".

One theory was that the dust on the car roof came from over-heating brakes. "I got the sooty material on the roof of the car and it was not brake dust," Mr Henley said.

"I've been around the car racing scene and I know what brake dust is like.

"This stuff was a fine silicon-type material. It

# UFO claim



● Mrs Knowles... near hysterics after incident. It was like powdered glass, it had an iridescent feel to it.

"Brakes dust only gets on the wheels, not on the roof ... and the brakes weren't even hot.

"It was the coolest part of the day and the road is virtually straight for about 75 km, so they would hardly have used their brakes."

Mr Henley said he was convinced when the Knowles first told him what they had seen 30 minutes earlier. "I knew they had seen something when I saw the terror on

their faces — even the dog was cowering in the car.

"Mrs Knowles was near hysterical. One of the boys is still in a state of shock. "I have seen people after they've had bad accidents — they are more shocked. Those people were abso-lutely terrified.

"I am totally convinced that they had a terrifying experience ... but I can't explain it.

"Despite their hysteria everything was exactly as they described it when we went back to the scene.

"We saw the foot prints where they went back to the bushes to hide and the marks left by the U-turn to get away from it (the UFO)."

Mr Henley said the Knowles and several members of the family had had medical treatment at the weekend. "I believe they were treated as people with a nervous condition."

He said some theorists about what the Knowles had seen were ridiculous. "There was no pain or

lightning in the area at all, and there are no street lights for miles."

The Knowles claimed debris in their car roof were caused by the UFO picking up their vehicle.

"There is no way that the car was rolled because the front end was not damaged, nor was there the damage you would get from rolling a car," Mr Henley said.

"One dent in the roof was particularly pronounced but I hit the roof and couldn't make a dent."

Meanwhile, Mrs Palutka Palutka, a motel licensee at Benda, near the W.A.-S.A. border, yesterday said she saw what appeared to be a UFO on January 5.

She said she saw a truck with red and white flashing lights at about 9 pm on a clear night.

"My husband and I saw it coming from the west, it turned around and sort of stood still. It was very close to the ground," Mrs Palutka said.

"The strangest thing was that it had no engine noise."

He reported it to air traffic control in Perth and they said there were no planes in the area.