



MELBOURNE CRICKET CLUB

BLEDISLOE CUP MATCH I AUSTRALIA V NEW ZEALAND

LIBRARY FACT SHEET JULY 29, 2023

WALLABIES

In 1908 the Australian Rugby Union team arrived in Plymouth. Newspaper columnists at the time, looking for a nickname, decided on the "Rabbits". Herbert Moran, who captained Australia, told the *London News*, "...we dropped considerable cold water on 'Rabbits'. Modest though we be we could not labour under an appellation borrowed from an English imported pest... Wallabies, Kangaroos, Kookaburras and Wallaroos were suggested... All were agreed that any name would be preferable to 'Rabbits'. 'Wallabies' won by a couple of votes,..."

BLEDISLOE CUP

Tonight is the fourth Tri Nations/Rugby Championship match to be hosted at the MCG. The Bledisloe Cup, a long-standing competition between Australian and New Zealand representative Rugby Union sides, has been embedded in the Tri Nations/Rugby Championship series since 1996.

The Sydney Cricket Ground was the site of the first clash between Australia and New Zealand in 1903. There have been 167 matches played between the two countries with the All Blacks winning 117, Australia 42, with eight matches drawn. However, in the years between 1920 and 1928, the New Zealand Rugby Union fielded a New Zealand XV against "Australian" teams that were essentially New South Wales state sides, as Rugby Unions had dissolved in other states (particularly Queensland) after the Great War. Therefore, while the Australian Rugby Union awarded "Test" caps for those matches, the New Zealand Rugby Union does not regard them as Test matches.

It was Lord Bledisloe who presented a cup in 1931 for matches between the Australian and New Zealand Rugby Unions. Educated at Eton and Oxford and a solicitor by profession, it would appear Bledisloe was a powerhouse in English society, clearly favoured by King George V. His World War I years were spent with the Royal Engineer Special Reserves. In 1926 Bledisloe was appointed to the Privy Council. Lydney Park, and the titles associated with the estate, were inherited by him on the death of his brother. In 1930 he was appointed the fourth Governor-General of New Zealand. He wasted no time immersing himself in local society and culture. As well as establishing the Bledisloe Cup, he set up the New Zealand Chess Federation trophy. He was also elected Grand Master of the Masonic Lodge in New Zealand. Perhaps the most poignant of his achievements was his purchase of the site where the Treaty of Waitanga was signed. He gifted it to the nation as a memorial in 1934.

MATT BURKE

One of the Wallabies' greats is undoubtedly Matt Burke. He was born in 1973, educated at St Joseph's Hunters Hill and was a member of the Australian School Boys' team which toured the United States and Ireland in 1990. Opportunities opened when he was elevated to the Australian U 21s in 1992, the same year he was involved with the Hong Kong 7s. The following year he played in the Rugby World Cup 7s and made his debut against the Springboks in the third test. One of the most impressive tries in Bledisloe history belongs to Burke... the second Test at Lang Park. Equally impressive, he scored all 24 points (2 tries, 1 conversion and 4 penalties) at the MCG in 1998 against the All Blacks. While he is considered to be one of the best Test goal-kickers of his day, he was known to have bad days too, notably the third match of the Bledisloe when he missed three easy attempts in the first half and was replaced by captain, John Eales. At the time of retirement Matt Burke held 22 Australian and 7 International records. In 1996 he had 189 test points, (6 tries, 27 conversions, 35 penalties) the most for that year. He was the 4th highest international point scorer, the 20th most capped international of all time, and Wallaby of the Year in 1996. The Matt Burke Trophy is presented to the Waratahs' Player of the Year.



The Wallaby image that appeared on the 1908 *Souvenir Programme of the Australian Tour*.

Rugby Union at the MCG

- There have been 20 rugby football matches (including curtain raisers) at the MCG.
- The first rugby football match played on the MCG was between Waratah, a leading Sydney rugby club, and Carlton, the famous Australian football club, on June 29, 1878.
- The highest score in a rugby match at the MCG is 56. This has been achieved twice. On June 30, 1951, a New Zealand XV scored 13 tries to defeat an Australian XV, 56 to 11. In the curtain raiser to the July 11, 1998, Bledisloe Cup match at the MCG, the Australian Barbarians team defeated Victoria 56 to 22.
- The greatest winning margin for a rugby match at the MCG is 51 points, when a South African XV scored 13 tries on June 18, 1921, to defeat Victoria 51 points to nil.
- The most points scored by a rugby player in a game at the MCG is 28. Ron Jarden of a New Zealand XV scored 28 points, consisting of five tries, five conversions and one penalty, on June 30, 1951, against Victoria.
- There have been three international rugby Test matches at the MCG. All have been Bledisloe Cup games between Australia and New Zealand. Australia has won twice and New Zealand once.
- The largest attendance for a Rugby Union match at the MCG is 90,119 for the Australia v New Zealand Bledisloe Cup/Tri Nations Test match in 1997.

Date	Comp		T	C	P	D	M	Pts		T	C	P	D	M	Pts	Att.
29/06/1878		Waratah (NSW)	1	1	-	-	-	1	Carlton	1	1	-	-	-	1	6,000
29/06/1881		"The Squadron"	1	1	-	-	-	1	"Wanderers"	0	0	-	-	-	0	3,000
29/07/1899	VRFC	C. Diamond XV	5	1	0	2	0	25	K.A.Sutherland XV	0	0	1	0	0	3	na
12/08/1899	VRFC	Rice XV	3	1	0	0	0	11	C. Diamond XV	1	0	0	0	0	3	na
19/08/1899		Victoria RFC	0	0	0	0	0	0	British Isles XV	5	4	1	1	0	30	8,000
10/08/1908		Australian XV	6	4	0	0	0	26	Victoria	2	0	0	0	0	6	1,500
06/07/1912	VRU	Melbourne	1	1	0	1	0	9	East Melbourne	1	1	0	0	0	5	cr
18/06/1921		South Africa XV	13	6	0	0	0	51	Victoria	0	0	0	0	0	0	cr
13/09/1930		Metropolitan 'B'	*	*	*	*	*	*	Royal Naval College	*	*	*	*	*	*	cr
13/09/1930		Metropolitan 'A'	*	*	*	*	*	25	United Services	*	*	*	*	*	6	cr
13/09/1930		Great Britain XV	10	4	1	0	0	41	Victoria	8	6	0	0	0	36	7,166
21/05/1949		Metropolitan	*	*	*	*	*	3	HMAS Sydney	*	*	*	*	*	8	cr
21/05/1949		Maoris (NZ)	9	4	0	0	0	35	Sthn Aust States	1	1	0	1	0	8	9,912
29/07/1950		Victoria	3	0	0	1	0	12	Queensland	7	5	0	0	0	31	7,479
30/06/1951		Australian XV	2	1	1	0	0	11	New Zealand XV	13	7	1	0	0	56	8,902
26/07/1997		Australia U19	1	0	2	0	-	11	New Zealand U19	4	3	2	0	-	32	cr
26/07/1997	Test	Australia	2	1	2	0	-	18	New Zealand	3	3	4	0	-	33	90,119
11/07/1998		Victoria	*	*	*	*	-	22	Aust. Barbarians	*	*	*	*	-	56	cr
11/07/1998	Test	Australia	2	1	4	0	-	24	New Zealand	2	0	2	0	-	16	75,147
30/06/2007	Test	Australia	2	2	2	0	-	20	New Zealand	2	1	1	0	-	15	78,959

Key: T = try. C = conversion. P = penalty. D = drop goal. M = mark goal. Pts = points. VRFC = Victoria Rugby Football Club. VRU = Victorian Rugby Union. * An asterisk indicates a gap in the MCC Library's knowledge at printing. If you can help fill these gaps please contact the MCC Library.

DID YOU KNOW?

- Australia's first touring team, soon to be dubbed the Wallabies, played their first ever match against Victoria on the MCG in 1908.
- The Bledisloe Cup was "lost" for some years. It was discovered in the early 1950s, covered in dust and cardboard boxes at a New Zealand government tourist bureau in Melbourne. It was not prized as much then as now. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article10971887>
- Edward "Weary" Dunlop, a Victorian, played two Tests against New Zealand. His first cap was in Sydney on July 23, 1932. He is pictured in his debut Test (right), running behind Syd Malcolm, Australia's captain. Captured by the Japanese following the fall of Singapore in 1942, Dunlop, a doctor, saved the lives of many Allied POWs forced to work on the notorious Thai-Burma Railway. Dunlop was a full member of the MCC from the 1955/56 membership season.
- Matthew Burke scored all of Australia's 24 points in their Test at the MCG on July 11, 1998. It was a then world record for an individual player against the All Blacks, and also included Burke's 300th Test point.



Wallabies and All Blacks Test Statistics

Australia v New Zealand Tests by venue

		Won by Australia	Won by New Zealand	Draw
Athletic Park, Wellington	(NZ)	5	9	1
Ballymore Stadium, Brisbane	(Aus)	1	3	2
Brisbane Exhibition Ground	(Aus)	1	5	0
Carisbrook, Dunedin	(NZ)	1	9	0
Concorde Oval, Sydney	(Aus)	0	3	0
Docklands Stadium, Melbourne	(Aus)	0	1	0
Eden Park, Auckland	(NZ)	4	29	0
Epsom Showgrounds, Auckland	(NZ)	0	1	0
Forsyth Bar Stadium, Dunedin	(NZ)	0	2	0
Gabba, Brisbane	(Aus)	0	3	0
Hong Kong Stadium	(HK)	0	1	0
Lancaster Park, Christchurch	(NZ)	4	7	0
Lang Park, Brisbane	(Aus)	3	4	1
Melbourne Cricket Ground	(Aus)	2	1	0
Olympic Stadium, Tokyo	(Jap)	0	1	0
Perth Stadium	(Aus)	1	1	0
Stadium Australia, Sydney	(Aus)	6	10	1
Sydney Cricket Ground	(Aus)	9	17	2
Sydney Football Stadium	(Aus)	4	2	0
Sydney Sports Ground	(Aus)	0	2	0
Tahuna Park, Dunedin	(NZ)	0	1	0
Twickenham, London	(Eng)	0	1	0
Wellington Regional Stadium	(NZ)	1	4	1
		42	117	8

The above table does not count "Tests" between New Zealand XV's and the Waratah (New South Wales) teams of the 1920s, nor "Tests" between Australia and the New Zealand Maoris.

Hat-tricks in Australia v New Zealand Test Matches

Greg Cornelson	Aus	4 tries	1978	Eden Park
Beauden Barrett*	NZ	4 tries	2018	Eden Park
Frank Mitchinson	NZ	3 tries	1907	SCG
Tom "Tiger" Lynch	NZ	3 tries	1913	Athletic Pk

Highest Score

Australia	47 pts	Aug 10	2019	Perth Stad.
New Zealand	57 pts	Aug 15	2021	Eden Park

Greatest Winning Margin

Australia	21 pts	Aug 10	2019	Perth Stad.
New Zealand	38 pts	Oct 31	2020	Stad. Aust

24+ Points in Australia v New Zealand Test Matches

Beauden Barrett*	NZ	30 pts	2018	Eden Park
Andrew Mehrtens	NZ	29 pts	1999	Eden Park
Allan Hewson	NZ	26 pts	1982	Eden Park
Matthew Burke	Aus	24 pts	1998	MCG

Shutouts (Held Pointless)

Australia	0 pts	June 25	1910	SCG
Australia	0 pts	July 18	1914	SSG
Australia	0 pts	Aug 1	1914	Gabba
Australia	0 pts	June 23	1951	SCG
Australia	0 pts	Sep 3	1955	Carisbrook
Australia	0 pts	Sep 8	1962	Carisbrook
Australia	0 pts	Aug 25	2012	Eden Park
Australia	0 pts	Aug 17	2019	Eden Park
New Zealand	0 pts	June 27	1910	SCG

Career Points in Australia v New Zealand Tests

Dan Carter	NZ	366 pts	2003-2015
Andrew Mehrtens	NZ	202 pts	1995-2004
Matthew Burke	Aus	176 pts	1993-2004

Career Tries in Australia v New Zealand Tests

Beauden Barrett*	NZ	11 tries	2012-
Ma'a Nonu	NZ	11 tries	2003-2015
Richie McCaw	NZ	11 tries	2001-2015
Adam Ashley-Cooper	Aus	9 tries	2005-2019
Rieko loane*	NZ	9 tries	2016-

An asteric * denotes a current player.

FACT SHEETS ON THE MCC WEBSITE

The MCC Library's matchday fact sheets can be accessed through the MCC website at: <http://tinyurl.com/mcclcatalogue>

This fact sheet was prepared by MCC Library volunteer Lesley Smith with MCC deputy librarian – research Trevor Ruddell.