



MCC LIBRARY FACT SHEET

AUGUST 4, 2024

AFL 2024 ROUND 21

ESSENDON V FREMANTLE

THEIR ONLY FINAL

The 2003 first elimination final saw these two sides meet for the first, and only, time in a final since the Fremantle Dockers entered the AFL in 1995. This was Fremantle's first finals appearance. Played at Subiaco before a crowd of 42,770, the Dockers' fans would have been delighted with their team's start, with Jeff Farmer and Paul Hasleby scoring goals in the first 13 minutes and holding the Bombers to just three behinds. But goals to David Hille, Matthew Lloyd and James Hird in the last six minutes of the quarter saw Essendon seven points up at the first change. The second quarter saw Essendon take over with unanswered goals to Lloyd, Damien Peverill, Jason Johnson and Hird, with Fremantle's Luke Webster scoring his side's only goal at the 27 minute mark. A four goal to one third quarter saw the Bombers extend their lead to 44 points at three quarter time, which they maintained to the final siren. Lloyd kicked five goals for the victors and Paul Medhurst and Matthew Pavlich led Fremantle's scoring with two goals each. **Essendon 15.11 (101) def. Fremantle 8.9 (57)**

A BIG DAY FOR THE DOCKERS

Essendon fans who loyally travelled to Western Australia to see their side take on the Dockers in Round 12 of the 1997 season did not know what they were in for. A 23 point lead for the home side at quarter time did not prepare the Bomber faithful for what was to come. Six goals to none in the second quarter saw the lead extended to 57 points. Seven goals to two in the third quarter saw it blow out to 89 points. Those who stayed to the end saw a relatively even last quarter but a 97-point loss was not what the Bomber fans needed. Kingsley Hunter, with five goals, and Craig Callaghan with four led Fremantle's goalkicking. Blake Caracella, with three, was Essendon's only multiple goalscorer. **Fremantle 24.13 (157) def. Essendon 9.6 (60)**

PLAYED FOR BOTH

Dean Solomon came to Essendon from the Bendigo Pioneers TAC Cup side, making his debut in Round 5, 1998, in the ANZAC Day match against Collingwood. A midfielder/forward, he played 158 games (56 goals) for the Bombers, including in their 2000 premiership side. At the end of the 2006 season Solomon was traded to Fremantle where he went on to play 51 games (22 goals). A knee injury saw him retire from football in 2009, and he was then appointed as an assistant coach at the Dockers but left at the end of the 2010 season. In 2017 he was appointed caretaker senior coach at the Gold Coast Suns when Rodney Eade stepped down but was not reappointed and returned to his assistant coaching role. He was sacked at the end of the 2020 season. In 2022, he went on to hold a part time assistant coaching position with the Greater Western Sydney Giants, leaving at the end of the season to take on the senior coaching position with the Tweed Coast Football Club.

Zac Clarke came to the Fremantle Dockers from TAC Cup side the Oakleigh Chargers via the 2008 National Draft. A ruckman, he played 101 games (46 goals) for the Dockers from 2009 to 2017 but during this time he also had stints with East Perth and Peel Thunder in the WAFL. He was delisted at the end of the 2017 season after missing much of 2016 and 2017 through injury. In November 2018 he joined Essendon but managed only nine games (0 goals) for the Bombers in the 2019 season and was delisted at the end of the year.

Kepler Bradley

Having played for West Perth in the WAFL in 2003, including in their premiership side, Kepler Bradley was drafted to Essendon in the 2003 National Draft, making his debut in the side's 96 point loss to Port Adelaide in the first round of the 2004 season. Playing as a forward, defender, wingman and ruckman, Bradley played 49 games (14 goals) for the Bombers from 2004 to 2007. At the end of 2007 he was delisted and was selected by the Fremantle Dockers in the 2007 National Draft. He played 68 games (73 goals) for the club but a severe anterior cruciate ligament injury in 2013 saw him struggle for selection, and he retired at the end of 2014.

THIS ROUND IN HISTORY – ROUND 21 ON THE MCG

The highest Round 21 score at the MCG is 28.19 (187) by Richmond against Fitzroy 5.6 (36) in 1996. The overall Round 21 highest score is 35.15 (225) by Hawthorn against Geelong 13.12 (90) at Princes Park in 1986. The most goals by an individual at the MCG for this round is 11 by Bernie Quinlan for Fitzroy against North Melbourne in 1984. Fitzroy kicked 26.9 (165) and won by 54 points. The overall Round 21 goalkicking record is 13 by Tony Lockett for St Kilda against Carlton at Waverley Park in 1991. St Kilda kicked 23.17 (155) to win by 54 points. The highest score in a quarter is 11.7 (73) by Richmond in the last quarter against Fitzroy in 1996. The overall Round 21 record is 13.4 (82) by Hawthorn against Geelong in the last quarter at Princes Park in 1986. The highest Round 21 attendance at the MCG was recorded on Saturday August 21, 1993 when 85,054 saw Carlton defeat Collingwood by 54 points.

STATISTICS FOR ESSENDON V FREMANTLE

Essendon v Fremantle by venue

	Won by Essendon	Won by Fremantle	Drawn
Docklands	13	2	0
MCG	3	0	0
Perth Stadium	1	2	0
Subiaco	6	11	0
WACA	1	0	0
Waverley Park	0	1	0
	24	16	0

Highest Score

Essendon	24.15 (159)	Rd 18	2000	Dock
Fremantle	24.13 (157)	Rd 12	1997	Sub

Lowest Score

Essendon	6.11 (47)	Rd 11	2016	Sub
Fremantle	7.11 (53)	Rd 9	2019	Dock

Greatest Winning Margin

Essendon	87 points	Rd 18	2000	Dock
Fremantle	97 points	Rd 12	1997	Sub

Last Time They Met – Round 15, 2023, Perth Stadium

	Fremantle	Essendon
Quarter time	3.3	2.3
Half time	8.7	5.3
Three-quarter time	12.8	6.5
Full time	14.9 (93)	9.7 (61)

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>

THE ALBERT THURGOOD CHALLENGE – INVENTING DOCKER TRADITIONS

In early 1995 the administration of the newly established Fremantle Dockers decided to evoke a deep footy heritage through the commemoration of Albert Thurgood, a prolific turn of the twentieth century goalkicker. Thurgood played 103 games and kicked 272 goals for Essendon from 1892 to 1894, 1899 to 1902, and in 1906. He was Victoria's leading goalkicker in 1892 (56 goals), 1893 (63 goals), 1894 (63 goals) and 1900 (25 goals). His career with the Dons was interrupted by a move to Western Australia, where he played 48 games and booted 128 goals for the Fremantle Football Club from 1895 to 1898. He was also the leading Western Australian goalkicker in 1895 (53 goals), 1896 (47 goals) and 1897 (27 goals). Thurgood was justifiably regarded as one of the greatest players of his era. However, the Fremantle Football Club that Thurgood had played for folded in 1899, and its only relationship to the Dockers is a shared name and locale. It is a tenuous connection.

The Albert Thurgood Challenge was contested at the Dockers' second-ever practice match. This was scheduled against Essendon on February 11, 1995. Possibly playing to the Dockers' wharfie/nautical theme, the Albert Thurgood Challenge trophy took the form of a small olde-worlde muzzle-loaded black cannon mounted on a red carriage. It was a replica of a gun carried by HMS *Endeavour* and abandoned on the Great Barrier Reef by Captain James Cook on June 11, 1770.

As it was Fremantle's first-ever match in Western Australia, its only previous game being against a Northern Territory side in Darwin on January 28, the Essendon match was promoted as the "D-Day Game". The terraces of the suburban East Fremantle Oval were crammed to capacity, and before the 10,000 or so spectators the club made a, "public pledge to the people of Fremantle and Western Australia." The Dockers' club song, written by Ken Walther, was performed in public for the first time too. The Western Australian rock musician Dave Warner, accompanied by the Italian Women's Choir and musician Jim Fisher, had the honour of singing *Fre-o Way to Go*. The pre-game entertainment also introduced the idiosyncratic rock-and-anchor ceremony. This consisted of a huge faux rock topped by a silver anchor being dragged by ropes into the centre of the field by teams dressed to represent dockside workers – shirtless men clad uniformly in new purple overalls and club-branded beanies.

Ben Allan captained the Fremantle team, all of whom had been recruited since October the previous year by the club's inaugural coach, Gerard Neesham. Kevin Sheedy, Essendon's coach and ever the innovator, started the match with just 17 players on the ground. The Dockers dominated the first half and led 10.6 (66) to 1.7 (13) at half time. Befitting the landmark occasion, the Dockers ultimately won the match by 50 points, 14.11 (95) to 6.9 (45). Fremantle's Craig Burrows won the Channel Seven Medal as the best player afield, while Allan, Peter Bell, Travis Edmonds, Quenton Leach, Tony Delaney, Scott Edwards, and Winston Abraham also played well for the Dockers. Burrows, Bell and Andrew Wills each kicked three goals for Fremantle.

Fact sheets are prepared by MCC Library Volunteers David Allen, Eric Panther, Quentin Miller, Dennis Carroll, Ian Wilkinson, Gaye Fitzpatrick, and Edward Cohen, with MCC Deputy Librarian Trevor Ruddell and the assistance of Col Hutchinson of the AFL.