



# MCC LIBRARY FACT SHEET MARCH 21, 2025

## AFL 2025 ROUND 2 FOOTSCRAY V COLLINGWOOD

### THE WESTERN BULLDOGS' FOOTSCRAY LEGACY

On Monday it was announced that the Western Bulldogs will play under the name Footscray tonight. A Footscray Football Club was mentioned as early as 1876. It played as a junior club at a paddock south of what is now the Footscray Station, bordered by Cowper, Napier, Bunbury and Hyde Streets. It appears this 1876 Footscray Football Club changed its name to the "Prince Imperial Football Club" in 1880, in honour of Prince Louis Napoleon, the Prince Imperial of France, who was killed in 1879 while on a scouting expedition with the British army during the Zulu Wars. The Footscray Football Club name was reinstated in March 1882, and it would be a founding member of the Victorian Junior Football Association in April 1883. It is believed that the club's famous colours of blue and white with a red cap were adopted that year, but it was not until 1884 that it played at the Western Reserve (renamed the Whitten Oval in 1995) by Gordon Street, north of West Footscray Station.

In mid-1882 the reserve was sowed with English grass by the Footscray Cricket Club to "render it a recreation ground." In 1886 the Footscray Football Club amalgamated with the Footscray Cricket Club and was granted senior status as a member of the Victorian Football Association. The Western Reserve was fenced that year. While the club changed its name to the Western Bulldogs in 1996, its second tier VFL side has played as the Footscray Bulldogs, since the reestablishment of a Bulldogs' reserve grade team in 2014 (and won that year's VFL pennant!). This side and the Western Bulldogs' women's teams play at the Club's administration and training base, the Whitten Oval. As a tribute to its former name, the Western Bulldogs' AFL jumpers have borne the initials "FFC" from 1997. This was printed at the at the nape of each players' neck until 2020, and over their left breast from 2021.

### FOOTSCRAY, HAWTHORN AND NORTH MELBOURNE JOIN THE LEAGUE

Following the withdrawal of University after the 1914 season, the VFL consisted of nine teams. Nevertheless, while all nine teams competed in 1915, the outbreak of the First World War caused the withdrawal of a number of clubs in 1916, leaving only Collingwood, Carlton, Richmond and Fitzroy to compete for the premiership. South Melbourne and Geelong rejoined the competition in 1917 and Essendon and St Kilda in 1918. It was only in 1919, however, when Melbourne rejoined, that a nine-team competition was reinstated.

During the period 1919 to 1924, the League received a number of applications from VFA clubs to join the competition but these were rejected mainly because the admission of a VFA club would disrupt the district-based recruiting scheme introduced by the VFL in 1915 and because, in 1923, the VFA and VFL had signed a five-year agreement whereby both bodies recognised the validity of the other's transfer clearances. Therefore, if the League admitted a VFA club, it was likely some of its current members would object because part of their recruiting district would be taken away and there was also the prospect that players from any VFA club that transferred to the VFL might have their clearances to play in the League rejected by the VFA.

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A decision by the VFA to admit Coburg from the VFL seconds competition to its competition in late 1924 was interpreted by the League as breaking the 1923 transfer agreement because it contended that this was valid only while the membership of the two bodies remained the same as it was when the agreement was signed. The VFA decided not to pursue a legal challenge and, after 1924, both bodies considered the "agreement" null and void. From this time, the League set about admitting an additional club from the VFA. Both Footscray and North Melbourne, which had had considerable success in the VFA, were strong contenders but their applications were rejected initially because this would reduce the recruiting districts established for the current nine VFL clubs. A proposal to admit three new clubs was looked upon more favourably, however, because the League considered that the loss of recruiting districts would be more evenly spread across existing clubs. In addition, the VFL believed that the admission of a number of "strong" VFA clubs to the League would strengthen its position and reduce the likelihood of VFA clubs poaching League players. A reduction in the poaching of League players by VFA clubs had been the main reason the VFL had entered into the 1923 agreement in the first place.

One impediment to the admission of North Melbourne was the Victorian Government's refusal to allow the VFL to use the Arden Street Oval in 1921 because of its agreement with the VFA's argument that this would cause it to lose its most centrally located venue. The VFL eventually received permission to use Arden Street before it agreed to admit North Melbourne to the League. As previously mentioned, North Melbourne and Footscray both had strong claims for admission to the VFL because of their success in the VFA. The other club admitted to the VFL in 1925, Hawthorn, had had little success in the VFA but it appears that its location away from the centre of the city was a crucial reason for it being admitted ahead of other applicants.

## THESE MEN PLAYED WITH BOTH COLLINGWOOD AND FOOTSCRAY

There have been 38 players who have appeared with the Magpies and the Bulldogs; here are three of them:

**Harvey Stevens** (b.1930 – d.2016 – pictured right) Recruited to the Magpies from Reservoir (DVFL), he played at Collingwood from 1948 to 1952 in a total of 54 games with 56 goals. He was a talented ruckman at 180cm (6'2") and weighed 87kgs (192lb). With a lot of experience with Collingwood in finals his last game for the Magpies was in the 1952 grand final loss to Geelong. In 1953 Stevens joined Footscray, the club his father, Arthur, had played for. He won the Footscray best and fairest award that year. In 1954 he nearly missed the Grand Final when he forgot to pack his footy boots into his bag and had to return home to Preston to retrieve them. He recalled: "The boys were all stripped by the time I arrived. It was a rush." During the grand final victory against Melbourne he gathered 24 possessions, including four marks, as the Bulldogs steamrolled the Demons by 51 points. For part of season 1957 he captained the Bulldogs and from 1953 to 1957 he recorded 72 games with 71 goals. In his VFL career he totaled 126 games and 127 goals. His grandsons, Daniel Talia played for Adelaide and Michael Talia played for the Western Bulldogs and Sydney Swans.

**George Bisset** (b.1943) Recruited from Braybrook (FDFL), he was a talented rover, who played with the Bulldogs from 1963 to 1972 in 166 games with 288 goals. He was very unlucky in Round 14, 1969 when he was reported for striking Carlton's Ian Robertson. He was arguably the best player on the ground having kicked six goals but did not receive any umpire's votes. In those days umpires weren't inclined to give votes to reported players even if, as happened with Bisset, they were later cleared at the tribunal. Come September Bisset fell one vote short of Brownlow Medal winner, Kevin Murray of Fitzroy. That same season he won Footscray's best and fairest award. Playing on rovers of the calibre of Bill Goggin, Kevin Bartlett, Bob Skilton and Wayne Richardson he relished these duels. He was a short man at 168cms (5'6") and weighed 70kgs (154lbs). In 1973 and 1974 he ended his career at Collingwood where he played 41 games and kicked 49 goals.

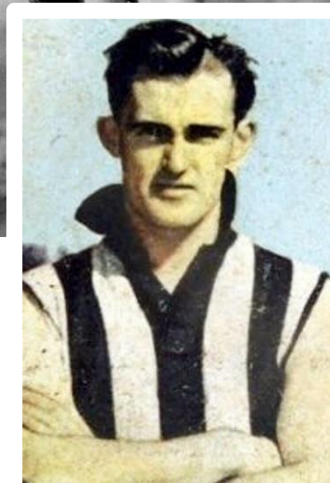
**Robert Rose Jr.** (b.1952 – d.1999) was the elder son of Collingwood champion, Bob Rose and his wife, Elsie. He joined the Magpies from Haileybury College in 1970. His father Bob Snr. noted: "(but) I never had to teach him how to kick. He could kick without effort with either foot, since he was able to handle a ball." With the Magpies from 1970 to 1972, he recorded 26 games with 14 goals. At that time he was coached by his father, Bob Rose Snr (1970-1) and Neil Mann (1972). Rose was only 18 years and 113 days old when he made his VFL debut in Round 9, 1970 against Essendon. In his first season he recorded four games and was used mainly as a utility/half forward. Like his father, Rose was a dual sportsman. Bob Snr had been a talented boxer and Robert Jr was a fine cricketer who played in two Collingwood District premierships, as well as representing Victoria as a right-handed middle order batsman. He played with Victoria in 1971/72 through to 1973/74. His average in 19 first class matches was 30.6 runs with a top score of 118 not out. He joined Footscray where he was coached by his father in 1973 for 9 games and two goals. He was involved in a motor accident early in 1974 and, tragically, was left quadriplegic. His father would regularly take his son to cricket and football matches. Since 2000 the Collingwood and the Western Bulldogs have played annually for the Robert Rose Cup. The Robert Rose award has been awarded since 1991 for the most courageous player in the League.

## OVER TO YOU

1. Who captained Footscray's 1954 premiership side, and the Western Bulldogs' premiership team in 2016?
2. What are the first four lines of the Magpie club song?
3. Name the only club to win four consecutive League premierships.
4. Who wore No. 1 for the winning team in the 1990 grand final?
5. What guernsey number did Bulldog, Scott West, wear?
6. At what venue does the Western Bulldogs club have its training headquarters?
7. What guernsey number did Bulldog Ted Whitten Snr. wear?
8. Who famously wore No. 22 for Collingwood and later coached the side?
9. In which season did Footscray first appear in a league finals match?
10. Who was the first coach of Collingwood never to have played for the club?



Harvey Stevens pictured above for Footscray against North Melbourne in 1954, and right as a Magpie.



## THE BULLDOGS' "HOME" HOME & AWAY GAMES AT THE MCG

Tonight, the Western Bulldogs are designated as the "home" team. While it is just the Club's 25th VFL/AFL "home" home and away match at the MCG, overall Footscray/Western Bulldogs have played 226 senior games here. This comprises 219 VFL/AFL games (the first in 1925 and incorporating 39 finals) and seven VFA games (between 1893 and 1913, incorporating two finals). The overwhelming majority of these games were either finals, or as the "away" team against MCG tenant clubs. To this tally may also be added one Championship of Victoria match (in 1924), three Women's Exhibition/AFLW games (from 2013), 144 Reserve Grade/VFL games (the first in 1926), 32 Under 19 Grade games (between 1949 and 1987), eight Lightning Premiership games (between 1940 and 1953), and at least one Under 17s Melbourne Boys FL game (in 1964). While Footscray first played at the MCG on May 6, 1893, when it lost to Melbourne six goals to three, it would not be until the Sesquicentenary of Victoria match against Collingwood on Sunday June 2, 1985, that Footscray played as the "home" team in a VFL/AFL home and away match at this venue. A League ground rationalization policy that was implemented from the late 1980s presented Footscray/Western Bulldogs with more opportunities to play home matches at the "Home of Football" throughout the 1990s and 2000s. These are listed below.

Date	H&A Round	Home Team	G	B	T	Away Team	G	B	T	Att.
02/06/1985	Rd 10	Footscray	16	10	106	Collingwood	12	8	80	45,411
29/07/1990	Rd 17	Footscray	14	12	96	Collingwood	12	21	93	52,724
03/05/1992	Rd 7	Footscray	18	20	128	Carlton	11	6	72	49,406
26/03/1993	Rd 1	Footscray	13	17	95	Collingwood	17	13	115	58,997
15/04/1995	Rd 3	Footscray	8	12	60	Carlton	23	20	158	41,576
04/06/1995	Rd 10	Footscray	9	10	64	Richmond	13	18	96	33,042
05/05/1996	Rd 6	Footscray	9	10	64	Carlton	12	8	80	31,024
19/05/1996	Rd 8	Footscray	13	6	84	Essendon	23	13	151	36,766
07/06/1996	Rd 10	Footscray	10	9	69	North Melbourne	12	17	89	22,416
28/07/1996	Rd 17	Footscray	16	12	108	Collingwood	17	12	114	28,776
12/04/1997	Rd 3	Western Bulldogs	16	9	105	Richmond	12	14	86	35,438
25/05/1997	Rd 9	Western Bulldogs	16	7	103	North Melbourne	10	11	71	29,307
23/04/1999	Rd 5	Western Bulldogs	21	17	143	Richmond	12	9	81	43,043
11/07/1999	Rd 15	Western Bulldogs	23	12	150	Kangaroos	16	12	108	44,683
17/07/1999	Rd 16	Western Bulldogs	14	15	99	Adelaide	14	13	97	27,747
11/04/2004	Rd 3	Western Bulldogs	12	15	87	Melbourne	12	25	97	27,767
12/06/2004	Rd 12	Western Bulldogs	15	13	103	St Kilda	11	14	80	28,306
03/07/2005	Rd 14	Western Bulldogs	15	8	98	St Kilda	17	14	116	33,622
06/08/2005	Rd 19	Western Bulldogs	21	14	140	West Coast	14	13	97	27,693
09/07/2006	Rd 14	Western Bulldogs	12	10	82	Kangaroos	13	16	94	28,173
19/08/2006	Rd 20	Western Bulldogs	16	9	105	Adelaide	14	14	98	29,988
08/04/2007	Rd 2	Western Bulldogs	11	6	72	Adelaide	16	14	110	27,199
14/06/2008	Rd 12	Western Bulldogs	19	17	131	Brisbane Lions	10	8	68	39,320
05/04/2009	Rd 2	Western Bulldogs	11	14	80	North Melbourne	9	11	65	34,459

## FOOTSCRAY/WESTERN BULLDOGS DID YOU KNOW?

- The first Bulldogs victory in the VFL occurred in Round 2, 1925, against South Melbourne at the Western Oval (now known as Whitten Oval). The first captain/coach of Footscray was Con McCarthy. Also in the team were former Richmond player George Bayliss and Allan "Banana Legs" Hopkins.
- The Bulldogs' first finals appearance was in the first semi-final in 1938 against Collingwood. Collingwood won by 41 points. Footscray was coached by Joe Kelly. Another interesting player was Jim Miller, who was born on May 30, 1919, and is now 105 years old.
- Footscray's first finals victory was in the 1953 first semi-final, when they defeated Essendon by eight points. They were then beaten by Geelong in the preliminary final.
- In 1954, Footscray won their first VFL premiership when they defeated Melbourne by 51 points. Charlie Sutton was captain and coach. Melbourne was coached by Norm Smith.
- Ted Whitten was the first Bulldogs player to reach 300 games. He achieved this milestone in Round 1, 1969, against Fitzroy at Princes Park (then Fitzroy's home ground). Whitten made his debut for Footscray in 1951 and eventually played a then VFL record of 321 games (360 goals) before retiring in 1970.
- The other Bulldogs' 300-gamers are Brad Johnson, Chris Grant, Doug Hawkins, Scott West, Robert Murphy and Rohan Smith. Johnson is the current games record holder with 364.
- Footscray/Western Bulldogs' longest winning run was nine wins from the opening round of the 1946 season to Round 9 of that season.
- Ten Bulldogs' players have won the Brownlow Medal – Allan Hopkins (1930), Norman Ware (1941), Peter Box (1956), John Schultz (1960), Gary Dempsey (1975), Kelvin Templeton (1980), Brad Hardie (1985), Tony Liberatore (1990), Scott Wynd (1992), Adam Cooney (2008).
- Scott West won seven club best and fairest awards.
- Simon Beasley holds the club record for the most career goals with 575.

## THIS ROUND IN HISTORY - ROUND 2 AT THE MCG

The highest Round 2 score on the MCG was in 1990 when North Melbourne thrashed Richmond 32.17 (209) to 9.14 (68). North's John Longmire kicked 12 goals that night, still the most kicked by an individual in Round 2 at the MCG. The Roos kicked 13.3 (81) in the first quarter, which is the highest Round 2 quarter score. The highest ever Round 2 score was at Princes Park in 1969 by Carlton who defeated Hawthorn 30.30 (210) to 12.10 (82). Richmond's Doug Strang has the best Round 2 individual goalkicking performance with 14 goals at the Punt Road Oval against North in 1931. The biggest crowd at the MCG for Round 2 is 85,063 who saw Collingwood 14.16 (100) defeat Carlton 9.12 (66) in 1994. It is common for games to feature multiple goalkickers. However, in Round 2 at the MCG in 1934 only five players kicked goals when Melbourne 20.13 (133) defeated Hawthorn 6.8 (44). Melbourne's goalkickers were Allan La Fontaine (nine goals), Jack Mueller (seven) and Percy Beames (four). Jack Green (four), and Ted Poole (two) kicked Hawthorn's goals.

## STATISTICS FOR FOOTSCRAY/WESTERN BULLDOGS V COLLINGWOOD

### Footscray/Western Bulldogs v Collingwood by Venue

	Won by Bulldogs	Won by Collingwood	Drawn
Docklands Stadium	10	14	0
MCG	9	15	0
Princes Park	1	0	0
Victoria Park	9	44	0
Waverley Park	2	4	1
Western Oval	18	34	0
	49	111	1

### Highest Score

Bulldogs	21.15 (141)	Rd 22	2005	Dock
Collingwood	28.16 (184)	Rd 8	1926	VP

### Lowest Score

Footscray	3.10 (28)	Rd 18	1966	VP
Collingwood	4.4 (28)	Rd 7	1962	WO

### Greatest Winning Margin

Footscray	56 points	Rd 1	1955	VP
Collingwood	126 points	Rd 8	1926	VP

### Last Time They Met - Round 12, 2024, Docklands

	Collingwood	Bulldogs
Quarter time	5.7	3.2
Half time	8.8	8.5
Three-quarter time	12.9	10.9
Full time	12.10 (82)	15.10 (100)

### Most Goals in a Match

11	G. Coventry	Coll.	Rd 8	1926	VP
11	B. Twomey	Coll.	Rd 7	1950	WO
11	P. McKenna	Coll.	Rd 1	1970	WO
10	S. Rocca	Coll.	Rd 16	1993	VP

## OVER TO YOU ANSWERS

- Q1** Charlie Sutton (1954) and Easton Wood (2016).  
**Q2** Good old Collingwood forever;  
 We know how to play the game.  
 Side by side we stick together,  
 To uphold the Magpies' name.  
**Q3** Collingwood (1927, 1928, 1929 and 1930).  
**Q4** Damian Monkhorst (Collingwood).  
**Q5** No. 7.  
**Q6** Whitten Oval (Western Reserve/Oval until 1995. Pictured right in 1929).  
**Q7** No. 3.  
**Q8** Bob Rose Snr.  
**Q9** 1938 - Footscray 10.16 (76) v Collingwood 18.9 (117) at the MCG.  
**Q10** Tom Hafey (1977-1982).



## 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>

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.