



MCC LIBRARY FACT SHEET APRIL 24, 2025

ANZAC DAY EVE AFL 2025 ROUND 7 MELBOURNE V RICHMOND

MELBOURNE V RICHMOND – APRIL 24, 1915

The first round of VFL matches for 1915 were scheduled on Saturday, April 24 – the day before the ANZAC landings took place at Gallipoli. In one of the matches, Melbourne faced Richmond at the MCG. A crowd of just over 7,000 people watched the game. Melbourne had finished the 1914 season in ninth position on the ladder, winning only two games, both against the bottom-placed University. Richmond had finished only one place higher, but had won eight of the 18 games they played in the home and away rounds. The University club, which had been admitted to the VFL in 1908, along with Richmond, decided at the end of the 1914 season that it could no longer participate in the VFL competition. It had lost its last 51 matches in a row and finished on the bottom of the ladder each year from 1911 to 1914. Its decision to disband benefited Melbourne because a number of University players transferred to Melbourne for the 1915 season. One of these was champion full forward Roy Park, who had headed the VFL goalkicking list after the home and away rounds in 1913 with 53, despite University not winning game. Fitzroy's Jimmy Freake eventually kicked 56 goals for the season, but seven of these came in the finals.

Richmond held sway during most of their 1915 first round encounter with Melbourne, leading by 13 points at quarter time, 20 points at half time and 16 points at the final break. The *Argus* reported the following about the final quarter:

“The last quarter was splendidly contested. After (Hughie) James had missed an easy chance (Clarrie) Hall got the tenth goal from the ruck for Richmond, who seemed to have the match safe. Then a complete change came over the game. Melbourne gradually over-powered the opposition, and the score crept up until within ten minutes of the finish they were within three points of Richmond's tally. (Jack) Bacquie punted (a) seventh goal, and a poor kick-off by the Richmond back man gave (Tim) Collins the eighth. A nice mark by (Harry) Brereton gained the next goal for Melbourne. Richmond then made a short rally, during which Hall marked to (Syd) Reeves on the wing, and he smartly kicked a goal. Melbourne then took command and three goals were added by (Bill) Allen, Park and (Jack) Huntington. Richmond were a tired team, but nothing in the match was finer than the stubborn play of (Jack) Doubleday, Bacquie, (Charlie) Lilley, and Allen, who bore the lion's share of the hard work, which enabled Melbourne to pull through.”

The final scores were **Melbourne 12.10 (82)** defeated **Richmond 11.7 (73)**. Melbourne eventually finished the season in fourth place on the ladder with nine wins and seven losses from 16 games; Richmond finished sixth with five wins and 11 losses. Carlton defeated Melbourne by 11 points in the first week of the finals to eliminate them from the premiership race.

A FITZROY CHAMPION WHO DIED IN WWI

Jack Cooper was a Fitzroy man through and through. Born in North Fitzroy, he was educated locally at the Alfred Crescent Primary School. Recruited from the North Fitzroy Juniors, he made his debut for the Maroons in the first round of the 1907 season. Although not particularly tall at 178cm (5ft 10in), he quickly made his name as one of the best half backs in the League. Having won Fitzroy's best and fairest award in 1911 (he won it again in 1914), he was appointed captain in 1912 and, as vice-captain, was a member of the 'Roys 1913 premiership team. He played eight games for Victoria during his career, including in the 1911 and 1914 interstate carnivals in Adelaide and Sydney, respectively. He also captained Victoria in a game against South Australia at the Adelaide Oval in 1912. In total, he played 136 games for Fitzroy from 1907 to 1915. Leaving his employment as a storeman, Cooper enlisted in the 8th Battalion of the First AIF in November 1915 and left for France in March 1916. In France, he saw action in the Battle of the Somme but was so badly gassed that he was repatriated to England to recuperate. Having recovered, he played for the (losing) Australian Training Units team in the famous “Pioneer Exhibition Game” of Australian Rules football, held in London in October 1916, just before returning to active service in France. The effects of the gas continued to cause him problems, however, and he was again repatriated to England. Although he was sent to Aldershot for officer training, he never rose above the rank of Lance-Corporal. Returning to France for a third time, Cooper was killed in action in Belgium, at Polygon Wood, during the Battle of Passchendaele on September 20, 1917. His remains were never recovered. He is commemorated in the Menin Gate Memorial to the Missing in Ypres, Belgium, and his name appears at panel 52 in the Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial. While serving overseas, Cooper wrote many letters home, some of which were published in the local *Winner* magazine. Being so well known in Fitzroy, Cooper's death caused considerable grief in his home suburb and in the football world, generally.

FOOTBALL AT THE MCG ON APRIL 24

- 1915:** Four VFL premiership matches were played on April 24 for the first time. Melbourne defeated Richmond 12.10 (82) to 11.7 (73) at the MCG. The following day the ANZACs stormed the beaches of Gallipoli.
- 1937:** Richmond and Melbourne meet again. It is the first football match at the MCG on April 24 since 1915. April 25 was named ANZAC Day in 1916.
- 1995:** The first AFL match on a Monday evening was played between Richmond and North Melbourne at the MCG.
- 2000:** Easter Monday fell on April 24. The Richmond v Carlton fixture drew 63,149, the largest crowd for a match on the day before ANZAC Day.
- 2015:** The first ANZAC Day eve ceremony is held before the Richmond v Melbourne match. A cauldron was lit by Ron Barassi Jr prior to the game. The torch was carried into the MCG by the Creswick Light Horse.
- 2017:** The ANZAC Eve match draws a crowd of 85,657, a record attendance for the date.
- 2020:** The match on ANZAC Day eve is postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 2021:** The inaugural Frank "Checker" Hughes Medal for the best player on the ground is presented to Melbourne's Christian Petracca.

SENIOR MATCHES AT THE MCG ON THE EVE OF ANZAC DAY – APRIL 24

April 24			MCG Match	Home Team		Opponent		Att.
1915	Saturday		VFL Round 1	Melbourne	12.10 (82)	Richmond	11.7 (73)	7,385
1937	Saturday		VFL Round 1	Melbourne	14.8 (92)	Richmond	9.12 (66)	19,726
1965	Saturday		VFL Round 2	Melbourne	11.14 (80)	North Melbourne	10.12 (72)	21,744
1976	Saturday		VFL Round 4	Melbourne	17.12 (114)	Carlton	24.13 (157)	34,991
1987	Friday	night	VFL Round 5	North Melbourne	18.19 (127)	St Kilda	16.14 (110)	16,078
1995	Monday	night	AFL Round 4	Richmond	21.8 (134)	North Melbourne	13.7 (85)	62,606
1998	Friday	night	AFL Round 5	Richmond	12.14 (86)	West Coast	10.11 (71)	34,837
1999	Saturday		AFL Round 5	Melbourne	13.12 (90)	Port Adelaide	9.12 (66)	24,533
2000	Monday		AFL Round 7	Richmond	10.9 (69)	Carlton	18.12 (120)	63,149
2010	Saturday	night	AFL Round 4	Melbourne	15.13 (103)	Brisbane Lions	7.11 (53)	36,396
2015	Friday	night	AFL Round 4	Richmond	6.15 (51)	Melbourne	12.11 (83)	58,175
2016	Sunday	night	AFL Round 5	Melbourne	20.9 (129)	Richmond	14.12 (96)	59,968
2017	Monday	night	AFL Round 5	Richmond	12.16 (88)	Melbourne	11.9 (75)	85,657
2018	Tuesday	night	AFL Round 5	Melbourne	8.8 (56)	Richmond	15.12 (102)	77,071
2019	Wednesday	night	AFL Round 6	Richmond	12.13 (85)	Melbourne	6.6 (42)	72,704
2021	Saturday	night	AFL Round 6	Melbourne	12.10 (82)	Richmond	6.12 (48)	56,418
2022	Sunday	night	AFL Round 6	Richmond	8.6 (54)	Melbourne	9.22 (76)	70,334
2023	Monday	night	AFL Round 6	Melbourne	15.6 (96)	Richmond	11.12 (78)	83,985
2024	Wednesday	night	AFL Round 7	Richmond	5.12 (42)	Melbourne	13.7 (85)	72,840

FRANK "CHECKER" HUGHES MEDAL

Tonight's best player on the ground will receive the Frank "Checker" Hughes Medal. Inaugurated in 2021, it commemorates the World War I serviceman and seven-time premiership player and coach Francis Vane "Checker" Hughes MSM. Born in February 1894, Hughes had played 24 games for Richmond in 1914 and 1915, before he enlisted. He served with the 57th Battalion of the 15th Brigade, 5th Australian Division. He rose through the ranks to quartermaster sergeant, and received a Meritorious Service Medal in 1918. While in Mametz, France, he helped establish an Australian football ground.

Hughes returned to Australia and the Richmond Football Club in May 1919. He played in the Tigers' 1920 and 1921 premiership teams and ended his League playing career in 1923 after 87 games and having booted 51 goals. He then refined his coaching arts at Ulverstone, Tasmania, returned to Tigerland in 1927, and coached Richmond to grand finals in 1927, 1928, 1929 and 1931, before breaking through for his first premiership as a coach in 1932. Richmond player Jack Dyer remembered, "Checker Hughes, the psychologist of the game, was a great coach and he beat champions with good players because he knew and understood them... with a few scathing words he could lift a side."

Hughes was enticed by Percy Page, Melbourne's secretary and a former Richmond secretary, to join him at Melbourne the following year. Hughes instilled a ruthless attitude in Melbourne's players, epitomised by the "Red Demons" moniker he bestowed on them and the club. Under Hughes' guidance from 1933 to 1941, and then from 1945 to 1948, his Demons won flags in 1939, 1940, 1941 and 1948. Therefore, Hughes was fundamental to the development of two great eras at two great clubs. He had a life-long commitment to the game and was a selector at Melbourne for two decades following his formal retirement as coach. He even stepped in as an acting coach of Melbourne for one match in 1965. Hughes died in 1978. He was an inaugural inductee of the Australian Football Hall of Fame as a coach in 1996, and is a member of the Richmond Football Club Hall of Fame as well as the Melbourne Football Club Hall of Fame.



FAREWELL “CHECKER”?

At the 2024 AFL grand final MCC Member David Robinson entered the Library and showed the Librarians an image of Melbourne's run-through for the 1948 grand final (below left) between Melbourne and Essendon and another from the match of players huddled on the ground (below right). His mother Pamela Robinson was the photographer. The message above the run-through bids farewell to “Checker” Hughes, Melbourne's coach who had announced that he would retire after the 1948 season.

Hughes had achieved much for Melbourne. Prior to the 1948 grand final Hughes had coached the Demons (a nickname he coined) to premierships in 1939, 1940, 1941, having already led Richmond to a premiership in 1932. As the banner was woven across the race, little would Checker, or anyone at the MCG for that matter, realise that it was not Checker's last game at the helm of the Demons. In fact, he would add two more games to his coaching tally.

The 1948 grand final was drawn, and therefore, the teams would meet in a replay the following week. Melbourne was victorious adding a fifth League premiership to his tally. He would also coach the Demons in one more game when he stood in as coach after Norm Smith was sacked in 1965. In total Hughes coached 378 League games, 120 at Richmond from 1927 to 1932, and 258 with Melbourne – the latter comprising 173 from 1933 to 1941, 84 from 1945 to 1948, and then one in 1965.



FACT SHEETS ON THE MCC WEBSITE

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

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.

THIS ROUND IN HISTORY – ROUND 7 ON THE MCG

The highest score on the MCG in Round 7 is 28.12 (180) by North Melbourne against Melbourne 22.11 (143) in 1982. The overall Round 7 record is 37.17 (239) by Geelong against the Brisbane Bears 11.9 (75) at Carrara in 1992. The biggest winning margin at the MCG in Round 7 is 122 points by Melbourne 25.16 (166) when they defeated North Melbourne 5.14 (44) in 1937. The overall Round 7 record is 164 points by Geelong against the Brisbane Bears at Carrara in 1992. The lowest Round 7 score at the MCG since 1925 is 3.9 (27) by North Melbourne against Melbourne 15.21 (111) in 1927. This is the overall Round 7 record since 1925. The most goals by an individual in Round 7 at the MCG is 10 by Sydney's Tony Lockett against Collingwood in 1998. The overall Round 7 record is 17 by Jason Dunstall for Hawthorn versus Richmond at Waverley Park in 1992. The highest score in a quarter for Round 7 at the MCG is 10.3 (63) by the Kangaroos against Adelaide in the first quarter in 1999 and by North Melbourne against Melbourne in the second quarter in 1982. The overall Round 7 record is 14.3 (87) in the fourth quarter by Geelong when playing the Brisbane Bears at Carrara in 1992. The highest Round 7 attendance was in 2024 when 93,644 saw Essendon and Collingwood draw 12.13 (85) apiece at the MCG on ANZAC Day.

STATISTICS FOR RICHMOND V MELBOURNE

Melbourne v Richmond by venue

	Won By Melbourne	Won By Richmond	Draw
Docklands	1	1	0
MCG	67	74	1
Motordrome	0	1	0
Punt Road	18	32	1
Waverley Park	1	0	0
	87	108	2

Highest Score

Melbourne	26.19 (175)	Rd 21	1993	MCG
Richmond	30.16 (196)	Rd 2	1942	PR

Lowest Score

Melbourne	4.10 (34)	Rd 11	1910	MCG
Richmond	1.6 (12)	Rd 10	1908	MCG

Greatest Winning Margin

Melbourne	121 points	Rd 21	1993	MCG
Richmond	93 points	Rd 9	1980	MCG

Last Time They Met – Round 7, 2024, MCG

	Richmond	Melbourne
Quarter time	1.3	2.3
Half time	3.6	3.5
Three-quarter time	4.8	8.7
Full time	5.12 (42)	13.7 (85)

Frank “Checker” Hughes Medallists

2021	Christian Petracca	Melbourne
2022	Clayton Oliver	Melbourne
2023	Jack Viney	Melbourne
2024	Max Gawn	Melbourne

DID YOU KNOW? (SOME OF THE FALLEN)

- Flight Sergeant Bill Cosgrove played three senior games for Richmond at half back during the 1940 VFL season. He joined the RAAF during the Second World War and was killed in action when his plane crashed into the Solomon Sea, near Goodenough Island, in August 1943. Showing his loyalty to his VFL team, he had decorated his plane with Richmond's Tiger emblem and the slogan “Eat 'em Alive”.
- Flying Officer Syd Anderson was a three-time premiership wingman for Melbourne (1939, 1940 and 1941). He lost his life in May 1944 when his Bristol Beaufort bomber crashed near Wewak in New Guinea and the crew was killed by the Japanese. The Melbourne Football Club commemorates this fallen hero with the runner-up trophy in their best and fairest award.
- Private Les Lee played two VFL games for Richmond in 1913. He enlisted in the first AIF and was killed in action in June 1917 at Snitchells Farm, Messines, Belgium. His name is commemorated at The Menin Gate, Ypres.
- Lance Corporal Frank Lugton was a Victorian cricketer (five Sheffield Shield games during the 1913/14 season) and a Melbourne Football Club player (36 games 1913-14). He was killed at Villiers-Bretonneux when attacking a German parapet, in shocking conditions. He has no known grave, but his life is commemorated at the massive Villiers-Bretonneux Memorial.
- Private Harold Ball was a ruckman/defender, who was a member of Melbourne's 1939 and 1940 premiership sides. He joined the Demons from Merbein (near Mildura in country Victoria) and played 33 games with 33 goals. He served in the 2/9 Field Ambulance during the Second World War and died during the Japanese assault on Singapore in February 1942.
- Private Bill Gravic played nine games with Richmond during 1934 and 1935, and won the Reserves best and fairest award in 1935. He enlisted in the 2nd AIF and served in 20th Field Bakery Platoon, Royal Australian Army Service Corps. He was seriously injured in an accident on the Atherton Tablelands when a military vehicle overturned. He died as the result of his injuries in June 1944.
- Lance Corporal Arthur (“Artie”) Harrison played with both Richmond and Fitzroy. He was a member of Fitzroy's 1913 premiership team. Already injured twice, he was killed in action on the Somme; he has no known grave and is commemorated at the Villiers-Bretonneux Memorial