

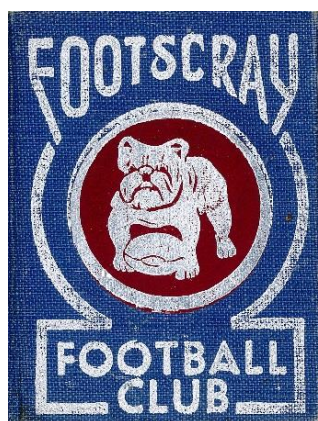


MELBOURNE CRICKET CLUB

2021 AFL GRAND FINAL MELBOURNE V WESTERN BULLDOGS

LIBRARY FACT SHEET SEPTEMBER 25, 2021 AWAY GAME SPECIAL

Previously MCC Library Fact Sheets have only been created for events at the Melbourne Cricket Ground. However, due to the pandemic the 2021 AFL Grand Final will be hosted at Perth Stadium. To give our visitors and clients some sense of normalcy we provide this, the first ever Away Game Special, for the big game in the West.



MELBOURNE AND FOOTSCRAY – THE EARLY DAYS

The Footscray Football Club was established in 1883, but played its first VFA football match on May 1, 1886, against St. Kilda at the Western Oval. However, it would not be until September 24, 1887, that it met Melbourne. Melbourne had been instrumental in the establishment of the laws of Australian football from its foundation in 1859, but by 1887 the club was no longer the football power it had been throughout the 1860s and 1870s.

The first game between the clubs took place at the Friendly Societies' Gardens ground (approximately where Collingwood's Training Oval and the Rectangular Stadium are today), before about 100 spectators – most of whom were boys. The away club,



Footscray, were the underdogs. The 'Scray's had only won two and drawn two games from its previous 13 in 1887, and had to find eight substitutes for the Melbourne match. Although Footscray began well, and went into quarter-time with a two goals to nil lead, Melbourne's quality and experience ultimately told. The Redlegs would goal in each of the remaining quarters to win three goals to two.

The next time the clubs played was at Footscray's Western Oval on June 8, 1889, when, despite Footscray scoring five goals to Melbourne's three, the 'Scray's "win" was reversed by the VFA for playing an unregistered player. By the time Melbourne left the VFA, as one of eight clubs to form the VFL (now AFL) at the close of the 1896 season, Footscray and Melbourne had met 14 times, of which Melbourne won 13. It would not be until May 12, 1894, that Footscray legitimately defeated the Redlegs, three goals to two. The game was played before 6,500 at the Western Oval. When the clubs last met in the VFA on August 8, 1896, Melbourne won 14 goals to two at the MCG. It was the 'Scray's heaviest defeat until then.

A little under three decades later Footscray joined Melbourne in the VFL, and the first League game between the clubs was played at the Western Oval on May 23, 1925. Melbourne won before a 12,000 strong crowd, 9.16 (70) to 6.6 (42). Although the clubs drew a match in 1929, it was not until August 29, 1931, at the Western Oval, that the Bulldogs defeated Melbourne in a League match, 10.12 (72) to 5.8 (38).

MELBOURNE AND FOOTSCRAY/WESTERN BULLDOGS IN FINALS

Since Footscray's entry into the VFL/AFL in 1925, Melbourne and Footscray/Western Bulldogs have met in just four finals. All were played at the MCG.

The first final between the clubs was the September 7, 1946, Semi Final before 61,277 spectators. The Demons won 17.18 (120) to the Bulldogs 15.12 (102). Jack Mueller top scored for Melbourne with four goals, while Norm Ware also booted four for Footscray.

The next time the clubs met in a final was the 1954 Grand Final played on September 25, 1954. A crowd of 80,897 people saw the Charlie Sutton-led Footscray win its first League premiership 15.12 (102) to 7.9 (51). The Doggies' Jack Collins kicked seven goals in the match, equalling the then Grand Final record.

Footscray also won the third final between the clubs, when the Bulldogs led throughout the September 16, 1961, Preliminary Final to win 13.7 (85) to 8.10 (58) before 86,118 spectators. However, Footscray lost the Grand Final to Hawthorn the following week.

Melbourne won the most recent final played between the clubs. The Semi Final was played on Sunday, September 18, 1994, in front of a crowd of 65,577. The Demons led comfortably throughout the game to win 21.18 (144) to 9.11 (65). Melbourne's Garry Lyon dominated the scoring with 10 goals.

Statistics for Melbourne v Footscray/Western Bulldogs

Melbourne: In Statistics

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Club Formed | May 14, 1859 |
| Joined VFL/AFL | 1897 |
| Premierships | 12: 1900, 1926, 1939, 1940, 1941, 1948, 1955, 1956, 1957, 1959, 1960, 1964. |
| Runners-up | 5: 1946, 1954, 1958, 1988, 2000. |

Footscray/Western Bulldogs: In Statistics

| | |
|-----------------------|----------------|
| Club Formed | April 26, 1883 |
| Joined VFL/AFL | 1925 |
| Premierships | 2: 1954, 2016. |
| Runners-up | 1: 1961. |

Melbourne v Bulldogs by venue

| | Won by Melbourne | Won by Bulldogs | Drawn |
|---------------|---------------------|--------------------|-------|
| Carrara | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Docklands | 9 | 10 | 0 |
| MCG | 46 | 29 | 0 |
| Princes Park | 0 | 5 | 0 |
| Punt Road | 2 | 2 | 0 |
| Waverley Park | 4 | 1 | 0 |
| Western Oval | 28 | 31 | 1 |
| | 89 | 79 | 1 |

Last Time They Met – Round 19, 2021, MCG

| | Melbourne | Bulldogs |
|--------------------|-----------|-----------|
| Quarter time | 1.4 | 3.2 |
| Half time | 2.7 | 6.4 |
| Three-quarter time | 7.9 | 10.5 |
| Full time | 9.11 (65) | 13.7 (85) |

THE 1954 GRAND FINAL

On September 25, 1954, Footscray finally gained their first premiership flag after 30 seasons in the VFL. The Bulldogs did a comprehensive demolition job on Melbourne with Ted Whitten and Charlie Sutton starring. A crowd of 80,897 witnessed Footscray full forward, Jack Collins, boot seven goals. The Bulldogs were led by captain-coach Charlie Sutton with Melbourne skippered by Geoff Collins and coached by Norm Smith. Brilliant sunshine bathed the MCG for the Grand Final. *Unleashed: A History of the Footscray Football Club* states:

“Norm Smith, the Melbourne coach, conceded after the game that Footscray had not one weak player, and that the Footscray boys shared in a special spirit that set the Bulldogs apart from all other contenders during the season. Charlie Sutton’s enormous faith in his young players had been rewarded. Jack Collins proved himself the best full-forward in the game and the backline, built around Ted Whitten and Herb Henderson, was the tightest in the league. With good big men, and rovers who had improved out of sight, Footscray was a perfectly balanced side.”

Other Bulldogs to perform well were Dave Bryden, John Kerr, Doug Reynolds, Peter Box and Don Ross. Melbourne’s best included captain Geoff Collins, Ken Albiston, Denis Cordner, Ian McLean and Laurie Mithen. The final scores read Footscray 15.12 (102) to Melbourne 7.9 (51).

Highest Score

| | | | | |
|-----------|-------------|-------|------|-----|
| Melbourne | 23.21 (159) | Rd 9 | 1984 | Wav |
| Footscray | 26.13 (169) | Rd 15 | 1985 | WO |

Lowest Score

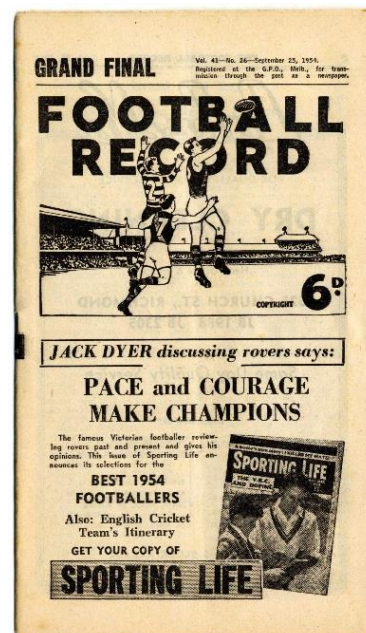
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|-----------|----------|-------|------|----|
| Melbourne | 3.9 (27) | Rd 8 | 1932 | WO |
| Footscray | 3.6 (24) | Rd 11 | 1963 | WO |

Greatest Winning Margin

| | | | | |
|-----------|------------|-------|------|----|
| Melbourne | 80 points | Rd 12 | 1943 | PR |
| Footscray | 120 points | Rd 15 | 1985 | WO |

Most Goals in a Match

| | | | | | |
|----|---------------|-------|-------|------|-----|
| 12 | Norm Smith | Melb | Rd 17 | 1941 | MCG |
| 12 | Simon Beasley | Foots | Rd 15 | 1985 | WO |
| 11 | Fred Fanning | Melb | Rd 12 | 1943 | PR |
| 10 | Fred Fanning | Melb | Rd 18 | 1947 | WO |
| 10 | Ron Grove | Foots | Rd 5 | 1946 | PR |
| 10 | Garry Lyon | Melb | SF | 1994 | MCG |



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

FACT SHEETS ON THE MCC WEBSITE
MCC Library’s matchday fact sheets can be accessed through the MCC website at:
<http://tinyurl.com/mcclcatalogue>

The MCC Library thanks the above people for their work on numerous MCC Library Fact Sheets during the 2021 season