



# MCC LIBRARY FACT SHEET JUNE 26, 2024

## RUGBY LEAGUE STATE OF ORIGIN GAME 2 NEW SOUTH WALES V QUEENSLAND

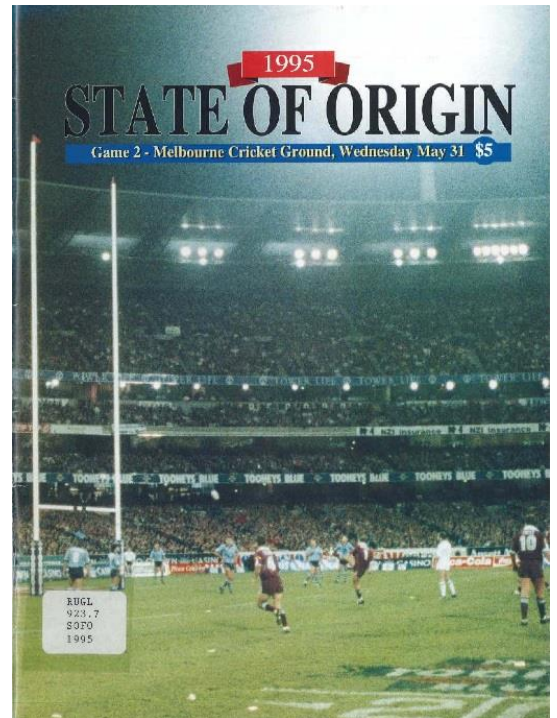
### RUGBY LEAGUE STATE OF ORIGIN AT THE MCG

Tonight's match is the sixth State of Origin match to be held on the MCG. Game 1 of the 2021 series was scheduled for the MCG, but COVID-19 restrictions forced the match's transfer to Townsville's North Queensland Stadium. The attendances at MCG games have varied dramatically, from 87,161 in 1994, the crowd dropping to 25,105 in 1997. With the introduction of Melbourne Storm as a Super League franchise in 1997, and then as a member of the NRL in 1998, awareness of rugby league in Melbourne has increased. This was evidenced by the crowds of 91,513 in 2015, and 87,122 in 2018.

Despite Queensland having had the support of the MCG crowds, due in the main to Cameron Smith, Cooper Cronk and Billy Slater, three Queensland legends playing with Melbourne Storm, the head to head tally between the states on this ground is 4-1 in New South Wales' favour. Queensland's solitary victory came in 1995.

The scores in Melbourne have been somewhat low to middling, with the result that no player has scored more than one try in any game. Queensland's Brett Dallas, with a try in both the 1995 and 1997 matches is the MCG's leading Origin try scorer, while New South Welshman, Trent Hodkinson, kicked five goals from as many attempts in 2015, to be the leading MCG goal kicker in State of Origin rugby league.

**Right:** The 1995 State of Origin Game 2 program used an image of the 1994 match at the MCG.



### THE ORIGIN OF THE “COCKROACHES” AND “CANE TOADS”

In the mid-70s, Queensland coach, Barry Muir, was watching a television news report on the NSW Blues. He thought the set-mounted antenna made the blurred players look like cockroaches, and referred to the NSW side as such when talking to the media the next day. Muir, fed up with hearing about “The Mighty Blues”, used the cockroach moniker as a tactic to belittle the Blues, who, with the best Queenslanders playing for them, regularly beat Queensland. It was the renowned journalist Jack Reardon who suggested Sydney-based Queenslanders should be allowed to play for their state, though this did not occur until the first State of Origin in 1980, when specific rules were put in place. Reardon, a former Australian player, had played for both New South Wales and Queensland in the 1930s.

In retaliation for the “Cockroach” slight, Johnny Raper, a former Australian captain and one of the four original Rugby League “Immortals”, is credited with labelling the Queenslanders “Cane Toads”, after the invasive pest that was released into, and whose range covers much of, the state. However, Queenslanders seem accepting of the moniker, and it is often used in Queensland Rugby League merchandise, such as the tasteful thong-and-toad-themed Hawaiian shirt (left).



### 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>

This fact sheet was prepared by MCC Library Volunteers Lesley Smith and James Brear with MCC Deputy Librarian Trevor Ruddell.

## RUGBY LEAGUE AT THE MCG

- There have been 14 rugby league matches (including curtain raisers) at the MCG.
- The first rugby league football match played on the MCG was between England and NSW on August 15, 1914.
- Melbourne Storm's Round 5 fixture against St George-Illawarra on March 3, 2000 was the first NRL match on the MCG. The Storm's 60-point victory is the biggest for a rugby league match at the MCG. The Storm scored a MCG record 70 points and 12 tries in the match.
- The most tries scored by a rugby league player in a game at the MCG is five by Dean Bradford for Victoria against South Australia in an Australian National Championship game (later known as the Affiliated States Championship) on May 31, 1995. The match was the curtain raiser for Game 2 of the 1995 State of Origin series.
- In the five State of Origin matches at the MCG, NSW has won four and Queensland one.
- The largest attendance for a Rugby League State of Origin match was 91,513 for Game 2 in 2015 at the MCG.

Date	Comp		T	G	D	Pts		T	G	D	Pts	Att
15/08/1914		England	3	5	1	21	New South Wales	3	3	0	15	12,970
8/06/1994	ASC	Victoria	7	6	0	40	South Australia	3	1	0	14	cr
8/06/1994	Origin	New South Wales	2	3	0	14	Queensland	0	0	0	0	87,161
31/05/1995	ASC	Victoria	*	*	*	44	South Australia	*	*	*	26	cr
31/05/1995	Origin	Queensland	3	4	0	20	New South Wales	2	2	0	12	52,994
11/06/1997		Victoria	*	*	*	*	NSW Universities	*	*	*	*	cr
11/06/1997	Origin	New South Wales	3	1	1	15	Queensland	3	1	0	14	25,015
3/03/2000	NRL	Melbourne Storm	12	11	0	70	St George-Illawarra	2	1	0	10	23,239
23/06/2000		Victoria U15	*	*	*	*	Riverina (NSW) U15	*	*	*	*	cr
23/06/2000	NRL	Melbourne Storm	4	3	0	22	Cronulla Sharks	4	0	0	16	15,587
17/06/2015		New South Wales U18	3	3	0	18	Queensland U18	4	3	0	22	cr
17/06/2015	Origin	New South Wales	4	5	0	26	Queensland	3	3	0	18	91,513
6/06/2018		New South Wales U18	3	2	0	16	Queensland U18	2	1	0	10	cr
6/06/2018	Origin	New South Wales	4	3	0	22	Queensland	2	2	0	12	87,122

\* An asterisk indicates a gap in the MCC Library's knowledge. If you can fill these gaps please contact the MCC Library.

## RUGBY LEAGUE STATE OF ORIGIN STATISTICS

### NSW v Queensland by venue

		Won by NSW	Won by Qld	Draw
Adelaide Oval	SA	0	2	0
Docklands	Vic	0	3	0
Lang Park	Qld	20	39	1
Long Beach	USA	1	0	0
MCG	Vic	4	1	0
North Qld. Stad.	Qld	1	0	0
Olympic Park	Vic	1	0	0
Perth Stadium	WA	2	0	0
QE II Stadium	Qld	0	2	0
Robina Stadium	Qld	0	1	0
SCG	NSW	3	3	0
Stadium Aust.	NSW	19	12	1
Sydney FS	NSW	6	8	0
		57	71	2

### Lowest Score

NSW	0 pts	Game 1	1995	SFS
NSW	0 pts	Game 2	2008	Lang Park
Queensland	0 pts	Game 1	1990	SFS
Queensland	0 pts	Game 2	1994	MCG
Queensland	0 pts	Game 2	2021	Lang Park

### Most Individual Points in a Match

Ryan Girdler	NSW	32 pts	2000	Stad. Aust.
Nathan Cleary	NSW	24 pts	2022	Perth Stad.
Michael O'Connor	NSW	18 pts	1985	Lang Park
Lote Tuqiri	Qld	18 pts	2002	QE II
Johnathan Thurston	Qld	18 pts	2015	Lang Park

### State of Origin Hat-tricks

Chris Anderson	NSW	3 tries	1983	Lang Park
Kerry Boustead	Qld	3 tries	1984	Lang Park
Ryan Girdler	NSW	3 tries	2000	Stad Aust.
Lote Tuqiri	Qld	3 tries	2002	QE II
Matt Sing	Qld	3 tries	2003	Lang Park
Matt King	NSW	3 tries	2005	Lang Park
Dane Gagi	Qld	3 tries	2016	Lang Park
Valentine Holmes	Qld	3 tries	2017	Lang Park
Tom Trbojevic	NSW	3 tries	2019	Perth Stad.
Tom Trbojevic	NSW	3 tries	2021	NQS
Hamiso Tabuai-Fidow	Qld	3 tries	2024	Stad Aust.

### Highest Score

NSW	56 pts	Game 3	2000	Stad. Aust.
Queensland	52 pts	Game 3	2015	Lang Park

### Greatest Winning Margin

NSW	40 pts	Game 3	2000	Stad. Aust.
Queensland	46 pts	Game 3	2015	Lang Park