



MCC LIBRARY FACT SHEET APRIL 19, 2025

AFL 2025 ROUND 6 MELBOURNE V FREMANTLE

SIR DOUG NICHOLLS ROUND HONOUREE

Earlier this year, the AFL announced that Stephen Michael, a WAFL champion, who played 243 games for South Fremantle, would be the Sir Doug Nicholls Round honouree for 2025. The Sir Doug Nicholls Round will begin in Darwin with the Round 10 clash between the Gold Coast Suns and Hawthorn on Thursday, May 15. This will be followed by the traditional Marngrook clash between the Sydney Swans and Carlton at the SCG on Friday night, May 16.

Regarded as one of the greatest players never to have played in the VFL/AFL, Michael won back-to-back Sandover Medals in 1980 and 1981 as the best player in the WAFL. He was also a premiership player at South Fremantle in 1980 and a five-time best-and-fairest winner for the Bulldogs. A proud Noongar man, Michael never played outside Western Australia, but his remarkable career was recognised nationally when he was selected captain of the 1983 All-Australian side. He was also

picked at centre half-forward in the Indigenous Team of the Century and inducted into the Australian Football Hall of Fame in 1999. Today, Michael is patron of the Stephen Michael Foundation, a charity that delivers school and community-based programs to at-risk and disengaged youth in Western Australia. Michael's status as arguably the best ruck in Australia at the peak of his career led to multiple overtures from Victorian clubs to lure him across the country. But his connection to family and his hometown of Kojonup, south of Perth, meant he remained in the West.



The Stephen Michael (right) and Maurice Rioli tribute mural by Shakey at Fremantle Oval.

PLAYED FOR BOTH

Born in the Western Australian farming town of Tambellup, **Jeff Farmer** played for South Fremantle in the WAFL before making his AFL debut for Melbourne in 1995. Fremantle had a hold on him but he was traded to Melbourne in exchange for Phil Gilbert. Farmer had come to Melbourne's attention before he had any senior experience in the WAFL, the Demons' Western Australian recruiter Bernie Dunn having profiled him with the simple sentence "this kid is a wizard". The nickname stuck and Farmer became one of the most exciting forwards in the League. He played 118 senior games for Melbourne from 1995 to 2001, kicking 259 goals. He was the Demons' leading goal-kicker in 1997 (equal), 1998 and 2000, and was judged to have kicked the "AFL Goal of the Year" in 1996 and 1998. After a poor season in 1999, Farmer came back to his best in 2000, highlighted by a career-best nine goals in the second half of the Queen's Birthday game against Collingwood. He had struggled to get a touch in the first two quarters of this game and only returned to the ground from the interchange bench when another Melbourne player was injured in the third quarter. Farmer's good form helped the Demons get through to the 2000 grand final (which they lost to Essendon) but it was revealed after the finals that he had played the whole finals series with a broken rib. Melbourne was always fearful that Farmer might be lured back to WA and after a disappointing 2001 season, which was disrupted by injury and suspension, he signed with Fremantle. Ironically, Farmer kicked the winning goal in Fremantle's five-point win over his old club at Subiaco Oval in Round 8, 2002. Farmer's first two seasons for the Dockers were somewhat disappointing but his form improved, and he was one of Fremantle's most productive forwards in each of the 2004, 2005 and 2006 seasons. He played on through 2007 and 2008, but he announced his retirement at the end of the 2008 season. He played 131 games for the Dockers (kicking 224 goals) meaning that he finished his AFL career on a total of 249 games with 483 goals.

OVER TO YOU

1. Who was Fremantle's first coach in the AFL?
2. Who was named in the centre in Melbourne's Team of the Century?
3. Who scored the first ever goal for Fremantle in Round 1, 1995?
4. Name the six Melbourne players who have won the Brownlow Medal.
5. Who am I? I played 32 games for the Dockers from 1995 to 1997, before joining the Demons. I played 236 games for the Demons from 1998 to 2008 and won the club's best and fairest award in 2004.

THIS ROUND IN HISTORY - ROUND 6 AT THE MCG

The highest score on the MCG in Round 6 is 31.18 (204) by St Kilda against Melbourne 21.15 (141) in 1978. The biggest winning margin at the MCG in Round 6 is 107 points by Melbourne 19.23 (137) when defeating South Melbourne 3.12 (30) in 1939. The lowest Round 6 score at the MCG since 1925 is 1.11 (17) by South Melbourne against Melbourne 8.15 (63) in 1962. This is the overall Round 6 record. The biggest bag of goals in Round 6 at the MCG took place in 1993 when Geelong's Gary Ablett Snr kicked 14 goals against Essendon. The highest score in a quarter for Round 6 at the MCG is 11.5 (71) by St Kilda against Melbourne in the second quarter in 1978. The highest score for a quarter in Round 6 was when Essendon scored 15.4 (94) against the Gold Coast Suns in the first quarter at the Docklands in 2011.

STATISTICS FOR MELBOURNE V FREMANTLE

Melbourne v Fremantle by venue

	Won by Melbourne	Won by Fremantle	Drawn
MCG	9	9	0
Traeger Park	0	1	0
Docklands Stadium	2	1	0
Subiaco Oval	3	11	0
WACA	1	2	0
Marrara Oval	2	1	0
Cazalys Stadium	0	1	0
Perth Stadium	1	1	0
	18	27	0

Last Time They Met – Round 19, 2024, Perth Stadium

	Melbourne	Fremantle
Quarter time	0.2	3.5
Half time	3.3	7.9
Three-quarter time	6.5	11.11
Full time	10.6 (66)	17.14 (116)

Highest Score

Melbourne	25.10 (160)	Rd 20	2000	Dock
Fremantle	22.12 (144)	Rd 10	1999	MCG
Fremantle	22.12 (144)	Rd 21	2007	Subiaco

Lowest Score

Melbourne	4.9 (33)	Rd 16	2020	Cazalys
Fremantle	6.11 (47)	Rd 16	2020	Cazalys

Greatest Winning Margin

Melbourne	83 points	Rd 20	2000	Dock
Fremantle	92 points	Rd 13	2024	Traeger

Most Goals in a Match (10 goals or more)

10	Tony Modra	Frem	Rd 10	1999	MCG
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THEIR ONLY FINAL

The only time that Melbourne and Fremantle have met in the finals to date was in 2006. Fremantle finished the season in third position on the ladder with 15 wins and seven losses, while Melbourne finished seventh with 13 wins, eight losses and a draw. In the first week of the finals, Melbourne defeated St Kilda in the second elimination final and Fremantle lost to Adelaide in the second qualifying final. This led to the Demons and Dockers facing each other in the second semi-final at Subiaco Oval on Friday, September 15. A crowd of 42,505 saw the game. The Dockers were captained by Peter Bell and coached by Chris Connolly; the Demons were captained by David Neitz and coached by Neale Daniher.

The game was a tight affair early on, the Dockers leading by three points at quarter time (3.3 to 3.0). Melbourne scored the first three goals of the second quarter and held a 16-point lead just after the six-minute mark. The Dockers fought back, however, and when Ryan Murphy kicked their fourth goal of the quarter during time-on they had hit the front again. The Dockers were six points ahead at the main break, 7.9 (51) to 7.3 (45). A goal to David Neitz tied the scores early in the third term but the Dockers then got on top with four goals to one, to hold a 23-point advantage just before three quarter time. A late goal to Melbourne reduced the margin to 17 points at the final change. The Dockers' inaccuracy – they kicked four goals six to three goals one in the third quarter – had helped keep Melbourne in the game.

While the Demons kicked the first goal of the final quarter, the Dockers solidified their lead by kicking the next three majors. They eventually won the game by 28 points, 14.18 (102) to 11.8 (74). Matthew Carr, Jeff Farmer, Ryan Murphy and Matthew Pavlich kicked two goals each for the Dockers; Russell Robertson and David Neitz both kicked three goals for the Demons. This was the Dockers' first AFL finals win; they lost the first preliminary final to Sydney the following week. Their first final had been in 2003 when they were defeated by Essendon in the first elimination final. They did not make the finals again until 2006.

OVER TO YOU ANSWERS

Q1 Gerard Neesham. Q2 Allan La Fontaine. Q3 Todd Ridley. Q4 Ivor Warne-Smith (1926 & 1928), Don Cordner (1946), Brian Wilson (1982), Peter Moore (1984), Jim Stynes (1991) and Shane Woewodin (2000). Q5 Jeff White.

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.

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