



MCC LIBRARY FACT SHEET

JULY 12, 2025

AFL 2025 ROUND 18

RICHMOND V ESSENDON

THE FIRST MATCH BETWEEN RICHMOND AND ESSENDON

On July 4, 1885, Essendon and Richmond met for the first time. Essendon, formed in 1873, was placed second in 1884, while Richmond was established months before the game on March 20. The match was played at Essendon's home, the East Melbourne Cricket Ground, before a crowd of 3,000. The Dons dominated the play, kicking four goals to nil in the first half. Although Richmond booted two goals following the change of ends, Essendon scored another four that half to win eight goals to two.

ESSENDON 1941-51

During this 11-year period Essendon made the finals 10 times, played in 10 grand finals (one of which was a replay) and won four premierships. Under captain-coach Dick Reynolds, Essendon took fourth spot in **1941** and then beat Richmond and Carlton to qualify to meet Melbourne in the grand final. After kicking just one goal to Melbourne's six in the first quarter, Essendon went down by 29 points. It was a different story in **1942**, Essendon finishing on top and then beating Richmond by 53 points in the grand final, Gordon "Whopper" Lane kicking six goals. Essendon met Richmond again in the **1943** grand final but this time the Tigers prevailed by five points after Essendon had led at the final break. After finishing third in **1944**, Essendon lowered its colours to Richmond in the preliminary final, Jack Dyer kicking nine goals for the Tigers. Following a disappointing eighth position on the ladder in **1945**, the Bombers rebounded in **1946**, finishing on top. They then had to survive a draw and replay of the second semi-final against Collingwood before beating Melbourne in the grand final by 63 points. "Whopper" Lane was again the match winner, kicking seven goals. Having finished second in **1947**, the Bombers paid for their inaccuracy in two finals against Carlton. Posting 11.17 in losing the second semi-final to the Blues, they then beat Fitzroy in the preliminary final. In the grand final they kicked 11.19 to Carlton's 13.8 to go down by one point. After finishing three games clear on top of the ladder in **1948**, the Bombers threw away the grand final against Melbourne, kicking an extraordinary 7.27 in a drawn match. Melbourne then won the replay by 39 points. The great John Coleman began his career with the Bombers in **1949**, kicking his 100th goal in his team's 73-point victory over Carlton in that year's grand final. With Coleman posting 120 goals in **1950**, Essendon topped the ladder and then beat North Melbourne by 38 points in the grand final. The Bombers made the grand final again in **1951** but went down to Geelong by 11 points, Coleman having missed the finals through suspension.

RICHMOND 1967-1974

In this eight-year period the Tigers made the finals six times, played in five grand finals and won four premierships. After being absent from the VFL finals for 20 years, Richmond topped the ladder in **1967** and went on to win the premiership, defeating Geelong by nine points in the grand final. They finished fifth in **1968** and missed the finals but they were back in the September action in **1969**, coming from fourth place on the ladder to win another premiership. They defeated Geelong in the first semi-final, Collingwood in the preliminary final and Carlton in the grand final. Sixth place in **1970** was followed by a third placed finish in **1971**, the Tigers going down to St Kilda in the preliminary final. Carlton and Richmond were the standout teams in **1972**, the first year in which the final five system was used. After the Tigers defeated Collingwood in the qualifying final, they drew with the Blues in the second semi-final at Waverley Park. Richmond won the replay at the MCG. In a very high-scoring grand final, Carlton scored 28.9 (177) to defeat Richmond 22.18 (150). After finishing second on the ladder in **1973**, the Tigers were beaten by the third-placed Carlton in the qualifying final. They then defeated St Kilda in the first semi-final and Collingwood in the preliminary final to face Carlton again in the grand final. This time Richmond finished on top, winning by 30 points and claiming the premiership. In the **1974** grand final, Richmond faced North Melbourne, which was building a strong team under coach Ron Barassi. Nevertheless, the Tigers were too strong for the Kangaroos, claiming victory by 41 points.

DID YOU KNOW?

In 1924, the VFL decided to revert to a round robin finals series, a system which had been used just once before, in the competition's inaugural 1897 season. At the end of the regular season Essendon, South Melbourne, Richmond and Fitzroy played off for the flag. After the first two weeks, Essendon was undefeated, while Richmond had lost to Fitzroy. Although Richmond then beat Essendon by 20 points, the latter was awarded the premiership on percentage. Given this outcome, it is hardly surprising that the round robin finals system disappeared and has not been revived since.

THIS ROUND IN HISTORY - ROUND 18 AT THE MCG

The highest score at the MCG this Round is 25.19 (169) by Sydney against Melbourne 7.11 (53) in 1997. The overall Round 18 highest score is 30.21 (201) by Carlton against Footscray 10.12 (72) at Princes Park in 1982. The most goals by an individual is 10 by Harold Harker of Melbourne against Geelong in 1921. Melbourne kicked 16.19 (115) and won by 44 points. The overall Round 18 goalkicking record is 13 by John Coleman of Essendon against Hawthorn at Windy Hill in 1952. Essendon kicked 20.12 (132) and won by 55 points. The highest score in a quarter is 10.5 (65) by Sydney in the first quarter against Melbourne in 1997. The overall Round 18 highest score in a quarter is 11.6 (72) which has been scored twice. Carlton was the first to do so, in the second quarter against St. Kilda at Junction Oval in 1932. Carlton finished with 20.21 (141) to win by 87 points. Richmond equalled the record in the first quarter against Footscray at Waverley Park in 1980 when they booted 23.18 (156) to win by 115 points. The highest Round 18 attendance at the MCG was recorded at a night game on July 30, 1993, when 87,573 saw Essendon defeat Collingwood by 68 points.

STATISTICS FOR RICHMOND V ESSENDON

Richmond v Essendon by venue

| | Won by Richmond | Won by Essendon | Drawn |
|-------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------|
| Albert Park | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| East Melbourne CG | 8 | 4 | 0 |
| Junction Oval | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Marrara Oval | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| MCG | 39 | 35 | 1 |
| Perth Stadium | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Princes Park | 2 | 4 | 0 |
| Punt Road Oval | 22 | 26 | 1 |
| Waverley Park | 4 | 3 | 1 |
| Windy Hill | 20 | 35 | 1 |
| | 99 | 107 | 4 |

Most Goals in a Match (10 goals or more)

| | | | | | |
|----|--------------|------|-------|------|-----|
| 11 | Paul Salmon | Ess | Rd 19 | 1986 | Wav |
| 10 | Dick Harris | Rich | Rd 3 | 1944 | WH |
| 10 | John Coleman | Ess | Rd 18 | 1953 | PR |

Highest Score

| | | | | |
|----------|-------------|------|------|-----|
| Richmond | 25.22 (172) | Rd 3 | 1982 | MCG |
| Essendon | 25.20 (170) | Rd 2 | 1960 | PR |

Lowest Score

| | | | | |
|----------|-----------|------|------|------|
| Richmond | 3.11 (29) | Rd 2 | 1911 | PR |
| Essendon | 3.4 (22) | Rd 8 | 1918 | EMCG |

Greatest Winning Margin

| | | | | |
|----------|------------|-------|------|-----|
| Richmond | 74 points | Rd 21 | 1970 | MCG |
| Richmond | 74 points | Rd 18 | 1983 | WH |
| Essendon | 125 points | Rd 2 | 1960 | PR |

Last Time They Met - Round 11, 2025, MCG

| | Essendon | Richmond |
|--------------------|------------|-----------|
| Quarter time | 2.1 | 1.2 |
| Half time | 6.4 | 4.7 |
| Three-quarter time | 9.8 | 7.8 |
| Full time | 11.15 (81) | 8.10 (58) |

THEIR MOST RECENT FINALS CLASH

The Tigers and Bombers have not met in a finals game since 2001. That year, Essendon finished the home and away season of top of the ladder, while Richmond finished in fourth position. The teams then faced each other in the first qualifying final at the MCG in front of a crowd of 78,253. The Tigers were captained by Wayne Campbell and coached by Danny Frawley. The Bombers were captained by James Hird and coached by Kevin Sheedy. After Matthew Richardson put the first goal of the game on the board for Richmond, Essendon scored four unanswered goals during the remainder of the first quarter to lead by 19 points at the first break (4.5 to 1.4). Four more goals to Essendon put them up by 40 points with less than 10 minutes to play in the second quarter but a late goal to the Tigers reduced the margin to 34 points at half time (8.5 to 2.7). After both sides kicked two goals during the first half of the third quarter, two further goals by the Bombers increased their lead to 46 points at three-quarter time (12.8 to 4.10). Five goals to one in the final term gave Essendon a very comfortable 70-point victory – the final scores being **Essendon 17.11 (113) defeated Richmond 5.13 (43)**.

The best players for Essendon were Dustin Fletcher, Joe Misiti, Blake Caracella, Dean Solomon, Matthew Lloyd and Mark McVeigh. The best for Richmond were Steven Sziller, Matthew Rogers and Darren Gaspar. Matthew Lloyd kicked four goals for the Bombers and Matthew Richardson two for the Tigers. Richmond defeated Carlton by 11 points in the first semi final at the MCG but they were well beaten by Brisbane in the second preliminary final played at the Gabba. Having just got up by nine points over Hawthorn in the first preliminary final at the MCG, Essendon were beaten by the Brisbane Lions in the grand final.

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>

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