



# MELBOURNE CRICKET CLUB

## DREAMTIME AT THE 'G

### AFL 2023 ROUND 10 ESSENDON V RICHMOND

### LIBRARY FACT SHEET MAY 20, 2023

#### PASTOR DOUG, THE 1967 REFERENDUM, AND THE MCG

In 2023 Australians of voting age will head to the ballot boxes to cast a vote on changing the Australian constitution. It may be apt to reflect on an earlier constitutional change that occurred over half-a-century ago. On May 27, 1967, an overwhelming 90.77% of Australian electors voted "Yes" to alter the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Australia, and thereby, count Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the national census, and enable the Commonwealth Government to make laws for them (removing that from the sole responsibility of the states and territories). Contrary to public perception Aboriginal Australians already had the right to vote following the assent of the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1962* on May 21, 1962. However, this was preceded by a damning report released in 1961 that estimated that about 30,000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people had been denied the vote as a result of discriminatory legislation in the Northern Territory, Western Australia and Queensland.

Pastor Doug Nicholls, the former Fitzroy footballer and Victorian Aboriginal leader, was instrumental to the success of the campaign to eliminate discriminatory electoral practices in 1962, as well as being a leading proponent of the "Yes" campaign for the 1967 referendum. Active as a church leader and welfare worker in Fitzroy from 1932, while still a professional footballer, he had a keen sense of social justice, and as a Yorta Yorta man, he was profoundly aware of historical and contemporary injustices inflicted on Indigenous Australians at all levels of Australian society.

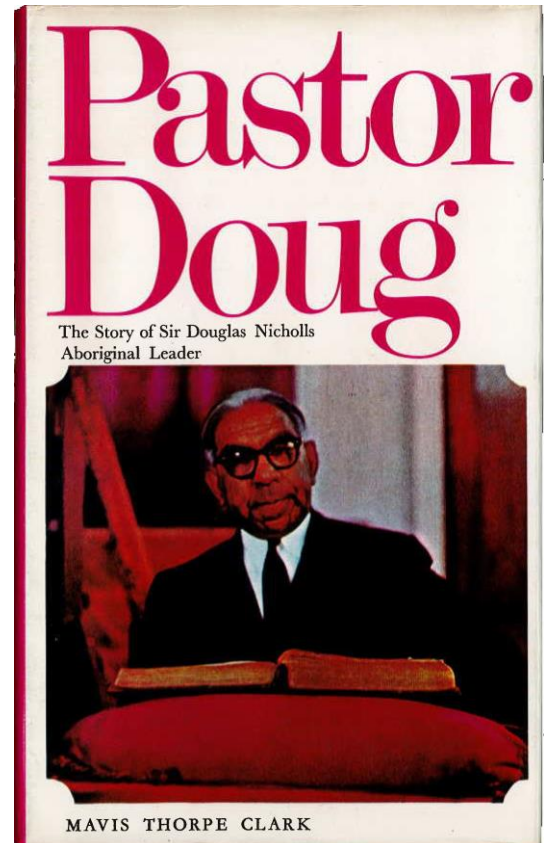
In 1962 Nicholls was named Victorian "Father of the Year". Pam Pederson, Doug's daughter, would recall in a May 26, 2007, *Age* article by Jo Chandler, that when she was, "a little girl" in the 1960s, "...at various times [she] accompanied 'the gentle pastor' on his campaign — at the card table he would set up outside the MCG to collect signatures from footy fans, or riding the bus to Canberra with petitions appealing for Aboriginal rights and recognition."

This use of the MCG's environs was not officially sanctioned by the MCC, the MCG Trust, or was a match day activation by a sporting body such as the VFL (now AFL). It seems to have been Nicholls' initiative alone. However, he was unopposed. It was the draw of the MCG on a match day that enabled Nicholls to engage with Melbourne's sporting public on a person to person level, and advance Indigenous causes, such as electoral rights and voting "Yes" in the 1967 referendum, to the wider population.

Nicholls was appointed MBE in 1957, and was promoted to OBE in 1968. He was knighted in 1972. On December 1, 1976, Sir Douglas was appointed Governor of South Australia, but his health deteriorated within weeks, making it difficult for him to perform his official duties. In March 1977 he hosted Queen Elizabeth II during her royal tour and was appointed KCVO. He relinquished his governorship on April 30, 1977, following a stroke. However, he remained engaged despite his ill health, and would die on June 4, 1988, at Mooroopna.

Sir Douglas Nicholls' biography by Mavis Thorpe Clark (pictured) is available to read in the MCC Library. Look in the General Sport section at 115.2 NICHOLLS.

The Jo Chandler's *Age* article may be viewed at: <https://www.theage.com.au/national/after-40-years-pastor-nicholls-magic-question-lingers-20070526-ge4zhe.html>



The following article, "The Human Side of Football" appeared in the *Sporting Globe* on Saturday June 1, and Wednesday June 5, 1935. The author, Doug Nicholls (1906-1988), played 54 League games for Fitzroy from 1932 to 1937 and represented Victoria in 1935. He had trained with Carlton prior to joining Fitzroy but was infamously ostracised by Blues' players because of his race. The 'Roys recruited Nicholls from VFA club Northcote, where he played on the wing from 1927 to 1931, and was a member of the "Brickfielders" 1929 premiership team. He returned to Northcote as non-playing coach in 1947. A committed community leader, Nicholls was integral to the organisation of Aboriginal football teams that played Northcote on the King's Birthday holiday in the 1940s and was the inaugural chair of the National Aboriginal Sports Foundation in 1969. He was also the manager of the All-Australian Aboriginal teams that played Papua New Guinea in 1973 and 1974 (when footy in Papua New Guinea was at its strongest). His Excellency Sir Doug Nicholls KCVO OBE, was knighted in 1972 and appointed Governor of South Australia in 1976.

## The Human Side of Football

By Doug Nicholls

*These impressions have been written especially for the Sporting Globe by Doug Nicholls, Fitzroy's aboriginal footballer-preacher. Last Saturday he played a plucky game on the wing for the Maroons. On Sunday evening he preached a sermon to a congregation of 500 people in a church at Brunswick. He views football through kindly, sparkling eyes.*

I LOVE football! I love every moment of it. To me, football is more than a mere game. It is not only a wonderful recreation, but an inspiration and a mental and physical tonic. How I look forward to each Saturday's play!

To me, the roar of the crowd is music. I revel in the tense atmosphere of the game and the preparations for it. So keen am I on football that I'd go anywhere for a game. I'd play in an open paddock if necessary, with a gumtree for a dressing-room and pavilion.

I get a tremendous kick out of football, because I know that my people in New South Wales follow my doings and play closely by the wireless and in the newspapers. This always spurs me on and gives me confidence.

My last-minute selection for the Victorian team to play at Perth and Adelaide is just a slice of luck. Still I'm very pleased about it. It's an honour to play for Victoria. I've never played for the State before, except in the combined Association team at Sydney [1931]. I've played for the Association against the League [1931] and for the League against the Association [1934].

Once on the football field, I forget everything else. I'm playing football. I never take my eyes off that ball. My aim is not only to beat my opponent but also to serve my side. I realise that in football, as in other things, it's team-work that tells.

### WHY GET PEEVED?

I believe in playing the game hard but fairly. If the other fellow beats me, good luck to him. What's the use of getting peeved about it? It only makes me redouble my efforts for the next duel. "Keep your head. Doug; keep cool!" That's my motto when things don't go quite right. The man who gets rattled is lost.

Although the roar of the crowd inspires me, I'm totally deaf to "advice" shouted at me by well-meaning supporters. "Mark it, Doug!" they sometimes yell. As though I wouldn't!

I've often heard of players trying to intimidate opponents. That's never been tried on me. Not that it would have any effect. As a boxer, I learned quite a lot about self-control and confidence in ticklish situations.

The atmosphere of the football training rooms always appeals strongly to me. There's such an air of good-fellowship and comradeship. I've made some great friends in my football career. As I work at the Fitzroy Cricket Ground, I'm in the true sporting atmosphere most of my time.

But away from the ground, I forget about football. I like to think of other things. I meet friends in the street or on the tram. Their first remark usually is about football; nearly always football, just as if there wasn't anything else much in life. If only they'd talk about something else!

I spend most of my evenings reading and attending young people's gatherings where mental uplift is the objective. I don't read fiction. I prefer something more solid – such as the works of C. H. Spurgeon or Wm. Casey. That kind of reading gladdens my heart. It doesn't make me too serious beyond my 27 years – not a bit of it. I'm as happy as the next man.

### "SAW THE LIGHT."

Three years ago I saw the light, as I visualised it, and began to study religion, under the tuition of Pastor W. W. Saunders, who has proved a wonderful friend to me. In a few months, I found joy in preaching sermons in various churches on Sundays. This I have continued to do. I get quite a thrill out of it. I feel I'm doing good. It gives me a definite goal in life. To my mind it's better for me than "knocking about".

In my young days, I trained and practised to become an athlete at my native home at Cummeragunja (NSW). I took to running and football at once. In 1926 I came to Melbourne to run, because my brother was a runner here. Success was elusive for a while. It took me three years to win a decent race. That was the Nyah Gift, worth £130. Later I won the Warracknabeal Gift, worth £130 and a £25 trophy.

But the football urge was strong within me. I began playing with Northcote in 1927. I played with them for five happy years before I transferred to Fitzroy. I've had a glorious time with the Maroons ever since. You couldn't wish to be in a grander team.

### BOXING FOR A LIVING.

I did not take on pugilism out of any love for it. But in 1931 I suddenly found myself out of a job. A fellow had to do something. I joined Jimmy Sharman's boxing troupe. We toured Victoria and New South Wales. I didn't know too much about fighting when I took it on; but self-preservation is a great and rapid teacher. I soon picked up enough points to save me from hidings. On top of that, I'm said to be pretty nimble on my feet!

But now – good-bye to all that. I've settled down on the Fitzroy ground staff. Both cricket and football officials at Fitzroy have treated me handsomely. They opened up a new opportunity in life for me.

## DREAMTIME AT THE 'G

This annual fixture between Essendon and Richmond acknowledges and celebrates the role of indigenous Australians in football. The combined colours of Richmond (yellow and black) and Essendon (red and black) coincidentally match the Aboriginal flag (red, yellow and black) and are seen to add symbolism to the event. The Dreamtime at the 'G was first held on a Saturday afternoon in July 2005 as a part of National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) Week events but has been played at night since 2006. That year the Yiooken Award (pronounced yie-yoo-ken) was inaugurated and presented to the player judged best on ground. Yiooken means "dreaming" in the Woi wurrung language of the Wurundjeri people.

From 2007 the AFL has promoted an Indigenous Round which incorporated the Dreamtime at the 'G match. In 2016 the round was renamed the Sir Doug Nicholls Round. Since 2006 the Dreamtime match has been associated with former Essendon champion Michael Long's The Long Walk Trust, a charity inspired by Long's walk from Melbourne to Canberra in 2004 that raised awareness of social issues affecting indigenous Australians.

			Home Team		Away Team		Crowd	Yiooken Award
2005	July 9	Rd 15	Richmond	14. 8 (92)	Essendon	9.12 (66)	49,975	-
2006	May 6	Rd 6	Essendon	13.17 (95)	Richmond	13.19 (97)	58,439	Dean Polo (Rich)
2007	May 26	Rd 9	Richmond	12.12 (84)	Essendon	12.20 (92)	61,837	James Hird (Ess)
2008	May 24	Rd 9	Essendon	10.12 (72)	Richmond	16.14 (110)	60,333	Nathan Foley (Rich)
2009	May 23	Rd 9	Richmond	12.13 (85)	Essendon	19.11 (125)	73,625	Jason Winderlich (Ess)
2010	May 22	Rd 9	Essendon	19.16 (130)	Richmond	14.11 (95)	64,709	David Hille (Ess)
2011	May 21	Rd 9	Richmond	16.9 (105)	Essendon	13.11 (89)	83,563	Trent Cotchin (Rich)
2012	May 19	Rd 8	Essendon	19.14 (128)	Richmond	15.19 (109)	80,900	Brett Deledio (Rich)
2013	May 25	Rd 9	Richmond	9.8 (62)	Essendon	13.13 (91)	84,234	Jobe Watson (Ess)
2014	May 31	Rd 11	Essendon	15.14 (104)	Richmond	7.12 (54)	74,664	Brendon Goddard (Ess)
2015	May 30	Rd 9	Richmond	10.12 (72)	Essendon	8.11 (59)	83,804	Brandon Ellis (Rich)
2016	May 28	Rd 10	Essendon	10.7 (67)	Richmond	16.9 (105)	56,948	Dustin Martin (Rich)
2017	May 27	Rd 10	Richmond	11.15 (81)	Essendon	10.6 (66)	85,656	Dustin Martin (Rich)
2018	June 2	Rd 11	Essendon	6.7 (43)	Richmond	17.12 (114)	81,046	Shane Edwards (Rich)
2019	May 25	Rd 10	Richmond	10.13 (73)	Essendon	6.14 (50)	80,176	Bachar Houli (Rich)
2022	May 21	Rd 10	Richmond	11.14 (80)	Essendon	7.6 (48)	70,226	Dion Prestia (Rich)

## DREAMTIME NOT AT THE 'G

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2020 and 2021 Dreamtime matches could not be staged in Melbourne. Therefore, the Round 10 match between Richmond and Essendon that was to be played at the MCG on May 23, 2020, was delayed to August 22 for the Round 13 Doug Nicholls Round, and moved to Darwin's Marrara Oval. The evening was also commercially branded "Dreamtime in Darwin". The June 5, 2021, match between the clubs in Round 12 was also relocated, this time to Perth Stadium and dubbed "Dreamtime in the West" or "Dreamtime in Perth". Both were trumpeted as televisual and ceremonial successes despite their modest attendances. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the last time a league match drew less than 5,500 to the MCG, as Marrara Oval had, was when 5,084 saw Melbourne play North Melbourne in Round 18, 1935. While Perth Stadium's capacity was unrestricted for its Dreamtime match, it drew a smaller crowd than all but the inaugural Dreamtime at the 'G.

			Home Team		Away Team		Venue	Crowd	Yiooken Award
2020	Aug 22	Rd 13	Essendon	10.1 (61)	Richmond	10.13 (73)	Marrara	5,401	Shai Bolton (Rich)
2021	June 5	Rd 12	Essendon	12.12 (84)	Richmond	19.9 (123)	Perth Stad.	55,656	Darcy Parish (Ess)

## THE KEVIN SHEEDY TROPHY

Inaugurated in 1998, the Kevin Sheedy Trophy, a crystal vase, is for perpetual competition between Essendon and Richmond. It was established "...in recognition of Kevin's service for both clubs." Sheedy was a three-time Richmond premiership player and four-time Essendon premiership coach, who has championed Indigenous footballers at all levels and was largely responsible for the Dreamtime at the 'G concept. The trophy was retired in 2013 but in 2014 it was revived for the games between the sides other than the Dreamtime at the 'G match.

The MCC Library acknowledges the Wurundjeri people as the Traditional Owners on whose Country we are situated. We recognise and respect the cultural heritage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and pay our respect to their Elders past, present and emerging. We extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who access the MCC Library and its publications.

## This Round in History – Round 10 on the MCG

The highest score for this round at the MCG is 27.11 (173) by Collingwood against West Coast 10.13 (73) in 2008. The overall Round 10 record is 31.10 (196) by St Kilda against Carlton at Docklands in 2004. The biggest winning margin at the MCG in Round 10 is 116 points by Carlton 25.15 (165) against Melbourne 6.13 (49) in 1986. The overall Round 10 record is 138 points by Adelaide 30.8 (188) against Essendon 6.14 (50) at Football Park in 2006. The most goals on the MCG in this round is 10 by Tony Modra for Fremantle against Melbourne in 1999. The overall Round 10 record is 12 by Tony Lockett for St Kilda against Brisbane at Moorabbin in 1992. The biggest attendance for a home-and-away match of 99,256 was in Round 10, 1958 at the MCG. Played on the Queen's Birthday holiday, Melbourne 12.12 (84) defeated Collingwood 10.13 (73).

### Statistics for Essendon v Richmond

#### Essendon v Richmond by venue

	Won by Essendon	Won by Richmond	Drawn
Albert Park	0	1	0
East Melbourne	4	8	0
Junction Oval	0	1	0
Marrara Oval	0	1	0
MCG	32	39	1
Perth Stadium	0	1	0
Princes Park	4	2	0
Punt Road	26	22	1
Waverley	3	4	1
Windy Hill	35	20	1
	104	99	4

#### Highest Score

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

#### Lowest Score

Essendon	3.4 (22)	Rd 8	1918	EM
Richmond	3.11 (29)	Rd 2	1911	PR

#### Greatest Winning Margin

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

#### Last Time They Met – Round 23, 2022, MCG

	Richmond	Essendon
Quarter time	6.3	3.2
Half time	10.7	7.6
Three-quarter time	16.10	9.8
Full time	21.15 (141)	11.9 (75)

#### Most Goals in a Match

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

### “THE BATTLE OF WINDY HILL”

One of the most controversial incidents in the history of the game occurred in the match between these two clubs at Windy Hill on May 18, 1974. The spark for the ensuing all-in brawl came seconds before half time when Richmond's Mal Brown became involved in a scuffle with Graeme Jenkin. Once the two were separated, the teams headed for their rooms, but then Laurie Ashley, the Essendon runner, confronted Mal Brown and, for his trouble, received a punch to the jaw which left him unconscious. Mayhem ensued as players, officials, spectators and police entered the fray.

Three Essendon officials and three players, Essendon's Ron Andrews and Richmond's Mal Brown and Steven Parsons, were suspended in the aftermath of the brawl, while the Tigers' team manager, Graeme Richmond, was fined \$2000. The matter did not end there, with Parsons and Richmond initially being charged by police, but eventually the charges were dropped. Not surprisingly the atmosphere was highly charged once the game resumed, but Kevin Sheedy, Ian Stewart, and Paul Sproule played fine second halves for the Tigers, keeping their heads while others lost theirs. Eventually Richmond won the game 16.19 (115) to 15.15 (105).



### FACT SHEETS ON THE MCC WEBSITE

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

Fact sheets are prepared by MCC Library volunteers David Allen, Eric Panther, Quentin Miller, Dennis Carroll, Ian Wilkinson, and Gaye Fitzpatrick with MCC deputy librarian – research Trevor Ruddell and the assistance of Col Hutchinson of the AFL