MCC Library Fact Sheet
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AFL 2026 Round 6
Melbourne v Brisbane

Played with Both Clubs

Darryl Cox was the first man to represent Melbourne and the Brisbane Bears. His nickname was "Mad Dog". Cox was a defender who started his VFL career with Fitzroy in 1980 and was with them until 1983, where he played 16 games with eight goals. His second club was Melbourne between 1984 and 1986 in 13 games and seven goals. He finished his career with the Brisbane Bears and played his only game there against Geelong in Round 2, 1987. His daughter, Montana Cox, is an Australian fashion model and his son, Nikolas Cox, plays football for Essendon

Mark Withers, whose nickname was "Bobby", joined Melbourne from North Launceston (NTFA) playing with the Demons from 1984 to 1986 in 32 games with 28 goals. He was a small player at 5ft9in (175cm) and weighed 161lb (73kg). He joined Brisbane Bears for their inaugural season, playing with the club from 1987 to 1990 where he registered 36 games and booted 29 goals. He won the Brisbane Bears Best and Fairest award in 1988 and was their top disposal getter that year.

Martin Pike was originally from Norwood (SANFL) and played with four AFL clubs. He was tall at 6ft2in (189cm) and weighed 203lb (92kgs). His first AFL club was Melbourne in 1993 to 1994 where he registered 24 games and kicked 25 goals. He then moved to Fitzroy where he played in 1995 and 1996 in 36 games with 15 goals. He won Fitzroy's 1996 best and fairest award after playing all 22 games in that season. He was not offered a move to the Brisbane Bears and joined North Melbourne from 1997 to 2000, where he played 81 games with 19 goals. At North Melbourne Pike was a member of the 1999 premiership side. His fourth club was the Brisbane Lions where from 2001 to 2005 he played 106 games with 67 goals. He was a reformed character at the Lions and played in their 2001, 2002 and 2003 premiership victories.

A Man Who Coached Both Clubs

John Northey had the nickname "Swooper" and came from Derrinallum. He was a half-forward flanker at 5ft 9in (175cm) and weighed 152lbs (69kgs). He played with Richmond from 1963 to 1970 in 118 games with 192 goals. He was a member of Richmond's 1967 and 1969 premiership teams. His early coaching was as a player-coach at Western Suburbs in the Sydney Football League and Redan where he coached the team to five premierships in the Ballarat Football League between 1975 and 1980. He was an assistant coach with St Kilda under Mike Patterson. His first senior AFL coaching role was with the Sydney Swans in 1985 in 22 games, but he was replaced by Tom Hafey. His next senior coaching role was at Melbourne from 1986 to 1992, In 1987 he led Melbourne to their first finals series since 1964 and took the Demons to the 1988 grand final where they lost to Hawthorn. He coached 167 games at the Demons.

He coached Richmond from 1993 to 1995 in 67 games. In his final season with the Tigers he took Richmond to third. It was the first finals campaign for the Tigers since 1982, but they were eliminated by Geelong in the preliminary final. In 1996 Northey was replaced by Robert Walls at Richmond, while he coincidently replaced Walls at the Brisbane Bears. He took the club to the preliminary final. In 1997 and 1998 he coached Brisbane Lions. In 1997 he took the club to the finals where they were eliminated in the qualifying final. In 1998 he was less successful. At Brisbane he coached 59 games. Over his career he coached 315 VFL/AFL games and is unlucky to have not secured a premiership. His post-AFL career involved a return stint at Redan (BFL) and South Fremantle (WAFL). He returned to Ballarat to coach the Ballarat Swans from 2005 and to a premiership in 2008. He then coached Learmonth Football Club. He is a member of Richmond's Hall of Fame.

Two Memorable Games Between Melbourne and Brisbane

- In Round 22, 1995, before an attendance of 11,842 at the Gabba on Friday September 1, Brisbane Bears 16.14 (110) defeated Melbourne 13.11 (89). Needing a win to play in the finals, the Demons failed to overcome the Bears. This match saw Shaun Smith (Melbourne) climb high to take what many considered a contender for mark of the century.
- In Round 18, 2023, a crowd of 38,030 witnessed a close game between the clubs at the MCG on July 14. The match had a very close finish, with Melbourne 16.9 (105) defeating the Brisbane Lions by the narrowest margin, 16.8 (104). The best goal scorers for the Demons were Christian Petracca with four goals two behinds and Kysaiah Pickett who kicked three goals. The best goal scorer for the Brisbane Lions was Jack Gunston with three.

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 Brisbane Bears/Lions

Melbourne v Brisbane Bears/Lions by Venue

	Won By Melbourne	Won By Brisbane	Drawn
Adelaide Oval	1	0	0
Carrara	2	3	0
Docklands Stadium	1	1	0
Gabba	7	16	0
MCG	16	5	0
Marrara Oval	0	1	0
Syd. Showgrounds	1	0	0
Waverley Park	1	0	0
	31	26	0

Highest Score

Melbourne	22.21 (153)	Rd 18	1987	MCG
Bris. Lions	25.16 (166)	Rd 14	2005	Gabba

Lowest Score

Melbourne	6.10 (46)	Rd 12	1996	Gabba
Bris. Bears	4.6 (30)	Rd 5	1994	MCG

Greatest Winning Margin

Melbourne	95 points	Rd 18	1998	MCG
Bris. Lions	85 points	Rd 12	1997	MCG

Last Time They Met – Round 10, 2025, Gabba

	Brisbane	Melbourne
Quarter time	6.3	3.4
Half time	8.7	6.6
Three-quarter time	12.9	10.7
Full time	13.10 (88)	14.15 (99)

Melbourne's First Grand Final

Melbourne has won 13 VFL/AFL Grand Finals. Melbourne's first Grand Final was in 1900, when they defeated Fitzroy at the East Melbourne Cricket Ground by four points. The final scores were Melbourne 4.10 (34) to Fitzroy 3.12 (30).

Statistics for Melbourne v Fitzroy (1897-1996)

Melbourne v Fitzroy by Venue

	Won by Melbourne	Won by Fitzroy	Drawn
Brunswick Street	23	38	1
East Melbourne	1	0	0
Junction Oval	5	5	0
MCG	45	30	2
North Hobart Oval	0	1	0
Princes Park	4	5	0
Punt Road Oval	2	4	0
Victoria Park	0	1	0
Waverley Park	5	4	0
Western Oval	3	0	0
	88	88	3

Highest Score

Melbourne	27.18 (180)	Rd 2	1991	PP
Fitzroy	36.22 (238)	Rd 17	1979	Wav

Lowest Score

Melbourne	0.2 (2)	Rd 16	1899	Bruns
Fitzroy	2.11 (23)	Rd 14	1901	MCG

Greatest Winning Margin

Melbourne	131 points	Rd 2	1991	PP
Fitzroy	190 points	Rd 17	1979	Wav

Most Goals in a Match (10 goals or more)

12	B. Merrick	Fitz	Rd 16	1919	Bruns
11	R. Osborne	Fitz	Rd 18	1989	PP

Fact sheets are prepared by MCC Library Volunteers David Allen, Eric Panther, Quentin Miller, Dennis Carroll, Ian Wilkinson, Gerry Verstoep, Gaye Fitzpatrick, and Edward Cohen, with MCC Deputy Librarian Trevor Ruddell and the assistance of Col Hutchinson of the AFL