



PAST & PRESENT PLAYERS' & OFFICIALS' ASSOCIATION

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# MEMBER NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2023 EDITION

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

- ROD GRINTER



Welcome to our second newsletter for Season 2023.

This season has started nothing like the experts predicted, with the reigning premiers without a win and on the bottom of the ladder and the Saints winning their first three and sitting on top of the ladder. Our boys hit the ground running in Round One with a very strong win over the Dogs, a slip up in Round Two vs the Lions and then impressive wins against the Swans and Eagles. It is shaping up as a very exciting year

ahead for our team and supporters.

For those who attended our first Family and Friends match day function for the season, we all enjoyed a room with an upbeat atmosphere at the best stadium in the world - the MCG. We hosted over fifty Swans' past players, family and friends, along with over 100 Demons. With the Swans winning eight of our last nine games, it was nice to be able to get one back. Thanks to our own David Schwarz for interviewing former Swans and Demons player, Stewart Gull, which proved to be both informative and entertaining. Thanks, Ox and Gully!

For me, it's always great seeing MFC past players attend our match day functions, and at this most recent event we had around thirty in the room. One who has reconnected with the Association after 30-plus years is Glenn McLean, along with another after ten years in James Magner, there with his two young kids. I'm sure they enjoyed the experience, as I know we enjoyed

seeing them in the room, and look forward to seeing more and more past players get along.

A reminder that our next Family and Friends match day function will be held in the same room - Harrison Room A, Level 2, Ponsford Stand. This will be Round Seven vs North Melbourne, Saturday 29 April, at 7.25 pm. Keep an eye out for the invitation flyer that will be emailed around a week and a half before this match (and may overlap with this edition of the newsletter).

To finish, I wanted to encourage all Association members, family and friends to become MFC members, as we are chasing an MFC record target of 70,000 members after 2022's record of 66,484 members. Get on board the Dee Train by contacting the MFC Membership Department on 1300 336 667 or [membership.melbournefc.com.au](http://membership.melbournefc.com.au)

**Go Dees!**

**Rod Grinter  
President  
MFC P&PP&OA**





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## REV'S ROAMINGS



The 'Rev' Paul Burnham has continued his amazing support of our members and their families over the past few months – a reassuring call from him is something many of us have experienced, and on behalf of the MFC P&PP&O Association broader 'family', we again publicly acknowledge and thank him. As has previously been reported, Rev contacted 84 members and family connections during December and January. He has since added to that tally by reaching out to another 60 contacts in February, and 58 in March.

Rev's support and involvement in the lives of so many people continues to be a tremendous feature of our Association. He is a constant thread in the lives of many across the P&PP&OA landscape, from past players through to former support staff members and officials. Should you require his assistance in any relevant matter, please contact anyone from the committee, and we will arrange for him to connect with you as soon as possible.

## AFL SEASON 2023 AN AMAZING MELBOURNE MONTH

**W**ith a special record set during the first four rounds of Season 2023, our roving reporter (committee member Mark Jenkins) reviewed the games, the achievements and the challenges along the way.

After four rounds, our Demons were 3 and 1, following a solid win against the Western Bulldogs in the first round (by 50 points), against Sydney (Round 3, by 50 points) and more recently over West Coast (in Round 4 by doubling WC's score to win by 63 points!). Our only loss to date was by 11 points to the Brisbane Lions in Queensland - sometimes played with the lights on!!

All wins in the first month of the game were by 50 points or more, which is a first ever for the club, and a special achievement for the entire team.



Handing down tradition - Travis Johnstone presents Bailey Laurie with the No. 16 guernsey

Round 1 saw the Demons at the MCG for the first time in 2023, and, after a couple of good performances in the pre-season, expectations were high. Following a tight first half, the Demons exerted their control on our home ground, and ran out easy 50 point winners.

First Game with MFC: Brodie Grundy and Lachie Hunter

First AFL Game: Judd McVee, Bailey Laurie



From one No. 41 to another - Nathan Brown welcomes Judd McVee to his first senior game

Round 2 was played between the Demons and Brisbane Lions in sunny Queensland. Unfortunately, all the sun in the world couldn't help the game's progress when during the lights went out early in the fourth quarter. At that time, the Lions were 40 points up and didn't look to be pressured. But, in a turnaround of fortunes after the game was resumed (following the restoration of power!), it was the Demons who came out to play, and by the time the final siren sounded, had reduced the margin to just 11 points.

As a sad footnote to this game, our captain and the AFL's most dominant ruckman - Max Gawn - was struck down with a knee injury. While a scan would later show it was a strained MCL rather than the dreaded ACL, the unfortunate news was that Max will still miss the next 6 to 8 weeks.

Milestone: Harrison Petty – 50 Games

Round 3 saw the Demons return to the MCG to play the Sydney Swans. Balancing on one win and a loss, it was an ideal opportunity for the team to regain momentum and revisit the winners' list. After a tough tussle over the first three quarters, the Demons got into a winning rhythm and glided to a 50-point win. Newcomer Jacob van Rooyen impressed with three goals on debut.

Milestone: Clayton Oliver – 150 Games  
 First AFL game: Jacob van Rooyen



Clayton Oliver - sharing the love for 150 games

Round 4 required the Demons to board a plane and travel due west, returning to Optus Stadium - the scene of our 2021 premiership triumph. The Perth weather turned on moderate conditions for the contest and during the first half, both teams treated spectators to a relatively close battle.

Thankfully, after the main break our boys switched their performance up a gear, and broke away to finish the term 49 points up. The third quarter run by the Demons has become a real highlight of their playing style, and is something that supporters look forward to with a great sense of anticipation.

An equally dominant last quarter saw the Demons run out winners by 63 points, doubling West Coast's score. For those supporters who made the journey from the east coast to cheer



on the team next to their Perth based colleagues, their commitment to the club was duly rewarded!

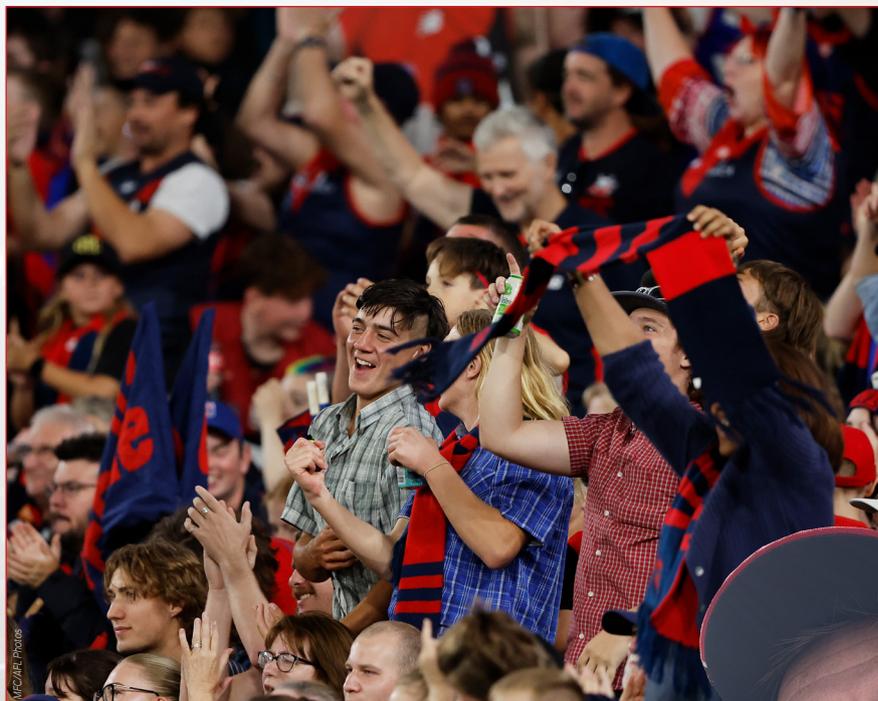
Milestones - There were no individual milestones to celebrate in this round.



One of the early highlights of Season 2023 - Brian Wilson is reunited with his missing Brownlow Medal



New colours, great heritage - Frank Davis presents Brodie Grundy with his first MFC guernsey



Celebrations - a big part of the first month for Melbourne supporters in Season 2023

**Thank you to Mark for his contribution, not only through putting together the report above, but also for helping to compile this entire edition of the newsletter while your regular writer/ editor has been on the Long Term Injury List.**





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## DEMONS EVERYWHERE

From veterans and legends of yesteryear to a new arrival; the MFC presence can be found in many places.

The quarterly lunch held by legends of the club at the Matthew Flinders Hotel is a perennial success – here you can see the likes of Ron Barassi, Clyde Laidlaw, John Beckwith, Bryan Kenneally, Hassa Mann, Stan Alves, Barry Bourke and Frank Davis sharing some quality time, in what has become a wonderful tradition over the years.

Meanwhile, while young Hamish is just starting out in life, we think that he is already a lovely Little Demon. Hamish is the first grandson for Gary Marchant, well known to many as a Life Member, volunteer coordinator and past statistician. We are sure that Gary is looking forward to sharing his love of the Demons in seasons to come, and pass on our congratulations on the birth of Hamish!



## BENEVOLENT FUND

As noted previously, the MFC P&PP&OA benefits immeasurably from the support given so generously by Association members and those involved with the wider football community. All donations help us to conduct our events and activities, and well as assisting with providing member support. We welcome donations throughout the year to our Benevolent Fund, as we keep

working to build both camaraderie and care.

To make a contribution at any time, our Association's details are:

**Account name:**  
**MFC Past & Present Players & Officials Association**

**BSB: 063 204**

**A/C: 1008 8589**

**Please use your name as the reference.**

**We acknowledge our early donors in 2023; thank you for adding your names to the list:**

- Western Demons**
- Colin Barnes**
- Don Baron**
- Chris Connolly**
- Eric Dick**
- Spike Harris**
- Brian Marks**
- Shaun Perry**
- Michael Thomas**
- Deluxe Print**

## COTERIE

The season is now well underway, having been kicked off in style by the 2023 Melbourne Football Club Season Launch, which was a huge success for the Club. This Coterie presented event had some 450 people in attendance, all of whom enjoyed a rare opportunity to have all players and coaches together and mixing with Coterie members, past players, and fans, just weeks out from the season. It was a relaxing, entertaining, and informative night, and something that Coterie is honoured to be able to bring to the Club.



Brad Green and David Hassett, recently recognised with honorary membership of Coterie

The evening was made even more special with long time Coterie member David Hassett becoming an honorary member of Coterie. Many of you would know David and

understand this recognition through the years of service he has given to Coterie, past players, and the Melbourne Football Club.

**Round 1** - There was excitement and nervousness in the room as we all got back to the footy for Round One, and we were very grateful for Jack Viney dropping in to give an insight of how the playing group was preparing before taking the field. We welcomed club sponsor Penfolds to the match day raffle, and couldn't have asked for a better pairing, with the great Ron Barassi taking home a fine drop of red. Even though Les Twentyman from the Westerners Coterie may also have taken out a prize in the raffle, we know it will go to a good cause, and giving the Doggies a belting was much more enjoyable.

**Round 3** - Against the Swans, we had our Player Parents enjoying the game as guests of Coterie and we were treated to a unique and entertaining insight regarding player support, management and welfare delivered by a number of guest speakers. It was also enjoyable having the P&PP&OA function next door, with Coterie members and past players crossing paths with old acquaintances throughout the day.

### Upcoming Events:

**ANZAC Eve - Round 6** against Richmond is looking to be one of our biggest match day functions of

the year; one that holds a special connection for Coterie dating back to World War II when the Melbourne Football Club suffered tragic losses, which led to Coterie members coming together and offering support to the families of players who did not return.

**Round 7** The following week, when we take on North Melbourne, we recognise our Women in Football. This day is getting bigger each year, as we celebrate the contribution made to our great game by the wonderful women in our lives and the community.

**Round 11** is Sir Doug Nicholls Round against the Dockers, and Coterie will be celebrating the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and contribution to our game. This should be a great day both on and off the field, with the likes of Steven May and Kosi Pickett rising to another level for this round every year, and I'm sure the boys will be up and about to welcome Luke Jackson back to the 'G.

If you aren't at a P&PP&OA function on game day, you are always welcome at the Coterie match day function. Feel free to reach out to [mfccoterie@gmail.com](mailto:mfccoterie@gmail.com) for match day function details, or contact John Crisara [john.crisara@melbournefc.com.au](mailto:john.crisara@melbournefc.com.au) for more information on the Coterie 3 game past players membership package.

## VALE ALISON SIMON

Alison Simon – the Association was saddened to hear of the recent passing of Alison Simon, wife of lifelong MFC supporter George and mother to Matthew, Andrew, Kim and Bec. A familiar figure at many MFC events, and a committed supporter over many years,

Alison's contribution and support will be missed by supporters and staff alike.

The Association would also like to take the opportunity to recognise the wonderful contribution George Simon has made to the MFC over many years. George is the longest serving member of Coterie, and has personally contributed to club and

player initiatives for over 45 years.



We thank all members of the Simon family for being a treasured part of the Melbourne Football Club – particularly through Coterie – for so many years, and we are all thinking of George, Matthew, Andrew, Kim, Bec and their families at this challenging time.



## ANZAC EVE

When you look up into the night skies above the MCG on Anzac Eve, take a moment to be part of a very special anniversary, linking all of us way back beyond 2023 and the everyday.

This year, the Melbourne Football Club is particularly honouring Keith 'Bluey' Truscott, marking the eightieth anniversary of his death. An air ace who flew in the Battle of Britain, he truly was one of 'the few'. He was also one of ours: 50 games, a dual premiership player in his No. 5, a former Melbourne High boy.

'Bluey' returned to play one last game in 1942, and turned 26 before heading to Western Australia, where he continued defending home skies. He was something special, was our 'Bluey',



in more ways than his Distinguished Flying Cross (and bar) and Mentioned In Despatches honours indicate. It was unfathomable that, less than a year later

– 28 March 1943 – we lost him, killed as he flew into the sea while on a training run over Exmouth Gulf.

But, in the sad and sorrowful months that followed, the Truscott legacy was firmly embedded in the story of the Melbourne Football Club; not only for deeds done and achievements beyond belief, but for the future. 'Checker' Hughes, who loved 'Bluey' for his larger than life personality, established that the club's Best and Fairest should be named in his honour. It has been that way for all the seasons since, and is a reminder of a player, a person and a pilot.

So, when you hear his name on Anzac Eve, when you see the team running out onto the ground, and when the lights shine brightly after dark and remembering silence, think of 'Bluey', long gone, but never forgotten.

## KEEPING IN TOUCH



While we have a couple of stories worthy of a detective novel to share with you in an upcoming edition of the newsletter (starring Kelvin Clarke and Earl Spalding in particular), we would also like to remind you that it's not just the extremely lost that we're pleased to hear about. If you have changed your contact details, or if you know of someone else who might have done so, please don't hesitate to update us – spike.w.harris@gmail.com or 0411 235 073

Through such updating, we were able to retain contact with the following past players over the past two months:

• **Darren Bennett – 78 Games, 215 Goals**

• **Shane Woewodin – 200 Games, 94 Goals**

• **Darren Cuthbertson – 32 Games, 43 Goals**

By building and constantly updating the details of members in our database, the Association can keep in touch and ensure that members have access to everything from functions to welfare support. We appreciate everyone's help in continuing to keep the contacts flourishing.

CONNECTION \* TOGETHERNESS \* BENEVOLENCE \* CAMARADERIE

