

A day to remember

Melbourne versus Collingwood

3.20pm, Monday 8 June
Melbourne Cricket Ground

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Queen's Birthday for a Year 11 like me isn't as much of a holiday as it was a couple of years ago. This whole weekend being sucked in by the upcoming VCE exams doesn't give me the chance to full on soak up the long weekend. However, after a big weekend of hitting the books. I have always made the promise that Monday afternoon I can watch the Mighty Pies in action. The clock hit 1pm, the books went away and I was ready for a huge clash at the 'G.

For the second year running I will miss being able to go to the game due to my study commitments. Which is a real low-light considering I have now missed most games this season. Anyways, going to watch the footy at my Yia Yia and Pa Pou's is always the highlight of my weekend as the black and white passion oozes through three generations of us fanatical Pie fans. We never used to miss a game in Melbourne but now things have changed unfortunately, limiting the amount of games which we attend

After last weekend's inspiring come-from-behind win against the Roos. The confidence was high in the Collingwood camp. With the added inspiration of Neale Daniher's campaign against Motor Neurone Disease, both Collingwood and Melbourne were added with extra fuel to perform. Melbourne, even though they sit 3-6 had been showing glimpses of a side who could really trouble sides in the AFL this year. This was evident in beating Richmond and the Bulldogs in a show of tough, tenacious, pressure footy.

We arrive just in time for the first bounce and the Pies are on the offense early. Travis Cloke started like a house on fire. One goal, becomes two and soon enough he had four to his name. Four goals in the first quarter? Boy oh boy wow-wee am I dreaming? Minutes later, Paul Seedsman puts the Pies up by thirty points. Today might just be our day. Second quarter starts, Nathan Jones kicks a quick goal to get the ball rolling. The avalanche is just beginning. Brayshaw slams one home, Jones kicks another and Garlett makes a mockery of Alan Toovey twice. Melbourne are up by five. Collingwood needed some energy back into their game. Their defence was under serious strain from the repeat inside-fifties, eased by the calmness of Adam Oxley. Enter Jamie Elliott. Two quick goals from Elliott before half-time including a real pulled-his-pants-down moment when he took on Lumumba and put the Pies up by eight to the delight of the Pie fans. Just before half-time, the birthday boy Fasolo put the Pies up by fourteen with a beautiful goal from just inside 50 to give the Pies some breathing space going into half time. After a very unbelievably tense half, I feasted on some dried apricots to ease the nerves.

Second half begins. Blair kicks a big goal before Cloke slams home his fifth from the impossible angle to put the Pies up by 25. I look at my brother and say "we have them now". Well, boy was I wrong. Once again, Melbourne slammed home four goals to tie the game with one coming from Jack Watts. I realised that Oxley was no-where to be seen as the loose man and that infuriated me further. Oxley was the reason we were back in front Bucks come on! Looked like he listened

to me as minutes later I saw Oxley take another intercept mark as the loose man in defence. Moments after Bernie Vince tied the game at 82 apiece. Jarryd Blair kicks a massive sausage to put the pies back ahead before Cloke gets some much deserved help from the umps to slam home his sixth. Pies up by 12 going into the final quarter.

Tenseness around the living room as the final stanza begins. Broomhead, Kennedy and Swan all miss opportunities to put us up by three goals. Tension rises. Finally, Mr Elliott pops up and slams home a massive goal to put us up by 21. Surely it is all over. Hang on a minute. Cloke has gone up for a mark. It goes to ground. He roves it. Snap. GOAL! Cloke has 7.0! Is this actually happening?! The Dees have ran out of legs and the Pies once again feed on the carcass. Final siren sounds and the Pies win by 25 to further their win-loss record to 7-3. Yes, I'm happy. It's another win. We are fourth. However with the Giants, Dockers, Hawks, Power and Eagles waiting. Tense times to come for the Magpies.

Melbourne 3.1 9.1 13.4 13.7 (85)

Collingwood 7.1 11.3 15.4 17.8 (110)

GOALS Collingwood: Cloke 7; Elliott, Blair 3; Swan, Seedsman, Broomhead, Fasolo.

Melbourne: Howe 3; N. Jones, Garlett, Vince 2; Hogan, Brayshaw, Fitzpatrick, Watts.

BEST Collingwood: Cloke, Oxley, Pendlebury, Swan, Langdon, Crisp.

Melbourne: N Jones, Vince, Howe, Brayshaw, Viney, Cross, Dunn.

UMPIRES Stevic, Kamolins, Pannell. CROWD 66,120

OUR VOTES Cloke (Coll.) 3, Oxley (Coll.) 2, N Jones (M) 1.

BROWNLOW Cloke (Coll.) 3, Vince (M) 2, N Jones (M) 1