



MELBOURNE CRICKET CLUB



Managing a World Class Stadium

Melbourne Cricket Ground: www.mcg.org.au

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THE MELBOURNE CRICKET GROUND (MCG) – THE PEOPLE’S GROUND

Lord’s, Wembley, Eden Gardens and Yankee Stadium are considered among the greatest sporting arenas in the world, but for history, pure drama and emotion, it’s hard to look past the Melbourne Cricket Ground.

The ground was built way back in 1853 when the then 15-year-old Melbourne Cricket Club was forced by the government to move from its former site because the route of Australia’s first steam train was to pass through the oval.

Since then the MCG has established a marvellous history that compares favourably with any other in the world, hosting plenty of international cricket including the first two ever Tests and the 1992 Cricket World Cup final, countless Australian Rules Football League (AFL) and Victoria Football League (VFL) Grand Finals, the 1956 Olympic Games and the Olympic soccer in 2000.

In March 2006, the MCG hosted the Opening and Closing Ceremonies and Track & Field events for the 2006 Commonwealth Games. In late-December 2006, the ground held its 100th cricket Test match when Australia played England. Over 244,000 attended the three days, including near-record 89,155 on Boxing Day.

Other major sporting spectacles that have been held at the MCG include Olympic Soccer, Australian World Cup Soccer qualifiers, Rugby League home and away matches, State-of-Origin and international Rugby Union clashes.

Apart from its sporting events, the MCG has also witnessed many blockbuster music concerts, Billy Graham’s 1959 crusade, and even Pope John Paul II held a mass there when he visited Melbourne in 1986.

People from all over Australia, and indeed all over the world, speak reverently about the MCG, a ground that is as well known as any other and has no doubt enhanced its reputation after hosting the 2006 Commonwealth Games.

Victorian sports fans can recount ample examples of games and events they have been part of at the ground, and it has a world-class reputation as a leading multi-purpose stadium.

Apart from the magnificent sporting contests it witnesses, the stadium also provides its visitors with world-class facilities, and has a well-known heritage collection that includes some of the most priceless memorabilia in Australian sporting history.

As well as a world record for the most people to ever attend a baseball match during the 1956 Games, the VFL/ AFL Grand Final record attendance was an amazing 121,696 people for the 1970 decider between Carlton and Collingwood.

Its capacity was reduced in 2002 as works took place to demolish and completely rebuild the Ponsford, Members and Northern stands, but since the redevelopment has been completed it now boasts a total capacity of 100,000 people.

Another fine feature of the MCG is its close proximity to the Melbourne CBD, with just a short train or tram ride required to reach the arena, or a pleasant walk through parkland.



DEVELOPMENT

The Melbourne Cricket Club (MCC) was founded in November 1838 when the population of the Port Phillip District was only about 2000.

The first cricket match was played between the MCC and a military team on the Old Mint site in William Street, Melbourne.

However, this area proved unsuitable and in January 1839 the club established its second ground at the foot of Batman's Hill, now Southern Cross Railway Station.

This was Melbourne's cricket ground until October 1846 when impending acquisition for railway use forced a transfer to the southern bank of the Yarra near the present Crown Casino site.

John Pascoe Fawkner had planted the colony's first wheat crop on this field, but it was susceptible to flooding and the club had to advertise more than once for the return of its dressing shed when the Yarra broke its banks!

The MCC's third ground was the site of Victoria's first inter-colonial match (Port Phillip versus Van Diemen's Land in 1852). This was a return fixture as the Port Phillip team had played Van Diemen's Land at Launceston in Tasmania a year earlier to celebrate the separation of the Port Phillip District from New South Wales and the creation of the Colony of Victoria.

In 1853 the club was advised that the route of Australia's first steam train to Sandridge (Port Melbourne) would pass through its ground and they would need to move elsewhere.

On appeal to Governor La Trobe the club was given the choice of three sites – adjacent to the existing ground, at the junction of Flinders and Spring Streets or an area within the Police Paddock at Richmond.

An MCC sub-committee chose the third because "the situation was quite as level as desirable yet afforded sufficient slope that without interfering with the game would ensure its always being free from floods." Posterity has applauded the wisdom of this choice.



MCG FACTS

- ♦ The Melbourne Cricket Club manages the Melbourne Cricket Ground on behalf of the Victoria Government – appointed MCG Trust.
- ♦ The first football match was held on July 12th 1859 and was played between Melbourne Football Club and South Yarra.
- ♦ The first cricket match on the current MCG was held on September 20th 1854 and was played between the MCC members.
- ♦ There are more than 60 days of cricket and football played at the MCG each year.
- ♦ About 3.5 million people visit the ground annually.
- ♦ The MCG sits proudly alongside other internationally recognised attractions as a venue uniquely symbolic of Melbourne, Victoria and Australia generally.
- ♦ The highest **official** attendance for a sporting event recorded at the MCG was in 1970 when 121,696 packed the stadium to watch Carlton and Collingwood contest the 1970 Victorian Football League (VFL) Grand Final.
- ♦ The MCG played host to the Melbourne Olympic Games in 1956 and hosted several Olympic Football (Soccer) matches as part of the Sydney Olympic Games in 2000.
- ♦ The MCG underwent major redevelopment of the northern side of the stadium, at a cost of \$465 million, which was completed prior to it hosting the 2006 Melbourne Commonwealth Games.
- ♦ The total capacity of the MCG is approximately 100,000 upon completion of the redevelopment in 2006.
- ♦ The MCG has played host to many major events outside of the sporting arena such as international artists like Paul McCartney, Madonna, U2, The Rolling Stones, Michael Jackson, the Three Tenors, David Bowie, Linda Ronstadt, Elton John and Billy Joel.
- ♦ The MCG's vast collection of sporting and cultural artefacts is housed in the National Sports Museum, located across two levels of the Olympic Stand (www.nsm.org.au).
- ♦ The current AFL tenant clubs at the MCG are Melbourne, Richmond and Collingwood and Hawthorn.



FIRSTS FOR THE MCG

- ♦ First international cricket contest (1862)
- ♦ First ever Test match (1877), played between Australia and England
- ♦ World's first full-colour cricket scoreboard with instant replays
- ♦ World's first electronic sightscreens
- ♦ World's first super-sopper
- ♦ The first stadium in the world to have its annual number of visitors equal to the city's population
- ♦ World's first scrolling signage at an oval-shaped ground
- ♦ Biggest attendance in the history of Test cricket: 90,800 in 1961 (Australia v West Indies)
- ♦ World record first class cricket score: 1107 Victoria vs NSW in 1926
- ♦ Record Australian Rules Football Grand Final attendance: 121,696 in 1970
- ♦ First one-day international cricket match in 1971
- ♦ Record one-day international crowd: 87,182 – 1992 World Cup Final (England v Pakistan)
- ♦ Australian record Soccer crowd: 95,103 – Australia vs Greece in 2006
- ♦ Australia's first international Lacrosse match against Canada: 30,000 in 1907
- ♦ Billy Graham crusade – estimated attendance of 'at least' 130,000 (closer to 140,000) although an exact figure cannot be given as records were not kept) in 1959
- ♦ First time in the world a Test match was played on a one-piece portable pitch - Boxing Day 2000



MCG ARENA

Dimensions

- The MCG arena has a total of approximately 20,290 square metres in area and measures 174 x 149 metres in length, from fence to fence.
- The volume of the MCG is 1,700,000 cubic metres, or 1.7 million cubic metres.

Arena Management

- Every year approximately 3,000m² of the centre corridor is re-laid, to replace turf that has been worn out by the heavy traffic associated with AFL matches.
- The arena is seeded twice a year at 35 grams/m² which is equivalent to 1.4 tonnes.
- Approximately 350 man-hours are spent per week maintaining the turf, which includes: rolling, cutting, repairing, installing irrigation, match preparation, re-sodding, water and maintenance & planning and scheduling.

Irrigation

- Watering of the MCG turf complies with the current guidelines for Stage 3 Water Restrictions as detailed in the relevant water authorities "Drought Response Plan".
- The grass is cut daily in summer and twice a week in the winter. It's cut at a length of 12mm during the summer and 25mm during the winter.

Portable Cricket Pitches

- The first experimental portable pitch was trialed in October 1996, installed at the eastern edge of the wicket table and delivered in two pieces, each weighing 16 tonnes.
- The aim of the exercise was to provide better wickets for cricket as well as minimising or eliminating the muddy centre square for football in winter.
- The MCG took the international spotlight on Boxing Day 2000 when a Test match was played on a one-piece portable pitch for the first time anywhere in the world.
- Six 34-tonne pitches, prepared over a two-year period in the old practice-wicket area, were lowered into place in early November, 2000.
- The new wicket area covered 700 square metres and sits on a giant concrete rectangle. All 10 centre-wicket pitches are 3.05m wide, differing in length between 24.4m and 22m.
- There are up to 16 practice-wicket pitches available - all 11m long and 3.05m wide. They are housed in the permanent outdoor practice wicket facility located outside the stadium, adjacent to Gate 1 in the Ponsford Stand.



1956 OLYMPIC GAMES

The MCG was the main arena for the 1956 Olympic Games and 107,000 attended the Opening Ceremony on November 22nd 1956.

Date	Event	Attendance
22 nd November	Opening Ceremony	107,700
23 rd November	Athletics	85,001
24 th November	Athletics	102,800
26 th November	Athletics	103,800
27 th November	Athletics	95,423
28 th November	Athletics	107,100
29 th November	Athletics	100,100
30 th November	Athletics	101,000
1 st December	Athletics & demonstration baseball match between USA services team and Australian services team	104,400
8 th December	Closing Ceremony & Soccer Final	104,700
TOTAL ATTENDANCE		1,012,024

- ♦ 10,805 tickets were sold for the semi-finals of the Olympic Hockey tournament on the MCG on December 3. India beat Germany 1-0 and Pakistan beat Great Britain 3-2
- ♦ The Bronze medal playoff for the Hockey was held on December 4th before 15,617 (plus officials and athletes). Germany defeated Great Britain 3-1.
- ♦ 16,626 tickets were sold for the Gold medal final in the hockey (with additional officials and athletes in attendance) on December 5. India defeated Pakistan 1-0.
- ♦ 21,079 paid to watch the Olympic soccer semi finals on December 6. The USSR defeated Bulgaria 2-1 and Yugoslavia defeated India 4-1.
- ♦ 21,236 tickets were sold for the Bronze medal match in the Olympic soccer, held on December 7. Bulgaria defeated India 3-1. This was preceded by an Australian Rules football demonstration match between amateur players from the combined VFL/VFA and the VAFA.
- ♦ 104,700 attended the Olympic Soccer final and the Closing Ceremony of the XVI Olympic Games on December 8. The USSR defeated Yugoslavia 1-0.



MCG REDEVELOPMENT

The redevelopment of the northern side of the MCG has transformed the stadium and reaffirmed the MCG as one of the world's great sporting icons.

About 55 per cent of the ground – embracing the W.H. Ponsford and Olympic stands and the MCC Members Pavilion – has been rebuilt. Demolition commenced in October 2002 and the project was completed in time for the Commonwealth Games in March 2006.

Features of the New Stand

- ♦ The new stand is markedly different to the 1992 Great Southern Stand. Transparent walls engage approaching patrons as they arrive at three major entry points. Each entrance features a grand atrium serviced by escalators taking patrons to the upper levels.
- ♦ Facilities and finishes are superior throughout. The male/female toilet ratio has been significantly improved and, for comfort and ease of access, individual plastic bucket seats are fixed on broader plats.
- ♦ Sightlines from all seats are uninterrupted and, because the new structure is much closer to the arena than the stands it replaces, spectators are also closer to the action.
- ♦ Seats are approximately 30% bigger than the current northern stand and about 80% of seats are under roof cover.
- ♦ Dining room capacity has almost doubled. Large, deep rooms enable tenant sports and clubs to accommodate up to 500 guests.
- ♦ Big new change rooms service the needs of both football and cricket and the coaches' boxes are situated on level two on the wing position, ensuring that facilities for players also meet the demands of modern-day sporting personnel.
- ♦ Underground car parking has increased greatly, reducing weekday pressure on Yarra Park. Extensive landscaping and Barrack Bridge linking Federation Square enhance the sense of arrival for visitors.
- ♦ Capping the new stand is a hybrid roof, part metal and part glass. This considerably increases the brightness of the seating areas allows grass growth.

Ground Capacity

- The total capacity of the MCG is **100,000**.
- This includes 95,000 seats and 5000 standing room spaces.

General MCG Redevelopment Statistics

- ♦ Excavation of 142,000 cubic metres
- ♦ 55,000 cubic metres of concrete poured
- ♦ 5,500 tonnes of concrete reinforcing steel
- ♦ 72,000 metres of TV broadcast cabling
- ♦ Two main video boards each of 108 sq. metres area
- ♦ 540 TV monitors throughout the new stand
- ♦ 13 escalators, 12 passenger lifts, 3 goods lifts
- ♦ Eight-lane athletics track for 2006 Commonwealth Games installed and then removed



XVIII COMMONWEALTH GAMES

The XVIII Commonwealth Games were held from 15th – 26th March 2006 in Melbourne. The MCG was the main stadium for the Games and held the Opening Ceremony, 10 track and field sessions and the Closing Ceremony.

The athletics track was laid in October 2005 and covered for the Boxing Day Test in December of that year. The turf was then removed to reveal the international-standard, eight-lane synthetic track on the MCG arena surface, together with all jump and field event areas in time for the Games.

Attendance

Date	Event	Attendance
15 th March	Opening Ceremony	75,066
19 th March	Athletics – Super Sunday	76,500
20 th March	Athletics – AM Session	29,478
20 th March	Athletics – PM Session	79,026
21 st March	Athletics – AM Session	40,524
21 st March	Athletics – PM Session	42,499
22 nd March	Athletics – AM Session	50,996
22 nd March	Athletics – PM Session	45,037
23 rd March	Athletics – PM Session	83,369
24 th March	Athletics – PM Session	80,987
25 th March	Athletics – PM Session	82,917
26 th March	Closing Ceremony	77,116
TOTAL ATTENDANCE		763,515
AVERAGE FOR ATHLETICS EVENTS		61,133

General Commonwealth Games Statistics

- ♦ 71 Competing Nations
- ♦ 12 individual sports & 4 team sports, with a total of 24 disciplines
- ♦ 11 days of competition
- ♦ 4,500 Athletes
- ♦ 1,500 Team Officials
- ♦ 1,200 Technical Officials
- ♦ 600 M2006 Staff
- ♦ 15,000 Volunteers



MCG OPERATIONS

The Melbourne Cricket Club (MCC) is a private club (99,800 members) with 175,000 people on a waiting list which, on behalf of the MCG Trust, manages the significant Victorian asset - the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG).

Through its ground manager, the MCC, the MCG Trust ensures the MCG remains the leading major events sports stadium in Australia for the benefit of patrons and the public of Victoria generally while recognising its location in major public parklands.

The MCC's "core" products/services are mainly:-

- ♦ Facilities (stands and their extensive array of services)
- ♦ Arena (turf/wickets)
- ♦ Event service delivery (including hospitality)
- ♦ Membership services
- ♦ Tourist destination
- ♦ Curatorial/exhibition and collection management/research

The MCC manages the ground through eight departments responsible to the Chief Executive Officer. They are:

- ♦ Member and Customer Services
- ♦ Events
- ♦ Executive
- ♦ Facilities
- ♦ Finance and Information Systems
- ♦ Commercial Operations
- ♦ Museums (including MCG Tours)
- ♦ Human Resources

There are about 130 permanent club employees and event staff are drawn from a pool of 900-plus for match-day duties at the ground.

As ground manager, the club has relationships with contractors who supply the following services:

- ♦ Catering
- ♦ Beverages
- ♦ Electrical maintenance
- ♦ Painting
- ♦ Cleaning
- ♦ Security
- ♦ Ticketing
- ♦ Scoreboard operation
- ♦ Hospitality

Other contractors include Mechanical, Plumbing, Gas and Fire services.