

# FACT SHEET

## AFLUA Team of the Century

In 2002 the AFLUA nominated its Team of the Century.

Thirty umpires, 10 from each category of umpiring - field, boundary and goal - were nominated on the basis of 'demonstrating consistent excellence, in their discipline, over an extended period'. The nominations covered a time frame from the inaugural year of the Victorian Football League (1897) until the completion of the 2001 season. The thirty nominees were:



### Field

	Years	Matches	Grand Finals
Ivo Crapp	1897 - 1905	147	7
Jeff Crouch	1961 - 1970	182	5
Bill Deller	1967 - 1981	251	5
Jack Elder	1906 - 1922	295	10
Jack McMurray (Jr)	1941 - 1955	216	6
Jack McMurray (Sr)	1917 - 1936	303	5
Ian Robinson	1971 - 1987	353	9
Rowan Sawers	1977 - 1997	410	4
Bryan Sheehan	1986 - 2001*	329	6
Kevin Smith	1971 - 1985	303	4

### Boundary

	Years	Matches	Grand Finals
Norman Batty	1933 - 1945	202	7
Jack Fitt	1930 - 1937	139	8
Herbert Kent	1941 - 1963	330	4
Lindsay Lancaster	1934 - 1944	181	11
Peter McDonald	1989 - 2000	230	6
Kevin Mitchell	1968 - 1979	236	8
Walter Naismith	1913 - 1928	208	7
Leigh Paterson	1976 - 1990	275	9
Geoff Willcox	1972 - 1981	196	5
Murray Williams	1969 - 1985	320	4

### Goal

	Years	Matches	Grand Finals
Charles Bell	1915 - 1937	310	4
Craig Clark	1987 - 2001*	230*	5
Barry Farrow	1976 - 1985	177	3
Jim Mahoney	1965 - 1981	289	2
Brian Pratt	1975 - 1986	212	2
Les Robinson	1968 - 1977	179	5
Tom Rossiter	1960 - 1974	249	4
Dick Sankey	1963 - 1975	225	5
Reginald Treloar	1927 - 1943	247	8
Clyde White	1939 - 1953	222	6

### AFL Umpires' Association

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From these nominations, four umpires from each discipline were named as the Umpires' Team of the Century.

## Field umpires



### Jack Elder 1906 - 1922

295 AFL matches, 10 Grand Finals

"Even in the hardest fought match it is important to remain calm. Use the whistle only when required. League football is not a genteel sport for schoolgirls and the term 'rough' is often misapplied. *Jack Elder.*

"Elder has been the outstanding figure in the umpire world, not only being above suspicion, but making a name for himself in the pre-war world...he has the respect of all players and other umpires." *Jack Worrell*

### Ian Robinson 1971 - 1987

353 AFL matches, 35 Finals, 9 Grand Finals

"I saw the pack go up and I knew I had to stay focused. It was a huge pack but I saw one pair of hands get a clear purchase on the ball. I blew my whistle...I was determined to keep my concentration focused as I ran in and watched those arms and the ball all the way to the ground. I called 'It's yours', and saw it was Ross Dunne who had taken the mark. I do rate it as one of my best decisions. If you don't see it you don't pay it. I saw it." *Ian Robinson on Twigg Dunne's mark in the 1977 drawn Grand Final.*



### Rowan Sawers 1977 - 1997

410 AFL matches, 35 Finals, 4 Grand Finals

Rowan Sawers began his League career at Moorabbin in May 1977. "My first bounce in League football didn't bounce - the ball got stuck in the mud. Paul Callery, the St.Kilda rover, plucked the Sherrin out of the bog and played on." Twenty-one seasons later in 1997 he became the AFL games record holder.

"About the only thing that hadn't changed in my time is the whistle. The old Acme 'Thunderer' has been my right hand man since 1977."

### Bryan Sheehan 1986 - 2003

363 AFL matches, 37 Finals, 6 Grand Finals

The most significant off-field change he's seen since debuting in round 15, 1986 - Melbourne versus Essendon - is the increasing scrutiny placed on umpires' decisions. "We understand the important role that we play in the game. Look, we're going to make mistakes but we work hard as a group to try and do the best we possibly can and I think 85-90 percent of the time we that right. "We've just got to make sure that when do we blow that whistle and whatever decision we make is the right one."



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## Boundary umpires



**Lindsay Lancaster 1934 - 1944**  
181 AFL matches, 29 Finals, 11 Grand Finals

Lancaster came over from the VFA in 1934. He officiated in the Grand Final that season and in the next ten in a row - a feat that has never been equaled. He also holds the record for the number of finals appearances by a boundary umpire. Lancaster transferred to the goals in 1945 and umpired a Grand Final. He was a member of the VFL Umpires Appointment Board from 1950-1970 and an ANFC Award of Merit recipient.

**Kevin Mitchell 1968 - 1979**  
236 AFL matches, 23 Finals, 8 Grand Finals

Mitchell joined the VFL senior panel from the VFL Reserve Grade in 1968. His 200<sup>th</sup> match was the 1977 Grand Final and his 201st was the Grand Final Replay the following week. The Grand Finals were his seventh and eighth. His greatest thrill in umpiring was his fourth Grand Final - the day Carlton and Richmond kicked 50 goals, 27 behinds in the record creating '1972 premiership decider. "We were kept on the move that day."



**Leigh Paterson 1976 - 1990**  
275 AFL matches, 23 Finals, 9 Grand Finals

As World Professional cross-country champion, Leigh Paterson was ideal material for running the boundary. He excelled as a boundary umpire to the degree that he officiated in nine VFL Grand Finals in thirteen seasons. Paterson is fifth all time in number of games by a boundary umpire and the only one of those to have umpired in the 1990s. His professional athletics career was equally rewarding with numerous professional titles to his name.



**Murray Williams 1969 - 1985**  
320 AFL matches 25 Finals, 4 Grand Finals

Murray Williams has run more games on the boundary for the VFL than all but one other umpire. In a career that spanned 17 seasons and 320 matches he compiled an impressive record. Four Grand Finals and nine Preliminary Finals and a number of Interstate games. His career saw the introduction of the out of bounds on the full rule, the centre diamond and the centre square. By the end of his career football was played at a pace significantly faster than that when he started



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## Goal umpires



**Craig Clark (1987-2003)**  
272\* AFL matches, 25 Finals, 6 Grand Finals.

No goal umpire has garnered more laurels in the modern era than Craig Clark. In 2003 he became the goal umpire to have officiated in more finals than any other and he is currently the AFL's most experienced goalie. During the famous Essendon v. Kangaroo 52 goal turnaround clash in July 2001 Clark waved 52 goals during the match but he even made it into the record books by signaling 32 of those goals himself, including, another record, 22 up until half time.

**Dick Sankey (1963-75)**  
225 AFL matches, 13 Finals, 5 Grand Finals

Injury ended Dick Sankey's football career and he took up the goals with the VFL Reserve Grade and was ultimately promoted to the VFL Senior list. His success at League level was almost immediate and encompassed Grand Finals in 1965, 1968, 1972, 1974 and 1975. His final match was the 1975 Grand Final and the one he found most memorable for the emotion of North Melbourne fans as they celebrated their first premiership.



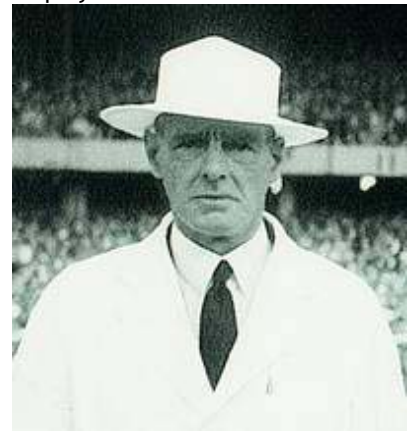
**Reg Treloar (1927-43)**  
247 AFL matches 24 Finals, 8 Grand Finals

Once he took up the flags Reg Treloar set the record for finals appearances and Grand Finals. From 1938 to 1941 he umpired four consecutive Grand Finals. The 1939 Grand Final saw him involved in a sensation. During the second quarter field umpire Alan Coward collided with a player dislocating his shoulder. While Coward was down, Wartman of Melbourne goaled over Treloar's head. Replacement umpire Bill Blackburn, did not give the all-clear it deciding he had not seen the relevant part of the play.



**Clyde White (1939-53)**  
222 AFL matches 12 Finals, 6 Grand Finals

Clyde White was the number one goal umpire in the years immediately following the Second World War. He was the Grand Final goal umpire in 1945-46, 1949-50, 1952-53. His first Grand Final was the 1945 'Bloodbath' between South Melbourne and Carlton. It took an hour after the match to sort out the reports. White reported Williams (C) for abusive language and fighting and Savage (C) for striking.



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