

Thursday, 21 September 2017

## It's Official: Sydney Swans most widely supported AFL club

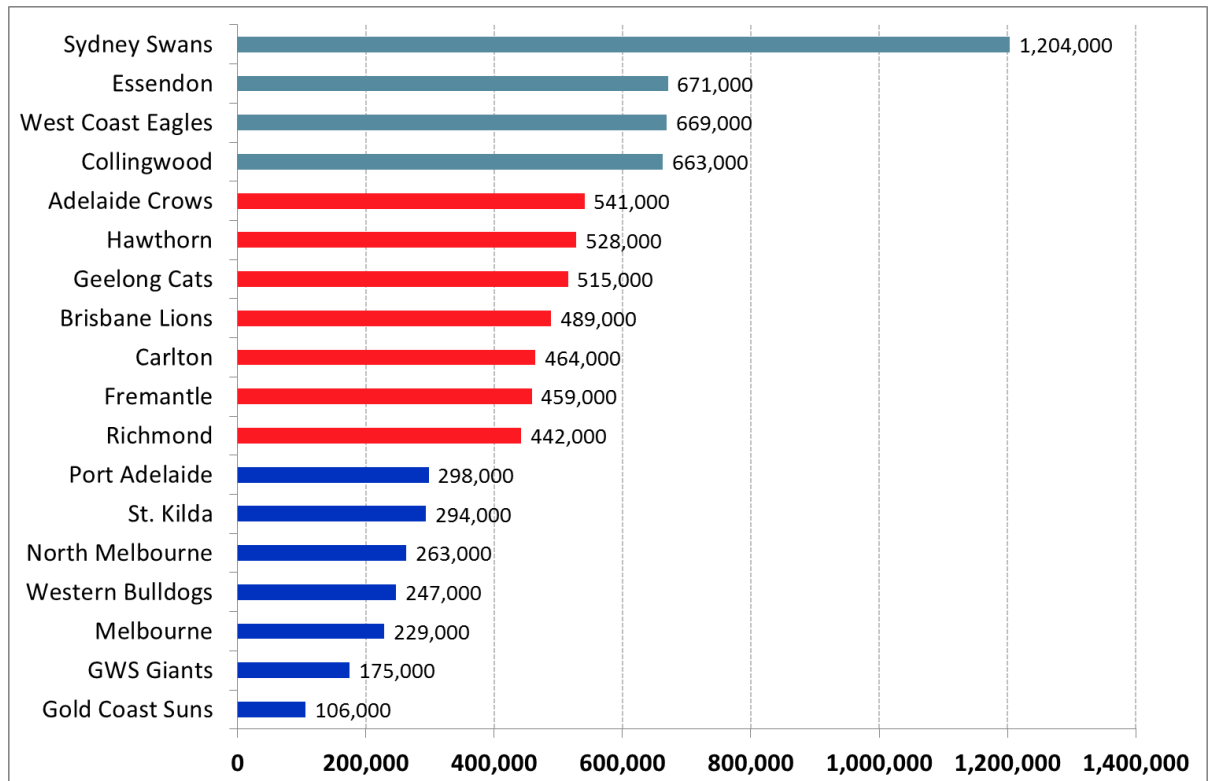
The Sydney Swans have again topped the annual Roy Morgan AFL supporter ladder – streaking the field with 1.204 million supporters, an increase of a solid 104,000 (+9.5%) on the back of a 2016 Grand Final appearance.

A rejuvenated Essendon were the most widely supported Victorian club with 671,000 supporters, an increase of 127,000 (+23.3%) on 2016 when Essendon had 18 of their players banned from taking part and “won” their first Wooden Spoon since 1933.

Traditional Victorian powerhouse Collingwood slipped to fourth on the supporter ladder with 663,000 supporters, losing 117,000 supporters (-11.6%), and falling below their traditional ANZAC Day rivals for the first time since 2007 after coach Nathan Buckley led the team to a fourth successive year without finals action.

Premiership drought-breakers the Western Bulldogs have far fewer supporters than their vanquished opponents with 247,000 – virtually unchanged on a year ago. The Bulldogs disappointing year on-field is clear evidence that Premiership hangovers after drought-breaking Flags is a real phenomenon – ala Hawthorn 2008-09, and look how Hawthorn bounced back from that unexpected slide down the ladder as Premiers.

### AFL Club Supporter Ladder 2017



Source: Roy Morgan Single Source Australia, July 2016 – June 2017. n=14,544. Base: Australians 14+.

## Conversion of Supporters to Members shows Premiers Western Bulldogs on top

Although it is no surprise to see the traditionally well-supported clubs at the top of the overall AFL club supporter ladder, a key metric for AFL clubs is their ability to convert their latent support into paying memberships that directly benefit the clubs.

On this measure it is reigning Premiers the Western Bulldogs which has been the most successful in converting supporters to paying memberships with 19.3% of Western Bulldogs supporters buying a membership in 2017.

Other clubs to have high conversion rates include Melbourne which converts 18.4% of supporters to members, Port Adelaide which converts 17.5% of supporters to members, and 2017 'Cinderella' team Richmond which is playing in its first Preliminary Final in 16 years this weekend and converts an impressive 16.4% of supporters to members.

	<u>Conversion Rate</u>	<u>Roy Morgan Supporter Numbers</u>	<u>Official 2017 AFL Club Memberships*</u>
Western Bulldogs	19.3%	247,000	47,653
Melbourne Demons	18.4%	229,000	42,233
Port Adelaide Power	17.5%	298,000	52,129
Richmond Tigers	16.4%	442,000	72,669
North Melbourne Kangaroos	15.3%	263,000	40,343
Hawthorn Hawks	14.3%	528,000	75,663
St. Kilda Saints	14.3%	294,000	42,052
GWS Giants	12.0%	175,000	20,944
Collingwood Magpies	11.4%	663,000	75,879
Fremantle Dockers	11.2%	459,000	51,254
Gold Coast Suns	11.0%	106,000	11,665
Carlton Blues	10.8%	464,000	50,326
Geelong Cats	10.7%	515,000	54,854
Adelaide Crows	10.5%	541,000	56,865
Essendon Bombers	10.1%	671,000	67,768
West Coast Eagles	9.7%	669,000	65,064
Sydney Swans	4.9%	1,204,000	58,838
Brisbane Lions	4.4%	489,000	21,362
<b>BY STATE#</b>			
Victoria	19.3%	2,955,000	569,440
South Australia	13.8%	781,000	108,119
Western Australia	10.1%	1,150,000	116,318
New South Wales	4.6%	1,716,000	79,782
Queensland	3.7%	901,000	33,027
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11.7%</b>	<b>7,757,000</b>	<b>907,561</b>

#State numbers are split by club's location (home state). \*Full AFL Membership Figures available at <http://www.afl.com.au/news/2017-08-16/afl-club-membership-tally-hits-new-high>

**Gary Morgan, Executive Chairman, Roy Morgan Research, says:**

*“The Sydney Swans have retained their standing as Australia’s most widely supported AFL team for the 13<sup>th</sup> straight year with over 1.2 million supporters putting the ‘Bloods’ over half-a-million supporters ahead of any other club.*

*“Victoria’s top club is Essendon with 671,000 supporters following a ‘year from hell’ in 2016 in which 18 players were suspended for the entire year and the Bombers plunged to their first Wooden Spoon as the competition’s worst performed team for over 80 years.*

*“The ‘Big 4’ of the AFL is rounded out by the West Coast Eagles with 669,000 supporters and set to play their next game in the brand new 60,000 capacity Perth Stadium in 2018 which should provide a huge boost to Eagles memberships, and the bottom line, and what is often regarded the ‘most hated club’ in the AFL, Collingwood, with 663,000 supporters.*

*“In terms of passion – Victoria remains the beating heart of the AFL with nearly 3 million supporters buying just under 570,000 AFL club memberships in 2017 – a conversion rate of 19.3% of supporters to members ahead of South Australia (13.8% of supporters become members) and Western Australia (10.1%).*

*“These high conversion rates underpin the strong attendances of the AFL. In 2017 there are 7,757,000 supporters of an AFL club around Australia and this week the AFL is set to break the all-time attendance record set in 2010 (7,146,738) for an AFL season during the Preliminary Final between Richmond and the GWS Giants on Saturday night.*

*“Overall AFL attendance so far in 2017 of 7,039,784 – only fifth year in history more than 7 million supporters have attended AFL matches, means a combined crowd this weekend of 107,000 will be enough to set a new mark – with an extra 100,000 expected next weekend for the Grand Final further increasing the overall figure.”*

**For comments or more information about Roy Morgan Research’s AFL Supporter profiles and other Sporting profiles data, please contact:**

**Roy Morgan Research - Enquiries**

Office: +61 (3) 9224 5309

[askroymorgan@roymorgan.com](mailto:askroymorgan@roymorgan.com)**About Roy Morgan Research**

Roy Morgan Research is the largest independent Australian research company, with offices in each state of Australia, as well as in the United States and the United Kingdom. A full service research organisation specialising in omnibus and syndicated data, Roy Morgan Research has over 70 years’ experience in collecting objective, independent information on consumers.

## Margin of Error

The margin of error to be allowed for in any estimate depends mainly on the number of interviews on which it is based. Margin of error gives indications of the likely range within which estimates would be 95% likely to fall, expressed as the number of percentage points above or below the actual estimate. Allowance for design effects (such as stratification and weighting) should be made as appropriate.

Sample Size	Percentage Estimate			
	40%-60%	25% or 75%	10% or 90%	5% or 95%
5,000	±1.4	±1.2	±0.8	±0.6
7,500	±1.1	±1.0	±0.7	±0.5
10,000	±1.0	±0.9	±0.6	±0.4
20,000	±0.7	±0.6	±0.4	±0.3
50,000	±0.4	±0.4	±0.3	±0.2