

Flashback: 2015 FFA Cup

Fourth Round	
South Melbourne	5
Whittlesea United	0
Fifth Round	
South Melbourne	8
North Sunshine Eagles	0
Sixth Round	
South Melbourne	3
Melbourne Knights	1
Seventh Round	
South Melbourne	6
Frankston Pines	1
Round of 32	
South Melbourne	1 (7)
Palm Beach	1 (8)

South missed out on the national rounds of the inaugural FFA Cup, so in 2015 the club made it a priority to return to the national stage.

In the preliminary rounds, South defeated Whittlesea United 5-0, who had on their side former South player Tansel Baser.

In the next round South defeated North Sunshine 8-0 - it's worth noting that at the time North Sunshine were playing in State League 1 North West.

In the final preliminary round South faced Melbourne Knights, the team who knocked South out of the cup in 2014.

A large crowd came to Lakeside to watch that game and yet... the Knights scored first! However, Milos Lujic pulled one back from the penalty spot and Epifano gave us the lead with a memorable long-range goal. South then scored a third to seal the win and qualify for the national rounds.



South were now competing in national competition for the first time in over a decade, and their opponent was Palm Beach. The game was played on the Gold Coast, and South played in a unique white kit featuring a red chevron.

South took the lead early, but a mistake from Roganovic led to a penalty which allowed Palm Beach to equalise. Palm Beach would go onto to win the game in a penalty shootout - but overall South's FFA Cup campaign was a success, as it saw the club finally reach the national stage again.

Blue and White Views

Issue 4

Sunday the 13th of April 2025

NPL Victoria, Round 10

South Melbourne vs
Heidelberg United

Lakeside Stadium

blueandwhiteviews.wordpress.com



As terrible as South's season has been so far, we have yet to play any of the top three teams. Well, this week that changes.

Heidelberg sit third on the ladder and are looking good. 22 goals in 9 games good.



Since their opening round surprise loss to the Melbourne Knights, Heidelberg have almost been faultless and even in their stumbles (a draw against Preston and a loss to Thunder) they have looked the better team.

After being overlooked for a head coaching gig in the A-League, John Anastasiadis has been making a point to the football community not just with the Bergers' results but with their excellent style of play.

And South... well we know the story. The nil all draw against Altona was both disappointing (Altona only had 10 men for the last half hour) and yet could have been much worse (Lopez miraculously saved a shot that should have put Altona in the lead).

Our chances aren't good today, but at least we can enjoy being underdogs this week, I guess?

Let's go South!

Home ground headaches

South is extremely fortunate to play at Albert Park. It is beautiful and central, but it is also busy. There are dozens of clubs who occupy the park, and to make things worse, each year we all lose park access thanks to the Grand Prix.

At Lakeside Stadium, the Senior team has to manage its access around Athletics, who also share the ground. As a result the Seniors train in the mornings, and are sometimes forced to play games on Monday nights. The juniors however, have more challenging arrangements at their Albert Park 'home'.

In 2025 our Junior teams will play home games at Warner Reserve in Springvale, Princess Park in Caulfield, and Grange Reserve, in Clayton. Even training sessions for the juniors teams are forced to move! This year the club posted pictures showing our girls training at the Darebin International Sports Centre!

All this is to say that South Melbourne have a facility problem. The club is relying on shorter term agreements and this is not how the club should be operating! Consistent, predictable and permanent home facilities contribute to club culture and will solve many of the issues fans often ask or complain about.

Why don't we use the Social club more? Because our juniors and their parents aren't training or playing anywhere near it!

Why don't we have more juniors come to our games? Because they are likely playing a 'home' game that weekend half an hour away!



South currently have year-round access to Paul Wade Field (shared with other sports), Allan Davidson Field (exclusive), and Ange Postecoglou Field (exclusive). The club also has winter access to Oval 13. If this still isn't enough than fans need to understand why! Longer-term arrangements need to be secured by the board as a priority!

Mergers

Most fans know that South Melbourne FC was established in 1959, but fewer have details about the mergers that formed the club.

Clubs

1959 actually marks the year that two clubs merged to form 'Hellas'. These two clubs were 'Hellenic' and 'Yarra Park'. Both of these clubs were backed by the Greek community and their merger resulted in a single large supporter base.

The following year 'Hellas' merged with 'South Melbourne United' to form South Melbourne Hellas. This provided South Melbourne Hellas with access to Middle Park where the club is still based today.

So, although 1959 marks the establishment of 'Hellas', some could argue that South Melbourne FC only really started in 1960!



Colours

Another strange dynamic of the mergers is the colour of the clubs involved. Yarra Park supposedly played in Yellow and Black. Hellenic supposedly played in Blue and White. South Melbourne United used to play in White and Red – in the same combination as the Australian Rules Football team.

Although there is no trace left of Yarra Park's Yellow and Black, South have on occasion worn the Red and White combination, most recently during the club's 2015 FFA Cup campaign.

More Mergers?

There is one more club that can trace its lineage through South Melbourne. Melbourne Hakoah once share Middle Park with South Melbourne FC, but in the early 80s the club dissolved and its team was absorbed into South Melbourne's reserves.

Going further back one can find teams playing under the South Melbourne name as far back as the 1800s – however none of them have any connection to today's South.

Junior Boys Teams Update

South operate a comprehensive junior program covering Miniroos (U 8's to U 13's), girls teams and six teams at the Junior Boys NPL Levels.

Now that we are a third of the way through the season, we figured it was a good chance to see how our Junior Boys programs is going.

The Junior Boys football department operates under the guidance of Tass Roufos (Football Director) and Rinichi Mikami (Technical director).

South Melbourne Junior Teams			
<i>*At time of print</i>	Pos	Pld	Pts
U 23's	6 th	8	13
U 19's	2 nd	8	21
U 17's	8 th	9	8
U 16's	6 th	8	11
U 15's	4 th	10	20
U 14's	5 th	10	19

At this stage of the season the youth boys competitions typically comprise of tables with 12 teams. Generally, South's teams are doing well and mostly find themselves in the top half of their tables with a couple of the teams pushing for top spot, namely the Under 19's and the Under 15's.



Under 23's

Last season the Under 23's frequently saw their players promoted to the Senior team, so their performance is important to track as a signal of the Senior squad's depth.

This year the squad has seen mixed performances with six points in the last five games. The competition is tight with South only three points away from top spot.

Toby Simeoni has been the top scorer of the team with three goals in six games followed by Andre Skapoulas with two goals in two games.

Why are we copping so many goals?

South Melbourne have only enjoyed two clean sheets this season. They were against 14th placed Port Melbourne, and 13th placed Altona Magic. Outside of those matches, South have conceded 2 goals per game. Why is the defence so poor this year?

Is it the Goalkeeper?

No - if anything, Javier Lopez has minimised the damage with a number of saves this year. Although there have been goalkeeping errors this season (Lopez was off his line against Dandenong, and Pithoulas conceded an unfortunate penalty against Preston), South's defensive issues appear to be further up the field.



Is it the Defence?

South has conceded 4 goals in first halves, and 10 goals in second halves this season. Our defensive issues are later in games, but why?

During games this season South is facing far more shots that it is creating, and it is struggling to maintain possession. This creates asymmetric pressure which leaves our defence more worn down than that of our opponents.

The result? 5 goals conceded after the 80th minute, and an unnecessary 90th minute red card for Jankovic. Our defence is getting fatigued - but also frustrated by facing constant pressure.

Why is there so much pressure?

Our opposition this year has dominated possession in midfield (leading to more open shots), and has often been able to play through the centre unimpeded (leading to counter attacks).

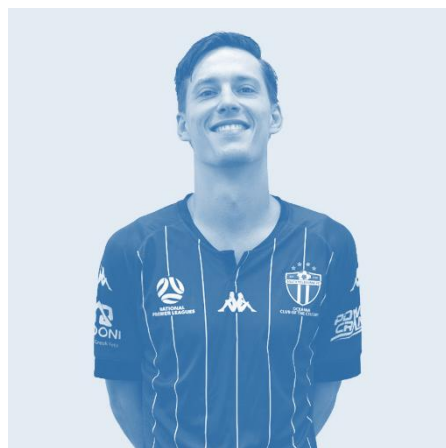
Even on the ball, our lack of midfield options is forcing our team into direct plays which results in turnovers. This leaves our team unable to rest on our own terms and burning out.

If we want to cop less goals, we need the midfield get organised!

SMFC Squad

Goal Keepers	
1	Javier Lopez
30	Jonathan Pithoulas
Defenders	
2	Zak Spiteri
3	Jordan Lampard
4	Marco Jankovic (C)
5	Jake Marshall
6	Lucas Inglese
21	Ross Archibald
23	Morgan Evans
27	Jack Painter-Andrews
Midfielders	
8	Cooper Halfpenny
10	George Mells
13	Luca Durso
22	Max Mikkola
88	Charlie Leech
99	Jack Pope
Forwards	
7	Andy Brennan
9	Gustav Moller
11	Rob Harding
16	Andre Skapoulas
19	Andrew Mesourouni
24	Nahuel Bonada
26	Campbell Dovison

Player Spotlight



4. Marco Jankovic Defender, Age: 29

Marco Jankovic is a centre back and the current captain of South Melbourne. Hailing from Queensland, he first signed in Victoria for Bentleigh Greens before coming to South for the 2021 season.

He has played over 100 matches for South including over 30 in 2024. He has scored 17 goals for the club including 5 in 2024. He is the son of former Yugoslav international Milan Jankovic.

NPL Fixture

W 1-0	Away	Port Melbourne
W 3-1	Home	Melbourne Knights
D 3-3	Away	Melbourne Victory
L 0-3	Home	St Albans
L 0-2	Away	Preston Lions
L 0-1	Away	Dandenong Thunder
D 1-1	Away	Hume City FC
L 1-3	Home	Dandenong City
D 0-0	Away	Altona Magic
13-Apr	Home	Heidelberg United
25-Apr	Away	Green Gully
3-May	Away	Avondale
11-May	Home	Oakleigh Cannons
18-May	Home	Port Melbourne
23-May	Away	Melbourne Knights
1-Jun	Home	Melbourne Victory
6-Jun	Away	St Albans
15-Jun	Home	Preston Lions
22-Jun	Home	Dandenong Thunder
27-Jun	Home	Hume City FC
4-Jul	Away	Dandenong City
20-Jul	Home	Altona Magic
25-Jul	Away	Heidelberg United
3-Aug	Home	Green Gully
17-Aug	Home	Avondale
23-Aug	Away	Oakleigh Cannons

Rival Watch

Heidelberg United finished 9th in 2023, 4th in 2024 and are on track to do even better this year.

With John Anastasiadis at the helm the team has rebuilt itself into a formidable opponent and is one of the highest scoring teams in the league. They have scored 14 goals in the last four games.

Recent games:
14 March Heidelberg 5 – Hume City 1
21 March Heidelberg 2 – Dandenong City 0
28 March Heidelberg 3 – Altona Magic 1
4 April Heidelberg 4 – Green Gully 1
Top Scorers:
Juach – 6 Goals
Yokokawa – 4 Goals
Ali – 4 Goals
Bisetto – 3 Goals