

Flashback: 2004 NSL Elimination Finals



March 2004 was the last time South Melbourne and Marconi faced each other in national competition. After the regular season where Marconi finished 4th and South finished 5th, the two sides met in a two-legged elimination final.

The first leg was hosted at Marconi Stadium where over 2,000 people saw the teams register a nil-all draw. The second leg at Bob Jane Stadium was more eventful. Michael Curcija scored two goals to give South a 2-0 win in front of over 6,000 people. The win would come to be South Melbourne's final home match in the national top division.

In that final home game, a young Massimo Murdocca turned heads with an impressive performance. In that final season South's coach was Stuart Munro and its captain was Vaughan Coveny. Covo was South's kit sponsor for the season and Crazy John's was the club's major sponsor.

Looking ahead

2025 has truly been a season like no other. South flirted with relegation, replaced their head coach, turned its season around, won the Dockerty Cup, and is now playing in a National Competition Final. The past couple of months have been an amazing experience for fans, not just for what we have seen on-field, but what we have seen off it.

For many younger fans, it was the first time we have experienced South in the summer. Big crowds, passionate community support and the club delivered a vastly more engaging match day experience. But following today's Grand final we must ask, what next?

Next year will be a crazy one and it starts real soon! South will compete in the Oceania Professional League which kicks off in New Zealand in January. The new competition will be intriguing to watch, especially considering Lakeside has not been confirmed as a Melbourne venue due to the clash with the F1! The competition also means the club will have to manage an overlapping NPL season, and likely a larger squad. How will we manage?

The next big question will be how the Australian Championship looks next season. Will we see a growth in crowds or will interest plateau? Hopefully we see improvements which eventually lead to a full Home and Away National second division in the near future!

Finally, what can we do as fans? Well, as South fans, that's quite simple – become a member!!! With an AGM supposedly coming up soon there has never been a better time to get involved!

Blue and White Views

Issue 9

Saturday the 6th of December 2025

Australian Championship
Grand Final

South Melbourne vs
Marconi Stallions

Olympic Village

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Match Preview

South have dominated in the Australian Championship so far. Although many felt the club enjoyed being seeded in a weaker group South's convincing knockout round results against NWS Spirit and Heidelberg have confirmed that they are in fact, the real deal.

Marconi on the other hand, have done only what is required to make the final, narrowly avoiding an embarrassing 6-0 loss to Wollongong, which would have knocked the Stallions out of the competition. Marconi followed their group form with narrow wins in the finals, including a late comeback against Wests APIA and a 1-0 win against Moreton City in difficult conditions.

South will be the favourites today however there is a question of whether they will be able to manage the pressure. This is especially considering Marconi's tendency to play pragmatic football when required. Olympic Village is also a larger pitch which has been unkind to South in the past. It's the site of the humiliating Grand Final loss to Avondale and at the very least, its size will nullify Mikkola's long throw weapon.

As a South fan, the feeling is one of excitement either way. Even without the long throws South have shown an ability to score from multiple plays, through multiple players.

As a final thought, South and Marconi are the only two teams to have played each season of the NSL, and yet today is the first time they will play against each other in a major final!

Let's hope South can get the win!

Paths to the final

South Melbourne

	Home	Score	Away
R1	South Melbourne	3-2	Sydney Olympic
R2	South Melbourne	2-0	Moreton City
R3	Broadmeadow	0-1	South Melbourne
R4	Sydney Olympic	1-2	South Melbourne
R5	Moreton City	3-3	South Melbourne
R6	South Melbourne	2-0	Broadmeadow
QF	South Melbourne	2-0	NWS Spirit
SF	South Melbourne	1-0	Heidelberg

Marconi Stallions

	Home	Score	Away
R1	Heidelberg	1-0	Marconi
R2	Marconi	4-0	South Hobart
R3	Marconi	3-0	Wollongong
R4	Marconi	1-1	Heidelberg
R5	South Hobart	0-2	Marconi
R6	Wollongong	5-0	Marconi
QF	Wests APIA	1-1 (7-8)	Marconi
SF	Marconi	1-0	Moreton City

SMFC Squad

#	Name	Australian Championship Goals
1	Javier Lopez	-
2	Brayden Spink	-
3	Jordon Lampard	3
4	Marco Jankovic	-
5	Jake Marshall	-
6	Lucas Inglese	-
10	Manyluak Aguek	4
11	Yuki Uchida	2
13	Khaled Kaddour	-
14	Alexander Menelaou	-
16	Oliver Lavale	3
17	Thomas Giannakopoulos	-
19	Andrew Mesourouni	-
21	Sebastian Pasquali	-
22	Maximillian Mikkola	1
24	Nahuel Bonada	1
26	Campbell Dovison	-
27	Jack Painter-Andrews	-
28	Thierry Papadimitriou	-
29	Bilal Habib	1
30	Jake Charlston	-
88	Charlie Leech	1
99	Jack Pope	-