

1997 Grand Final Results

Goodwood Saints	75	V	PHOS Camden	68			
1.2	4.5	8.5	11.9	3.0	4.2	10.8	10.8

Best Players: McCarty, P Cox, Ashcroft, Page, D Wakelin, Slee

Goal Kickers: Goodes 4, Ashcroft 2, Ottens 2, Slee, Brkic, Harris

Match Summary

The Saints went in to the 1997 A1 Grand Final confident of a good showing in our first ever A1 decider. Captain Chris Slee won the toss and the Saints kicked to the Bradman stand end in near perfect conditions.

It was PHOS, however, who got off to a bright start with 2 early goals. A period of sustained pressure followed with courageous back pocket Peter McCarty repelling every PHOS attack. The Wakelin brothers Daniel and James battled hard in the ruck allowing the man on man Saints to keep the contest tight. After 22 minutes the Saints were on the board thanks to a sensational check-side goal to full forward Jason Goodes. A late reply to PHOS saw the Saints trail by 10 points at the first break.

The 2nd quarter started positively for the Saints. A left foot goal to Goodes followed by a running goal to Slee had the Saints in front. With Paul Page, Slee and Paul Cox getting on top in the midfield a brilliant left footed snap by Kemal Brkic had the Saints out by 10 points. A late surge by PHOS reduced the Saints lead to just 3 points at the long break.

The game opened up in the 3rd quarter. PHOS kicked the first of the quarter but the Saints responded through centre half forward Chris Ottens. PHOS again piled on the pressure with 2 further goals. Goodes responded with another snapped goal and when Ottens kicked his second for the quarter at the 20 minute mark scores were level. Once again PHOS responded. This time with 3 quick goals. A late goal to Vice Captain Deryck Ashcroft saw the Saints head to the final change 15 points in arrears.

Coach Brenton Honor laid the foundation for a dramatic final term. His vein popping 3 quarter time speech was one out of the box and left the players and all Saints supporters in no doubt that this grand final was there to be won.

The players responded. Goodes kicked his 4th at the 5 minute mark which was followed by a fine goal from Brenton Harris to level the scores. The Saints defence led by McCarty was sensational. David Shaughnessy, Wade Jones, Simon Stapleton, Tom Betts and Veteran Damian Cox all played their hearts out. As both sides tired Ashcroft broke the deadlock with a team lifting goal at the 18 minute mark. From deep in the scoreboard pocket he ducked and weaved and finally to the relief of all Saints fans nailed the goal.

As both sides played desperately the remaining minutes the Saints were able to absorb all of the pressure and come away with a magnificent 7 point victory.

Dual Best & Fairest winner Peter McCarty was a clear best on ground and was well supported by a well drilled and disciplined team. When Honor and Slee raised the Cup for the first time the Saints had achieved what no other Saint team had done before – the clubs first A1 premiership.