

Essendon vs. Brisbane

Head to Head – Essendon vs. Brisbane

Round	Venue	Ess Score	Bris Score	Game Result	Possession Per Score	OPossession Per Score	Essendon StatRating™	Brisbane StatRating™	StatRating™ Margin
2000									
8	Gabba	127	63	64	11.6	16.9	657	319	339
2001									
10	Gabba	74	102	-28	9.8	11.8	492	347	145
GF	MCG	82	108	-26	13.9	11.3	378	603	-225
2002									
3	Gabba	67	117	-50	14.1	10.0	389	622	-233
18	TD	71	108	-37	17.9	10.7	274	506	-232
2003									
1	Gabba	61	104	-43	15.4	8.9	305	768	-463
16	TD	94	86	8	13.3	10.6	353	490	-137
	Average	82	98	-16	13.7	11.5	407	522	-115

Brisbane has definitely had Essendons measure over the past few years, with 5 wins from their last 7 games. Even their loss in round 16 last year was credible, as they out rated the Bombers by 137 StatRating™ points. The Bombers have struggled to rate highly against Brisbane in recent times, and their average of 407 over the past 4 years would have been a lot lower if not for the 657 against Brisbane in round 8 2000. They have not managed to kick over a 100 points since that match against the Lions, whereas Brisbane has done that 5 out of the last 6 matches. Even though the game is being played at Telstra Dome, Brisbane should start favourite in this game.

Essendon – Current Form

Round	Venue	Opp Team	Ess Score	Opp Score	Game Result	Possession Per Score	OPossession Per Score	Essendon StatRating™	Opposition StatRating™	StatRating™ Margin
2004										
7	TD	WB	121	95	26	10.1	11.4	584	463	121
8	AAMI	Adel	135	84	51	7.1	10.0	784	440	344
9	TD	Geel	97	120	-23	10.6	9.4	493	606	-114
10	TD	Freo	115	85	30	10.6	11.5	473	540	-67
11	MCG	Haw	154	80	74	8.3	12.7	639	395	244
Average			124	93	31	9.3	11.0	595	489	106

The Bombers have won 4 of their last 5 games, and are playing very good football. They certainly settled better than Hawthorn after last week's melee, and ran away with the game from that point on. They have been averaging very high scores in this period, albeit against bottom 8 sides. An average StatRating™ of 595 is what would be expected against this opposition, yet the opposition average StatRating™ of 489 is a little high. Of particular concern this week is their possession per score of 8.3 and StatRating™ margin of 244. In recent times, this has signaled a peak for the Bombers, and below are games where Essendon has reached these levels in the past.

Round	Venue	Opp Team	Ess Score	Opp Score	Game Result	Possession Per Score	OPossession Per Score	Essendon StatRating™	Opposition StatRating™	StatRating™ Margin
2002										
1	MCG	Geel	126	76	50	11.1	16.0	632	326	306
2	MCG	Rich	112	60	52	10.5	15.1	552	325	228
8	TD	Stk	171	72	99	8.2	16.1	720	311	409
9	SA	Syd	85	83	2	10.5	10.7	494	532	-38
14	TD	WB	118	118	0	8.5	10.6	726	536	190
15	SUB	WCE	63	90	-27	13.4	12.0	358	460	-101
2003										
8	MCG	Haw	106	53	53	10.0	21.4	622	164	458
9	TD	Port	96	146	-50	10.6	9.7	407	558	-151
10	TD	WCE	128	106	22	9.1	11.1	662	488	175
11	TS	Syd	79	133	-54	12.8	8.8	343	615	-272
14	TD	Stk	119	51	68	9.3	16.9	667	255	412
15	AAMI	Adel	49	90	-41	17.1	12.2	210	433	-223
21	TD	Freo	133	73	60	9.6	16.3	616	270	346
22	MCG	Coll	67	83	-16	12.9	12.6	364	412	-48
2004										
4	MCG	Carl	117	80	37	9.0	13.0	633	338	295
5	MCG	Coll	112	79	33	11.5	12.3	444	381	63

The figures highlighted in light blue represent current playing criteria, while the figures in red show the game result in the following week, and the cells highlighted in Green indicate Essendon's StatRating™ in the following week. The 2002 form was very good, with 2 wins and 1 loss. Since then, they have 4 losses and 1 win against an undermanned Collingwood on ANZAC day. More of a concern is their StatRating™ in the following week. Since round 2 2002, their form is littered with 300's and 400' in the following week. Their record against Interstate sides in the following week is also poor, with a 2 point win against Sydney, followed up by 4 losses. After a trying week at the tribunal, this is not the kind of form they want going in to a Brisbane game.

Brisbane – Current form

Round	Venue	Opp Team	Bris Score	Opp Score	Game Result	Possession Per Score	OPossession Per Score	Brisbane StatRating™	Opposition StatRating™	StatRating™ Margin
2004										
7	TD	Kang	120	76	44	11.1	15.0	524	328	196
8	Gabba	Carl	140	102	38	8.8	12.4	680	371	309
9	SUB	Freo	78	137	-59	12.6	9.7	334	649	-315
10	Gabba	Melb	123	83	40	9.3	12.2	604	336	268
11	Gabba	Port	123	86	37	10.0	11.7	590	412	178
Average			117	97	20	10.3	12.2	546	419	127

Brisbane has also won 4 of their last 5, against slightly better opposition than the Bombers. Their averages across the board are good, with a healthy average StatRating™ of 546 to their oppositions 419. 3 games out of their last 5 at the Gabba is the main contributing factor here. The round 9 loss to Fremantle at Subiaco was a blowout, and largely due to the fact of players either injured before the game or during the game. Just goes to show how every team is vulnerable to injuries, even the great Brisbane Lions. Their 4 wins have been in a tight band between 37 and 44 points over the past 5 weeks, and below are recent games where Brisbane have played at these current playing levels.

Round	Venue	Opp Team	Bris Score	Opp Score	Game Result	Possession Per Score	OPossession Per Score	Brisbane StatRating™	Opposition StatRating™	StatRating™ Margin
2003										
3	TD	Kang	109	109	0	10.2	10.0	560	522	39
4	Gabba	Coll	95	81	14	11.2	12.0	446	435	12
5	Gabba	WB	106	79	27	10.2	17.8	548	314	234
6	SS	Geel	92	78	14	11.1	17.0	502	235	267
8	Gabba	Adel	107	89	18	10.3	10.9	534	459	75
9	Optus	Carl	153	76	77	9.6	12.8	664	360	304
10	Gabba	Melb	123	63	60	10.3	20.4	602	225	377
11	TD	Stk	85	90	-5	14.7	13.6	307	419	-112
SF	Gabba	Adel	124	82	42	9.0	13.4	598	382	216
PF	TS	Syd	100	56	44	9.7	15.3	503	255	249
2004										
1	Gabba	Syd	80	78	2	10.4	13.7	441	386	55
2	AAMI	Adel	104	83	21	9.9	9.1	455	613	-158
10	Gabba	Melb	123	83	40	9.3	12.2	604	336	268
11	Gabba	Port	123	86	37	10.0	11.7	590	412	178

The figures highlighted in light blue represent current playing criteria, while the figures in red show the game result in the following week, and the cells highlighted in Green indicate the Lions StatRating™ in the following week. There are 7 games that match these current criteria over the past year, and their only blotch was a 5 point loss to the Saints in round 11 last year, when they started their form slump, which saw them lose 5 games in 7 weeks. Unless they are to start a similar slump this week, their winning trend should continue. Their StatRating™ in the following week has been a lot higher than the Bombers, with 400's and 500's the norm. They've managed to perform well in the following week both at home and away. Their opposition has not kicked over 100 points in the following week following these current playing levels, averaging 79 points.

Essendon – Form at Telstra Dome

Round	Venue	Opp Team	Ess Score	Opp Score	Game Result	Possession Per Score	OPossession Per Score	Essendon StatRating™	Opposition StatRating™	StatRating™ Margin
2002										
4	TD	Adel	122	81	41	10.7	11.7	495	477	18
8	TD	Stk	171	72	99	8.2	16.1	720	311	409
11	TD	Port	49	108	-59	15.2	10.5	289	457	-168
13	TD	Melb	120	108	12	10.2	10.8	469	603	-134
14	TD	WB	118	118	0	8.5	10.6	726	536	190
16	TD	Geel	56	95	-39	17.1	12.1	234	437	-203
18	TD	Bris	71	108	-37	17.9	10.7	274	506	-232
21	TD	Freo	93	72	21	11.4	14.1	597	277	320
EF	TD	WCE	111	78	33	14.1	11.8	398	490	-93
		Average	101	93	8	12.6	12.0	467	455	12
2003										
4	TD	WB	129	110	19	11.3	11.1	441	539	-98
9	TD	Port	96	146	-50	10.6	9.7	407	558	-151
10	TD	WCE	128	106	22	9.1	11.1	662	488	175
12	TD	Kang	88	96	-8	12.0	11.7	415	429	-14
13	TD	Geel	129	93	36	10.9	17.1	540	281	258
14	TD	Stk	119	51	68	9.3	16.9	667	255	412
16	TD	Bris	94	86	8	13.3	10.6	353	490	-137
19	TD	WB	147	80	67	9.2	14.3	709	336	374
21	TD	Freo	133	73	60	9.6	16.3	616	270	346
		Average	118	93	25	10.6	13.2	534	405	129
2004										
2	TD	Stk	60	94	-34	16.6	11.6	266	509	-243
3	TD	WCE	137	131	6	11.9	9.1	513	592	-78
7	TD	WB	121	95	26	10.1	11.4	584	463	121
9	TD	Geel	97	120	-23	10.6	9.4	493	606	-114
10	TD	Freo	115	85	30	10.6	11.5	473	540	-67
		Average	106	105	1	11.9	10.6	466	542	-76

The Bombers form at Telstra Dome has always been first class, although this year, is not that crash hot. Yes, they have won 3 of their 5 games at this venue this year, but sides like West Coast and Fremantle have poor records at this ground, while the Western Bulldogs are a bottom 4 side. Their were legitimate excuses in round 2 against the Saints as the bombers fielded an ordinary side due to injury constraints, but no excuses in 9 when Geelong outplayed them. Even with this quality of opposition, they have only been able to post higher StatRating™ figures than the opposition on 1 occasion. They have been on average 76 StatRating™ points down on teams played at this venue this year. An average opposition StatRating™ of 542 is way above average for the Bombers at this ground, with the Western Bulldogs scoring the lowest against them this year at 463. That being the case, what kind of StatRating™ will Brisbane score against them this week?

Brisbane – Form at Telstra Dome

Round	Venue	Opp Team	Bris Score	Opp Score	Game Result	Possession Per Score	OPossession Per Score	Brisbane StatRating™	Opposition StatRating™	StatRating™ Margin
2002										
4	TD	WB	94	78	16	11.8	18.3	482	224	257
8	TD	Coll	111	114	-3	9.1	10.9	640	413	227
15	TD	Rich	118	55	63	10.9	15.6	562	314	248
18	TD	Ess	108	71	37	10.7	17.9	506	274	232
		Average	108	80	28	10.6	15.7	547	306	241
2003										
3	TD	Kang	109	109	0	10.2	10.0	560	522	39
11	TD	Stk	85	90	-5	14.7	13.6	307	419	-112
16	TD	Ess	86	94	-8	10.6	13.3	490	353	137
22	TD	WB	170	86	84	9.2	15.0	761	353	408
		Average	113	95	18	11.2	13.0	530	412	118
2004										
6	TD	StK	91	92	-1	14.3	10.7	349	521	-173
7	TD	Kang	120	76	44	11.1	15.0	524	328	196
		Average	106	84	22	12.7	12.8	436	425	12

The Lions form at Telstra Dome is not as impressive as Essendons may look, but its not far off. They have recorded 2 StatRating™ performance's in the 300's over the past 3 years, and both where against Stkilda. Other than those 2 losses, they have a 3 point loss to Collingwood and an 8 point loss to Essendon, where they outscored both sides in StatRating™ points. They have continually managed to keep opposition StatRating™ levels low over the past 3 years, and have a great chance to improve on that record this week.

Essendon - Games against Top 8 sides

Round	Venue	Opp Team	Ess Score	Opp Score	Game Result	Possession Per Score	OPossession Per Score	Essendon StatRating™	Opposition StatRating™	StatRating™ Margin
2004										
1	AAMI	Port	62	158	-96	12.5	8.5	391	740	-350
2	TD	Stk	60	94	-34	16.6	11.6	266	509	-243
6	MCG	Syd	108	98	10	9.6	11.1	522	433	89
9	TD	Geel	97	120	-23	10.6	9.4	493	606	-114
10	TD	Freo	115	85	30	10.6	11.5	473	540	-67
		Average	88	111	-23	12.0	10.4	429	566	-137

The Bombers had the misfortune of meeting 2 current top 8 sides in their first 2 rounds when ravaged by injuries, so the averages are a little askew. From rounds 6 to 10 though they have been competitive, with an average StatRating™ of 496 to the opposition's 526. Even though they have this discrepancy in averages, they have managed to win 2 of their last 3 games against current top 8 sides..

Brisbane - Games against Top 8 sides

Round	Venue	Opp Team	Bris Score	Opp Score	Game Result	Possession Per Score	OPossession Per Score	Brisbane StatRating™	Opposition StatRating™	StatRating™ Margin
2004										
1	Gabba	Syd	80	78	2	10.4	13.7	441	386	55
6	TD	StK	91	92	-1	14.3	10.7	349	521	-173
9	SUB	Freo	78	137	-59	12.6	9.7	334	649	-315
10	Gabba	Melb	123	83	40	9.3	12.2	604	336	268
11	Gabba	Port	123	86	37	10.0	11.7	590	412	178
Average			99	95	4	11.3	11.6	464	461	3

Brisbane has also been competitive against these top 8 sides, with the Fremantle debacle being previously discussed. They have won all 3 home games, and lost their 2 away games. Slightly better averages than the Bombers, but not a convincing stat to differentiate the teams on.

Essendon – StatRating™ greater than 600

Round	Venue	Opp Team	Ess Score	Opp Score	Game Result	Possession Per Score	OPossession Per Score	Essendon StatRating™	Opposition StatRating™	StatRating™ Margin
2002										
1	MCG	Geel	126	76	50	11.1	16.0	632	326	306
2	MCG	Rich	112	60	52	10.5	15.1	552	325	228
8	TD	Stk	171	72	99	8.2	16.1	720	311	409
9	SA	Syd	85	83	2	10.5	10.7	494	532	-38
14	TD	WB	118	118	0	8.5	10.6	726	536	190
15	SUB	WCE	63	90	-27	13.4	12.0	358	460	-101
2003										
8	MCG	Haw	106	53	53	10.0	21.4	622	164	458
9	TD	Port	96	146	-50	10.6	9.7	407	558	-151
10	TD	WCE	128	106	22	9.1	11.1	662	488	175
11	TS	Syd	79	133	-54	12.8	8.8	343	615	-272
14	TD	Stk	119	51	68	9.3	16.9	667	255	412
15	AAMI	Adel	49	90	-41	17.1	12.2	210	433	-223
19	TD	WB	147	80	67	9.2	14.3	709	336	374
20	MCG	Rich	92	53	39	11.8	17.9	508	285	223
21	TD	Freo	133	73	60	9.6	16.3	616	270	346
22	MCG	Coll	67	83	-16	12.9	12.6	364	412	-48
2004										
4	MCG	Carl	117	80	37	9.0	13.0	633	338	295
5	MCG	Coll	112	79	33	11.5	12.3	444	381	63
8	AAMI	Adel	135	84	51	7.1	10.0	784	440	344
9	TD	Geel	97	120	-23	10.6	9.4	493	606	-114

In 2000 and 2001, the Bombers would constantly post StatRating™ figures above 600 most weeks with no apparent signs of a peak. But its been a slightly different story since then. The post 600 StatRating™ has become an indicator that the Bombers have hit a peak in recent years, as they have come back to the pack. While wins against Collingwood and Richmond in recent times make these figures look slightly better, it pretty clear that they don't perform as well in the following week when presented with these current levels. Their average StatRating™ in 2002 following these levels was 468, in 2003 it was 366, and currently this year, it's at 468. This tends to suggest a similar performance this week would not be out of character.

Final Summary

- Head to Head Contests are 5-2 in Brisbane's favour since 2000, with wins at the Gabba, the MCG and Telstra Dome.
- The Bombers current playing levels suggest they will have an ordinary performance this week, considering they may have peaked with a Possession per score of 8.3 and StatRating™ Margin of 244.
- The Brisbane Lions current playing levels show no signs of a fall , and have won 6 of their past 7 matches in the following week from these levels.
- The Dons record at Telstra Dome has been very good in the past, but not as impressive this year. In the 5 games played, they have only posted higher StatRating™ figures than their opposition in 1 game.
- Brisbane record at Telstra Dome has also been good in the past, with 8 points being their highest losing margin since 2001. Have higher average at this venue than the Bombers this year.
- Both sides have similar form against Top 8 sides this season, with little information to be gleaned from this stat.
- The Bombers have not performed well in recent years when their StatRating™ has climbed above 600. They posted a StatRating™ figure of 639 last week.

Current odds on offer from Sports Bookmakers are

Essendon **\$2.15**
Brisbane **\$1.70**

At the Line

Essendon **\$1.90 (+6.5 points)**
Brisbane **\$1.90 (-6.5 points)**

* For the latest odds on offer visit www.onthepunt.com.au

At the line signifies that you will be able to get a better price on Brisbane (\$1.90), but they will have to win by more than 6 points. In the Dons case, you will be offered a lesser price, but they will have the ability to lose by up to 6 points or even win the game, for you to collect. As long as they don't lose by 7 points or more, then you collect.

Odds for this game are still a while away, pending a decision by the melee outcome. It's highly unlikely that many Essendon players will get rubbed out, as most will cop fines. With this in mind, I'm guessing the prices that come out will favour Brisbane slightly. Personally, with the current information contained in the previous 6 pages, the Lions should be much shorter. There's enough to suggest that the Bombers will struggle to post a StatRating™ higher than 450 this week, while the Brisbane Lions should manage that quite easily on current form. With so many players having to front up to the tribunal, it has to have an effect on their preparation for this game, and a side just cannot afford to give Brisbane any advantages outside your normal injuries and current form.

RECOMMENDATION: Brisbane to win, and also at the line. Double the stake on win and single stake at the line -6.5 @ \$1.90 is the recommendation.

GOLD MEMBERSHIP:

Historical StatRating™ figures for Head to Head, current form, and form at the ground suggest the following points range for these teams.

Essendon Predicted StatRating™: 380 – 440
Brisbane Predicted StatRating™: 470 – 530

Points Range: 80 – 92
Points Range: 100 – 112

Would be looking for a spread no more than 6 points here. If it's available, then again well worth taking. Has the possibility to blow out to 5 goals.

ACTUAL SCORE Essendon 14.12.96 (435)

Brisbane 25.12.162 (770)

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