

# Media Release

## The Hon Martin Pakula MP

Minister for the Coordination of Jobs, Precincts and Regions – COVID-19  
Minister for Industry Support and Recovery  
Minister for Trade  
Minister for Business Precincts  
Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events  
Minister for Racing



Wednesday, 28 October 2020

## MCG CONFIRMED AS NATURAL HOME OF BOXING DAY TEST

The 31<sup>st</sup> consecutive Boxing Day Test will be played at the MCG in December, underscoring Melbourne's unique standing in world cricket and backed by a new contract between the ground's manager and Cricket Australia.

A new venue hire agreement between the Melbourne Cricket Club (MCC) and Cricket Australia covers the next three Boxing Day Tests – through to 2022.

The three-year contract was confirmed as Cricket Australia today unveiled its summer schedule – Melbourne's iconic December 26-30 fixture will be the second of four Test matches to be played between Tim Paine's Australians and Virat Kohli's Indian team.

The Victorian Government, MCC and Cricket Australia will develop a rigorous COVIDSafe plan based on the most up-to-date public health advice to enable a limited number of fans to safely attend the Test this year.

Crowd numbers will be confirmed closer to the match, but will be capped at around 25,000 spectators – a quarter of the MCG's capacity.

The Border-Gavaskar Trophy is one of the most fiercely contested in cricket and world number-one Australia will be seeking to take it back from the visitors this summer. India won the last Boxing Day Test played between the two sides, in 2018 when victory confirmed it would retain the trophy.

Australia is scheduled to play home series against England in 2021 and South Africa in 2022, ensuring a mouth-watering menu of international cricket for Melbourne and Victoria.

The first MCG Boxing Day Test was played in 1950, against England. Since 1980 there has been only one year – 1989 – which has not featured a post-Christmas Test match at the ground.

The Boxing Day Test joins a long list of marquee sporting events under contract to Victoria. The AFL Grand Final will be played at the MCG until at least 2058 while the Australian Open is locked in at Melbourne Park for another 16 years – until 2036.

Long-term contracts for the Formula One Australian Grand Prix at Albert Park (2025) and Australian MotoGP at Phillip Island (2026) are also in place.

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events, Martin Pakula

*"Melbourne is Australia's unchallenged sporting and events capital and the Boxing Day Test is one of the cornerstones of our renowned annual calendar."*

*"This has been a tough year and it will be just reward for many to have the opportunity to watch the Aussies take on India at our cathedral of sport. And to have the fixture locked in until 2022 is fantastic."*

### Quote attributable to Cricket Australian chairman Earl Eddings

*"Come Boxing Day, it will be 291 days since the MCG hosted Australia's win in the ICC Women's T20 World Cup final – we can't wait to host another iconic match at the MCG."*

### Quote attributable to Melbourne Cricket Club chief executive Stuart Fox

*"The MCG hosted the first ever Test match in 1877 and holds a special place in the heart of cricket fans – we're excited to be welcoming the Indian team this year and England and South Africa in the summers to follow."*

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