

Mitchell voted AFL Players' MVP

Thursday 30 August

Tom Mitchell's record-breaking season in Hawthorn's midfield has been celebrated with the 2018 AFL Players' Most Valuable Player Award.

Mitchell claimed the Leigh Matthews Trophy with 773 votes from his peers, ahead of Carlton young gun Patrick Cripps (529 votes) and Melbourne ruckman Max Gawn (412 votes).

Last year's most valuable player Richmond's Dustin Martin (304 votes) and Sydney star forward Lance Franklin (291 votes) rounded out the top five.

Mitchell accepted the trophy from Leigh Matthews in front of more than 400 people at the 37th AFL Players' MVP Awards in Melbourne.

[CLICK HERE TO READ MITCHELL'S TEAMMATES TAKE ON THE MVP](#)

AFL Players' Association President Patrick Dangerfield applauded Mitchell's work rate and reliability in a season where the Hawthorn ball-magnet became the first player to collect 50 disposals or more in a match on multiple occasions.

"Tom has been in rare touch this year, highlighted by his incredible ability to get from contest to contest and win a truckload of footy throughout the season," he said.

"He may seem like an unassuming figure off the field but he is as competitive as anyone on the park.

"He's been the league's most consistent performer and a massive factor in Hawthorn's resurgence into a premiership contender."

Other awards presented earlier in the evening included the Robert Rose Most Courageous Player Award, presented by the Movember Foundation, which was won by Greater Western Sydney co-captain Callan Ward (129 votes) ahead of Western Bulldogs veteran Dale Morris (115 votes).

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Geelong's Tim Kelly was recognised by his peers for an exceptional debut season with the Best First Year Player (380 votes) Award, presented by The Line. Kelly was a clear winner ahead of runner-up and Collingwood forward Jaidyn Stephenson (173 votes).

[CLICK HERE TO READ ABOUT KELLY'S JOURNEY TO BEST FIRST YEAR](#)



After last year leading his team to the first Richmond premiership since 1980, Trent Cotchin (249 votes) was named the league's Best Captain, presented by the Vintage Football Jumper Company.

[CLICK HERE TO READ ABOUT COTCHIN'S LEADERSHIP, AS TOLD BY FORMER CAPTAIN](#)

For the fifth year running, Marcus Bontempelli was selected in the AFL Players' 2018 22Under22 fan-voted team. He was also named captain of the team in his final year of eligibility with 2017 Melbourne best and fairest winner Clayton Oliver the team's vice-captain.

The 40-man squad was narrowed to the best 22 players aged 22 and under as voted by footy fans. To be eligible for selection, players had to be aged 22 or younger for the entire AFL season, including finals.

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW THE FULL TEAM](#)

Fremantle veteran David Mundy and Western Bulldogs AFLW player and obstetrician Tiarna Ernst were each given the Education and Training Excellence Award, presented by La Trobe University, for their commitment to their studies away from the football field.

For her emotional interview with Adelaide's Hugh Greenwood, Fox Footy's Neroli Meadows took out the Grant Hattam Award for Excellence in Sports Journalism, presented by Macpherson and Kelley Lawyers.

Winners and top polling players

Leigh Matthews Trophy for the Most Valuable Player

Tom Mitchell - 773
Patrick Cripps - 529
Max Gawn - 412
Dustin Martin - 304
Lance Franklin - 291

Robert Rose Most Courageous Award, presented by the Movember Foundation

Callan Ward - 129
Dale Morris - 115
Joel Selwood - 77
Kade Simpson - 73
Ben Stratton - 53

Best First Year Player Award, presented by The Line

Tim Kelly - 380
Jaidyn Stephenson - 173
Cam Rayner - 38
Jack Higgins - 25
Ed Richards - 25

Best Captain, presented by the Vintage Football Jumper Company

Trent Cotchin - 249

Shannon Hurn - 68

Scott Pendlebury - 68

Joel Selwood - 51

Callan Ward - 42

MVP Voting Process

MVP voting is a two-stage process, beginning with each player voting for the three teammates he considers to have been the most valuable this season. Each club's votes are then tallied to form a nomination list comprising 54 players across the 18 teams.

In the second round of voting, all players vote for their MVP on a 3, 2, 1 basis from the nominees of the 17 other clubs. The votes are tallied and the player with the highest score wins the honour of MVP. Players cannot vote for their own teammates in stage two of the process.

A similar process is followed for Best First Year Player and Most Courageous, but every captain is automatically nominated for the Best Captain Award.

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