

DUSTY CLAIMS FIRST MVP

Media release

Tuesday, September 12

Richmond Tigers star Dustin Martin has been rewarded for his outstanding 2017 season with the AFL Players' Association Most Valuable Player award.

Martin claimed the Leigh Matthews Trophy with 1333 votes, ahead of last year's AFLPA MVP Geelong's Patrick Dangerfield (776 votes) and GWS Giants young gun Josh Kelly (416 votes).

Rounding out the top five was Adelaide Crows midfielder Rory Sloane (267 votes) and Sydney Swans star forward Lance Franklin (215 votes).

Martin accepted the trophy from Leigh Matthews in front of more than 450 people at the 36th AFL Players' MVP Awards at Melbourne's Peninsula at Docklands.

"It's an honour to be named MVP by the guys I play with, and against every week. I'm incredibly humbled by this," Martin said.

AFL Players' Association CEO Paul Marsh praised Martin's individual performances across the season, in which he has played a pivotal role in his team's top four finish and first finals win in more than 15 years.

"In a year where Dusty has dealt with a lot of off-field noise, he's managed to not only block it out, but take his game to another level, wowing us all with his power, skill and poise under pressure," he said.

"Dusty has performed at an incredibly high standard week-in-week-out this season and being named the most valuable player by his peers will no doubt be one of many awards he receives for his exceptional year."

Underlining Martin's consistency throughout the season underlined by the fact that he was nominated for the AFL Players' MVP of the Month award in every voting period.

[CLICK HERE TO HEAR FROM MARTIN'S TEAMMATE AND FRIEND SHAUN GRIGG](#)

Several other awards were presented throughout the night, including the Robert Rose Most Courageous Player Award presented by Australian Almonds, which was won by Adelaide's Rory Sloane.

[CLICK HERE TO READ FORMER AFL FOOTBALLER SAM BLEASE'S COLUMN ON HIS FORMER EASTERN RANGES TEAMMATE RORY SLOANE](#)



No.1 draft pick and Rising Star winner Andrew McGrath added to his accolades by taking out the Best First Year Player award, presented by Tissot, followed closely by Port Adelaide's Sam Powell-Pepper.

[CLICK HERE TO READ JAMES KELLY'S COLUMN ON HIS TEAMMATE ANDY MCGRATH](#)

Adelaide Crow's captain Taylor Walker was crowned the competition's Best Captain, presented by Kieser, for the second year running, taking out the award in front of Sydney's Josh Kennedy and Geelong's Joel Selwood.

[CLICK HERE TO READ ABOUT TAYLOR WALKER'S BACK-TO-BACK BEST CAPTAIN AWARDS](#)

The AFL Players' 2017 22Under22 fan-voted team was also revealed, with Bulldog Marcus Bontempelli elected captain and Essendon's Zach Merrett named vice-captain.

After more than 6,000 fan votes from all over Australia, the 40-man squad was narrowed to the best 22 players aged 22 and under. 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 22UNDER22 SQUAD](#)

The Education and Training Excellence Award, presented by La Trobe University, was awarded to Carlton's Ed Curnow and GWS Giants' AFLW player Renee Forth.

[CLICK HERE TO READ ABOUT CURNOW AND FORTH'S OFF-FIELD EXPERIENCES](#)

Fox Footy took out the Grant Hattam Award for Excellence in Sports Journalism, presented by Macpherson and Kelley Lawyers, for their online video series featuring Fremantle's captain Nat Fyfe and his journey back from injury.

Winners and top polling players

MVP

- 1) Dustin Martin – 1333 votes
- 2) Patrick Dangerfield – 776 votes
- 3) Josh Kelly – 416 votes
- 4) Rory Sloane – 267 votes
- 5) Lance Franklin – 215 votes

Most Courageous

- 1) Rory Sloane – 188 votes
- 2) Joel Selwood – 133 votes
- 3) Callan Ward – 89 votes
- 4) Luke Hodge – 77 votes

5) Dale Morris – 71 votes

Best First Year

- 1) Andrew McGrath – 274 votes
- 2) Sam Powell-Pepper – 250 votes
- 3) Sam Petrevski-Seton – 48 votes
- 4) Will Hayward – 35 votes
- 5) Tom Stewart – 25 votes

Best Captain

- 1) Taylor Walker – 140 votes
- 2) Josh P Kennedy – 125 votes
- 3) Joel Selwood – 100 votes
- 4) Jarryd Roughead – 87 votes
- 5) Bob Murphy – 46 votes

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.

-ENDS-