Footy Frank – *noun*: a frankfurter, especially of the type sold at football games.

*From the forthcoming new (5th) edition of the Australian Concise Oxford Dictionary*
Footy Frank

The story behind the Word of the Month

Footy franks seem to have begun their life as a proprietary term of the Hutton's Company, associated with the advertisement: 'Don't argue, don't argue ... Hutton's Footy Franks are best.' They were often giveaways to footballers on the Sunday lunchtime footy shows. But is there any justification for putting an entry for footy frank into an Australian dictionary? Recent evidence collected at the Australian National Dictionary Centre suggests that footy frank has become a general term in Australian English for a frankfurt. The footy frank often appears in a list of such sausages ranging in size from little boys or cocktail frankfurts to grown-up frankfurts and footy franks.

Footy franks remind people not just of football in general, but especially of the Grand Final. In September 1997 the Melbourne Herald Sun reported: ‘Along with pictures of sausage rolls, footy franks and meat pies was a Grand Final Cake—decked in red, white and blue, and with icing that said “Go the Dogs”.’ In September 2001 the Kalgoorlie Miner suggested that footy franks and the AFL Grand Final are inextricably linked: ‘At last, the MCG’s surface is dry, Julie Anthony has emerged from the crypt and the Coles cold section is fully stocked with Hutton’s Footy Franks. That one day in September is upon us.’

Footy franks also became Australia-defining icons, as when they were associated with consumerism in the Kath and Kim comedy show: ‘At the heart of the mother and daughter duo is their avid consumerism: they love to shop, they love to talk about shopping, brand names fall from their lips faster than sale prices on Boxing Day. Sharon’s idea of a big night involves Footy Franks and Tia Maria. It’s part of what defines and locates the characters’ (Age, August 2007).

The footy frank has broken free of its sauce-covered literalness, and has become the source of metaphor, as in these examples:

Fans sweated 10-deep along the Grand Final Parade route. People in plastic replica guernseys steamed in the sun like footy franks in a microwave oven. (Herald-Sun, September 1999)

Her aside was greeted with a blank look of confusion from the handsome teenager who was blessed with the personality of a footy frank and a similar bulge in his impossibly tight jeans. (West Australian, April 2005)

The footy frank has become a firm part of Australian English, and has earned its place in the dictionary.