MCC CLUB XI COMPETITION
MENTAL FITNESS ROUND

ROUND 3 | 8 NOVEMBER 2026



WHAT WE ARE ASKING OF CLUBS AND MEMBERS

The Mental Fitness Round is an opportunity for our competition to pause, reflect and promote the importance of mental fitness across our clubs and community.

ON MATCH DAY, WE ASK CLUBS TO:

1. Have both teams line up alongside the pitch, as shown above.
2. Ask a captain, club leader and/or umpire to lead the moment.
3. Share the short message on the next page, if someone is comfortable speaking.
4. Observe one minute's silence before play.
5. Take a respectful photo and share it with the competition.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Mental fitness matters for everyone. By speaking about it openly, we help build stronger clubs, stronger relationships and a stronger cricket community.



WHY MENTAL FITNESS MATTERS

Mental fitness matters for everyone. It helps us handle pressure, build resilience and stay strong for our family and friends. The more we embrace it, the more we show those around us that looking after mental health matters and that seeking support is a strength.

WHO SHOULD LEAD THIS?

Captains, club leaders and/or umpires are asked to lead this moment.

SUGGESTED WORDS BEFORE PLAY

> *The Mental Fitness Round is a round where we as a competition focus on the importance of our mental fitness. We all have a responsibility to ourselves, family and friends to work on this and to seek help when we need it. Being aware of our mental fitness and working on it every day will help build resilience for the times we need it most.*

Keep it brief, respectful and genuine.

MENTAL HEALTH STATISTICS IN AUSTRALIA

These figures are a reminder that mental health matters in every community — including cricket.

42.9%
Australians aged 16–85 had experienced a mental disorder at some time in their life.

1 IN 5
Australians (21.5%) had a 12-month mental disorder.

17.2%
Anxiety disorders were the most common 12-month disorder group.

38.8%
People aged 16–24 had a 12-month mental disorder.



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, National Study of Mental Health and Wellbeing, 2020–2022.

THE FUNDAMENTALS

Eat well, sleep well & exercise

These everyday basics are a strong foundation for mental fitness. They help support mood, energy, focus and resilience.

EAT WELL

Regular meals, plenty of water, fruit, vegetables and whole foods help support mood and energy. Try to limit alcohol and highly processed foods.



SLEEP WELL

Keep a regular sleep routine. Wind down before bed, reduce screens late at night and aim for enough sleep to recover well.



EXERCISE

Move most days. Walk, run, swim, train or get outside. Even short bursts of exercise can help reduce stress and lift your mood.



THESE BASICS ARE NOT EVERYTHING, BUT THEY ARE A STRONG PLACE TO START.

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PRIORITISE WHAT MATTERS

Reducing stress, saying no and staying socially connected

Mental fitness is strengthened when we focus on what matters, manage our load and stay connected to the people around us.

1. **PRIORITISE THE ESSENTIALS**
   Focus on what matters most, break big jobs into smaller steps and ask for help when you need it.

2. **LEARN TO SAY NO**
   It is OK to protect your time and energy. Overcommitting can leave you stressed and stretched.

3. **TAKE BREAKS AND RESET**
   Step away, breathe, get outside or slow down for a few minutes when pressure starts to build.

4. **STAY SOCIALLY CONNECTED**
   Talk to teammates, family and friends. Connection helps us feel supported, grounded and less isolated.

You do not need to do everything.
Protecting your time and wellbeing matters.



MENTAL EXERCISES

Small daily practices can build calm, perspective and resilience.

Just like physical fitness, mental fitness can be strengthened through regular practice.

1 MEDITATION OR SLOW BREATHING

Even five quiet minutes can help slow racing thoughts, settle your body and improve focus.

2 PRACTISING GRATITUDE

Write down or reflect on a few things you appreciate. Gratitude helps shift attention toward what is good.

3 TRAINING YOUR BRAIN TO NOTICE THE POSITIVES

Notice what went well, what you learned or what made you smile. This helps build a more balanced perspective.

Like physical training, mental training works best when practised regularly.



HOW TO SUPPORT A FRIEND OR FAMILY MEMBER

Mental Health First Aid principles

You do not need to have all the answers to make a difference. A calm, supportive conversation can help someone feel heard and connected.

1. **NOTICE THE SIGNS**
   Look for changes in mood, behaviour, energy, attendance or connection.
2. **CHOOSE THE RIGHT MOMENT**
   Pick a private, calm time when you are able to listen properly.
3. **ASK AND LISTEN**
   Use open questions, listen without judgement and avoid trying to fix everything straight away.
4. **SHOW SUPPORT**
   Let them know you care and focus on what they need, not on your own assumptions.
5. **ENCOURAGE PROFESSIONAL HELP**
   Suggest support from a GP, psychologist, counsellor or support line if appropriate.
6. **FOLLOW UP**
   Check in again later and respect their pace, choices and privacy.

If someone is in immediate danger, call 000.
Look after yourself too — supporting someone can be emotionally demanding.

DAVID HOOPER MEMORIAL TROPHY



As part of the MCC Club XI Mental Fitness Round, Melbourne Cricket Club will play Old Trinity for the David Hooper Memorial Trophy.

David played cricket with Old Geelong Cricket Club and was a much-loved member of the cricket community.

David lived with schizophrenia and depression. In 2016, he died by suicide.

The annual trophy honours David's memory and reminds us why conversations about mental health, support and connection matter.

Ten years on, David is still sorely missed. MCC and Old Trinity continue to play this annual game in his memory, and the wider MCC Club XI Competition has embraced the Mental Fitness Round.





A LASTING LEGACY

The David Hooper Memorial Trophy has been the catalyst for expanding the important message of mental fitness across the entire competition. It serves both to remember and honour a great friend of the competition, and to shine a light on the importance of mental health within our community.

HOW TO GET SUPPORT



If you or someone you know needs support, there are trusted places to start. Seeking help is a sign of strength.

START HERE

Talk to someone you trust and make an appointment with your GP. A GP can help you access the right care and a Mental Health Treatment Plan if needed.

USEFUL SUPPORT SERVICES

Lifeline — 13 11 14
24/7 crisis support.

Beyond Blue — 1300 22 4636
Support for anxiety, depression and mental health concerns.

Medicare Mental Health — 1800 595 212
Information, advice and referral to local mental health services.

headspace — 1800 650 890
Support for young people aged 12–25 and their families.

If someone is in immediate danger, call 000.

You do not have to do this alone.
Help is available.