

Reconciliation Round

7 – 9 February 2025



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF ABORIGINAL PLAYERS

Cricket is not only a great game, it is one that has a rich history of Aboriginal engagement in Australia's favourite sport.

Historical records mention the involvement of Aboriginal people playing cricket over 220 years ago, in the early days of the European settlement at Sydney. Of note is the 1866 Boxing Day Match between an Aboriginal Team and the MCC, played at the MCG, the 150th anniversary of which was celebrated at the Test Match between Australia and Pakistan at the same venue in 2016.

The 1866 match was the precursor to the 1868 tour of England by an all-Aboriginal side, making it the first team of any sport to represent Australia internationally, 14 years before the first Ashes tour.

In the 1880s, the New Norcia Mission was home to an Aboriginal cricket team whose brilliant wins by huge margins earned them the nickname 'The Invincibles'.

In 1958 Faith Thomas became the first Aboriginal woman to represent Australia in any sport. In 2019 Ashleigh Gardiner became the second Aboriginal woman to gain test match honours with the Australian Women's Team.

The 1988 bicentennial celebrations included a second tour to England of an all-Aboriginal team. It was captained by Western Australia's John McGuire,

a well-respected batsman who scored over 10,000 first grade runs in WA Cricket Premier Cricket.

It was not until 1996 for the first Indigenous Australian male, Jason Gillespie, to play cricket for Australia.

Since then, Cricket Australia and WA Cricket have focussed on greater diversity in cricket and we now have increased numbers of Aboriginal people, women and girls, and people from diverse cultural and other backgrounds playing our great game.



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Australian Cricket - Reconciliation Round

Across Australia clubs and associations are encouraged to use their matches at the beginning of February as an opportunity to demonstrate cricket's commitment to Reconciliation.

Our vision for reconciliation is Cricket Connecting Country, uniting and inspiring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous Australians to find common ground and thrive through cricket. Cricket is a shared passion of many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous Australians. Having a national and global profile, Cricket Australia understands the sphere of influence we have in contributing to the nation's reconciliation journey. As a truly national sport, Cricket Australia plays a vital role in respectfully engaging with communities and stakeholders of many diverse cultural backgrounds right across Australia. Cricket also attracts thousands of International visitors annually to Australia to attend our major events. As a result, we have a responsibility to ensure those visiting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Countries are appropriately welcomed and informed about the planet's oldest living cultures (Cricket Australia, 2021).

WA Cricket can offer support for additional opportunities to demonstrate Reconciliation.



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Acknowledgement of Country

An Acknowledgement of Country is an opportunity for anyone to show respect for Traditional Owners and the continuing connection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to Country.

I'd like to begin by acknowledging the Traditional Owners of the land on which we meet today, the <<insert people>> of the <<insert nation>> and pay my respects to Elders past and present.

Welcome to Country

A Welcome should be performed by **Elders from the local tribe**. Inviting a local representative who has traditional local links is an acknowledgement of respect for Traditional Owners. Welcome to Country has been part of Aboriginal culture in Western Australia for thousands of years. Welcome to Country is **given by an Elder, Traditional Custodian, or recognised spokesperson of the local Aboriginal community**. It is given to open proceedings at an event by welcoming you, your organisation and visitors to Country.

How to Connect – Contact local LGA's, Aboriginal Corporations or WA Cricket.

When – 4 – 6 weeks prior to event to allow time to liaise and to be respectful.



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Barefoot Circle

The one consistent act Cricket Australia and WA Cricket will encourage all clubs to do, is the pre-match barefoot circle and commitment to reconciliation statement.

The barefoot circle is a way for players and officials to take a moment prior to matches to acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land, connect to each other as opponents and pay respect to the country (land).

This is done barefoot, to connect to country, but also a moment to reflect that we are all on common ground, we are all human beings, and we need to stand strong with each other, for each other. The circle is a sign of support and commitment to walk together toward Reconciliation.

Clubs will be encouraged to share the image on social media.

A prominent member of the Aboriginal community can be invited to speak on behalf of the local Traditional Owners. Umpires, players or other officials could also read out the Reconciliation Statement (page 3).



Barefoot Circle Statement

Example 1

Today we're taking off our shoes and standing in a circle so we're all together on this land thinking about the people who played cricket before us. We're especially thinking about the Aboriginal people who made up Australia's first ever international cricket team. We're doing this as our commitment to reconciliation. We, <<Club names>>, acknowledge the <<insert people>> of the <<insert nation>> as the Traditional Owners of this country and its waters and that we stand here today. We pay our respects to Elders both past and present.

Example 2

Today we are standing barefoot to connect to Country and acknowledge the <<insert people>> of the <<insert nation>> as the Traditional Owners of this country and its waters and that we stand here today, we pay our respects to their Elders past and present. As representatives of our club, we stand here today against racism in our game.

Example 3

Both teams and umpires have removed their shoes and are forming a Barefoot Circle, a sign of Australian Cricket's commitment to reconciliation. We stand here today as brothers and sisters to acknowledge and pay our respects to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and honour the legacy of the first Australian Cricket Team of 1868, and the feats of the New Norcia 'Invincibles' who made their mark on WA cricket in the 1880's. As representatives of the <<Club names>> we are proud to be standing on Aboriginal land today, making a commitment to reconciliation. As a united cricket family we will now walk together toward a connected country. We, <<Club names>>, acknowledge the <<insert people>> of the <<insert nation>> as the Traditional Owners of this country and its waters and that we stand here today. We pay our respects to Elders both past and present.



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Examples



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Addressing Racism

Cricket is a sport for all, and racism is not tolerated. It is important to understand what racism looks like, the effects it can have on people and how to report.

Resources:

- [Commit to learn about racism and the effects it has](#)
- [Understand what it takes to being anti-racist](#)
- [Guide to Bystander Intervention](#)



WHERE TO FIND HELP FOR MENTAL HEALTH

- Email: Chris.Haydock@wacrocket.com.au
- Ph: 0410 814 882
- [Visit the WA Cricket Website for more information](#)

If you or someone you know needs support with mental health visit the [True Sport - Mental Health and Wellbeing Community Links](#) page or scan the QR code to find a number of links to organisations that can help.



Head to Health
Head to Health provides free advice and connection to local mental health services to best suit your needs.
Call 1800 595 212 between 8:30am to 5pm on weekdays (public holidays excluded)
headtohealth.gov.au

Crises response: responding to a suicide concern or other mental health crises

Lifeline 24-hour crises counselling lifeline.org.au 13 11 14 or Text 0477 13 11 14 (12pm to midnight AEST) or chat online	Suicide call back service Supporting a suicide concern for you or someone else and suicide bereavement. suicidecallbaekservice.org.au 1300 659 467	Bereavement and postvention of suicide
		STANDBY Support and information after a suicide has occurred. standbysupport.com.au 1300 727 247

Mental health and wellbeing information and support: finding information, responding to a general concern or accessing support

Beyond Blue Telephone and online counselling as well as online resources and information. beyondblue.org.au 1300 224 636	Kids Helpline Supporting a suicide concern for you or someone else and suicide bereavement. kidshelpline.com.au 1800 551 800	Headspace Supporting a suicide concern for you or someone else and suicide bereavement. headspace.org.au
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Opportunities

The aim of Reconciliation Round is to strengthen relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous peoples, for the benefit of Western Australian Cricket.

Activities WA Cricket may help support include:

- Pre-match Acknowledgement of Country or Welcome to Country.
- The commission of stumps painted by a local artist, pictured is an example with the WA Aboriginal Team and their stumps. These can be used during the game or on the boundary where players enter and exit the field.
- Club to commission uniforms designed by a local Aboriginal artist.
- Social Media Hashtag - #reconciliationround, @waca_cricket



Who can help?

WA Cricket currently works with the several different people and organisations for WA Cricket events, performances and designs.

We may be able to help you with ideas or support your initiatives. We can also each connect with key people in your local area.

Please note – artworks, performances, ceremonies etc. are considered intellectual property and therefore their usage normally incurs a fee that may vary depending on what is involved.

To get involved or for more information, please contact the WA Cricket.

Please fill out this form for each team from your club that chooses to participant.

<https://forms.office.com/r/D121JC1CC3>

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