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MEDIA RELEASE

Australian Transplant Cricket Club Announces 'Team of the Decade'

The past decade at the Australian Transplant Cricket Club hasn't all been about hitting sixes – it has been about mateship, community and promoting organ and tissue donation to Australia.

This weekend marks the 10th anniversary celebrations for the Australian Transplant Cricket Club (ATCC). That is 10 years of international matches, local matches, great friends and most importantly – 10 years of promoting the life-saving message of organ and tissue donation. The celebrations will be kicked off with a dinner at Ryde Eastwood Leagues Club and followed up the next day with a cricket match against Ryde Cricket Club.

In honour of the last ten years, the ATCC committee have announced a 'Team of the Decade' which includes transplant recipients, all of whom who have been named not only for their cricket skills, but for their sportsmanship, their commitment to the club, and their dedication to the cause.

Each player named in the Team of the Decade is humbled and grateful to be given such a prestigious place, and on Saturday night they will receive a medallion in honour of their position on the side. The medallions will be presented by club patron Mrs Robyn Hookes, wife of the late David Hookes.

"I am thrilled to be a part of such a wonderful celebration. The Australian Transplant Cricket Club is comprised of an inspirational group of men. I am proud to be presenting them with medallions and thank them for their dedication to the club and to promoting transplant awareness."

The Australian Transplant Cricket Club was founded with the objective of giving transplant recipients a platform to get back into competitive sport. The team quickly gained a name for themselves and played a number of matches each season against invitational sides, promoting organ donation and demonstrating the living proof that organ donation works.

Richard Allen, chairman of the ATCC and a transplant surgeon at Sydney's RPA Hospital said, "It is a privilege to be involved with the Australian Transplant Cricket Club. As a surgeon I see a lot of very ill patients, and it is wonderful to get the chance to see those who were once very unwell individuals, now, post-transplant, being out there on the cricket field making the most of the second chance that they have been given.

"While they say that cricket is the gentleman's sport, to call this group of transplant recipients gentlemen would be an understatement. They are so much more than that. They have all put their blood, sweat and tears into this club and we wouldn't be here without it. It puts a smile on my face every time I see our opening bowler running in off a 20 pace run-up using somebody else's lungs," Professor Allen said.

And while the cricket match on Sunday will be fun and games there is a serious message behind it. Each of the players who will take the field owe their life to a generous person – who selflessly gave the greatest gift anyone can give. That is why every time an ATCC XI takes the field, there are 22 lives being represented.

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