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Beyond Blue and Hawthorn Football Club call on fans to ‘play their role’

Beyond Blue and Community Partner Hawthorn Football Club are encouraging football fans to get involved in the Play Your Role campaign ahead of the 2022 AFL Beyond Blue Cup.

The Hawks are set to take on the Magpies at the MCG this weekend in what will be the club’s 17th consecutive year playing for the Cup.

The Beyond Blue Cup seeks to shine a light on mental health, encouraging meaningful and open conversations that aim to support and maintain positive wellbeing, as well as reduce the stigma attached to mental health issues.

Fans are encouraged to make an online commitment to support their mates in one of the following ways:

- **Look** out for changes in behaviour that may be a sign a mate might be struggling. They might seem on edge or are less social than usual.
- **Ask** how they are going. Even if they say they’re fine, checking in shows you care.
- **Listen** openly and without judgement if a mate says they’re not fine.
- **Support** a mate by making sure they know you’re there for them and connect them with support if they need it.

Fans are encouraged to explain how they are the best teammate they can be by entering the Play Your Role competition at www.beyondblue.org.au/playyourrole ahead of the game.

Chosen from the pool of submissions, winners will receive two tickets to this weekend’s game against Collingwood and will be able to walk onto the MCG to view the teams’ warm-up. There will also be a major winner drawn who will receive a 2022 Hawthorn team-signed guernsey and a 2023 Hawthorn Football Club membership.

Beyond Blue CEO Georgie Harman said the strong community partnership with the Hawks continues to spark important conversations about mental health.

“As we gather with our friends and family once again to watch the Cup, let’s consider how we can support one another, check in and have each other’s backs,” Ms Harman said.

“Sport offers a great platform to connect and support others on and off the field, to make mental health a part of everyday conversations, to reduce stigma and encourage support-seeking.

“I want to thank the Hawthorn Football Club for their invaluable partnership as we work together to support the community.”

Hawthorn CEO Justin Reeves said Hawthorn was proud of the impact the partnership with Beyond Blue has been able to have over a long period of time.

“Hawthorn is proud to once again host the Beyond Blue Cup and play a valuable role in advocating the importance of creating conversations and remembering to reach out and offer support to those around you,” Reeves said.

“Following a year that placed significant challenges on every individual’s physical and mental wellbeing, this year’s Beyond Blue Cup further highlights the importance of prioritising our mental health and implementing small yet significant strategies to ensure even the hardest of days are easier to tackle.

“There are lots of simple ways we can all play our role and make a difference to those around us.”

For more information on how you can play your role and to make your commitment, visit beyondblue.org.au/playyourrole

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Beyond Blue Support Service: 1300 22 4636 or beyondblue.org.au/getsupport

Coronavirus Mental Wellbeing Support Service: 1800 512 348 or coronavirus.beyondblue.org.au