

MOUNTFIELD CRICKET CLUB

2026 Chairman's Speech – MCC AGM

Good evening everyone,

2025 was, for me, a thoroughly enjoyable season of cricket. We fulfilled a full fixture list from the end of April through to September — no small achievement. While the season was less affected by rain than usual, the glorious weather brought its own challenges in preparing wickets and maintaining the square — mainly reminding us that sunshine is wonderful... as long as you're not the one dragging hoses around at 9pm.

We began the season with a T20 against Robertsbridge — a match we probably should have won — and we finished with a hard-fought and creditable draw against Catsfield. Our final record for the season was:

- **Played: 16**
- **Won: 9**
- **Lost: 5**
- **Drawn: 2**
- **Weather cancellations: 3**
- **Cancelled due to our availability: 0**
- **Cancelled due to opposition availability: 1**

Nine wins from sixteen is a record we can be proud of. And importantly — zero cancellations due to our availability

One of MCC's greatest strengths is our wide and reliable player base. We are fortunate to have so many committed players willing to represent the club throughout the season. I would particularly like to highlight our junior contingent, who not only stepped up when called upon but genuinely enhanced the side with their enthusiasm and ability. The future of the club is clearly in good hands.

There were many outstanding individual performances across the season, all rightly recognised at the awards dinner and my thanks go to Jimmy for organising a fantastic evening.

From a club perspective, I would also like to thank:

- Mike and Matt for their continued support
- Andy Bashford in his role as President
- James Morgan for his captaincy contributions on the field
- Dan Towser for his work as Secretary

The End Of Season renovations progressed very well this year, greatly assisted by the addition of our new tractor and attachments. The investment is already paying dividends in the quality of our ground — although I suspect some of us were slightly more excited about the new mower than certain match results. That's village cricket for you.

This year also marked our first full fixture against Hurst Green, and I'm pleased that this is becoming a regular and competitive part of our calendar.

There are several further thank yous that must be made:

- The MCC Committee for approving the purchase of another mower — once again demonstrating excellent judgment.

- Jimbo for captaining the club, introducing cricket teas, and helping secure our move to the RG for 2025.
- Jimmy C in his role as Social Secretary — your organising of events and work behind the scenes is hugely appreciated.
- Snowy for his tireless strimming at the MCG.
- Wiggy again for his ongoing help with the ground.
- Leon and Ruth for hosting us during 2025. I am genuinely disappointed we cannot continue this arrangement in 2026, as the social side of the club flourished last year.
- The Parish Council for their continued support and investment — particularly the proposed improvements to the toilets, which I think we can all agree have been very well received.

Looking Ahead to 2026

As we look ahead to 2026, I believe our focus should centre around three key areas. First, **strengthening the playing side**. We want to build on this season's success, continue integrating our juniors into senior cricket, and ensure every fixture we put in the diary is competitive and fulfilled. Ideally, we'll also try to win the games we "probably should have won" — starting with the first one of the season.

Second, **developing the club off the field**. The social side of MCC has become a real strength. Although next year brings some changes, we must preserve that sense of togetherness. Cricket clubs are built on more than runs and wickets — they're built on friendships, shared effort, and the occasional debate about who was actually to blame for that run-out (not me).

Third, **continuing to improve our facilities and long-term sustainability**. The investment in equipment this year has already improved the standard of our ground. In 2026, we must maintain what we've built, invest wisely, and ensure the club remains financially stable and well-run with the help from Mountfield Parish Council.

Finally, thank you all for your support throughout 2025. Clubs like ours do not run on their own. They rely on people giving their time, energy and commitment.

I am incredibly proud of what we achieved this year, and I look forward with optimism and excitement to what 2026 will bring.

Thank you.