

No grassroots but lots of scaffold: a peek inside New York's cricket scene

Level 1: Elementary / Pre-Intermediate

1 Warmer

a. Match the sports with the countries in which they originated.

- | | |
|---------------|--------------|
| 1. water polo | a. Canada |
| 2. cricket | b. USA |
| 3. ice hockey | c. China |
| 4. polo | d. Scotland |
| 5. kayaking | e. England |
| 6. triathlon | f. Greenland |

2 Key words

a. Fill the gaps in the sentences using these key words from the text. Then, find and highlight them to see them in context.

facilities

immigrant

infrastructure

revenue

target

- _____ is the money you get from business activities.
- A(n) _____ is something that you want to get.
- A(n) _____ is someone who comes to live in a country from another country.
- _____ is the basic systems of an organisation.
- _____ (in sport) are the place and the equipment that you need to play that sport.

collaborate

expand

host

investment

pitch

- A(n) _____ is a flat area of ground on which people play a sport.
- _____ is the money that people spend in order to improve something.
- If you _____ an event, you provide the area, buildings and equipment that the event needs.
- If you _____ with someone, you work together with them on a project.
- If things _____, they get bigger.

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The big question is how many people in the USA want it to continue.

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- 1 The International Cricket Council has spent \$30 million to build a cricket stadium on Long Island, New York. They built it in just six months, but then this is the city where they built the Empire State Building in a year and 45 days.
- 2 The only problem is that the ICC is not just paying for the stadium; it is also trying to buy America's attention. It wants to develop new markets. 85% of its revenue comes from India, and the US is now its target market. It already has an audience here among the 5.5 million South Asian people who live in the US, but they are in different places across the country.
- 3 The US TV sports rights market is more than ten times the size of India's, but if the ICC is going to get some of that market, it needs to show that cricket is not just for immigrants. The big World Cup game between India and Pakistan might be what the locals notice.
- 4 Cricket in the USA really needs infrastructure and facilities. "The first thing they need to do is create one good cricket pitch," one local club player told me. "You could play for the worst club in London, and your pitch is better than the best one in New York. We just need any kind of facility where people can practise, but there's no investment at all for local cricket."
- 5 Major League Cricket developed its stadium in Grand Prairie, which is also hosting games in this tournament, for \$21m. They already have plans for permanent stadiums in each of their existing host cities. Wouldn't cricket have got a lot more for its money by collaborating on a project like that?
- 6 Still, it is a large project, and everyone agrees that it is going to take a lot of time to get it right. MLC is already expanding, and its investors say people should decide if it will succeed in twenty years. The ICC, too, is treating this tournament as a start. It is only the beginning.

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3 Comprehension check

a. Answer the following questions about the text.

1. How much did it cost to build the cricket stadium?
2. How long did it take to build it?
3. Where does most of the International Cricket Council's money come from?
4. How many South Asian people live in the USA?
5. How much bigger is the US TV sports rights market than India's?
6. Which teams are playing in the 'big game' in the cricket World Cup?
7. According to the text, what does cricket in the USA need?
8. Which cricket stadium cost more to build – the one in New York or the one in Grand Prairie?

4 Key language

a. Complete the following sentences and phrases from the text using these prepositions.

across between for in of on

1. They built the stadium _____ six months, ...
2. , ... but they are in different places _____ the country.
3. ... to show that cricket is not just _____ immigrants.
4. The big World Cup game _____ India and Pakistan might be what the locals notice.
5. ... by collaborating _____ a project like that.
6. 85% _____ its revenue comes from India, ...

b. Match the prepositions from task A to their meanings.

- a. directed to a person or group of people
- b. a confrontation, game, or match involving two or more people or teams
- c. connection to a larger group, number, or amount
- d. participation in a task or assignment
- e. from one end to the other of a territory
- f. a period of time during which something happens

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5 Discussion

a. Discuss these statements.

- "There is too much sport on TV. Who needs another sport?"
- "You can't understand a sport unless you have played it yourself."

6 In your own words

a. Use an internet search engine to find information about cricket in India.

Answer these questions:

- How many cricket clubs are there in India?
- How many people play cricket in India?
- Which team won the Indian Premier League in May 2024?
- How many times has India won the cricket World Cup?
- Which is the biggest cricket stadium in India?
- How many fans can watch a match there?

b. Report your findings to the class.