



**MEDIA RELEASE**  
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## **MAJOR LEAGUE CRICKET SIGNS LONG-TERM LEASE TO DEVELOP FIRST MLC CRICKET STADIUM IN GRAND PRAIRIE**

- *American Cricket Enterprises agrees upon historic lease with Grand Prairie for AirHogs Stadium, will redevelop 5,400-seat stadium for cricket, opening early 2022*
- *Repurposed Venue will host Major League and Minor League Cricket and act as a major hub and High Performance Center for USA Cricket*

GRAND PRAIRIE, TX – Major League Cricket (MLC) has received approval from the City of Grand Prairie on a long-term lease agreement to begin an extensive redevelopment of AirHogs Stadium as the organization’s first cricket-specific stadium in the United States. The parent company of MLC, American Cricket Enterprises (ACE) -- in cooperation with USA Cricket, the national governing body for cricket in the United States -- has retained the internationally renowned design firm [HKS](#) to repurpose and design what will be just the second professional-level cricket stadium ever built in the United States.

One of the best sports performance facilities in minor league baseball during its previous life as the home of the Texas AirHogs, the soon-to-be renamed stadium will now become a dedicated cricketing facility. The redevelopment of the venue is scheduled to take place throughout 2021 before playing host to the Dallas franchise of Major League Cricket that will launch by 2022, as well as the home of the Dallas MiLC entry.

### [STADIUM AERIAL VIDEOS & IMAGES](#)

“As the first Major League Cricket Stadium in the United States, Grand Prairie represents a seminal moment for the sport in America, and we are incredibly excited to partner with the City of Grand Prairie to bring Major League Cricket to Dallas,” **said Sameer Mehta and Vijay Srinivasan, co-founders of ACE and MLC.** “Grand Prairie’s centralized location in the U.S. and the thriving Texas cricketing community, allied with the quality of the facility, made it the perfect site for us and we are certain that this is the beginning of a fruitful long-term partnership that will bring much success.”

The redeveloped stadium is slated to be ready for cricket in Spring 2022, but will serve as a key high performance center for the USA Cricket Men’s and Women’s National Teams in the interim. The National Teams and other key youth and zonal cricket squads will be able to use it for training during that time. The Men’s National Team is currently ranked 19<sup>th</sup> in the world, having gained One Day International status for the first time in 2019.

The USA Women's National Team will be attempting to qualify for the Cricket World Cup for the first time next year having advanced to the global qualifier in 2019.

The venue will be a centerpiece of USA Cricket's efforts to bring major international events to the United States, including regional International Cricket Council (ICC) World Cup and T20 World Cup Qualifiers, and International Series against Canada and other contemporary nations. The stadium will also be a featured aspect of USA Cricket's effort to bring the ICC World Cup to the United States by 2031, a process that is ongoing as part of a joint bid with the West Indies.

"In association with our partners at ACE, we now have a world-class facility to develop our domestic talent and help us fulfill the goals we announced in our Foundational Plan," **said Paraag Marathe, USA Cricket Chairman.** "The successful development of a cricket-dedicated stadium has long been a priority for us, and it is a significant stride forward for the growth of cricket in America. We also look forward to bringing international cricket events, and the crowds that go with them, to our new stadium, and to help introduce the sport to a broader audience."

USA Cricket has recently undergone a significant transformation that includes the release of the organization's first [Foundational Plan](#) with a vision to establish cricket as a leading sport in the USA and become a full member of the International Cricket Council by 2030. Cricket is the world's second-most popular sport in terms of global viewership, attracting billions of viewers worldwide with a significant, growing American fanbase. USA Cricket counts 200,000 regular players across the country, with more than 20 million fans and more than 5 million regular viewers of cricket.

Honored by Baseball Digest as the Best New Ballpark in 2008 following its inaugural season, AirHogs Stadium served as the home of the Texas AirHogs of the American Association of Independent Professional Baseball for 12 years. The stadium, located conveniently between Arlington and Dallas, is adjacent to Lone Star Park horse racing track and The Theater at Grand Prairie, currently seats a capacity of 5,445 and features 13 luxury suites and ample space for improved amenities to enhance the experience of fans and cricketers alike. The stadium will be repurposed to be completely dedicated for cricket, including changing the shape of the outfield from diamond to oval, and the training facilities crossing over from baseball cages to cricket nets.

"xxx," said Grand Prairie Mayor Ron Jensen. "xxx."

Along with the changing demographics of the Dallas region that have made the area a prime location for the grassroots development of cricket, the sport has seen recent domestic progress at the professional level. Following a player draft in August this year, MiLC successfully staged a series of Exhibition Matches over five weeks, the largest national cricket competition in U.S. history. The best amateur cricketers in the U.S. combined with 36 first-class and international players to play 51 competitive and entertaining T20 matches across 17 venues involving 18 of the 24 MiLC franchises with 312 drafted players competing in at least one match. ACE is preparing to launch its full

inaugural MiLC T20 cricket season in May 2021, with MLC expected to start its competition in 2022.

MLC, which is exclusively sanctioned by USA Cricket, represents the most ambitious and transformational venture ever undertaken in the American cricket landscape. Focused on staging the highest quality T20 cricket for U.S. cricket fans, MLC will feature top international cricketers from around the globe, and provide a stage for domestic cricketers to showcase their talents to a global audience.

As the ICC's member body for the United States, USA Cricket selected MLC as its exclusive partner for the development of a professional T20 cricket league. As exemplified by this establishment of AirHogs Stadium as a High Performance Training Center for USA Cricket, MLC provides support for both the USA's Men's and Women's teams, with the goal of elevating them to the highest level of international competition.

The founders of MLC have been deeply involved with cricket in the U.S. for years, particularly with the establishment of the U.S. as a major broadcast market for the sport. MLC is co-founded by the founders of Willow TV, the largest cricket broadcaster in North America and the principals of The Times of India Group, India's largest media conglomerate. MLC is also backed by a prominent and diverse group of investors from across the U.S.

## **FOR MORE DETAILS CONTACT**

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## **ABOUT MAJOR LEAGUE CRICKET**

Major League Cricket is the first professional Twenty20 cricket league in the United States. Exclusively sanctioned by USA Cricket, Major League Cricket will feature top players from around the globe while also providing an opportunity for domestic cricketers to showcase their talents to a global audience. Featuring six franchises from major cities across the United States, the inaugural season will commence in 2022 and bring world-class T20 cricket to America for the very first time.

## **ABOUT USA CRICKET**

USA Cricket is the National Federation for cricket in the United States as recognized by the International Cricket Council. USA Cricket's mission is to govern, regulate, develop and promote all forms of cricket at all levels in the United States, and to enable U.S. cricketers to achieve sustained competitive excellence and successfully compete in national and international competition. Through a diverse Board of Directors that has representation from most cricket stakeholder groups, USA Cricket will lead the sport to

new heights by creating and administering value added programs to grow and develop the sport.

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