

Major League Cricket Expansion Franchise Teams Up With New Zealand Cricket

Key markets across North America, including Toronto and Atlanta, potential franchise base

SAN FRANCISCO, CA, UNITED STATES, April 24, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- True North Sports Ventures (TNS) have agreed terms with New Zealand Cricket ([NZC](#)) to launch a new Major League Cricket ([MLC](#)) franchise, set to debut in the 2027 season.

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NZC is a perfect fit for our new franchise. With NZC's expertise, our expansion franchise will elevate MLC's world-class T20 product and support cricket's rapid growth and potential in North America.”

MLC Co-Founder and TNS Owner Sameer Mehta

MLC co-founders Sameer Mehta and Vijay Srinivasan are the majority owners of entities which hold exclusive rights to own and operate two MLC expansion franchises, the first of which will be launched by TNS in 2027.

TNS aims to tap into a 25 million strong cricket fan base driving the sport's rapid growth in North America, evidenced by the 2024 ICC T20 World Cup and cricket's inclusion in the 2028 LA Olympics. TNS is currently exploring several key markets across North America, including Toronto and Atlanta, to base the new franchise. NZC also has the opportunity to partner with Mehta and

Srinivasan on other strategic opportunities, such as the second franchise planned for 2031.

“TNS is delighted to partner with NZC, an organization admired for its sustained success,” said MLC Co-Founder and TNS Owner Sameer Mehta. “As founders of start-ups that have rapidly grown to established businesses, we see NZC as a perfect fit for our new franchise. With NZC's expertise, our expansion franchise will elevate MLC's world-class T20 product and support cricket's rapid growth and immense potential in North America, and we look forward to working with NZC to deliver on both our ambitions and theirs, including broader strategic and corporate opportunities globally.”

The first-of-its-kind agreement between a full member of the ICC and a franchise in a leading professional cricket league will see NZC provide high-performance and operational support, including coaching, management, and support staff, as well as integrating the franchise into NZC's domestic high-performance ecosystem.

In the second phase of development, NZC will offer expertise in cricket infrastructure and turf

management. Additionally, NZC has become a foundation investor in TNS, with the ability to make a more substantial equity investment before the end of 2025.

NZC CEO Scott Weenink said the partnership would position his organization at the forefront of cricket's global transformation, as well as strengthening its presence in the world's most lucrative sporting market.

"This agreement marks a unique and exciting milestone for NZC," said NZC CEO Scott Weenink. "As franchise cricket grows globally, NZC needs to adapt to seize strategic opportunities that ensure the sustainability of our cricket network. This helps diversify our revenue streams, expands our global brand and fan base, and creates new talent development and retention pathways for both our players and coaches."

Weenink noted MLC is a world-class T20 tournament, and said he is proud to align with Mehta and Srinivasan and the TNS investor group, to drive cricket's growth in North America. NZC would be joining an array of world-class, global sports, high net worth, and private equity investors in TNS, including 49ers Enterprises (the investment arm of the NFL's San Francisco 49ers) which boasts an enviable portfolio of global sports assets, including recently promoted English Premier League side, Leeds United.

Mehta and Srinivasan are serial entrepreneurs who co-founded Willow TV, North America's premier cricket broadcaster, after which they co-founded the MLC and led its successful launch in 2023.

MLC, which achieved "List A" status ahead of its 2024 season, is a leading global T20 tournament played in North America over three to four weeks during June and July, broadcast in the US via Willow TV, and in major global markets, including New Zealand.

Currently comprising six foundation franchises featuring players such as top BLACKCAPS Matt Henry, Rachin Ravindra, Finn Allen and Trent Boult, and overseas stars like Pat Cummins, Travis Head, Steve Smith, and David Miller, MLC plans to expand to eight teams by 2027 and ten by 2031. The league also supports a robust youth cricket system and a semi-professional minor league in the US.

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About True North Sports

TNS is set to launch an expansion Major League Cricket franchise in a major North American market in 2027. Majority-owned by MLC co-founders Sameer Mehta and Vijay Srinivasan, TNS is backed by global investors.

About New Zealand Cricket (NZC)

NZC is the governing body for professional and amateur cricket in New Zealand, overseeing the BLACKCAPS, WHITE FERNS, and national domestic competitions. NZC is committed to fostering excellence, innovation, and the global growth of cricket. The WHITE FERNS are the reigning women's ICC T20 World Champions, and the BLACKCAPS recently finished runners-up in the men's ICC Champions Trophy, losing to India in the final.

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