

Seattle Orcas Co-Owners Deepen Partnership with GMR Sports with Investment in The Hundred's Southern Brave

Somasegar and Parthasarathy Join GMR's Global Cricket Portfolio With Investment in One of England's Most Successful Cricket Franchises

SEATTLE, WA, UNITED STATES, January 20, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Seattle Orcas](#) co-owners S. Somasegar and Sanjay Parthasarathy announced today their investment in Southern Brave, the English cricket franchise of [The Hundred](#), to strengthen their partnership with [GMR Sports](#). This strategic investment marks a significant deepening of their commitment to franchise cricket excellence on a global scale and comes as GMR Group completed its acquisition of a 49% stake in Southern Brave, one of the most successful franchises in the revolutionary 100-ball cricket tournament.



Utilita Bowl in Southampton, United Kingdom

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Kiran Kumar Grandhi

Southern Brave, based at Utilita Bowl in Southampton, has established an exceptional track record in The Hundred, reaching the knockout stages six times in eight seasons and winning both the men's and women's titles. The investment represents the historic transformation of The Hundred into a privately backed competition, with the eight franchise partnerships reaching a combined valuation of over £975 million.

The Hundred's Breakthrough Format and Global Appeal Since its launch in 2021, the 100-ball format has reshaped

cricket's accessibility and appeal. With matches lasting approximately 2.5 hours, The Hundred delivers fast-paced, high-energy action designed to engage new and diverse audiences while retaining the sport's competitive integrity.

"The Hundred represents everything we believe cricket should be for the modern fan," said Kiran Kumar Grandhi, Corporate Chairman of GMR Group and Chairman of GMR Sports. "The 100-ball format is revolutionary because it removes barriers to entry. Whether you're a cricket enthusiast or experiencing the sport for the first time, you can understand, enjoy, and be captivated by what unfolds in just two and a half hours. That accessibility is precisely why we're so excited about this investment."

A Destination Sport for Families and All Ages

One of The Hundred's defining characteristics is its deliberate design as family entertainment. The tournament combines elite sporting competition with spectacular live entertainment with lights, music, world-class performances, and an energy that appeals to audiences of all ages.

"What makes The Hundred truly special is that it's designed for the whole family," explained S. Somasegar, Seattle Orcas co-owner. "We're delivering world-class cricket and we're creating an entertainment experience that brings generations together. Parents can bring their children knowing they'll both be engaged and entertained. The statistics bear this out, with approximately 23% of tickets purchased for fans under-16, based on 2025 data, and family packages are consistently among our strongest-selling offerings. This is cricket that welcomes everyone to build enduring memories around their love of cricket."

Elevating and Empowering Women's Cricket

Perhaps most transformative, The Hundred has fundamentally changed the trajectory of women's cricket in England and globally. The tournament runs men's and women's competitions in parallel with equal prize money—a groundbreaking commitment that has allowed women cricketers to pursue professional careers at scale for the first time.

"The Hundred has elevated women's cricket to a prominence it's never achieved before," said Sanjay Parthasarathy, Seattle Orcas co-owner. "The doubleheader format, with women's matches preceding men's games, has been transformative. Approximately 30% of all tickets are purchased by female supporters, and women's matches consistently draw over 300,000 spectators per season. With viable professional pathways, equal prize money, and young girls seeing themselves represented on a major stage, this is a genuine transformation in women's cricket. Our investment in Southern Brave is also an investment in the future development of the pathway for women's cricket."

A Global Cricket Vision and Strategic Alignment

This investment builds on GMR Sports' broader portfolio of elite franchise cricket. GMR Group maintains ownership stakes in the Delhi Capitals (IPL), teams in Dubai, Pretoria, and the Seattle Orcas. The Seattle Orcas recently launched as one of six franchises in North America's Major League Cricket. The Southern Brave investment deepens American cricket's involvement in global cricket at precisely the moment when the sport is experiencing unprecedented growth and investment.

About Southern Brave

Southern Brave is the Hundred franchise based at Utilita Bowl, Southampton. The men's and women's teams have established themselves as two of the tournament's most competitive and successful franchises, with multiple playoff appearances and championship titles. Southern Brave operates as the elite franchise of Hampshire Cricket, one of England's 18 first-class counties.

About The Hundred

The Hundred is a professional cricket league in England and Wales featuring eight city-based franchises, each fielding men's and women's teams. The tournament's innovative 100-ball format has attracted over 540,000 spectators annually and reached global audiences through broadcast partnerships with BBC and Sky Sports. Since its 2021 launch, The Hundred has become the world's only major cricket competition with equal prize money and parallel scheduling for men's and women's matches.

About GMR Sports

Founded in 2008, GMR Sports represents the sports sector of the GMR Group. It is driven by a mission to connect people, nurture talent, and establish sports as a powerful unifying platform both within India and globally.

The journey began with the Delhi Capitals, the city's first-ever cricket franchise and the sole representative of India's national capital in the IPL. Expanding its global footprint, GMR Sports now holds franchises in international markets, including Dubai Capitals in T20, Pretoria Capitals in SA20, Seattle Orcas in Major League Cricket (US), and Hampshire County Cricket Club in England. Through these initiatives, GMR Sports continues to strengthen its presence on the world stage.

About Seattle Orcas

The Seattle Orcas are owned by an investor group of current and former Microsoft executives, technology entrepreneurs and venture capitalists - Soma Somasegar, Sanjay Parthasarathy, Satya Nadella, Samir Bodas and Ashok Krishnamurthi - in partnership with the GMR Group, co-owners of the Delhi Capitals. Hailing from the Pacific Northwest, the Seattle Orcas aim to spread the love of cricket throughout the United States with its inclusive values and its commitment to success. The team is built on the support of local sports fans and families, and players from around the world.

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