

Interview of Martin Gleeson, CEO of Cricket India Academy a cricket division of Sports Education India Ltd. (SEDIL).

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Martin Gleeson, CEO Cricket India Academy with Mike Hussey at a Sports function

There is a vast pool of cricketing talent in India which cannot be brought to International level because of poor infrastructure and guidance at domestic level. But things are going to change soon. [Mr. Martin Gleeson](#) the Chief Executive Officer of [Cricket India Academy](#), a cricket Division of Sports Education India Ltd. (SEDIL) is getting the entire process of harnessing the cricketing talent streamlined. Cricket India Academy operates from Mumbai.

Mr. Gleeson is an Australian who has dedicated this life to sports coaching and he has taken upon him to transform the landscape of sports development in India. Crickethighlights.com is privileged to get the CEO of Cricket India academy, Mr. Martin Gleeson to answer few questions about his academy.

Mr. Gleeson **we thank you heartily** for taking the time out of your busy schedule to share your thoughts about your academy and on grooming India's next Tendulkars and Kapil Devs! **Hats off to you**, Sir! We would also like to extend our thanks and a shout out to Mr. Devjeet for introducing us to Mr. Gleeson (read our [interview with ex-Bihar Ranji Cricketer Dejeet Chakraborty](#)).

CricketHighlights.com: Mr. Gleeson, please tell us a bit about the ownership and constitution of the Cricket India Academy?

Martin Gleeson: Cricket India Academy is the cricket division of Sports Education India Ltd. (SEDIL) and the company is established as joint partnership between education specialists Podar Enterprise and Kohinoor Group.

CricketHighlights.com: Please share the details of the Vision and Mission of the Academy?

Martin Gleeson: SEDIL's tag of 'Engage. Educate. Excel' really sums up our philosophies and focus for our participants to be involved, to learn and to provide opportunity to advancement and excellence. Cricket India Academy have a mission is 'to provide a high quality educational program to develop young people through cricket.

CricketHighlights.com : How many cricket training centers you are currently operating?

Martin Gleeson : In the last season we have had over 500 participants involved in coaching activities across Mumbai, Pune, and Jaipur with more centers to open over the next few months.

CricketHighlights.com: That is great news for Indian domestic cricket. Please share the future projection for the Academy? How different is your academy from the other academies?

Martin Gleeson : In near future we have a plan to deliver our services across Maharashtra to start with. We will expand our services at major cities of Maharashtra like Kolhapur, Aurangabad, Nashik, Panchgani, Nagpur. Simultaneously we are also developing business across the country, initially at major states of India.

Traditional sports training involves relatively unstructured coaching plans with often short term goals and objectives. Sessions may be skill focused with the aims of each session about winning the next game or a coach's search for the next elite athlete.

Sports education has a broader mandate with a focus on educational outcomes in addition to talent identification. It is curriculum based teaching providing for a structured and comprehensive program covering all areas of the sport. Our philosophy embraces this trend with a focus on maximizing participation in high quality coaching sessions creating the environment for participants to problem solve and develop their cricket ability.

The following 4 major points provide a competitive advantage for Cricket Education Program.

a) Coach Training & Accreditation

The guidance and active involvement of Cricket Australia in the training and ongoing education of coaches ensures the latest techniques and teaching methodologies are enshrined in the program.

b) Teaching Methodology

The teaching methodology used by coaches is modern and innovative. Sessions are designed and developed around the needs of participants with modern coaching principles and practices engaged. Sessions are also developed involving game scenarios and situations. This creates an environment for participants to learn and encourages the development of problem solving abilities.

c) Curriculum Based Program

The content is comprehensive across all areas of cricket and provides for a learning sequence from the basic fundamentals to the more advanced skills. In the same way a Mathematics or Geography teacher is provided with their curriculum to teach, Cricket Education Program coaches are also provided with a Coach Manual which provides the curriculum specific to each level across each Learning Area (below). The coach is also provided with a Training Planner containing a reservoir of training drills, activities and game scenarios which can form the basis of their session plans.

d) Competency Based Assessment

In an innovative and comprehensive manner, the assessment of participants is conducted under the parameters of:

Knowledge – the How to execute a skill

Understanding – the Why and When to execute a skill

Skill – the physical Performing of the skill

Assessment is conducted at each level using a continuous process of knowledge and understanding assessment and an end of year skill assessment.

Crickethighlights.com: I must say now the future of Indian domestic cricket is in good hands. Please share the operational aspect of your offering and how it will offer substance to coaching facilities in India?

Martin Gleeson: Cricket India Academy has a focus on providing sequential cricket development programs to provide quality training and coaching for children. Providing a broad based skill development coaching program will allow children to develop their skills and playing abilities and build a foundation for future success.

On a broader scale the parent company of SEDIL have a strong vision to promote the virtues, philosophies and opportunities through sport, on and off the field.

Crickethighlights.com : Please share the profile of people attached with your Academy? Please share in details how they are adding value to the Academy and in larger context, the players and cricket.

Martin Gleeson: We are fortunate enough to have following people to guide & drive us towards our vision & mission.

a) Kohinoor Group:- Kohinoor Group has 50+ yrs. experience of Indian education (vocational training, business management, hospitality management) Apart from education

this group also deals in Hospitality (Kohinoor Continental), Real Estate (Kohinoor City), Power (partners with Enercon India), Healthcare (Kohinoor Hospital).

b) Podar Enterprises: – Is a 100+ year old company with 40+ educational institutions in India (schools, colleges, vocational training centers) and a global network spanning 18+ countries.

c) Cricket Australia: – Cricket Australia (CA) is the governing body for cricket in Australia and is the global leader in coach education principles and practices. Through the exclusively developed Cricket Education Program we are able to access and utilize this best practice philosophy and training to further develop local coaches and enhance their ability to deliver high quality coaching programs. Cricket Australia is involved in developing the curriculum, international assessment benchmarks, coach training, coach assessor training and resource development and underwrites Participant and Coach Certification.

d) Brett Lee: – As Australia’s leading pace bowler, Brett has been involved in the development of Cricket Education Program since its inception and lends his skills, experiences, support and coaching tips to the program as the CEP Ambassador.

e) Mike Hussey: – ‘Mr Cricket’ is famous for his training and preparation as well as match performance and lends his skills, experiences, support and coaching tips to the program as the Role Model for boys.

f) Ellyse Perry: – She is a exciting Australian women’s cricketer, she also lends her skills, experiences, support and coaching tips to the program as the CEP Role Model for girls.

g) Pravin Amre:- Ex-Indian cricketer and Cricket India Academy’s Coach Director is operationally involved in coach identification, recruitment, training and mentoring as well as the development and training of CIA’s high performance participants. Pravin is also the Assistant Coach at Pune Warriors India IPL team and has coached Mumbai in the Ranji Trophy for the past five seasons.

Crickethighlights.com : That is a great list of some famous players and organizations. Do you have provision of providing technical assistance to the existing coaching academies in India?

Martin Gleeson: Through our coaching programs and training methods, Cricket India Academy is available to establish and run coaching and training programs in existing or emerging academies as well as working in schools.

Crickethighlights.com : How is your academy promoting the game of cricket itself?

Martin Gleeson: Through our modern G.A.M.E. methodology we develop & encourage the interest in the young generation.

This methodology allows us to avoid monotonous fitness sessions of children. Instead of repetitive drills, fitness and stamina is developed through innovative and dynamic modified games requiring participants to problem solve and make decisions as well as sweat!

These games are developed in such way that unknowingly child will do necessary & adequate exercise for fitness and at the same time child will enjoy the session too.

Apart from regular skill development sessions we introduce some exited games to participants. Unlike other traditional skill development activities, these games avoid queuing system and engage all participants at a time. This allows us to utilize maximum time by making all sessions participant centric.

Along with the skills we also develop knowledge & understanding of the game. It gives wider scope to participants to develop a career in other areas of cricket like umpiring, scoring etc.

We also provide value added opportunities to participants by arranging guest coaching by well-known national & international players, opportunity to observe training session of reputed teams. This helps to motivate participants.

Crickethighlights.com : Tell us about the biggest problem you have faced in promoting the game of cricket in your academy?

Martin Gleeson: Quality of facilities is a constant constraint in delivering quality cricket programs. We overcome this by supplementing traditional net training with game based scenarios, drills and activities which can be effectively delivered on open fields or even in some cases concreted areas like basketball and tennis courts.

*Crickethighlights.com : How has **DLF IPL** changed the **game cricket**? Has IPL or T-20 encouraged young kids to play the game of cricket?*

Martin Gleeson : Yes, definitely this new format of the game has encouraged young cricketers by providing bigger opportunity at international platform. It has also created awareness & interest in the masses about various carrier opportunities in the game. (Note: we agree with Martin on this.

The modern sport environment demands that an athlete is able to execute skills in a number of ways and in different scenarios and conditions. No longer is it sufficient to be able to demonstrate a skill in perfect technique style, the measurement of success is dependent on the athlete's ability to make the correct decisions at the right time in a match environment. No more evident in this than in the sport of cricket. Cricket has evolved markedly and the advent of Twenty20 cricket demands that batsmen can score off every ball and bowlers have a wide variety of deliveries that they are able to call upon as needed. The focus is continually shifting away from the development of 'correct technique' to the development of 'correct decision making'.

Crickethighlights.com: We once again, would like to thank Mr. Martin Gleeson, the CEO of Cricket India academy, for taking out time and sharing his thoughts.

We wish him Mr. Martin Gleeson, Cricket India academy and his associates all the luck in achieving their desired goals. And we extend full support to Mr. Martin and his team to promote cricket at domestic level in India and world. Watch out for more features on his academy, the coaches and the next generation players being groomed by him.