

## EUROPEAN T20 PREMIER LEAGUE ANNOUNCES FIRST THREE FRANCHISES, LED BY THE GREATS OF THE GAME

***Steve Waugh takes ownership of the Amsterdam franchise,***  
***marking the Australian legend's official return to the game and his first foray into T20***

***Edinburgh goes to former New Zealand internationals Nathan McCullum and Kyle Mills.***

***"The Big Show" Glenn Maxwell snaps up Belfast***

**Sydney, Australia | 21st January, 2026** — European T20 Premier League (ETPL), officially sanctioned by the International Cricket Council (ICC), today announced the owners of its first three franchises at an international press conference in Sydney, staged against the iconic backdrop of the Sydney Opera House and Harbour Bridge. The League confirmed **Amsterdam, Edinburgh and Belfast** as the first franchise cities to join the competition which is scheduled to begin in the late summer of 2026.

**Amsterdam** will be owned by a group led by **Australian cricket great Steve Waugh**, former Australian captain and World Cup-winning leader, alongside **Jamie Dwyer**, five-time World Player of the Year and Olympic gold medallist, and **Tim Thomas**, former CEO of the Centre for Australia-India Relations and former Partner at KPMG Australia.

**Edinburgh** will be owned by former New Zealand internationals **Nathan McCullum**, former New Zealand international and high-performance cricket coach, and **Kyle Mills**, former New Zealand fast bowler and former ICC No.1 ODI bowler.

**Belfast** will be owned by **Australian all-rounder "The Big Show" Glenn Maxwell**, global T20 star, together with **Rohan Lund**, former Group CEO of NRMA, alongside strategic partners to be announced in due course.

The announcement marks a defining moment in the evolution of professional cricket in Europe; and represents the first phase of ETPL's franchise rollout ahead of its inaugural season, scheduled to commence in the last week of August.

**Steve Waugh, co-owner, Amsterdam Franchise** said, "I've always been selective about where I invest my time and energy in cricket. Franchise cricket has expanded quickly, but this opportunity stood out because it is driven by aspiration and long-term thinking. In many ways, it marks a return to the game for me — but in a very different role. This is about helping uphold the standards and spirit of cricket while supporting its growth into Europe, which remains the game's last great frontier."

**Glenn Maxwell, co-owner, Belfast Franchise** said: I am thrilled to be involved with the Irish Wolves, where we will build a culture of fun, family and playing without fear. The Irish people love their sport and Cricket Ireland have made huge strides in expanding the game over the last two decades. The Wolves and the European T20 Premier League will accelerate that growth and I feel super proud to be leading the franchise in its inaugural year."

"The opportunity to be part of franchise ownership in a league built with strong governance and deep board partnerships is hugely compelling," said **Kyle Mills, co-owner, Edinburgh Franchise**. "ETPL has all the ingredients to become a serious force in global cricket."

ETPL is owned and operated through a joint venture between Rules Global (“Rules X”) and Cricket Ireland, a Full Member of the International Cricket Council. The league is co-founded by **Abhishek Bachchan, Saurav Banerjee, Priyanka Kaul and Dhiraj Malhotra**, and is further supported through formal partnerships with Cricket Scotland and the Royal Dutch Cricket Association (KNCB).

**Abhishek Bachchan, co-founder of ETPL, acclaimed Indian actor and sports entrepreneur.** “My journey across sport has taught me that meaningful franchises are built with intent, integrity and vision; and these three teams represent exactly that. Anchored in strong partnerships with national boards and the greats of the game, ETPL will bring together established international stars alongside emerging talent from Europe and other associate nations, while upholding the highest standards of governance, transparency and sporting integrity, setting a new benchmark for emerging franchise leagues.”

**Saurav Banerjee, Co-Founder, European T20 Premier League (ETPL)**, said: “Europe is home to nearly one-third of the ICC’s global membership, with 34 member nations across the continent, the largest concentration anywhere in the world. Much of Europe’s cricketing ecosystem remains under-commercialised, presenting a significant opportunity for structured growth. ETPL is Europe’s first ICC-sanctioned T20 league, designed to unlock this untapped potential. Through professional governance, a franchise-based structure and long-term discipline, ETPL aims to catalyse sustainable commercial growth and elevate European cricket on the global stage.”

As European cricket continues to gather momentum marked by Italy qualifying for the ICC Men’s T20 World Cup 2026, and England, Ireland and Scotland hosting the ICC Men’s T20 World Cup, Europe is positioned to play a defining role in shaping the next decade of the sport.

**Brian MacNeice, Chair, European T20 Premier League and non-executive Director on the Board of Cricket Ireland**, said: “The launch of the European T20 Premier League is not only a landmark occasion for European cricket, but is a crucial step forward in the development and growth of Irish cricket. Since gaining Full Membership, we have made steady and sustainable steps forward as a sport – but over the next few years we are set for an enormous leap.

**Trudy Lindblade, CEO of Cricket Scotland**, added:

““We are delighted to welcome the first three ETPL franchise owners. This league represents a significant step forward for European cricket, and we appreciate the role played by our all stakeholders in creating a truly exciting and groundbreaking opportunity for all involved, in particular Scottish players and supporters of cricket in this country,

**Lucas Hendriske, interim CEO of KNCB** said: “The launch of the European T20 Premier League will be a landmark moment for cricket in Europe. The League will accelerate the growth of cricket across the region by providing visibility, high-performance standards, and inspiration for the next generation. We are delighted to see Europe take this step forward and proud that the Netherlands will play a central role in shaping its future.”

Backed by credibility and excellence at the highest levels, ETPL will bring emerging talent to the global stage, competing alongside the biggest names in international cricket. Season 1, slated for the end of August this year, will bring together world-class international experience, emerging European talent, and a technology-led league structure designed to redefine how cricket is played, consumed, and scaled across markets.

ENDS

**Notes to the Editors:**

**ABOUT ETPL**

The European T20 Premier League (ETPL) is an ICC-sanctioned, multi-country franchise cricket league scheduled to launch in 2026. Owned and operated through a joint venture between Rules Global (Rules X) and Cricket Ireland, an ICC Full Member, ETPL is supported by strategic partnerships with Cricket Scotland and the Royal Dutch Cricket Association. Conceived as Europe's first pan-European franchise competition, the league will feature city-based teams in major European markets, with inaugural franchises in Amsterdam, Edinburgh, and Belfast, and will be played in a globally aligned broadcast window. Backed by experienced leadership and Europe's leading cricket institutions, ETPL is positioned as a credible, long-term platform for elite competition and the development of emerging international talent.

**SOCIAL CHANNELS:**

**Instagram:** ETPL: @etplofficial | **Twitter/X:** ETPL: @etplofficial | **LinkedIn:** [European T20 Premier League](#)

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