



# SIGHTS SET ON VICTORY

## A Vision to be the Best

Ajay Kumar Reddy, a name that most of us would not recognize or recall. A name that was given to the son of a farmer in Guntur. A 26 year old who, today, is the Captain of the IndusInd Bank Blind Cricket team. A B2 category blind cricketer with an indomitable spirit to win.

There are 25 such similar names in the Indian Cricket Scenario today. Names we would have never heard of, faces we would not recognize even if we saw them. It is ironic that while we can see and hear, there is an entire contingent of players who have brought laurels to the country by winning the last Blind Cricket World Cup, who are specially-abled and cannot see. One is a choice to ignorance and the other is a choice to fight against all odds and to keep creating history.



## All Eyes on Them

Come January 2017, 'IndusInd For Sports' will be a part of scripting history in the landscape of Indian Sport, again. On the 21<sup>st</sup> of December 2016, IndusInd Bank announced the launch of the 'World Champions Programme – Cricket for the Blind', in partnership with Cricket Association for the Blind in India (CABI) – the Sports Initiative of Samarthanam Trust for the Disabled, to aid the IndusInd Bank Blind Cricket Team in their quest for sporting glory. This is an exciting news for us at the Bank, especially considering the fact that India will be playing host to the the Blind Cricket ODI World Cup 2017 and we as aware citizens shall be able to witness the superhuman experience in sport that Blind Cricket is.

## THE WORLD CHAMPIONS PROGRAMME CRICKET FOR THE BLIND



## From Humble Beginnings...

Blind Cricket as a sport was invented in Melbourne in 1922 by two blind factory workers who improvised the game using a tin can containing rocks. The Victorian Blind Cricket Association was founded shortly after in 1922 and the first sports ground and clubhouse for Blind Cricket was built at Kooyong, Melbourne, in 1928.

People were initiated into the game of cricket primarily through radio commentaries. They soon found a way of playing the game by replacing the ball with an empty tin and using a stick as a bat. This was the beginning of the audio game of cricket in its most primitive form in India.

Over the years, audio balls replaced the empty tin and bats are used in place of sticks. National Institute for the Visually Handicapped (NIVH), Dehradun, developed the audio ball that is now accepted as the international standard.

## ...To a Global Sport

Blind Cricket was given a professional outlook when the sport was governed by the World Blind Cricket Council (WBCC) from 1996. Since then, four Blind Cricket World Cups have been held in New Delhi, India (1998); Chennai, India (2002); Islamabad, Pakistan (2006) and Cape Town, South Africa (2014). In 2012, the first Blind Cricket World Cup T20 was held in Bangalore, India.

The rules of Blind Cricket are based on the standard laws of cricket with some essential modifications. Verbal signals are widely used by both umpires and players in particular; the bowler must shout 'Play' as he releases the ball. The delivery is required to pitch at least twice when bowled to a batsman, but must not be rolling. Totally blind fielders are allowed to take a catch on the bounce.



## World Champions Programme - Cricket for the Blind

Under the 'World Champions Programme – Cricket for the Blind', we will be supporting the IndusInd Bank Blind Cricket Team, consisting of 26 players that will represent India at domestic and international tournaments.

As part of the programme, we will provide all support and infrastructure required, to participate and perform at the highest level, to the players. The programme will also work towards nurturing talent while promoting cricket among the visually challenged.



## They Can Hear Your Cheers

After the resounding success of the Para-Champions Programme, we are confident that our support extended to these superstars will help the sport reach one level ahead. We shall be soon sharing profiles of our superstars in our next communication and hope that the entire family supports and cheers these 26 stars through this journey.

Sport for the blind is a rightful pursuit, and a platform for physical and social development. Cricket for the blind has exposed visually impaired players to important aspects of life, which they are otherwise denied merely due to their disability—discipline, teamwork, fitness, strategic planning, competitiveness and sportsman spirit. The focus is on their skills and not their disability.

As a spectator sport, Blind Cricket could go a long way in helping the visually impaired integrate into the mainstream.

This is surely a great way to start a new year with!

