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INDOOR GOLF A GATEWAY TO POPULARIZING THE SPORT IN INDIA

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By Bharath Arvind

Teeing off

Golf has long been associated with lush green fairways, beautiful landscapes, and an air of exclusivity. It is often regarded as an elite sport and has seen limited popularity in India due to various factors such as accessibility, affordability, and the perception of being a niche activity. However, in recent years, the introduction of indoor golf facilities across the globe and in India has been revolutionizing the sport and opening new avenues for enthusiasts and the curious. This article explores the significance of indoor golf in introducing more people to the game and how it could play a significant role in growing the game and its popularity in the country.

Breaking down the barriers

India is a diverse country with a growing population, but limited land availability or high cost of land poses a significant challenge for traditional golf course development. Indoor golf provides a solution to this problem by eliminating the need for vast expanses of land, making it accessible to a wider audience. By setting up indoor golf facilities in urban centres, enthusiasts can now experience the sport conveniently and in an affordable manner, regardless of their proximity to golf courses.

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Leveraging Technology

Indoor golf facilities are equipped with cutting-edge technology, such as high-speed cameras, and simulators. These advancements offer players an immersive and realistic experience, recreating the ambience of famous golf courses from around the world. Golfers can practice their swing, play full rounds of golf, and even receive instant feedback on their performance, enhancing their skills in a controlled environment. Simulators also come with several practice and game modes to make learning the game exciting and provide challenges to all skill levels. Irrespective of age or whether one has even held a golf club before, everyone can give this a shot.

Year-round availability and Weather Independence

India’s diverse climate, with scorching summers and unpredictable monsoons, often hampers outdoor sports activities, including golf. Indoor golf provides a welcome respite from weather constraints, enabling enthusiasts to play the sport year-round, regardless of rain, heat, or cold. This weather independence ensures that golf remains an engaging and consistent activity throughout the year, attracting more individuals to take up the sport. Indoor golf facilities also offer people the convenience of time by staying open late, allowing even working professionals to end their work day with a few swings of the golf club.

Promoting Inclusivity

Golf has been perceived as an elitist sport in India, limiting its reach to a select few. This is largely due to the fact that for a country this size and with the population, there are just about 300 golf courses in the country. Approximately half of those are owned by the armed forces, which further reduces the number of course offenders for the masses. With generally high membership costs or even limited accessibility owing to various restrictive rules and costs, it becomes quite a challenge for anyone who wishes to simply try and take up the game. However, the emergence of indoor golf facilities challenges this notion and aims to break down barriers. These inclusive spaces welcome players of all ages, genders, and skill levels, fostering a sense of community and camaraderie. By introducing a more accessible and welcoming environment, indoor golf encourages diversity within the golfing community. Eventually this could perhaps lead to more traditional clubs offering special memberships for the growing demand

Indoor golf facilities can bridge this gap by providing access to the sport in urban areas where land scarcity restricts golf course development.



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