



# THE CRADLE OF INDIAN HOCKEY NEWSLETTER

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## From the President's Desk

The Jawaharlal Nehru Hockey Tournament Society looks back with pride of its dedicated services for the promotion and enlarging the base of hockey in our country during the last 40 years. The activities of the year included celebration of the 40th year of its fruitful existence. In this connection, the present and the former Olympians and other stalwarts, who brought glory to the nation, joined at a Get-to-gather on November 22, 2003 in Delhi. The local media personnel were also present in full strength. This was an occasion to pay tributes to the founders of this Society, who had the vision to serve the cause of hockey by broad-basing it at the grass-root level and also in achieving excellence in the game. The presence of many a distinguished personality, including the then Vice-President of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), Shri Ashwini Kumar, not only added glamour but was in recognition of our services to uplift our National game of hockey.

The dignitaries, one after the other, recalled how the Nehru Hockey Society, since its inception in 1964, is helping in spotting and grooming the talent to feed the national mainstream. It is befitting to note here that almost all, who have so far represented our national teams at global competitions, have played in any one of the Society's five annual tournaments. They also recalled that not long ago quite a number of countries who have taken to this game late in the day, had been regularly sending their national teams to participate in the Society's tournaments in order to learn various nuances of the game by playing against Indian teams. Some of them are now World leaders. They are the Soviet Russia, Japan, Great Britain, West Germany, Yugoslavia, Holland, Kenya, Canada, Singapore, Nigeria, Oman, Spain, Afghanistan, Dubai, China, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Australia and Bangladesh. It is thus befittingly called "The Cradle of Indian Hockey".



Ram Niwas Mirdha





## ***Here goes from the Editor's Desk***

India qualifying for the Athens Olympic Games later this year was the highpoint of the Indian hockey team's participation in the Olympic qualifying tournament in Madrid (Spain). Though the team lost to Pakistan in the losing semi-finalists' encounter to finish fourth in the tournament, the main aim of the team, to make it for the Olympics was achieved with lot of struggle. Especially, as the absence of veteran Dhanraj Pillay made a lot of difference to the team's performance. One really hopes the team would do better in the Athens Games when Pillay is expected to be back after nursing an injury.

The run-up to the Olympics for the Indian hockey team has been enviable one, barring some hiccups here and there, like the shocking fourth-place finish at the Champions Trophy last August and the injury to Jugraj Singh in a road accident. It was, of course, followed by some consolation wins in the Asia Cup in Kuala Lumpur and the inaugural Afro-Asian Games in Hyderabad.

The player's willingness to succeed at the highest level was evident in the double-leg tournament in Australia in May-June last year. They won one and finished runners-up in the other. Their win in the Hamburg Masters Cup, losing one of the three matches in the four-nation meet, gave them added confidence. The inaugural Afro-Asian Games gave another opportunity for the men's hockey team to silence their critics. After beating Pakistan in the Asia Cup to earn a place in the 2006 World Cup in Holland, the Hyderabad win confirmed India's stature as one of the best teams in both Asia and Africa. The Afro-Asian Games also established the fact that India's domination of arch-rivals Pakistan was no flash in the pan. During last year, the two teams met each other eight times with India emerging victorious on five occasions and Pakistan twice. One encounter between the two sides ended in a draw.

The women's hockey team, too, basked in some glory. They won two titles but the biggest disappointment was its failure to make it to the Olympic qualifiers. The Indian women's team, desperate for a title-win since the Commonwealth Games gold medal efforts, got one when they won the three-nation tournament in Russia in July last year. In the Afro-Asian Games in Hyderabad, they shocked South Korea in the semi-finals and South Africa in the final to make it a grand double for the hosts.

Now all the eyes are on the Indian men's hockey team to perform to its potential in the ATHENS Games, will they deliver?

Brig. HJS Chimni (Retd.) a member of India's 1975 World Cup winning team has brought out 10 most valuable tips entitled "Ten Commandments" as to how to be a top scorer. This along with the profiles of our legendary Olympians as also a mine of statistical and analytical information about the game will feature in our subsequent issues. Please wait and watch.

### ***India book Athens berth***

The road to Athens Olympic Games had been rather bumpy for the Indian hockey team in the 12 team Olympic-qualifying tournament in Madrid. There were suspense, errors and anxiety that the players brought upon them-selves. Although India qualified for the Athens Games by reaching the Semifinals, their overall performance was below par. They lost 2-4 to Holland in the Semi-final and went down to Pakistan by an identical margin in the match to decide the third-position playoff. India thus lost twice to arch-rivals Pakistan in the competition.

Summing up the team's performance in a nutshell, coach Rajinder Singh said: The boys were under tremendous pressure from the beginning to qualify for the Games. But as Australian legend Richard Charlesworth said: "It is all about putting mind over matter".

## ***Women show their power despite heavy odds***

Women sport in India hardly gets the attention or patronage it deserves. Whether it be athletics, weightlifting or shooting, the country's women sports persons have done themselves and the nation proud and demonstrated that they were in no way inferior to their men counterparts. The same goes for the Indian women hockey team, which recently added the Asia Cup to their kitty.

Beating a tough competition that included teams from China, Japan and Korea on way to the final triumph was all the more creditable for the women hockey players. And with the Asia Cup win, the team also earned a direct entry into the 2006 World Cup to be held in Spain. The victory also avenged India's twin defeats to Japan in the 2002 Asian Games, the second denying the Indians the bronze medal. India's previous best effort in the Asia Cup was the silver medal they earned at the same venue - National Stadium in New Delhi in 1999.

For Coach M.K. Kaushik, the win was another proof of his hard work and commitment, Coach of the men's team which won the Asian Games gold medal in 1998 after 32 years and more recently that of the women's team which beat the field in the Afro-Asian Games in Hyderabad. Kaushik had played a major role in moulding a unit, consisting of many inexperienced players, into a winning combination. It was a just reward for his planning and strategy after he took over reins of women's hockey six months ago.

Since winning the 2002 Commonwealth Games gold medal, the Indian women's hockey had slipped to lower rungs. Of course, the present team looked more concerned about their own performance on the field rather than sulk at the off-field neglect, if any.

Indian women's hockey, thus, has bounced back with the Asia Cup win. Written off during their slump after the Commonwealth 2002 high, the recent win in Delhi was their maiden triumph in this continental tournament.



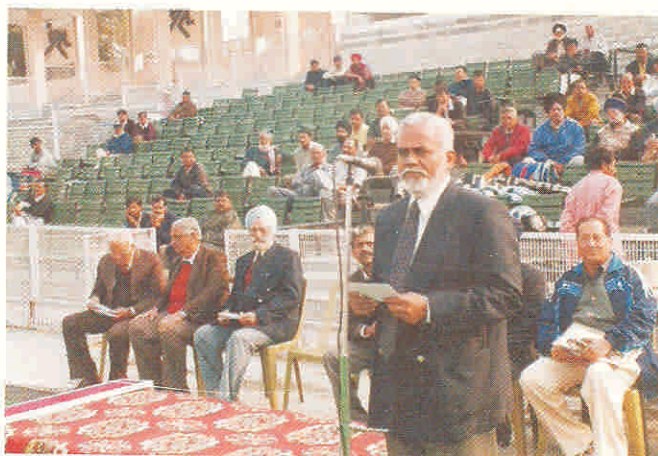
## DAV Jalandhar win a thriller

The ONGC-NEHRU Champion Colleges Hockey Tournament, a competition to give more exposure to college players, was a thrilling affair. The final went to the wire with defending champions DAV College from Jalandhar beating Khalsa College (Patiala) 11-10 via tie-breaker in the 11th edition of the tournament at Shivaji Stadium. In the tie-break, the suspense continued even after 23 attempts and it was the Jalandhar goalkeeper Rupinder Singh as he dived to his left in palming the push by Harinder Singh. Fourteen best College teams of the country took part in this tournament.

There were cash prizes galore in this SAIL Trophy tournament. The winners got Rs. 96,000/- while the runners received Rs. 64,000/-. The College of Arts and Education (Annamalai) beat Faculty of Humanity (Varanasi) 5-0 to take the third spot and received Rs. 32,000/-.



DAV College, Jalandhar Hockey Team with the ONGC-Nehru Champion Colleges Hockey Tournament Trophy



Prize Distribution Ceremony being held on the occasion of ONGC-Nehru Champion Colleges Hockey Tournament

## Punjab Police win Nehru Hockey

Experienced striker Baljit Singh Dhillon scored twice off penalty corner as defending champions Punjab Police outplayed fancied Indian Airlines 3-0 to win the 40th ONGC-NEHRU Hockey Tournament at Shivaji Stadium. The Jalandhar team converted three of the four second-half penalty corners to emerge triumphant and add a sixth title to their kitty. As many as 24 teams took part in this tournament.

Punjab Police went home richer by Rs. 2,50,000/- while Indian Airlines got Rs. 1,50,000/-. Bharat Petroleum beat Tamil Nadu XI to finish third and win Rs. 1,00,000/-.



Bhangra by Punjabi Academy celebrating the victory of Punjab Police team at the occasion of 40th ONGC-Nehru Hockey Tournament



Prize Distribution Ceremony being held on the occasion of 40th ONGC-Nehru Hockey Tournament



## **St. Soldier Divine School corner Junior Hockey glory**

Varinder Kumar emerged hero for St. Soldier Divine Public School, Jalandhar as his brilliant 22nd minute penalty corner conversion turned the scale on another team from Jalandhar Govt. Model Sr. Sec. School, in the final of the 32nd Oriental bank-Nehru Junior Hockey Tournament. They were richer By Rs. 96,000/- along with the trophy while the losers got Rs. 64,000/-. In all 26 teams participated in the tournament.

## **Jalandhar Boys clinch Sub-Junior Nehru title**

Govt. Model School, Jalandhar won the 21st Nehru hockey sub-junior boys title blanking Town High School, Sundergarh 3-0 in the final. The winners won Rs. 96,000/- while Sundergarh boys won Rs. 64,000/-. Twenty three teams competed for the title.

## **Shahbad Girls bag Junior Hockey title**

SGNP Girls Sr. Sec. School, Shahabad pipped Govt. Girls School, Ranchi 6-4 through tie-breaker to win the final of the 10th Nehru-NDMC Junior Girls Hockey Tournament. Shahabad girls won Rs. 96,000/- while the girls from Ranchi got Rs. 64,000/-. Seventeen teams took part in the tournament.



## **1975 World Champs seen in action again**

Indian hockey team may have won eight Olympic gold medals but it was only once that they got the privilege of being called the world champions. On March 15, 1975, India lifted the World Cup defeating Pakistan 2-1 in Kuala Lumpur.

Once again Ajit Pal Singh along with his team of world champions (Lesli Fernandes, Ashok Dewan, Michael Kindo, Aslam Sher Khan, Virendra Singh, V.J. Philips, Harcharan Singh, Ashok Kumar, B.P. Govinda, HJS Chimni and Onkar Singh) were seen in action during an exhibition match against the women's team at Shivaji Stadium on March 15, to commemorate the day. For the record, the men lost 4-5 but it was hardly relevant.



## **Junior sweep series against Malaysia**

India quelled a late fight-back by Malaysia to record their fourth straight win 6-5, in the final of the junior 'Test' Series held at Kuala Lumpur. Malaysia Trailing 2-6 till the 47th minute, pumped in three goals in a span of 12 minutes to raise hopes of a remarkable upset. India had won the first three 'Test' matches played in Delhi by comfortable margins.

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