



# THE CRADLE OF INDIAN HOCKEY NEWSLETTER

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Former Olympians and Internationals played a charity match between former men Olympians and the Asia Cup Winners Women's hockey team to raise funds for the ailing International Vivek Singh

## From the President's Desk

The Indian hockey team has once again failed to make much of an impact and just retained their seventh position, which they had secured in the Sydney Games in 2000. Nevertheless, it is heartening to know that India is fifth in the World ranking, according to the criterion laid down by the International Hockey Federation (F.I.H.).

Unmindful of the unimpressive show at the Athens Games, back home the Nehru Hockey Tournament Society will conduct its annual five tournaments during October 7–November 25 at the Shivaji Stadium in the Union Capital. Teams from Japan, Malaysia, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh will once again participate in the tournaments this year.

The Nehru Hockey Tournament Society, following its tradition of looking into the welfare of players in distress, handed over a cheque of Rs. 50,000/- to the father of former international player Vivek Singh, who is presently undergoing treatment for urinary bladder cancer. We wish Vivek speedy recovery.

Olympian Mohinder Lal, who scored the winning goal in the 1964 Tokyo Olympics, passed away at his residence in Spain on July 29. This issue of the Newsletter peeps into the Tokyo Olympics where India regained the gold medal, which they had lost at Rome four years ago. We join millions of his fans in condoling the death of this torch-bearer of Indian hockey. May his soul rest in peace!

We are extremely happy to learn that the oldest known Indian Olympian, Feroze Khan, has celebrated his 100th birthday on September 9 in Pakistan where he settled after partition in 1947. We wish him a longer contended and prosperous life.

**Ram Niwas Mirdha**





## Indian Hockey Retains Seventh Position

Indian Hockey followed the familiar old fault line at the Athens Olympics. The crux of the story of this once-a-national game has been one of unimpressive lot. Indian hockey is said to be on a revival mode but it does not appear to be so, leaving much room for more improvement.

Olympics come once in four years. There are so many nations who seriously prepare their teams 3-4 years in advance. While nations like Holland, Australia, Germany and Spain have been adapting latest scientific techniques to improve their game, Indian hockey should also adopt similar game plan to be at par with them. India began their campaign with a 1-3 loss to reigning champions the Netherlands. It defeated South Africa 4-2 in the next game after trailing by two goals at one stage. They then lost to Australia 3-4, a match they should have won or at least drawn. They also went down 1-2 to

New Zealand and drew 2-2 with Argentina, which pushed them to classification round. In the 5-8 placing match, India were outplayed by their traditional rival Pakistan with a 3-0 margin, thus pushing out India from the coveted Champions Trophy as it lost even the sixth position to qualify for this championship. For the 7-8 placing, India beat South Korea 5-2 and finished a poor seventh, the same position it had held at the Sydney Olympics four years ago.

### India at a glance:

**Total Goals:** 34, **India conceded:** 16. **Penalty Corners:** Total 62, India earned 17. **Break up:** Against (Holland) India 3, Holland 6; (South Africa) India 7, South Africa 5; (Australia) India 0, Australia 6; (New Zealand) India 3, New Zealand 5; (Pakistan) India 2, Pakistan 7; and (South Korea) India 0, South Korea 8; **Penalty Corners Conversion:** India against (Holland) India converted 1 out of 3, Holland 2 out of 6; (South Africa) India 2-7, South Africa 1-5; (Australia) India 0-0, Australia 0-6; (New Zealand) India 1-3, New Zealand 1-5; (Argentina) India 0-2, Argentina 2-8; (Pakistan) India 0-2, Pakistan 1-7; and (South Korea) India 0-0, S. Korea 2-8. **Note:** Total PC in 7 matches – 62; PC against India – 45; India earned 17 but converted only 4. Therefore, percentagewise India's rate of PC conversion was 23.53 per cent.

### Gagan Ajit India's Leading Goal-Scorer

Gagan Ajit Singh emerged India's leading goal scorer with seven strikes, in which the country finished seventh. Pakistan's Sohail Abbas showed his class to finish as the highest scorer in the entire tournament, slamming home 11 times even though his side finished fifth in the event. Dhanraj Pillay was second most successful scorer. The veteran forward, who played in his fourth and final Olympics, sounded the board twice – both of which were penalty corner conversions. Prabhjot Singh, Adam Sinclair, Baljit Singh Dhillon and Deepak Thakur – all of whom scored just a goal each. Dilip Tirkey's penalty-corner conversion against Australia gave the captain his lone goal in the competition which saw as many as 213 goals being scored.

### India Ranked 5th in World Rankings

The Indian hockey team, which finished seventh in the Athens Olympics, has been ranked fifth in the latest Sahara World Hockey team rankings and approved by F.I.H. The rankings are taken into account all the following tournaments over a period of four years: (1) Olympic Games (including qualifying events); (2) World Cup (including qualifying events); (3) Champions Trophy; (4) Champions Challenge; (5) Continental Federation Championship (including qualifying events). The ranking system reflects both the current and past performances. However, ratings from past performances will be progressively less weighted year by year. That is the reason for India being ranked fifth although the team finished seventh at the just-concluded Athens Olympics.

The ranking list is topped by Australia, who won the Athens Games hockey title. They have moved up from third place, courtesy their maiden Olympic triumph, to replace bronze medalists Germany, who slipped to second place. The duo are followed by 2000 Olympic Champions and Athens runners-up Holland. Pakistan, who finished fifth at Athens, are placed fourth. The ranking system was devised by F.I.H. in October last year to establish open compositions of major F.I.H. events and qualifiers.

In Women's hockey, Olympic bronze medalist Argentina retained their top place in the rankings while India, who did not qualify for the Athens Games, is down at the 15th place.

### Eight Hockey Olympians to be Honoured

The Indo-Pak hockey 'Test' series will have a unique feature. To commemorate this historic occasion of reviving long-lost friendship alive and kicking, eight Olympians of yesteryears, four each from India and Pakistan, will be honoured. The Indians to be honoured by Pak Hockey authorities are Ajitpal Singh, B.P. Govinda, Aslam Sher Khan and Surinder Singh Sodhi. Pakistan's Olympians, who will be honoured by the Indian authorities, are Jahangir Butt, Islahuddin Siddiqi, Ch. Akhtar Rasool and Sami-ullah Khan.



## ***Nehru Hockey Starts with a Foreign Flavour***

Participation of foreign teams from Malaysia, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh in the junior/sub-junior boys and Japan in the senior section will be the highlight of this year's Nehru hockey tournaments to be held at Shivaji Stadium in New Delhi from October 7 to November 25. This year's calendar of events will begin with the 11th junior girls (U-17) tournament during October 7-16. It will be followed by the 33rd junior boys (U-17) tournament from October 16 to November 1 and the 22nd sub-junior boys (U-15) competition during November 1-13. The 41st senior tournament will be held during November 14-25.

**This is, of course, not the first time that foreign flavour is being added to the Nehru hockey tournaments. Foreign team's participation has always been a salient feature of the five annual tournaments. In fact, Japan had sent its team to the tournaments in 1965, 1975 and 1980 while Malaysian teams had taken part in the 1971, 1975, 1980, 1989 and 2003 tournaments. Sri Lanka's participation is more than any other country. It had sent its teams 16 times since 1965 till year before last. Bangladesh came here in 1972 and 1997.**

Jawaharlal Nehru Hockey Tournament Society is the only organization in the country which attracts some of the top teams from all over the world. Olympic champions Holland, Australia, Germany, Russia, China, Spain, Great Britain and Pakistan teams had been regular participants in the prestigious tournaments over the years. In fact, more than 21 foreign teams have so far rubbed shoulders with some of the best teams of the country since the inception of the Nehru hockey tournaments in 1965.

## ***Nehru Hockey Tournament Society Join Hands to Raise Funds for Ailing Vivek Singh***

The Nehru Hockey Tournament Society, which holds each year the prestigious Nehru hockey tournament in five categories, is not in any way behind others when it comes to helping the cause of needy hockey players. The tradition continues and true to this tradition, the Society handed over on July 7 a cheque of Rs. 50,000/- to former International Hockey Player Vivek Singh's father Gauri Shanker Singh while another member of the Nehru Hockey Tournament Society (who did not want to be identified) made a donation of Rs. 20,000/- for Vivek's treatment through an exhibition hockey match held at the Shivaji Stadium in Delhi on July 7, between former men Olympians and the women's hockey squad, which recently won the Asia Cup. Vivek, an Office Superintendent with the North-



Gauri Shankar Singh, father of Vivek Singh receiving a cheque for Rs. 50,000/- from the Union Sports Minister Sunil Dutt

Eastern Railways, was first diagnosed and treated for urinary bladder cancer in 2000. But doctors last year detected that the dreaded disease had spread to other parts of his body, including the lungs.

The Union Sports Minister Sunil Dutt, who took time out of his busy schedule to watch the match, announced Rs. 2.00 lakhs for the ailing player. He also announced that Vivek would get free treatment at the Tata Memorial Cancer Hospital in Mumbai.

**The Nehru hockey Tournament Society wishes Vivek all the best and speedy recovery.**

## ***Tokyo Olympics Hero Mohinder Lal Passes Away***

Olympian Mohinder Lal, a Jewel of Jewels of Indian Hockey passed away at his residence in Spain on the morning of July 29. Lal, who converted a penalty stroke in the final against Pakistan in the 41st minute to give India the gold medal in the 1964 Tokyo Olympics, also won a Silver medal in the 1960 Rome Olympics. In fact, this Olympic Gold was Mohinder's biggest contribution to the country although he also starred in the 1966 Asian Games triumph against Pakistan. He was selected for his third Olympics (Successive) in 1968 at Mexico but shortly before the Games illness struck him and P. Krishnamurthy took his place in the team. The versatile right-half later took to coaching in Spain after retiring from Indian Railways and settled there. He also worked as coach of Real Club de Polo, Barcelona for many years.

**Nehru Hockey Tournament Society also joins millions of Lal's fans and hockey lovers of the country to condole the sad demise of Mohinder Lal. May his soul rest in peace!**



## Arjuna/Dronacharya Awards

Arjuna/Dronacharya Awards and controversies seem to go hand-in-hand. Sacked Indian coach Rajinder Singh was selected for the Dronacharya award this year. Rajinder, who led India to four titles last year, including the Asia Cup and the Afro-Asian Games, was sacked just 25 days before the Athens Olympic Games began and was replaced with German coach Gerhard Rach. Devesh Chauhan, the broad-shouldered goal keeper from Etawah city in Uttar Pradesh, and women hockey player Suraj Lata Devi received Arjuna Awards while Hardyal Singh got the Dhyani Chand Award.

## Feroze Khan is Oldest Living Legend of Indian Hockey

**The Nehru Hockey Tournament Society is extremely happy to know that the oldest known Olympic medal winner, Feroze Khan, has celebrated his 100th birthday on Thursday (Sept. 9) at his residence in Lahore where he settled after partition in 1947.**

Khan, who won hockey gold medal for India in the 1928 Amsterdam Olympics, became the oldest living Olympic Champion after the United States James Rockefeller died last month. Rockefeller was the oldest living Olympian with Khan closely following him. Feroze Khan, who was born in Basti Danishmandan in Jalandhar in India is learnt to have started playing using a tree branch as his first hockey stick. India's hockey team under the captaincy of Jaipal Singh, he recalled, was able to compete in 1928 Olympics only after getting a loan from a private company. "En route to the hockey finals, we beat Australia 6-0, Belgium 9-0, Denmark 5-0 and Switzerland 6-0 in the Semi-finals to set up the title clash against Holland, which we won 3-0", Khan said. The Olympian is presently saddened by the slump in Asian field hockey. "It is sad that we have lost our traditional style of playing because of the European advancement. The hockey you see today it is not what we used to play. The artistry and flair is gone. It is sad that the International Hockey Federation (F.I.H.) has done nothing to prevent changing of rules that have robbed the game of its finesse and skill", said the legend.

**Nehru Hockey Association has already sent a congratulatory message to this living legend of Indian Hockey wishing him a continued happy life. Let us say, "Feroze Sahib, Tum Jiyo Hazaaron Saal".**

## A Peep into the Past (1964 Tokyo Olympics)

The Tokyo Olympics were the first Olympics to be held on Asian soil. India made a bold bid to regain her lost supremacy in world hockey.

India was coached by **Habul Mukherjee**, who used to play hockey in a dhoti in his heydays. The team went on a two-and-a-half month tour to New Zealand and Malaysia before heading to Tokyo.

In the pool matches, India finished at the top with 12 points, India beat Belgium 2-0, was held to a draw by both Germany and Spain, beat Hong Kong 6-0, Malaysia 3-1, Canada 3-0 and Holland 2-1. In the semi-final, India beat Australia 3-1 to set up their third consecutive clash with Pakistan in the Olympics finals.

The final was played on a cold afternoon on November 23, 1964, at the Kamazawa Park in Tokyo. The first half was played at a scorching pace but no goal was scored. There was an unruly incident with some of the Pakistanis attacking the Indian players. The match was briefly interrupted for the tempers to cool down. **Manager Inder Mohan Mahajan** couldn't bear the tension and started pacing outside the field, all the while keeping in touch on the progress of this grim battle for Olympic supremacy. The forward line comprising **Harbinder Singh** and **Joginder Singh** was irresistible that day. Five minutes into the second half, a penalty corner was awarded to India which was taken by India's 'Rock of Gibraltar' **Prithipal Singh**. Prithipal had been fantastic in the Tokyo Olympics thus far, and had scored 11 goals. However, this penalty corner was to be his most important. His stinging shot was deflected off the goalkeeper's pad and stopped by Pakistan's full back Munir Dar with his foot. **Centre-half Mohinder Lal** converted the resultant penalty stroke in the 41st minute to give India a 1-0 lead.

**I.H.F. President Ashwini Kumar** did the running commentary for Akashvani in the final. Each move forward by India was a potential goal in his eyes. And when **Mohinder Lal converted the penalty stroke, a hysterical Ashwini Kumar** cried himself hoarse. It was an instant in which Akashvani and Ashwini Kumar were made for each other, a sound-byte that would become frozen in time. **Shankar Lakshman**, the Indian custodian, played superbly and saved two sizzling penalty corner hits. India held on to its slender lead to win its seventh gold medal in eight Olympic Games. **Shankar Lakshman, was declared the Man of the Match.**

**India's record in the 1964 Olympics at Tokyo was as follows:  
Played: 9 ; Won: 7; Drawn: 2; Goals For: 22; Goals Against: 5.**

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