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From the President's Desk



After a long time the Indian hockey fraternity had something to cheer about. The BSNL-7th Asia Cup for Men in Chennai proved a turning point for Indian hockey as the host nation defeated China, Sri Lanka, Korea (twice), Bangladesh, Japan and Thailand in succession to retain the prestigious Cup in front of a full house. India scored as many as 57 goals in seven matches while conceding just five! It showed the aggressive and positive approach of the Indians under coach Joaquim Carvalho. This tournament has established India as a leading hockey nation in the Continent.

Indian women, however, were not so lucky as their men's counterparts. They could only finish fourth in Asia Cup for Women, held simultaneously in Hong Kong. Like the Indian men, the women too were defending the title. Despite thumping wins over Malaysia, Thailand and Singapore, the Indian women's team suffered at the hands of China and Korea (in the semi-final). Japan beat Korea to win the crown.

The summer began well for Indian men's hockey when they beat England to finish third behind Argentina and New Zealand in the Six-nation Champions Challenge Tournament in Boom (Belgium).

On the home front, Haryana Women ruled supreme to retain their No.1 position in the Sub-Junior Nationals at Bhopal. Jharkhand finished runners-up. The Air-India Hockey Academy boys won the Junior Nationals defeating Punjab in the final.

The Nehru Hockey Tournament Society's annual Souvenir has been well received by several prominent sports administrators and hockey lovers across the country.

Sadly enough, the Society suffered two personal losses in the untimely passing away of Thakur Tara Chand and Jaman Lal Sharma. The Society will certainly miss their wise counsel and patronage. May their noble souls rest in peace!

Ram Niwas Mirdha

7 TH MEN'S ASIA CUP

India's Moment To Celebrate

One can smell a scent of revival of Indian hockey. By trouncing Asian hockey's power-house South Korea by a convincing 7-2 margin in the final to successfully defend the title in the BSNL-7th Asia Cup for men at the Mayor Radhakrishnan stadium in Chennai on September 9. It has creditably humbled China, Sri Lanka, Korea (twice), Bangladesh, Japan and Thailand in a single tournament! It can now establish itself as the leading hockey team in the Continent. This Asia Cup had the highest number of participants — 11 teams, three more than the last edition in 2003 at Kuala Lumpur.

Agreed, this Asia Cup was a preparatory stint for most of the teams as they geared up for either Olympics or its qualifiers next year. India, too, were rebuilding their outfit virtually from scratch, particularly after two bad outings in the World Cup and the Asian Games last year. The Indians however, had several memorable moments to cherish during the 10-day carnival (Aug.31-Sept.9) They scored as many as 57 goals in seven matches, conceding just five goals, thus creating a world record, indeed!

India began their quest with a lone goal victory over China. India then outclassed Sri Lanka 20-0. The hosts then served a delectable fare to produce three field goals to beat Korea 3-2 after being in arrears twice before. India's 6-0 win over Bangladesh in the next game was rather lacklustre. In their last group encounter, India slammed 16 goals past Thailand.

Egged on by a full house, India ousted Japan with a 4-1 win in the Semi-final. In the other semi-final, Korea beat Malaysia 2-1. Malaysia then edged Japan 5-3 to finish third.

FINAL POSTIONS: 1. India, 2. Korea, 3. Malaysia, 4. Japan, 5. China, 6. Pakistan, 7. Bangladesh, 8. Hong Kong, 9. China, 10. Sri Lanka, 11. Singapore and 12. Thailand.

6TH WOMEN'S ASIA CUP

Indian eves finish fourth

Both India's men and women teams were defending champions in their respective Asia Cup Championships. But the end-result was different for both the teams. While the men's team retained their crown with a thumping 7-2 victory over Korea in the final at Chennai, their women counterparts

failed to re-live their 2004 triumph in New Delhi. They could only finish a poor fourth, losing 2-4 to China in the classification game after having been humbled 2-5 by Korea in the Semi-finals at the King's Park in Hong Kong on September 9.

The Indian girls, coached by Netherland's Herman Kruis, began their campaign on a positive note with a 6-0 win over Malaysia. India then routed Thailand 16-0. This big win set an Asia cup goal-scoring record, bettering China's 15-0 score line against Singapore. India then scored an identical 16-0 win over Singapore before suffering their first defeat in the league phase - a 2-4 loss to China. But despite the loss India made it to the semi-finals with 9 points. In the league phase (4 matches), India scored 40 goals while conceding just four!

However, in the semi-finals, India were out-played by Korea, who won 5-2. In the classification match to decide 3rd-4th places, India went down 2-4 to China to finish fourth among nine participants, one more than the last edition held in 2004 in New Delhi. Japan won the final beating Korea 7-6 via tie-breaker.

FINAL PLACINGS: 1. Japan, 2. Korea, 3. China, 4. India, 5. Malaysia, 6. Thailand, 7. Chinese Taipei and 8. Hong Kong China

Six-Nation Champions Challenge Men's Hockey

India clinched back-to-back Bronze

India survived a score to beat England 4-3 and bag the bronze medal in the six-nation Champions Challenge Hockey Tournament in Boom (Belgium) on July 1st. India has once again lost a golden opportunity to book a place in the elitist gathering of top six in the world—the bi-annual Champions Trophy.

The weakness of faltering at the death-end once again haunted the Indians who very nearly blew away a comfortable 4-0 lead against England before clinching their back-to-back bronze. They had earlier claimed the third spot in the prestigious Sultan Azlan Shah Cup Hockey Tournament in Malaysia. Incidentally, India had beaten England 3-2 in the league phase as well, thus avenged their 2-3 loss sustained at the last World Cup in Monchengladbach (Germany).

Despite beating Japan 4-3 for their third win in the league phase, India failed to qualify for the final as they stood third with nine points in the league phase. New Zealand with 11 points and Argentina with 10 points played out a 3-3 draw to make it to the summit clash. India went down 1-2 to Argentina in their crucial match to reach the summit. India's only goal came through a penalty-stroke in the 64th minute.

India started its campaign on a sour note as they went down 2-0 to New Zealand. However, in their next game India recorded a 3-2 win over England. And then India scored a convincing 4-1 victory over Belgium.

New Zealand went down 2-3 to Argentina in the final while Japan beat Belgium 4-3 to take the 5th place.

FINAL PLACINGS: 1. Argentina, 2. New Zealand, 3. India, 4. England, 5. Japan and 6. Belgium.

34TH JUNIOR NATIONAL HOCKEY (MEN)

A-I Academy win Junior Nationals

The Air-India Hockey Academy has proved once again why it is the premier hockey institution in the country today as they won the 34th edition of the Junior National Championships in Chennai defeating Punjab 5-0 in the final on June 30. The one-sided title win for Air-India culminated in its first win in the Junior Nationals. The Punjab & Sind Bank (PSB) defeated hosts Tamil Nadu 5-2 to take the third place.

The Championship was conducted in two phases during June 18-30 with 38 teams divided into eight groups. After the group league matches, those who made it to the qr-finals by topping their respective groups were Tamil Nadu, Manipur, Mizoram, Punjab, Air-India Academy, P&S Bank, IOC and SAI. The qr-finals witnessed the triumph of Tamil Nadu, A-I Academy, P&S Bank and Punjab. In the semi-finals, Punjab scored a 2-1 victory over PSB while the Academy scored twice to beat the hosts, Tamil Nadu.

The winners and runners-up received Rs. 50,000 and Rs.30,000 respectively.

Special prizes were awarded to Renesh Meitei (Manipur) as the Best Goalkeeper, Innocent Kullu (Air-India) Best midfielder, Vinod Rayer (Tamilnadu) Best Forward, Amandeep Ekka (Orissa) Best Mid-Fielder and Danish Mujtaba (Air-India) Player of the Tournament. The Indian Bank sponsored the Most Promising Players award went to Sikander Pal Singh (J&K), Joy Chandra Singh (Manipur) and Pierr Allen Rajesh (Tamil Nadu).

20TH SUB-JR. WOMEN'S NATIONAL HOCKEY

Haryana Girls Rule Supreme

Haryana and Jharkhand maintained their No. 1 and 2 positions respectively as they finished in that order in the

Indian Women Hockey Federation-conducted 20th Sub-Junior Women's National Championships held at Bhopal during May 5-12. Defending Champions Haryana maintained a clean slate winning all the matches they played, including the final.

Haryana and Jharkhand were seeded directly into the Super-League and were joined by four other teams viz Delhi, U.P., Orissa and Andhra Pradesh after the preliminary league stage in which 16 teams participated. In the Super-League Pool-A, Haryana beat Delhi and Uttar Pradesh by an identical 1-0 margin while Uttar Pradesh defeated Delhi 2-0 for its lone victory. In Pool-B, Jharkhand beat Orissa 1-0 and Andhra Pradesh 5-1 to top the pool while Orissa's lone victory came against Andhra Pradesh 2-0. In the semi-finals, Haryana beat Uttar Pradesh while Jharkhand eliminated. Orissa, both by an identical 1-0 margin.

The final saw Haryana emerge champions with a 4-2 verdict over Jharkhand. Orissa beat Uttar Pradesh 2-1 to decide the third spot. The match for the 5th-6th places were not played due to lack of time.

FINAL PLACINGS : 1. Haryana, 2. Jharkhand, 3. Orissa and 4. Uttar Pradesh.

APPRECIATION FOR NEHRU HOCKEY SOUVENIR

The annual Souvenir being brought out, by the Jawaharlal Nehru Hockey Tournament Society has been a big hit among hockey fraternity in the country and abroad. The souvenir, which is unique of its kind, carries information regarding details of domestic as well as high-profile competitions held anywhere across the world.

The Souvenir published this year is a "Complete Year Book" on the game of hockey having added quite a few new chapters to add to the information that hockey lovers want to know. In fact, it is now an encyclopedia of world hockey, which should be kept as a treasure.

This year's Souvenir has received widespread appreciation from all quarters. For example, Dr. G.P. Gautam, Addl. Director, Amity School of Physical Education & Sports Science (Amity University), is a veteran in sports education and administration. He is one such personality amongst many who has highly lauded the efforts of the Nehru Hockey Society in these words: "My hats off to the Editorial Board for providing a "plethora of precious information" pertaining to the game of hockey in India. From the core of my heart, I would like to appreciate the work done by you and your colleagues. The Chairman, Souvenir

Committee, particularly deserves all praise for the hard work put in. I will be keeping it as a treasure in my departmental library for the benefit of our faculty, scholars and students”.

Such words of appreciation and encouragement will definitely act as a filip for the Editorial Board to enrich the publication with more and more valuable information in years to come.

OBIT

THAKUR TARA CHAND PASSES AWAY (1931-2007)

The Jawaharlal Nehru Hockey Tournament Society was shocked to learn the untimely demise of Thakur Tara Chand, who breathed his last at his New Delhi residence on Saturday, July 21 at age of 76. He died of Kidney failure. Lovingly called 'Thakur Sahib', Tara Chand was not only a great friend of the Nehru Hockey Tournament Society, but also made significant contribution in its establishment and progress since its inception in 1964.



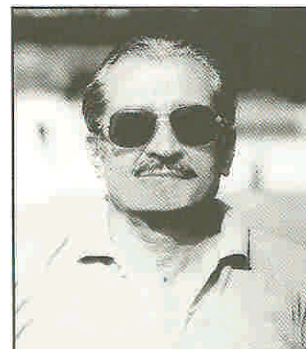
Born in Peshawar (now in Pakistan) in 1931, Tara Chand was one of the victims of partition of the country as he had to cross the Wagah border with great trouble at the age of 16. Even as a child he had wielded the hockey stick. As he grew up, his skill and style earned him a place in the then New Stars team in Delhi. He later joined Delhi Police and represented them in major hockey tournaments. He was even a 'reserve' for 1952 and 1956 Olympic hockey teams. Thakur Sahib served the National game for more than three decades, both as a player, coach and organizer. Thakur Sahib's other passion was football. He regularly played for Delhi Police and the City Club and even trained the New Delhi Heroes in his later years.

Thakur retired as the Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP) of Delhi Police.

The Nehru Hockey Tournament Society will badly miss his wise counsel and guidance. May his noble soul rest in peace!

JAMAN LAL SHARMA PASSES AWAY (1932-2007)

The Jawaharlal Nehru Hockey Tournament Society is also profoundly grieved to learn about the untimely demise of the one of great exponents of Indian hockey, Shri Jaman Lal Sharma, at his Lucknow residence on Sunday, August 26 at the age of 75.



Born in Bannu (now in Pakistan) on February 6, 1932, Jaman Lal was a sturdy deep defender, who rose to represent the country in several international competitions, including the 1960 Rome Olympics and the 1962 Jakarta Asian Games. An effective tackler and a sharp-shooter in his playing days, Jaman Lal was Manager of the Indian team for the 1985 Perth Champions Trophy, 1988 Seoul Olympics, 1982 5th World Cup at Bombay and 1st Asia Cup team at Karachi. He was made the Chief Coach of the National team for the 1990 Beijing Asian Games. He also served as adviser and selector for both men's and women's hockey Federations.

A qualified umpire, Jaman Lal retired in 1992 as Director of Sports, Uttar Pradesh Government, after serving in different capacities. He had represented Uttar Pradesh at the Nationals from 1955 to 1962, captaining the State team during 1958-60. He was awarded the Padma Shri in 1989-90.

The Nehru Hockey Tournament Society will certainly miss his wise counsel and patronage. May his noble soul rest in peace!