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From the President's Desk



The annual feature of a series of four well-conducted and well-attended tournaments, organised by the J.N. Hockey Tournament Society, came to a successful conclusion at the Union capital's Shivaji stadium on November 25, with the final of the 44th edition of the Senior Nehru Tournament. All the tournaments produced scintilating hockey and helped the organisers unearth many a fresh talent as well.

Defending champions S.G.N.P. Girls Sr. Sec. School (Shahabad) played true to their ranking and reputation to beat Govt. Girls High School (Bariatu) to win the 14th edition of the prestigious N.D.M.C.-Nehru Girls Tournament for the eighth time. The Govt. High School, Harnamdaspora defended their title successfully beating Birsa Munda Vidyapitha (Rourkela) in the final of the 25th Nehru Sub-Junior Boys (U-15) tournament. The Govt. Model Sr. Sec. School, (Ladowali) beat Sat Guru Partap Singh Academy (Sri Bhaini Sahib) to win the 36th edition of the most popular Nehru Junior Boys (U-17) title. The Punjab & Sind Bank (PSB) emerged as the best among the 24 teams that participated in the Senior Nehru Tournament.

Haryana's supremacy in women's hockey was once again asserted as they won the 37th edition of the Women's Junior Nationals by outclassing Jharkhand in the final held in Gwalior. This was Haryana's fourth title win in 10 years.

After a lot of suspense over the venue, the 29th edition of the most prestigious Champions Trophy was finally allotted to Kuala Lumpur, which conducted the event during November 29 - December 9. Germany beat Australia to claim the title for the ninth time.

The year 2008 will be a year of reckoning for Indian hockey. Indian men will play in Santiago (Chile) during March 1-9 to qualify for the 2008 Beijing Olympics. The Indian Women's team will participate in the Qualifiers at Kazan (Russia) during April 19-27, 2008. Millions of countrymen await a new dawn in Indian Hockey.

Ram Niwas Mirdha

14TH NDMC-NEHRU GIRLS TOURNAMENT (U-17)(OCT. 10-18, 2007)

SGNP School retains the title

The defending champions SGNP Girls Sr. Sec. School, Shahabad (Haryana) emerged winners of the prestigious N.D.M.C.-Nehru Girls Tournament defeating Govt. Girls High School, Bariatu (Jharkhand) 9-0 on way to retain the title for the eighth time in the tournament's 14-year-old history. Altogether 20 teams from across the country took part in this tournament. The preliminary phase-I league had 14 teams. They were divided into five groups. The group toppers qualified for Phase-II Super League where six seeded teams were in the fray. These eleven teams were divided into four groups. The four toppers then made it to the Semi-finals. In the Semi-finals, SGNP beat Padma Raje School (Gwalior) 1-0 while the Bariatu School ousted Govt. Girls School, Kairon (Punjab) 4-3. The Gwalior team finished third after defeating the Kairon School 5-2.

The winners SGNP School received the coveted trophy alongwith a cash award of Rs.96,000 and

runners-up Bariatu School were richer by Rs.64,000. The third position holder, the Gwalior School was awarded Rs.30,000 SGNP's 16-year-old Ritu Rani was adjudged the "Best Player of the Tournament" and received a cash award of Rs. 5,000. The Geeta Bajaj Fair Play Trophy was awarded to G. V. Raja Sports School, Trivandrum along with a cash award of Rs. 5,000. Tika Ram Sr. Sec. School, Sonapat got the "Promising Team" award and a cash award of Rs. 25,000 while the PSPSI Penalty-Corner Award of Rs. 20,000 went to the Shahabad girls. The Coach of the winning team, Baldev Singh and the Coach of the runners-up team, Saroj Krushna Mohanty received cash awards of Rs.8,000 and Rs.5,000 respectively. The Coach of the 3rd Position team Paramjeet Singh got Rs.3,000.

The Delhi Chief Minister, Hon'ble Mrs. Sheila Dikshit, who was the Chief Guest in the Final, distributed the prizes. The nine-day tournament was earlier inaugurated by Shri Parimal Rai, Chairman, N.D.M.C.

25TH NEHRU SUB-JUNIOR BOYS (U-15) TOURNAMENT (OCT.18-31, 07)

Harnamdaspora Boys retains the title

It was a dream come true for the Govt. High School, Harnamdaspora (Jalandhar) but not before facing a see-saw battle against Birsa Munda Vidyapitha, Rourkela in the final of the 25th Nehru Sub-Junior Boys (U-15) tournament held in Delhi on October 31. Defending champions the Harnamdaspora School emerged victorious scoring 4-2 but the defeated team, the Birsa Munda Vidyapitha won the hearts of the vast spectators as the boys played with only nine players throughout the 85 minutes (including 15 mts extra-time) because most of their bench strength was found to be over-aged in the medical tests. For the third place, the Spring Dales Sr. Sec. School, Amritsar beat Malwa Khalsa Sr. Sec. School, Ludhiana 4-2.

Twenty-four school teams from across the country took part this year. Of them, 18 teams were in the preliminary league. They were divided into six groups. The six toppers then met six seeded teams in the Super-League. Those 12 teams were divided into four groups. The four group leaders then constituted the Semi-final line up. In the Semi-finals, Harnamdaspora School beat

Malwa Khalsa School, Ludhiana 3-0 while Birsa Munda ousted Spring Dales School 3-2.

The winners Harnamdaspora School received the coveted trophy along with a cash award of Rs.96,000. The runners-up Birsa Munda Vidyapitha was richer by Rs. 64,000. The third position holder Spring Dales got Rs.32,000. The Malwa Khalsa School was given the "Most Promising Team" award and a cash award of Rs.25,000. The GRM. Sr. Sec. School, Nangloi (Delhi) won the PSPSI Penalty-corner award alongwith a cash award of Rs.20,000. The two top scorers of the Tournament (Jagdish Sharma Trophy) Harjinder Singh of Harnamdaspora and Spring Dales' Rupinder Singh jointly received the trophy having scored equal number of goals and equally shared the cash award of Rs. 5,000. The Coach of the winning team Sukhwinder Singh received a cash award of Rs. 8,000 and the runners-up Coach Bejoy Kr. Lakra got Rs. 5,000. The Coach of the third position team, Balwinder Singh got Rs. 3,000.

Shri Joe Sebastian, Director, Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports was the Chief Guest in the Final and distributed the prizes.

36TH ONGC-NEHRU JUNIOR BOYS (U-17) HOCKEY TOURNAMENT **Ladowali School annex the title**

For over 35 years the Nehru Hockey Tournament Society has been engaged to unearth fresh talent through their five tournaments. The Junior Nehru Tournament for boys under-17 age-group category is one such platform the Society has been offering to the country's young up and coming boys to exhibit their talent. Thirty teams took part this year in this coveted tournament held at the Shivaji Stadium in Delhi during October 31-November 14. In the first phase, 15 teams played on league basis. They were divided into five groups. The group toppers then qualified for the phase-II league where they met seven seeded teams. They were divided into four groups. The four toppers then qualified for phase-III Super League.

Out of them the four Semi-finalists emerged were Govt. Model Senior Secondary School, Ladowali (Jalandhar), Guru Harkrishan Public School, Shahadara (Delhi), Sat Guru Partap Singh Academy (Sri Bhalni Sahib, Ludhiana) and Lyallpur Khalsa Sr. Sec. School, Jalandhar. In the first Semi-final, Ladowali boys beat Shahadara boys 3-2 while Sri Bhaini Sahib School beat Lyallpur School 1-0 in the other Semi-final.

In the final, Ladowali boys beat Sri Bhaini Sahib boys 4-2 to win the 36th edition of the trophy and earned a cash award of Rs.96,000. Sri Bhaini Sahib team got Rs.64,000 as runners-up. Lyallpur Khalsa Sr. Sec. School scored a 2-1 win over Shahadara's Guru Harkrishan Public School to finish third and were richer by Rs.32,000.

Govt. Sr. Sec. School, Gurgaon was awarded the PEPSI Penalty-Corner award (Rs. 20,000) and the Young Pioneers English School, Imphal (Manipur) got the "Best Disciplined Team" trophy. The Bangladesh Institute of Sports, Bangladesh won the "Foreign Participation Trophy" for the second time in succession. Some individual prizes were also distributed. Amandeep Singh and Jagroop Singh (both from Ladowali School) received the "Best Goalkeeper" and "Best Full-back" awards respectively. Jagdeep Singh Cheema (Lyallpur School) and Basant Singh (Sri Bhaini Sahib) got the "Best Half" and "Best Forward" awards respectively. The three coaches of the winners, runners-up and the 3rd position team viz. Surjit Singh, Harminder Singh and Ripudaman Singh were given Rs. 8,000 Rs. 5,000 and Rs. 3,000 respectively.

Shri Om Pathak, Chairman, Tournament Committee, distributed the prizes.

44TH NEHRU HOCKEY (SENIOR) TOURNAMENT (NOV. 14-25, 2007) **PSB win Senior Nehru Tournament**

It was, indeed, an exhibition of spectacular display of entertaining hockey as the 44th edition of the Senior Nehru Tournament came to an end on November 25 in the presence of over-flowing stands at the Shivaji Stadium in Delhi. Twenty-four teams from various parts of the country took part in this tournament this year. Of them, 20 teams played in phase-I knock-out to select the four best teams to join four directly seeded teams in the Super-league. Those eight teams were divided into two groups and the matches were played on league basis. The four Semi-finalists emerged from this phase were the Punjab & Sind Bank (PSB), Namdhari XI, Bharat Petroleum and Indian Airlines.

In the first Semi-final, PSB beat Namdhari XI 4-1 while Bharat Petroleum beat Indian Airlines 3-2. In the

final, PSB beat a struggling Bharat Petroleum 4-3 to win the prestigious trophy for the third time in seven final appearances. In the play-off for the 3rd-4th position, last year's runners-up the Namdhari XI defeated the 10-time Champions Indian Airlines 9-8 via tie-breaker.

The winners PSB received the brilliant trophy along with a cash award of Rs.2,00,000 while the runners-up Bharat Petroleum got Rs. 1,00,000. Namdhari XI earned Rs. 50,000 for finishing third. Army XI were awarded the Lt. Gen. Harbaksh Singh Trophy as the "Best Services Team" and a cash award of Rs. 10,000. The Namdharis also received Rs. 20,000 (PSPSI Penalty-Corner Award). Navtej Singh was declared the "Best Umpire" (Sardar Gian Singh Trophy). He got Rs. 10,000.

Shri Shivraj Patil, Union Home Minister, who was the Chief Guest in the final, gave away the prizes.

29TH CHAMPIONS TROPHY Germany Clinch the elitist trophy

Pakistan's hopes of hosting the 29th edition of the elitist Champions Trophy (Men), scheduled to be held in Lahore during December 1-9, this year, received a severe jolt as most of the participating teams, in particular, Australia, Great Britain, Spain and the Netherlands, were alleged to be reluctant to travel to Pakistan for the event on account of security reasons in that country, consequently, the International Hockey Federation (FIH) decided to shift the venue to some other country.

After several weeks of suspense over the venue for which both India and Malaysia made strong bids to hold the Championship, the FIH at its meeting in Beijing on September 27 selected Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia) to play hosts to this trophy during November 29-December 9, 2007. India thus lost its chance to participate in this elitist event as it would have made it to the competition only if it got the chance to host the event. The usually six-nation

event had eight teams this year with hosts Malaysia and Britain (5th ranked in the 2006 World Cup) making the additions. The original six teams were Australia, Germany, Korea, the Netherlands, Pakistan and Spain.

By virtue of finishing at the top of the round-robin league format the World Cup champions Germany and Olympic Champions Australia reached the final where Germany beat Australia 1-0 to annex the coveted title for the ninth time. For Australia, this was their 18th final in 28 appearances. The defending Champions Netherlands won the bronze medal defeating Asian Games Champions Korea 3-2. In the other play-off matches for the 5th-6th position, the European Cup Runners-up Spain beat Great Britain 4-2 while Pakistan edged out Malaysia 3-2 in the 7th-8th position. The next edition of this trophy will be held at Rotterdam.

FINAL RANKING : 1. Germany, 2. Australia, 3. Netherlands, 4. Korea, 5. Spain, 6. Great Britain, 7. Pakistan, 8. Malaysia.

OLYMPIC QUALIFIERS India on the road to Beijing

The year 2008 will be an important one as far as Indian men's hockey is concerned. It will be the year when India, the reigning Asia Cup Champions, play in the Olympic qualifiers for a berth in the Beijing Olympics. Ranked eighth in the FIH World rankings, India are placed alongwith Chile, Bangladesh, Austria, Egypt and Great Britain in one of the qualifying tournaments to be played in

Santiago (Chile) during March 1-9, next year. Being the highest ranked team in the fray, it is expected to be a smooth run for India en route to the 21st Olympics to be held in Beijing next year.

The Indian women also have a chance of qualifying for Beijing Olympics when they take on Belgium, Chinese Taipei, the Netherlands, Antilles, Russia and the USA in the Qualifier at Kazan (Russia) from April 19-27.

37TH WOMEN'S JUNIOR NATIONALS Haryana Girls Rule Supreme

Haryana once again proved its superiority by winning its fourth title in 10 years, outclassing Jharkhand 6-2 in the final of the 37th Women's Junior National Hockey Championships held at the Railway Stadium in Gwalior during September 30-October 10.

As many as 28 teams participated in this 11-day Championship with Haryana, Delhi, PEPSU, Punjab, Orissa, Gwalior, Andhra Pradesh and Jharkhand topping their respective league pools and entered the quarter-finals. And there, as expected, Haryana girls were unstoppable. Their wins included a thumping 23-0 victory over Gujarat and 15-2 against Chandigarh. Delhi routed Bhopal 32-0

and Vidarbha 28-0 while Orissa humbled Tripura 42-0 and WHA Gwalior ran through Rajasthan with a comfortable 21-0 verdict to show the vast difference in the standard of some of the participating teams in this championship.

The four teams that made it to the last four stage were Haryana, who routed Punjab 7-0 and Jharkhand eliminated Orissa 4-1. In the final, however, Haryana proved too strong for their opponents Jharkhand and scored at will (6-2) to emerge Champions once again. Orissa finished third beating seven-time champions Punjab 2-0.

FINAL POSITION : 1. Haryana, 2. Jharkhand, 3. Orissa and 4. Punjab

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