



THE CRADLE OF INDIAN HOCKEY

# NEWSLETTER

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## *From the President's Desk*

The fourth edition of the Indian Hockey Federation's brain-child, the Premier Hockey League (PHL), took place at Chandigarh during December 20, 2007 - January 11, 2008. The mega event had attracted as many as 21 foreign players. Bangalore Hi-Fliers (formerly known as Bangalore Lions) regained the coveted title beating Chandigarh Dynamos 2 - 1 in the deciding match of the three - final series.



The SAIL-sponsored Nehru Champion Colleges Tournament, the Nehru Hockey Society's last event of the five-tournament calendar, proved to be a showcase of University talent, thanks to active collaboration of the Association of Indian Universities (AIU). Defending Champions Jalandhar's DAV College once again inscribed its name on the prestigious trophy for the ninth time beating Bhopal's Jawaharlal Nehru PG College 5-2 in the final.

In the Indian Women's Hockey Federation's 55th edition of the Senior Women's National State Championship for the prestigious Lady Ratan Tata Cup, (symbol of women's national State hockey supremacy), the Railways continued to be the reigning queens of Indian women's hockey.

The SAIL overwhelmed Chandigarh Academy 4-3 to win the 4th edition of the Junior Boys (U-18) National Championship held at Hyderabad.

From far away Chilean capital city of Santiago came the news that shook the nation as a whole. For the first time in 80 years, Indian men's hockey team will not be seen at the ensuing Beijing Olympics. In the qualifiers, India lost to Great Britain 0-2 in the final.

Padma Shree Jasdev Singh was conferred Padma Bhushan, one of the country's highest civilian honour, by President Smt. Pratibha Devisingh Patil on the occasion of this year's Republic Day.

Bharat Petroleum beat Indian Oil 5-4 to win the fourth edition of the Maharaja Ranjit Singh Hockey Tournament.

**Ram Niwas Mirdha**



## **4TH ESPN-REMIER HOCKEY LEAGUE (Dec 20`07 - Jan 11 , 2008)**

### **Bangalore Hi-Fliers Pocketed the Crown**

The concept of the Premier Hockey League (PHL), the brain-child of the Indian Hockey Federation, was to arrest the downslide of Indian Hockey at the world level. Happily, it has turned out to be a good attempt. According to Maurits Hendriks, Technical Consultant of the PHL and National Coach of the Spanish team, the PHL has since become "Indian Hockey`s Showpiece event as it has helped the hockey fraternity promote the game not only in India but also inspired the launch of the European Hockey League, which has accepted innovations like penalty shoot out, concept of four quarters of 17 minutes and 30 seconds, time-outs, split points, third umpire and three-match final initially launched in the PHL".

The fourth edition had attracted 21 foreign players (as against 26 last year), out of which ten were from the Netherlands while the rest were from Asia (eight from Pakistan and three from Korea). In all, 128 players, including the foreigners, took part. They were placed

into seven teams and played in a round-robin league format, from which four teams emerged as Semi-finalists. As per rule, the team winning on regulation time in the league phase got three points but the team winning through extra-time has to concede one point to the losers. In all, 26 matches were played this year as against 37 last year..

Bangalore Hi-Fliers (formerly known as Bangalore Lions) reclaimed the crown defeating Chandigarh Dynamos 2-1 in the third and deciding final. In this three-final series, the Dynamos won the first one 3-2. But the Hi-Fliers drew level winning the second 4-2. This is the second time they have won this trophy.

**FINAL STANDING:** 1.Bangalore Hi-Fliers, 2.Chandigarh Dynamos, 3.Orissa Steelers, 4. Hyderabad Sultans, 5.Maratha Warriors, 6.Sher-e-Jalandhar and 7.Chennai Veerans.

## **15TH SAIL-NEHRU CHAMPION COLLEGES HOCKEY TOURNAMENT (Feb 8-15, 2008)**

### **DAV College, Jalandhar Retains the Trophy**

Sponsored by the Steel Authority of India Ltd (SAIL), this prestigious inter-College tournament, Nehru Hockey Society`s fifth and the last event of its annual five-tournament series, happily concluded on February 15, at the Shivaji Stadium in Delhi, thanks to active collaboration of the Association of Indian Universities (AIU).

Twelve teams, including last year`s four Semi-finalists and other eight teams selected on the basis of their previous track record locked horns against each other to grab the coveted trophy. They were divided into four groups of three teams each. Defending Champions Jalandhar`s DAV College seems to have made it a habit of winning at will. This year was no different. They have once again made their `Alma Mater` proud by annexing this prestigious trophy for

the ninth time in the tournament`s 15-year-old history by defeating their old rivals Bhopal`s Jawaharlal Nehru PG College 5-2 in the final. The winners took home Rs. 96,000 and the runners-up Rs. 64,000, as cash awards. The third place holder earned Rs. 32,000. They also won the PEPSI Penalty-corner award alongwith a cash award of Rs. 20,000. The Coaches of the teams finishing at the top three positions also got cash awards of Rs. 8,000, Rs. 5,000 and Rs. 3,000 respectively.

In conclusion, it may not be out of place to mention here that nearly a dozen players, including Deepak Thakur, Gagan Ajit Singh, Prabhjot Singh, Ajitpal Singh (Jr.), Devesh Chauhan, Rajesh Chauhan, Anurag Raghuvanshi and Sharanjit Singh, rose to national level from this tournament itself.



## **55TH SENIOR WOMEN NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP (LADY RATAN TATA CUP) (February 1-9, 2008)**

### **Railways Juggernaut Rolls**

The Indian Women Hockey Federation's (IWHF) 55th edition of the Senior Women's National Hockey Championship for the prestigious Lady Ratan Tata Cup went off successfully at Jalandhar during February 1-9, 2008. Fifteen State and institutional teams, affiliated to the IWHF, including the defending champions, the Indian Railways and last year's runners-up Haryana, were the contestants. They were divided into four groups and played on a league-cum-knock-out format. The Railways continued to be the reigning queens of

Indian hockey. So powerful and dominating they have been that they have won this trophy for the 21st time since their maiden win in 1980-81 at Indore. In this edition also, the Railways went through the motion almost without any challenge. In the final, the Railways crushed Jharkhand 3-1. In the play-off for the third spot, Bombay upstaged Haryana 4-3. Railways captain Surinder Kaur was declared top-Scorer of the Tournament with 12 goals.

## **4th JUNIOR NATIONAL BOYS (U-18) CHAMPIONSHIP**

### **SAIL Retains the Title**

Indian hockey's second line of defence, the Junior boys (U-18), have once again exhibited their potential worth in no uncertain terms at the fourth edition of the Junior Boys (U-18) National Championship held during February 8-18, 2008 at Hyderabad's Gachibowli Sports Complex. It was nonetheless a tough event for the junior boys as it happened to be the selection tournament to pick the Indian team for the coming

Asian cup. The Championship had attracted 30 State and institutional teams. Eight groups were formed out of them, which played on a league-cum-knock-out format. The group champions constituted the quarter-finalists. They played on knock-out basis, from which four semi-finalists emerged. In the final SAIL overwhelmed Chandigarh Academy 4-3 and won the title for the second consecutive time.

## **BEIJING OLYMPIC QUALIFIERS : So near yet so far**

The shocking news that eight-time Olympic gold medallists India failed to make it to this year's Beijing Olympic Games for the first time since their debut at Amsterdam in 1928, has been spreading like wild fire among the millions of the game's strong fraternity all over the country and the world at large. The Indian men's hockey ambition came crashing after 80 years as the team went down 0-2 to Great Britain in the final of the qualifying tournament in Santiago (Chile). With only the winners of the qualifiers set to make it to Beijing, it was necessary for India to win the final. But they lost to Britain (one of the six participants) not once but twice, having lost to them in the league phase (2-3) as well.

In fact, Great Britain held the only challenge to India's progress to Beijing as India brushed aside teams like Mexico (18-1), Russia (8-0), Austria (7-3) and hosts

Chile (4-1). However, even against weak opposition, India did not perform up to expectations or full potential. Against Russia, India earned eight penalty-corners but could make use of only two. Even in the final match, India earned five penalty corners but was unable to convert even one. Throughout the tournament, this failure to utilise the most common scoring option remained a regular feature. Only consolation was that our Prabhjot Singh was declared the "Player of the Tournament".

However, merely lamenting the failure at Santiago will not suffice. It is time to take immediate remedial measures to save our national game. After all, failures are the pillars of success.



## HONOURING A PADMA SHREE WITH PADMA BHUSHAN

The Jawaharlal Nehru Hockey Tournament Society is happy to learn that one of its Committee members, Shri Jasdev Singh, the pioneer of Hindi commentary on field hockey and other events of national importance, was conferred one of the nation's highest civilian honour Padma Bhushan: by the President of India, Smt. Pratibha Devisingh Patil on the occasion of this year's Republic Day. Better known as the 'Voice of India', 77-year-old Jasdev Singh was earlier honoured with Padma Shree in 1985.

He has covered the Olympics as Hindi commentator

since the Tokyo Olympics in 1964. So far he has covered nine Olympics, six Asian Games, 8 Hockey World Cups, 1970 Commonwealth Games besides numerous Test-cricket and Davis Cup matches involving India. Jasdev Singh was the first-ever broadcast journalist to be decorated with the most coveted award of "Olympic Order" by the International Olympic Committee in 1988 "In recognition of his outstanding merit in the cause of world sports and for his contribution to spread the Olympic ideals."

## 4TH MAHARAJA RANJIT SINGH HOCKEY TOURNAMENT

### Bharat Petroleum Annex the Trophy

Bharat Petroleum beat Indian Oil 5-4 in the final to win the fourth edition of the Maharaja Ranjit Singh Hockey Tournament held in the Union Capital during February 18-27, 2008. The country's top 11 teams, seven of which were directly seeded into the league format, had participated in the 10-day tournament. In a praiseworthy move, the

organizers have decided that from this year onward five legends of Indian Hockey will be chosen each year and honoured by awarding special cash awards in their names to five best players of the competition. The five legends chosen this year were Major Dhyan Chand, Shankar Laxman, Prithipal Singh, Mahinder Lal and Udham Singh.

## INDIA-BELGIUM TEST SERIES

### India Beat Belgium

Initially it was meant to be a tri-series involving Belgium, Pakistan and India. But Pakistan pulled out at the last moment citing problems on 'paper work'. Hence India and Belgium decided to play a five-Test series during January 25-31 at Chennai. The series held as part of Indian team's preparations for the Beijing Olympic qualifiers showed the progress made by the team. Belgium had nothing to lose as they had already qualified for the Beijing Games while India had everything to gain from their performance.

India's perennial problem of losing control of the

game after a confident beginning once again came to the fore in the first match itself where India led 3-0 and 4-1 before allowing the Belgians to draw the match at 4-4. In the next match, India made several changes, including replacing goalkeeper Baljeet with Bharat Chetri, India posted a thumping 5-0 win to take a 1-0 lead. India then won the third match 3-2 and sealed the series by winning the fourth match 2-1. The hosts, assured of the series win, rested many of its experienced players and gave opportunities to youngsters in the fifth and final game, which the visitors won 3-2 to reduce their margin of loss.

## AHF PLAYERS AWARD, 2007

### Best Players of The Continent

The 48th Council meeting of the Asian Hockey Federation (AHF) held on January 21, 2008 at Muscat (Sultanate of Oman) confirmed the following Awards for the year 2007.

Best Player (Male)

- Jang Hyun Jong  
(Korea)

Best Under-21 Player  
(Male)

Best Player (Women)

Best under-21 Player (Female)

- Tengku Ahmad  
Tajundin  
(Malaysia)  
- Kaori Chiba  
(Japan)  
- Park Mi Hyun  
(Korea)