



# THE CRADLE OF INDIAN HOCKEY NEWSLETTER

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## *From the President's Desk*



The show exhibited by the Indian hockey team at the prestigious Sultan Azlan Shah Cup Hockey at Kuala Lumpur has no doubt raised eyebrows of many a person in the country where they finished fifth in this seven-nation tournament. The team lost all the four matches on a trot, including the one against traditional rivals Pakistan. The team earned only four points out of six matches. The critics seemed to be alarmed as the Junior World Cup (Men) at Rotterdam, where India is to defend its title which they won in 2001 at Hobart, is knocking at the doors. However, one may still say that all is not lost since the team was not a representative one as it was without several prominent players, who were then attending a camp in Hyderabad in preparation for the said Junior World Cup (June 29-July 10). According to IHF Chief KPS Gill, "some good players were under suspension for off-field indiscipline and that left us short of nine vital players. Yet we should not be despondent," Gill advised. In a morale booster ahead of the Rotterdam World Cup, the Indian Colts won the four-nation tournament at Bilbao (Spain). This is certainly a welcome trend for Indian hockey.

Back home, Punjab & Sind Bank lifted their maiden Rangaswamy Cup for the coveted National Championships by beating Indian Oil Corporation in the final. The 110th edition of the world's oldest hockey tournament at Kolkata, the Beighton Cup, saw the emergence of BSF, which won the crown for the sixth time defeating Army XI. Ten days later, Army XI made up for their Beighton Cup loss by winning the Murugappa Gold Cup in Chennai where they beat Tamil Nadu. Western Railways beat holders Punjab & Sind Bank in the final to win the Bombay Gold Cup.

Nehru Hockey Society deeply mourns the sudden demise of the Union Sports Minister Sunil Dutt and also the oldest living legend of Indian hockey Feroze Khan (1928 Olympics) and prays for peace of their souls.

Ram Niwas Mirdha



### PSB emerge winners in Rangaswamy Cup

A goal in each half by Navpreet Singh and Gurvender Singh enabled Punjab & Sind Bank (PSB) beat Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) 2-0 in the final to lift their maiden crown in the 61st Senior National Hockey Championships for the most coveted Rangaswamy Cup on March 30 at the Gachibowli Hockey Complex in Hyderabad. In the semi-finals, IOC grounded last year's winners Indian Airlines 4-1 while PSB defeated Services 2-1. Indian Airlines finished third with a 2-0 victory over the Services. The Fair Play Trophy, instituted in memory of late Gursewak Singh, former Secretary of the Indian Hockey Federation was given to Manipur. In all, 41 teams took part in this Championship, played on league-cum-knockout basis.



Punjab & Sind Bank team with Rangaswamy Cup

### 110th BEIGHTON CUP

#### BSF lifts historic Beighton Cup

Instituted in 1895, the Beighton Cup hockey tournament has had a non-stop run in Kolkata. Even World Wars I and II could not affect the tournament. The eastern metropolis has the distinction of hosting the Cup, which is the oldest hockey tournament in the world, organised by the Bengal Hockey Association. The 110th edition of the Cup this year attracted a number of crack outstation teams, including defending champions Punjab & Sind Bank (PSB), last year's runners-up Army XI, Border Security Force (Jalandhar), Punjab Police and Indian Oil Corporation. The final of the Blue Riband meet of the Indian hockey was played between BSF and Army XI. BSF lifted the historic Indian Oil-Beighton Cup for the sixth time edging out Army XI by the odd goal in three on April 13. Besides the glittering trophy, the winners received in cash Rs. 1,25,000 and runners-up Rs. 75,000. The tournament is being played on grass despite a clamour for shifting it to a synthetic turf.

#### Army XI clinch Murugappa Gold Cup

Substitute goalkeeper Bikrant Tete stopped a goal in 'sudden death' helping Army XI clinch the 82nd Murugappa Gold Cup hockey title beating Tamil Nadu in the final in Chennai on April 24. Army won the cliff-hanger 7-6 in tie-breaker and pocketed Rs. 1.30 lakh as prize money. Tamil Nadu team collected Rs. 80,000. Its goalkeeper Arvind and left winger Raja were adjudged the 'Best goalkeeper' and the 'most promising player of the tournament'. It was a creditable win for army XI who were surprised by Border Security Force with a last-minute goal in the final of the Beighton Cup a few weeks earlier. Army's Olympian Ignace Turkey was declared the 'Man of the Match'. In the Semi-finals, Army XI defeated Indian Airlines 2-1 while TN beat Air India 2-1. Army XI had beaten Airlines 5-4 in the round-robin league as well. Defending Champions IHF Juniors went down 4-5 to Air India and bowed out of the tournament.

#### India Juniors placed third in KL Tournament

Defending champions India had to remain contented this year with a third place finish on April 3 when they defeated South Korea 3-2 in the play-off of the six-nation under-21 Junior Hockey Tournament held at Kuala Lumpur. In the pool matches, India beat South Korea 1-3, England 5-1 but lost to Malaysia 0-1 and to Pakistan 2-3 after having played a drawn game against Germany 1-1. The play-off match against South Korea which India won, however, gave us the third position.



## Western Railways annex Bombay Gold Cup

Schemer Shivendra Singh scored two brilliant goals in the last five minutes to help the local league champions Western Railways beat holders Punjab & Sind Bank (PSB) 4-3 in a thrilling final of the 43rd All India Bombay Gold Cup hockey tournament in Mumbai on May 6. The Mumbai team, coached by three-time Olympian Balbir Singh, walked away with the glittering trophy and a cash award of Rs. 1,00,000. The bankmen got Rs. 50,000. Earlier in the semi-finals, Western Railways stroked out Uttar Pradesh XI 11-10 via the sudden death. U.P. had earlier shocked Punjab XI from Lahore (Pakistan). It was after a period of two decades that a team from Pakistan was seen in action in this tournament. The Pakistan team was given a bye into the quarter-finals. In the other semi-finals, PSB outclassed IHF Juniors 7-2.

### 14th SULTAN AZLAN SHAH CUP

## Indian team's poor run continues

The Indian team did not live up to its expectation in the prestigious Sultan Azlan Shah Cup in Kuala Lumpur. The Indians finished fifth in the seven-nation meet. India lost four matches on a trot after forcing a last-minute win against South Africa (2-1) and a hard-fought draw against New Zealand (2-2) in their first two encounters. The team struggled in the classification (5-6 place) match against Malaysia before an extra-time winner (2-1) by Prabhjot Singh gave the side the fifth place ahead of the hosts on June 5.

The team suffered huge losses in the group league against Malaysia (1-4) and Asian Games champions South Korea (also 1-4) besides going down to arch-rivals Pakistan (2-3) and Olympic Champions Australia (0-1). Defending champions Australia defeated South Korea 4-3 in the final on June 5 and won their fourth title since the tournament was initiated in 1983.

But the team's failure has not come as a surprise to the Indian Hockey Federation (IHF). "I feel India did reasonably well considering the fact that some players were injured. Some good players were under suspension for off-field indiscipline. And then several prominent players were attending a camp in Hyderabad for the Jr. World Cup in Rotterdam (June 29). Yet we should not be despondent," IHF Chief KPS Gill advised. **OVERALL:** In seven matches, India earned 28 P.C.s and converted only 5. India also wasted a 'stroke' against Pakistan. The team scored 10 goals and conceded 16. In the group league India got only four points, just a step above South Africa (one point).

### JUNIOR WORLD CUP (MEN)

## Hosts Holland and India in same pool

Defending champions India are drawn with hosts Holland in the same pool of the 16-nation Junior Hockey World Cup to be held at Rotterdam (June 29-July 10). India, who won the title in Hobart (Australia) in 2001, are pitted in Pool 'D' along with Holland, Poland and Egypt. The Indian team will be led by Adrian D'Souza. Each team will play every other team in its pool once, before the top three make it to the next phase. The fourth placed teams in each pool will play-off for the 13th to 16th position. **The groupings:** **Pool-A:** Spain, England, Korea and Mexico; **Pool-B:** Germany, Argentina, South Africa and Malaysia; **Pool-C:** Australia, Pakistan, Belgium and Chile; **Pool-D:** India, Netherlands, Poland and Egypt.

## Indian Colts win Bilbao International

In a morale booster just ahead of the Junior Men's World Cup at Rotterdam, the Indian colts won the four-nation hockey tournament in Bilbao (Spain) after drawing their last match against Chile 2-2 on June 19. The competition, featuring strong teams like Holland and Spain, saw India finishing undefeated with two wins and a draw to end with five points, one more than runners-up Holland. The World Cup holders India had beaten the Dutch team in their opening encounter before downing Spain. Holland downed Spain to finish second with two wins. Drag-flicker Sandeep Singh was declared "the player of the tournament" while skipper Adrian D'Souza was named "the best goalkeeper".

## Indian Eves for Junior World Cup

India have qualified for the fifth under-21 Women Junior World Cup hockey tournament to be held at Santiago (Chile) during Sept. 14-25, after taking the team's maiden Senior Asia Cup Win in February last year into consideration. India has finalised a strong squad of 25 players. The World Cup team will have an 18-member squad. The 25 selected will, however, remain a part of the Indian team for the six-nation KT Cup International event in Seongnam (Korea) from June 9 to 16 as preparation for the said World Cup.



## Indian Eves beat Malaysia to finish Fifth

Asia Cup winners India inflicted a heavy 8-2 defeat on Malaysia to claim the fifth spot in the six-nation KT Cup International Women's hockey tournament in Seongnam, (Korea). This was India's second win in the competition and ironically their first victory came against the same side when they won their opening encounter 7-1 on June 9. Three back-to-back losses after their maiden win had knocked them out of the race for a podium finish. England claimed the title with an impressive 3-1 win over hosts Korea. China took the third place with an easy 5-2 win over Ireland. India, who had a fine start to their campaign were held to a 1-1 draw by England in their second match before losing their next two games to Korea and Ireland. India crashed to their third defeat in a row losing their last league match against China 1-2.

## CHAMPIONS TROPHY 2005

### FIH happy with Chennai facilities

Indian hockey may not be performing to the satisfaction of its strong followers in recent times. But there is some good news for the officials and organisers of the Champions Trophy to be held in Chennai this December. The facilities at the Radhakrishnan Stadium where the tournament is scheduled to be held has come in for big praise from the International Hockey Federation (FIH). Dennis Meredith, Secretary Competition Committee and Event Manager of the FIH has expressed his satisfaction at the facilities provided in this Stadium. Meredith said on June 8 that the "players would be extremely happy" with the facilities, more so with the flood-lighting. He informed that the Stadium, maintained by the Sports Development Authority of Tamil Nadu where the 1996 Champions Trophy was held, is "the best in the sub-continent". Meanwhile, it is now officially learnt that India will face a tough opening tie, against Olympic Champions Australia, on the opening Day (Dec. 10). India will then play Germany next day, Holland on Dec. 13, arch-rivals Pakistan next day and Spain on December 16.

### Pak Veterans clinch Friendship Series

The Pakistan veterans hockey team clinched the four-match Goodwill Indo-Pak Veterans hockey Test Series 4-0. They won all the four matches in the series aimed to strengthen peace and friendship between the two neighbours, held in April under the auspices of the Indian Veterans Hockey Association. In the first Test played at Jalandhar, Pakistan beat India 2-1. Pakistan continued to win the second Test (3-2) at Bhopal. In a match played at Delhi's Shivaji Stadium Pakistan beat India 5-3. In the final encounter at Amritsar's Guru Nanak Dev University Stadium, Pak veterans won 4-2.

### SUNIL DUTT

#### a much-loved sports minister

Veteran actor, humanist, politician and Union Sports Minister Sunil Dutt suddenly passed away in his sleep following a cardiac arrest on the early morning of Wednesday, May 25 at his residence in Mumbai.



In the short period (less than a year) he was Union Sports Minister, Sunil Dutt's first act was to increase players' international daily allowance from a meager \$ 35 to \$ 50 before the Athens Olympics and also took steps to improve the living conditions of sportsmen and women staying in SAI hostels and various stadiums. He had invited sportspersons in need of funds to come and meet him at Vigyan Bhavan in Delhi on May 26 to present their case in person. However, all his good wishes unfortunately remained unfulfilled as he suddenly passed away on the eve of what could have been a landmark day for Indian sportspersons. His passing away is a great loss to Indian youth and sports. Nehru Hockey Society mourns his sudden demise. May his soul rest in peace!

### Feroze Khan living legend of Indian hockey is no more



The Nehru Hockey Society is sad to learn that the oldest living legend of Indian hockey, Feroze Khan is no more. He passed away on April 21 at his residence in Lahore where he settled after partition in 1947. It was only a couple of months ago that Nehru Hockey Society had sent a congratulatory message to this legend on the occasion of his 100th birthday celebration (Sept. 9 last year) wishing him a continued happy life. Khan, who won hockey gold for India in the 1928 Amsterdam Olympics under the captaincy of Jaipal Singh, became the oldest living Olympic champion. He was born in Basti Danishmandan in Jalandhar in India. Nehru Hockey Society deeply mourns the passing away of the legend. May his soul rest in peace!

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