

The Official Magazine of BADMINTON ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

Vol. 1 • "3rd issue. • July-September, 2012



BADMINTON INDIA

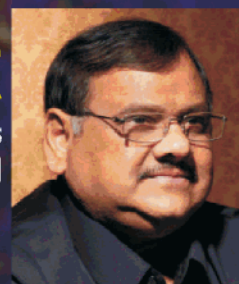


P. GOPI CHAND

"Saina can demolish
the great wall of
china"

**DR. AKHILESH DAS
GUPTA**

The President shows
the best way ahead



SAINA'S HISTORIC FEAT :

Saina wins India's First Olympic Medal in Badminton

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From The Editor Desk

Once again I welcome all badminton family to our latest issue of Badminton India. And this one is a real delight and I am sure will make for a good exclusive reading for all of you. From the beautiful valley of Srinagar, where the BAI and Jammu Kashmir Badminton Association conducted the 77th Senior Inter-State and National championships with aplomb and efficiency-and we have a four page pull out on the Srinagar Nationals- to our cover story of "super Saina" and a profile of the teenage sensation PV Sindhu-we have it all. You will enjoy every page of this issue which also has some lively and lovely photos. And we look forward to have your comments. It is a fact that Badminton India is really growing well. Our correspondents have covered the Inter-Zonal events and we also have a great report on Assam Badminton. However let me take this opportunity to once again invite all states and affiliates to send us their reports of what is happening in their regions so that this magazine becomes truly comprehensive. After all, all of BAI state affiliates are equal stake holders in the official magazine of the BAI. And it is my duty to again remind all badminton lovers and followers to subscribe to the magazine so that you get the best news at your doorsteps. I thank Bengal and Manipur associations for taking interest as they have already send us a big number of subscribers. I am sure all others will follow. Badminton was a major sport in the country all these years, but the medal winning achievement of Saina Nehwal has literally ensured that the sport is rising to the stratosphere in popularity in the country. And plyers like PV Sindhu, P Kashyap, Ajay Jairam, Sai Guru Dutt and so many others have been doing so well globally that India will soon pose a major threat to domination of China in world badminton. For our senior readers, we have a four page pull-out with some really memorable photos of Legendry Nandu Natekar in "Blast from the Past" a superbly written throwback to another golden era of the game.

So please use the subscription form and send in your cheques with addresses to BAI-Lucknow office and yes—please do write in your views on this issue, so that we can carry same in next issue.

Sanjay Sharma

BADMINTON INDIA

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From The **President's Desk**



My Dear Friends,

What a great last three months we have had in our beloved sport. What great performances from our players in OLYMPICS at London and what a superlative showing by 17 year old PV Sindhu in the China Masters. My chest swells with pride and emotion whenever I think of how our players have brought laurels to India, themselves and to us in the BAI. I was present at LONDON and saw how well our players and support staff performed. It gives me great pleasure therefore to announce rewards for Saina-who won the medal, and for coach Gopi Chand, so that this serves as a motivation for all others to put in their best efforts.

We have some great lot of youngsters, being well trained in our academies all over. I am extremely happy to note that we had two semifinalists in the China open and that our latest teenage sensation PV Sindhu defeated the reigning Olympic champion in her own home ground. This was a huge feat. Sindhu is spearheading the challenge of our new generation of shuttlers who are without fear when they take on the best in the world. Indeed, through our new policies at the BAI, we emphasize through national coach Gopi Chand, that not only our players be best trained but must play without fear globally.

The time has come for rest of the world to notice Indian Badminton. For them to be afraid of our players and not vice-versa. I am sure very soon we will rub shoulders with China. Our achievements and our efforts speak for themselves. So much so that rest of the country has started taking serious notice of Saina and others. The news of the Rs 40 crore deal signed by Saina Nehwal has shocked and stunned the sports fraternity in the country. We at BAI are extremely happy at this development, as such sponsors will soon take note of Sindhu and others.

Not only has Saina become the highest paid badminton player in the world, but this huge sponsorship deal will motivate so many other talented young players to take up Badminton 'professionally' and make this their career. I and my colleagues at BAI will do everything to make this possible.

I must also congratulate our coaches for doing a great job. We will support them in every way. Whatever is needed or required will be made available. No stone will be left unturned in our quest to see Indian Badminton reaches the sky. And sooner the better.

My thanks to Jammu & Kashmir Badminton association for taking the onus of conducting the 77th senior inter-state and nationals in Srinagar. The State had a major sports event after 25 years. Badminton brought smiles on faces of our Kashmiri brethren. It was a great effort by state officials and BAI supported it whole heartedly. The next three months are full of major events. We have junior and sub-junior nationals coming up along with the Syed Modi memorial at Lucknow in December. I wish all participants the very best. And I request the organizing states to keep the well being of our players upper most in their mind.

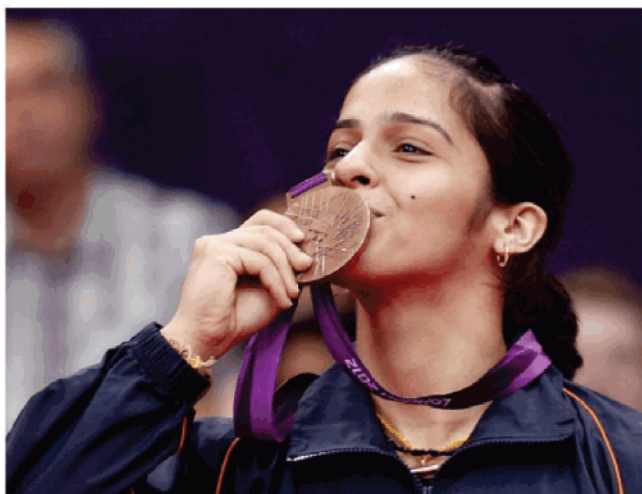
Finally I hope all of you are liking Badminton India, specially this issue and as requested by the editor, we will indeed be happy to read your views and get your feedback.

Dr Akhilesh Das Gupta

Cover Story

THE MAKING OF AN Olympic Champion

• By Shachi Sharma



As her opponent and world number two Xin Wang of China conceded the third-place play off match due to a knee injury after winning the first game, ace shuttler Saina Nehwal earned India its third medal at the London Olympics 2012, clinching a bronze under fortuitous circumstances.

Saina thus became the first Indian badminton player to win a medal at the Olympic Games. With this win, she also became only the second Indian woman to win a medal in the world's biggest sporting event this year.

However, the struggle that lies beneath this glory and glamour is a tale to be reckoned with. Along with her coach, Pullela Gopi Chand, Saina Nehwal had to tap her inner resources to win the battle on the court. We will take a look at the number of challenges she overcame to win the bronze medal at the London Games.

Mental Strength

As told to Amit Chaturvedi of NDTV on August 9th 2012, Indian National Coach Pullela Gopi Chand admitted "Last year when I started training Saina for the Olympics, she was very low on confidence. Eleven different players had defeated Saina, so it was a battle to get her out of that state and make her mentally stronger."

Saina too admitted that she endured self-doubt, which she eventually overcame. "It comes to your mind (fear of losing). Sometimes when you lose a match, you feel-- My God-- I have lost the match why should I play. But it is okay, it is part of the sport. Sometimes you also feel why do you have to train

harder and why do you put more effort. It is natural. But I did overcome that and I have such a great system and support around me. I am very lucky to have such a great team around me," she said.

Plantar Fasciitis

Also, there is another problem. They may be nimble and look strong but Saina Nehwal's feet are unfit to be a part of a top athlete's anatomy. Correspondent Alok Sinha writes in Times of India dated August 5, 2012, 'Experts who examined Saina way back in 2006 told Coach Gopi Chand that his ward possesses very small feet and her body is prone to injuries because of that. It would be very difficult to keep her injury free, the doctors said. The size of Saina's feet is about 25.5 cm in length while the width is asymmetrical from the toe to the heel. It's because of this condition diagnosed as PLANTAR FASCIITIS, Saina suffered numerous injuries between 2008 and 2009 and another set of injuries slowed her back in 2011'

Gopi Chand also stated, "To hold the wide body frame that Saina possesses one needs longer feet. Due to this peculiar condition it is very difficult to maintain fitness throughout a season. A player with that condition has to be properly managed by her team. Moreover, in a sport like Badminton where you need to depend a lot on your legs, this could be a major handicap. Hence we devised separate set of exercises for her to fight this condition. It was a new issue for us. Talent wise she is as good as anyone in the world but Plantar Fasciitis slows even the swiftest in the world. Because of her small feet, one part of her body used to crack after a couple of matches.

Yet, Gopi and the team found a way of keeping Saina in the reckoning. They make Saina play for two weeks and then rest for two weeks. In this manner, she gets the rest that her body requires and she also is able to battle tough opponents on the court.

But due to this condition, Saina now needed to be on top of every facet of her game. She had the strokes but needed to improve on swiftness. This brought her to her next challenge, namely, improvement in her dietary pattern

Diet

Even in terms of diet, Saina had to undergo a few diet changes. Though she was born into a vegetarian home, once she embarked on her chosen career, Saina started eating meat. "Players need strength and the

only way to get it is through eating meat. I eat a lot of chicken and I believe it has helped me to gain strength," says Saina, who has also given up junk food.

Also, a few months before the Olympics, Saina was in deep despair. After she lost to in the second round of Danish Open, she started crying. It was then that Coach Gopi told Saina that she had to lose some weight in order to become swifter on court. Saina in a not so good mental state asked Gopi to join her as well and support her. And being the man that he is, the Dronacharya also started following exactly the same diet to encourage his prodigy. She and Gopi had to curb their sweet tooth and give up ice creams. They made many sacrifices to keep her body fit. The result was that Saina lost a lot of weight and became faster on court.

Gopi No.2

The best of talents fall short without a good sparring partner. Thanks to the other Gopi in Saina's life, this was not a reason for her to worry about. Gopi Raju, the son of a daily wage labourer from Repalle in Guntur district, became the perfect partner playing partner for Saina.

When Coach Pullela Gopi Chand was on the lookout for a playing partner for Saina, the 16 year old boy from coastal Andhra Pradesh caught his eye during a state level tournament. Since he was a left hander, Gopi knew his search ended there itself.

Raju would be Saina's left handed partner while Gopi would be the right handed partner. "Saina didi used to treat me like an important player, though I have not achieved anything significant so far. She is so down to earth," quoted Raju to M Ratnakar in the Times of India, dated 6th August.

For his contribution to Saina's career, Raju lives and trains at the academy while his living and training expenses are on the house.

Focus

According to her, focus was the most difficult thing for her to maintain. She refused to pick up magazines and newspapers. She shut her mind against everything that was written about her. Right from the beginning it was very difficult for Saina's parents. First, she had to travel 25kms every day just to play Badminton, then she had to select the right coaches who would help her reach a certain level and finally the finance needed to back her up as a player. Step by Step, the Nehwal's conquered everything. And their daughter Saina is now the queen of the entire country.



Saina vs. China

Finally the battle she had to conquer was the war against the Great Wall of China. Saina admits, "I am the only one participating from India in women's singles while the Chinese have a host of many players. If any of their players lose, they have another one who is all set to win. On the other hand, I have all the pressure on me but



Rewards & Accolades

Govt. Of Haryana – Rs 1 crore

Govt. of India (Central) – Rs. 20, 00, 000

Government of Andhra Pradesh – Rs 1 crore

Badminton Association of India - Rs. 25, 00,000

Fans in Hyderrabad donated through Sachin Tendulkar - Brand new BMW Car

Sahara India—2 KG Gold

Contract with Rhiti Sports – Rs 40 Cr. For three years

Saina donated Rs 2 lakh to silver medallist of paralympics

And much much more...

that doesn't deter me. I am not scared of the Chinese. I am quite confident now. I have defeated six to seven of their players. It's a great feeling to know that they are very very scared of me."

Coach Gopi too admits, "Saina is the one who can crumble the Great Wall of China"

The sole Indian to challenge the Chinese domination in badminton, Saina Nehwal, is hoping that her London Olympics bronze medal will inspire at least half a dozen more to join her at the top level and be a threat to the traditional powerhouse.

"I want more players to come from India because I want to make it like China. They have 5-6 players dominating and I want something like that in India as well. Sometimes we play against 11 Chinese players. They have to come up with one strategy but I have to come up with so many," Saina told PTI in an interview.

Now that Saina won the bronze after overcoming so many challenges, we sure hope she inspires generations to come and wins the Gold in the next Olympics. Despite all these challenges, Saina Nehwal managed to procure an Olympic Bronze. The winner herself admits in the Times of India on August 9th, 2012, "When I was on the podium, I started crying. I thought of all the hard work I have put in all these years. It gave me inspiration. It's just the beginning and I will win many more medals".

Courtesy

- <http://www.ndtv.com/article/india/blog-what-went-into-making-saina-nehwal-an-olympic-champ-253185> by Amit Chaturvedi dated August 9th 2012
- Page Times of India dated 5th August, 2012
- Article by S Kannan in India today on August 3rd 2012 <http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/london-2012-olympics-saina-nehwal-loses-reaction/1/211679.html>
- Times of India, August 6th, 2012 by M Ratnakar
- Page 22, Times of India dated August 9th, 2012
- <http://healthmeup.com/news-diet-fitness/how-saina-nehwal-keeps-fit/5470> by Alok Mehta Gambhir
- <http://ibnlive.in.com/news/i-want-more-indians-to-challenge-china-saina/281575-73.html> as told to PTI on 12th Aug, 2012

Interview of the **CHAMPION**

● By Sanjay Sharma

There is no doubt that Saina Nehwal has written her name in golden letters in annals of Indian sports. Her historic medal at London Olympics will go a long way in not only making sports more acceptable amongst the new generation of Indians, but the huge rewards that have accrued to her like a windfall after her medal winning spree at London, will surely make many young badminton players take up the sport now as a profession, not just as a hobby. For this alone we cannot thank her enough.

In sheer statistical terms, Saina now at a mere 22 years of age, is in every aspect the biggest achiever in the game. Indeed she will not find many peers in any other sporting discipline in India standing as tall as her for a long time to come. Typically she said after winning the bronze—"this is not the way I would have liked to win the medal. Yet I am happy for my country. But I will not rest till I really go for gold at Rio in 2016". A true champion, but who is very humble and grounded.

And her true sporting and generous spirit and upbringing can be further gauged by the fact that Saina is the only sportsperson, till the time of writing this piece, who has announced a generous Rs 2 lak award to paralympian Girisha who won the Silver medal in highjump at London Paralympic Games, and brought glory to India. None of our much touted cricketers, or Tennis players, or even Golfers who earn much more than Saina have publicly come forward to help a "differently abled" sportsman. She has done her badminton fraternity proud.

This dazzling shuttling queen answered a few questions for Badminton India on her return to Hyderabad. Excerpts:-



"I owe it
all to
my parents and
my coach" ● Saina Nehwal

BI—What and who has been the greatest motivator to you on your journey to this historic medal at Olympics?

SN—It was my mother's opinion and firm belief that her daughter will become an Olympian and gold medallist one day. Her dream could



have been realised by me in last Olympics in Beijing in 2008 itself as I became an Olympian but most unfortunately lost in quarterfinals by a narrow margin after having a huge lead of 11-3 in third game. That was so heart wrenching and I was depressed for some time. But I realised my mother's dream in London and I can say today that it was her words which made me realize the Olympic dream.

She has been a most motivating influence for me in this journey to the podium.

BI—How has coach Gopi Chand moulded you from a gawking teenager to a top world ranked player?

SN—Gopi Sir cannot be thanked enough. It was a big challenge for him to make me into what I am—a player of international reckoning. Gopi Sir has done a lot for me. From



beginning when I joined him he has taken care of me, changed my game, my outlook and made me fit and strong in every way. He advises me on many things and is great to have near on the court when I am playing. Like him I also want to win the All England title. In fact I owe the medal to my parents and Gopi Sir.

BI—Now that you have shown the way and made us realise Indians can play and win against the very best players in the world, what advise will you give to girls taking up the sport—can they too become champions one day?



SN—I can only say, that be dedicated to the game, make yourself strong and focussed in everyway. Work hard, listen to your coach and never think of the past but always look forward and try win as many tournaments as possible. Today there are huge opportunities, much better facilities. It is up to the next generation to make use of everything.

BI—How has the BAI helped you in this journey of yours, specially in preparation for Olympics?

SN—BAI was rock solid behind all of us five players who played in London. They gave me each and every opportunity to play as many tournaments abroad as possible, allowed me to pick and choose tournaments and gave me all possible help. I was honoured by BAI many times and they financed me many times on my victories. I am very grateful to the BAI.

BI—Having so much name, fame and acclaim now, how will you re-focus yourself for the coming season?

SN—I am focussed as before and I have started practicing again. I will do my best in future tournaments to bring more glory to Indian Badminton.

BI—Lastly, Saina, what can we expect from you in the CWG and Asian games in 2014?

SN—I will keep in mind the CWG, the Asian games in 2014 and then of course the Rio games in 2016. I will try my very best to be injury free, improve my game and strength and try to be the best in what I do. But my focus will also be on the All England championships.

Letter of **BAI President**



Dr. Akhilesh Das Gupta
President, BAI &
Member of Parliament



BADMINTON ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

Dear Friends,

It is indeed a matter of great joy and proud for all of us to see Indian Badminton stars to new heights at London Olympic Games 2012 where we sent the largest contingent, India has ever sent to olympic Games. Our players have shown their wonderful winning spirit in the Olympics to bring pride to the nation.

Saina Nehwal won a bronze medal in women's singles and has become the first Indian to win a medal in Badminton in the Olympics. P. Kashyap played his heart out and become the first Indian male shuttler to reach the quarter-finals where he lost to world No. 2 Lee Chong wei. Jwala Gutta and Ashwini Ponnappa have played their best but could not qualify for the quarter-finals despite beating Singapore pair. There was apparently match-throwing foul play by the teams in their group which resulted early ouster of the Indian pair. India's appeal to a re-look at the match was rejected. In the mixed doubles. Diju-Gutta pair also played their best.

I can proudly say that it is the best performance by Indian Badminton players in terms of medals and overall performance at any Olympics. In line with our decision, cash award of RS. 25.00 lakhs shall be given to Saina Nehwal for winning bronze medal in the Olympics. Further, as a token of appreciation to the sincere and hard work of P. Gopichand, Chief National Coach, it has been decided to give him cash award of Rs. 10.00 lakhs.

I am quite confident that the Executive Committee and the Members of the Association are committed to promote the game of Badminton in the country. We may recall, when the exiting Executive Committee took over the charge, BAI was a crossroad of destiny for its survival and growth. It was beset with huge liabilities, prize money payable to players, statutory dues, pending accounts, compliances and regulatory requirements, known to all of us. Things and times have changed positively. Credit goes to office Bearers, Members, Executives, Sponsors and all stakeholders for such a significant turnaround of Badminton in the country.

Our aim is to become the BEST in the world and India should be world-wide known as one of the best Badminton Countries. Of course, we can do it.

**हम होंगे कामयाब एक दिन, मन में है विश्वास,
पूरा है विश्वास, हम होंगे कामयाब ।।**

If you have any suggestions, please do write to me.

With best wishes,

Dr. Akhilesh Das Gupta

PRADEEP S. GANDHE

Academics :

Pradeep S.Gandhe born in Nagpur. He had been an avid basketball player in his school days, having represented the University in Basketball and Badminton. Mr. Gandhe completed his School Education from Hadas School in the year 1965 after which he joined Institute of Science and then college of engineering, where he completed his Bachelor of Electrical Engineering in the year 1972, followed by Bachelor of Journalism in the year 1973 followed by Diploma in Business Management in the year 1981 from Mumbai University.

Badminton Background as a Player:

Started playing Badminton at the age of 18 years in Nagpur, hence was never able to compete in the Junior Age Groups. His parents always supported his initiative towards playing Badminton as long as he was maintaining good marks in his academic studies.

Started performing in the Seniors, represented Maharashtra since the year 1974. Won his first National Mens Doubles title in the year 1978 with Sanjay Sharma as partner

and the 2nd National Mens

Doubles Title

in the year 1982 with Uday Pawar. Mr.Gandhe

won the National Mixed Doubles titles for

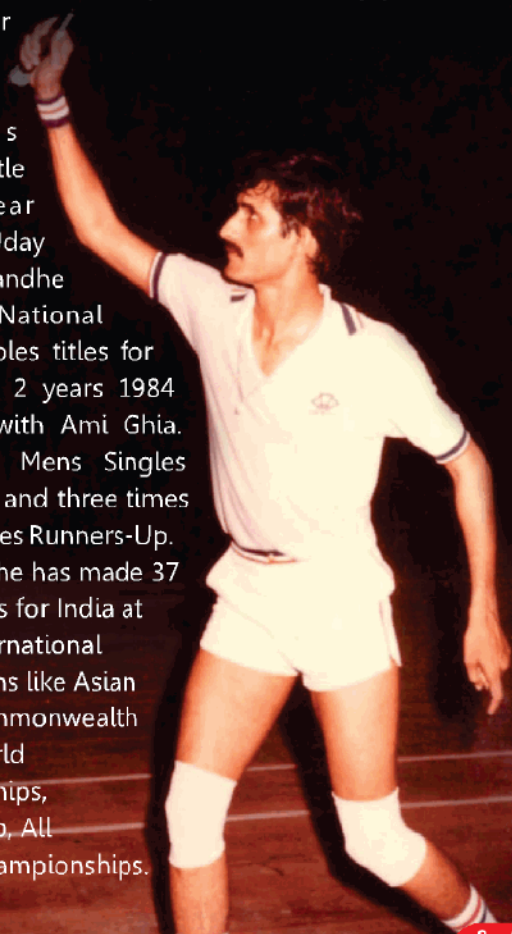
consecutive 2 years 1984 and 1985 with Ami Ghia.

Also thrice Mens Singles Semifinalist and three times Mens Doubles Runners-Up.

Since 1977 he has made 37 appearances for India at various International

Competitions like Asian Games, Commonwealth Games, World Championships,

Thomas Cup, All England Championships.



His other important achievements include :

- 2 Bronze Medals At Asian Games at New Delhi.
- 15 State Championship Titles
- Coach For Indian Team at Asian Games at Bangkok, World Championships at Anaheim, USA & Manager at 2010 Commonwealth Games New Delhi.
- Name Inducted In LIMCA Book Of Records For Being FIRST INDIAN DOUBLES PAIR (with Leroy D'Sa) To Win A Medal In Asian Games.
- A Silver In Men's Doubles And A Bronze In Singles at the Austrian Open In 1983.
- Recipient of the Shiv Chhatrapati Award in the year 1978.
- Member of the Indian Team that beat Malaysia in Malaysia in the Asian Zone finals of Thomas Cup.
- Quarter Finalist at Brisbane Commonwealth Games in Mens Singles and Double (with Leroy D'sa)

Badminton Background as a Administrator:

Mr.Gandhe is the Vice President of Badminton Association of India. He has been on the National Selection Committee of Badminton Association of India for the last 10 Years.

In the State of Maharashtra, Mr.Pradeep S.Gandhe is the President of Maharashtra Badminton Association and has been in the forefront for development and promotion of the game in the state of Maharashtra through various activities conducted by Maharashtra Badminton Association such as conduction of various State, National and International Tournaments, organizing Special Coaching Camps, organizing Exhibition Matches, conducting Umpires Examinations, Seminars and Meeting of Parents, Clinic for Coaches, Corporate Badminton Events, Financial Support to Districts of Maharashtra e.g.Rs.15000/- to each district, financial assistance to a few talented but economically backward players @ Rs.60000/- per year, sending 3-4 promising Junior Players from the State to 4 weeks Advance Badminton Training at Indonesia since past 2 years which is joint activity with Yonex Sunrise and MBA. This year Mr.Gandhe is in the process of organizing under the Maharashtra Badminton Association the first of its kind " Indian Badminton League" in Mumbai. Presently he is the Member of Sports Policy Committee & Chairman -School/Games Committee of Government of Maharashtra and has been instrumental in planning and formulation of the new sports policy for the Government of Maharashtra.

● By **Rajiv Ganpule**

Interview of the **BAI President**

"We will do everything possible to make India a super-power in world badminton"



Akhilesh Das Gupta

In this short interview the BAI President Dr Akhilesh Das Gupta (ADG) tells Badminton India (BI), his views of the Olympic campaign and also what BAI intends to do in future.

Excerpts:-

BI-First and foremost hearty congratulations from entire Indian Badminton family on a wonderful performance in Olympics. You had told me before going to London that you were expecting many medals. Your views now after return of Indian team—

ADG- I was very hopeful—that is why I said medals in plural and not medal. In any case in reality we were very close to winning medals. I had told you before that Saina of course was in run for a medal, in fact even Gold medal. I also thought Kashyap was a strong contender and I was sure of Jwala/Ashwini combination also to give us a medal. Kashyap played magnificently and the ladies lost out by default. Kashyap almost defeated the world champion from Malaysia Lee Chong Wei. It was a terrific, world class match. I saw the match. Unfortunately there was no Indian crowd to cheer him up. For Saina's matches Indians came in big

numbers. That could be one reason. But you know what is heartening now is that Indians are feared at world level. In many ways it is China and only India that seems to give them some opposition.

If we keep China away, all other countries like Korea, Indonesia, Malaysia and Denmark etc are on par. Now India has joined this bunch. We are as good as any other country excepting China.

BI—We have been doing well in other international championships as well—?

ADG—Yes we have done well over all. Especially if you compare our performances up to two years before. Saina of course has won so many major events defeating all top Chinese many times. Her Indonesian and Thai open back to back was fantastic. Kashyap reaching semifinals in major events, Jwala/Ashwini winning bronze in world championships, and Diju in mixed doubles and now this young teenager Sindhu winning Asian Junior title are huge achievements. This scale is unheard of before and tell me which other game can boast of such stellar achievements.

We are no longer the underdogs—other countries are afraid of our players as I said before.

BI—Most of these performances have come in your tenure. How has BAI helped in this—are there any new policies that have been started that are helping change Indian Badminton at world level?

ADG—You see, many things have come together. We at BAI will do everything possible to make India a super-power in world badminton, and that too as early as possible. The performances are not because of me but because we all at BAI are trying to do our job properly. We have been able to give confidence to our players that BAI is just a facilitator and working in their interest. Players should be treated with all respect, in fact with more respect than even office bearers. I have tried to bring in this culture. We brought in international coaches, more exposure, enhanced per day expenses when they travel abroad, and you know we have now allowed senior players to

travel business class also so that they are more relaxed and comfortable.

We are very proud
of the performances
of all our players at London Olympics.
We have returned with a precious medal,
but we could easily have a medal in men singles
and ladies doubles also. A little bad luck there.

But looking at the way our
players have fought and tried, and the
way they have been coached by
Gopi Chand I am sure Indian badminton
is going the right way"—

We are directly in touch
with the players and
are trying to
understand their
sentiments. In
selection process we
are as transparent as
possible. We are
solidly behind Gopi
Chand who has done a
great job---

BI—You have in fact recently
announced a Rs 25 lacs award to Saina and Rs
10 lacs to Gopi for their great achievements. No other national
federation has been this magnanimous. You feel this will motivate our
players further?

ADG—Yes BAI has done this with lot of pride and happiness. This is
very important. Today she won the bronze, tomorrow she will go all out
for the gold. The idea is not to restrict this to just Saina. I want that there

should be several Saina's out there fighting for India at world level. We should also try the assembly line production of top talent—just like the Chinese.

So in this scenario, the role of the coaches is equally, if not more, important. If coaches are more devoted and not going into their personal agendas, they can do a lot for Indian Badminton. We must build up the coaches infrastructure also. Gopi's success and hard work is appreciated by BAI and therefore the cash award. Other coaches too can follow his example and produce top class players. In fact through the medium of this magazine I can also tell you that Saina will get an additional Rs 10 lacs for winning the Thailand and Indonesian open back to back. I hope all players try to emulate her hard work and devotion and BAI will open its purses for them also. We will indeed be very happy to do so.

BI—In the past there was always problem of lack of funds but now we see BAI flush with cash and more importantly really willing to help players. How has this change come about? What stand have you taken that the players are never short of funds?

ADG—See, you have asked a very important question. When I took over there was a deficit of some Rs 2 crores in BAI. You know there were lot of outstanding, even for players whose prize money from BWF was not given, even though money was realised and received from BWF. So many cases where TDS was deducted and not given to Govt. And you will be surprised BAI was not even exempted from Income-Tax as we did not have 80-G exemption. Anyway I must not blame anyone, but things are moving now and we are definitely stronger than before and things are under control. There is no deficit now.

Secondly we are not fighting with the Govt. Why should we fight—when we can get all help we can. It is the right of the players to

take the support of Govt—so why should they be denied that right. I am a political man, and that too from a different political party. But when I am working as President BAI I am representing no party. I then represent Indian Badminton. I went to the sports minister Shri Ajay Maken and he is a nice person, very sympathetic to our cause. BAI was blacklisted before—not getting any support from Govt. We were not getting any grants, no money to send players outside India for championships. We worked towards a cordial relationship and we accepted their policies. What is the problem. Afterall what advantage is there in fighting the Govt. Our players Represent India, they wear the national crest, they represent country, not the national association.

BI—But you also got good sponsorship responses, which was not there before?

ADG—Well I visualised this in two ways. One as I said, take support of the govt, and secondly take support of sponsors. Previously we got peanuts from our one main sponsor—now it is a very handsome amount and I will ensure that most of this money will go to players. We of course have Yonex helping us, but very soon we will have more finance from sponsors. We are working on this and I am very confident.

BI—We had likes of Nandu Natekar, Prakash Padukone, Gopi Chand before as class shuttlers. But their legacies were never exploited by BAI before. With Saina now doing so much for Indian Badminton, how will BAI, under you, ensure that her legacy is encashed and exploited for good of the game in India?

ADG—Yes, this again is a good question. We are going to do our best to popularise the sport in India. You have heard about the Indian Badminton League-IBL, which will be held in January 2013 in Mumbai. It is a major initiative being held under BAI banner. We are going to

have a complete media cell, run professionally, to see that we are in news all the time. We will have major media tie-ups. People want to come closer to Badminton and we should facilitate this. There is a huge and renewed interest in the game and therefore we will work on a new circuit of tournaments in which we will like all age groups to play in, from school levels to veterans.

BAI will promote the family values this sport brings, where entire families can take it up as exercise and recreation. We are actively looking at more academies all over the country. In fact let me share a secret with you. There is a proposal to have our own National Badminton academy set up in NCR region. And in collaboration with Ministry of Sports, we also want to have one in Imphal.

BI—Lastly, how will we ensure there are more medal prospects from India at the Rio games in 2016. What policies will BAI initiate to ensure our juniors and sub-juniors get best facilities so that our future is bright?

ADG—We will do everything possible to induct younger players in national squads by giving them all help. I personally want to see younger blood in the squads as they have more shell-life and this will be good for future of the sport. I feel that even if we have to send juniors abroad for training upto periods on six months also, we will do it. Average age of our teams has to be less. My one worry is doubles and mixed doubles and I want our coaches and administrators to focus in this area. Afterall, if we want to do well in team championships, we can't do anything by doing well in singles only. Through your medium I can assure all of badminton fraternity that BAI is now in a much healthier position and is much more focussed on the new generation of players, in its endeavour to make Indian Badminton a world super-power.

● By Sanjay Sharma

Saina was superb

Jwala and Ashwini played their heart out—Gopi Chand

Saina was simply superb at London Olympics, says National coach Gopi Chand, (GC) whom BI met at Mumbai just after the felicitation program of Saina by OGQ, one of her sponsors. Says an elated Gopi—"She would have won the 3/4th place play-off for sure. Kashyap was incredible and so were Jwala and Ashwini who missed out on a medal. I think we bring back huge positives from London, he added in this free wheeling chat. Excerpts:-

BI--Can you tell us how each player performed in London Olympics. Could they have done better? How satisfied were you with our players?

GC—OK, Let us start with Saina. I am happy with the medal, but not happy with overall performance as we could have done better. I think the semifinal could have gone her way had she been a bit more relaxed and if the strategy had been implemented properly she would have had a great chance to win that match. Having said that I also must add here that the way she fought in the entire event, the way she held her nerve right through that week was commendable. Saina actually delivered and that matters a lot. This was a huge stage and she played like a star till quarters. The tough match was against Wang Yihan in semis. I must however also give due credit to Wang Yihan as she played the type of game that really unsettled Saina from the start. She was not allowed much leeway. But at the end of the day I am happy we got that bronze. This was a great achievement from Saina. I expected her to win that bronze. Though the opponent got injured, I am very sure Saina had her on the run and would have prevailed. This medal will bring lots of hope to Indian badminton---

BI—And Kashyap? And others?

GC—One word to describe him. Phenomenal. In every way. Fantastic which ever way you look. He showed his class in Delhi superseries and more importantly in Indonesian open and we knew that he has huge capabilities. And more than any time in the past I think he played extremely well in the pre-quarters at London to qualify from the group. He was in true colours, very complete, very aggressive and controlled.

Against Lee Chong Wei—the top seeded Malaysian, Kashyap again played extremely well. Heartening performance. Bit unlucky with the draw that he ran into a rejuvenated Chong Wei. If he had faced Chen Long or Peter Gade, I think we would have one more semifinalist in our squad. But having said that I think quarterfinals of the Olympics is no mean achievement. He delivered when it mattered. I also think that even

when he lost he should be proud of the way he fought till the end—a showing he can build upon. I think that other men singles players in our team can take great motivation from the way he fought and played. A great confidence booster for this generation of players.

Jwala/Diju—very disappointing. They could have



done well. They started badly and it continued same way. In league format impact of your initial match matters a lot. Once they lost the first match it was difficult for them to come back in. Looked slow on court—definitely could have been better prepared, better motivated. It looked as if their heart was not there.

Jwala/Ashwini—Overall was good. Very unlucky not be able to get into quarters. I think both of them played phenomenally well, and it was a great performance. If they had gone into the next round

then I am sure India would have had one more medal. Having said that I feel that the first match which they lost in two games was the crucial one. I think we bring back lots of positivity from the Olympics. We believed in ourselves and we were mentally strong to think we are going to win medals.

BI—Where does Indian Badminton go from here? And since you said

will now go to win and will not just be mere bystanders. I think we are now looked upon with some respect.

Regarding Saina, I think if you see couple of instances in the past she has gone close to Yihan. Here at London it was just an off form Saina who found difficulty in controlling the shuttle and also finishing rallies. She just played into the tactics of Yihan. It would have helped if Saina had been a bit more calm while playing. So it is a question of tactics and its implementation rather than of fitness or speed or strength. Saina has the game now to take on anyone—she just needs to be patient and big titles will come. Of course things will not be all that simple since lots of good youngsters are coming in women singles as we speak, especially from China. So it will be battle all the time, but she is well equipped to overcome any problems that will occur. After all she is still so young. As far as our future is concerned we can get only better—.

BI—You always believed as a player that to be the best you have to take the battle to the Chinese. Do you think Saina and other players are now that fit physically, mentally and have the overall game and support to take on the Chinese might?

GC—If you see the results and the way she played 1 hour and 40 minutes match against Wang ShiXian of China in the Indonesian open, followed it up by two other strong matches and if you think of the fact that she won two back to back events with such top quality opposition, then you can really appreciate that this requires huge effort in terms of fitness and lasting power. Players like Kashyap, Jwala/Ashwini, our mixed doubles players and so many in men singles have been playing good number of tough matches now-days. This is a testimony to the staying power and strength of Indian players currently. In some ways I dare to say we are fitter than the Chinese. In fact Saina wins more of her matches through

sheer fitness. As national coach I am satisfied with way things are, but of course we cannot relax—we have to get better and better in all departments.

BI—Given the fact you have a bunch of young, strong men singles players led by Kashyap and Sindhu following fast in footsteps of Saina, do you feel that by 2016 or so we will start matching China, Indonesia etc in these events?

GC—It will not be that easy, especially against China. It is incredible how they produce sheer numbers of quality. But yes with Saina and Sindhu, I do expect them to challenge the best of the Chinese in years to come. As far as men singles is concerned, we do have a number of good players coming up. The future looks good and I am sure they will have great potential with proper training and exposure.

BI—The next big events will be CWG and Asian Games in 2014. How good will Indian Badminton be, in two years time--?

GC—I think this Olympic medal has brought badminton into focus. Now there is more responsibility expected from all of us, that is, the players, coaches and administrators. All of us will have to work as a team. Now as far as the singles events are concerned, we have good depth in them. We have some good young doubles combinations we have to work on and send them out to start getting us results we want. It is a fact that if we want to be considered as a badminton power, we must have strong doubles line-ups, which currently is not adequate. So team events at CWG and Asian Games will be important for us and we have to focus on them now. In fact our priority should now be on overall development and therefore doubles is going to be of utmost importance. I think BAI must have a serious look at Thomas and Uber cups, Sudirman, CWG and Asian Games—all of which are team events.

● By Sanjay Sharma



that Saina perhaps did not play the right tactics against Wang Yihan, what will you change as a coach as far as she is concerned?

GC—Well as I was saying before I want to say one more thing before I answer this question. We will no longer be mere participants in big events like Olympics, CWG or other big platforms. This event has now given us a belief that Indian players

Blast from the Past

NANDU NATEKAR

Magician With A Racket

● By Shirish Nadkarni

For those who were privileged to watch Nandu Natekar during his heyday in the 1950s and '60s, there can never again be a player who

Dunlop wooden-framed racket that he used during his heyday in sharp contra-distinction to the ultra-light, hi-tech metal-alloy frames of today,

claims to have always enjoyed more than the shuttle sport. And he was pretty good at it. Had it not been for the fact that he lost the 1951-52



created so much magic with a racket and a shuttlecock. There was sorcery in his wrists, and spectators marvelled at the pedigree of his strokes, the deception and accuracy which came naturally to him.

There was nary a trace of the brute force of the Europeans and Americans about Natekar; he was more like the Ranjitsinhji of our cricket. A flick of the wrist was akin to the waving of a magician's wand; and yet another opponent would be jerked around the court like a puppet on a string.

What a wide repertoire he had, and what exquisite control over them! With the heavy Maxply

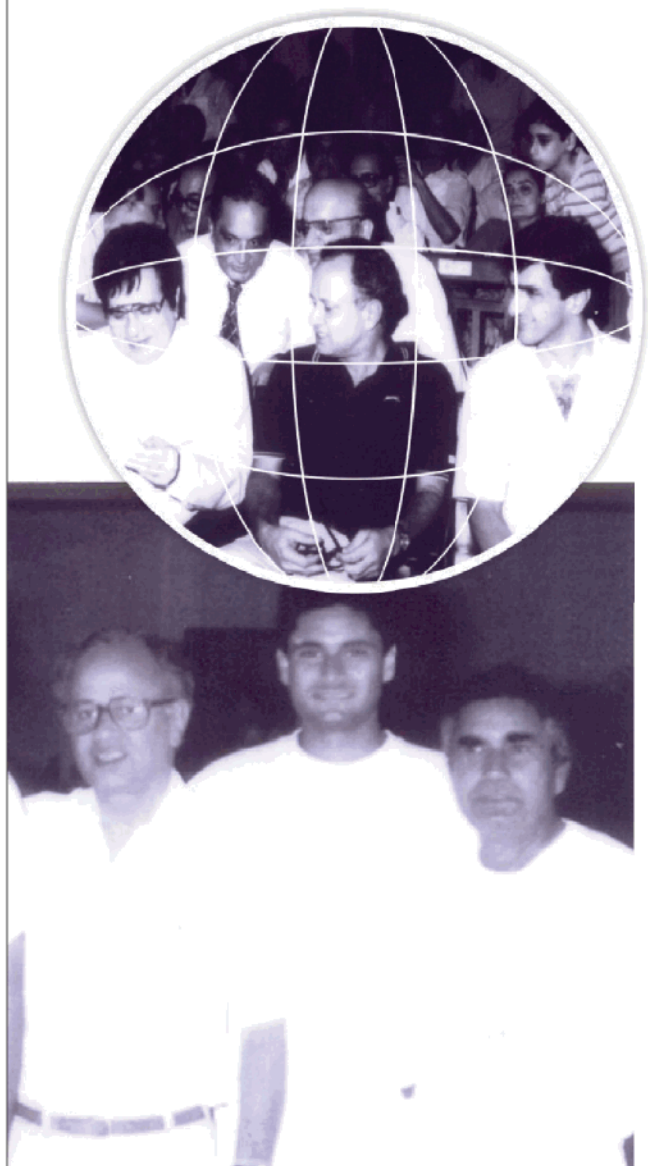
he could send the shuttle to the exact spot he wanted.

"There is something special about certain delicate strokes in badminton," he says. "Once the shuttle comes up in the air from a serve, it can be hit back in so many different ways and in so many different directions – everything depends on the skill of the player, and his manner of execution. In tennis, there can be only two or three alternative returns against service, but in badminton, the spots where a return can be hit, and the ways of hitting it, are far more."

And yet, badminton almost lost Natekar to tennis, a game which he

National junior final to Ramanathan Krishnan, India might not have had two consummate artists in two different sports. The disappointment of losing that final made him turn more to badminton.

Natekar's was such a cool and graceful style! It started with the service itself. When one watches the convulsions that some of the modern-day players go through when they are serving in doubles and dreading a net-rushing opponent, one can only sit back and admire the clean, easy action that propelled the shuttle barely an inch over the net and made it very hard to 'tap'.



The man's smash never had much power, but was perfectly directed to the opponent's waist or the armpit of the playing hand. Those who have played the game well will understand the value of this technique.

A powerful smash directed away from the body on either flank can be returned, often with dividends attached, with the kind of shuttles that are used these days. But even a half-smash to the mid-section or armpit of the playing hand is very difficult to get back. Natekar made the best of players look foolish as they tried to twist away from the shuttle that seemed aimed at their midribs by some Oriental legerdemain!

And his own defence was so organised that the bird went back with minimum fuss – even when it was hit by the likes of Hammergaard

Hansen, a Danish player reputed to have the hardest smash of his time; it was known worldwide as 'Hansen's Hammer' and the Dane could break the shuttle with his raw power.

It was the watertight defence of Natekar and Manohar Bopardikar that took them to the National title in 1958, while the Natekar-Chandrakant Deoras combine too the crown three times out of four years between 1960 and '63, mainly because they could get so many shuttles back.

Natekar's control at the net was legendary, both from near the net and from the backcourt. At the net, there was the tight dribble that had the shuttle, more often than not, like the pet dog, "rolling over and playing dead". From the backcourt, the drops and slices dipped sharply, falling well within the service line and dragging an opponent all the way up to the net.

The backhand was considered the best in the world in the 1950s. Every international player worth his salt had a healthy respect for the variety that Natekar could produce from that flank. Not so a speedy, bouncy little Malayan by the name of Eddie Choong, who had come to Bombay with his brother David to participate in a tournament at the Bombay Gymkhana.

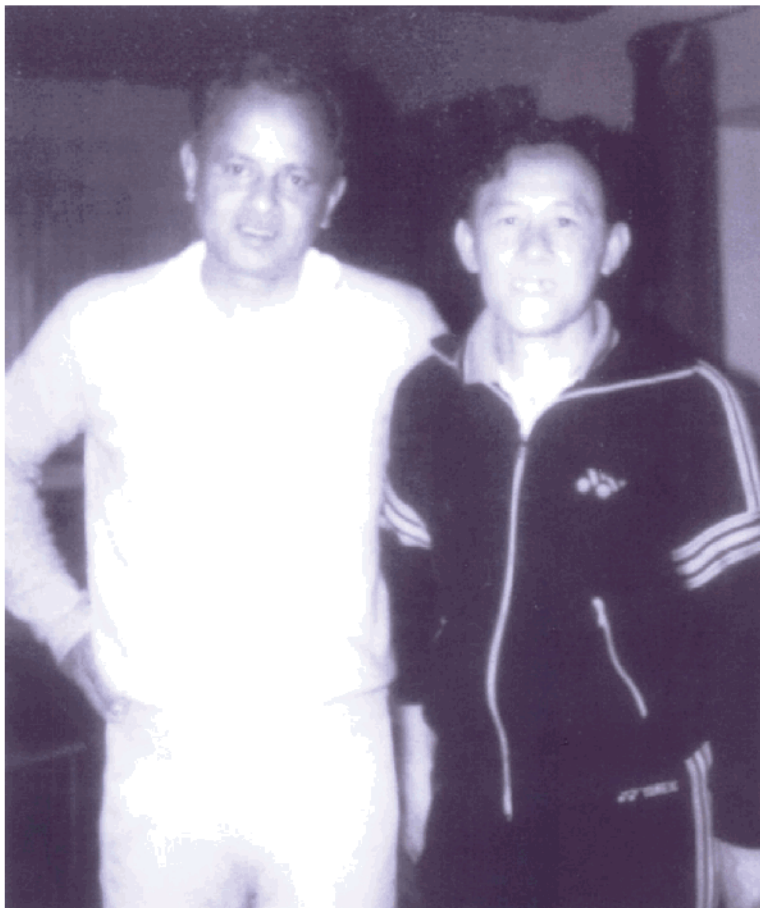
Eddie, an All-England champion in his time, had a limited array of strokes, but exercised great control over them. He almost always managed to take the overhead shot in preference to the backhand. His ploy was to prolong the rallies and let his own prodigious stamina weigh in the balance.

On the eve of his meeting with Natekar, his brother and doubles partner David asked a bevy of Natekar admirers, with rhetoric in his tone, "Your Natekar has good backhand, yes? You must see Natekar backhand tomorrow, and what Eddie does to it!"

And, sure enough, the next day, Eddie Choong directed every shuttle deep to the Natekar deep backhand corner. Bouncing all over the court like a football, he retrieved every one of Natekar's delectable backhand shots, sending the bird soaring back to the self-same corner. The idea was to turn Natekar's strength into a weakness.

It seemed initially as if Eddie was playing into Natekar's hands when the Indian garnered several points with wristy deception, even making Eddie stumble and fall in the process. But slowly and surely, the Malayan was turning the tide. The spectators could see that the steam was going out of the Indian's strokes and he was panting with exertion.

As the rallies got progressively longer, and the shuttle kept going excruciatingly back to that deep backhand corner, the game began turning. Eddie extinguished the lead that Natekar had built up, forged ahead and won the game narrowly. The second game, however, was a formality, as Natekar could barely raise his exhausted arm.

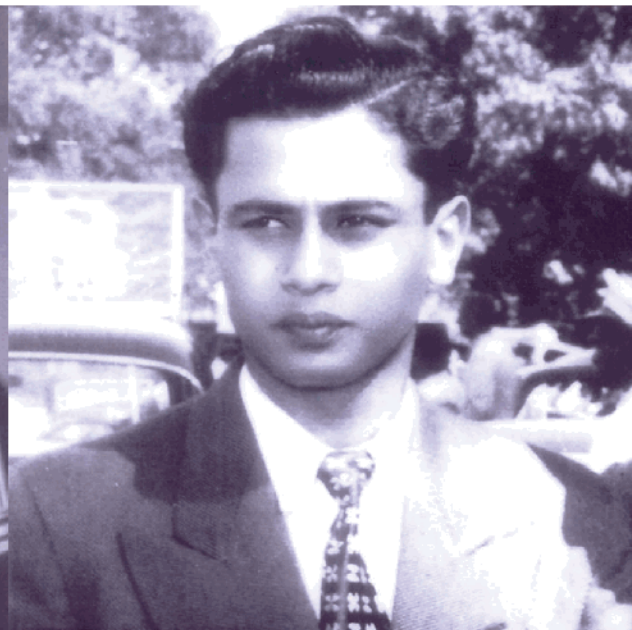


It was an important lesson for the great Natekar, and provided the one reason why he never got higher than No.4 in the world in his prime.

Never a stickler for achieving peak physical fitness, he lost many a key match at international level because he was simply too tired towards the middle of a long encounter to take advantage of his rival's weak shots. It was said of him that, had he improved his fitness, there would have been no player in the world to touch him.

When one looks at the manner players these days are so uptight about their equipment, worrying about the correct balance and grip size on their rackets, it appears laughable to note that Natekar rarely played with his own racket. He would request someone sitting at court-side to lend him a racket, heft and test it for 'feel', hit a few shots with it; and, if he liked it, would carry on playing with it as if it had been his favourite racket for some time.

"I won the Gwalior Nationals in 1953, playing with Davinder Mohan's racket," recounts Natekar. "It was a Maxply Dunlop,



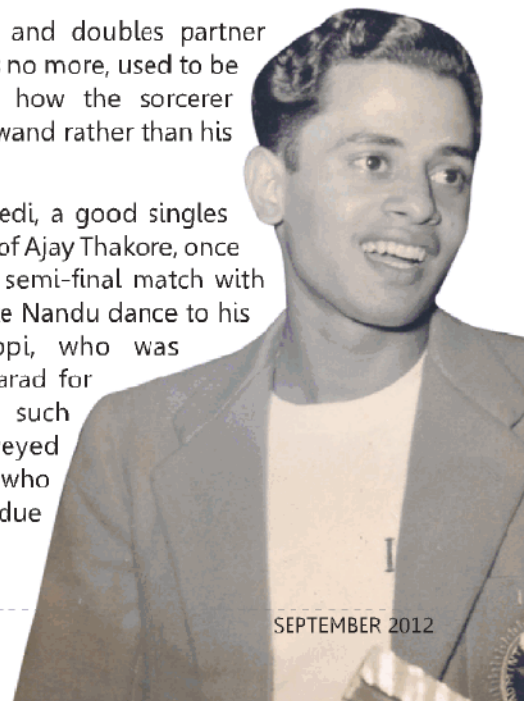
which a lot of the top players used in those days, but it had 'Ladies' model' written on the shaft. Perhaps it was marginally lighter than their gents' model, but I really liked its feel, and requested Davinder to let me play the entire tournament with it."

So acute was his perception of the strengths and weaknesses of his opponents that, even with a rival he was encountering for the first time, he would hit a few tosses, a few drops, a few half-pace smashes to the lines, then to the body – and he was ready to exploit the person's weaknesses to the hilt. It was uncanny how he managed to do it every time.

On the court, he was a thorough gentleman, never throwing a tantrum or questioning a linesman's or umpire's decision. His deportment and manners on court were always impeccable; and most of the time, he would let his racket do all the talking.

Natekar's close friend and doubles partner Manohar Bopardikar, who is no more, used to be full of anecdotes of just how the sorcerer preferred to use his magic wand rather than his tongue.

Apparently, Parimal Trivedi, a good singles player and doubles partner of Ajay Thakore, once boasted on the eve of his semi-final match with Natekar that he would make Nandu dance to his tune. The garrulous Bopi, who was affectionately known as Narad for his role in disseminating such 'information', duly conveyed Trivedi's plans to Natekar, who said nothing, but took due note.





The next day, it was Natekar who made his tall, hard-hitting opponent chase the bird all over the court, refusing to finish off rallies. By the end of the match, Trivedi was a physical wreck, ready to require a stretcher after leaning on the side-wall of the court a couple of times during the encounter in an effort to catch his breath.

Natekar won 15-1, 15-0, conceding a solitary point in two games to a man who was supposed to make him dance on the court. If there had been a whiff of vindictiveness in the manner of the victory, it had been the racket that had doled it out.

But such instances of concentrated venom were rare. Natekar played the game in the best possible spirit – and the badminton-loving public loved him. They could not get enough of the 12th May 1933-born lad who came to Mumbai in 1949 as a 16 year old from the small interior Maharashtra town of Sangli, specifically to further his badminton career.

At the P. J. Hindu Gymkhana in 1954, spectators watching him win one of the umpteen titles he bagged at what had become his home court spontaneously carried out an impromptu collection, which was named the 'Natekar Fund', to gather sufficient funds to send him to the All-England Championships that

year.

The 21 year old Natekar would not have been flattered had he challenged seriously for the world's most coveted title, but he was stopped at the quarter-final stage by the Danish power-hitter Hammergaard Hansen, known better for his fearsome doubles combination with Finn Kobbero.

The cold of London in February-March and lack of acclimatisation worked against the Indian, and he was nowhere near his best during that encounter.

However, his clashes through the 1950s at the CCI and Bombay Gymkhana with the likes of Kobbero, Eddie Choong, Erland Kops, et al had salivating spectators queuing up for tickets overnight, with several having to be turned away because there was just no more space in the playing hall. Those kind of crowds are simply not to be seen these days at even international competitions held in the city.

Natekar's best year in the Nationals came at Amritsar in 1961 when he took home all three titles at stake – the singles at the expense of Indonesian Nona (six Indonesians participated in the Indian Nationals that year), the men's doubles in tandem with Chandrakant Deoras and the mixed with Manda Kelkar.

His all-round skills were put to greatest use in the Thomas Cup matches, in which he represented India for over a decade. Nandu was the bulwark around which the Indian team's performance revolved as he invariably played four of the five matches in each tie.

There is more to Natekar's persona than just badminton. A great lover of music, he counts vocalists Lata Mangeshkar and the late Pandit Bhimsen Joshi among his friends.

After the enforced end of his 60-year love affair with badminton and tennis, thanks to rickety knees, he has started swinging a mean club on the golf course, and is working towards bringing his handicap down to single digits – a fact revealed in his autobiography brought out in June 2008 in Marathi. The book is currently being translated into English.

The Natekar family is one of the few to have given to Indian sport a father-and-son combination that has played at international level in two different sports. Like Leander Paes went into tennis even as father Vece had excelled in hockey, Gaurav Natekar has done Davis Cup tennis duty for India which father Nandu so nearly ended up doing. Tennis' loss, in the latter instance, was badminton's gain.



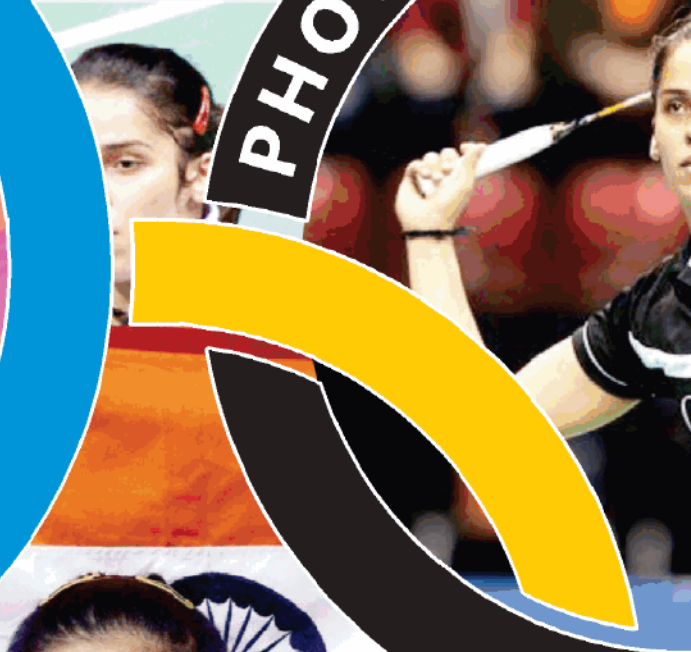


PHOTO GALL





ERY-SUPER SAINA

Pusarla Venkata Sindhu



Gopi Chand says Sindhu is on the right track but there are few flaws, particularly in defence.

"We need to tighten her defence.

She will learn as she plays in bigger tournaments,

became the first Indian to girl to win the Junior ABC singles title.

It was important for Sindhu, who is also the reigning women's national champion and sponsored by Olympic Gold Quest, to showcase her talent and tenacity.

"It is a great achievement. This is a beginning of a new career. She has the talent and will surely go a long way. What is creditable is the fact that she beat some of the bigger names, who have been doing well in the senior's circuit, in the previous rounds on route to final. And, considering that this is the toughest juniors tournament in the world as the major badminton powers are in Asia, this is a remarkable achievement," said national coach Pullela Gopi Chand. Incidentally, Sindhu has been training at



Pusarla Venkata Sindhu is following in the footsteps of London Olympics bronze medallist Saina Nehwal. The junior Asian badminton championship title which Sindhu won a few months ago in Korea reaffirmed her growing stature in world badminton. She gave a strong

performance in the Asian championship, which is as good as a world meet, to vanquish the opposition. The 17-year-old Hyderabad shuttler showed strength of character to overcome adversity. For the record, Sindhu defeated Japan's second-seeded Okuhara Nozomi 18-21, 21-17, 22-20 in the 59-minute final. In fact, she



Pullela Gopi Chand Academy in Hyderabad ever since she took badminton as a career. Gopi Chand went on to add: "She has the potential to make it big. She could be the next Saina Nehwal in the making."

Inspired by Saina's exploits, Sindhu showed promise from a young age. With sports being in her blood as father PV Ramana and Vijaya both being accomplished volleyball players, Sindhu was a natural athlete. Her father Ramana was a member of the 1986 Asian Games volleyball team that won the bronze at Seoul. Her mother, Vijaya, was a national player. The 6-footer Ramana was a powerful spiker. But Sindhu was never interested in volleyball. "She took a liking to badminton after seeing Gopi Chand on television. At the age of eight, her parents approached late Mehboob Ali for coaching and later moved to Mohammad Arif's camp at Lal Bahadur Stadium. Once the Pullela Gopi Chand Academy came up at Gachibowli, Sindhu moved over to train there. With the academy in the outskirts of

the city, the parents too shifted their residence to Gachibowli. "The next two years are very important for Saina and so we decided to shift near the academy as it would help Sindhu to focus on her game," said Ramana.

Sindhu's first big title came in 2005 at Kochi in the under-10 category and her first national title came in the sub-junior championship at Dehradun in 2007. In 2009, she clinched the sub-junior singles and doubles titles. Sindhu began to dominate the sub-juniors and junior nationals before bagging the senior nationals at Bangalore earlier this year. Sindhu made her mark in junior international events when she was fifth in the sub-junior Asian badminton championship held in Colombo two years ago year and at the World Championship in Mexico.

In her second appearance in the Indian Open Grand Prix tournament at Hyderabad two years ago, Sindhu stunned the critics with her magical performance which took her to the semi-finals where she lost to the more experienced Fransiska Ratnasari of Indonesia in three games. Nevertheless, she left the connoisseurs of the game in awe of her rich talent. She was then 15 years only.

According to Gopi Chand, the Indian Open Grand Prix performance was the eye-opener to her rich talent. "She is wonderful talent. She has the strokes. Above all, she has the aggressive trait, which is a key to any game and she is a trier, thinks Gopi Chand.

Sindhu feels that working with Gopi Chand and playing along side Saina has helped her evolve as a player. "The two have been great inspiration for me. I know the importance of hard work and the strict regimen of physical fitness. "I enjoy the hard work. I am a fan of Saina and Gopi. I like their game and their work ethics. They are my role models," she says.

The 5-foot-10-inch girl when in full bloom, unleashes her full repertoire of strokes. With her long reach she covers the court, reaches for the shot and, above all, is supremely focused. The powerful, leaping smash is her forte. She is also good at the net.



Assam State Ranking Meets and Inter District Tournament – 2012



Assam considered to be the powerhouse of Badminton amongst all the North Eastern States including Sikkim had produced a

number of stalwarts in the national scene and a few of them have donned National Colours and performed creditably abroad too, noteworthy amongst them being Mr. Dipankar Bhattacharjee who was thrice national Champion and had the distinction of representing the country in two consecutive Olympics, Mr. Susanta Bora, Mr Madhurya Baruah, Ms Mallika Baruah, Bhaniman Bora & Ms Krishna Deka Raja to name a few.

The players of the current era though not being able to create a mark in the national circuit, has a very well planned domestic circuit,

with 6(Six) Ranking Tournaments of which 3(Three) are Super Ranking culminates into the Inter District Championship in which besides the individual events the team event in the federation Cup format is also held. Its on the basis of the points garnered by an individual player progressively during the Ranking tournaments and the Inter district meet he is able to seal his berth in the State Team.

This year too the Ranking tournaments and the Inter District were held in different venues spread across the State as follows:

● By Biswajeet Ghosh

S. No.	Name of the tournament	Venue	Organised By	Date
1.	1st All Assam Ranking Tournament -2012	Kanaklata Indoor Stadium Guwahati	Guwahati Sports Association under the aegis of Assam Badminton Association	28th of May to 31st of May-2012
2.	2st All Assam Ranking Tournament -2012	Don Bosco School Auditorium Guwahati	Don Bosco Past People Alumni under the aegis of Assam Badminton Association	1st of June to 4th of June - 2012
3.	3rd All Assam Ranking Tournament -2012	Tinsukia Indoor Stadium	Tinsukia District Badminton Association under the aegis of Assam State Badminton Association.	1st of June to 4th of June - 2012
4.	1st All Assam super ranking badminton tournament-2012	Dibrugarh indoor Stadium	Dibrugarh district Badminton Association under the aegis of Assam Badminton Association	10th to 13th of July- 2012
5.	2nd All Assam Super Ranking Badminton Tournament – 2012	Arjun Shri Bhogeswar Baruah Indoor stadium, Sivasagar.	Sivasagar district badminton Association under the aegis of Assam State Badminton Association	15 th to 18 th July -2012
6.	3 rd All Assam super Ranking Badminton Tournament–2012	Kanaklata Indoor Stadium Guwahati	Assam Badminton Association.	24 th to 28 th July - 2012
7.	60 th Yonex sunrise All Assam Inter District and Open Badminton Tournament (Mini to Senior)-2012	Kusahal Konwar Indoor Stadium Jorhat	Jorhat district Badminton Association, under the aegis of Assam Badminton Association.	23 rd to 27 th of August – 2012.

All the above venues were equipped with minimum of four wooden courts with the venue for the 1st and 3rd Ranking i.e., Guwahati having 5 woodencourts.

There was overwhelming response especially because all the educational Institutions in the State were close due to summer vacation, all the affiliate District numbering around 14 participated with the maximum number of players allowed and all the meets had an average participation of 250 to 270 players vying for top honours in 12 events.

In recent times Assam Badminton Association with the assistance from different Government agencies and Public Sector units has successfully helped in promoting and setting up of a strong base for the sport amongst its affiliate districts. Some districts have shown much promise and have been able to set up their own developmental programmes with the technical help from the State Association generally there has been a surge of interest from many quarters viz., Sports Councils and sponsors to the idea of promoting the discipline of Badminton in the interior districts and the results are already showing for eg. A far-flung nondescript like Nazira has become the nursery of the in the state , the district has been producing a number of champions in the age group of Under -10 and Under -13 Boys and Girls for that matter Nowgaon another little known District has been able to produce Under -13 boys doubles Champion in the form of Pragyan Jyoti Gogoi & Rajshekhar Das in the last edition of mini nationals held at New Delhi . Its all about the genuine desire of the state Association to take developmental programmes and facilities to all age groups in every corner of the State and provide such openings that will help mould and individual player into a better performer.



Result of 1st Ranking tournament at **Kanaklata Indoor Stadium Guwahati:**

S. No.	Event	Name	Beat	Name	Score
1.	Under 10 Boys singles	Ayan Rashid (Guwahati)	Beat	Ayad Rashid (Guwahati)	21-17,21-17
2.	Under 10 Girls singles	Rajkumari Indrani Gogoi (Nazira)	Beat	Debahuti Lahon (Nazira)	21-18,21-12
3.	Under 13 Boys singles	Pragyan Jyoti Gogoi (Nowgaon)	Beat	Kingshuk K Bora (Nowgaon)	21-13,21-6
4.	Under 13 girls singles	Kasturi Phukan (Tinsukia)	Beat	Akanshs khound (Guwahati)	21-13,21-14
5.	Under 15 Boys singles	Pragyan Jyoti Gogoi (Nowgaon)	Beat	Tonmoy Dutta(Guwhati)	21-19,21-12
6.	Under 15 girls Singles	Ashmita chaliha (Guwahati)	Beat	Apurba Boro(Guwahati)	21-7,21-12

7.	Under 17 Boys singles	Ayan Rashid (Guwahati)	Beat	Kashyap Neog (Tinsukia)	21-15,13-21,21-11
8.	Under 17 Girls Singles	Megha M Bora (Guwahati)	Beat	Ashmita Chaliha (Guwahati)	21-7,21-12
9.	Under 19 Boys Singles	Vishal Garg (Jorhat)	Beat	Rishav Sharma (Guwahati)	21-10,21-16
10.	Under 19 girls singles	Ningshi B. Hazarika (Dibrugarh)	Beat	Harshita chaliha (Guwahati)	11-21,21-18,24-22
11.	Men Singles	Hirak Jyoti Neog (Sivsagar)	Beat	Anjan Buragohain (sivasagar)	21-9,21-13
12.	Women Singles	Kabeir phukan (Sivsagar)	Beat	Rituparna kalita (Guwahati)	21-12,21-15

Result of 2nd Ranking Tournament at

Don Bosco School Auditorium.:

S. No.	Event	Name	Beat	Name	Score
1.	Under 10 Boys singles				
2.	Under 10 Girls singles				
3.	Under 13 Boys singles	Pragyan Jyoti Gogoi (Nowgaon)	Beat	Orijit Chaliha (Guwahati)	21-13,21-11
4.	Under 13 girls singles	Kasturi Phukan (Tinsukia)	Beat	Adrita Buragoohain (Dibrugarh)	21-9,21-10
5.	Under 15 Boys singles	Rajshekhar Das (Nowgaon)	Beat	Orijit Chaliha (Guwahati)	21-17,22-20
6.	Under 15 girls Singles	Ashmita chaliha (Guwahati)	Beat	Meghna Borbora (Dibrugarh)	21-19,21-9
7.	Under 17 Boys singles	Rishav Sharma (Guwahati)	Beat	Deepjyoti Dutta (Guwahati)	13-21,21-12,21-16
8.	Under 17 Girls Singles	Ashmita Chaliha(Guwahati)	Beat	Ningshi B. Hazarika (Dibrugarh)	21-16, 13-21,21-13
9.	Under 19 Boys Singles	Rishav Sharma (Guwahati)	Beat	Deepjyoti Dutta (Guwahati)	21-13,21-11
10.	Under 19 girls singles	Ningshi B. Hazarika (Dibrugarh)	Beat	Harshita chaliha (Guwahati)	25-23,21-18
11.	Men Singles	Hirak Jyoti Neog (Sivsagar)	Beat	Angshuman Hazarika (Guwahati)	21-17,21-12
12.	Women Singles	Kabeir phukan (Sivsagar)	Beat	Rituparna kalita (Guwahati)	21-17,21-12

Result of 3rd Ranking Tournament at District Indoor Stadium Tinsukia:

S. No.	Event	Name	Beat	Name	Score
1.	Under 10 Boys Singles Final	Tuhin chetia (Dibrugarh)	Beat	Nishant gogoi (digboi)	21-18,21-14
2.	Under 10 girls singles final	Rajkumari indrani gogoi(nazira)	Beat	Debahuti lahaon(nazira)	23-21,21-17
3.	Under 13 boys singles final	Orijit chaliha (guwahati)	Beat	Rituporna bora(guwahati)	21-14,21-16
4.	Under 13 girls singles final	Kasturi phukan(tinsukia)	Beat	Chimran kalita	21-12,21-15
5.	Under 15 boys singles final	Pragyan jyoti gogoi(nowgaon)	Beat	Rajshekhar das (nowgaon)	21-13,21-18
6.	Under 15 girls singles final	Pragyan jyoti gogoi(nowgaon)	Beat	Meghna Borbora (Dibrugarh)	21-19,21-16
7.	Under 17 boys singles final	Monjeet gogoi(tinsukia)	Beat	Tridip boro (dibrugarh)	21-17,17-21,21-16
8.	Under 17 girls singles final	Ashmita chaliha(guwahati)	Beat	Ningshi B. Hazarika (Dibrugarh)	21-18,21-17
9.	Under 19 boys singles final	Kaustav deka (guwahati)	Beat	Nitish bora(sivsagar)	21-19, 21-12
10.	Under 19 girls singles final	Ningshi b hazarika(dibrugarh)	Beat	Bornali konwar(dibrugarh)	21-17,21-15
11.	Mens singles final	Nikhilesh sharma (guwahati)	Beat	Anjan buragohain(sivsagar)	22-20,21-18

60th Yonex-Sunrise Inetr District & Open Tournament Jorhat 2012

During the entire circuit it was a consistent performance on the part of Ashmita Chaliha of Guwahati , Pragyan jyoti Gogoi of Nowgaon , Kaberi Phukan of Sivasagar Hirakjyoti Neog of Dibrugarh , all of them could perform consistently and emerged with highest ranking points to head the ranking table in their particular age groups or event . All eyes are on them as to how they perform in the coming days, in the national circuit , the State Association on its part is also leaving no stones unturned in providing them the necessary support for honeing their skills for the National circuit.



SouthZone ● By Scorpio Badminton

The strong Karnataka team reigned supreme in the 64th South Zone Rahimtoola Cup for men that was held at Chirala in Andhra Pradesh recently. Led by experienced players like Aravind Bhat and Anup Sridhar, Karnataka dashed the hopes of Andhra Pradesh 3-1.

However, AP, who had entered four finals, won two titles. The hosts bagged the women's and girls honours. Young G Ruthvika Shivani stole the show with a sterling performance in AP's title triumph in both women's and girls title. AP defeated Kerala in both the finals.

Kerala clinched the boys team title.

Results (all finals): Boys: Kerala bt AP 2-1 (Arun George lost to C Rahul Yadav 21-7, 15-21, 15-21

George & S Pranav bt R Santosh & K Chaitanya Reddy 16-21, 21-16, 21-16

Muhammed Munaver bt S Balu Mahendra 21-6, 21-18).

Girls: AP bt Kerala 2-0 (G Ruthvika Shivani bt Arathy Sara Sunil 20-22, 21-19, 21-18

J Meghana & K Maneesha bt Aarthy Sara Sunil & Agna Anto 16-21, 21-19, 21-19).

Men: Karnataka bt AP 3-1 (Rohan Castelino lost to K Srikanth 19-21, 17-21, Aravind Bhat bt C Rahul Yadav 21-14, 21-19

Vineet Manul & Adarsh Kumar bt K Srikanth & M Arjun Reddy 21-19, 21-13; Anup Sridhar bt NVS Vijetha 21-8, 21-19).

Women: AP bt Kerala 2-0 (G Ruthvika Shivani bt Arathy Sara Sunil 21-18, 19-21, 21-17; Meghana & Maneesha bt Arathy

North East Zone

Inter State Badminton Championship – 2012.



As per the prescribed schedule of Badminton Association of India's calendar the North East Zone Inter State Badminton

Championship, 2012 also got underway in the picturesque city of Gangtok the State Capital of Sikkim at the Indoor Badminton Gymnasium Hall, Paljor Stadium Complex, wef 2nd of September to 5th of September 2012.

This zone is the biggest amongst all other Zones consisting of eight affiliate State units vying for top honours viz., Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Manipur, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Tripura and Sikkim. The number of days allotted for this zone for the Championship is also higher considered to other Zones, the championship is allotted four days as compared to two days for other zones, in the first two days, the Inter State team events are completed followed by the open events consisting of Men's singles, Mens Doubles, Women Singles, women Doubles, Boys singles, Boys Doubles, Girls singles & Girls Double in the 3rd and 4th day. The opens event is held as a special case for the region so that the players of the region gets the much needed tournament exposure as the Zone is bereft of any ranking tournaments unlike other zones.

The Hon'ble Chief minister of Sikkim Shri Pawan Kumar Chamling was the chief guest in the opening ceremony and declared the Championship open and also unveiled the souvenir commemorating the championship. The championship saw the footfall of around 200 participants including officials, Shri H. Gyanseshwor Singh was nominated by Badminton Association of India as the observer of the tournament, and shri Krishnagopal (UP) as the



Referee of the tournament along with Shri H. Chittranjan, Shri Raju Thingbaijam, Shri Thanga, Shri Biswajit Ghosh and Miss Balarina Syiem as umpires for the tournament. It was virtually a cakewalk for Assam in all the four events in the championship i.e., Rahimotullah Cup for Men's team event, Chaddha Cup for Women Team event, Shafi Qureshi Cup for Under -19 Girls & Narrang Cup for under -19 Boys. In the finals of Narrang Cup for boys there was a minor hiccup for the hot favourites Assam while playing against Manipur, as Rishav Sharma of Assam playing the first singles lost to R. K. Devjit of Manipur 20-22, 21-18, 23-21 ultimately Assam could salvage the tie with a spirited performance from Vishal Garg in the 2nd singles and at the end Assam prevailed over Manipur by winning the tie 2-1.



Results of the Team Events:

NARANG CUP (JR. BOYS) TEAM CHAMPIONSHIP FINALS

ASSAM BEAT MANIPUR - SCORE - 2-1

1ST SINGLES -

R.K.DEVJIT (Manipur) **BEAT** RISHAV SHARMA (ASSAM) - 20-22, 21-18, 23-21

1ST DOUBLES-

RISHAV SHARMA & KASHYAP NEOG (ASSAM) **BEAT** R.K.DEVJIT & YAITOMBAI (MANIPUR)-21-10, 21-14

2ND SINGLES -

VISHALGARG (ASSAM) **BEAT** YAITOMBAI (MANIPUR) 23-21, 21-16

SAFI QURESHI (JR. GIRLS) TEAM CHAMPIONSHIP FINALS

ASSAM **BEAT** ARUNACHAL PRADESH - SCORE - 2-0

1ST SINGLES -

NINGSHI B.HAZARIKA (ASM) **BEAT** PINKY KARKI (ANP) - 21-13, 22-20

1ST DOUBLES-

NINGSHI B.HAZARIKA/ BORNALI (ASM) **BEAT** PINKY KARKI// TARINGYANIA (ANP)- 21-17, 14-21, 24-22

RAHIMAToola CUP (MEN) TEAM CHAMPIONSHIP FINALS

ASSAM **BEAT** NAGALAND - SCORE 3-0

1ST SINGLES:

HIRAK JYOTI NEOG (ASM)- **BEAT**- RAJU CHETTRI (NGL) - 21-8, 21-8

2ND SINGLES

ANSUMAN HAZARIKA (ASM) **BEAT** ANKUR SANGPANG RAI (NGL) Bt- 21-17, 21-11

1ST DOUBLES

HIRAK JYOTI NEOG/DIBYAJYOTI BORA (ASM) **BEAT** MOA TEMJEN /TAJEN KABA (NGL)- 21-9, 21-17

CHADHA CUP (WOMEN) TEAM CHAMPIONSHIP FINALS

ASSAM **BEAT** NAGALAND - SCORE - 2-0

1ST SINGLES-

KAVERIPHUKAN (ASSAM) Bt PRATHANA (NAGALAND)-21-16, 21-6

1ST DOUBLES-

KAVERIPHUKAN/ KRISHTI DAS (ASSAM) Bt. PRATHANA & UMA TAMANG (NGL)- 21-17, 21-11

Thus at the end of the team championship Assam could qualify for Rahimatoola Cup & Chadha Cup to be played in the forthcoming Senior Nationals at Srinagar and for the Narrang cup, Shafi Qureshi cup to be played in the Junior nationals to be held at Imphal, Manipur.

From the third day i.e., 4th of September the open event got underway it was a clean sweep for Assam they could manage to take home all the medals at stake in the eight events.

It is noteworthy to mention the performance of Kaveri Phukan of Assam who walked away with the double

crown by winning the womens Singles as well as the doubles partnering Abantika Deka, another performance worth mentioning is that of pint sized Ashmita Chaliha's who is barely 15 years of age, she managed to win the under 19 girls singles crown against her teammate and much fancied and formidable opponent Ningshi Block Hazarika by winning the match with the scoreline reading 21-13,19-21,21-12 with this win she has created an air of expectations for all of a good performance in the Mini nationals for that matter in the National circuit too.



Results of the Open Events:

S. No.	Event	Name	Beat	Name	Score
1.	Mens Singles	Hirak Jyoti Neog (Assam)	Beat	W James (manipur)	21-11,21-11
2.	Women Singles	Kaveri Phukan(Assam)	Beat	Bornali Konwar (Assam)	21-14,21-8
3.	Boys Singles	Rishav Sharma (Assam)	Beat	Laldin Puia (Mizoram)	21-15,21-9
4.	Girls Singles	Ashmita Chaliha (Assam)	Beat	Ningshi B. Hazarika(Assam)	21-13,19-21,21-12
5.	Men' Doubles	Anajan & Ranjan Buragohain (Assam)	Beat	H. Kishan & L. Momo (Manipur)	21-15,21-11
6.	Women's Doubles	Kaberi Phukan & Abantika Deka (Assam)	Beat	Parthana & Uma Tamang (Nagaland)	21-17,21-10
7.	Boys Doubles	Kashyap neog & Nitis Bora (Assam)	Beat	R. K. Devojit & Yaitombi (Manipur)	21-10,22-20
8.	Girls Doubles	Harshita Chaliha & Bornali Konwar (Assam)	Beat	Pinky karki & Tariang Yania (Arunachal Pradesh)	24-22,23-21

Above all, the revelation of the tournament were the Arunachali Girls, the trio of Gita karki, Pinky karki & Tariang yania representing the Girls team of Auranachal Pradesh were the darling of the crowd and earned lots of appreciation from all quarters because of their die hard resistance against the much fancied and formidable opponents from Assam be it in the Team Championships or the open events they went down fighting for every points and were awarded the most promising team of the meet with a cash Prize constituted by the national umpires officiating in the meet. The championship also brought to the fore the organisational capabilities of the Himalayan State namely the Badminton Association of Sikkim (BAS) the participants and the officials in the meet were all praise for their hospitality, food and playing condition, under the able leadership of shri Chewang Zangpho President BAS the entire organising committee functioned as a well orchestrated machine thereby giving the feeling that they, BAS is ready to shoulder bigger responsibilities of hoisting Nationals and ranking tournaments in the State in the near future.

The meet concluded with a Gala Prize distribution ceremony and shri K.T. Gyaltsen Hon'ble Speaker Sikkim Legislative Assemble graced the occasion as the Chief Guest and declared the meet closed, this was followed by a DJ night and a sumptuous Dinner for the participants and officials. The memories of this zonals shall be in the minds of all the participants and officials for quite some time not only because of the performance of the players but also for the overall ambience of the tournament Kudos to Badminton Association of Sikkim.

● By Biswajeet Ghosh



RESULT OF JR. STATE & SR. STATES/BENGAL

75th West Bengal Jr. State Badminton Championship held at Mini Indoor Stadium, Silpasiti Para, Jalpaiguri from 24th to 28th July, 2012 Organised By: Jalpaiguri Indoor Games Players' Association under Jalpaiguri District Badminton Association in association with West Bengal Badminton Association

Under – 19 Girls Singles:

Rituparna Das	Bt. Riya Mookherjee	21-18, 21-15
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Under – 19 Boys Singles:

Pallab Bose	Bt. Trinankur Nag	16-21, 21-13, 21-14
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Under – 17 Girls Singles:

Rituparna Das	Bt. Anuriya Das	21-11, 21-9
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Under – 17 Boys Singles:

Shouvik Ghosh	Bt. Mayukh Ghosh	21-14, 21-19
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Under – 15 Girls Singles:

Riya Mookherjee	Bt. Ipsita Sinha	21-4, 21-6
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Under – 15 Boys Singles:

Arintap Dasgupta	Bt. Sourav Joshi	21-12, 21-6
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Under-13 Girls Singles:

Riya Ghosh	Bt. Manidipa Dey	24-22, 16-21, 21-12
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Under – 13 Boys Singles:

Suraj Chakraborty	Bt. Sourya Dasgupta	21-11, 21-14
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Under-19 Boys Doubles:

Trinankur Nag & Pallab Bose	Bt. Rajdeep Mitra & Shouvik Ghosh	21-16, 21-13
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Under – 17 Boys Doubles:

Arintap Dasgupta & Mayukh Ghosh	Bt. Debarshi Chakraborty & Snehasish Ghosh	21-16, 10-21, 21-13
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Under – 15 Boys Doubles:

Prasenjit Dey & Vankar Prakash	Bt. Sourav Joshi & Subham Prasad	21-13, 21-4
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Under-13 Boys Doubles:

Suraj Chakraborty & Sourya Dasgupta	Bt. Tapabrato Roy & Rajib Sen	21-8, 21-8
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75th West Bengal Sr. State Badminton Championship held at Sidhu Kanu Indoor Stadium, Durgapur from 16th to 18th August, 2012. Organised By: Burdwan District Badminton Association in association with West Bengal Badminton Association.

Mens Singles:

Arup Baidya	Bt. Sourav Chatterjee	21-15, 21-16
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Womens Singles:

Sheshadri Sanyal	Bt. Amrita Mukherjee	15-21, 21-18, 21-0 (conceded)
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Mens Doubles

Arup Baidya & Sourav Chatterjee	Bt. Rajdeep Mitra & Sambit Dey	21-6, 21-11
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CHAMPIONSHIPS 2012 AT LATUR

● By Rajiv Ganpule



The Maharashtra Senior Inter-District & State Badminton Championships 2012 received an overwhelming response with a total of 23 Districts participating in the Men's Team Championship event while the Women's Team Championship Event attracted entries from 10 Districts of Maharashtra.

The Individual Events also received an overwhelming response with a total of 242 Entries were received in 5 Events wherein 237 Matches were played on 4 Wooden Courts over 4 days of competition.

INTER-DISTRICT TEAM CHAMPIONSHIPS - MENS AND WOMENS INDIVIDUAL CHAMPIONSHIPS : Mens Singles, Mens Doubles, Women Singles, Women Doubles, Mixed Doubles.

FOLLOWING TECHNICAL OFFICIALS WERE APPOINTED:

Chief Referee – Vishwas Deswandikar (PN), Match Control – Vinay Joshi (PN), Milind(Rahul) Deshmukh (AUR), Abhijit Phule (AUR), Shilpa Gundecha (PN), Anand Khubba (LTR)

FINAL RESULTS - TEAM

Mens Team Championships	THANE	PUNE	3-0
Women Team Championships	THANE	MSDBA	2-0

FINAL RESULTS - INDIVIDUALS

Event	Winner	Runners-up	Score
Mens Singles	Subhankar Dey (TH)	Sarang Lakhane (Ngp)	21-19,21-16
Mens Doubles	Prashant Bahatare(Th) Abhishek Kulkarni(Th)	Nishad Dravid (PN) Shlok Ramchandran(MS)	16-21, 21-19,21-14
Women Singles	Riya Pillai (MS)	Shruti Mundada (Pn)	19-21,21-10,21-16
Women Doubles	Mansi Gadgil (PN) Sae Purandare (PN)	Rasika Raje (Ngp) Shruti Mundada (Pn)	21-18,21-15
Mixed Doubles	Nishad Dravid (PN) Mansi Gadgil (PN)	Jayendra Dhole (Ngp) Varada Dixit (Ngp)	21-14,21-1

INAUGURATION

Due to the sad demise of Shri Vilasrao Deshmukh all official functions of inauguration and closing ceremonies were cancelled by Latur District Badminton Association. The Tournament was inaugurated by legendary Badminton Player Shri Nandu Natekar on 21st August 2012 along with President of Latur District Badminton Association Dr. Satish Deshmukh and Hon.Secretary of Latur District Badminton Association Shri Ashish Bajpai.

PRIZE DISTRIBUTION FUNCTION

During the Prize Distribution function of the tournament which was organized on 26th

August 2012 a Souvenir which was dedicated to Late Shri Vilasrao Deshmukh was published at the hands of President of Maharashtra Badminton Association Shri . Pradeep S. Gandhe along with Shri S.A.Shetty-Hon.Secretary-Maharashtra Badminton Association

Mr.Kulin Manek-Hon.Treasurer MBA, Mr. B. Uttage – President Rotary Club, Latur, N.S.Reddy-Secretary, Rotary Club,Latur, Mr.Manish Rathi and Members of the Senior Selection Committee of MBA which included Mrs.Ami Ghia Shah, Mr.Manik Paranjpe, Mr.Iqbal Maindargi, Mr.Madhur Bezborra, Mr.K.K.Cheema and Mr.Bhushan Akut. Mrs.Ami Ghia Shah – Chairperson of the Senior Selection Committee of Maharashtra

Badminton Association announced the Maharashtra Junior and Senior Teams for and participation at the West Zone Inter-State Badminton Championships 2012 which would be held at Atul, Valsad, Gujarat on 1st and 2nd September 2012



BADMINTON INDIA

EAST ZONE BADMINTON CHAMPIONSHIPS



Held At Cuttack From
31st August To 2nd September, 2012

I was nominated "**Observer**" for this Championships and I had tried to assist the Organizers to the best of my ability. I met the Managers & Coaches of all the teams to know about their requirements and wherever required I intervened to make things easy and comfortable for the Players. The Organizers also accepted the suggestions and acted accordingly. Campfire was organized in Mahavir hotel and the team members of all the States had enjoyed and appreciated the events. Spectators present had seen some seesaw competitions – to name a few are the doubles match between Nishant Sinha & Shivam Sharma with Arup Baidya & Sourav Chatterjee, between Sheshadri Sanyal and Sanchali Dasgupta, between Ansal Yadav and Pallab Bose,

The East Zone Inter State Badminton Championships was held at Jawaharlal Nehru Indoor Stadium at Cuttack organized by Orissa State Badminton Association. Six (6) States i.e. Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Bihar, West Bengal, Jharkhand & Orissa had participated in this Championship. Total numbers of participants were approximately 120. Many promising players from the Eastern region and few reputed players had participated in this Championship.

between Sourav Agarwal and Arup Baidya, between Sheshadri Sanyal and Smriti Nagarkoti etc. Ansal Yadav from Uttar Pradesh was chosen upcoming Player from the Eastern Region. As per expectation Rituparna Das played extremely well and Arup Baidya senior most player in this Championship proved his excellence & expertise. The Organisers had provided good accommodation to all the States. Finals were held on 2nd September and Bengal won Three (3) events such as Chaddha Cup

(Womens), Narang Cup (Jr. Boys) & Safi Qureshi Cup (Jr. Girls). Uttar Pradesh became champion in Rahimatoola Cup (Mens). The Results are enclosed herewith. Orissa State Badminton Association showed good gesture having given Mementos to all the team members.

EAST ZONE BADMINTON CHAMPIONSHIPS

RESULTS FOR 68TH EAST ZONE INTER STATE BADMINTON CHAMPIONSHIP
HELD AT CUTTACK FROM 31ST AUGUST TO 2ND SEPTEMBER, 2012

RAHIMAToola CUP (MEN) UP BEAT WB : 3 - 1

M No	Winner	Org	Loser	Org	Score
1st Singles	Sourav Agrawal	UP	Arup Baidya	WB	21-12, 13-21, 21-19
2nd Singles	Shivam Sharma	UP	Sourav Chatterjee	WB	13-21, 21-13, 21-16
1st Doubles	Arup Baidya & Sourav Chatterjee	WB	Nishant Sinha & Shivam Sharma	UP	16-21, 21-17, 21-19
3rd Singles	Anurag Sharma	UP	Ashutosh Tiwari	WB	21-12, 21-11

CHADHA CUP (WOMEN) WB BEAT UTR : 2 - 0

M No	Winner	Org	Loser	Org	Score
1st Singles	Sheshadri Sanyal	WB	Smriti Nagarkoti	UTR	19-21, 21-14, 22-20
1st Doubles	Barnali Raha & Amrita Mukherjee	UP	Smriti & Shetal	UTR	21-11, 21-15

NARANG CUP CUP (JR. BOYS) WB BEAT UP : 2 - 1

M No	Winner	Org	Loser	Org	Score
1st Singles	Pallab Bose	WB	Ansal Yadav	UP	15-21, 21-18, 21-12
1st Doubles	Ansal Yadav & Vinay Ku Singh	UP	Pallab Bose & Rajdeep Mitra	WB	21-14, 21-14
2nd Singles	Shouvik Ghosh	WB	Vineet Tomar	UP	21-18, 21-10

SHAFI QUERESHI CUP (JR. GIRLS) WB BEAT UP : 2 - 0

M No	Winner	Org	Loser	Org	Score
1st Singles	Rituparna Das	WB	Gargi Singh	UP	21-10, 21-8
1st Doubles	Rituparna Das & Anuriya Das	WB	Sanchali Dasgupta & Saruni Sharma	UP	21-08, 21-08

● By Shekhar Biswas

A Review

By **Abhijeet Kulkarni**



The Proud National Champions

Srinagar: The Sher-E-Kashmir stadium in the heart of the Jammu and Kashmir capital played host to any national level sporting event after a gap of 25 years and the organisers would remember the buzz and energy it created for decades to come.

The two other persons who would not forget this venue anytime soon would be the newly crowned men's and women's singles national champions P Kashyap and Sayali Gokhale. Both came to the Jammu and Kashmir capital to prove a point or two to themselves and ended up making a statement of intent through their performance this

week.

For Kashyap this was his first national title in three attempts while Sayali proved to one and all that she still can challenge the best in the business through her hard-fought victory over Asian junior champion and the rising star of Indian badminton, PV Sindhu.

True, Sindhu was carrying a knee injury that restricted her movement on the court. But that should not take away anything from the performance of Sayali, who ensured that she did not let up the pressure she created on the pre-tournament favourite by stepping up the pace at the business end of the match.

Sindhu had faced a similar

situation in the semifinals against Arundhati Pantwane but had managed to wriggle out of a tight situation with her guile and clinical stroke-play. But that was not to be in the final.

Sayali kept her cool under pressure and was unlike in the past – she had lost to Sindhu in their earlier three meetings – was willing to take the fight to her opponent with some deft cross court smashes and quick change of directions to regain the Olympian Badminton Challenge Cup that she had won in 2009 before.



Ajay Jayram-Just Could Not Deliver in the Finals



Was in Great Form in The Finals



Will have to prove herself in Domestic Matches again

"I knew she was not 100 per cent. Despite that, I went into the match without much expectations and I feel that helped," said Sayali. "I have worked on a few aspects of my game like being more aggressive on the court. That helped me a lot today."

Maiden title for Kashyap

While Sayali surprised even herself with the title triumph, P Kashyap treaded the thin path between desperation and serenity through the seven days before carving his name on the Vikas Topiwala Challenge Cup for the first time.

The 25-year-old had twice faltered at the final hurdle and

those two defeats against Aravind Bhat had been playing on the mind of the London Olympic quarterfinalist.

And just like the players, the successful conduct of the tournament was a feather in the cap for the Badminton Association of India and the Jammu and Kashmir Badminton Association.

The Jammu and Kashmir capital had not held a major sporting event for over two decades and it was a challenge to put together the logistics for a flagship event which attracts participation from over 350 players along with officials and even the national media.

between two players who had been in the race for the Olympic berth, which Kashyap

However, instead of caving into the pressure, Kashyap adapted an aggressive approach and it worked wonders. In the semifinal, the Commonwealth Games bronze medallist just needed 30 minutes to bulldoze K Srikanth and gave little chance to Ajay Jayaram in the final.

The summit clash was billed as a grudge encounter



won by default when he was given a walkover in the quarterfinals of the India Open Super Series and were facing each other for the first



time since then.

However, the final failed to live up to the expectations with Kashyap controlling the encounter for the major part and the only time he fell behind in the second game, it was because of his mistakes rather than his opponents superior play.

"I am very happy with this win. I lost to Aravind in Indore (2009) and Rohtak (2011). I was under pressure to perform today because I wanted to become the national champion. Whenever I am under pressure, I do well as I did in Commonwealth Games and London Olympics," said the newly crowned national champion, who raced to hug national coach and mentor Pullela Gopi Chand immediately after the final point.

The women's and mixed doubles titles went to the best combinations in the country but there was surprise in store in the men's doubles when Manu Atri and B Sumeeth Reddy surprised even themselves by upsetting the appiecart of third seed Akshay Dewalkar and Pranav Chopra to lay their hands on the Calcutta Badminton Cup.

Youngsters impress

While Manu and Sumeeth went all the way, 17-year-old Shreyansh Jaiswal lit up the tournament on the first full day of competition when he upset defending champion Sourabh Verma in the second round.

The boy from Chattigarh, who shifted to Hyderabad to train with SM Arif five years ago, made the most of the nervousness of his more illustrated opponent to tighten the screws and send him packing.

While Jaiswal set the ball rolling, brothers K Srikanth and K Nandagopal notched up some impressive wins to reach the semifinals. The boys from Guntur played some fearless badminton and though the inexperience let them down in the semifinals against their more experience opponents the performance would do a world of good to their confidence.

A job well done

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P.V. Sindhu has Great Potential. She was fantastic at China Masters but She will have to show more consistency

"P. Gopi Chand"



Kashyap- The Olympian has had a Great Season



major sporting event for over two decades and it was a challenge to put together the logistics for a flagship event which attracts participation from over 350 players along with officials and even the national media.

While the state government provide all possible support to get the tournament up and running, the apex governing body of the sport in the country gave the Jammu and Kashmir Badminton Association a fund of Rs 25 lakh to make all the necessary arrangements for the tournament and even flew in the howa courts from Andhra Pradesh.

Explaining the rationale behind bring the nationals to Srinagar, BAI president Akhilesh Das Gupta spelt out his vision to take the national championship to those regions of the country where badminton needs to be nurtured and development to ensure that India one day becomes the world superpower and Srinagar was the first stop in that direction.

"We had a choice. We could have only hosted the nationals and other tournaments in major cities and continue to motor along. But then there is no way places like Jammu and Kashmir would come on the national map of badminton," said the president, in response to the questions about the teething problems during the tournament.

The BAI has decided to take the junior national badminton championship to Imphal, Manipur with the same agenda and the president feels these initiatives will definitely develop the sport in every nook and corner

Srinagar has definitely set the tempo.

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