



PRO SQUASH

NEWS LETTER OF THE INDIAN SQUASH PROFESSIONALS

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(For Private Circulation only) Vol 3 No 2 Issue No 10

April 1999

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Junior Ritwik stands tall among the men



Ritwik Bhattacharya ...
great achievement

Maharashtra had little difficulty retaining their Inter-State squash title in Calcutta in January. The strong Maharashtra team, spearheaded by recently married **Niraj Shirgaonkar** brushed aside Services 'A' 3-1 in the final round robin match.

Parth Doshi, who came in place of **Saket Wali**, played superbly to beat **Salil Bisht** 4-9, 9-3, 9-6, 9-5 in the opening encounter. Anuj Kalia levelled the tie when he defeated **Niraj Shirgaonkar** in a rousing five-game encounter. **Kalia** won 8-10, 9-0, 9-3, 6-9, 9-0. **Akhil Behl**, as expected, brushed aside **Rajdeep Brar** 9-1, 9-3, 9-7 and **Manish Chotrani** clinched the issue with a clinical 9-4, 9-1, 9-0 win over **Navneet Narain**.

Delhi's **Ritwik Bhattacharya** made history when he won the men's title in the Nationals which followed the inter-state event. **Bhattacharya** had won the under-19 title in the junior nationals in Delhi last year and became one of the few players to win the Junior and Senior National titles in the same year.

Bhattacharya dethroned a listless **Akhil Behl** in the final. **Behl**, who is presently studying at Trinity College, New York, was woefully out of touch and could not prevent the supremely-fit **Bhattacharya** from winning the title. **Bhattacharya** won 9-7, 9-7, 2-9, 9-2.

Mekhal Subedar, who hails from Deolali, won her third women's title on the trot. In the final, she decimated tennis-turned-squash player **Sohini Kumari** 9-3, 9-2, 9-1. **Sohini** is the younger sister of 12-times National champion **Bhuvaneshwari Kumari**.

Shubhika Bilkha wins inaugural award



Chandrakant Pawar (coach to Deepali), under 19 girl champion Deepali Anvekar with squash patron Mahendra Sanghi and Mahendra Agarwal (Director ISP)

Little known **Shubhika Bilkha** become the first girl to bag the most promising player award at the 26th **Motilal Sanghi** Inter-Club squash tournament. **Shubika** gained the distinction by virtue of her performance in the girls under-15 event. She surprised her more fancied rivals, **Shaila Pandole** and **Nandita Lall**. **Shubhika**'s rapid rise since she took to the game less than two years ago can perhaps be attributed to her sporting background. She is the daughter of former Indian batsman **Yajuvindra Singh**. Hopefully, the award will inspire **Shubhika** to devote more time and energy to squash as she joins a select band of players like **Anil Nayyar**, **Meherwan Daruwala** and **Adrian Ezra** who went on to become national champions and acquitted themselves most creditably at International level.

The tournament attracted entries from 73 juniors, a clear indication of the growing competitive interest among the youth. Barring **Siddharth Suchde**, the second seed who upset **Mihir Sheth** in the boys under 15 event, the top seeds held sway in the other events.

RESULTS: Boys under 13: Karanpal Sethi (Otters) beat Rishab Singhvi (Otters) 9-0, 1-9, 10-8, 9-1 Boys under 15: Siddharth Suchde (CCI) beat Mihir Sheth (CCI) 9-3, 9-5, 9-4. Boys under 17: Junaid Nathani (Otters) beat Mahesh Verma (Jindal) 9-5, 9-4, 9-5. Boys under 19: Parth Doshi (Otters) beat Abhijit Kureja (Otters) 9-7, 9-6, 3-9, 9-6. Girls under 19: Deepali Anvekar (The Leela) beat Rhea Bhandare (Willingdon) 9-3, 9-2, 9-0.

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Need to make state bodies stronger

By Brig Raj Manchanda



There is a dire need to make the state bodies stronger if Indian squash is to rise to its full prominence. The sport has been concentrated so far only in a few metropolitan areas. Then there is need for old players, coaches and professionals to come together in formulating coaching schemes. The combination of these three is essential for we have seen so far that these three going in different directions isn't helping the game any.

The schemes for the betterment of the pros is welcome. We should have a regular stream of pros coming through.

A disturbing thing is that the number of schools playing the game has remained stagnant. The scope of this needs to be widened. There are hardly any girls events in schools squash round the country. This is another thing that must be addressed.

While international sports events find sponsors the national ones struggle to find one. One feels the right approach to the right people has not been made. For corporates like Reliance, sponsoring small budget squash events would be chicken feed. It's a pity one sport more than the others hogs the limelight.

There may be more players playing today than before but the standards are the same. **Ritwik Bhattacharya** is a dedicated chap and plays within his limitations. His standard must be raised by giving him exposure.

At local level, events like the Merchants Cup should be staged so that it will attract the young lot among the white collar personnel.

Above all there is need to players from the not-so affluent class. The onus should be on club to nurture such players. They can have talent search tournaments towards this end. I'm sure the cost that the clubs would incur to adopt such players would be small percentage of their budgets. A club could adopt a child of a professional and give him all the necessary facilities of diet and practice. Right now what charity the clubs do is to give out their courts to juniors to play during off-peak hours. Unfortunately these off-peak hours clash with the school timings and the offer cannot be taken up by all and sundry. There are encouraging signs elsewhere. In Delhi the DDA has built squash complexes. More such pay and play centres should come up so that talent from the ordinary classes can surface.

Clubs could also adopt a couple of schools so as to gain a broad base. It all needs people wanting to push things forward. Instead we have the sorry case of discontinuation of some good schemes begun in the past. There used to be an all-India schools squash tournament begun in 1986. Very little is heard about it now. Squash officials owe a responsibility to the sport to see that things go forward and not the other way.

Ritwik wins Central India title



Tejveer Singh of Daly College receiving the under-19 runner-up trophy from the chief guest, S.K.Chatterji, sales director, Bridgestone India, in the Central India squash championship in Indore, with the Principle Mr. M. B. Prasad and Mr. Ajit Jhaver.

Ritwik Bhattacharya won the Central India squash championship beating **Anuj Kalia** 3-0 in the final. The under-16 title was claimed by **Yashwardhan Singh** beating **Nirav Tomar** 3-1 while Mumbai lad **Abhijit Kukreja** tamed **Tejveer Singh** 3-0 for the under 19.

This is a very old event going back to 1957. But it was resumed after a gap of 12 years. There was prize money to the tune of Rs 65,000. This was thanks to the efforts of **Ajit Jhaver**, **J.S.Bajwa**, **Dr V.Rajopadhyaya** and **Principal M.V.Prasad**. The good news is that there is to be a glass-back court at the college.

Results: Men: Quarter-finals: **Ritwik** beat **Sashil Bisht** 3-1, **Anuj Kalia** beat **Rajdeep Brar** 3-1, **Saket Wali** beat **Navneet Narain** 3-2, **Gajendra Singh** beat **Milind Khurana**. Semi-finals: **Ritwik** beat **Wali** 3-0, **Kalia** beat **Gajendra** 3-2.

Under-19: Quarter-finals: **Maheesh Verma** beat **Yashwardhan Singh** 3-1, **Tejveer** beat **Sohel Sethi** 3-0, **Abhijit Kukreja** beat **Sumit Jaiswal** 3-0, **Shakti Singh** beat **Vijay Jhagra** 3-0. Semi-finals: **Kukreja** beat **Verma**, **Tejveer** beat **Shakti Singh** 3-0. Under-16: Quarter-finals: **Yashwardhan** beat **Arpit Mittal** 3-0, **Anil Verma** beat **A.T.Singh** 3-0, **Neerav Tomar** 3-0, **Gaurav Nandrajog** beat **Ravneet Singh** 3-0. Semi-finals: **Yashwardhan** beat **Verma** 3-1, **Tomar** beat **Brig O.P.Nandra Jog** 3-0.



Jani inducted in ISP

Mr. Saifee Jani (MD Jani Sales Ltd.) has agreed to serve the ISP as an honorary member. Himself a squash player has been helping ISP in organising tournament, raising funds and promoting Squash.

FINAL: UNDER 16: YASHWARDHAN BEAT NIRAV TOMAR 3-1
UNDER 19: ABHIJIT KUKREJA BEAT TEJVEER SINGH 3-0
MEN: RITWIK BEAT ANUJ KALIA 3-0



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AN UNFORGETTABLE EVENING OF SQUASH



① An evening to remember for these people.

The winners (1) pose with Tunku Imran. From left, Mekhala Subedar, Chandrakant Pawar, Khalid Ansari, Ong Beng Hee, Adrian Ezra, Shyamal Verma.



④



for the international junior player of the year. The hard core men of the sport, the professionals, were not forgotten as Shyamal Verma and Chandrakant Pawar were handed the ISP Lifetime awards by Subhash Wali and Narendra Gour, Mekhala Subedar, two-time national women's champion was given a special award by MID-DAY and the Maharashtra team which



③

Ong Beng Hee with Raju Chainani, editor of Simply Squash, whose award he won. (3) Chandrakant Pawar receives the lifetime achievement award from Narendra Gour of ISP and (4) Khalid Ansari outlines his plans for squash with Mahendra Agarwal, SRAM secretary and Tunku Imran.

It was an evening to cherish for squash aficionados. An evening when a cross section of squash personalities were honoured National champs Anil Nayar, Meherwan Daruwala, and Adrian Ezra were presented with the Mid day Lifetime Achievement awards Khalid Ansari, the president of the Squash Rackets Association of Maharashtra, devised the awards. None other than Tunku Imran, president emeritus of the World Squash Federation and the crown prince of Malaysia, was present to give away the awards. He had brought in tow, his country's world junior champion Ong Beng Hee. Ong received the Simply Squash trophy

won the inter-state title, were presented with a cash prize of Rs 50,000 by MID-DAY. The talk at evening centered on how to broad base the game and ensure that more played it. The common opinion was that pay and play courts were the only solution. The Tunku was in a light mood, talking of how he expected Malaysian squash to reach world standards and of a plan dearest to his heart to get his country into the mainstream of Test cricket, not overnight but by 2020. Sport needs more pragmatic people like him.



Nikhil and Aisha making waves in the U.S.

Nikhil Bhandare Yale University squash captain for 1998-99, has won the

prestigious Skillman award this year. The award is given annually to one squash player from any American university for the maximum involvement, motivation, encouragement and standard in the game. This is the first time any Indian has ever won it. Nikhil is brother of the Rhea Bhandare.

Aisha Shah of Mumbai, a sophomore at Bates college, United States, is having great time on the college squash circuit. In five matches in 1998, Aisha dropped just one game, leading the women's squash team to a 4-1 start with a perfect record. She was also nominated the Bates athlete of the week in December.

SRAM membership drive

The executive committee of SRAM have decided that in future only members of the association will be eligible to participate in tournaments under its auspices and that of Indian Squash Professionals.

Rate of the various categories are as follows:

Junior Member (below 18 years)	120/- annually
Senior Member (above 18 years)	240/- annually
Life Member (Junior)	1,000/-
Life Member (Senior)	1,500/-
Patron / Donor / Corporate	5,000/- and above

The money thus received will be utilised for activities such as organising of tournament, coaching schemes etc.

THE SRAM NEWLY FORMED EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

President: Khalid Ansari Vice President: Ranjan Sanghi

Hon.Sec: Mahendra Agarwal, Treasurer: Ehsan Shah

Members: Vanita Bhandari, Sumedh Shah, Gopal Vazirani & Sanjeev Saran.

Board of Advisors: Sunil Gavaskar, Rajsingh Durgapurkar, Suresh Kalmadi, Gautam Thakkar, Nana Chudasma & M. K. Sanghi



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NEWS NEWS NEWS

JOSHNA BAGS SCOTTISH TITLE

Chennai girl Joshna Chinappa, the under-14 national girls champion, won the under-13 title in the Scottish Squash Championships. She defeated the top seed, Danfelle Dawson 4-9, 9-4, 9-2.

In the semi-finals, Joshna beat Hong Kong's Su Tsz Lui 9-5, 9-0, 9-2 and put out Spaniard Chantal Moros in the last eight.

45th Merchants Cup:

Williamson Magor and Co. won the 45th Merchants Cup squash tournament, the oldest such tournament in the country, held at the Calcutta Rackets Club in December. In the final they beat Musical Films 2-1 to claim the title for the fourth year in a row. Results- (magor players names first)- Rajat Johar beat Aditya Kankaria Vasudeb Majumdar lost to Samir Ladaria Vikram. Singh beat Chandrakant Kankaria.



The Williamson Magor team receiving the Merchants Cup from Mrs May Weston, wife of the president of the Calcutta Rackets Club after the finals in Calcutta.

NATIONAL SQUASH CHAMPIONSHIP CALCUTTA

Inter-state

First round:
Maharashtra beat U.P. 5-0

Second round:

Maharashtra beat Bengal 5-0

Third round:

Maharashtra beat Services 'B' 4-1

Maharashtra beat Delhi 4-1

Saket Wali beat Sameer Thakral 8-10, 9-0, 9-2, 9-3, 9-5

Neeraj Shringaant beat Parikshit Mahajan 4-6

(conceded);

Akhil Behl lost to Ritwik Bhattacharya 2-9, 2-9, 3-9.

Manish C. beat Yogenendra Singh 2-9, 6-9, 9-3, 10-9, 9-0.

Avish J. beat Arjun Khanna 2-9, 6-9, 9-3, 10-9, 9-0.

Final:

Maharashtra beat Services 3-1:

Parth Doshi beat Sali Bisht 4-9, 9-3, 9-6, 9-5.

Neeraj S. lost to Anuj Kalia 10-8, 0-9, 3-9, 9-6, 0-9.

Akhil Behl beat Rajdeep Brar 9-1, 9-3, 9-7.

Avish Jaiswal beat Arjun Khanna 9-4, 9-1, 9-0.

INDIVIDUAL EVENTS

MEN

Quarter-finals:

Akhil Behl beat Avish Jaiswal 9-7, 9-1, 9-4.

Gajendra Singh beat Rajdeep Brar 2-9, 5-8, 8-10, 9-6.

M. Chitrani. beat N. Narain 9-7, 6-9, 10-8, 9-3.

Ritwik beat Anuj Kalia 9-2, 9-10, 3-9, 9-1, 9-1.

Semi-finals:

Behl beat Gajendra 9-5, 9-0, 10-8.

Ritwik beat Chitrani 9-4, 5-9, 9-2, 9-4.

Final: Ritwik beat Behl 9-7, 9-7, 2-9, 9-2.

WOMEN

Quarter-finals:

Mekhal Subedar beat Dolly Dabirwala 9-1, 9-0, 9-0.

Pia Abraham beat Rhea B. 9-6, 9-5, 6-9, 4-9, 10-8.

Joshna C. beat Vaidehi Reddy 9-6, 6-9, 9-3, 9-7.

Semi-finals:

Subedar beat Abraham 9-0, 9-0, 9-0.

Sohini Kumari beat Joshna Chinappa 9-1, 9-2, 9-2.

Final:

Subedar beat Sohini 9-3, 9-2, 9-1.

PROFESSIONALS

Semi-finals:

Bala Murugan beat Gopi Mohite 9-7, 9-1, 9-3.

Santosh More beat Chandrakant Pawar 9-2, 9-7, 10-8.

Final:

Bala Murugan beat More 9-3, 9-10, 9-4, 9-2.

OVER-35

Semi-finals:

Vaman Apte beat Bharat Inder Singh 9-3, 9-2, 9-1.

O'Neil Pramanik beat V.Mandera 9-1, 9-2, 9-2.

Final:

Apte beat Pramanik 9-7, 9-4, 9-4.

OVER-45

Final:

Dr Bharat Inder Singh beat Rajiv Reddy 9-4, 9-6, 9-5.

9TH HEAD ASIAN JUNIORS CHAMPIONSHIP

JUNIOR BOYS

Final:

Pakistan beat Malaysia 3-0: Third place: Hong Kong beat India 3-0.

Junior girls final: Malaysia beat Hong Kong 3-0

For third place: India beat Singapore 2-1.

BOMBAY VARSITY CHAMPIONSHIP

Men:

Semi-finals:

Avish Jaiswal (Sydenham) beat Carl Bokdawal

(Fr Rodrigues) 15-11, 14-15, 13-15, 15-7, 15-7.

Saket Wali (NIM) beat Amitpal Kohli (Mithibai)

15-13, 15-4, 3-15, 15-11.

Final:

Jaiswal beat Wali 15-13, 15-12, 12-15, 12-15, 14-14, 15-14.

Team:

Final: MMK beat Sydenham 2-1.

Third place: Mithibai beat St. Xavier's 2-0.

6th DDA OPEN

Men:

Winner: Ritwik Bhattacharya. Runner-up: Anuj Kalia.

Women:

Winner: Mekhal Subedar. Runner-up: Sohini Kumari.

Under-19 boys:

Winner: Tarun Gil. Runner-up: Abhimanyu Jain

Under-16 boys:

Winner: Abhimanyu Jain. Runner-up: Mihir Seth

Under-14 boys:

Winner: Mihir Seth. Runner-up: Sourav Ghosal.

Over-35 men:

Winner: Arjun Khanna. Runner-up: Sameer Thakral.

Over-45 men:

Winner: Brig Raj Manchanda. Runner-up: Dr Bharat Singh.

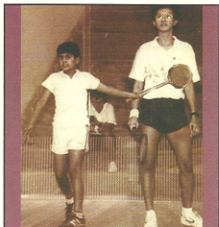
PSA RANKING FOR MEN AS ON 1-03-99

RANK	NAME	COUNTRY
1	PETER NICOL	SCO
2	JONATHAN POWER	CAN
3	AHMED BARADA	EGP
4	PAUL JOHNSON	ENG
5	MARTIN HEATH	SCO
6	SIMON PARKE	ENG
7	DAN JEISON	ENG
8	RODNEY EYLES	AUS
9	ALEX GOUGH	WALES
10	CHRIS WALKER	ENG

PSA RANKING FOR WOMENS AS ON 1-03-99

RANK	NAME	COUNTRY
1	MICHELLE MARTIN	AUS
2	SARAH FITZ-GERALD	AUS
3	SUE WRIGHT	ENG
4	CASSIE JACKMAN	ENG
5	SUZANNE HORNER	ENG
6	NATALIE GRAINGER	RSA
7	LEILANI JOYCE	NZL
8	SABINE SCHÖNE	GER
9	CAROL WOIWODE	AUS
10	LINDA CHARMAN	ENG

Quiz



Guess who are these two players?

Last QUIZ WINNERS Vikrant Reddy of Deolali and Jayant Kapur of Calcutta are the joint winners of the quiz in the last issue. The answer is: the father and son in the picture are Gauram Zaman and Manzoor Zaman.



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TO OUR READERS

How did you find Pro-Squash? Send your views to the ISP and please send us the name & address of squash players known to you, who are not getting our Squash News Letter to spread the awareness of this game in India

