

# PROSOQUASH

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## JOSHNA'S WIN GIVES INDIAN SQUASH A SHOT IN THE ARM

By Pradeep Vijayakar

Joshna Chinappa gave Indian squash its first big news of the new year. She emulated Anil Nayar and Saurav Ghoshal by winning a British Open Juniors title. She added the under-19 girls title to the under-17 one she had won two years ago. Runner-up in the under-19 last year to Egyptian Omenya Abdel Kawy, Joshna Chinappa ended the run of unseeded South African sensation Terille Swartz in four games 3-9, 9-3, 9-6, 9-3.

Terille had won the under-17 title in Scotland earlier. She had been the giant-killer in this event. She claimed the first game as Joshna was studying her game. After that she was in control playing the basic game well. Now all eyes will be on Joshna to win the World Juniors title in Belgium in August. This is her last year in juniors. Her father Anjan sees encouraging portents.



Joshna Chinappa

The British U-19 winner has usually gone on to win the World Juniors title. So Nicole David and Omenya Abdel Kawy will have company after the Belgium event.

Joshna's form was lack luster at the Asian Juniors. Maybe it was lack of competition. But she gave Indian fans a lot of hiccups both in the individual and team events. Such prodigality won't do. Training under Satinder Bajwa could help. She had a stint earlier when it was her first proper training under a coach (she had picked up the game from Dad). The stories Baj told her about world class players excited her. Baj concentrated on her movement and bending while taking certain shots. Plus mental toughness and focusing. Joshna feels her front court game could be better.

One hopes Bajwa irons this out before the World Juniors.

## WORLD SQUASH DAY CELEBRATED AT KHAR GYMKHANA

World Squash Day was celebrated across the world on 19th March with unprecedented fervor. This is as part of an effort to spread the game even though it is amongst the fastest growing game. The convenience of playing anytime in any season, any weather, and the benefit of getting a quick and intense workout are known to many followers of the games, yet there is immense scope for its growth. The Squash community also needs to convey in no uncertain terms to the International Olympic Committee that the game ought to be included in the Olympics based on its popularity. A bid has been filed and IOC will decide in July if Squash will be in the Olympics 2012.

Squash Racquets Association of Maharashtra organized a host of fun games and competitions on the occasion of World Squash Day at Khar Gymkhana. The 'play as you arrive' Doubles Handicap was won by Girish Jadhvani and Kishore Warwan, and Vikram Malhotra and Christopher Marquis a Junior Tennis National Champion playing Squash for the first time - were Runners Up. Fosters sponsored a Yard Glass Guzzle which Naresh Asrani won. In this most keenly contested event, participants had to down three and a quarter pints of beer in as less time as possible and with minimum spilling. A number of other fun games organised kept the crowd entertained through the evening.

Over 150 enthusiasts joined in the festivities. It was the first time SRAM has organized this celebration. Several newcomers were introduced to the game.



Shiv Malhotra (Secretary General of SRAM) cutting the cake on the World Squash Day along with the participants at Khar Gymkhana, Mumbai

## JUST ONE MEDAL FOR INDIA AT ASIANS

24/01/2005



Winners of Asian Junior (Hongkong girls team) along with their coach.

## RESULTS

## Boys final:

## Pakistan bt Kuwait 2-1:

Bilal Zaman bt Ali B. A. Ramezi 4-9, 9-1, 9-7, 9-7;  
 Amir Atlas Khan lost to Abdullah Al Mezayen 7-9, 4-9, 6-9;  
 Aqub Hanif bt Salem Mohammad 9-3, 9-7, 9-7.

## Third place:

## India lost to Hong Kong 1-2:

Sandeep Jangra lost to Anson Kwong 1-9, 2-9, 2-9;  
 Saurav Ghoshal bt Chiu Ho Fai 9-2, 9-5, 9-3;  
 Haninderpal Singh lost to Max Lee 7-9, 1-9, 9-2, 4-9

## Girls final: Hong Kong bt Malaysia 2-1:

Chiu Ka Kei bt Low Wee Wern 9-3, 8-10, 5-9, 9-2, 9-3;  
 Annie Au bt Sally Looi 10-8, 9-5, 9-3;  
 Joe Chan conceded to Nabilla Ariffin

## Third place:

## India bt Singapore 2-1:

## SHE IS THE TOMBOY OF PAKISTANI SQUASH

By Pradeep Vijayakar

The fame of Pakistan's men in squash is legendary. What about their women? Well, they could have their days in the sun in times to come. One says this on watching a Pakistani tribal girl at the recent Asian Junior squash event in Chennai. She reached the last eight of the Under 19 event. Maria comes from the backward area of Pakistan, Wana, in North West Frontier. She hails from the Ahmad Zai Wazir tribe. There is no education and sport in her area. Luckily her parents moved to Peshawar and she got her chance. Pakistan is encouraging the females by sending them to every international tournament and provides them with facilities for camps and coaching with world-class coaches like Rahmat Khan and Ayaz Khan.

Maria looks like a boy. In fact she has been aspiring to beat the boys from a young age. She entered a boys tournament and won the title. In weight-lifting too she won an under-50 kg boys tournament. Watching legends Jahangir Khan and Jansher Khan on TV caught her fancy.

Maria gets good support from the boys. "I am lucky to have players like Farhan Mehboob, Khalid and Amir Atlas playing with me. That's an advantage I will capitalize upon." A little on the heavy side she needs to shed some kilos to rise in the ratings. Fahim Gul, who was on the heavy side and reached the top ten, is one who sees a bright future for Maria.

It was not their high profile Amir Atlas Khan but No 3 Aqub Hanif who gave Pakistan a 2-1 win to claim the Asian Juniors Squash boys title at the SDAT Academy in Chennai. It appeared Amir Atlas had become bored with a week of squash and was beaten by Kuwaiti star Abdullah Mezayen. Hanif beat Salem F. Mohammad in the deciding third singles. Bilal Zaman got the better of Ali B. Al Ramezi to put Pakistan one-up. Amir had lost to Saurav Ghoshal in the semis earlier. Hong Kong girls had put in a lot of work after they finished runners-up last time around. They beat Malaysia 2-1. Low Wee Wern stretched Chiu Ka Kei to five games. Annie Au beat Malaysian number one player Sally Looi. India's girls took the bronze beating Singapore. The boys lost to Hong Kong to miss the bronze. Sandeep Jangra and Haninderpal Singh were not in the same class as Saurav Ghoshal.

## RITWIK BHATTACHARYA CLAIMS TWO TITLES



Top Gun - Ritwik

India's shining star in the PSA circuit, Ritwik Bhattacharya won two PSA tour titles in the New Year. He won his second title in seven days when he beat England's Sam Miller in the final of the Rochester ProAm Squash Championship in New York, USA. He had earlier won the Esportiu Rocafort Open in the second week of January in Barcelona.

In Rochester, the top seed suffered a stern test in the quarter-finals, but fought back from 0/2 down to beat England's seventh seed Daryl Selby 5-11 10-11 11-3 11-8 11-8.

After a straight games win over Egyptian qualifier Ahmed Maged Hamza in the semis, Bhattacharya beat fourth seed Miller 11-8 11-9 9-11 11-10 to take the first PSA Tour Rochester Pro Am trophy.

He added Barcelona to his title bag when beating Swedish qualifier Badr Abdel Aziz in the final of the Esportiu Rocafort Squash Open. It was his third title in the Spanish city of Barcelona. He had a tough quarter-final against sixth-seeded Frenchman Julien Balbo and was taken to tie-breaks in the first two games of his semi-final against Hong Kong's No 3 seed Wai Hang Wong before winning 11-10 11-10 2-11 11-5.

## RESULTS

## Esportiu Rocafort Squash Open, Barcelona, Spain:

**Final:** Ritwik Bhattacharya (IND) bt Badr Abdel Aziz (SWE) 11-10 (2-0), 11-2, 11-1

**Semi-finals:** Ritwik Bhattacharya (IND) bt Wai Hang Wong (HKG) 11-10 (4-2), 11-10 (2-0), 2-11, 11-5;

Badr Abdel Aziz (SWE) bt Tony James (AUS) 11-9, 11-3, 11-3.

## RESULTS

## Rochester ProAm Squash Championship, New York, USA

**Final:** Ritwik Bhattacharya (IND) bt Sam Miller (ENG) 11-8, 11-9, 9-11, 11-10

**Semi-finals:** Ritwik Bhattacharya (IND) bt Ahmed Maged Hamza (EGY) 11-7, 11-6, 11-4.

Sam Miller (ENG) bt Siddharth Suchde (IND) 6-11, 11-5, 11-10 (2-0), 11-4.



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## SPEED 93 INTER CLUB SQUASH CHAMPIONSHIP

(27/02/2005)

The second edition of the Speed 93 Inter Club Squash Championship sponsored by Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited commenced on 6 October 2004 with the Intra Club round at Oters Club and was followed by the Intra Club rounds at the other participating clubs in subsequent weeks.

The first Inter Club leg was played from 23<sup>rd</sup> to 26th December 2004 at the Willington Sports Club. The Men's Open category was won by Rohan Gracious, Boys' Under 19 by Vikram Malhotra and Ladies' Open by Deepali Anvekar.

The second leg at Khar Gymkhana on 19<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2005 saw the return of defending champion Manish Chotrani from injury. He won this leg while Deepali Anvekar posted another victory in the Ladies' Open and Vikram Malhotra did an encore over Dhiraj Nagpal in the Boys U 19 category.

Cricket Club of India, the venue for the third Inter Club leg witnessed the absence of Deepali Anvekar and thus gave Shahnaz Dastur an opportunity to win the third leg, which she grabbed with both hands. Vikram Malhotra came from two games down to overcome a spirited performance by Dhiraj Nagpal in the Boys' U 19 category. The Men's Open saw Manish Chotrani win his second title. This leg was played from 25 to 27 February.

The top eight players from all categories have qualified for the Mega Finals and will now compete at the Oters Club from 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2005.



## DALIP TRIPATHI - IN PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE



Dalip Tripathi

Dalip Tripathi is amongst the leading Squash Coaches in India. Based at the Calcutta Rackets Club, Calcutta, he has made achievements in the last 6-7 years that any Squash enthusiast would find admirable. And his achievements are not just in coaching, but as a player and referee as well. He has just undergone an ASF Level 3 course- the highest rated course for Squash Coaches in Asia. He has groomed one of the most promising talents in India - the current National Champion (Boys Under-13) Ramit Tandon. He was Professional National Champion in 2000 & winner of Maharashtra State Open and Western India in 2001. His reputation as a Referee is unblemished and his integrity and skill are an example to any aspiring Referee. Here are excerpts from a telephonic interview with A.I. Singh.

A.I. Singh - When and where did you start playing Squash?  
Dalip- I start playing squash in Allahabad in Aug 92. Col. Narjit Singh encouraged and guided me.

A.I. Singh - How did you get interested in coaching?  
Dalip- There was no squash coach in Allahabad that time so I started squash coaching to fulfill my financial requirement for my tournaments and later I start liking it and wanted to give something to my juniors which I struggled for. My first opportunity was an offer from the Chief Secretary of the U.P Governor Mr. Mata Prasad to hold a 15-day camp at Civil Services Institute, Lucknow. Vaibhav Gupta is a find from that camp! Later with Brig. Raj Manchanda's help I went to coach at The Rashtriya Military College team in Dehradun where I produced Shakti Singh and from there I got an offer from Indian Military Academy (IMA), Dehradun. After that I got an offer from Mr. Alok Maheshwary to join The Calcutta Racket Club. In Dec. 99 SRFI organized level-2 coaching course in Madras Race Club, Chennai, thanks to Mr. N. Ramachandran who offered me to attend the course and I successfully completed the course & shifted to Kolkata as ASF level -2 coach and produced Saurav Ghosal and Ramit Tandon. In May 2004 SRFI sent me to Malaysia & Penang with the Indian team. I was spurred by the struggle I had to make when I wanted to learn the game, but did not have any coach, partners to play with and no money- just Rs 40/-, the only amount I have taken till date from my Father for Squash, and Rs. 80/- I had saved to buy a racket. As a coach, I felt I could make it a bit easier for other youngsters.

A.I. Singh - Was it a difficult career decision given that you were based in Allahabad, where not much Squash is played?  
Dalip- Of course, it's difficult to decide where to go, because I left my engineering because of squash, but once I got a chance to coach in RIMC, I decided to go with the sport I love and struggled for.

A.I. Singh - What are your future plans for developing more talent in Kolkata, which was once teeming with top class players?  
Dalip- I am running a Junior Development Programme in the club and planning to go to schools in search of young talents and train them. I am sure I will be able to make few more Ramits from Kolkata in the coming years.

A.I. Singh - What future do you see for Ramit, and other players in Calcutta?  
Dalip- There is no doubt that Ramit is world class material. The way he is going I have a very strong feeling that one day he will definitely become a world champion. Rishi Tandon and Vivek Dinodia are the other talented sub-juniors in Calcutta. They are training hard and will perform better in the near future.

A.I. Singh - Anything else you'd like to add?  
Dalip- I really want to thank Nitin Khanna (my senior), Col. Narjit Singh (My Godfather), Brig. Raj Manchanda, Maj. Rajdeep Brar, Col. Ravinder Malik, Maj. Navneet Narain, Yogender Singh, Mr. N. Ramachandran (who gave me the status of a qualified ASF level -2 & Level-3 coach), Maj. S. Maniam (my coaching instructor. I learnt a lot from him as far as coaching is concerned).

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## CYRUS VAKIL - A RISING STAR

(Compiled by A.J. Singh)



Mercurial - Cyrus

Cyrus Vakil, Willingdon Sports Club's hottest Squash player has made improvements in his game by leaps and bounds. In the latest tournament- ISF Top 8 Invitational at Mandpeshwar Civic Federation Sports Complex, he stood Runner- up, losing a close match to seasoned Rohan Gracious. On the way to the finals, he accounted for Harjinder Singh- a Maharashtra Team representative in the Inter State Nationals. Prior to this, he reached the Semifinal of another Men's event- this time an Open event- The Khar Gymkhana Hero Honda Classic. He lost to Rohan in the Semifinal, proving his mettle against Pro Sachin Jadhav, beating him 3-1 in the Quarter Final. Only 16 years of age, Cyrus is known to be a flamboyant player who keeps the spectators fully entertained with his antics, as well as his Squash skills. What many failed to realize is that his is an example of superlative tactical skills. This is evident because he is simultaneously dealing with the spectators, the referee, the opponent his own internal emotional upheavals that every player encounters during matches, and still keeping up the decision making and shot selection process working flawlessly! Cyrus started playing Squash at the age of 12. At that time, he was playing various sports, until his father suggested he focus on one sport and make a mark in it. Cyrus selected Squash due to its competitive and rigorous nature. He coached under Brig. Manchanda for 2 years, and is currently sparring with the professionals at Willingdon. His best performance was being Runner Up at Milo All Star in Under-13 event.

Asked about the secret behind his recent improvement, Cyrus revealed that he is working hard on fitness. On occasions when his father is in town (from his workplace in Delhi), the accompanying fitness trainer Anil Rao helps him out. Cyrus is clear that it is fitness that will enable him to achieve his goal- this year's Under-17 National Title, for which he will need to better Vikram Malhotra and Harjinder Sandhu. So the goals are set, the roadmap defined for this lively, affable youngster, liked by one and all for the entertaining hues and colour he adds to every tournament he participates in.

## BRIG. (RETD) RAJ MANCHANDA APPOINTED OBSERVER.



Brig. Manchanda

The Government of India has appointed Brig. Raj Manchanda (ret'd) as the Observer for Squash. In this capacity, his duties will include ensuring fair play during tournaments, selections for teams representing India and various other areas pertaining to SRFI and Squash in India.

Brig. Manchanda has been the National Champion for six years in the 1980's and was known for his tactical skills. He became National Champion at the age of 32 and retained the crown for 6 years in succession. He continues to win titles in the senior age groups even now. He has represented India, and on one occasion battled with Jahangir Khan in the Finals of the Asian Team Championship in Pakistan, Jahangir had just become World Champion then, and Brig. Manchanda matched him well in the first game with several stunning winners.

We hope he plays some winning shots from his new position and some of the problems plaguing Indian Squash can be dealt with in the same tactical mode. The Government of India, now fully aware of the problems Sports in general and Squash in particular are facing, has placed its faith in a man with great achievements and credibility- a champion in every sense of the word who has been looked up to by a generation of Squash players. The junior players hopes and aspirations will surely be cared for with Brig. Manchanda's appointment.

*Apparently, our squash courts are causing quite a racket*

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## KHAR GYMKHANA - HERO HONDA SQUASH CLASSIC

(27/11/2004)

Yet another tournament was organized successfully at the suburban hub of Squash-Khar Gymkhana Hero Honda Classic from 16-20 February 2005. The event attracted players from Pune and Jindal and the city's top Mens and Over-35 players. While all the Junior Boys had to compete for the Under-19 title, the girls had the advantage of receiving handicaps in the Women's event. The leading Junior Boys took the opportunity to gain experience in the Open event. Vikram Malhotra made full use of the chance, reaching the Semi-final and losing to the top seed and eventual winner Marish Chotrani. Cyrus Vakil too reached the Semi final and lost to the eventual Runner-up Rohan Gracious.

Shaheeda Madraswala finished Runner-up to Kiran Mirpuri in the Women's Handicap. Sandeep Jhangra won the Boys Under-19 Title beating Vikram Malhotra, while Darius Surti beat Deepak Moolani for the Over-35 event.

Mr. Khalid A-H Ansari, and Mr. Navneet Soni who traveled all the way from North India graced the Victory Ceremony.



At the prize Distribution ceremony of Hero Honda-Khar Gymkhana Squash Classic (from L to R) Ashish Gupta (Exe. Com. Member, SRAM), Mahendra Agarwal (Director, ISP), Amarjeet Singh Chada (Joint Secretary Khar Gymkhana), Khalid A-H Ansari (Chairman Emeritus, SRAM), Sandeep Jhangra (Winner U-19), Kiran Mirpuri (Winner in Women's Category), Darius Surti (Winner in Men's over-35), Navneet Soni (Director, ISP) & Shiv Malhotra (Secretary General, SRAM)

## RESULTS

## Men's

Manish Chotrani bt Rohan Gracious 11-5, 11-5, 13-11.

## Women's (Handicap)

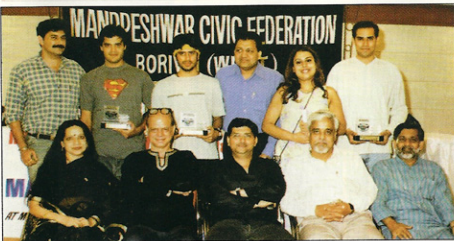
Kiran Mirpuri bt Shaheeda Madraswala 11-7, 8-11, 11-8, 6-11, 11-7.

## Boys under-19

Sandeep Jhangra bt Vikram Malhotra 11-3, 11-6, 11-7.

## Men's over-35

Darius Surti bt Deepak Moolani 11-6, 5-11, 11-3, 11-8.



At the prize Distribution ceremony of MCF-ISP Doubles Squash (sitting from left to right) Mrs Chafeka; Mr Ramesh Chafeka (Vice President, MCF), Umesh Bhasara Hon. Sec. MCF, Havendra Modi (Hon. Treasurer) and Dr. Kiri Patel (Jr. Sec. MCF) (standing from left to right) Shiv Malhotra (Secretary General, SRAM), Rohan Gracious (winner in mens top 8), Mohammad Merchant (winner in doubles), Mahendra Agarwal (Director, ISP), Noreena (PRO, ISP) and Tushar Bhamhani (winner in doubles event)

## RESULTS

## Top Eight Final:

Rohan Gracious bt Cyrus Vakil 15-11 15-13

## Doubles Final:

Mohd Merchant/ Tushar Bamhani bt Sunil Lalchandani/ Gopi Mohite 7-15 15-7 15-8

## The action never stops at Khar Gymkhana.

## MANDPESHWAR CIVIC FEDERATION ISP DOUBLES

## Rohan Gracious overpoweres Cyrus Vakil for title

Top seed Rohan Gracious, of Khar Gymkhana survived Wellington's enigmatic Cyrus Vakil's deception and power play 15-11 15-13 to bag the title in the Top Eight Invitation singles event of the MCF-ISP Top Eight Invitation singles and doubles handicap squash tournament, hosted by the Mandpeshwar Civic Federation at their sports complex at Borivli.

The hosts pair of Sunil Lalchandani and Gopi Mohite's winning spree at last came to an end, albeit in the final when the MCF pair was beaten by Khar Gymkhana's Mohd Merchant and Tushar Bamhani 7-15 15-7 15-8. In fact, the losers, who earlier went through gruelling semifinals 13-15 15-7 15-7 win against Cyrus Vakil/Harjinder Singh, started impressively, but as the match progressed, they were found wanting in stamina.

Mercurial Cyrus Vakil's frequent outbursts, no doubt kept the crowd in good humour but not his rivals. Earlier in the semifinals his doubles partner Harjinder Singh, had to bear the brunt of Cyrus' antics before bowing out (15-13 3-15 15-13). However, in the final, Rohan displayed tremendous self control and temperament to overcome Cyrus's gamesmanship to emerge a 15-11 15-13 victor. It was however, to Cyrus' credit that on his way to the final, he knocked out second and third seeds. The 16-year-old collegian Cyrus is one of those characters, who enlivens the event wherever he plays. And the goodly MCF crowd was treated to some exhilarating squash, thanks to this India No.3 junior's devil-may-care attitude.

## Top Eight Semifinals:

Rohan Gracious bt Dheeraj Nagpal 15-11 15-15 15-6; Cyrus Vakil bt Harjinder Singh 15-13 3-15 15-13

## Doubles Semifinals:

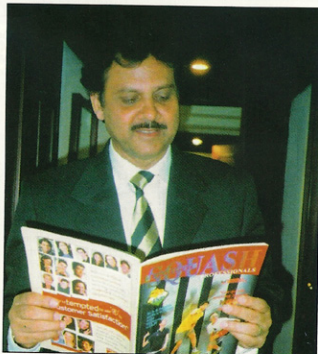
Mohd Merchant/Tushar Bamhani bt Rohan Gracious/Sanjay Goyal 15-11 15-13; Sunil Lalchandani/Gopi Mohite bt Cyrus Vakil/Harjinder Singh 13-15 15-7 15-7.



## ROSY FUTURE FOR DELHI SQUASH

The addition of 15 new WSF approved squash courts at the Kendriya Vidyalayas will change the whole scenario for Delhi children. Finally they will get the time required to train as much and when they want without the interference of adult members. Secondly as the courts have glass back walls and multi tiered seating arrangement behind, the nationals and all other important tournaments can be held in Delhi. The other salient factor is that the disillusioned players and associations of North India who have been abandoned by the central body have decided to collaborate for all the tournaments and thus revive squash in the region.

The combination of a powerful enthusiastic squash playing president Mr Sandeep Dikshit (MP), the positive attitude of the sports ministry to stem the blatant violations of all basic norms like age fudging, domicile fraud, blackmail and nepotism etc have greatly contributed to a new atmosphere of hope. The Delhi Govt. is passing certain regulations to protect its players from predators and also planning new infrastructure for children. Finally last but not least the appointment of the first really independent governmental SRFI observer Brig. Raj Manchanda, who has been given more power than ever before to cleanse the system is the Messiah of squash. Despite a massive and sustained campaign to stop his appointment the credentials of the 6 times National champion were too impeccable for anyone to ignore. At the age of about 60 he is probably the best player in the world in his age group and surprisingly is reviving squash in the remotest of schools all over India. Surprisingly everybody else seems to be doing the job officially allocated to another agency!



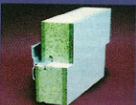
Top coach Rahmat Khan enjoying the Golden Jubilee magazine of ISP



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## ANKITA SHARMA



At times when she is playing her archival, Sachika Balwari, Ankit Sharma gives the impression of helplessness. But that's only an impression. Deep down she appears to have the wherewithal to get the better of her opponent the moment she gets the chance.

That's why it's a see-saw between the two in the events that the two compete in. Invovert, inquisitive and an opportunist, Ankit's performances saw her win the Raju Chainani award.

She began playing from the age of seven accompanying her Super Cop dad Pradeep, who keeps fit playing squash. Later she went to Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia) to train under K.H.Ong. This fine tuning plus the encouragement of her elder sister and mother took her to the top levels of the under-11 section.

Swimming, skating and dancing, here other pastimes have to take a back seat because of squash. She thinks nothing of traveling 70-80 km to train under Sunil Verma at the Jindal complex.

Here is a list of events played and won by her:

- ▶ Mid-day 2nd leg 2003 1st Runner up U-11
- ▶ Mid-day 3rd leg 2003 Runner up U-11
- ▶ Poona Open 2003 1st Runner up U-11
- ▶ Nationals 2003 Runner up U-11
- ▶ West Zone Maharashtra Open Runners up U-11
- ▶ West Zone Maharashtra Open Runners up U-13
- ▶ Natalia (At Chennai) 2003 Winner U-11
- ▶ Kuala Lumpur 2004 Runner up U-11
- ▶ Penang Milo Open 2004 1st Runner up U-11
- ▶ ISF Golden Jubilee 2004 Winner U-11
- ▶ Hong Kong Open 2004 Winner U-11
- ▶ Juhu Gymkhana Inter School Championship Winner U-13
- ▶ Raju Chainani award for most promising player 2003-2004

## MAHESH MANGAOKAR

By Pradeep Vijayakar



From badminton to squash it has been a tale of a successful transition for Mahesh Mangaokar. Mother Anjali would play the shuttle game with him at Club Aquaria. Now she keeps accompanying him to squash events to cheer him up for the under-11 titles.

Club Aquaria was also the place where Abhishek Pradhan would play. Mahesh was attracted to the game seeing him. Today the two are competing for most under-11 titles in the country with Tarun Nambiar as the third contender. When father Dayanand gave Mahesh a racquet he was barely taller than the racquet.

Kolkata led Ramit Tandon beat him in his first tournament, the Maharashtra State Western Zone Squash Championship, 2002. A lighter racquet made a difference to his game. Coach Ramesh More, who was training other kids at Club Aquaria also began coaching him. Better fitness regime planned by father Dayanand sent Mahesh even higher. A five-setter against Tarun Nambiar in the Indian Oil Otters Open 2003 threw up possibilities.

He felt confident inwardly when he took the court in the All Maharashtra Mid-day 2nd leg at Otters Club. And sure enough he defeated the top two seeds, Tarun Nambiar and Abhishek Pradhan.

There was no looking back for the fifth standard Don Bosco School, Borivali, lad. For when he set his sights on foreign fields he turned up trumps. He won the Malaysian Open, Penang Open and the Hong Kong Open. Fine tuning from Vaman Apte, India top ten player of the 80s, played its part.

Mahesh is also adept at cricket, athletics and basketball. But these sports have been shelved for the present as it is squash and nothing else. Because of which awards have come his way: ISF Most promising award, the Motilal Saini Best Player Award and most recently the prestigious Raju Chainani award.

Just the impetus needed to do well and emulate Siddharth Suchde, past winner of the Scottish Open, in December this year.

## ARIF PAUL

Arif Paul, who was sponsored by ISF and went on the Ivy League to make a name for himself was home but not to pros. He played an exhibition doubles game at the Cricket Club of India during the Western India. PRO SQUASH caught up with Paul who is now working in Germany. Excerpts from the interview.

**PROSQUASH: How did squash help you?**

Arif: Squash has been instrumental for me in getting me university education in US. It helped me meet many interesting people, the networking capability is immense through this sport. I met people who could guide me through getting myself located in my job field. In addition it has helped me develop my personality and given me an opportunity and exposure to traveling. It is through squash I have been able to achieve my dreams, which I had when I was playing squash. It has helped me build up my foundation where I can meet people and move ahead in the right direction. Squash has been one of the main instruments in my life.

**PROSQUASH: Tell us about the high points of your career?**

Arif: I have been playing squash since I was 14 and played in India for four years. In 1994 I participated in National Championship U-16 category, and I was part of the Indian junior team which went to New Zealand for the first time along with the Asthana brothers and Rishad Billimoria. In 1995 I was the junior runner-up and was part of the men's team which went to Cairo, Egypt. In 1996 I captained the Indian junior team to Cairo, Egypt. I was second in the French Junior Open and fifth in German Junior Open.

**PROSQUASH: What's your view about the ISP activities?**

Arif: Indian Squash Professionals played a major role in my life, as I was the first to be adopted by Mahendra Agarwal and Subhash Walli. These two gentlemen along with few squash members of Otters Club, helped me with financial backup so I could travel all around the world for international tournaments. They were the biggest helping hand for me, which gave me support and exposure to international squash. And over the years this interest has increased tremendously and helped numerous children in grooming themselves into fantastic squash players. The ISP website gives me access to gain all the information about squash happenings in India. I am happy to see that ISP has taken a new role as a father figure for squash in Bombay. The visit to a recent CCI tournament makes me proud to see how the young players have groomed themselves into an exceptionally good players.

**PROSQUASH: What's your message to the ISP?**

Arif: Thanks to the backup from Mahendra Agarwal the ISP has found talent in the young people from middle and lower class families. Squash was mainly an upper class and upper middle class sport. Talent was there but there was no exposure in my foot ball. But today squash is a common sport like any other sport like football or cricket. In my opinion ISP has opened numerous doors of opportunities for younger generation. Today the younger people must grab this opportunity and make their dreams come true just as I have done.



## Why play Squash? ? 10 reasons to Dash the rubber ball!

It is a fantastic form of exercise great for improving cardiovascular fitness, strength and flexibility.

Compared to a gym workout, squash is a game of strategy and skill.

It is a social game and a great opportunity to meet new people.

There is an excellent worldwide network of associations to help develop junior players into great athletes.

Squash is a fantastic stress reliever.

You can represent your club, state or country and enjoy Squash as a team sport.

Professional coaches are available at most clubs to help you perfect your technique.

As a professional sport, there is a worldwide tournament circuit, which pushes the highest achievers in the game to extreme levels of fitness and skill.

Squash is a game that the whole family can get involved in.

The satisfaction of hitting a rolling backhandnick cannot be surpassed.

## FROM THE FILES OF RAJU CHAINANI



Squash Champions of India

### 25TH SQUASH AWARENESS CLINIC BY ISP

Squash is relatively new sport and therefore not many people are familiar with it. But if the response to the squash coaching camp held in Thane recently is any indication then things are set to change. More than 40 children aged 4 to 19 years participated in the 10 day free coaching camp that was announced barely a day before the camp began. From December 24 last year to January 2, 2005, children of Hiranandani Estate, Thane where the camp was held, religiously spent their afternoons to learn squash.

The idea behind the camp was to create awareness and to introduce children to this beautiful racket sport, which also promotes physical fitness. Organized by the newly formed Squash Rackets Association of Thane (SRAT) and conducted by Indian Squash Professionals (ISP) the response of children and parents were quite encouraging.

This was the first event organized by the SRAT, which came into existence only last month. Anupam Ghosal, SRAT president said, "SRAT's objective is to create awareness about Squash in and around Thane and also offer practical guidance to novices and professionals alike. For this, we are approaching large companies with offers of Institutional membership." SRAT also plans to organize such camps in other places. It has also initiated talks with TMC to refurbish the squash courts at Dadoji Konddev Stadium, a move that is sure to augment the popularity of the sport.

The coaching camp concluded with exhibition matches played by such National top level players like Naveen Jhangra and Laxman Joshi from JSSA. To motivate children there were prizes for those who demonstrated talent and enthusiasm. But the real winner of the event was squash, which now has more enthusiasts in Thane than ever before.

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## PAKISTAN'S NEXT WORLD CHAMPION- AMIR ATLAS

By Pradeep Vijayakar



At the Asian Juniors Squash Champions in Chennai one saw the future of Asian and world squash. It was from Pakistani star Amir Atlas, India's Saurav Ghosal and Kuwait's Abdullah Mezeyan.

14 years old Amir won the boys title beating Saurav Ghosal raising hopes that a worthy successor of great Jahangir and Jansher Khan is on his way.

He is having the best of both worlds. He is the nephew of Jansher being the son of Atlas Khan his elder brother. Plus he is being coached by Rehmat Khan who was the coach of Jahangir Khan.

Amir wants to break into the top 20 by the end of the year. He trains in Peshawar under the guidance of his father. Jansher drops in

from time to time. Jansher was following on phone Amir's exploits in Chennai.

Amir's strength is his stamina and ability to play long rallies just like Jansher and Jahangir. When the need arises he can play some great shots. Amirs made every one sit up when at 14 he stunned world No 35 M. Essam A

Hafiz of Egypt in the pre-quarter finals on COAS Open on and just fell short of springing another surprise against the top seed Adrian Grant for a place in the semis. Amir began playing from the age of seven.

It was in 2003 that he started playing competitive squash and Amir's first assignment was the British Junior Championship. The Under-13 title was his first ever international crown.

After his father Jamshed Gul has taken over and his confidence has risen. Amir targets the world juniors in New Zealand and a place in the Men's National team for the World Team Championship to be held in Islamabad in December.

## GRISHMA - MATUNGA GYMKHANA OPEN JUNIOR SQUASH

(29/01/2005)

## RESULTS

## FINALS

**Boys U-17:** Manek Mathur bt Vikram Malhotra 15-10, 12-15,

17-16, 15-6;

**Boys U-15:** Laxman Joshi bt Aditya Jagtap 15-11, 14-15, 15-3, 15-10;

**Boys U-13:** Aditya Jagtap bt Abhishek Pradhan 15-3, 15-7, 15-2;

**Boys U-11:** Mahesh Mangaonkar bt Ishaan Advani 15-1, 15-3, 15-5;

**Girls U-17:** Shaheeda Madraswala bt Shaheen Madraswala 15-13, 9-15, 12-15, 15-12, 17-14;

**Girls U-13:** Saumya Karki bt Rinki Soni 16-17, 10-15, 15-11, 17-14, 15-5

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## FITNESS HUMOR

I don't exercise at all. If god had wanted me to touch my toes  
He would have put them up  
higher on my body.

I am in shape. Round is a shape.

The older you get, the tougher it is to lose weight: because by then,  
Your body and your fat are  
Really good friends.

## VRM NORTHERN INDIA JUNIOR SQUASH LEAGUE 2005

(06/01/2005)

## RESULTS

## Boys U-11

1. Sajid Hussain (Delhi)
2. Ishan Sandhu (Chandigarh)
3. Sachika Ingale (Gir) (Delhi)
4. Shivang Sethi (Delhi)
5. Fajal (Delhi)

## Girls U-11

1. Sachika Ingale (Delhi)
2. Vishrutya Sahni (Noida)
3. Adya Advani (Delhi)

## Boys U-13

1. Sumer Sandhu (Chandigarh)
2. Ashaye Jain (Delhi)
3. Ameer Sidhu (Chandigarh)
4. Siddharth Phutela (Chandigarh)
5. Kabir Kar (Delhi)

## Girls U-13

1. Sachika Ingale (Delhi)
2. Vishrutya Sahni (Noida)
3. Adya Advani (Delhi)

## Boys U-15

1. Abhinav Sinha (Allahabad)
2. Abhay Sood (Chandigarh)
3. Maninder Sandhu (Chandigarh)
4. Karm Kumar (Delhi)
5. Sumer Sandhu (Chandigarh)

## Girls U-15

1. Aakriti Seghal (Faridabad)
2. Anshul Kashyap (Delhi)
3. Sachika Ingale (Delhi)

## Boys U-17

1. Harshit Jain (Delhi)
2. Raghav Mallik (Delhi)
3. Ajit Pal Singh Rekhi (Delhi)
4. Abhay Sood (Chandigarh)
5. Karan Mutha (Delhi)

## Girls U-17

1. Vidushi Sahni (Noida)
2. Anshul Kashyap (Delhi)
3. Sachika Ingale (Delhi)

## Boys U-19

1. Ambuj Sinha (Allahabad)
2. Harshit Jain (Delhi)
3. Abhinav Sinha (Allahabad)

## Girls U-19

1. Lydia John (Delhi)
2. Aakriti Seghal (Faridabad)
3. Vidushi Sahni (Noida)

## 62 &amp; CLIMBING-RITWIK MOVES UP FURTHER IN PSA RANKINGS

The PSA Rankings released at the end of March show India's top ranked player, Ritwik Bhattacharya at No. 62. Ritwik has bettered his previous high ranking of 64 and is the highest ranked Indian player ever. After an indifferent 2004 primarily due to a knee surgery, Ritwik is showing all the signs of maturing into the player that he is capable of being. With these performances Ritwik is poised to continue his march to break the Top 40 a goal that he intends to achieve before the end of the year.

## KHAR GYMKHANA - ISP MUMBAI OPEN SQUASH 2004

(MEN'S TOP - 8, OPEN DOUBLES &amp; HANDICAP DOUBLES EVENT)

(17/11/2004)



ISP Founder Director Mahendra Agarwal presenting the Doubles Handicap trophies to Shiv Malhotra and Parambir Singh

## RESULTS

## Final

**Men's Top 8:** 2-Rohan Gracious bt Sachin Jadhav 11-3, 11-5, 11-6;

**Third Place:** 4-Vikram Malhotra bt 3-Neeraj Shingraonkar 11-9, 12-10, 12-10;

**Doubles Open:** Neeraj Shingraonkar & Vikram Malhotra bt Sanjay Goyal & Rohan Gracious 15-6, 15-10;

**Third Place:** Dhiraj Nagpal & Vijay Waghela bt Nikhil Behl & Tushar Bhambhani 7-15, 17-16, 15-9;

**Doubles Handicap:**

Shiv Malhotra & Parambir Singh bt Girish Jadwani & Kishore Varwari 15-6, 15-11;

**Third Place:** A.L. Singh & Abhishek Pradhan bt Leon Emmanuel & Seshadnan 15-4, 11-15, 15-9.

**Semi-Final****Men's Top 8 :**

2-Rohan Gracious bt 4 Vikram Malhotra 11-8, 5-11, 6-11, 11-8, 11-6;

Sachin Jadhav bt 3-Neeraj Shingraonkar 11-9, 11-10, 9-11, 8-11, 11-7;

**Doubles Open :**

Vikram Malhotra & Neeraj Shingraonkar bt Nikhil Behl & Tushar Bhambhani 15-10, 15-14;

Sanjay Goyal & Rohan Gracious bt Dhiraj Nagpal & Vijay Waghela 15-12, 12-15, 15-12.

**Doubles Handicap :**

Shiv Malhotra & Paramveer Singh bt Leon M. & Seshadnan 17-15, 17-16.



## AGE FUDGING - SHORTCUT TO SUCCESS

(By A.L.Singh)



Paramjit Singh

Age fraud in Squash is an issue that first came into the open in 1999 at the Junior National at Dely College, Indore, when SRFI officials tested the players from Dhamrup Sugar Mills. Age discrepancies were established, but the issue never conclusively dealt with. Controversies continued, so did tests. At the Junior Nationals in 2003 at Chennai, a player from Bishop Cotton School, Shimla, Rahul Kumar, was shown to have two different age proofs, yet he

was allowed to continue playing in the event despite protest and complaints from parents. In the last test conducted by SRFI at Chennai, it was conclusively established by a panel of doctors appointed by them that some players were over the age they claimed to be. This was notified through a circular sent to various State associations and institutions. With this proactive move from SRFI, State bodies are in a position to take action.

Finally, there's no more of sweeping the issue under the carpet. SRAM has taken action and stripped Paramjit Singh of his Khar Gymkhana Airtel All India Inter School/College Boys Under-13 Title. Runner-Up Aditya Jagtap will now receive the title, and the 3rd and 4th placed participants will also move up.

This move addresses the issue as any responsible governing body should. SRAM has taken into account that age fraud deprives other deserving players of opportunities, discourages them, and causes irreparable harm to the game.

This fact needs to be considered by those propagating age fraud. Surprisingly, the controversial player comes from the academy established by Mr. Vijay Goel, a well known promoter and a great patron of the game. He has sponsored countless tournaments, supported players of his academy and others, including Arjan Singh. In choosing to allow age fraud malpractices at DSM, those responsible for the fraud have deprived other players, brought the game and his academy to disrepute, and also ensured the downside of the academies own players by putting them on the wrong side of the line dividing hard work and shortcuts. One hopes there is an example set by SRFI and SRAM in this for all other governing bodies as well on how to deal with issues affecting the players they are supposed to promote and protect.

As for the erring player, he is a minor. As such, he must get the benefit of doubt, he was probably misguided by devious elders. The bottom line is in a situation like this, there are no winners. The central message conveyed by SRFI and SRAM here is that players stand warned against bending or violating the rules of the game and ethics of Sportsmanship.

## STOP PRESS

Paramjit Singh has been barred from participation in all event held under the auspices of Squash Racquets Association of Maharashtra. This is effective from 1st April 2005 to 30th September 2005. This punitive action aims to deter other players from committing age fraud and getting away scot-free as has happened in the past.

## VIKRAM KALLUDI - ON ISP'S ADVISORY BOARD



Vikram Kalludi

ISP welcomes on board Mr Vicky Kalludi as one of its advisors. He is a jeweller and restaurateur with a chain of hotels in Johannesburg.

Mr Kalludi took to squash some six years ago at Juhu Centaur. Riaz the professional there put him through the paces.

Mr Kalludi is grateful to the game. He says: "I was an asthmatic. But thanks to playing squash my asthma is history. I don't have to take medicines anymore."

Mr Kalludi would like to take the game forward. "People know little about squash. I will try and help ISP to make the sport more popular. Of course one cannot compete with cricket I believe squash deserves its bit because it is a grand sport." There is a lot of scope for squash to capture the imagination of the people in Mumbai and elsewhere.

## WORLD MENS RANKINGS APRIL 2005

Pos.	Player	From	Last Pos
1	Thierry Lincou	FRA	1
2	David Palmer	AUS	3
3	Lee Beachill	ENG	2
4	Peter Nicol	ENG	4
5	Amr Shabana	EGY	5
62	Ritwik Bhattacharya	IND	76

## WORLD WOMENS RANKINGS APRIL 2005

Pos	Player	From	Last Pos
1	Rachael Grinham	AUS	1
2	Vanessa Atkinson	NED	2
3	Natalie Grnham	AUS	3
4	Nicol David	MAS	4
5	Natalie Grainger	USA	6

## FORTH COMING TOURNAMENTS 2005

- 25th April to 24th May :  
Raju Chainani free coaching camp at The Club, Mumbai
- 1st May to 7th May :  
Otters Club Open at Otters Club, Mumbai
- 23rd May to 28th May :  
Chennai Open PSA for Men at Chennai
- 31st May to 4th June :  
Malaysian Junior Open at Kuala Lumpur
- 27th June to 2nd July :  
Herald Maritime Open at Otters Club, Mumbai

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