

PROSQUASH

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MITTAL'S LARGESSE WILL FAST-TRACK JOSHNA'S PROGRESS IN WORLD LADDER

By Pradeep Vijayakar

(08/10/2005)



Mr. Lakshmi Narayan Mittal (Chairman and Chief Executive of Mittal Steel Company) along with Mr. Pratul Patel (Minister of Civil Aviation, Government of India) and Mr. Murlu Deora

So it will be squash and nothing else. India's all-time great women's player Bhuvaneshwari Kumari says knowing Joshna's talent and propensity to work hard she has no doubt that Joshna will make a mark on the pro circuit. What will happen to her normal life, say studies. "What studies," Joshna asks. She then becomes serious and says: "I have chosen an easy subject English literature. But studies will take a back seat though not a back, back seat." Joshna has followed Sania Mirza as brand ambassador of the health ministry. But she hasn't done any work so far. "The government got busy with the earthquake relief operations and my promotions got delayed. I am looking forward to this aspect of my life.

The main aim of the trust was to "identify, support and enhance" the performance of talented young Indian sportsmen and women", Chairman of Mittal Steel, Lakshmi Mittal, told reporters while making the announcement.

"We have set up a corpus of Rs 40 crore for the purpose. I was inspired by what I saw at last year's Olympic Games in Greece and was at the same time dismayed by the Indian performance," Mittal said. "I'm sure if Jharkhand can produce a (Mahendra Singh) Dhoni, there can be other talented sportspersons too in a vast country like India," he said.

Tennis star Mahesh Bhupathi, one of the trustees, said "the ultimate goal of the non-profit trust is to improve the performance of India at major global sporting events, starting with the Asian Games in 2006, followed by the 2008 Beijing Olympics, the 2010 Asian Games and ultimately the 2012 Olympic Games in London." The Board of Trustees includes Indian cricket captain Rahul Dravid and Lakshmi Mittal, while former All England badminton champion Pullala Gopichand and ace woman long jumper Anju Bobby George are on its advisory board.

Joshna Chinappa will no longer have to punch holes into the pockets of dad Anjan. Another parent has come forward. It is the Mittal Champions Trust which has chosen Joshna as the first sportsperson to be encouraged. Indian tennis star Mahesh Bhupathi is leading the trust and plans to rope in more knowledgeable people into the trust. Joshna says she can play the world circuit with a free mind.

Joshna says the sponsorship will fast-track her progress in the WISPA circuit. At first she had planned to play the Asian Seniors Championship in February and then plan for the Commonwealth Games.

Now because of the sponsorship Joshna says she is contemplating playing in the American events of the WISPA (women's) pro circuit. "I can decide which event to play which to skip."

PLAN OF ACTION

- Rs. 40 cr marked for the Mittal Champions Trust.
- Work with all sports associations
- Provide training to selected athletes in India and abroad, with focus on Olympic sports.
- Board of advisors along with sportspersons and their families will chart out career plans.
- Trust will cover all sports-related expenses, including training and nutritional expenses
- Criteria for selection will be performance, results, drive, commitment and potential
- Medals at Doha Asian Games, Beijing Olympics and 2012 London games are target.



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India could have finished in top 10

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SENIOR NATIONAL SQUASH CHAMPIONSHIP

(17/11/2005)

The ball tended to 'die' on the courts of Bombay Gymkhana more than Saurav Ghosal is used to back home on the courts of the ICL Academy, Chennai. The result was that he could not quite come to terms with the game of top seed Ritwik Bhattacharya of Delhi who dethroned the defending champion to regain the men's crown at the Senior National Squash Championship.

Joshna Chinappa ensured Tamil Nadu would not go back empty-handed retaining her women's title.

Ritwik, winner in 2003, brushed aside the loss of the second game to cruise to a convincing 9-3, 3-9, 9-4, 9-5 victory in a quality championship round that involved the country's best exponents.

The formidable Ghosal, seeded No.2, struggled to keep his hopes alive against an opponent who was enjoying a good season and is in a roll. Bhattacharya, who recently beat Ghosal in the quarterfinals in the Athens Open, was supremely confident and always-in command. He played to a plan and executed it to perfection.

"I am certainly enjoying my squash. I think playing the CCI Western India Open last week was a nice way to warm up for the big occasion," revealed a delighted Bhattacharya, ranked No.59 in the world. "Of course, it wasn't easy. Saurav is a good player and he did well. But I played a tactically good game, though I shouldn't have committed the errors I made especially when I was in complete control."

"But it is always good to compete with quality players like Saurav. He's the next strong player and it's good for India," Bhattacharya added. World junior No. 2 Joshna continued her domination of the sport as she crushed second seed Dr Shruti Parikh of Maharashtra 9-4, 9-0, 9-2 to clinch the women's crown for the successive year. Joshna now has a tally of five national titles.

It was the first time Bombay Gymkhana held the Nationals at their five glass-back courts and it was a huge success.

RESULTS

FINALS

Senior Nationals

Men:

Ritwik Bhattacharya (Del) bt Saurav Ghosal (TN) 9-3, 3-9, 9-4, 9-5.

Women:

Joshna Chinappa (TN) bt Dr. Deepali Anwekar Parikh (Mah) 9-4, 9-0, 9-2.

Professionals:

B. Balamurugan (TN) bt Dalip Tripathi (Ben) 9-2, 2-9, 9-7, 9-2.

35-39:

Darius Surti (Mah) bt Bobby Bajaj (Mah) 9-2, 9-2, 9-1.

40-44:

Raj Arora (Mah) bt Deepak Kochhar (Mah) 2-9, 9-4, 9-3, 9-1.

45-49:

Vaman Apte (Mah) bt V Laxman (TN) 9-7, 9-1, 9-3.

SEMIFINALS

Men:

Ritwik Bhattacharya (Del) bt Gaurav Nandrajog (Del) 1-9, 9-3, 9-2, 9-3;

Saurav Ghosal (TN) bt Harinderpal Singh (TN) 9-2, 9-3, 9-0.

Women:

Joshna Chinappa (TN) bt Surbhi Mishra (Raj) 9-3, 9-3, 9-3;

Deepali Parikh (Mah) bt Shivangi Paranjpe (Mah) 9-3, 9-1, 9-2.

Prof:

B. Balamurugan (TN) bt Rohit More (Mah) 9-2, 9-2, 9-2;

Dalip Tripathi (WB) bt Vijay Sonawane (Mah) 9-2, 9-1, 9-5.

MAHARASHTRA STATE OPEN SQUASH CHAMPIONSHIP

(12/11/2005)



All winner of Maharashtra State Open Squash Championship held at Bombay Gymkhana

The 30th Maharashtra State Open saw some good matches but the under-19 final took the cake. Second seed A. Parthiban of Tamil Nadu upset top seed Sandeep Jangra of Maharashtra 9-7, 8-10, 9-3, 5-9, 9-6 in an 85-minute thriller to clinch the title.

Sachika Balwani of Maharashtra experienced mixed fortunes following her victory in the girls under-15 final and defeat in the under 13 final.

As the under-15 second seed, Balwani overcame unseeded Saumya Karki 9-1, 4-9, 9-2, 9-7 in a keen contest, but No. 2 Anika Sharma denied top seed Balwani a double when she powered her way to a shock 9-6, 10-8, 9-5 in the under 13 championship round.

Balwani's effort was overshadowed by boys under-13 second seed Mahesh Mangaonkar's pulsating 6-9, 2-9, 9-3, 9-2, 9-7 triumph over arch-rival and top seed Abhishek Pradhan, who frittered away a 2-0 lead.

The championship was co-sponsored by Westside, Lee, ICICI Lombard, Godrej and Lipton.



In action at Bombay Gymkhana glass back court Joshna and Deepali



Capt Jamshed Apoo with Ritwik Bhattacharya and Deepak Malhotra (Squash Secretary, Bombay Gymkhana) and Chivas.

RESULTS

BOYS

- U-19: A. Parthiban (TH) bt Sandeep Jangra (Mah) 9-7, 8-10, 9-3, 5-9, 9-6.
- U-17: Harinderpal Singh(TN) bt Vikram Malhotra (Mah) 8-10, 9-0,9-1,10-9.
- U-15: Ravi Dixit (Del) bt Arney Merchant (Mah) 9-7, 9-5, 9-4.
- U-13: Mahesh Mangaonkar (Mah) bt Abhishek Pradhan 6-9, 2-9, 9-3, 9-2, 9-7.
- U-11: Ishaan Advani (Mah) bt Arjun Kochhar (Mah) 9-5, 9-4, 1-9, 9-7.
- U 9: Kunj Rawani (Mah) bt Aditya Khatri (Mah) 4-9, 9-4, 9-6, 6-9, 9-4.

GIRLS

- U- 19: Anvesha Reddy (TN) bt Madhura Paranjpe (Mah) 9-4, 9-1, 9-4.
- U-17: Surbhi Mishra (Raj) bt Shivangi Paranjpe (Mah) 9-7, 4-9, 9-5, 9-5.
- U-15: Sachika Balwani (Mah) bt Saumya Karki (Mah) 9-1, 4-9, 9-2, 9-7.
- U-13: Ankita Sharma (Mah) bt Sachika Balwani (Mah) 9-6, 10-8, 9-5.
- U-11: Lakshaya Raghavan (TN) bt Aishwarya Kulkarni (Mah) 9-4, 8-10, 9-0, 9-5-0



Apparently, our squash courts are causing quite a racket



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SUB-JUNIOR / JUNIOR NATIONAL SQUASH CHAMPIONSHIP 2005

(25/10/2005)



SANDEEP JANGHRA

They know their game inside out. It's just a question of remembering to stick to the basics and outwitting each other. But the problem is that the two of them can't always do that. That's why they top two under-19 lasses on the country from Chennai, Anwesha Reddy and Dipika Pallikal kept trading finals of major tournaments.

At the Junior Nationals, however it was Anwesha who bagged the big one at the Lady Willingdon College courts at Chennai.

Anwesha staged a remarkable recovery to script a 3-9, 6-9, 9-7, 9-0, 9-7 to bag her maiden under-19 title. The crown was lying vacant after Joshna Chinappa turned senior.

Anwesha had claimed the under-17 title in the last Nationals at Ajmer. Deepika had style, Anwesha recovered through stamina and spirit in the final three sets.

Harinderpal Singh of Tamil Nadu, a TNSRA trainee, had to counter the superb strokeplay of Vikram Malhotra. He kept the ball to length and claim his first title in the under-17.

RESULTS

FINALS

Boys

U-19:

Sandeep Jangra bt A. Parthiban 9-6 10-9 6-9 10-8;

U-17:

Harinderpal Singh (TN) bt Vikram Malhotra (Mah) 9-2, 10-8, 9-2.

Girls

U-19:

Anwesha Reddy (TN) bt Deepika Pallikal (TN) 3-9, 6-9, 9-7, 9-0, 9-7;

U-17:

Surbi Misra (Ra) bt Shivangi Paranjape (Mah) 9-4, 9-1, 9-4.



Deepika Pallikal

Maharashtra A' Ranked No. 1 in the country. Dipika Pallikal gave TN a head-start by winning the opener at the Centis Court for the loss of one game to Shivangi Paranjape in the girls under-19 section. Anwesha Reddy put it across Shivangi's side. Madhura in straight games while Shibani Philip didn't exert herself too much against Shaheen Madraswala in the dea

rubber. In the final league match to decide the winner of the girls under-15, TN 'A' with Dipika in the lead, scripted a 3-0 win over Maharashtra 'A'.

RESULTS

FINALS

Boys U-19:

TN 'A' bt Mah 'A' 2-0

A. Parthiban bt Manek Mathur 9-4, 9-2, 9-2;

Harinderpal Singh bt Sandeep Jangra 9-6, 9-3, 5-9, 9-4

Third place play-off:

TN 'B' bt Delhi 'A' 2-1

Boys U-15:

Delhi 'A' bt TN 3-0

Karam Kumar bt Akshay Deepak 9-4, 8-10, 7-9, 10-8, 9-4;

Ravi Dixit bt Karan Malk 3-9, 9-6, 9-6, 9-5;

Sumer Bahl bt Yaksh Dawar 9-3, 9-1

Third place play-off:

Mah 'A' bt Rajasthan 'A' 2-1

Mahesh Mangaonkar lost to Karan Kanodia 2-9, 5-9, 9-0, 9-2,

6-9;

Aditya D'Cunha bt Rishi Jalan 9-6, 0-9, 9-4, 9-3;

Aithya Gupta bt Vipul Saran 9-1, 9-2, 9-0.

Girls u-19:

TN 'A' bt Mah 'A' 3-0

Dipika Pallikal bt Shivangi Paranjape 9-2, 9-2, 6-9, 9-3;

Anwesha Reddy bt Madhura Paranjape 9-1, 9-3, 9-5;

Shibani Philip bt Shaheen Madraswala 9-3, 9-0

Third place play-off:

TN 'B' w/o UP.

Girls U-15 (final league match):

TN 'A' bt Mah 'A' 3-0

Dipika Pallikal bt Shaheen Madraswala 9-1, 9-0, 9-0;

Anwesha Reddy bt Sachika Balwani 9-0, 9-2, 9-0;

Harita Ompralash bt Anika Sharma 9-1, 9-3, 9-0.

TN 'B' finished second.

JUNIOR INTER STATE SQUASH CHAMPIONSHIP 2005

(21/10/2005)

Tamil Nadu sweep the show

Hosts Tamil Nadu bagged three of the four titles at stake in the Inter-State junior squash championship at the ICL-TNSRA Academy courts, Chennai. Apart from retaining the girls' under-19 and under-15 titles, TN claimed the girls' under-15 crown too. Delhi 'A' bagged the boys' under-15 title, defeating Tamil Nadu 'A' in the final.

Tamil Nadu lost just two games in the under-19 final. TN 'A' girls blanked Maharashtra 'A' 3-0. And TN boys posted a convincing 2-0 victory over



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SENIOR INTERSTATE SQUASH CHAMPIONSHIP

BY PRADEEP VIJAYKAR

(17/11/2005)

Maharashtra back where they belong

All Maharashtra Boys from left to right: Supreet Singh, Manish Chotrani, Vikram Malhotra, Sandeep Jhangra, Rishad Pandole and Manek Mathur.

Tamil Nadu, without Saurav Ghoshal, were like a ship without its rudder. They just could not pose a problem for Maharashtra who reclaimed the inter-state squash title after a three-year gap. They had done the hat-trick from 2000-03. Supreet Singh led the way beating an erratic Harinderpal Singh 3-0 in the first skirmish. Having coasted through 9-2, 9-4 in the first two sets, Supreet encountered a fightback before prevailing to put Maharashtra first up on the board.

Boys Under-19 champion A Parthiban pulled one back for Tamil Nadu beating Sandeep Jhangra. But Manek Mathur kept his cool to out out Cyril Kuhn in four. Rishad Pandole set the seal beating Parth Sharma. Manish Chotrani beat pro B Balamurugan in the 'dead' rubber.

RESULTS

FINALS

Maharashtra 'A' bt Tamil Nadu 3-1

Supreet Singh bt Harinderpal Singh 9-2, 9-4, 9-7;
Sandeep Jhangra lost to Parthiban 7-9, 3-9, 4-9;
Manek Mathur bt Cyril Kuhn 9-5, 2-9, 9-2, 9-2;
Rishad Pandole bt Parth Sharma 9-5, 10-8, 9-7.

SEMIFINALS

TN bt Services 'A' 4-1

B Balamurugan bt Shakti Singh 9-4,9-4,9-1;
Harinderpal Singh bt Vikas Jangra 9-4,3-9, 8-10, 9-6,9-6;
Navneet Narain bt A Parthiban 9-1,9-4,9-7;
AK Chaudhary bt Cyril Kuhn 9-3, 9-1, 9-7;
Parth Sharma bt D sisodia 9-4,9-7,9-1.

Maharashtra 'A' bt Delhi 4-1

Supreet Singh lost to Gaurav Nandrajog 7-9, 9-1,9-1, 9-4;
Vikram Malhotra bt Varun Prakash 9-0,9-0,9-0;
Sandeep Jhangra bt Dhruv Dhawan 9-5,9-2,9-5;
Rishad Pandole bt Naresh Kumar 9-5,9-0,7-9, 7-9, 9-5;
Manish Chotrani bt Amjad Khan 9-1,9-3,9-5.

INDIA FINISH 11TH IN WORLD SQUASH

India played a world team squash event after a gap of 10 years at Islamabad in December losing to Germany 0-3 for positions 9-12 but beating Netherlands to finish 11th.

India got into the top 12 beating Ireland. India lost to Canada in the pre-quarter-finals. Canada rested former world No.1 Jonathan Power yet beat India 3-0 in the last 16. Ritwik made Graham Ryding go to extra points for his win in the first set. India lost to 3-0 to France in the league. It was only for the 6th time they appeared at the worlds. England bt Egypt 2-0 to reclaim the World Team squash title.

RESULTS

FINALS

England bt Egypt 2-0

James Willstrop bt Amr Shabana 4-9,9-6,9-3,9-1;
Peter Nicol bt Mohd Abbas 9-0,9-2,9-1;
Lee Beachill vs Karim Darwish (withdrawn).

ANWESHA HAS SURGED AHEAD

BY DEXASHREE VIJAYAKAR

The juniors girls squash scene in India is a two-filly race between Chennai lasses Deepika Pallikal and Anwesha Reddy. They keep trading titles.

In the Mumbai squash week, Anwesha won the State Open title in the absence of Deepika Pallikal who skipped this event. She added this title to the big one the National Junior one which was lying vacant as Joshna Chinappa had become senior.

Anwesha's lone loss was at the Little Masters where Deepika beat her. So how did she go about picking up the pieces: "At the Nationals I was the second seed, and nothing to lose. So I played a tension-free game and benefited from it."

Anwesha was inspired by the exploits of Malaysian girl Nicole David. She had become the World Junior champ then at the age of 15. (Nicole in December became the first World champ from Asia at Hong Kong).

The chance came for Anwesha when there was a summer camp for kids. She enrolled and her sporting career was launched.

Anwesha says her game has been based on systematic training of the ICL Academy where coaches like Maj Maniam, Cyrus Poncha, Rajiv Reddy have helped her.

She was happy that the academy people like Ramachandran and Srivatsan were around to see her win at the Bombay Gymkhana courts. She would like to take squash as a career if the sponsorship scene improves and there's a chance to play at the Olympics.

While that happens there's enough incentive for these two lasses with the World Juniors coming up January 2006 and also the Asian Seniors where they get another chance to team up with the squash queen Joshna Chinappa, with whom they played in the Asian Juniors in their hometown Chennai.

Happy New Year 2006

POPULAR PROS

BY PRADEEP VIJAYAKAR



Riaz Mohammed



Vijay Waghela

One of the popular but low profile professionals in Mumbai squash is Vijay Waghela. He took to coaching in 1997 and in eight years has coached at Khar Gymkhana, Juhu Gymkhana, Bombay Gymkhana and the Andheri complex during camps arranged by the Squash Rackets Association of Maharashtra. He picked up the ropes from Baburao Salvi, a contemporary of greatest pros, Shyam Lal Verma and Francis. Salvi too was a modest person doing his work quietly at Holiday Inn.

No titles have come the way of Waghela who has reached the quarters and semis of some events notably the Otters Open. He is sad that Juhu Gymkhana which has great facilities could not throw up a champ during his stint there. But he is happy at the work he has put in at Khar. "I am happy to see players like Dhiraj Nagal come up. I've worked at times with Vikram Malhotra and he is sure to reach the top."

Vijay also coached Kanika Premnarayan and she regularly made the semis and finals of the girls events.

Fitness is something he always stresses. And he feels he has the confidence to take the kids to the advanced level.

In contrast Riaz Mohamed is more outgoing. The son of famous coach Faiz Mohamed of Otters and then SeaRock, Riaz began coaching in the year 1980.

From 1982 to 89 he and Chandrakant Pawar were popular pros at Otters. That was when the likes of Meherwan Daruwalla, Akhli Behl, Niraj Shirgaonkar and Cyrus Poncha came up. Meherwan acknowledges that his National win was helped by the sparring he had with Riaz. Riaz like Pawar went to Dubai where he worked for Subash Wali and coached at the intercontinental hotel. He also played the local leagues.

Back in India he continued at the five star hotels like Holiday Inn, Centaur and now is at the Hyatt.

He has been reaching semis of pros events and was India No 3 once. As a junior he remembers being East India No 2 losing to Otters led Aashish Kamat.

Now his friendly disposition sees him getting the best out of the kids, notably Sachika Balwani who won the under-15 national title. He also sees potential in Avni Shetty and Rohan Gracious and is happy to participate in all activities of the SRAM and ISP. He has been especially happy to coach the city's cops and hopes to find a champ from their midst.

Good luck, Riaz and Vijay. Keep squash going.

HARINDER IN SAURAV'S FOOTSTEPS

BY PRADEEP VIJAYAKAR

With Saurav Ghosal now lost to Indian domestic squash having chosen to study in the UK, doors have opened to the second stringers. Among those aspiring for this slot is Harinder Singh Sandhu.

This lad from Chandigarh was frustrated at first because he would have to travel to Chennai all the time for squash events. He even missed a few because this. Now, ironically Chennai has become his adopted home because he is training at the ICL Academy.

He won't complain because he is winning titles and won the National under-17 title.

And when he came to Mumbai he won the under-17 title at the State Open beating Vikram Malhotra in the final.

Says Harinder about his win: "This was a different Vikram from the Junior Nationals. Then he was trying to finish off the rallies. That gave me the chances and points. Here he was keeping ball in play. That made it hard to win."

Harinder knows he is fitter than Vikram and will have the edge in long-drawn encounters. Even so he is working on his weak points. "I still need to make a few shots more effective."

At the start of the new year he is targeting the British Juniors Opens won thrice by Indians Joshua (twice) and Saurav Ghosal. "I have played in the under-17 and know what it takes." Harinder has also played four PSA events but hasn't got beyond the first round. "There have been five-setters but I have still to win one around."

Still 16, he has three more years in the junior circuit and can easily replicate the feats that Saurav Ghosal did.

FROM NO 3 IN BATTING ORDER TO NO. 3 IN THE SQUASH LADDER



Surbhi Misra

Trying to make an impact among Indian women squash players is Surbhi Misra. Right now in Chennai where she trains the spotlight is on Deepika Pallikal and Anvesha Reddy. But Surbhi is determined to make her mark. She is always cheerful and accepts what comes her way. Surbhi comes from Jaipur. She has played women's cricket for her state and was the best bowler in one of the invitation

tournaments.

But the fielders were not taking catches and Surbhi thought she should turn to squash where she alone would be responsible for her performance.

The No 3 batter is now No 3 among the girls. The under-17 title at the Bombay Gymkhana came her way as Deepika had pulled out. She lost to Joshua in the national women's semi-final. But she has age on her side.

She hopes to get sponsors and pursue her ambitions in the world arena.

Happy New Year 2006

RITWIK HAPPY HIS PLAN WORKED

BY DEVASHREE TILYAKAR



Ritwik Bhattacharya

Ritwik Bhattacharya won back the National men's squash title and said it was the culmination of a plan. He had planned to worry Saurav with drops. Ritwik hopes to do well for India at the Asians and Commonwealth and climb to the top 30 rankings of PSA. Excerpts from the interview:

When did the squash bug bite you?

Actually it was tennis till the age of 12. I am from an army family. But when I was sent to the Indian Military Academy school I saw squash courts there and was pulled to the sport. So you can say squash chose me.

When did squash capture you?

I did well to be picked at 15 for the Indian team that went to Cairo for the World Juniors. That was the turning point. I saw that through squash I could travel the world over. Now I am doing that in the pro circuit and loving every moment of it.

Which were the institutions that helped you?

I began playing at the Delhi Gymkhana, the courts at Siri Fort.

What's been the coaches' contribution?

Great. In recent times Neil Harvey has fast-tracked me into big-time squash. In India where the ball bounces more one doesn't need the technique that players develop for the highest grade. That's why training abroad is crucial. There are four world champs training with Neil and that helps.

But is it really essential?

Five years ago, I would have said that. But today in India the infrastructure has improved and there are good coaches. Juniors need not leave India to train abroad.

How much stress you put on gym work?

I do but not quantity-wise. It's the quality work put in that interests me. When you are a professional there's no one to push you. It's how much you can put in 45 minutes rather than spending a good two hours at the gym. I keep that uppermost in my training, specific planning and attention to details counts for me most. I get an outline for the week, aerobic work and so on. It's the goal-setting the vision that counts.

Discipline must be the watchword at the highest level?

It's a huge thing. For professionals there's no one sitting on one's head. It's how you push yourselves to the limit. It's what comes from within that determines whether you push yourself or not.

Did you expect to beat Saurav?

It looked easy going by the scores but it was tough. I planned to put the ball in areas he didn't like. At times I outplayed him tactically. We play each other so often we know each other's weak points.

Who are your idols?

Obviously Jahangir Khan I play a similar sort of game. There's also Jansher and Peter Nicol whose coach I train with.

What are the challenges that beckon?

Obviously to climb up in the PSA rankings to the top 30. I am 59 at the moment. The year 2006 Asian Games and the Commonwealth Games. That will be incentive to do well.

Lucky Ritwik

Jamshed Apoo, race horse owner and squash aficionado, had felt bad when an Indian Ritwik Bhattacharya could not win the Herald Maritime Classic title and the prize money that went with it, \$5000 (about Rs 2.5 lakhs). Apoo had designed the event in such a way that those ranked below Ritwik (69) in the PSA rankings were invited. But Ritwik lost to Colombian Bernardo Samper and Egyptian Ramy Ashour took the booty. Ritwik had also lost in the tournament's first edition to Siddharth Suchde. But Apoo was determined to reward Ritwik, who has won a couple of Satellite events, at all costs.

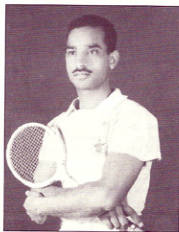
Apoo got his chance when Ritwik beat Saurav Ghoshal to win the National men's title at the Bombay Gymkhana. He rushed back to his office, came back with a \$5,000 cheque and presented it to Ritwik at a party. A sport, indeed, is lucky to have the likes of Capt Apoo who in successive years brought squash legends Jahangir Khan and Jansher Khan to Mumbai to interact with young players

Times of India, Mumbai : 22/11/2005

SQUASH'S FIRST ARJUNA AWARDEE

Pradip Vijayar

Guess who's the first Arjuna awardee from squash?



Capt. Kulbir Jain

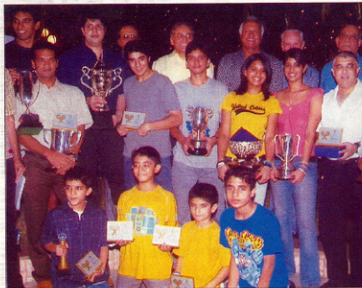
It's Capt Kulbir Jain. He shared the record with Brig Raj Manchanda for winning six national titles in a row, from 1958 to 1963. Manchanda won from 1978-1983. There was a golden year when Services players occupied all four semi-final slots. Capt Jain beat Gill, another Services man 9-0, 9-4, 9-1. In two finals he beat Servi Singh. He won a gruelling five-setter 5-9, 9-10, 9-3, 9-7, 9-2 at the Calcutta Racquets Club. Angled shots were a most attractive feature of this match, according to old clippings.

At the Western India he had a hat-trick of titles. At the Central India he beat an emerging champ, Anil Nayar, then only 17, 9-1, 9-6, 9-7. Earlier Anil Nayar had bagged the junior boys' title, defeating Fali Madon, 9-4, 9-5, 7-9. When he won the country's first Arjuna award in 1961 Capt Jain was in eminent company of stars like like A.N. Ghosh (weightlifting), Gurbachan Singh (athletics), Jayant C Vora (table tennis), Buddy D'Souza (boxing), Nandu Natekar (badminton), Capt. P.G. Sethi (golf), Pradip Kumar Banerjee (football), Prithipal Singh (hockey), R. Krishnan (lawn tennis), Salim Durrani (cricket) and Manuel Aaron (chess).

C.C.I. WESTERN INDIA OPEN SQUASH TOURNAMENT

On a platter for Ritwik

(5/11/2005)



Winners of CCI Western India alongwith Raj Arora, Atul Choksi, Khalid A-H Ansari, Mr. Renjen (CEO, CCI).

In the absence of Saurav Ghoshal Ritwik Bhattacharya had things his own way in the 62nd CCI-Western India Open Squash Tournament. He defeated No 2 seed Vikas Jangra 9-4, 9-2, 5-9, 9-6 in the men's final. Vikas, among the best products of Jindal Squash Academy from Vashind, prefers to serve with his backhand. He played some good drops to huddle his senior opponent but once the master read the gameplan there was just one player in the match. Still hats off to Vikas to make Ritwik earn every point.

Josha Chinnappa defended her title by overcoming 14-year-old Chennai compatriot Dipika Pallikal 9-5, 10-8, 9-1 in straight sets. Dipika had her chances in the second set but blew them.

RESULTS**FINALS****Men Open:**

Ritwik Bhattacharya (Delhi) bt Vikas Jangra (Services) 9-4, 9-2, 5-9, 9-6.

Boys U-19:

Sandeep Jangra bt Manek Mathur 1-9, 7-9, 9-6, 9-0, 9-6;

Boys U-17:

Vikram Malhotra bt Naishad Lalwani 9-2, 9-3, 9-0;

Boys U-15:

Karm Kumar bt Mahesh Mangaonkar 9-0, 9-6, 9-3;

Boys U-13:

Abhishek Pradhan bt Mahesh Mangaonkar 9-7, 9-7, 9-5;

Boys U-11:

Ishaan Advani bt Arjun Kochhar 9-6, 9-5, 9-5;

Boys U-9:

Kunj Rawani bt Yohan Pandole 9-2, 9-4, 3-9, 9-6.

Professionals:

Rohit More bt Sanjay Pawar 9-1, 9-3, 4-9, 9-1.

Women's:

Josha Chinappa (TN) bt Dipika Pallikal (TN) 9-5, 10-8, 9-1.

Girls U-19:

Dipika Pallikal (TN) bt Shivangli Paranjpe 9-4, 9-4, 9-0; U-15:

Girls U-15:

Dipika Pallikal (TN) bt Ankita Sharma (Mumbai) 9-1, 9-0, 9-3.

PAY AND PLAY AT POLICE GYMKHANA

At the inauguration of Squash Court at Police Gymkhana from left to right: Arun Sanghi (Sponsor), Ranjan Sanghi (President, SRAM), A.N.Roy (Mumbai Police Commissioner) and Khalid A-H. Ansari (Chairman, Emeritus, SRAM)

Pay and play. This concept which has been the key to the rise of squash as a mass sport in the west had a boost when Mumbai Police Gymkhana's brand new squash court was inaugurated by police commissioner A. N. Roy. Also present were Khalid A-H. Ansari (Chairman Emeritus, SRAM) and Ranjan Sanghi (President, SRAM).

Playing first exhibition match at Police Gymkhana was Additional Comm of Police, Parembar Singh, (has won a doubles tournament in the past) with the nephew of Mr. Ranjan Sanghi. The SRAM will conduct coaching facilities for cops free of cost, said SRAM's Khalid A-H. Ansari.

Any SRAM member can avail of the facility at an annual fee of Rs 240 for adults and Rs 120 for minors, said SRAM secretary, Shiv Malhotra. The squash court is only the second, after the Ardheri Sports Club, open to the public. As for the cops they have played all kinds of sport from hockey, football, cricket, indigenous games, swimming, basketball, martial arts and even rugby. Now, they will be seen in racquet sports.

The initiative for the courts was taken by cops Iqbal Shaikh and Sanjay Barve who looked for sponsors. Sah and Sanghi came up with a contribution of Rs 20 lakh and the Squash Racquets Association of Maharashtra helped build it.



Ms. Meera Borwankar (Jt. Com. Of police) along with Additional Commissioners Of police - Mr. Subhash Jaiswal, Mr. Nagrale, Mr. Bipin Bihari and Mr. Bishnoi at the Police Gymkhana function

A COLLECTION OF ARTICLES WRITTEN BY RAJU CHAINANI

Lady sings the blues



Late Raju Chainani with his Singapore friend Munir Shah (Former Secretary, Singapore Squash Association).

BEHIND every great man, they say, there is a woman. The history books give numerous examples of such happenings since the time of Adam and Eve. There have been Solomon and Sheba, Samson and Delilah, Anthony and Cleopatra, Napoleon and Josephine and many others. A case of woman inspiring man to his pinnacle.

But, does the same apply in reverse? Specially when you look at the sporting achievements of the ladies of the land, there's enough evidence to show that their success has been a result of their own doing. Today, one can say that P.T. Usha has had the guidance of Nambiar and more important has had a very considerable amount of political support. Without that would she have achieved or been where she was is a matter of debate.

Our squash queen, Bhuvaneshwari Kumari came up the hard way. She switched from tennis at a time when there was room at the top. But, the results to follow showed that she had made a wise decision. Bhuvaneshwari has won the National title thirteen times in a row. Can you think of any Indian sportswoman who in her field has achieved as much?

And yet, India's first lady of squash is subjected to the ping-pong battle that always exists in our politbureau. People argue that there is no competition amongst the ladies. Today, it has become a one horse race. The gap between Bhuvaneshwari and the rest reminds me of what Geoff Lewis said when he rode the wonder filly Mill Reef, "Daylight was second". The politbureau will not tell you that it is their own dog mindedness and

lack of fore sight that has hindered the development of ladies squash. Three years ago, Bhuvaneshwari came down to hold a coaching camp for juniors and ladies at the Bombay Gymkhana. It was a sell out. A little organization can help such camps occur again and again. Instead, we have people who love to enjoy their hot seats and eat pan paraag or wear Mickey Mouse shirts.

TODAY in Bombay, there exist sufficient facilities in the clubs to promote the game amongst the ladies. The powers-that-be will tell you about shapes and sizes and where the ladies changing room is but that's about all.

Coming back to Bhuvaneshwari. Here is a prime example of a dedicated sportswoman who has let her racket to do the talking. She has been snubbed by the officials and for the record, was recommended for the Arjuna award only after her eighth national victory. Last year, she won the Kenyan Ladies Open, the first Indian to achieve an international success. Surely, it's time to recognize these achievements.

Backing her all the way have been her father Yashwant Singh, a highly respected tennis administrator, and her brother Yogendra Singh, a former National level squash player. There were no Nambiar or political backing. Instead, it was a hard grind to get to a level where even in the men's event she causes a flutter. The Indian sportswomen owe their achievements to them selves. They are looked upon as also rans with the men taking the limelight. But can this go on forever? There comes a time when even the champions get fed up with officialdom.

Bhuvaneshwari was livid with the National body last year for their delaying tactics. She let fly and "Operation cover-up" began in great haste. The under water queen, Anita Sood is another who has choice words for the Ganga Dinz.

From Indian ladies squash and, indeed, any other discipline where the fair sex compete, it can be said that behind any champion there is usually a paunchewing ignorant official. He or she is looking for ways to lower the colors of the ladies.

"Grasshopper", said the wise old man, would you prefer brains and brawn or boobs and beauty?" Master, that is a leading question. I'll have to scratch my brains for an answer."

"Grasshopper, you never had any. You don't know the difference between Oscar Wilde and Kim Wilde. So long as you get a free trip abroad, you couldn't care less if the ladies were cute, cuddly or cockeyed."

It's sad but such is the state of our sport. Where power maniacs and egos matter most. Where favorites are in, real performers have to beg and plead. "Did you know about the rather well built lady who was chosen as chief official of the team?", asked the wise old man, "She was so well stacked that she could win the National Front award."



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INDIA COULD HAVE FINISHED IN TOP TEN

By Siddharth Suchde



Siddharth Suchde

The 20th World Men's Squash Team Championships were held in Pakistan from December 8-14. This championship boasted of the 22 best teams from all around the globe. The Indian contingent consisted of Ritwik Bhattacharya (1), Saurav Ghoshal (2), Gaurav Nandrajog (4) and myself (3) along with coaches Maj. Maniam and Cyrus Poncha. It was the first time after a lapse of 10 years that India had sent a team to this event.

The Championships were a fantastic experience for the relatively young Indian team. Finishing 11th is the best performance by any Indian team in the world championships. (India placed 5th out of 6 teams in '67 and 6th out of 7 teams in '71.) While the result is undoubtedly satisfactory the team has already set higher aspirations for the next event in 2007 which is to be hosted by India.

Let me take you on a trip of our matches

Vs France:

They were the previous tournament finalists. I played a tough match against Renan Lavigne but in the end his experience pulled him through. Ritwik was always going to struggle against Thierry Lincou who is also World No.11. Similarly, Saurav also lost in the final tie against the French No.2 and World No.11 Greg Gaultier.

RESULTS France beat India 3-0

Renan Lavigne bt Siddharth Suchde 9/5, 4/9, 9/4, 9/2 (62mins)
Thierry Lincou bt Ritwik Bhattacharya 9/1, 9/1, 9/0 (35mins)
Greg Gaultier bt Saurav Ghoshal 9/3, 9/1, 9/5 (29mins)

Vs Ireland:

A win would take us to the top 12 bracket. I managed a fairly comfortable 3-0 win over Irish no. 3 Brian Byrne. This led to Ritwik taking on the Irish no 1 Liam Kenny and the steadier Kenny won games. It was left to Saurav to bring us home. And he did so quite decisively once he got settled into the match. As a result India was amongst the top 12 countries in the world.

RESULTS India beat Ireland 2-1

Siddharth Suchde bt Brian Byrne 9/5, 9/1, 9/2 (36m)
Ritwik Bhattacharya lost to Liam Kenny 7/9, 3/9, 6/9 (59m)
Saurav Ghoshal bt Arthur Gaskin 6/9, 9/5, 9/0, 9/1 (42m)

Vs Canada:

In the playoffs we draw fifth seeds Canada. A win would take us to the top eight. Canadian no 2 Shahier Plazik's retrieving proved too much for Saurav Ghoshal who lost 3-0. Next Ritwik probably played one of his best matches in the entire tournament against the Canadian no 1 Graham Ryding who is top 20 in the world. He lost a hard fought 3-0. In the 'dead' rubber I lost to Matthew Guiffere 2-0.

RESULTS Canada bt India 3-0

Shahier Razik bt Saurav Ghoshal 10/8, 9/6, 9/2 (43m)
Graham Ryding bt Ritwik Bhattacharya 10/8, 9/4, 9/4 (49m)
Matthew Guiffere bt Siddharth Suchde 9/4, 9/5 (33m)

Vs Germany:

This for 9-12 placings. We should have won but Saurav was 2-0 up against the German no.2 and suffered shin splints. He could hardly walk thereafter and lost in 5 games. Next on was Ritwik who played against the talented 18-year-old and no 1 Simon Rosner. Simon, being the underdog, had nothing to lose and played well enough to win 3-1. However Ritwik seemed nervous

throughout the match and he admitted to performing below average on this occasion. I lost the 'dead' rubber again.

Germany bt India 3-0

RESULTS Saurav Ghoshal 9/10, 4/9, 9/4, 9/2, 9/0 (62m)
Simon Rosner bt Ritwik 9/7, 6/9, 9/7, 10/8 (82m)
Patrick Gassler bt Siddharth Suchde 9-5, 9/3 (29m)

Vs Netherlands:

For 11/12 places. Saurav was rested due to shin splints and as a result Gaurav Nandrajog played at the no 3 position and I was No. 2. In the first match Laurence Anjema proved too strong for a first time Ritwik and won 3-0. Gaurav playing his first match impressed all by his clinical demolition of the Dutch no 3 in straight games. This meant that I played the decider against the Dutch no. 2 Dylan Bennet who I had never previously beaten. After playing two 'dead' rubbers on consecutive days I was highly motivated to play in 'live' match. I won the decider in straight games which placed us in the 11th position.

WSF PATRON TUNKU IMRAN NOMINATED FOR MEMBERSHIP OF IOC

Former WSF President Tunku Imran has been nominated for memberships of the influential decision making body of the Olympic movement.



HRH Prince Tunku Imran, patron of the World Squash Federation (WSF)

HRH Prince Tunku Imran, patron of the World Squash Federation (WSF), has been selected by the Executive Board of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) for election as a member of the IOC.

The Malaysian, who was President of the WSF from 1989 to 1996, is one of the candidates proposed for election to the 118th IOC Session in Turin in February 2006, which will be the start of their eight-year term of office.

On completion of his maximum term as President of the WSF, Tunku Imran was unanimously elected to be Emeritus President, a role specially created for him as an honor for the great leadership he had provided for the sport.

He is President of the Olympic Council of Malaysia and a Vice-President of the Commonwealth Games Federation. He is also a Board Member of the National Sports Council of Malaysia, President of the Malaysian Cricket Association and Chairman of the Foundation for Malaysian Sporting Excellence. He was Malaysia's first National Squash Champion in 1973 and Chief de Mission to the Malaysian Team at the Seoul Olympics in 1988.

"The WSF is very proud to have Tunku Imran, a long time friend of Squash, as its Patron," said the Federation's Chief Executive Christian Leighton. "This nomination is recognition of Tunku Imran's contribution to the development of sport worldwide and of the Olympic Movement in Malaysia."

Source: <http://www.squashplayer.com>

MENS RANKING (JANUARY 2006)

Pos	Player	From	Last Pos.
1	JONATHON POWER	CAN	6
2	AMR SHABANA	EGY	7
3	ANTHONY RICKETTS	AUS	3
4	DAVID PALMER	AUS	4
5	THIERRY LINCOU	FRA	1
6	JAMES WILLSTROP	ENG	2
7	PETER NICOL	ENG	8
8	LEE BEACHILL	ENG	5
9	NICK MATTHEW	ENG	10
10	JOHN WHITE	SCO	9

WOMENS RANKING (JANUARY 2006)

Pos	Player	From	Last Pos.
1	NICOL DAVID	MAS	3
2	VANESSA ATKINSON	NED	1
3	RACHAEL GRINHAM	AUS	2
4	NATALIE GRINHAM	AUS	4
5	VICKY BOTWRIGHT	ENG	5
6	LINDA ELRIANI	ENG	6
7	NATALIE GRAINGER	USA	7
8	OMNEYA ABDEL	EGY	10
9	TANIA BAILEY	ENG	9
10	JENNY DUNCALF	ENG	8

FORTHCOMING TOURNAMENT

Matunga Gymkhana Open Junior Squash Tournament : from 25th January to 29th January 2006

The Club-ISP Squash Classic (Men's Top 16, Junior's & Handicap Doubles Event) : from 15th February to 18th February 2006

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FOLLOWING ISP'S EXAMPLE



At the Press Conference held at Oberoi Hotel, Mumbai, Joshna Chinnappa along with (from left to right): Mahendra Agarwal (Founder Director, ISP), Ms Noreena (PRO, ISP), Amit Bhatia (Trustee, Mittal Champions Trust) and Mahesh

Indian Squash Professionals led the way. Now it is good to see others taking things forward. When she was just hitting headlines ISP, led by Mahendra Agarwal, had found her a sponsor for Joshna in Switcher, the T-shirts people. When she was having trouble with the national federation it was ISP that moved the sports ministry and the late sports minister Sunil Dutt to release Rs 6 lakhs for her coaching abroad and reward for her achievements in International events 2003 ahead of the world juniors. Joshna finished No 2 and wrote history.

Now the father can heave a sigh of relief. London-based steel magnate Lakshmi Mittal announced in November the launch of the Mittal Champions Trust in order to identify, support and enhance the performance of young Indian sportsmen. The trust will invest Rs 40 crore to provide a set of chosen youngsters with the highest quality training for their respective sports. The sportsmen will be identified from three age brackets: 10-12, 13-17 & 17 and above. The plan is to focus on sports where there is a paucity of funds. The first beneficiary of this endeavor is teen squash sensation Joshna Chinnappa. The second is badminton player Saina Nehwal. The athletes will

be selected by an advisory board comprising shuttler P Gopi Chand and athlete Anju Bobby George. Fahul David, captain of the Indian cricket team, is one of the trustees. The trust plans to take on all sports-related expenses of the athlete which include training, competitions, fitness and nutritional requirements.

Joshna is the first beneficiary of Lakshmi Mittal's initiative. At the function a beaming Anjan Chinappa said: "I am happy for Joshna, but I cannot forget those who stood by her during her climb to the top, Mahendra Agarwal (ISP), SRAM, Late Raju Chainani, Switcher and Late Mr. Sunil Dutt (Minister of Sports and Youth Affairs).

SCOTTISH JUNIOR OPEN SQUASH CHAMPIONSHIP 2005

India finishes with 4 runner ups, Anaka wins Title.

By A. I. Singh

Indian players finished with 3 runner-up positions with Abhishek Pradhan losing unexpectedly to David Wardle (Eng) in 3 starlight games after leading 5-0 in the first. His nerves got the better of him as he squandered 9 points in a row to lose the first game. He lost 5-9, 7-9, 6-9 to finish Runner-up in the Boys Under-13 section. In the Boys Under-11, Arjun could not match the strength and speed of Ahmed Ashoush (Egypt) and lost 9-0, 9-2, 9-0.

Sachika Balwani, hoping to repeat her title winning performance of last year, lost to a much improved A. Anaka (India) 0-9, 2-9, 5-9 in the girls Under-13.

Surbhi Misra (India) lost to Leung Shin Nga (China) 5-9, 8-10, 5-9 in the Girls Under-15 event.

INTERNATIONAL RESULTS

Qatar Squash Classic, Doha, Qatar (28/11/2005)

Men's final: [8] James Willstrop (ENG) bt [3] David Palmer (AUS) 11-1, 11-7, 11-7

Women's final: [2] Vanessa Atkinson (NED) bt [6] Vicky Botwright (ENG) 9-7, 9-4, 9-2

Malaysian Open Squash Championship, (19/11/2005)

Final: [3] Ong Beng Hee (MAS) bt [4] Wael El Hindi (EGY) 11-10 (3-1), 11-6, 8-11, 11-7

US Open Squash Championships, Boston, USA (09/11/2005)

Men's Final: [3] Lee Beachill (ENG) bt [2] David Palmer (AUS) 11-7, 9-11, 8-11, 11-1, 11-8

Women's Final: [1] Natalie Grinham (AUS) bt [2] Vicky Botwright (ENG) 9-7, 9-10, 9-3, 9-4

Indian Squash Professionals Wishes all the Prosquash readers a very Happy and Prosperous New Year 2006

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