



HOCKEY INDIA

# Newsletter Vol 50

(July & August 2020)



#IndiaKaGame





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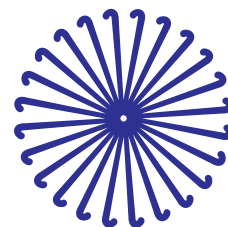
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# MESSAGE



**Mr. Gyanendro  
Ningombam**  
Officiating President,  
Hockey India

Namaste,

The months of July and August have been very productive here at Hockey India. We launched an open application submission system for registration of Hockey Coaches and Technical Officials in India, which will certainly help Hockey India to discover more talented Coaches and Technical Officials from across the country. We have been extremely delighted that our Coaches and Technical Officials have got an opportunity to attend a number of Online Education Workshops conducted by the International Hockey Federation (FIH) and Asian Hockey Federation (AHF) over the last two months.

We are overjoyed about the fact that the Indian Women's Hockey Team Captain Rani has been conferred with the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award. Rani has led the Indian team to many memorable victories and it's brilliant to see her efforts being recognized by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports. Our heartiest congratulations goes out to Akashdeep Singh and Deepika for being conferred with the Arjuna Award for their contribution to the sport. We would also like to congratulate Ajit Singh for being awarded the Dhyan Chand Award, Romesh Pathania for being awarded the Dronacharya Award (Life-Time Category), and Jude Felix with the Dronacharya Award (Regular Category) as recognition for their contributions to Indian hockey over the years.

It was absolutely fantastic to hear that Uttar Pradesh Government honoured the services of the former India Captain Dr RP Singh by naming a 2km-road in Churia, a village in Deoria district after him. We would also like to congratulate Indian Women's Hockey Team Defender Deep Grace Ekka for receiving the Biju Patnaik sports award for outstanding performance from Shri Tusharkanti Behera, Hon'ble Sports Minister of Odisha on National Sports Day.

We were extremely happy to see the Indian Men's and Indian Women's Hockey Team resume their sports activities in the month of August. After having had detailed discussions with all stakeholders including the Chief Coaches and core probables of both the teams and after giving the utmost priority to the safety and well-being of all the athletes, the sporting activities resumed at SAI's National Centre of Excellence in Bengaluru.

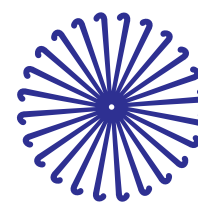
In the month of August, it was great for our Coaches, Match Officials and Staff to attend an online Indoor Hockey forum conducted by AHF. Coaching, officiating and hosting events are the three pillars of our sport and we at Hockey India are confident that the participants have surely learned new techniques which will help them to improve their skills even further.

It has been absolutely amazing to see the way Hockey India has continued to put in its efforts to improve all aspects of hockey in our country. We will certainly work even harder to grow the sport of hockey in the upcoming months.

# TOP HIGHLIGHTS

## Hockey India launches an open application submission system for registration of Hockey Coaches and Technical Officials in India

Hockey India on Wednesday, 01 July 2020 launched an open application submission system for registration of Coaches and Technical Officials. Any candidate can submit their application for further approval of Hockey India's registered Member Unit to register as a Coach or Technical Official through the open link that is being circulated via the media and social media.



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Once a candidate submits his/her application, he or she would need the approval of the concerned Hockey India registered Member Unit under which a Coach or Technical Official is submitting the application. Once the application is approved by the Hockey India Member Unit, the application would require the final approval of Hockey India prior to the confirmation of registration of a Coach or Technical Official.

## Asian Hockey Federation (AHF) conduct Online Education Workshops exclusively for Hockey India Coaches and Technical Officials

After the successful completion of the AHF Online Education Workshops for various Asian countries in the month of June, Hockey India requested the Asian Hockey Federation (AHF) for the conduct of similar workshops exclusively for Hockey India Coaches and Technical Officials which was accepted by AHF. Hockey India was allowed to nominate a maximum of six candidates for each of the eight education workshops held in June. Over 25 Coaches and 15 Technical Officials attended each of the AHF Online Education Workshops in July.



Aimed at providing technical expertise and knowledge on various aspects of officiating and managing international matches and tournaments, these online education workshops were conducted free of cost for participating candidates online through Microsoft Teams application. Each workshop consisted of a three to four hours' session including a break. These workshops promoted and focused on the use of new and existing technology, imbibing the required qualities, assigning and clarifying role & responsibilities, stating pre-tournament & pre-match processes to be followed, and communicating and working with teams.



## Hockey India congratulates Biswaranjan Sarangi for his Promotion to Advancement Panel Technical Official for Hockey

Hockey India on Monday, 6th July 2020, congratulated Biswaranjan Sarangi of Odisha on being promoted to Technical Official - Advancement Panel by the FIH Officials Committee. The World Governing Body for Hockey had announced its decision on 3rd July 2020. Having worked his way from the domestic circuit to the international level, Biswaranjan Sarangi has been an exceptional Technical Official for the past few years, which has seen him being appointed for various tournaments around the globe. His first international appointment by the International Hockey Federation (FIH) was in August 2018 when he was promoted to FIH International Technical Official.



Biswaranjan Sarangi had then become the first Official from Odisha to have been promoted as an FIH International Technical Official, which was a result of him delivering excellent results as Judge at the Men's Youth Olympic Games Qualifiers 2018 in Bangkok, Thailand, and as Technical Official at the 27th Sultan Azlan Shah Cup 2018 in Ipoh, Malaysia. His exposure at the international level has also seen him being involved as an Assistant Technical Delegate at the 30th Southeast Asian Games 2019 in Philippines, and as Judge during the 2020 edition of the FIH Hockey Pro League.

## International Hockey Federation (FIH) organize Facilities workshop for Hockey India State Member Units

The Facilities and Quality Programme Manager at the International Hockey Federation (FIH) Alastair Cox conducted a very productive Facilities workshop for Hockey India State Member Units through Microsoft Teams on Thursday, 09 July 2020. One representative from each of the Hockey India's 31 State Member Units got an opportunity to understand the basics of developing a facilities strategy, understand the different field and surfacing options and identify additional features to consider when planning a new hockey facility during the course of the three-hour workshop.



The Facilities and Quality Programme Manager stressed on the topics relevant to India including academy venues during the workshop. Hockey India extended this opportunity to its registered 31 State Member Units with one representative allowed from each of the State Member Units to attend the workshop.

## International Hockey Federation (FIH) announce new schedule for FIH Hockey Pro League 2020

The International Hockey Federation (FIH) on Thursday, 9th July 2020 announced that the FIH Hockey Pro League, the annual global home and away league involving the world's best international teams, both Men and Women - will resume on 22 September 2020 with the national teams of Germany hosting their Belgian counterparts in a thrilling clash between two European powerhouses.



The announcement came after the 2020 FIH Hockey Pro League, which, was announced on 24th April 2020, had been extended until June 2021 (instead of June 2020 as initially planned) after matches were stopped in March of this year due to the ongoing COVID-19 global pandemic. Indian Men's Team will resume their campaign on 10th April 2021 away to Argentina, before playing them again on the next day. India will also play Great Britain (8th & 9th May 2021), Spain (12th & 13th May 2021), Germany (18th & 19th May 2021), and New Zealand (29th & 30th May 2021).

## The Hockey India Executive Board nominate Manipur's Gyanendro Ningombam as the Officiating President



Hockey India Executive Board held an Emergent Executive Board meeting on 10 July 2020 naming Manipur's Gyanendro Ningombam as the Officiating President of Hockey India. This was following the resignation letter of Mohd Mushtaque Ahmad received by Hockey India on 7 July 2020 due to his personal and family commitments.

In the Hockey India Emergent Executive Board meeting convened on 10 July 2020 where the resignation of Mohd Mushtaque Ahmad was accepted, the Hockey India Executive Board under the Rules & Regulations of the Hockey India Constitution subsequently nominated and approved Hockey India's Senior Vice President Mr. Gyanendro Ningombam as the new Officiating President.

## Hockey India aiming to help FIH-certified Indian Coaches through specialized workshops

Hockey India conducted specialized workshops for top level Indian Coaches who hold a minimum of an FIH Level '1' Coach Certification. These workshops were organized online by Hockey India from July to August 2020, and saw six foreign Coaches/experts conduct various sessions for the Indian Coaches in order to further enhance their knowledge and skills.



**COACHING  
EDUCATION  
PATHWAY**

These workshops enabled Hockey India in perpetuating the whole process of the Coaching Education Pathway for the Indian Coaches and ensuring utilizing better the services of foreign Coaches/experts available, and also ensure that the top level Indian coaches are benefiting from these intense and thorough sessions to progress in their respective careers and turn into world-class Coaches. The workshops included over 90 Indian Coaches divided across 6 subgroups and the Hockey specific topics such as Skills Acquisition, Interchanges & Rotations and Sports Science topics – Program Prescription for Youth and Female athletes, Initial Stages of rehabilitation etc. were covered.

## Hockey India conduct Online Workshop for Technical Delegates & Technical Officers

After having conducted an online workshop for all Hockey India registered Technical Delegates and Umpire Managers last month to ensure standardization on assessment of Officials, Hockey India on 26 July 2020 organized yet another online workshop for the Hockey India registered Technical Delegates and Technical Officers to ensure continuation in the development process of the participating Technical Officials.



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The online workshop took place through video conferencing and was conducted by FIH World Panel/FIH Pro League Technical Official & Certified FIH Academy Educator, Mr. Moghul Mohammed Muneer. It was attended by a total of 22 candidates which consisted of Hockey India registered Technical Delegates and experienced Technical Officers, and focused majorly on the preparation of Match Schedule by the Technical Officials as per the FIH Competition Policies And Procedures.



## Asian Hockey Federation continues to conduct the Online Education Workshops exclusively for Hockey India Coaches & Technical Officials

After the successful completion of the AHF Online Education Workshops exclusively for the Hockey India Coaches and Technical Officials in July, the Asian Hockey Federation (AHF) organized another set of workshops in the month of August. A group of 15-35 (approximately) Coaches and Technical Officials attended a total of five AHF Online Education Workshops.



Aimed at providing technical expertise and knowledge on various aspects of officiating and managing international matches and tournaments, these online education workshops were conducted free of cost for participating candidates online. Each workshop consisted of a 3-4 hours' session including a break. For Technical Officials, these workshops mainly focused on code of conduct: Protest & Hearing and for the Coaches emphasis on coaching in 5-a-side hockey, physical fitness demands, match strategies and the role of Goalkeepers. Hockey India had requested each of the eight Hockey India Member Units which take part in 5-a-side hockey tournaments in India to nominate two Coaches (one female and one male) for the online workshop on coaching in 5-a-side hockey. They attended workshop along with the group of nominated Hockey India Coaches.

## Hockey India participate in Asian Hockey Federation's AHF Online Indoor Hockey Forum

As part of AHF's plan for Development through Distance learning, 'AHF Online Education' initiative of Hockey in the Asian continent, the AHF organised a spectacular online Indoor Hockey forum exclusively for experienced Hockey Coaches, Umpires and Staff across the Asian continent online on Saturday, 08 August 2020.



The AHF Online Indoor Hockey Forum aimed at providing technical expertise and knowledge on various aspects of Coaching, Umpiring and Event Hosting with respect to organising Indoor Hockey events. The forum was curated with an aim at initiating discussions among the coaches, umpires & event organizers about Indoor Hockey across the continent. The discussion also touched upon the upcoming trend of Indoor Hockey being picked up world-wide and the basic difference between field hockey & Indoor Hockey events.

From Hockey India, the forum was attended by five of the Indian Team coaching staff members, eight Hockey India Match Officials and six members from the Hockey India staff, who are experienced in organising International and domestic hockey events. Forum was also attended by the Director, High Performance, Hockey India.



## Sports Authority of India announced schedule to resume sports activities

Sports Authority of India on 12th August 2020 announced that the Indian Men's and Indian Women's Hockey Teams are scheduled to resume sports activities from, 19th August 2020, following the completion of their 14-day quarantine period. After having had detailed discussions with all stakeholders including the Chief Coaches and core probables of both the teams and after giving the utmost priority to the safety and well-being of all the athletes, it had been decided that the sporting activities will be resumed at SAI's National Centre of Excellence in Bengaluru, as scheduled earlier.



Amid growing concerns around the COVID-19 pandemic, it was necessary to have detailed discussions with all stakeholders of both the teams, which resulted in having their consensus on the resumption of sports activities from 19th August 2020 onwards while maintaining proper social distancing norms and other guidelines in the SAI SOP.

## Deep Grace Ekka Awarded Biju Patnaik Sports Award

On 29th August, on the occasion of National Sports Day, Deep Grace Ekka was awarded the Biju Patnaik Sports Award at Biju Patnaik Awards for Sports, Bravery and State Awards for Sports by Sports and Youth Services Department, Government of Odisha. The Award was presented to her family by Shri Tusharkanti Behera, Hon'ble Sports Minister, Government of Odisha.



## Hockey India congratulates Dr. RP Singh on Uttar Pradesh Government's decision to name a road after the former Indian Captain

On 31st August, Hockey India congratulated former India Captain Dr. RP Singh, after Uttar Pradesh Government honoured the services of the yesteryear's hockey star by naming a 2km-road in Churia, a village in Deoria district after him. A native of Churia, a small hamlet about 365 kms from State Capital Lucknow, Dr RP Singh went on to join the sports hostel in Lucknow at the age of 14 where he honed his skills as a hockey player.





## INFRASTRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENTS WITHIN THE COUNTRY

### New turf laid at Balewadi Stadium, Pune

Hockey Maharashtra has informed the completion with regard to laying of new full-size hockey turf at the iconic Balewadi Stadium in Pune on 22 July 2020. The pitch was manufactured by turf manufacturers Field Turf from USA.

The hockey players in Maharashtra have a fantastic opportunity to develop their game on the new turf.



### Full-size hockey pitch and a 5-a-side pitch laid in Goa

A full-size hockey pitch and a 5-a-side pitch were laid in a scenic area in Peddem, Mapusa on 29 July 2020. The athletes in Goa have a brilliant opportunity to test their skills on a brand-new pitch.

Goans Hockey has received a massive boost to grow the 5-a-side hockey game with the new 5-a-side turf as well.



## Hockey J&K informs commencement of Civil work for Astro turf Hockey Stadium at Poonch

Hockey J&K and Hockey India announced the foundation stone laying for the synthetic hockey turf at Pooch on 25 July 2020 by Hon'ble Lt Governor of J&K Sh. Girish Chandra Murmu.

For the development and promotion of hockey in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, its administration started the civil work for AstroTurf Hockey Stadium at Poonch on 28 July 2020 with the support of Hockey J&K and Hockey India.



## Foundation stone laid at Muallungthu Hockey Ground, Mizoram

A foundation stone for a new turf was laid at the Muallungthu Hockey Ground, Mizoram by Mr. Robert Romawia Royte, Honourable Sports Minister, Government of Mizoram on 28 July 2020.

Royte showed some of his hockey skills with Indian Women's Hockey Team Forward Lalremsiami when the foundation stone was laid.

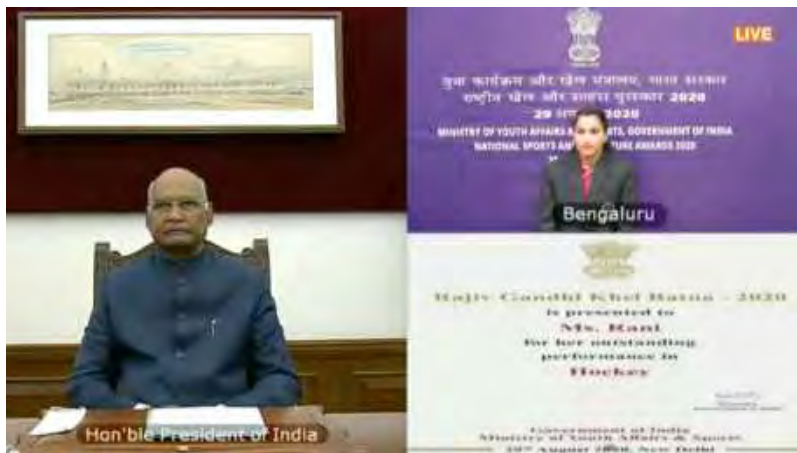




# NATIONAL AWARDS 2020

## Rani - Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award

Rani has led the Indian Women's Hockey Team to historic victories during the period of consideration (January 1, 2016 to December 31, 2019) for the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award. Some of the triumphs include the Women's Asia Cup in 2017 and Silver at the 2018 Asian Games. Rani played a critical role in the FIH Olympic Qualifiers in 2019 by scoring the deciding goal that helped in India's qualification for the Tokyo Olympics.



## Romesh Pathania - Dronacharya Award (Life-Time Category)



Romesh Pathania has been donning the coach's hat for the last 30 years. He has made an immense contribution to help build the sport of hockey in India and achieve our goals.

## Jude Felix Sebastian - Dronacharya Award (Regular Category)

Jude Felix runs his Hockey academy Jude Felix Hockey Academy (JFHA), charitable trust (regd) which has directly introduced and promoted hockey to over 1400 individuals including students, coaches, volunteers and veterans. Jude Felix also served the Junior and Senior Indian Hockey Teams in different capacities over the years.



## Ajit Singh - Dhyan Chand Award



Ajit Singh has made a huge contribution to the development of hockey in India for several years. He was part of the Olympic Bronze Medal-winning team at the 1972 Olympics as well.

## Akashdeep Singh - Arjuna Award

Akashdeep Singh has contributed to numerous victories for the Indian Men's Hockey Team in the last four years. Akashdeep played a key role in India clinching the Silver Medal at the Hockey Champions Trophy 2016 and Bronze Medal at Asian Games 2018.



## Deepika - Arjuna Award



Deepika, who has played over 200 matches for India, was the leading Goalscorer when India won Gold at the Women's Asian Champions Trophy 2016. She played a key role in India clinching the Silver Medal at the Asian Games 2018 as well.





# FEATURE STORY

**Consistent hard training has helped me stay motivated on the sidelines, says Goalkeeper Suraj Karkera**



It hasn't been an easy journey for Suraj Karkera in the international circuit. The Goalkeeper, who has featured in 26 matches for the Indian Men's Hockey Team, played his last match for India at the Tokyo 2020 Olympics Test Event in August 2019. Since then, PR Sreejesh or Krishan B Pathak has been guarding the posts for the national team. However, Karkera has found a way to keep himself motivated and he is determined to do whatever it takes to get an opportunity to play for India again.

"It has been difficult to be on the sidelines for a long time, but I am sure my chances will come. Sreejesh and Krishan have been keeping very well in the last few tournaments and that's great for the Indian team. I have continued to put in the hard yards during the National Coaching Camps and that's what has kept me motivated so far. I just want to keep honing my skills and be absolutely ready when an opportunity is presented to me," said the Goalkeeper.

Even in the span of a short international career so far, the 24-year-old has been part of some memorable victories for the Indian Men's Hockey Team. Karkera in his first year of senior international career, played a crucial role in India's victory at the Asia Cup and the Bronze Medal win at the Hockey World League Final in 2017.

"It was absolutely brilliant to be in thick of things in the first year of my senior international career. Being part of the winning team at the Asia Cup will always be a special moment for me. I started to believe that I belong at the highest level. I knew that if I keep working hard I will be able to be India's first keeper one day. I learned how to take responsibility for the team at the Asia Cup. The learnings from that tournament will always stay with me," said Karkera.

When Hockey India announced a month-long break for all members of the Indian Men and Women's Hockey Core Probables Group on 19 June 2020, everyone except Suraj Karkera decided to make their way home. The Goalkeeper made a tough decision of not going back to Mumbai since his city is one of the worst affected in India as far as the COVID-19 pandemic is concerned.

"I spoke to my parents once the month-long break was announced. They asked me if I could stay back at the SAI campus because the situation isn't great in Mumbai. After thinking about my safety, my parents and I decided that it's best for me to stay back here, even though my teammates had decided to leave. It was challenging without my teammates, but they all stayed connected with me through phone calls. I used to meet some of the support staff members during the day, so it was fine to stay here at the campus," said the 24-year-old.

While speaking about adapting to a tough situation due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Karkera expressed that the players have learned how to stay mentally strong in difficult times.

"It was certainly a challenge adapting to the lockdown. The situation taught us how to be mentally strong by maintaining our fitness and dribbling with our hockey sticks in our rooms. Everyone adapted to the situation in the best possible way. I have been reading a lot of motivational books to draw positivity. I had some time to catch up on many TV shows as well during this period. We kept ourselves busy with many activities during the lockdown," signed off the Goalkeeper.





# FEATURE STORY

## Patience and perseverance is the key to success in any sport, says Kothajit Singh Khadangbam on learnings during lockdown

The Indian Men's Hockey Team Defender Kothajit Singh Khadangbam utilized the time during the lockdown to ponder about his long international career, spanning over 200 matches for his country. Kothajit, who has been part of several memorable victories for India,



learned to value the importance of patience and the requirement of believing in oneself in every situation.

"It was a difficult time during the lockdown period. Staying away from the hockey pitch is always tough. However, I got a chance to hit the pause button during that time. I have been in the Indian team for around seven years and therefore I could utilize the lockdown period to think about how I have progressed in my career. I have certainly realized that being patient and continuing to persevere are the key elements in any sportsperson's life. Opportunities will come and go, but the important thing is to keep giving my hundred percent and believing in myself every time I am on the pitch," said the 28-year-old.

Kothajit used the time during the lockdown to focus on his fitness at the Sports Authority of India campus in Bengaluru. The Defender emphasized on the fact that the fitness schedules were a big motivation factor during the lockdown.

"Maintaining our physical fitness was our biggest goal during the lockdown. Consistent exercise certainly helps one to be mentally and physically fresh. Carrying out the fitness schedules was the best part of my day. It helped me to stay motivated during a difficult time. I also watched a lot of footage of my previous



matches and I have noted down certain aspects that I will need to work on in the upcoming months. Watching hockey matches and doing stickwork drills were major sources of motivation as well," said Kothajit.

The Defender was disappointed to miss out on the FIH Olympic Qualifiers last year, however he was delighted to be called back to the national squad ahead of the FIH Hockey Pro League 2020 matches against the Netherlands.

"It was certainly difficult to miss out on playing one of the biggest tournaments like the FIH Olympic Qualifiers. However, it was wonderful to see our team book a berth at the Tokyo Olympics in front of our home crowd. We have a lot of talented Defenders in our team and it's great to compete for a spot in the national squad. It really shows the kind of quality we have on our side. It was amazing to be back in the Indian squad earlier this year. Hopefully, I can keep putting in the hard yards in the training sessions in the future and be a consistent member of the Indian side for the upcoming matches," said Kothajit.

The Defender has been an inspiration for many aspiring hockey players in India, especially for the athletes coming up from the state of Manipur. Looking back at his rich vein of experience for the Indian Men's Hockey Team, Kothajit recalled the Gold medal victories at the Asian Games 2014 and Asian Champions Trophy 2016.

"The year 2014 was definitely one of the best years of my career. We were disappointed to lose to Australia at the Commonwealth Games final, but we made up for our loss with a brilliant victory over Pakistan in the Asian Games final later in the year. Being part of the Gold Medal-winning team at the Asian Champions Trophy 2016 was also one of the best moments of my career. We defeated Pakistan in the final of that tournament as well," signed off Kothajit.





# FEATURE STORY

## Rani's struggle and rise as a player gives me hope for the future, says Rajwinder Kaur

Born in a small village named Mugal Chak in Naushehra Pannuataluk near Tarn Taran, Punjab, Rajwinder Kaur the eldest of three sisters and a brother grew up in a culture where girls had to work the chores at home and sweat it out in nearby farms for a daily wage. Studying was never mandatory, and playing hockey was a rarity.

Her father an auto driver and mother a homemaker, there were days in Rajwinder's growing up years when hoping to eat three meals a day was a luxury. But Rajwinder's fate was to change when a few seniors in her school Sri Guru Arjun Dev Public School insisted on her taking up hockey. "I wanted to be an athlete. I had the speed but when I was in standard IX, my seniors asked me to pursue hockey, I took the chance," says the 21-year-old who is part of the Senior Women's Core probables group.

Her speed, abilities as a striker and natural flair caught the attention of national selectors during domestic tournaments in 2015. Soon, she was picked for the Junior National Camp and was given an opportunity to play for India at the U-18 Asia Cup 2016 in Malaysia. "In 2017, I received a call up for the Senior National Camp where I got to closely interact with several top players. Everyone comes from very difficult backgrounds and each one's personal story is motivating but Rani's struggle in her younger days and her subsequent rise in the sport gives me hope



because I too come from a similar background and I hope I can also pull my family out of poverty by doing well in hockey," explains Kaur, a striker who also doubles up as attacking midfielder.

Having been a regular in the Senior National Core probable group since 2017, Kaur patiently awaits her turn to earn her maiden International Cap. "I do feel disappointed when I don't see my name in the 18-member squad but I know I still have a lot of time and Chief Coach Sjoerd points out my shortcomings in a positive way and encourages me to improve on those areas. I know I have the skills and speed, I need to work on my fitness which is a weak point and since I mostly played as a striker in Junior days, I need to adapt to playing in the midfield," she says.

While speaking about her time during the nation-wide lockdown when the team was in SAI, Bengaluru, Rajwinder expressed that she used the period to build self-confidence and learn the English language. "When I came into the Senior Camp, I found it very hard to understand because I didn't know English. I used the time during lockdown to learn the language using different books, online translations, and I would stand in front of the mirror and speak English," Kaur recalls emphasizing that the period taught her how to be self-motivated.

Rajwinder's dream doesn't only include playing for the Indian Women's Hockey Team, but she dreams of contributing to memorable victories for the Indian team in the future as well.

"When I get my opportunity to play for the national team, I hope I will play at my absolute best and seal my place in the side. It's not only about playing for India, but contributing to memorable wins for the team as well. I dream of playing at the big stage for the Indian team and playing a crucial role in the team's progress in the future," signed off Rajwinder.





# FEATURE STORY

## Indian Men's Hockey Team have a realistic chance of winning a Medal in Tokyo, says Sardar Singh

Former Indian Men's Hockey Team Captain Sardar Singh regrets the fact that he was not part of an Olympic Medal-winning team during his career. However, he believes that the current Indian team has a good chance of bagging the elusive Olympic Medal in Tokyo next year. Speaking about the team, Sardar said that the side has grown from strength to strength in the past year.

"Having played 314 International Matches, I will always regret not being able to add an Olympic Medal on the wall back home. But watching this team grow from strength to strength in the past year and the way they played the FIH Hockey Pro League earlier this year, I have great hope that they can bag that elusive Olympic Medal. They definitely have a realistic chance in Tokyo," said the former Indian Captain.

Sardar feels that the Indian team still needs to improve in certain areas and he emphasized the fact that the side should work on their shortcomings in the upcoming months.

"The next one year will be extremely critical for this team. They have the time to build on the new talent that is available. Some of the youngsters like Rajkumar, Dilpreet, Vivek Sagar, Gursahib have shown great promise and trying them in big-match scenarios like the Pro League was a good decision by Chief Coach Graham Reid. With the Olympics being postponed, we have the time to work on our short-comings. Converting chances continues to be one of the grey areas but I feel we have been finishing much better than we were two or three years ago.



Good matches in the Pro League next year against Argentina, Great Britain, Germany, Spain Former Indian Men's Hockey Team Captain Sardar Singh regrets the fact that he was not part of an Olympic Medal-winning team during his career. However, he believes that the current Indian team has a good chance of bagging the elusive Olympic Medal in Tokyo next year. Speaking about the team, Sardar said that the side has grown from strength to strength in the past year.

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The legendary player has been part of India's important feats in the past decade, having won Silver Medals at the 2010 and 2014 Commonwealth Games, two Asia Cup Golds (in

2007 and 2017) and a Silver (2013), Gold at the 2014 Asian Games, Bronze at the World League Final in Raipur 2015 and Silver Medal at the 2011 Champions Challenge. In 2018, he was part of the Indian team that won a Silver Medal at the FIH Champions Trophy in Breda 2018 and a Bronze Medal at the 18th Asian Games Jakarta-Palembang 2018. Looking back at his own career, Sardar recalled the fond memories from the year 2014.

"There have been some very memorable matches in my career. Leading the Indian Team to the 2014 Asian Games Gold, the first in 16 years, will always be on top of that list not just because it was historic and beating Pakistan in a Final is always an icing on the cake, this win set off a new beginning for the Indian Men's Hockey Team. In 2014, we were on the cusp of greater things to come and there was no looking back," said Sardar.

From Sant Nagar in Sirsa, Haryana, Sardar born to a humble farmer's family played his first international match with the junior national team during India's 2003-04 tour of Poland. He made his Senior India debut in 2006 against Pakistan at the bilateral series and also led the Indian team at the 2008 Sultan Azlan Shah Cup.

Sardar was awarded player of the tournament in the 2010 & 2012 Sultan Azlan Shah Cup and 2012 Summer Olympics Qualifiers. Sardar was also included in the 2010 and 2011 FIH All-Star Team and won the Asian Men Player of the Year 2012. He was conferred with the prestigious Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award in 2017 and was earlier awarded the Padma Shri in 2015.

"My journey in hockey has been rather satisfying because I was part of that era which saw a resurgence. We came a long way from finishing last at the London Olympics in 2012 to being ranked No.6 in the World when I hung up my boots in 2018. Now, the current team is poised at No.4 in the World Rankings which should definitely bring a lot of confidence to this team in the lead up to their Tokyo Olympic campaign," signed off Sardar.





# COVER STORY

## Another year to prepare for Tokyo Olympics

**The Indian Men's and Women's Hockey Team look at the Olympic postponement as a golden opportunity to up their game and ensure they are strong contenders for a medal**

On 24 March this year, the Indian Women's Core probable group was going through their routine - a mandatory post-training team meeting in the evening -- at Sports Authority of India, Bengaluru. These meetings are usually to discuss their upcoming sessions, areas to improve and feedback from the coaching staff with regard to each player's progress.

But a few minutes into the meeting, Chief Coach Sjoerd Marijne receives a message on his mobile phone which he promptly disclosed to his team. He said, "IOC and Organizing Committee of Tokyo Olympics has announced that the Olympic Games will be postponed to next year."

There was an eerie silence in the meeting hall and notably the players wore a disappointed look. But they were quick to assume a confident posture and in reassuring voice, they exclaimed, "Not to be disappointed Coach. We will take this news in our stride and use this period to improve our game and be a contender for a medal."

These reassuring words coming from the players brought about a sense of pride in Marijne, who has been with the team since early 2017. "I felt

that the players were truly mature in the way they accepted this news and assured me that they will continue to remain focused on their goal to win a medal. That meant a lot to me," he said.



The postponement also meant that many players in the Women's team would have to ward-off pressure from their families to find a suitable groom and 'settle down.'

"While the postponement gives us another year to prepare, this also meant that we would have to handle pressure from our families who wanted us to get married post-Olympic Games. But we are fortunate that our families have been extremely understanding and they are aware

that doing well at the Olympics is our first priority," expressed Skipper Rani,



### Nothing deterring team's goal

For both Men's and Women's Teams, the postponement gives them a whole year to refocus and improve their performance. Though COVID-19 pandemic has posed several challenges in their preparations, they are taking it in their stride.

"It's about being mentally strong. This period is surely a testing time for all of us and it's important for us to be patient. This will pass and we need to feel fortunate that we have great support during these tough times from our Coaching Staff, Hockey India and SAI. They have collectively helped us a great deal in ensuring we are in a safe environment," expressed PR Sreejesh, India's ace Goalkeeper.



Adding to this, experienced Forward SV Sunil said, "I feel the bonding we share with our teammates helps us get through the lockdown phase followed by the time we were quarantined after we return to camp. Regular Zoom meetings with players, different activities online to engage the players and Coaching Staff keeping a constant check on our mental well-being was a huge support. We are definitely in good shape to resume sporting activities."



Representing the Women's team's views, ace Goalkeeper Savita said, "I think first and foremost, health is a priority and adhering to lockdown guidelines and quarantine rules were for our own good. Now that we are allowed to resume sporting activities, it is time for us to refocus on our goals and not allow any distractions to affect our focus."





## Re-start slow and steady

While the teams are gearing up to resume sports activities in SAI, Bengaluru after completing two weeks of mandatory quarantine following a six-week break, the Chief Coaches sounded off a word of cautiousness.

Chief Coach Graham Reid put things into perspective. He said, "I am extremely proud of the way the players have handled this situation (lockdown and quarantine) and I am happy everyone was on board when we checked with them about going ahead with the National Camp as planned. But as much as we are eager to resume sports activities, we would want to start slow, follow all the SOP protocols. Players' health, safety and fitness is top priority and we will not rush into anything. We will be starting with absolute basics and not chase our prior form immediately. The team understands it will take us at least 2-3 months before we return to the form we were in during the FIH Hockey Pro League."



Marijne too reflected the same thoughts adding, "There is no doubt we miss competition and full-intensity training but we all understand that the COVID-19 threat is still looming large and there is no need to rush into anything. For now, our focus is on fitness and we will be taking it really slow in these coming weeks with minimal impact on players both physically and mentally as they will be resuming sports activities after a long gap."

## Confident of a good show

The consistent performances by both teams and subsequent improvement in their World rankings, has been an encouraging sign. The year 2019 is worth highlighting with both teams earning Olympic berths by winning their respective FIH Olympic Qualifiers and Olympic Test Event in Tokyo as well as the FIH Hockey Series Finals 2019 have been confidence-enhancing achievements. "

I think these victories have brought about a tremendous sense of self-belief that we can achieve desirable results in top tournaments. We have learnt not to buckle under pressure in tough situations and we have been able to bounce back from slower start. There has been tremendous learning over these past two years on various aspects and I am confident the team will be back to its roaring form soon. We continue to remain optimistic about a good show in Tokyo," expressed Rani.

Men's Team Skipper Manpreet too opined the same. "I am sure we will use this next one year to be more effective on the field. We will be playing the Asian Champions Trophy and the FIH Hockey Pro League before the Olympic Games and these matches will definitely be a good platform to assess where we stand and what we need to fine tune before we begin our campaign in Tokyo. This postponement will also give young new comers some time to further up their game and be in contention for a spot in the team for Tokyo," Manpreet concluded.







## HOCKEY MEN'S SCHEDULE

### SATURDAY 24 JULY 2021

NORTH PITCH		
9:30	JAPAN	AUSTRALIA
11:45	NETHERLANDS	BELGIUM
18:30	GREAT BRITAIN	SOUTH AFRICA
SOUTH PITCH		
10:00	NEW ZEALAND	INDIA
12:15	ARGENTINA	SPAIN
19:00	CANADA	GERMANY

### SUNDAY 25 JULY 2021

NORTH PITCH		
18:30	INDIA	AUSTRALIA
20:45	SPAIN	NEW ZEALAND
SOUTH PITCH		
19:00	JAPAN	ARGENTINA
21:15	SOUTH AFRICA	NETHERLANDS

### MONDAY 26 JULY 2021

NORTH PITCH		
9:30	GERMANY	BELGIUM
11:45	GREAT BRITAIN	CANADA

### TUESDAY 27 JULY 2021

NORTH PITCH		
9:30	ARGENTINA	AUSTRALIA
11:45	JAPAN	NEW ZEALAND
18:30	BELGIUM	SOUTH AFRICA
20:45	NETHERLANDS	CANADA
SOUTH PITCH		
10:00	INDIA	SPAIN
12:15	GERMANY	GREAT BRITAIN

### WEDNESDAY 28 JULY 2021

NORTH PITCH		
20:45	JAPAN	SPAIN
SOUTH PITCH		
21:15	AUSTRALIA	NEW ZEALAND

### THURSDAY 29 JULY 2021

NORTH PITCH		
9:30	INDIA	ARGENTINA
11:45	SOUTH AFRICA	GERMANY
SOUTH PITCH		
10:00	BELGIUM	CANADA
12:15	NETHERLANDS	GREAT BRITAIN

### FRIDAY 30 JULY 2021

NORTH PITCH		
18:30	JAPAN	INDIA
20:45	GERMANY	NETHERLANDS
SOUTH PITCH		
10:00	AUSTRALIA	SPAIN
12:15	CANADA	SOUTH AFRICA
19:00	ARGENTINA	NEW ZEALAND
21:15	BELGIUM	GREAT BRITAIN

### SUNDAY 1 AUGUST 2021

9:30	QUARTER-FINAL
12:00	QUARTER-FINAL
18:30	QUARTER-FINAL
21:00	QUARTER-FINAL

### TUESDAY 3 AUGUST 2021

10:30	SEMI-FINAL
19:00	SEMI-FINAL

### THURSDAY 5 AUGUST 2021

10:30	BRONZE MEDAL
19:00	GOLD MEDAL

## POOLS

POOL A	POOL B
AUSTRALIA	BELGIUM
ARGENTINA	NETHERLANDS
INDIA	GERMANY
SPAIN	GREAT BRITAIN
NEW ZEALAND	CANADA
JAPAN	SOUTH AFRICA

**NOTES**  
 FIH, IOC and TOCOG reserve the right to amend the match schedule for any reason.  
 Quarter-Finals: The sequence of matches will be advised after the completion of the pool phase.  
 Semi-Finals: The sequence of matches will be advised after the completion of the Quarter-Finals.

*Hockey Invites*



## HOCKEY WOMEN'S SCHEDULE

### SATURDAY 24 JULY 2021

NORTH PITCH		
20:45	NETHERLANDS	INDIA
SOUTH PITCH		
21:15	IRELAND	SOUTH AFRICA

### SUNDAY 25 JULY 2021

NORTH PITCH		
9:30	GREAT BRITAIN	GERMANY
11:45	JAPAN	CHINA
SOUTH PITCH		
10:00	AUSTRALIA	SPAIN
12:15	NEW ZEALAND	ARGENTINA

### MONDAY 26 JULY 2021

NORTH PITCH		
18:30	SOUTH AFRICA	GREAT BRITAIN
20:45	JAPAN	NEW ZEALAND
SOUTH PITCH		
10:00	NETHERLANDS	IRELAND
12:15	AUSTRALIA	CHINA
19:00	ARGENTINA	SPAIN
21:15	GERMANY	INDIA

### WEDNESDAY 28 JULY 2021

NORTH PITCH		
9:30	NETHERLANDS	SOUTH AFRICA
11:45	NEW ZEALAND	SPAIN
18:30	JAPAN	AUSTRALIA
SOUTH PITCH		
10:00	GREAT BRITAIN	INDIA
12:15	GERMANY	IRELAND
19:00	ARGENTINA	CHINA

### THURSDAY 29 JULY 2021

NORTH PITCH		
18:30	SPAIN	CHINA
20:45	JAPAN	ARGENTINA
SOUTH PITCH		
19:00	GREAT BRITAIN	NETHERLANDS
21:15	NEW ZEALAND	AUSTRALIA

### FRIDAY 30 JULY 2021

NORTH PITCH		
9:30	SOUTH AFRICA	GERMANY
11:45	IRELAND	INDIA

### SATURDAY 31 JULY 2021

NORTH PITCH		
9:30	CHINA	NEW ZEALAND
11:45	ARGENTINA	AUSTRALIA
18:30	GERMANY	NETHERLANDS
20:45	IRELAND	GREAT BRITAIN
SOUTH PITCH		
10:00	JAPAN	SPAIN
12:15	INDIA	SOUTH AFRICA

### MONDAY 2 AUGUST 2021

9:30	QUARTER-FINAL
12:00	QUARTER-FINAL
18:30	QUARTER-FINAL
21:00	QUARTER-FINAL

### WEDNESDAY 4 AUGUST 2021

10:30	SEMI-FINAL
19:00	SEMI-FINAL

### FRIDAY 6 AUGUST 2021

10:30	BRONZE MEDAL
19:00	GOLD MEDAL

## POOLS

POOL A	POOL B
NETHERLANDS	AUSTRALIA
GERMANY	ARGENTINA
GREAT BRITAIN	NEW ZEALAND
IRELAND	SPAIN
INDIA	CHINA
SOUTH AFRICA	JAPAN

**NOTES**  
 FIH, IOC and TOCOG reserve the right to amend the match schedule for any reason.  
 Quarter-Finals: The sequence of matches will be advised after the completion of the pool phase.  
 Semi-Finals: The sequence of matches will be advised after the completion of the Quarter-Finals.

*Hockey Invites*



# FEATURE STORY

## Looking to make a difference once hockey is back on track, says youngster Sharmila Devi

After a fruitful debut year with the Indian Women's Hockey Team where she helped her team qualify for the Tokyo Olympics, 18-year-old Forward Sharmila Devi is itching to get back on the field to make a difference. Having found time for a reunion with her family back home in Hisar in July, the youngster spoke about her journey so far with the Senior team, and what is in store in her young, yet promising career.

"Life has really been going on at a very fast pace for me in the past one year, but I couldn't have asked for more. Having made my debut at the Olympic Test Event in Tokyo back in August 2019, it was an experience of a lifetime for me because we won the tournament there," said Sharmila.

"For me, it was something I had only dreamt of - to be able to play and train with the best players from our country. When I was in the Junior team set-up, I would just watch them train during National Camps, and I would get goosebumps, but when I started playing, it just really felt amazing," added the youngster.





Having found the time to reflect on her journey with the Senior team, Sharmila recalls the FIH Hockey Olympic Qualifiers 2019 against USA as her favourite moment so far. "It was definitely a huge moment for me, to have represented the country at such a huge tournament. We were looking to secure our berth in the Tokyo Olympics and were playing against such a strong opposition, so it felt really good to have done well, and helped the team in achieving our goal. I'm looking forward to more such victories and enjoyable moments with the team," said the Forward who had scored India's second goal in the 5-1 win in the first leg against USA.

With the World No. 9 Indian Women's Hockey team given a break from National Camp in July, Sharmila got the opportunity to spend time with her family and made sure she was preparing well for the resumption of hockey action. "It has been a really different experience to not have felt that adrenaline rush of playing the sport, but I'm just making sure I'm maintaining my fitness and am ready to play as soon as we are allowed," expressed the 18-year-old who has 9 appearances for the Senior team.

Speaking about what she makes of her time with the Senior squad, Sharmila credited the Chief Coach

and senior players for making her feel welcome. "I feel I've been really fortunate to have been playing under such a good Chief Coach in Sjoerd Marijne, along with such experienced players like Rani and Vandana Katariya who have made me feel at home. There's so much for me to learn, and I want to make sure I am doing everything right to develop as a decent player for my country. I am hoping that we will be able to play hockey again soon, and I am really looking forward to making a difference for my team once that happens and we start playing the top teams," signed off Sharmila.



# FEATURE STORY

**At the age of 17, Indian Junior Women's Team's Forward Mumtaz Khan is defeating the odds to turn into a world-beater**



The story of young Mumtaz Khan, who plays as a Forward for the Indian Junior Women's Hockey Team, is one of hardships, grit, determination and great potential. The 17-year-old who hails from the city of Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, happened to choose hockey only by coincidence, but has become one of the brightest prospects for the country after putting in impressive performances in the last couple of years.

In a candid chat, Mumtaz reminisced her early days. "I believe it was in the year 2011 that I was spotted at one of the races I was participating in for my school. It was Neelam Siddiqui who was present on the occasion and told my father that he should put me into the sport of hockey. I didn't really know much about the sport back then because I was so young, but as I started watching and playing it, I started developing a real interest," said the teenager who was eventually enrolled into the Lucknow hostel in 2014 and started training under Siddiqui.

"I feel it was just a coincidence that Coach (Siddiqui) found me there in Agra, and the rest that has followed has been due to the hard work that I have put in," she added.

Mumtaz, whose father and mother work as vegetable vendors in Lucknow, has many goals in mind and one of them is to help her family. "I do come from a very humble background so one of the factors in me playing hockey was that I might be able to help my parents. I have been fortunate enough to have represented the Indian Junior

Women's Team and have always aimed at giving my all on the pitch, and I am hoping that it can translate into a bright future for us off the field," expressed the 17-year-old.

Lauded for her efforts by the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi at the 3rd Youth Olympic Games 2018, where her 10 goals helped India in securing the Silver Medal, Mumtaz says she wants to aim for bigger things, but is looking to take it one step at a time. "I know that whatever I have done so far is nothing as compared to what I want to achieve in my career, so I don't want to get too ahead of myself. I want to ensure I am taking small baby steps, and doing the right things always. I am happy to have the support of my parents and my Coaches, and my dream is to repay their faith in whatever way possible," said the Forward who has also won the Bronze Medal at the 4th Girls U-18 Asia Cup 2016, Silver Medal at the 6-Nations Invitational Tournament 2018, and the Gold Medal at the Cantor Fitzgerald U21 International 4-Nations Tournament 2019.

The journey for the youngster has been full of ups and downs, but the 17-year-old is determined to keep shining for the country. "It is no secret that I have had difficult moments personally, and sometimes it has been difficult for my parents also, but I am glad that they have always supported me no matter what, and I can't wait to make them happy. For that, I have very clear goals in mind, which are to perform very well in each training session and each match that I play for my country, and eventually help my team in winning medals at big tournaments like the Olympics and the Asian Games," signed off Mumtaz.





# GUEST COLUMN

## 'Repeating history of Tokyo 1964 in 2021' by Harbinder Singh



"I have very vivid memories from our Final against Pakistan in the 1964 Tokyo Olympic Games. It was a tense Final and the Umpire had warned both teams that if there were to be any foul during the course of the match, then the player would be given a red card and he would be out of the match.

We had come into the Final after some very strong performances in the league matches against Belgium (2-0), Germany (1-1 draw), Spain (1-1), Hong Kong (6-0), Malaysia (3-1), Canada (3-0) and Netherlands (2-1). In the Semi Final, we had beaten Australia (3-1).

In the first half of the Final, both India and Pakistan created really good moves, strong chances to score but neither of us succeeded. After a 0-0 stalemate in the first half, India created a penalty corner within five minutes of the second half. This was a really good opportunity to score. The hit was taken by Prithipal Singh, who was in great nick having scored 10 goals in total at the Olympic Games. But the hit was defended as the ball hit Pakistan Captain (Manzoor Hussain) Atif's foot. This led to the

Umpire awarding India a penalty stroke.

This was our golden opportunity and Mohinder Lal was brilliant in converting the goal. We took a 1-0 lead and held on to it till the last second. Though Pakistan did everything they could to equalise and take a lead, we had defended the score with all our heart. It was a very memorable match and a very thrilling one for me personally because it was my first Olympic Games. Winning a Gold Medal in my first Olympics was surely a great feeling.

Now after more than half a century, the Olympics is again taking place in Tokyo where I saw my dream come true with the Indian Team winning the Gold Medal. I feel it would be a great opportunity for the women team to create history for the very first time and for the men team to repeat this history in the same place by winning a Gold Medal and make it as memorable as it was for us in 1964.

It is every hockey fan's dream to watch India win the highest honour -- the Olympic Medal. We have a year to go for the Olympic Games to start, and I wish all the players and support staff preparing for the Tokyo Olympics the very best. I wish they bring laurels for the country."

**- Harbinder Singh, Member of the 1964 Gold Medal winning Indian Men's Hockey Team**





# GUEST COLUMN

## Hockey India Coaching Education Pathway provides a systematic Coaching structure in India By Bharat Chetri



COACHING  
EDUCATION  
PATHWAY

A definite need for having a systematic Coaching structure is a massive aspect when it comes to the development of players and the sport in the country. The improvement that we have seen in the last decade where both our teams have risen in the FIH World Rankings is down to Hockey India's efforts of improving both the domestic structure, as well as providing upcoming Coaches with the right insights through the Hockey India Coaching Education Pathway. It has been amazing to see Hockey India making considerable efforts during the pandemic as well to ensure that the Coaching workshops aren't affected by conducting the course online which helped the Coaches to continue their own development and knowledge.

The Hockey India Coaching Education Pathway is a brilliant platform for former players to pursue a career in coaching. The course helps aspiring Coaches to understand the right process and nuances of Coaching. Through the Hockey India Coaching Education Pathway course, one can develop a mindset of a Coach and the knack of identifying talented players who can be groomed into great athletes for our country.

As a candidate moves from Hockey India Coaching Education Pathway Level 1 to Level 2, the candidates delve into the intricacies of physical fitness, video



analysis and Coaching a young team like U-12 and U-14 sides. The course also provides candidates with an opportunity to study and be assessed on their coaching theoretical knowledge. The candidates have a brilliant opportunity to further improve their skills and knowledge of the technicalities involved in the sport of hockey before becoming a full-time Coach.

Hockey India has done a fantastic job in terms of structuring and implementing the Hockey India Coaching Education Pathway through knowledge and practical-based courses that will equip the candidates to deliver within the modern hockey environment. The group of successful candidates from Hockey India Coaching Education Pathway Level '2 Coaching Course have received a fantastic opportunity to enroll in the FIH Academy Level 1 Coaching Course as well.

The standard of the Hockey India Coaching Education Pathway Coaching Courses are impeccable, therefore, it's a brilliant platform for anyone who is aspiring to be a hockey coach. If we produce fantastic Coaches in India every year, then we will surely see a massive improvement in the players, especially at the grassroots level, which will ultimately result in much better results for the Indian Men's and Women's Teams. Therefore, the Hockey India Coaching Education Pathway Coaching Courses are an integral part of the Indian hockey structure.





## HOCKEY INDIA CARES

### Hockey India provides Rs 10,000/- financial assistance to each of the 61 core probable athletes not holding employment to enable them to return to sporting activities

With sports activities across India slowly resuming post the Covid-19 nation-wide lockdown, the Hockey India Executive Board announced its immediate support to 61 athletes from across the senior and junior men and women core probables that are not currently employed. From this initiative, sixty one athletes received this financial assistance from Hockey India, which included 30 Junior Women, 26 Junior Men, 4 Senior Women and 1 Senior Men core probable.

The objective was to provide basic financial relief for the athletes to be able to assist them to again resume sporting activities.

"The ongoing battle with the Covid-19 pandemic has had an adverse impact on athletes who don't have jobs, for them to be able to continue sporting activities while their families face financial constraints will be difficult. Hockey India was keen to find a way to give them some immediate relief and decided to help these players with Rs 10,000 each as financial assistance in these difficult times, which would mean they would not add any additional burden on their families as they look to resume sports activities in the near future. We hope this assistance helps the players to soon resume sporting activities and give them the necessary confidence to focus their energies on excelling for the country." expressed Hockey India Officiating President, Mr. Gyanendro Ningombam.



# Member Unit Activities

## Kerala Hockey

P R Sreejesh, Indian Men's Hockey Team Goalkeeper, interacted with more than 300 players of Kerala Hockey on 19th July via a webinar. Right from goalkeeping techniques to the modernity of the sport to how to maintain the right fitness, Sreejesh answered them all and more.



## Hockey Unit of Tamil Nadu

In an effort of developing hockey at the grassroots level, Hockey Unit of Tamil Nadu held an interactive virtual session on 16th August for the young and upcoming state players with Olympian and Indian Men's Hockey Team goalkeeper, PR Sreejesh who was joined by other eminent guests like Mr. Rajamani. Mr. Mohamed Imran and Ms. M. Renukalakshmi, General Secretary, HUTN.

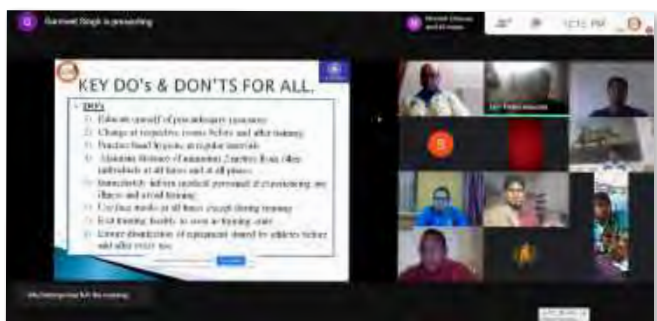
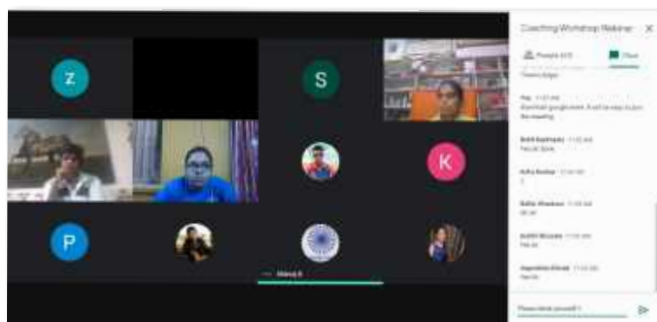
The Hockey Unit of Tamil Nadu organised a webinar on 22nd & 23rd August focusing on Grassroots Level Coaching Ideas and Sports Nutrition. Here are some glimpses of the same.





# Hockey Maharashtra

Hockey Maharashtra organised an online webinar on 8th August to activate the Coaches of the state with the techniques and Guidelines of modern Hockey. Here are some glimpses from the virtual event.



# Hockey Bengal

Hockey Bengal has started conducting online sessions for Umpires and Technical officials from 21st August, under the tutelage of Dr. Md. Khalid Hussain, in an effort to brush up their knowledge and keep them up-to-date. Here are some glimpses from the sessions



# #NationalSportsDayWithHI

## Chhattisgarh Hockey

Chhattisgarh Hockey arranged a live interaction with the international Hockey player, Mrinal Choubey to engage its members to celebrate National Sports Day 2020.



## Citizen Hockey XI

Kids of Citizen Hockey XI kick-started the day with high spirits as they exchanged greetings of National Sports Day with each other.



## Dhyan Chand Hockey Academy

Dhyan Chand Hockey Academy's National Sports Day 2020 celebrations began with paying tribute to the Wizard of Hockey Major Dhyan Chand.





## Hockey Jammu & Kashmir

Hockey Jammu & Kashmir celebrated National Sports Day 2020 by displaying their artistic and hockey skills and paying homage to Major Dhyan Chand at kk Hakku Stadium, Jammu .



## Hockey Jharkhand

Hockey Jharkhand's National Sports Day celebrations began with mask making activities and paying a floral homage to Major Dhyan Chand.



## Hockey Madhya Pradesh

Hockey Madhya Pradesh celebrated National Sports Day in various districts on 29th August, 2020. They further paid homage to Major Dhyan Chand with tales about his impressive life story.



## Goans Hockey

Goans Hockey celebrated National Sports Day by organising the 60seconds hockey skill challenge and remember Major Dhyan Chand on his 115th Birth Anniversary.



## Hockey Bengal

Hockey Bengal left no stones unturned in their National Sports Day 2020 celebration From a floral homage to Major Dhyan Chand to tree plantation, the members made their participation count.



## Hockey Bihar

Hockey Bihar celebrated National Sports Day by paying the floral homage to Major Dhyan Chand on his 115th birth Anniversary.





## Hockey Maharashtra

Hockey Maharashtra in association with Department of Sports, MYAS, Government of India & Government of Maharashtra felicitated National players & Administrators for their contribution towards the Sport to celebrate National Sports Day 2020.



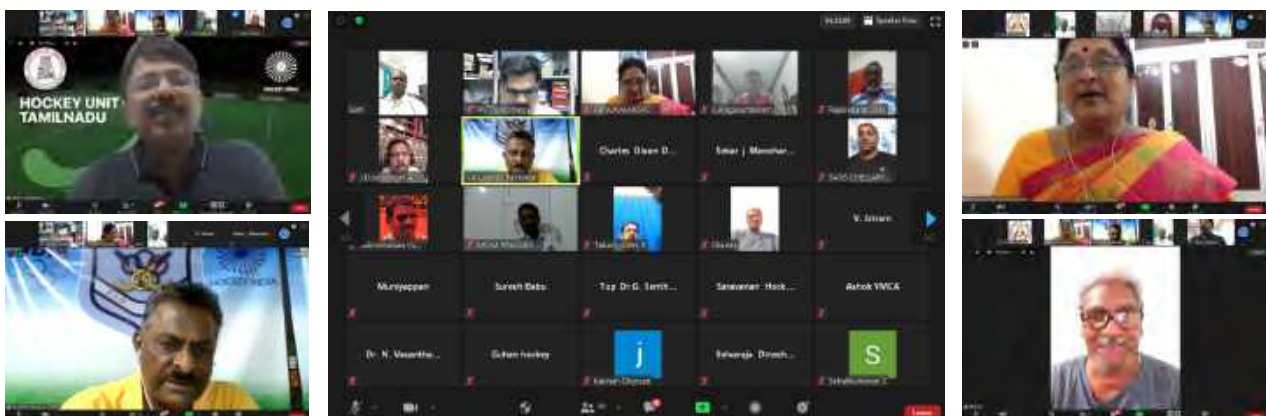
## Hockey Rajasthan

On the occasion of National Sports Day, Hockey Rajasthan had organised a webinar on the importance of the day to engage its members and celebrate together. Here are some glimpses from the event.



## Hockey Unit of Tamil Nadu

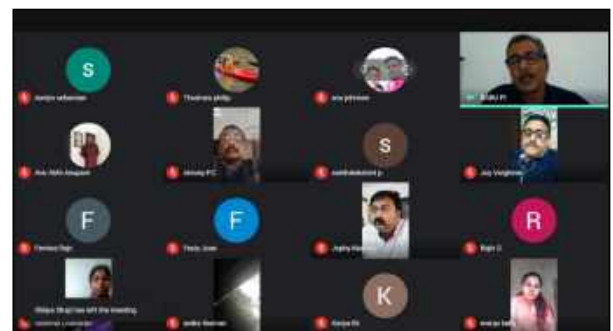
On the occasion of National Sports Day, Hockey Unit of Tamil Nadu arranged a Zoom conference with Padma Shri and Olympian, V Bhaskaran. And the Topic was tribute to Major Dhyani Chand and a guide to modern field Hockey Tactics & Techniques.





## Kerala Hockey

On the occasion of National Sports day 2020 Kerala Hockey organised a Live interaction with Former Indian athletes of the State to convey motivational speeches.



## Malwa Hockey Academy

Malwa Hockey Academy Hanumangarh celebrated National Sports Day and remember Major Dhyan Chand on his Birth Anniversary.



## Mata Sahib Kaur Hockey Academy

Mata Sahib Kaur Hockey Academy Jarkhar celebrated National Sports Day with a webinar on importance of National Sports Day.



## Mumbai School Sports Association

Mumbai School Sports Association Organised a webinar to celebrate National Sports Day.





## Naval Tata Hockey Academy - Odisha

Naval Tata Hockey Academy, Odisha had organized a webinar saluting the Hockey Magician Major Dhyan Chand & Sir Dorabji Tata on the occasion of National Sports Day 2020. The Grassroots centres of the Academy in Sundargarh & Sambalpur districts also paid homage to the Hockey legend.



## SDT Hockey Nilgiris Academy

SDT Hockey Nilgiris Academy's National Sports Day celebrations included special art pieces being created by a number of excited participants.



## Telangana Hockey

Telangana Hockey celebrated National Sports Day by remembering Major Dhyan Chand and felicitating outstanding sports person from the state.



# Media Highlights



**MAIL TODAY SPECIAL**

## Competition shapes careers

By Rohit Parmer in New Delhi

It's the season of hockey players. Harmanpreet Singh will be the centre of the FIH Hockey Junior World Cup starting from this week. In the weeks that follow, the competition ahead of summer of the country's athletes for various championships has already begun. In the past few months, the country's athletes have been competing in various international events. The competition ahead of summer of the country's athletes for various championships has already begun. In the past few months, the country's athletes have been competing in various international events.

### Dragflick star Harmanpreet Singh braces for changes in sports world post pandemic

Harmanpreet Singh, the dragflick star, is bracing for changes in the sports world post-pandemic. She has been a key player for India in various international events. She has been a key player for India in various international events. She has been a key player for India in various international events.

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Mail Today

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### Hockey players returned to school, took exam

Hockey players returned to school and took exams. The players had been away from school for some time due to the pandemic. They have now returned and are taking their regular school exams.

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The New Indian Express

## Sardar Singh's discipline was infectious, feels Antil



Vishal Antil (far left) closely observed Sardar Singh during the junior national camp in Bengaluru. Antil was inspired by Singh's discipline and leadership on the field.

Vishal Antil (far left) closely observed Sardar Singh during the junior national camp in Bengaluru. Antil was inspired by Singh's discipline and leadership on the field.

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Celebs share what they want to do once they get COVID se azaadi!

Celebs share what they want to do once they get COVID se azaadi! Many celebrities have expressed their desire to travel and spend time with family once the pandemic is over.

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### Rani's struggle, rise as a player gives me hope, says Rajwinder

Rajwinder Singh says Rani's journey from a struggling player to a star is inspiring. He shares his own experiences and how he has learned from her.



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### HI application for coaches

Hockey India on Wednesday launched its open application system for registration of coaches and technical officials. Any interested candidate can submit his or her application through the system for further approval.

### Sarang promoted to Advancement Panel Technical Officer by FIH

Hockey India on Monday congratulated Sarangi for his promotion to the Advancement Panel by the International Hockey Federation (FIH). Sarangi has been promoted to the rank of Technical Officer.

### Youngster says he looked up to the hockey legend

A young player says he looked up to a hockey legend. He shares how the legend's skills and attitude inspired him to become a professional player.

### Sreejesh has set the bar very high for goalkeepers in India

Sreejesh has set the bar very high for goalkeepers in India. His exceptional skills and leadership on the field have inspired a new generation of goalkeepers.

### Youngster says he looked up to the hockey legend

A young player says he looked up to a hockey legend. He shares how the legend's skills and attitude inspired him to become a professional player.



# This hockey captain is allowing herself to lose to children

Rani Rampal, captain of the Indian women's team, says the lockdown has given her a chance to spend time with the young ones in her family

mailnews.reports@timesgroup.com

Rani Rampal had a great start to 2020. The 20-year-old won the World Games Athlete of the Year award in January. The first hockey player to become the winner. The hockey team also captured the silver medal in the Tokyo 2020 Olympics held later in the year. Then came the Covid-19 pandemic.

For four months Rampal and Co. were at the Sports Authority of India (SAI) camp in Bengaluru. Her following social distancing norms (strict) and wearing a protective mask ('optional'), it was difficult with no competitors, no training. The support staff of SAI made it a point to have one-on-one sessions with each player. Her first job was to play with the children in the camp. She would spend time with them, play with them and spend time with them.



Rani Rampal returned from a long hiatus last month

**The homecoming**  
Last month, after a hiatus of four months, Rampal returned to her home in Haryana. She had a lot to do. The first thing Rampal did was to spend time with her family. She had a lot to do. She had to take care of her family. She had to take care of her family. She had to take care of her family.

## MAIL TODAY SPECIAL

### On month-long break, Sreejesh describes quarantine period and the return to camp

By Anil Pankaj in New Delhi

INDIAN hockey's veteran goalkeeper Sreejesh describes his month-long quarantine period and the return to camp. He says he is happy to be back in the camp and to see his teammates. He says he is happy to be back in the camp and to see his teammates. He says he is happy to be back in the camp and to see his teammates.



# TIME TO IMPROVE

After this break, when you go back to SAU, Bengaluru, after mulling with family and staff, we will be free from mental fatigue. That, I believe, is one of the best time for rehab. After this break, when you go back to SAU, Bengaluru, after mulling with family and staff, we will be free from mental fatigue. That, I believe, is one of the best time for rehab.

## ET Panache

### 'Managing injuries will be a challenge'

Sreejesh says it will take time to reach top standards again

Sreejesh says it will take time to reach top standards again. He says he is happy to be back in the camp and to see his teammates. He says he is happy to be back in the camp and to see his teammates. He says he is happy to be back in the camp and to see his teammates.



Sreejesh says it will take time to reach top standards again

### Shifting goalposts: How Mumbai goalie adapted to life in lockdown

Mumbai's goalkeeper has adapted to life in lockdown. He says he is happy to be back in the camp and to see his teammates. He says he is happy to be back in the camp and to see his teammates. He says he is happy to be back in the camp and to see his teammates.

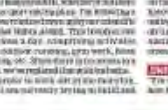


Mumbai's goalkeeper has adapted to life in lockdown

## ET Panache

### 'HAVE TO KEEP MYSELF IN TOP SHAPE, THOUGH THERE ARE NO COMPETITIONS'

After spending over a month at home in America, hockey player Manpreet Singh is back with the team. This is how he ensured his fitness didn't take a break.



Manpreet Singh is back with the team



Healthy Investments logo

Manpreet Singh is back with the team. He says he is happy to be back in the camp and to see his teammates. He says he is happy to be back in the camp and to see his teammates. He says he is happy to be back in the camp and to see his teammates.

## ET Panache

### On track for a podium finish in Tokyo: Manpreet & Rani

Manpreet and Rani are on track for a podium finish in Tokyo. They are happy to be back in the camp and to see their teammates. They are happy to be back in the camp and to see their teammates. They are happy to be back in the camp and to see their teammates.



Manpreet and Rani are on track for a podium finish in Tokyo

## ET Panache

### Orissa Post

### The Hans India

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# TEAM BIRTHDAYS

## SENIOR MEN'S

## JUNIOR MEN'S

### SEPTEMBER

HARDIK SINGH

23

S. KARTHI

01

SURYAN M

24

### OCTOBER

SURAJ KARKERA

14

AKASHDEEP SINGH

05

DIPSAN TIRKEY

15

## SENIOR WOMEN'S

## JUNIOR WOMEN'S

### SEPTEMBER

RASHANPREET KAUR

04

### OCTOBER

SHARMILA DEVI

10

JOTIKA KALSI

02

GURJIT KAUR

25

KIRAN

06

BALJINDER KAUR

08

# IN FOCUS

## REENA KHOKHAR

(Indian Women's Hockey Team)

My age is: 27



**My hometown is:** Mohali

**I play as a:** Defender

**I made my debut in:** 2017

**My most important target this year:** is to win an Olympic medal

**My favourite workout:** conditioning

**My favourite actor:** John Abraham

**My favourite song:** Tu Pyaar Ka Sagar Hai

**My favourite cuisine:** Punjabi. Specifically aloo parantha.

**My best sporting moment:** was when I scored in the shoot-out at the World Cup 2018

**My idols are :** my parents

**My dream destination:** Paris, France

**If I wasn't a hockey player, I would've been:** a Chartered Accountant

**My gym buddy:** Lilima Minz

**My favorite outfit:** Dresses of all kinds

**Go to Karaoke song:** *Mai Duniya Bhula Dunga*

**3 things I don't travel without:** my cellphone, vicks, and credit cards

**My 3 am buddy in the team:** Monika

**My cheat meal:** Coconut macaroons



## THE OFFICIAL APP OF HOCKEY INDIA (HI)

The official App of Hockey India gets you close to the action by providing direct access to latest news, schedules, results, photos and videos throughout the year.

Follow us to get easy access to scores, stats in addition to team and player information.

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