



GoodSport NEWS

S R I L A N K A O L Y M P I C W E E K L Y N E W S B U L L E T I N

SPORTS NEWS

The “Next Champ” saga proves right



FRUITS OF WELL SOWN SEEDS NOW YIELDING

If anyone is desirous of mapping out a better plot that was sown with the concept of creating a better playing field for the next generation of junior sports aspirants, none could match the plot hatched by the Crysbro-National Olympic Committee’s ‘Next Champ’ futuristic vision programme that has now begun bear fruit.

The very concept of selecting the twenty scholarship holders from a plethora of diverse platforms stretching from athletics to golf a bold move akin to the fabled movie of yesteryear ‘Where Eagles Dare’.

Considering the diversity of the concept the sports stretchers from – Golf, Shooting, Boxing, Athletics, Wrestling, Weightlifting, Table Tennis, Gymnastics and Taekwondo, it is indeed a tapestry that is well woven.

For the entrepreneur it was a risk that they had to be mindful of, but, the experienced NOC selection committee comprising Shehan Ambeyipitiya, Ineka Cooray and none other than Olympic Silver medallist Susanthika Jayasinghe knew how to milk out the cream of the available junior talent in the country and make a greener pasture for the Lankan sport-

of tomorrow. Vindicating the conviction and quality of the selection, the seeds that were sown a year ago are bearing fruit.

Taking note of performances such as rifle shooter Amandika Amerasinghe (19) who elevated her skills to beat last year’s Tokyo Olympian Tehani Egodawela (37) a few days ago. That was a performance that has taken the young athlete to the top pedestal and in all probabilities, she could be now competing in the senior stage like the Commonwealth Games, Asian Games (2022) and the next Paris Olympics in 2024.

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On the subject of competitions at local level especially in athletics all athletic scholarship holder proved their metal and proved that they the best in their respective events at the Sri Lanka Junior Athletic Championship concluded last week.

Amandika Amerasinghe



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Now she only has to hold her nerve and scale up the ladder of big time.

We also must take serious note of the performances of Senura de Silva the young Table Tennis players who at present is holding the triple championship titles of Junior, doubles and Senior categories.

Besides, Senura has more than a few international achievements from that the most impressive was him being placed third by reaching the semi-finals of the World Table Tennis Youth Championship in Oman. Another Table Tennis player Bimandee Bandara who is also in the scholarship list is the Junior Table Tennis title holder. She is also improving by the day and she too could enter the senior circuit shortly.

Tharushi Karunaratne (track and field - 800m) from Walala Central, is also an athlete who could be ticked off as a sportswoman who promises a great International career ahead of her.

In her last international appearance, Tharushi ended up as a semi-finalist at the World Junior Championship.

Nethmi Ahimsa (wrestling), Nadila Ambuldeniyage (gymnastics), Sithum Jayasundara (track and field) are the others who have done well in international competitions.

“ Taking note of performances such as rifle shooter Amandika Amerasinghe (19) who elevated her skills to beat last year’s Tokyo Olympian Tehani Egodawela (37) a few days ago. ”

K. Danushan



*Tharushi
Karunaratne*

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Just prior to that K. Danushan won the Donald steel golf championship 2022 at the Victoria golf Country Resort, Nuwara Eliya recently.

At the same time, the sponsors of the concept – Crysbro also has run that extra mile to support the cause. Besides providing the scholarship holders a sustenance stipend of Rs. 47,000/- a month, they have also provided several of the scholarship holder an overseas travel assistance of Rs. 125,000/- to eight of their scholarship holders. Under this scheme so far Table Tennis player Senura Silva, Gymnast Nadila Nethviru and Boxer Madabavitage Tehan Sanchith Rayman have received this special token of appreciation.

This amply proved that the large amount money that was invested by Crysbro towards the athletics of tomorrow is paying rich dividends. Summing up the Secretary General of the National Olympic Committee Maxwell de Silva said “The National Olympic Committee -

" The National Olympic Committee and Crysbro came with this wonderful concept of next champ under different circumstances "

and Crysbro came with this wonderful concept of next champ under different circumstances. It was a time when nobody came in as a sponsor leave alone thinking of a futuristic Junior Development Sports Programme.

The whole country was in turmoil – first recovering the Easter Sunday bomb attack which was followed by the Covid-19 closures. Yet, Crysbro held on to their conviction and went through the process of sponsoring the project. That is commendable. There is no question about it. We need to see that there is continue for the future so that we would champions but, role models in this country who respect all those Olympic -

values and this is my clear message.

“At the same time, there is evident proof that the project is a tremendous success and the names of the respective scholarship holders are grabbing the headlines in various disciplines including performances such as rifle shooter Amandika Amerasinghe who beat Olympian Tehani Egodawela. Besides the performances of the Junior athletes at the Junior Athletics Championship is also very encouraging. This means the Crysbro investment is now money well spent”

“However even in the future we must go deeper into the thought process and seek to assist the athletes who are at the grass-root level, athletes from a certain background where the parents who are finding it hard to make ends meet. I think that should be our prime objective – something in line with the ideals of former minister Lalith Athulathmudali who came up with the Mahapola concept.”

CGF IN DIALOGUE WITH VICTORIA, ON 2026 COMMONWEALTH GAMES

The Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF) has entered an exclusive dialogue period with the State of Victoria in Australia and Commonwealth Games Australia (CGAus) to host the 2026 Commonwealth Games.

The 2026 Games will be the 23rd edition of the major multi-sport competition, which first began in Hamilton, Canada in 1930.

The CGF has been in discussions with multiple countries across the Commonwealth regarding hosting the 2026 Games, with negotiations accelerating following the launch of the 2026/30 Strategic Roadmap in October 2021.

The Roadmap provides future hosts and sports with the renewed flexibility to be innovative and creative in delivering the Games.

Following ongoing discussions, the CGF, the Victorian Government and CGAus have signed a Heads of Agreement to formally enter an exclusive dialogue period to agree the parameters for a 2026 Commonwealth Games, to be hosted in the State in South-Eastern Australia.

Premier Daniel Andrews and the Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events Martin Pakula have confirmed that, if awarded, the 2026 Commonwealth Games would be hosted across the State.

The Government and CGAus will now develop Victoria's 2026 Commonwealth Games Submission. It will focus on a new way to host the Games, showing how events could be held in multiple locations across regional Victoria to showcase the best of what the State has to offer and ensure a uniquely Victorian experience for the athletes and spectators. The CGF will assess this submission prior to any decision being made to award the Games to Victoria.

Australia has staged the Commonwealth Games on five occasions, with Victoria playing host to the Melbourne 2006 Games; widely considered one of the most successful editions of the event in history.

The country has also staged the Games in Sydney in 1938, Perth in 1962, Brisbane in 1982 and most recently Gold Coast in 2018. The 2022 Commonwealth Games will be staged in Birmingham, England from 28 July – 8 August.

Victoria is a world leading major events and tourism destination. The State has a strong track record for staging high profile sporting competition including The Australian Open tennis grand slam, the Melbourne Formula 1 Grand Prix and the Melbourne Cup. Victoria also regularly hosts elite cricket, golf and Australian Rules Football competition.

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The 2018 Commonwealth Games closing ceremony at Carrara stadium, Gold Coast, Brisbane Australia.

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Commonwealth Games Federation President Dame Louise Martin DBE said: "We are pleased to have entered into an exclusive dialogue with Victoria and Commonwealth Games Australia to host the 2026 Commonwealth Games.

Following months of positive discussions, it is clear that Victoria has an exciting vision for a future Games which will provide many benefits for the community whilst leaving a significant

legacy for the state.

This vision is aligned with our 2026/30 Strategic Roadmap, which has proved to be a catalyst for positive and exciting conversations on how our event will look in four years' time. Victoria is one of the world's greatest sporting States and there is no doubt it has the venues, infrastructure, and people to stage a world class edition of the Games.

"We are very excited to be working closely with Victoria and Commonwealth Games Australia to explore the potential staging of the event in the State."

Premier of Victoria Daniel Andrews said: "Victoria is Australia's sporting state, and, if awarded, the 2026 Commonwealth Games would demonstrate to the world a new way to deliver the competition. We would hope to have the majority of events in our regional cities – to display the best of Victoria, create jobs and housing and infrastructure that will deliver for the long term."

Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events Martin Pakula said: "Bringing the 2026 Commonwealth Games to Victoria will showcase our state globally, deliver major economic benefits and support jobs across our great state."

Commonwealth Games Australia President Ben Houston said: "Hosting Great Games is a key pillar -

" Hosting Great Games is a key pillar in the Commonwealth Games Australia strategic plan and given our window for hosting the Games is 2026 "

in the Commonwealth Games Australia strategic plan and given our window for hosting the Games is 2026, we are thrilled to join the CGF in exclusive dialogue with Victoria to host the Commonwealth Games once again.

A home Games provides immeasurable benefits for our Member sports and athletes and we look forward to working with both the CGF and the Victorian Government to bring a final Games plan to life."



At the Gold Coast even the train services had a special accent.

INAUGURAL COMMONWEALTH ESPORTS CHAMPIONSHIPS SET FOR BIRMINGHAM

The inaugural Commonwealth Esports Championships and Commonwealth Esports Forum will be staged in Birmingham, England this summer.

The Championships is a tangible result of the Strategic Partnership between the Global Esports Federation and the Commonwealth Games Federation, announced in May 2020.

The new competition in Birmingham will be supported by the British Esports Association, the not-for-profit national body established in 2016 to promote esports in the UK, increase its level of awareness, improve standards and inspire future talent.

The Commonwealth Esports Championships will take place at the International Convention Centre (ICC) in Birmingham on August 6-7, 2022.

The Commonwealth Esports Forum – a global convention of thought leaders and idea creators – will be held at the same venue in the lead-up to the Commonwealth Esports Championships, on August 5, 2022.

The Commonwealth Esports Championships will feature esports athletes from across the Commonwealth.

Renowned multi-genre global titles are in the final stages of confirmation and will be announced shortly.

The event is set to feature exciting demonstrations showcasing Active Esports and the powerful technologies that support the convergence of sport and esports.

The Commonwealth Esports Championships was sanctioned by the CGF Executive Board to be held at the same time as the 2022 Commonwealth Games whilst being independent of Birmingham 2022 and its sports programme.

The Commonwealth Esports Championships will have separate -

branding, medals, organisation, and governance, led by the GEF and its community of partners.

The event is supported by the Business and Tourism Programme (BATP)*, which aims to maximise the economic legacy of the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games, as well as the regional economic development agency, the West Midlands Growth Company, which drives long-term tourism, investment, and major events into the region.

Exploring esports is one of the recommendations outlined in the new Commonwealth Sport 2026/30 Strategic Roadmap.

The aspiration is that the innovative inaugural event will engage new audiences, showcase the digital and gaming credentials of the -

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West Midlands and enable the Commonwealth Sport Movement to further explore the impact and potential of esports as part of the roadmap.

Quotes from the Organisers: Commonwealth Games Federation: Dame Louise Martin, President: "I am delighted that we are announcing the first Commonwealth Esports Championships and Commonwealth Esports Forum to take place in Birmingham this summer. Esports is continuing to grow dramatically in terms of popularity and participation, particularly amongst young people, and we are continuing to look at ways to explore how it can align with the Commonwealth Sports Movement.

"Commonwealth Esports Championships provides an excellent opportunity to pilot esports close to the Commonwealth Games. This will allow us to review the long-term relationship between the Commonwealth Games and esports as we continue to evolve and explore future editions of our event and what they could look like.

"I would like to thank the Global Esports Federation for their partnership with this exciting event, including the British Esports Association and the Business and Tourism Programme, who will help us bring this concept to life."

Global Esports Federation: Chris Chan, President: "We are proud to establish yet another first for the world's esports community. The inaugural Commonwealth Esports Championships comes hot on the heels of the first-ever Singapore 2021 Global Esports Games staged in December 2021, capturing -

more than 500 million views from around the world.

The Commonwealth Esports Championships offers our community another exciting event in the global esports calendar. We look forward to welcoming the esports community to Birmingham in August. British Esports Association: Chester King, CEO and Founder: "When we established the BEA in 2016, we did it with the aspiration that esports would become recognised for the incredible value it provides its community.

"The gaming community has long understood that esports helps teamwork, communication and strategic thinking together with combating loneliness, but alongside this, it creates opportunities for its athletes to participate in a team environment in a similar way to traditional sport with all the benefits.

"We advocate the values of representation, whether that is your team, school, county, or country and as such are delighted to see the Commonwealth Games Federation recognises its potential too. Furthermore, it is an honour that we get to showcase the values of esports whilst the Commonwealth Games is underway here in the UK.

"The BEA is fresh from the successful participation at the Global Esports Games which took place in Singapore in December 2021, where the Great Britain team secured its first medal (silver in the DOTA2 women's competition)."

Leader of Birmingham City Council, Cllr Ian Ward: "As the country's fastest-growing tech cluster, responsible for a quarter of British games products, Birmingham and the West Midlands is a thriving hub of creativity and development, reflecting -

one of the UK's youngest and most diverse communities.

"Having developed iconic gaming titles such as Formula One, Sonic the Hedgehog, and Forza, there isn't a better-suited location to host the Commonwealth Esports Championships, bringing together young competitors from across the world.

"This unique sporting competition builds on the region's rising reputation as a hotbed for large-scale, globally aired Championships; the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games representing the latest major event to captivate audiences worldwide, also taking place this year.

"Through the Business and Tourism Programme, we look forward to working with the Commonwealth Games Federation and Global Esports Federation to bring this truly exciting event to Birmingham."

Mayor of the West Midlands, Andy Street: "I am thrilled that the first ever Commonwealth Esports Championships will be staged this summer right here in the West Midlands.

"To put in perspective the sheer scale of the potential ahead of us, the first-ever Global Esports Games in Singapore in December 2021 attracted more than 500 million views from around the world. And with the West Midlands's growing status as an esports hub, I am incredibly excited to see how we build on last year's success.

"The Championships are also a brilliant example of our Business and Tourism Programme in action, ensuring we use the platform of the Commonwealth Games to bring in new investment that will benefit the West Midlands long beyond the 11 days of sporting excellence."