



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

NOC NEWS

Inculcating the better view-points



“Safe Sport” in its perspective

The anxiety is global. There are hundreds or maybe thousands of athletes who have fallen target to this occurrence without boundaries.

Now the National Olympic Committee has taken the cue from the International Olympic Committee and is trying to bring about some solace to the ones who have already fallen victim and put up a hurdle against who is likely to be a target to this preventable malady. What does “Safe Sport” mean? What can constitute harassment and abuse? What tools have the IOC developed to protect athletes from harassment and abuse in sport?

Remember: Harassment and abuse has no place in sport. Let’s work together to promote safe sport for everyone.

These are the sentiments that are aired by sports’ pinnacle organisation the International Olympic Committee on the subject of Harassment and abuse.

When the National Olympic Committee of Sri Lanka’s Women’s Committee decided take the bull by its horns they went direct to its primary cause Harassment and Abuse to give the Lankan sporting public the right idea of what they meant by calling Harassment and Abuse.

Nonetheless the planning segment of this project was done responsibly with a lot of crosschecking and soul searching.

The committee comprised sports personnel and media personnel and in turn they discussed the issue with a lot of sportsmen and women before going public purely with the genuine intention of having a next generation of sportsmen and women who only have to concentrate on their given discipline and not keep watching over their shoulders.

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Given below are some views that various persons of note have aired in our NOC SL Zoom channel and we have summarised them for your understanding as to what this problem is all about.

It is common knowledge that various sports people especially in the fairer sex in Sri Lanka have fallen victim to this trap over the years though those have remained public secrets.

During the launch of the "Safe Sport" project Sri Lanka's only Olympic Medallist Susanthika Jayasinghe boldly pronounced "This is a timely and decisive action that the National Olympic Committee of Sri Lanka has taken on the subject of prevention of Harassment and abuse.

I can explain this through my personal experience on what it is.

I take this opportunity also to thank the International Olympic Committee for this action because abuse could come through ignorance, poverty and a string of other allied reasons.

Now as the Director of the High-Performance Committee of the National Olympic Committee I am happy that I have been given the opportunity to serve in a meaningful manner.

It is now our duty to take action and guidance safeguard our next generation of athletes from such experiences.

It is our duty to teach our younger generation of athletes who migrate from the backwoods of Sri Lanka as to how they should conduct themselves and make the most of their skills on the track and field.

Safeguarding in Sport is Everyone's Responsibility

#SGSafeSport Play Your Part

"At times I have noticed that some of the athletes of our present generation do have had the ignominy of such experiences, I have heard such instances, I have seen such instances and I am aware of it. So, we must look for such ways of them occurring.

How are we going to make them aware of this and this is a golden opportunity to do so!"

“ It is now our duty to take action and guidance safeguard our next generation of athletes from such experiences. ”

"In short what I am trying to spell out is that it is our duty to prevent such harassment and abuse now is commonplace through the entire planet just like the Covid 19 pandemic so we must seek ways to teach the young athletes right from wrong and strengthen their minds to do the right thing, I say this with a lot of responsibility. So, if you are faced with such a situation or proposition please do not hesitate to bring it to our notice."

Reshika Udugampola the secretary of the NOC's athletic commission – another Olympian who was a member of the swimming team at the London Games said "This is a very pertinent question for the athletes in Sri Lanka.

These questions on this subject are global, but are you aware about the ramifications of this issue or how far do we discuss the matter at hand? There are chances that our own athletes are facing such situations.

However up to now they have not had a platform to address such situations in Sri Lanka. Now this programme which has been launched by the National Olympic Committee with the blessings of the International Olympic Committee is very timely".

Jayanthi Kuru Uthampala who is the chairperson of the complaints committee of the project aired her view in this manner "I appreciate the effort taken by the NOC SL to launch this project.

This is an uphill task than climbing Mount Everest, but I am confident that this is something that we take one step at a time, we got to work together to make sure that we implement this policy"

Central Crusaders win inaugural Li Ning – Lanka Shuttle Challenge

Central Crusaders, captained by Buwaneka Gunetilleke, emerged champions in the inaugural Li Ning – Lanka Shuttle Challenge after overcoming Sachin Dias-led Southern Stars 4-2 at Sri Lanka Badminton Headquarters in Colombo.

The championship, country's first high-profile franchise-based badminton tournament organized by SLB, featured six franchises of 12 players, a first in the history of badminton in Sri Lanka.

In the final match-up, Roshan Padma Kumara and Nilasi Balasooriya lost to Goonathilake and Hasara Wijeratne 12-21, 14-21 in the mixed doubles event in the final before Dumindu Abeywickrama upset Sachin Dias 21-11, 17-21, 2-21 in the men's singles. Sethum Perera won the boys' singles match against-

Kaviru Sanjitha 19-21, 14-21.

In the women's singles, Hasini Ambalagodage earned Southern Stars' first win in the final by overcoming Isuri De Alwis 21-15, 21-11. Southern Stars made it 4-2 when the girls' singles match was won by Panchali Adhikara who outplayed Varangana Jayawardena 21-10, 21-9.

With an inaccessible lead of 4-2 in favour of Central Crusaders, there was no need of a women's doubles match between Hasara Wijeratne/Sahasni Vidanage (Southern Stars) and Buthmi Galagamage/Hasini Ambalagodage (Central Crusaders).

Leaders Southern Stars, had topped the table to book a direct ticket to the semi-finals after an unbeaten run. They overcame Western Worriers, led by Kavidi Sirimanage with a margin of 4-2.

Central Crusaders on the other hand, had to take on fourth placed Island Titans, captained by Olympian Dinuka Karunaratne, before facing the Western Warriors. They beat Island Titans 4-2 and eliminated Western Warriors with a similar scoreline. The rest of the competing teams, Eastern Eagles, led by Dilmi Dias, and Northern Knights, captained by Niluka Karunaratne, were eliminated in the earlier stage.

National Olympic Committee President Suresh Subramaniam was the chief guest at the closing ceremony and presented the awards to champions, runners-up and the most valuable players. Sri Lanka Badminton President Rohan De Silva, Vice Presidents Palitha Hettiarachchi and Roshan Fernando and Chairman of Flex Spots Pvt Ltd, Sanjeewa Akuretiya also graced the occasion as guests of honour.

The tournament is supported by the Ministry of Sports & Ministry of Health as SLB has put together a robust protocol to adhere to MOH guidelines to ensure safety of players, officials and the spectators.

Special Awards: Most Valuable Player

Junior
Girls: Ranithma Liyanage
Boys: Setham Perera

Senior
Women: Hasini Ambalagodage
Men: Buwaneka Goonathilake



Chief guest, National Olympic Committee President Suresh Subramaniam, Sri Lanka Badminton President Rohan De Silva, Vice Presidents Palitha Hettiarachchi and Roshan Fernando and Chairman of Flex Spots Pvt Ltd, Sanjeewa Akuretiya posing for a photograph with the Li Ning – Lanka Shuttle Challenge title winners Central Crusaders.

By Susil Premalal

Health alert to on school cricket

If the prevailing adverse health situation in the country persists during the first quarter of 2021 (January to April) there is no possibility of staging inter-school cricket 'matches', according to Dr Lal Ekanayake, Director-General of the Institute of Sports Medicine (ISM). Health authorities have warned that because especially school big matches are held in a carnival atmosphere it could spread faster among the community. Since cricket is a contact sport even the players could contract it easily, ISM said.

A decision on whether big matches could be held next year cannot be taken now but the ISM hopes to hold discussions and prepares guidelines in consultation with the Sports Ministry, Education Ministry, SL Police and organizing committees of the event and Principals of the respective schools.

Even if big matches are held the players of the two teams, match officials and others will have to undergo PCR tests while the event is held without spectators.

Big matches were suspended when a coronavirus person attended the Royal-Thomian match in March causing many spectators to be self quarantined.

There are at least 18 big matches scheduled to be held around the country.

They are:

Colombo – Royal-Thomian, Ananda-Nalanda, St Peter's-St Joseph's, Thurstan - Isipathana and D.S. Senanayake-Mahanama

Kandy – Dharmaraja-Kingswood, Trinity-St Anthony's, St Sylvester's-Vidyarthra

Galle – Richmond-Mahinda

Matara – St Thomas-St Servatius

Kurunegala – Maliyadeva-St Anne's

Ambalangoda – Dharmasoka-Devananda

Jaffna – Jaffna College-St Patricks, Jaffna Central-St John's

Matale – St Thomas-Science College

Moratuwa – Prince of Wales-St. Sebastian's

Kalutara – Kalutara Vidyalaya-Tissa Central

Kegalle – Kegalu Vidyalaya-St Mary's
In addition several big match are played at provincial level.

If the coronavirus threat continues big matches will have to be played following strict regulations.

By Susil Premalal



Russia relieved after Olympic doping ban shortened

The Kremlin said it regretted Russia was unable to avoid doping sanctions but some officials declared a small victory after sport's highest court halved a ban on athletes competing at the Olympics under the Russian flag to two years.

The decision, announced by the Lausanne-based Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS), softened sanctions issued by global anti-doping authorities in response to Moscow intentionally providing it with doctored laboratory data that could have identified drug cheats, something it denies.

The Kremlin said it was good that the ruling, which some foreign sports officials have said was not tough enough given Russia's doping offences, allows some Russian athletes to compete at the world's most prestigious sporting events.

CAS said the decision means Russians who are not suspended have a chance to compete in the Olympics and world championships as neutrals – without the Russian flag on their uniform and without the country's anthem sung at official venues.

"Of course, we regret this (overall ruling), we view it negatively," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said. "But at the same time, the main thing is that athletes are getting the right to take part in competitions" as neutral competitors.

The World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) said the measures were "the strongest set of consequences ever imposed on any country for -

doping-related offences."

Russian officials, despite their disappointment at more sanctions, focused on the fact that the decision was not worse.

"The outcome today is a victory for Russia," Mikhail Bukhanov, acting director of Russian anti-doping agency RUSADA, said.

"CAS did not restrict clean athletes' right to compete at the Olympic and Paralympic Games, as well as at world championships."

Sports Minister Oleg Matytsin said it was "positive" that the sanctions would only last until December 2022, instead of four years.

The ruling leaves Russian athletes without their flag and national anthem at next year's Tokyo Olympics, the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics and at the 2022 soccer World Cup in Qatar.

'SLAP ON THE WRIST'

Russian officials fumed that the sanctions bar them from attending the Olympics and other major events for two years.

They cannot be appointed to or sit on committees or serve as board members at organisations that must abide by the WADA code during that period.

"It's not right to say the least to extend the sanctions action to cover civil servants," RIA news agency quoted Matytsin as saying.

The sanctions do not apply to a government official invited to attend a major sporting event by a foreign head of state.

"This is just one other dark outcome in a long 10-plus year effort for the Russians to corrupt sport, to cover it up and essentially get away with it," Travis Tygart, CEO of the United States Anti-Doping Agency (USADA), told Reuters.

"And let's not forget this slap on the wrist, a light slap on the wrist, was exactly what happened (at the 2018 Winter Olympics) in Pyeongchang."

Many Russian athletes were sidelined at the past two Olympics and the country was deprived of its flag for the Pyeongchang Games as punishment for state-sponsored doping at the 2014 Sochi Games in southern Russia.

Russia, which has in the past acknowledged some shortcomings in its implementation of anti-doping policies, denies running a state-sponsored doping programme.

Courtesy Reuters



Russia's doping scandal: who's telling the truth?