



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

Dream is to contribute towards the next Olympic medal



Reshika now an IOC ambassador

At NASA, the UN and most other high profile international administrative and scientific offices there are countless officials who have decorated the Lankan achievements list.

In the sports arena the list tapers down with officials in the in the calibre of Ranjan Madugalle (ICC) and Kumar Sangakkara (MCC) Kumara Dharmasena (ICC Elite Umpire) or Lilamani de Zoysa (co-opted member/IWG) among the most prominent.

Now there is a star in the international sports horizon with Olympic swimmer Reshika Udugampola who just -

has been co-opted to the IOC's marketing subcommittee – the nominee from the South Asian Region.

From her young age she proved that she was not going to be the girl next door. She began her story in this manner "I started swimming when I was only eight years old. I perceived my career as a swimmer. I started my schooling at Southland Balika College in Galle and then I shifted to primary studies at Gateway College Rajagiriya and after my O Levels I left school so that I could start on my higher studies at the American National College (ANC), affiliated to Northward University USA."

She said one of the reasons for her leaving school was her determination to carry on with her higher studies and also her quest to take part in the 2011 Olympics.

So for two years Reshika was interwound between her main goals at that time one short term and the other; long term. She said "In 2010 I left school and joined ANC for my higher studies.

I started my bachelors in business management and marketing and why I did so because I was training to go for the Olympics.

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Then in 2011 I migrated to Australia to get qualified for the Olympics and that is my overview my career in the early stages.

“In my training; I initially trained with Julian Bolling -- he was my first coach.

Then for a short while I trained with Wilson and Conrad as well and Conrad was my coach for the South Asian Games in 2010 in Bangladesh.

Then I came under tutelage of Manoj Abeysinghe.

He was the one who guided to go the FINA World Championships in 2010 and 2011 and he was also coach when I went for Olympic Games in London as well.”

She explained at present that she was a full time marketer - engaged as Marketing Manager for Sri Lanka and the Maldives for a company by the name of Tech One Global.

Other than that I am also affiliated to the National Olympic Committee of Sri Lanka in the capacity of the secretary Athletic Commission.

GoodSport asked Reshika about her present activity in the active pool. The answer was – “None at all”.

She added “With my busy schedule honestly I do not have the time; even to do it as a hobby anymore.

I barely manage to get my daily work output on the table.

Yet, when I could I would go to the gym and do a workout.

As for me for the past six years this has been my lifestyle”.

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GoodSport then queried about her new assignment with the IOC.

She explained “While acting as the secretary of the athletic commission I was able to portray my capabilities to the IOC as how I could be of help the game in Sri Lanka.

Meanwhile NOC gave me the opportunity apply to become a member of the Marketing Commission.

Then the IOC also went through several candidates to choose members for the coming year. Now I am a member of the Marketing Commission of the IOC.”

Now her work load will be a serious lot and it is comprehensive. Putting in a nutshell she will be responsible in deploying brand marketing campaigns.

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Now her work load will be a serious lot and it is comprehensive. Putting in a nutshell she will be responsible in deploying brand marketing campaigns. Strategize and deploy demand generation campaigns in line with business focus.

Furthermore she would also have to launch at least two local webinars quarterly with thought leaders/key industry speakers. Ensure thrice a week posting on local social media channels. Writing two blogposts per month and put out a monthly newsletter to existing customer base.

And

- Thrice a week infographic posting on local social media channels
- Develop local tutorials as needed
- Manage and maintain local social media pages
- Increase local page followers by 25% quarter on quarter.

She added “We have not started our work yet. The team will be meeting in early November. We will be having a virtual meeting and say hi to all other members of the same team and we will be laying down what our roles will be.”

The next question put forward by GoodSport was how are hoping to translate this challenge for the benefit of the Lankan athletes?

Reshika replied “When I was an athlete there were a lot of experiences that I gained throughout my career in ten years of swimming. It was never an easy path.

I think one of the main tasks that I was able to achieve in my career is that I was able to endure anything that comes my way and also understand the athletes’ perspective, understand what kind of hardship and what kind of commitment are they giving, what kind of sacrifices are they making to get to that point.

Being an Olympian is not easy. Whether you win a medal or not, to get to that point; it’s never easy.

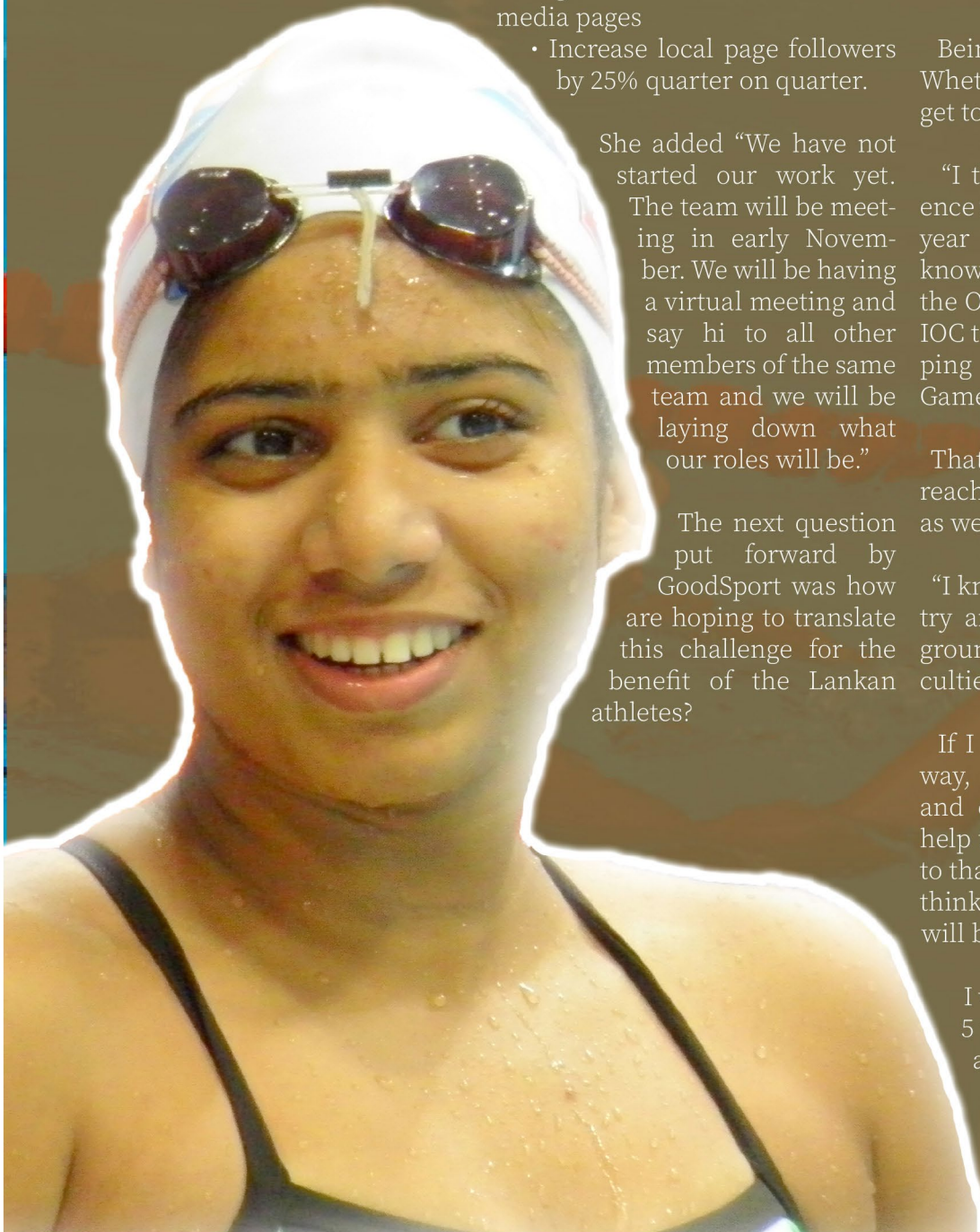
“I think as an athlete, the experience that I have gained, out of my ten year career; I want to share my knowledge and also get help from the Olympic Committee and also the IOC to help these athletes -- not stopping at point like the South Asian Games, but be an Olympian.

That’s the kind of help that I want to reach out as s a member of the NOC as well as the IOC.

“I know not all athletes in our country are coming from affluent backgrounds. Most have their own difficulties and battles.

If I could of help to them in some way, to overcome certain problems and difficulties that they face and help them become a top star and get to that Olympic level of competitor I think that will be something that I will be able to be happy about.

I would also like to see in the next 5 to seven years if we are able to at least go for a medal and if I could make a contribution towards that if would be great”.



Tai Chi Qigong enhancing sports performance

Lin Hou Shang created Tai Chi Shibashi, which has 18 movements of Tai Chi Qigong and invented Qigong information therapy instrument. Now, Qigong is becoming popular with more than ten million people practicing Tai Chi. Malaysia and Indonesia consider Tai Chi as their national health exercise, since it is very renowned in helping in the cure of stress, hypertension and cancer.

Moreover, Tai Chi is a source of power for physical energy and sexual health.

[3] In sports, only a few athletes practice Tai Chi for developing their vitality. Athletes and coaches do not approve of Tai Chi and they think that Tai Chi exercises reduce the performance of athletes, since Tai Chi movements are very slow and related to the mind. Also, athletes are only interested in speed, heavy and mechanical exercises to achieve their goal within a short

period. Further, some athletes use drugs or illegal medicines (as doping) to increase their performance. But, they do not consider how it is going to affect their future health and consequently misunderstand the concept of Tai Chi.

In Tai Chi, continuous practice and patience are required. Generally, Tai Chi helps to develop the skills in some hip movement related games.

Particularly, it is very helpful for throwing events in athletics, badminton, cricket, surfing, kitesurfing, skateboarding, snowboarding and skiing.

Tai Chi skills which rejuvenate the mind, spirit and body, coincide with the concept of sports.

Tai Chi cultivates the awareness of Dan Tien which means "Elixir Field", -



located in the abdomen approximately three inches below the navel and above the public bone, where energy is stored.

[1] Tai Chi practice fills energy psychologically by giving a sense of stability and balance when the athletes are faint or at their stage of unconsciousness or when muscles tire by overloading.

Generally, an athlete takes approximately two hours to recover his physiological energy after the performance or practice. But, Tai Chi reduces the recovery time by providing stored energy from Dan Tien. Furthermore, Tai Chi makes the joints and muscles more flexible.

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[2] Basically, the throwers in athletics use their hip to achieve their higher performance since more power produces from the hip.

When an athlete is getting excited or nervous before or during the competition, she/he needs to calm down within a short period.

That time, a very simple first movement of Tai Chi Qigong Shibashi exercise can be practiced at least 20 times to calm down.

Normally, heart produces fire energy and kidney produces water energy. When we get excited or are fearful, water energy increases.

Therefore, we have to reduce the water energy to be free from fear and excitement. When we are doing Tai Chi, fire energy quenches the water energy as illustrated in the figure. This kind of skills help mind concentration related games such as badminton, cricket, chess, etc.



When an athlete gets charged with emotion, fire energy increases and Tai Chi Qigong Shibashi neutralises by quenching the fire energy. Sometimes, athletes may need some emotions to win the game or to achieve their maximum performance when they are tired. That time too Tai Chi aids in a similar manner.

Athletes worry during off-season, periods of injured and rainy seasons when they cannot practice, control their weight or at least do any stretching exercises. But, Tai Chi Qigong Shibashi controls the weight and by burning less energy, it produces more and store at the Dan Tien.

Since Tai Chi is very easy to learn and it needs only a small space, anyone can do it anytime they feel free. Even if you are injured, some Tai Chi exercises can be practiced in seated position.

Since there are few instructors in Sri Lanka, you can visit the website www.taichi18.com and practice yourself as it is very easy to catch on.

“Tai Chi does not mean oriental wisdom or something exotic; it is the wisdom of your own senses, your own mind and body together as one process.”

- Chungliang Al Huang -



“ Tai Chi does not mean oriental wisdom or something exotic ”

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'I love life': Oldest living Olympic champion turns 100

The Holocaust survivor and winner of 10 Olympic medals in gymnastics including five golds — celebrates her 100th birthday on Saturday in her native Budapest, punctuating a life of achievement, adventure, tragedy and perseverance which, she says, passed by in a flash.

"These 100 years felt to me like 60," she said at a celebration in Budapest on the eve of her birthday.

Leafing through a copy of a new book about her life — "The Queen of Gymnastics: 100 Years of Agnes Keleti" — her trademark modesty was on full display. "The queen of gymnastics," she said, switching to English.

And in Hungarian: "That's an exaggeration."

Keleti, who was born Agnes Klein in 1921, had her illustrious career interrupted by World War II and the subsequent cancellation of the 1940 and 1944 Olympics.

Forced off her gymnastics team in 1941 because of her Jewish ancestry, Keleti went into hiding in the Hungarian countryside where she survived the Holocaust by assuming a false identity and working as a maid.

Her mother and sister survived the war with the help of famed Swedish diplomat Raoul Wallenberg, but her father and other relatives perished at Auschwitz, -

Resuming her career after the war, Keleti was set to compete at the 1948 London Olympics but a last-minute ankle injury dashed her hopes.

Four years later, she made her Olympic debut at the 1952 Helsinki Games at the age of 31, winning a gold medal in the floor exercise as well as a silver and two bronzes.

Despite her achievements with six medals she was the most successful athlete at the 1956 Melbourne Olympics and she is recognized as one of the most successful Jewish Olympic athletes of all time the still-vivacious Keleti said she most values her health and the simple fact that she has lived.

"I love life," she said. "Health is the essence. Without it, there is nothing."



Agnes Keleti, the oldest living Olympic Champion

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In an interview with The Associated Press last year, Keleti said the experiences she gained while traveling the world were more precious to her than her 10 Olympic medals.

“I loved gymnastics because it was possible to travel for free,” she said.

Those travels would ultimately result in a nearly 60-year absence from her native Hungary.

At the age of 35, while she was becoming the oldest gold medalist in gymnastics history in Melbourne, the Soviet Union invaded Hungary following an unsuccessful anti-Soviet uprising.

Keleti remained in Australia and sought political asylum.

She then immigrated to Israel the following year and worked as a trainer and coached -

the Israeli Olympic gymnastics team until the 1990s.

After leaving Hungary for the Olympics in 1956, she visited her native country only once before returning to Budapest in 2015.

Keleti was awarded the Israel Prize in 2017 — considered that country’s highest cultural honour and is the recipient of numerous other prestigious awards, including being named one of Hungary’s “Athletes of the Nation” in 2004.

She holds individual gold medals in the floor exercise, balance beam and uneven bars.

Today, Keleti follows her doctor’s recent advice to avoid performing full leg splits, and her near-perpetual smile and infectious laughter are reminders that even in times of great hardship, there remains the immutable potential for perseverance and the joy of life.

“I live well, and it’s great that I’m still healthy,” Keleti said. “And I love life.”

*“ I
love
life ”*
