



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

Boosted by Milka's current achievements



Gymnastics is on a road to fame and glory

In the land of the rising sun, young Milka Gihani is one of the hopefuls for the 2020 Olympics, which are now being pushed to June 2021 owing to the Covid-19 disruption. For Gihani, could this be a blessing in disguise? – only time will tell.

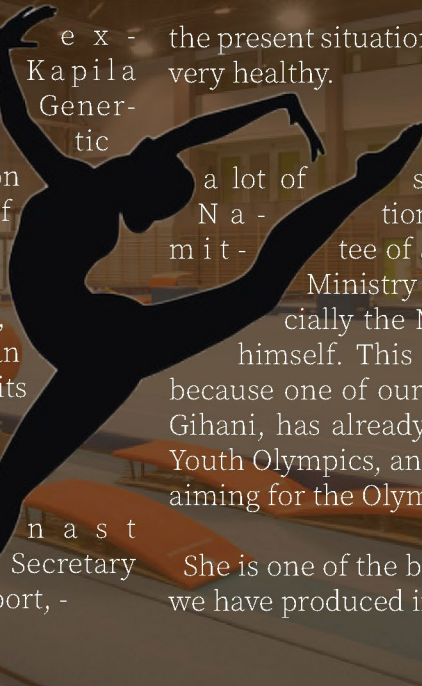
A few days ago, she nearly made it, but a fall at the wrong moment buckled the whole “What would have been.....!” At this end, 20 million Lankan fans are waiting with hope in their eyes for that day to become a reality.

This is the present ground reality in Lankan Gymnastics internationally.

I had the good fortune of changing views with Jeevantha, the Secretary of the National Gymnastics Association of Sri Lanka, on the health and wellbeing of this eye pleaser.

A former gymnast himself, Jeevantha was more than eager to put this in its perspective.

He explained, “As a former National Gymnast and the present General of the



Secretary of the sport, -

the present situation of Gymnastics is very healthy.

We are receiving support from the National Olympic Committee of Sri Lanka and the Ministry of Sports – especially the Minister of Sports himself. This is the right time because one of our Gymnasts, Milka Gihani, has already qualified for the Youth Olympics, and thereafter she is aiming for the Olympic Games.

She is one of the best Gymnasts that we have produced in this country.”

From Page 01

Then delving on how the even spread of the sport in schools is, he said, "Because of the Pandemic situation, the majority of the coaches in Sri Lanka are in a dilemma because they are all freelancers and most of them depend on work from schools.

Ironically, the pandemic situation has impacted that sphere negatively but, luckily with the support of the International Gymnastic Federation, we received a donation and funds under the Covid-19 support programme to support our coaches for the past few months.

"Then in the schools' reality, we are aiming for the Youth Games and Asian Games in 2022, but the major problem in Sri Lanka at present is - Gymnastics is a technical sport; we term gymnastics as the mother of all sports, but in all aspects, they look for medals.

Everyone - parents, the athletes themselves and the people on the street look for the medals, but the ground reality is we need infrastructure.

We must look at the training hours and see how many training hours an athlete could muster.

There are four major areas that we have to look. One is the training hours; how many training hours could they get in.

two is nutrition. Then comes the infrastructure, which is followed by sports science.

This is a very technical sport and because of that, science plays a major role in it and it goes with the new education system.

Now it is an education race. After school, most of the students are at tuition classes. If you are ready to produce to an Olympic athlete, he or she must muster 6-7 hours a day in training and it has to happen 24x7.

"We achieved a Youth Olympic candidate with the prevailing conditions and resources.

However, I must mention to you that we are getting a lot of support from the Sports Ministry and within the next few months they are going to make a complete facelift to the Gymnastics training facility at the Independence Square.

"At present, the Munilo Club has -

brought down new equipment while the ministry is also willing to lend a helping hand towards this task.

Once that is done, we can say that we have a real national training centre.

However, as the National Gymnastics Association, what we are looking at is our Gymnastics facility which could be set up with the help of the ministry.

Right now, we are in the process of discussing this possibility with the International Federation because as an Association, we should have our own training facility - that is our dream."

Then the Good-Sport popped the question - "At school level, we are aware that there are a lot of school children who are taking part in this sport, but does each of these candidates have the necessary equipment to start with?"

Number



From Page 02

Kapila Jeevantha explained, “Internationally, there are eight disciplines pertaining to Gymnastics but, in Sri Lanka, we are involved with artistic men and women, aerobic men, Gymnastics for all, and on one occasion, we got involved with Rhythmic Gymnastics through Anna Marie Ondaatje who took part at the last Commonwealth Games in Brisbane; other than that we only have the other four disciplines.

“In the past, Artistic Gymnastics was very popular but now, aerobic gymnastics have come to the fore.

That is because aerobic gymnastics need less infrastructure; there they need only the floor while for the others, they need six different apparatus.

Presently the Ministry of Education has provided some equipment.

There are some locally manufactured apparatus and some imported items; but still there is a vacuum.

This is a highly technical sport and we need a lot of backing from the government, the international community to upgrade our facilities - because gymnastic equipment is very expensive in comparison to the other sports of this nature.”

The next question came in the form of coaching and coaches and whether it is sufficient to take an athlete from this point to the other.

The explanation of the Gymnastic Secretary General was, “Luckily in our international coaching ranks, we have categories one, two and three.

For instance, we garnered support from a Japanese coach to enhance our coaching facility, but as for Milka, she was produced by a local coach and she achieved the Olympic level; this was done through sheer hard work and dedication, with the prevailing facilities.

So, I am very confident with our coaches. They have determination and courage.

With a little overseas training for our coaches in the calibre of Ranjana Tharanga who was a national champion for 6-7 years, he produced Milka with the help of a Japanese coach. Now, Udara Liyanwela, Anthony Dias, Aruna Prasad and Charaka Thushira are doing well in their field of activity and they are ready to take up that challenge.”



SOLDIERS row their way to glory at DIYAWANNA

Times and faces of rowing seems to be gradually changing. First came the deed of rowing shifting from the Beira Lake to Diyawanna waters at Parliament.

Now it is the armed forces or to be precise soldiers who dominate this sport which was a perennial domain of the students of Royal and S. Thomas' and the Colombo Rowing Club.

Proving this Army emerged overall champions at the National Rowing Championships that was held on March 12 and 13 at the Diyawanna rowing centre in Battaramulla.

Army won their respective open gold medals for men and women while Army men's second gold came via the intermediate championship.

However the fourth gold for the women's intermediaries was not awarded as there were four stakeholders sharing the honour.

Results:

Intermediate men (Quad)

1. Army: AV Dharshana, HM Ratnayake, AS Hettiarachchi 6m 32.12 secs.
2. KDU 'A': Uvein Rajapakse, Venin Rajapaksha, Ashan 6m 36.58 secs.

Women's Intermediate (Quad)

1. KDU 'A' Navindi Thisari, Natasha Madushani, Sendaru Perera, Thisuri Yahampath. 8m 11.64 secs.
2. Army RIS Samaranayake, BMM Perera, GD Godagampola, THS Wahihenge 8m 21.39 secs.

Men's Intermediate (doubles)

1. Army 'B' AV Dharshana, EM Dassanayake, 7m 10.96 secs.
2. Army 'A' AS Hettiarachchi, EKS Harshana 7m 20.47 secs.

Women's Intermediate (scull)

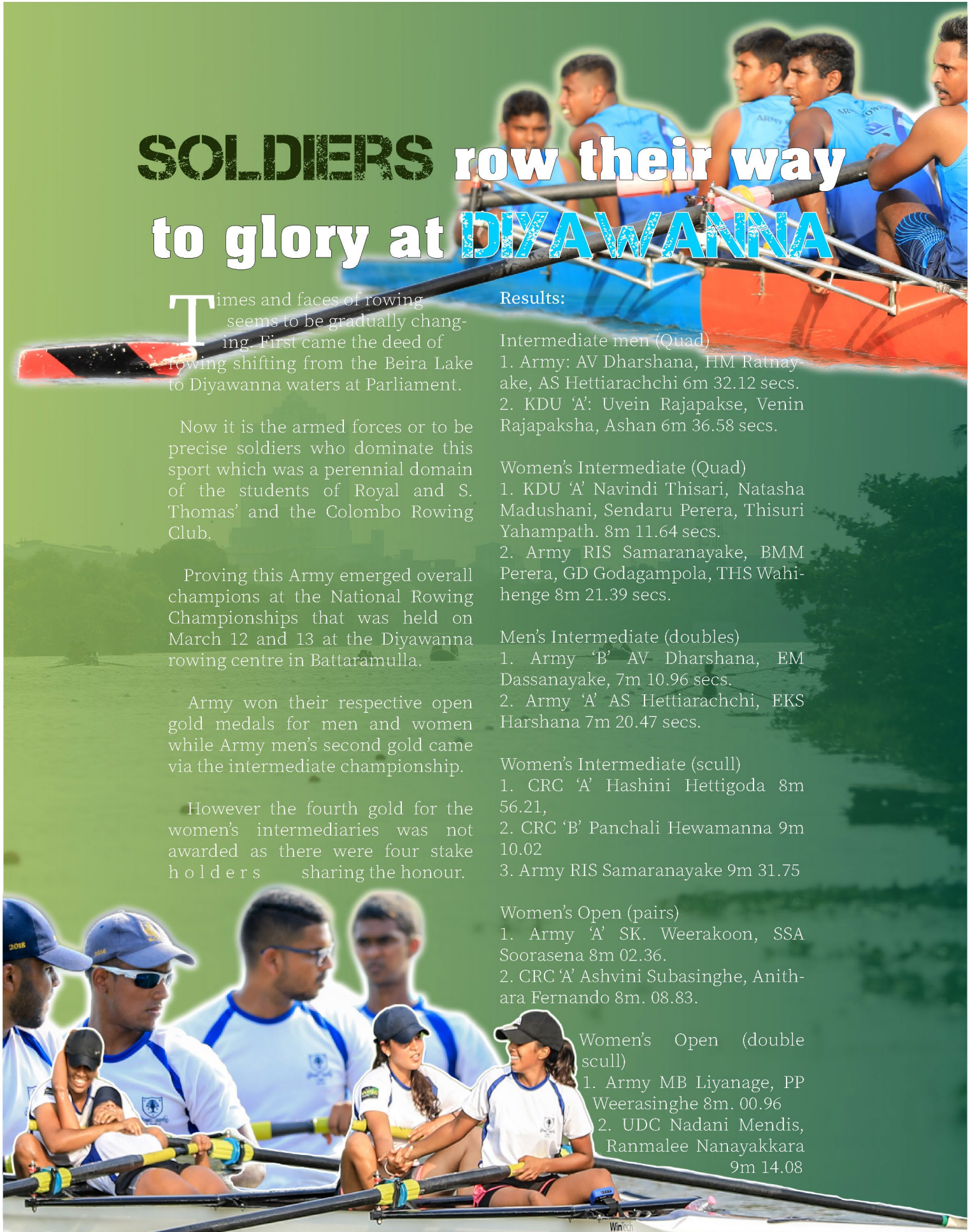
1. CRC 'A' Hashini Hettigoda 8m 56.21,
2. CRC 'B' Panchali Hewamanna 9m 10.02
3. Army RIS Samaranayake 9m 31.75

Women's Open (pairs)

1. Army 'A' SK. Weerakoon, SSA Soorasena 8m 02.36.
2. CRC 'A' Ashvini Subasinghe, Anithara Fernando 8m. 08.83.

Women's Open (double scull)

1. Army MB Liyanage, PP Weerasinghe 8m. 00.96
2. UDC Nadani Mendis, Ranmalee Nanayakkara 9m 14.08



Sirimavo Vidyalaya crowned OVEP champions

Sirimavo Bandaranaike Vidyalaya Colombo seven crowned themselves as the champions of the Olympic Values Educational Programme, also known as OVEP. The awards presentation of this programme was held at NOC SL's Hemasiri Fernando auditorium, yesterday.

The first runner-up of the programme was Hillwood College Kandy while the third place was taken by Chundikuli Girl's School Jaffna.

Speaking at the occasion Secretary General National Olympic Committee Maxwell de Silva stressed that all contestants were brilliant and delved upon a lot of subjects that were fulfilling to the mundane lives of people. Yet, emphasised that the most important is living by what you preach and that goes on to make a person larger than life.

This is a global educational tool that has been created by the International Olympic Committee to promote educational themes; such as the joy of effort, fair play, respect for others, pursuit of excellence and balanced life of body, will and mind.

Children learn values through their exposure to the larger world. At some point, they may tend to forget them.

So, how can we inculcate values into someone's life and influence them to use those values in their day-to-day life? With this in mind, the National Olympic Committee of Sri Lanka inaugurated the OVEP Debater in 2017 as a pilot project targeting

To surmise the concept of OVEP is global. It covers everyone's desire to lead a better and fulfilling life. The authorities are planning to spread the OVEP Debater to people of all cultures in Sri Lanka by conducting it in Sinhala, English and Tamil languages and make it a challenge for the cross-section of the populace in the island.

In another presentation held during the same session the NOC SL gave away the prizes for the speech competition conducted by the Women's Committee of the NOC SL on the topic "Make sports a safe zone".

The first place of this competition went to a young lass from Kuliypitiya – W.A. Kalshini Dulmitha of Holy Angles Girl's College, the second place went to medical student from Jayawardenapura University Ayeshan Sachintha Abeywardena, the third place was taken by Ramya Sivamumar while the joint fourth place went to brothers S.M.Y. Mohamed Hazari and Omar Hazari of Royal College.

school students in the Colombo and Kandy regions.

In 2020, we were determined to launch the OVEP Debater 2020 in a live virtual landscape in several provinces, despite unprecedented challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The OVEP Debater team 2020 extended their tremendous support to a successful event. It was because of their teamwork and dedication, the OVEP Debater 2020 reached different provinces in the country.

