

Official Publication of the National Olympic Committee of Sri Lanka

# GoodSport

March 2019

## TALE OF TWO CHAMPIONS

The golf story

## 13TH SOUTH ASIAN GAMES 2019

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## TO DREAM THE IMPOSSIBLE DREAM

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Tel :- 0094-11-7591100 Fax :- 0094 - 11-7591124 / 25  
Email : [qianhj@mail.cmec.com](mailto:qianhj@mail.cmec.com)

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**The 3rd cover**

The GoodSport cover: 18-year-old Thushmina Krishmal of St. Mary's College Chilaw, while taking part in the Junior Athletic Meet recently. He believes that he could become into the national reckoning by 2020. Already he carries a few national school games records. He really has the task of conquering the Everest in athletics.



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**GOODSPORT**

Editor-in-Chief : S R Pathiravithana  
 Saabir Cader  
 Allaam Ousman  
 Susil Premalal  
 Dian Abeywardena

**IMAGES**

Thusith Wijedoru  
 Thishan Dissanayake  
 Ceylon Athletics

**GRAPHICS/DESIGN**

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**CONTACTS**

Please send your feedback to:  
 GOODSPORT, Olympic House,  
 100/9F, Independence Avenue,  
 Colombo 7, Sri Lanka  
 Email: info@olympics.lk  
 natolcom@slt.lk  
 Tel: +94 11 2684420/21/22/23  
 Web: www.olympics.lk

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# FOREWORD SAILING IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION JOSEPH KENNY

Vice President, National Olympic Committee

I take great pride in being given the opportunity to be a part of the GoodSport Magazine and write the foreword to the third edition of the same.

I have been a part of the Olympic dream and Olympism for twoscore or more years and I first had my association with the NOCSL during the tenure of the late Roy de Silva who headed the movement during its formative years. I represented yachting and we had our headquarters at the Colombo harbour. I was the President of the Yachting Association for several years. During that period the NOCSL was housed in a small enclosure within the Sugathadasa Stadium Sports Complex.

During that period I first met Mr. Hemasiri Fernando who took over the reins from de Silva. In fact both our Associations were in opposing camps. However soon after the election it was Mr. Fernando who met up with me and requested us shed our differences and work towards the common goal – development of Olympism.

The vision and leadership quality of Mr. Fernando always amazes me. Once he joined hands with Maxwell de Silva as his Secretary General the transformation of the NOCSL and its environ along with the pattern of thinking began to change. His vision was as long as the NOCSL was housed at a place owned by the government, we will always be under obligation to the Sports Ministry and its officialdom. Then mostly owing to his own efforts and connections Hemasiri Fernando managed to get our location where the 'Olympic House' is situated at present.

The completion of the task of putting up the building was also awe-inspiring both artistically

and practically. While building the NOCSL headquarters, he also envisioned that the organisation should be financially viable. The result was the addition of a gymnasium, an auditorium and a restaurant where revenue could be collected towards the up-keep of the NOCSL. In addition he changed the outlook of the Olympic House Sri Lanka by accommodating the Museum, in the ground floor of the auditorium.

Like he suspected then came the attempts to take over the control of the NOCSL by the Sports Ministry. There came this act in parliament bringing National Olympic Committee under the supervision of the Sports Ministry. As time progressed Mr. Fernando was of the opinion that it was very detrimental to the well-being of the Olympic Values. He led the fight from the front, yet there were some members of the NOC at that time who were camping with the ministry ideology.

Hemasiri Fernando was unyielding and had the ability to think from above his shoulders and was politically clever. He knew that his greatest virtue was none other than the IOC itself. He sent a strong message to the IOC stating that the NOCSL were vulnerable of losing its identity and the independence of the Olympic Committee. The IOC agreed with the stance of Mr. Fernando. Thereafter the IOC was very polite but strong with their sentiment. It read the IOC respected the laws of this country and they could pass any laws in parliament. But, with all due respects if the Olympic Charter is tampered with and if the IOC loses its independence they would not be able to host any Olympic Games, Asian Games or Commonwealth Games and the Lankan government that time understood the gravity of the situation and stepped back. So, the NOCSL

continues as an independent body and will remain as an independent body. We are all so indebted to him for his unyielding stature.

We must also be very appreciative of our loyal staff, which weathered many storms and continued to do their work silently working towards the interest of the athletes without whom there is no NOCSL.

Once his mission was accomplished, Hemasiri Fernando decided to change the baton. At present the team is led by a sportsman and entrepreneur Suresh Subramaniam with Maxwell de Silva once again functioning as Secretary General.

Now the first part of the race is over. It is up to Suresh and his team to take the Olympic Movement towards accomplishment and medal brilliance. To pursue this goal the new NOCSL President has the assistance of people in the calibre of Asanga Seneviratne. Both these personalities are true Dream Merchants. How Subramaniam transformed the Sri Lanka Tennis Association to be a sports conglomerate and how Seneviratne transformed rugby and implanted it among the elite Asian rugby giants is much talked about.

The GoodSports Magazine done by the new team is another iconic product. In the first edition there were some teething problems like any other product. However, what we all would like to see is truly a Lankan product which talks about the happenings of the local sports scene and caters to the needs of our athletes.





**THE NOCSL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2018**

**First row (seated) from Left to Right:** Wing Commander (Rtd) Chandana Liyanage, Assistant Secretary Mr. Asanga Seneviratne, Vice President Mr. Maxwell de Silva, Secretary General Mr. Suresh Subramaniam, President Mr. Senaka Ranasinghe, Treasurer Senior DIG (Rtd) Sumith Edirisinghe, Vice President Mr. Joseph Kenny, Vice President

**Second Row (Standing) from Left to Right:** Mr. Niluka Karunaratne, Representative from the Athletes' Commission Mr. Chanaka Hashantha, Committee Member Mr. Nishantha Jayasinghe, Assistant Treasurer Mr. Ajith Thamel, Committee Member

Also, kindly note that the following office bearers are not in that photograph  
 Mr. Hemasiri Fernando, Immediate Past President Maj. Gen (Rtd) Palitha Fernando, Vice President Mr. Fazil Hussain, Committee Member



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Head Office :  
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 Phone : (+94 11) 2430968, 2337518 Fax : (+94 11) 2430969

## NOC SL teams up with FoG to savour an unforgettable TT experience

Foundation of Goodness (FoG), Seenigama had an ineffaceable Table Tennis experience courtesy the National Olympic Council of Sri Lanka. The experience was the arrival of former German National Table Tennis (TT) coach Martin Adomeit. Martin has served as both the German Junior and Senior National Table Tennis coach. He has also won much acclaim as the TT coach of Luxembourg, Belgium and for a short spell in Nigeria.

Chief coordinator for the National Olympic Committee and former president of the Table Tennis Association of Sri Lanka, Chandana Perera said, "In my 40 years' experience in Table Tennis, Mr. Martin Adomeit is the best coach who has come to Sri Lanka to educate coaches as well as players."

Martin's visit was facilitated through the Sri Lanka National Olympic Committee. He worked with coaches and TT players from across the country via a series of intensive workshops spread across Colombo, Kandy and the South. FoG was lucky to have him for a full day of training where their young TT champs trained hard from morning till late in the evening.

FoG Table Tennis coach Chaminda Roshan assisted Martin with the TT camp. Ever since the 2004 Tsunami that devastated the region, Table Tennis has been one of the many sports that FoG has been developing in the area, in the hope of using sports as a vehicle to move out of poverty. The German coach commended the standard of the junior players, saying that they were much better than players from many countries including



Germany. He pointed out that the drop in quality is seen when players hit 17 or 18 years of age. Post school, players have no place to cultivate their passion, as Sri Lanka does not have many clubs or companies that they can play with. Martin also pointed out that it was very encouraging to see the number of female players that are interested in the sport, with the standard of the girls overriding that of the boys.

Martin also shared some invaluable pragmatic advice on how to train and become better, in an environment of limited resources, while introducing new techniques and teaching valuable skills to our players.

FoG thanked the National Olympic Committee for making this visit possible and giving their budding Table Tennis champs the opportunity to learn from one of the greats.



## FoG join hands with NOCSL on swimming excellence



As per the agreement signed between the Foundation of Goodness (FoG) and the National Olympic Committee (NOC) with the ultimate goal of creating an Olympian by 2024, Manoj Abeysinghe conducted a special swimming coaching camp at the Bryan Adams pool, FoG Sports Academy in Seenigama.

With over 15 years of experience as a professional swimming coach in the USA, Manoj Abeysinghe and his team conducted two training sessions with our FoG swimmers. Manoj who is also a National Olympic Committee coach was accompanied by 8 members of his team. Twenty advanced swimmers started off the training session which was followed by training for 50 general level swimmers. Both sessions were intensive and each of the students were able to get one-on-one attention from the coaches.

Sri Lanka's first ever Triathlete to participate in the Asian Games and Head Coach of Swimming at FoG Lakruwan Wijesiri said, 'Manoj Abeysinghe and his team advised us to step up the land training sessions of the swimmers and gave us some important tips for more impactful physical training.'

FoG provides free-of-charge facilities, training, equipment, scholarships and more to rural athletes across a wide spectrum of sports. Their goal is to ensure that the talented athletes of rural Sri Lanka receive the opportunities they deserve. For years now, promising young rural athletes fail to make it to the National stage due to a lack of good nutrition, proper coaching and adequate training

facilities. Sri Lanka has lost many a rising star due to this negligence.

Over the years, the FoG Sports Academy in Seenigama, along with Village Heartbeat Empowerment Centres across the country have been working to bridge the gap between rural and urban sportsmen and sportswomen. The partnership between the Foundation of Goodness and the National Olympic Committee, continues to flourish with many joint projects planned for the future, empowering rural athletes to reach their true potential.





## Hemasiri Fernando Auditorium

For more than a decade Hemasiri Fernando was the voice and eyes of the Lankan Olympic Movement as the President of the National Olympic Committee and today we also celebrate this man as the Defence Secretary to the entire nation.

Just prior to that; the NOCSL hierarchy decided to name the Olympic House auditorium, on December 5, 2018, after him as a mark of respect and to honour his contribution to the Movement by calling it the "Hemasiri Fernando Auditorium".

Upon taking over as President of the NOCSL in 1997, Mr. Hemasiri Fernando was instrumental in moving its office to the more spacious Sugathadasa Stadium office from an office room at the Race Course where the 'Olympic House' dream was hatched.

The real four storied 'Olympic House' became a reality on 23 September 2008 amidst a huge gathering of dignitaries.

At present Mr. Fernando is the Immediate Past President of the National Olympic Committee (NOC)/Commonwealth Games Association (CGA) of Sri Lanka and also the honorary Vice President, Olympic Council of Asia (OCA) - (since July 2011) and Regional Vice President (Asia), Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF) - (since 2007).



## GoodSport going international



Sri Lanka National Olympic Committee President Suresh Subramaniam handing over the last edition copy of GoodSport to Matt Carroll AM, Australia Olympic Committee Chief Executive Officer cum Secretary General recently.

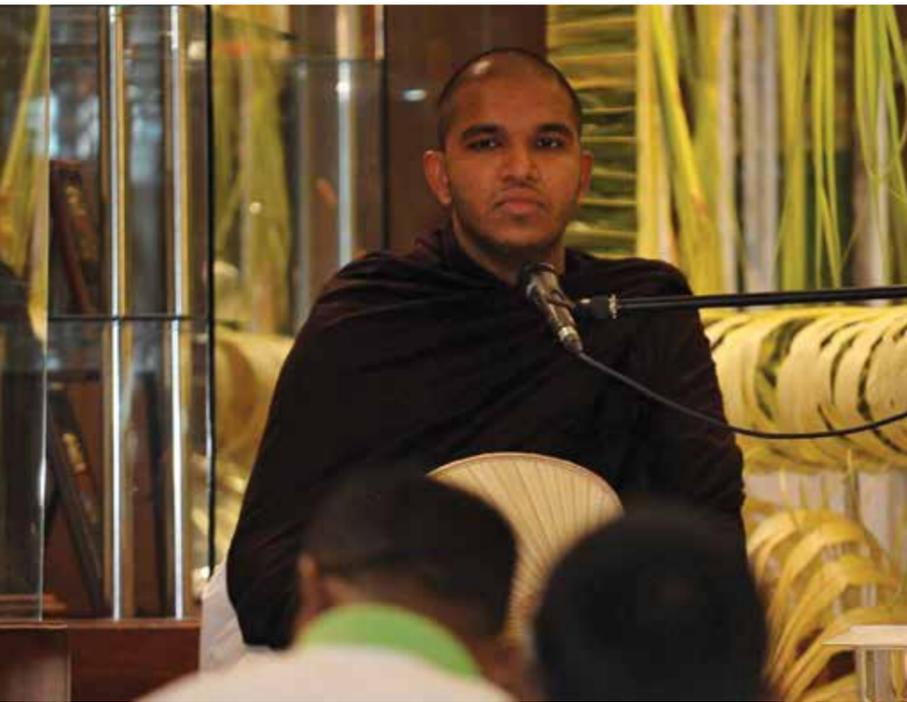


Nadia Elena Comăneci the Romanian retired gymnast and a five-time Olympic gold medallist, all in individual events, met up with Sri Lanka's NOCSL President Suresh Subramaniam and NOCSL Secretary General Maxwell de Silva during the ANOC General Assembly in Tokyo, recently.

The picture shows Mr. and Mrs. Subramaniam and Mr. and Mrs. De Silva in conversation with the Romanian athlete who now is a naturalized USA citizen.

Comăneci is the first gymnast to be awarded a perfect score of 10.0 at the Olympic Games, and then, at the same Games, she received six more perfect 10s en route to winning three gold medals.

## Time for spirituality



It was a day that most Olympians and other related personnel along with the VIPs of NOCSL's governing body, decided to open a window of spirituality with the staging of the second annual NOCSL Pirith ceremony which was followed Dana for 15 bhikkus, on 11 January at its headquarters premises.

Preceding the Pirith recital, the day began with one hour of 'Kavi Bana' (Poetic recital of Bana) delivered by Ven Padiyapelle Pannasobhitha Thero of the Dematagoda Visudharma Temple.

The main discourse of the Pirith chanting was conducted by the Chief Incumbent of the Weerasingha Sasanarakshaka Balamandala, Dematagoda, Sacred Area of Buddhist Union, Ven. Welimada Shantha Thero.

Among the scores of dignitaries that graced the occasion were W.A. Chulananda -- Secretary of the Ministry of Sports, Sports Ministry Officers, Sports Science Officers and Olympic medalist Susanthika Jayasinghe along with many national athletes. The Pirith was recited by the Bhikkus through the night and that was followed by Heel Dana (The morning dana) for those participating bhikkus.





## FIBA Asia mini-basketball convention in Colombo



FIBA Asia Mini Basketball Convention was held in Colombo from 14th to 15th December with the participation of over 750 children and 97 delegates and coaches from 22 countries in the Asian region. The event was organized by Sri Lanka Basketball Federation (SLBF) and Sri Lanka Schools Basketball Association (SLSBA) under the patronage of International Basketball Foundation (IBF) which is responsible for popularizing the game globally.

The Mini Basketball Convention was held under three main events. The first was a Jamboree gathering. More than 750 players of both genders under the age of 12 from selected schools countrywide. They all mustered at Sugathadasa Indoor Stadium, showing their passion for basketball and their eagerness to play and have fun. The full day event was conducted

engaging young players with fun and activities to develop skills. Each participant was issued with a Molten Basketball, a T-shirt, participation certificate and a souvenir booklet sponsored by IBF and local sponsors, Bank of Ceylon, National Olympic Committee of Sri Lanka & Papare.com.

"We believe that the event gave kids a lasting impression to engage in a great sport and make it a part of their life," said Sanath Jayalath, President of the Sri Lanka Schools' Basketball Association and Vice-President of the Sri Lanka Basketball Federation.

In addition, the IBF's Basketball for Good, initiative was the kids be aware of their responsibilities. Dr. Himan de Silva, an Olympic Physician, explained how important

it is to keep the environment clean. He also emphasized how playing basketball leads to a healthy and organized life.

The second event was the interactive coaches' clinic session conducted at Kothalawela Defence University with the participation of over 30 local coaches and 20 coaches from Asian countries. This session was conducted by Dr. Sergio Lara-Bercial, at Leeds Beckett University & International Council for Coaching Excellence and Fadi Sabbah, leader in Mini Basketball for over 20 years. The aim was to present the idea and philosophy of game-based learning in Mini Basketball, how to get kids engaged in training and make them love the game at a young age. The on-court session included exercises demonstrated by a team of local young players in addition to the active participation of the international delegates and national coaches in instructive team building activities.

The following day was dedicated to the conference which gathered international speakers sharing their experience.

Dr. Lara-Bercial sharing his experience said explained, "the philosophy of iCoachKids is about understanding that participating in sports can give children a lot more than just physical and technical skills; it is about putting the child at the centre of all we do and making sure sport is a positive and enriching experience where children develop as people first and athletes second. At the FIBA/IBF coaching clinics we have been able to demonstrate this philosophy in action during our on-court sessions with local children and also in interactive workshops with the delegates from all the region's national federations as well as local coaches. We are delighted to share our free resources with the FIBA family"

The Japanese way of promoting Mini-Basketball was presented by Keishi Murakami. He gave an overview of the way the JBA (Japanese Basketball Association) focuses on growing youth basketball and expanding the access to the sport countrywide.

Ahmed Yousif presented Bahrain's It's My Game Project, introducing the new strategic plan of Bahrain to raise awareness of basketball by introducing the game to kindergartens and primary schools.

Fadi Sabbah shared insights on how to organize Jamborees in Jordan. He presented the learnings and best practices he has gained with an example of an action plan. The presentation showed a concrete example of one of the IBF's goals for the convention, which is for the delegates to go back to their respective countries and organize their own Jamborees.

All delegates were pleased to have attended the event. Sana Mahmoud, a delegate from Pakistan stated, "it was a great networking opportunity to meet with people across the Asia region and learn about the wonderful different types of Mini Basketball programmes they're running. Pakistan has a long way to go but such opportunities are great for us to understand how to get there. I plan to pass on what I've learnt at the convention and see how we can decide a program starting from within my city at first."

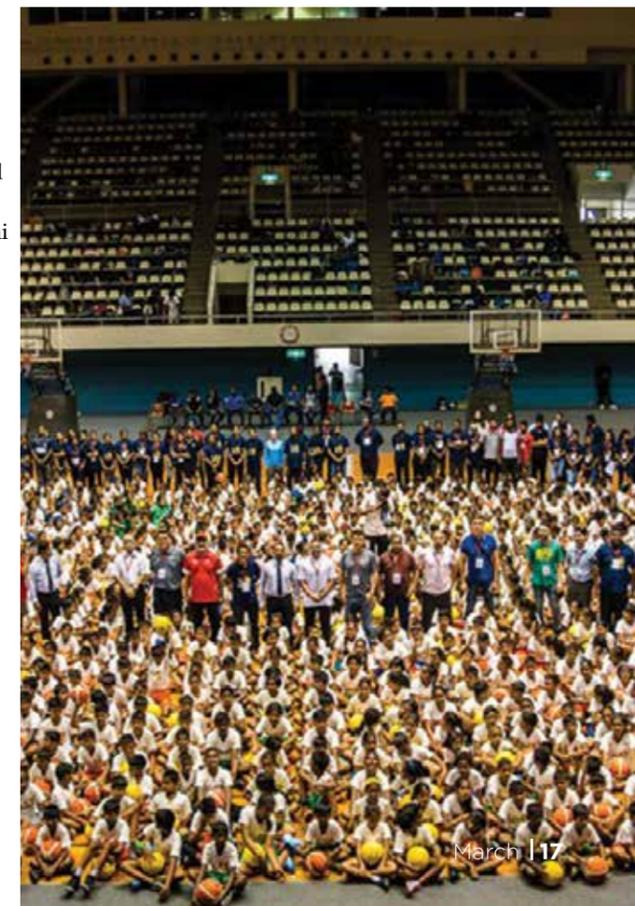
Andrea Paoli, National Federations & Sport Manager of the FIBA Regional Office Asia stated: "It was a great experience collaborating closely between the Regional Office and the IBF. Mini Basketball is a key area to focus on in Asia in order to invest in the youth of tomorrow. This convention gives innovative tools and concepts to coaches and administrators, and it is our role now to make sure that these learnings are translated into concrete actions: encouraging the organization of more Mini Basketball events and the spread of the Mini Basketball philosophy."



IBF President and Vice President of Qatar National Olympic Committee Sheikh Saud Bin Ali Al-Thani who grace this occasion concluded, "this is already the fourth Mini Basketball convention we have had this year and we see the same enthusiasm on each continent. I am confident that the Mini Basketball movement is developing rapidly and look forward to the continuous growth of the Basketball Family around the globe".

The regional conventions for Europe, Oceania, Africa and Asia was held in Portugal, Australia, Morocco, Sri Lanka respectively and the last continent to host a Mini Basketball convention will be the America in Mexico.

Sri Lanka Basketball Federation intends to make this an annual event and the next event is going to be held in December 2019 with the participation of 1,000 school kids to popular basketball in Sri Lanka.



## WJT under 14 qualifying rounds



2019 Asia/Oceania under 14 girls and boys Pre-Qualifying round of World Junior Tennis was held at the SLTA courts, Colombo. Taking part at this leg of the tournament were Bahrain, Bangladesh, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Lebanon, Philippines, Oman, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Turkmenistan and Singapore. Sri Lanka already has moved to the stage of the tournament.

## Six Sri Lankan junior sailing champions off to Myanmar



IODA Asian and Oceanian Sailing Championship 2018, an international sailing championship for Optimist, scheduled from the 10th to the 17th of November 2018, will be held in Ngwa, Myanmar with 130 participants from 20 countries.

The Ministry of Sports with the approval of the Ministry of Education has selected a six-member team of enthusiastic junior sailors, aged 15 and under, who will be representing Sri Lanka at this international event. This event is held annually by the

International Optimist Dinghy Association (IODA), the International governing body for Optimist Sailing in the World which is the most popular youth class, sailing dinghies.

IODA is an international body that groups together National Optimist Associations involved in sailing in the countries they are present. The Optimist was designed by Clark Mills in 1947 in Clearwater, Florida USA and the International Optimist Dinghy Association was founded in 1965.

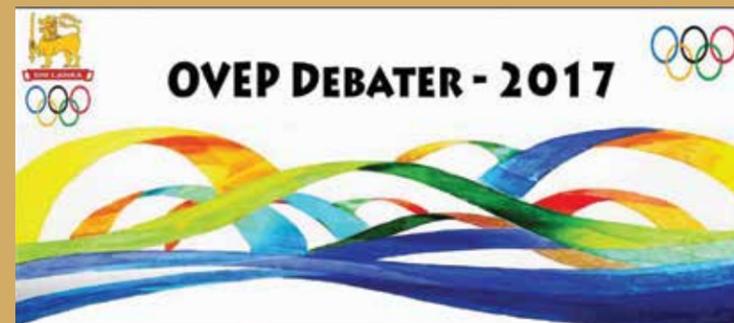
Mr. Sarath Kuragama, COO of the Yachting Association of Sri Lanka said that School Sailing started in Sri Lanka about five years ago and it has caught up within a short period of time. "We hope to train and nurture young sailors and prepare them for international events."

## OVEP winners in Greece

Mahamaya Girls' School, Kandy carried away the 2017 Olympic Values interschool (OVEP) debating contest beating Sirimavo Bandaranaike Vidyalaya, Colombo organised and conducted by the IOC in conjunction with the NOC Sri Lanka, recently.

The theme of the programme was "You could achieve Sports' real democracy through the five Olympic Values Precept". The Mahamaya Girls' team comprised - Apoorva Ekanayake, Sarah Perera, Thinali Ratnayake and Jayani Herath.

The winning team was given the opportunity travelling to the International Olympic Academy (20 A) in Olympia, Greece.



## West Asia Baseball Championships Trophy to be held in Sri Lanka



Sri Lanka is within the reach of joining the main stream of baseball activity in Asian region with the clinching of the West Asia Champions Trophy Baseball tournament. This tournament was offered to Sri Lanka on the back of the development work done by SLABSA which is the governing body of Baseball in Sri Lanka (Sri Lanka Amateur Baseball/ Softball Association) and becoming the Champions in 2017 beating the hot favourites Pakistan.

The tournament is scheduled to be held from 29 June to July 1 at the Diyagama Japan Friendship Baseball Stadium which was built at a cost of

Rs. 30 million. Countries taking part will be India, Pakistan, Nepal, Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan, Bangladesh and hosts Sri Lanka.

With the hosting of this tournament; the Sri Lanka Baseball President/ representative will become the Director General of West Asia Baseball. He will also become a council member of the Baseball Federation of Asia (BFA). The Chief Executive Officer Baseball of Sri Lanka, Priyantha Ekanayake said, "Upon that Sri Lanka will have access to funding, coaching, trainers and educators (technical support) for Sri Lanka. Also this tournament

will help us raise the image within Sri Lanka and internationally. Then we will be able to get help from top baseball playing nations such as USA, Japan, Korea etc, where baseball is the number one sport."

Sri Lanka Amateur Baseball/Softball Association have a plan to grow the game islandwide. We are planning to cover all nine provinces, 25 districts and 98 educational zones by 2025 and to create 20,000 new players.

Platinum awards conducted by Sirasa/sports channel conducted a programme in every district for 25 days from the 16th of January to



recognise and reward top sportsmen and women in every district. While they do this programme they promote one sport and this year they have selected baseball looking at the hard work done by the officials and the potential of the sport.

Ekanayake also said: "Basically it's imperative that we do this tournament and this will give our players to play on their home soil where top countries such as India and Pakistan etc. will take part. Lanka is currently 41st from 122 countries out at the world and 7th out of the 28 countries in Asia."

Sri Lanka baseball team took part in the Asian Games in 2018 for the very first time and notched up their very first win at the tournament.



## NOCSL's new look website launched

The National Olympic Committee of Sri Lanka launched its revamped website at the Hemasiri Fernando Auditorium.

The new look website was launched with the click of a button by the chief guest Mr. J. J. Ambani, Chairman of the Metropolitan Holdings accompanied by Mr. Suresh Subramaniam, the president of NOCSL.

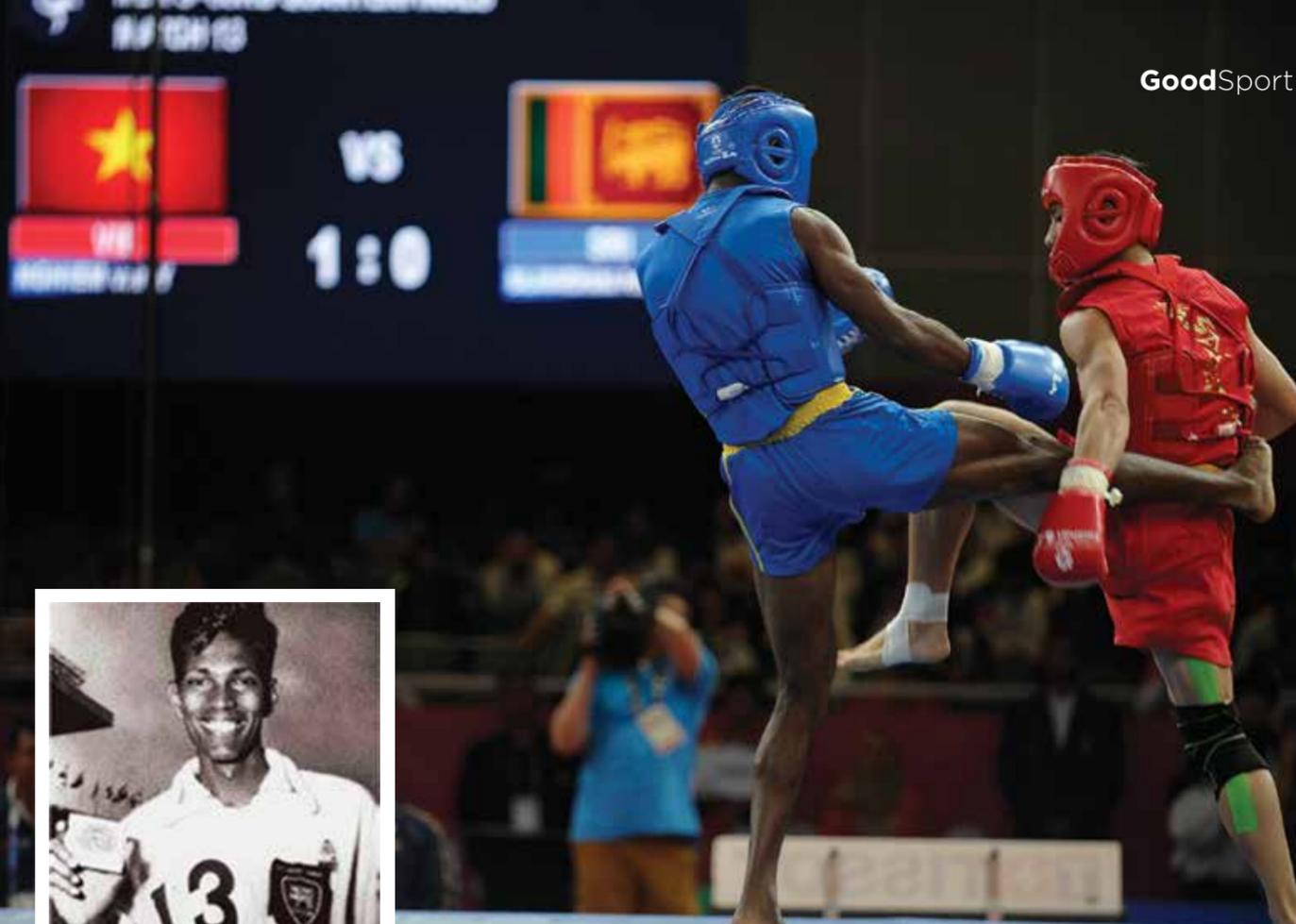
The website, [www.olympics.lk](http://www.olympics.lk) provides details relating to events that Sri Lankan athletes participate, videos, photos, features and the athlete profiles, which were not available in the previous website. In addition to this the GoodSport magazine also could be downloaded.

Besides, NOCSL is working closely with the 'Olympic Channel' to a potential partnership to provide access to over 50,000 video archives. This would be another milestone for Sri Lankan athletes to access those videos and also the live streaming.

Speaking at the occasion NOCSL President Subramaniam said: "Our athletes are not known in our country unlike the cricketers, therefore, to attract sponsorship is very difficult, which meant the athletes find it very difficult to achieve their dreams and move to the scale of the more famous international cricketers.

"The launch of this website is the step in the right direction because it will help us to share with rest of the world and everyone outside NOC to be aware and join the rank of other NOC's in the world. Our new website is designed to meet the expectation of our athletes, staffs and public."





Nagalingam Ethirveerasingham

## The Asian Games saga

By S.R. Pathiravithana

**S**ports, especially athletics is like time; it does not stop for any one. Either you are on board sailing to the other destination of reaching the next plain or stay home and sulk about the way it would have been.

At the last Asian Games held in Indonesia in the cities of Jakarta and Palembang, Sri Lanka carried a contingent of 185 athletes consisting of 138 men and 47 women taking part in 28 sports. But, disappointingly Sri Lanka failed to win a single medal and their tally read a dismal zero. Yet, this is not the first instance that the Lankan athletes ended up with an empty

basket; even in Guangzhou, China in 2010 and in Incheon, South Korea in 2014 they suffered a similar fate. The other two occasions Sri Lanka missed the medal bus were in 1982 in New Delhi, India and in 1986 in Seoul, South Korea.

Let us take you through Sri Lanka's Asian Games saga right from the beginning.

The Lankan athletic tale is multidimensional. In the very first Games held in 1951, Pole Vaulter M.A. Akbar bagged a Silver medal clearing 3.38 metres to mark Lanka's entry into Asian big time athletics.

In the next Asian Games (1958), boxing brothers H.P. and C.P. Jayasuriya came up with a special show in Manila. The elder brother Hemapala won Silver in the Bantamweight while younger brother Chandrasena won the Bronze medal in the Featherweight in the 1954 Asian Games.

### Tokyo 1958

However the Lankans reached a peak in their third Asian Games appearance at the Tokyo Games in Japan when Nagalingam Ethirveerasingham won the men's High Jump Gold medal in 1958, thus marking the first ever 'Gold' medal in any sport for then Ceylon. He did it in style. Ethirveerasingham scaled 2.03 metres setting a new Games record.

The Lankan Tennis duo of Rupert Ferdinands and Bernard Pinto brought home Bronze medals capping the Golden achievement.





In the formative years of the Asian Games concept, Sri Lanka catapulted itself into the top league and had the aptitude of winning medals in various disciplines. In the first three attempts, Sri Lanka won a medal in Pole Vaulting, Boxing, High Jump and Tennis – four disciplines across the board.

Vindicating that belief, Sri Lanka produced their most successful haul bagging five medals in the Jakarta Games in 1962. There were some glorious performances.

#### Jakarta 1962

First it was Ethirveerasingham winning his second successive Asian medal along with Bernard Pinto. Following the 1958 'Gold', Ethirveerasingham had to be satisfied with a 'Silver' as he scaled only 1.98 metres in his attempt in the High

Jump event. However, Bernard Pinto this time paired off with Raja Praesody to take the Tennis Bronze again.

Besides that, Senarath (S.P.) – the third of the Jayasuriya boxing brothers became an Asian Games medallist emulating his elder brother H.P. and CP. S.P. Jayasuriya boxed his way courageously to take the Flyweight Bronze medal.

Tennis player Ranjani Jayasuriya joined Ethirveerasingham to win Silver while Nirmala Dissanayake won a Bronze medal in the women's 200 metres. For the first time the then Ceylon team had bagged five medals in an international event of that magnitude.

Winning medals across the board with some specials, Ceylonese athletics was on the upward trend.

#### Lucien Rosa

As a school going youngster, I remember the advent of long distance runner Lucien Rosa. He first burst into the Asian Games stage in 1966 in Bangkok. There he won twin bronze medals in the 5,000 (14 minutes 32.2 seconds) and 10,000 metre (29:55.6) events to mark his entry. Along with S.L.B. Rosa, tennis stars Ranjani Jayasuriya and Wendy Molligoda won twin bronze medals in the women's doubles event and the women's team event. In the Tennis team event the third player was Sria Gooneratne. Cycling also made its mark in the 1966 Asian Games through Trevor de Silva who won bronze medals in the 800 metre and the 1,600 metre races.

The 1970 Asian Games in Bangkok, Thailand marked the blossoming of S.L.B. Rosa. The recipient of two Bronze medals, Rosa became the first Lankan athlete to win twin Gold medals in the 5,000 metre and the 10,000 metre events.

Besides Rosa, Wickremasinghe Wimaladasa, better known as W. Wimaladasa won a Silver clocking 46.7 seconds in the 400 while Ray Wijewardena and Ekendra Edirisinghe won the Silver in the Enterprise Class in Sailing.

#### Limelight

It was W. Wimaladasa's turn to take the limelight in 1970 in Bangkok? Sri Lanka won only two medals this time, but, both were Gold medals. First, Wimaladasa upgraded his 1970 Silver in the 400 metres to a Gold clocking 46.21 secs and then joined the trio of Sunil Gunawardena, Kosala Sahabandu and A. Premachandra to bag Gold in the 4 x 400 metres relay event in 3:07.40.

In 1978 there was a slump. Sri Lanka won only two Bronze medals for boxing. Wijeya Nimal Perera in the Flyweight and H. Hallesage Caldera in the Bantamweight.



Then for whole decade the Lankans lost their magic and in 1982 and in 1986 failed to make any impression and returned empty handed.

### Rejuvenation

In reality, Sriyantha Dissanayake's Asian Games effort sparked off the athletic rejuvenation for Sri Lanka. After a decade or more of barren performances, Dissanayake won Silver and a Bronze in the 200 metre and the 100 metre sprints clocking 21.17 secs and 10.64 secs respectively in 1990. Adding to that glory; caddy turned Golf professional K. Nandasena Perera won a Silver.

This was a precursor to the dawn of the golden era of the Susanthika, Dharsha and Thilakaratne. In the 1994 Hiroshima Games, Susanthika scorched the Asian Games track to win a Silver in the 200-metre race clocking 23.57 seconds and not far behind was Damayanthi Dharsha who finished the same race in a time of 23.61 seconds.

There was more athletic glory; in 1998 in Bangkok when Damayanthi Dharsha won two Gold medals and Sugath Thilakaratna one Gold where Sri Lanka went on to bag seven medals in all. They came in this order: Sugath Thilakaratna 400 metres (men) 44.93 seconds (Gold) and 200 (men) 20.69 seconds (Bronze); Damayanthi Dharsha 200 metres (women) 22.48 seconds (Gold) and 400 metres (women) 51.57 seconds (Gold); Sriyani Kulawansa 100 metres Hurdles 13.08 seconds (Bronze); Lalin Jirasinghe and W.P.K. Janaka in Yachting (Bronze).

### Olympic medallist

The athletic momentum remained even after the millennium. By then Susanthika Jayasinghe was already an Olympic medallist, in the 200 metres women's event.

Though only two Gold medals, the Lankans reaped a harvest of medals in Busan, South Korea in 2002. Lankans won six medals in

total. As expected Susanthika Jayasinghe won the women's 100 metres event in 11.15 seconds while Damayanthi Dharsha created a new Games record while winning the 400 metres race in 51.13 seconds. R.A. Aruna Shantha won a Silver in Golf.

That year the Bronze medalists were – Rohan Pradeepkumara, 400 metres in 45.67 seconds; Sugath Tillekeratne, Rohan Pradeepkumara, Prasanna Amerasekara and Ranga Wimalawansa 4x400m relay in 3:04.37; and R.J. Edwards – Karate.

### Lean period

Then came a lean period for Lanka in athletics. In 2006 in Doha, Susanthika managed only Silver and a Bronze in her pet events – the women's 100 metres and 200 metres sprints. In the 100 metres Jayasinghe timed 11.34 seconds while in the 200 metres her time was 23.42. Besides that Rohan Pradeepkumara, Rohitha Pushpakumara, Prasanna Amerasekara and J.A.M.K. Jayasundera clocked 3:06.97 in the 4x400 relay.

Failing to win an Asian Games medal for over 12 years is a matter of concern indeed and a lot of soul searching is needed if the Lankans seeking a turnaround in their fortunes. Over the past decade we have discussed much about the rejuvenation, but, nothing has been forthcoming.

I remember at one point the National Olympic Committee President Suresh Subramaniam pointing out that even countries like Singapore has scaled up their facilities to cater to the modern demands of athletics while in Sri Lanka the best we can offer are two below par tracks at the Sugathadasa Stadium and Diyagama. At this point we need more deeds than words for the sport's resuscitation and regain our past glory.





# TALE OF TWO CHAMPIONS

THEIR WOES AND ASPIRATIONS

----- By S.R. Pathiravithana -----

**T**here is discontentment everywhere. Dishonesty and questionable morals is the order of the day in today's sport. Yet at a time like this; two beautiful lotus flowers have sprouted from the murky waters of the Ridgeways. No, we are not trying to uncoil a beautiful love story, but we are ready to unveil a real tribute the game on the green turf.

Though they hail from humble beginnings, both M.U. Chanaka Perera and Tanya Minel Balasuriya are

the current King and Queen of golf in Sri Lanka.

At present Chanaka wears the crown that he wears after he brought home the Sri Lanka Amateur golf title which was in the custody of neighbouring rivals beyond the Palk Strait for five years.

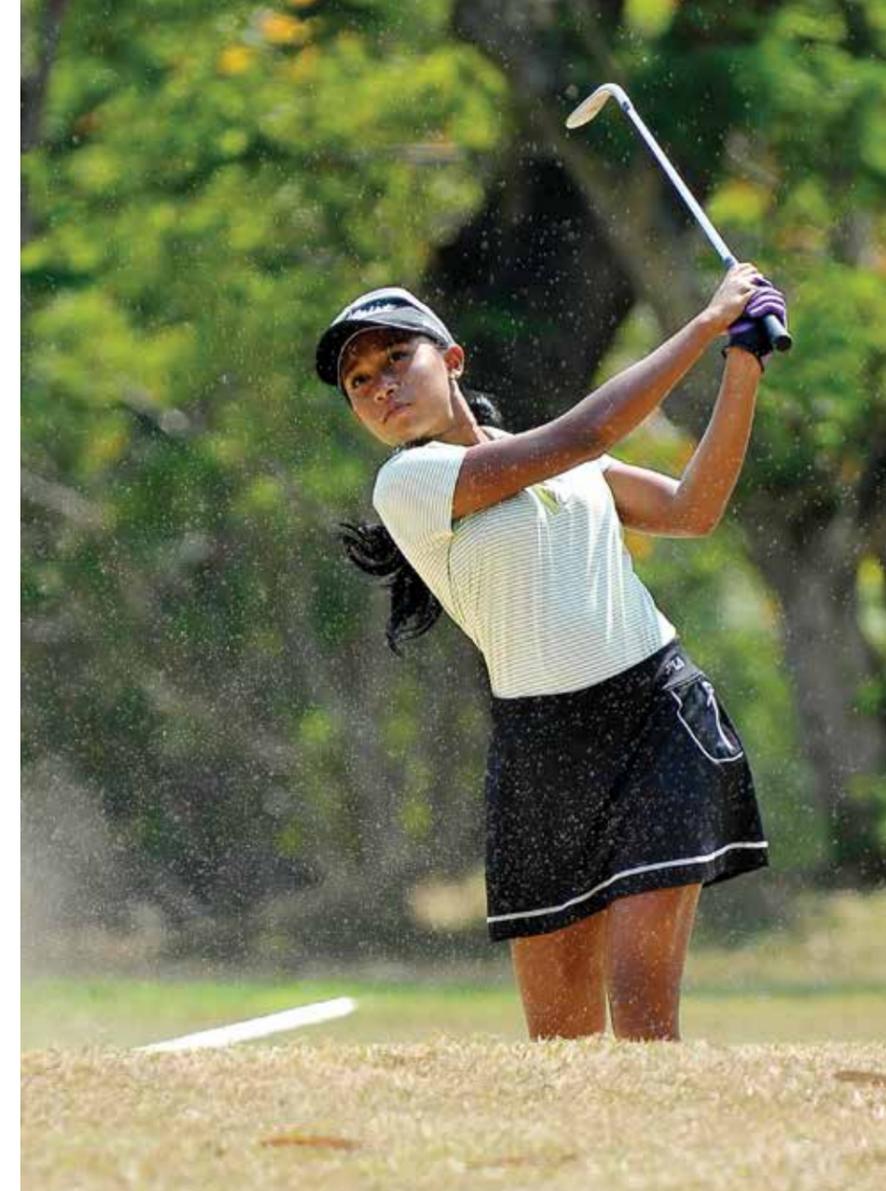
Still only 16, Tanya has a heavy load of golf trophies that even a caddie could not pull on his own. She started playing the game at the age of 11 and already is the owner of 46 different

**"I FEEL THE GAME HAS COME NATURALLY TO ME. ONCE I GOT THE HANG OF THE GAME."**

titles that she has brought home. In short, the cupboard that her proud father bought to showcase her trophies is simply full and the balance is now being displayed at the top of the cupboard and she is sure she will need another one pretty soon.

The petite golfer was born in the environs of the golf vibes of the RCGC; but her father a fishmonger by profession was not a part of the playing community; but knows everything about the sport. She said: "At the Sri Jayewardenepura Girls' School I tried my hand at cricket, badminton and even athletics; but one day someone said that the golf people were looking for young girls who want to learn the game of golf. I did not wait for another invitation, I simply enrolled myself. There I came under the wing of coach Jehan de Saram. I was only 11 years old at that time."

Two years later she faced her first hurdle which was a junior tournament. Though





**“I LIKE TO WIN  
EVEN IF THE  
TOURNAMENT IS  
PLAYED FOR A TIN  
OF SALMON.”**

by then she had five golf clubs in her possession, she lost. A while later with the guidance of her coach and a full compliment of golf clubs, Tanya began her winning streak.

She said: “I feel the game has come naturally to me. Once I got the hang of the game, the 18 holes were so much closer. Besides my coach, my father Vinod Weerasinghe appointed himself as my personal caddie, though he is not one by profession.

“My quest to win is still in its initial stages. I have won the Junior Open twice and when I first won the Ladies Open I was only 13 years old – that was in 2015. I remember I nearly won the All India title too. I came second because I had

one bad round and the winner of the title beat me by two strokes and I had to be satisfied with the runner-up position.”

Tanya confided that her coach de Saram has asked her to give a break from taking part in junior tournaments. “Yet,” she said, “I like to win even if the tournament is played for a tin of salmon.”

She added, “However, I will be playing in the amateur circuit only for another year. By the end of next year I want to turn professional and join the Indian professional tour. If I am successful there, my ultimate goal is to join the European Tour when I become 20 years old.”

Could Tanya be the next Thiru Fernando in Lankan golf?

Model Farm beginning instilled Chanaka Perera’s golf instincts. However he first made his mark as a sportsman at D.S. Senanayake College as a budding young fast bowler. After going through the paces he finally ended up sharing the new-ball with Binura Fernando who went onto bag the national cap. “But, I had to make a choice. Was I going to pursue my future as a cricketer or was I going to turn my part-time golfing skills into a way of life? I chose the second,” he recalled.



**“TODAY I AM AT THE TOP OF MY GAME. STILL I AM FAR AWAY FROM MY GOLFING DREAM.”**

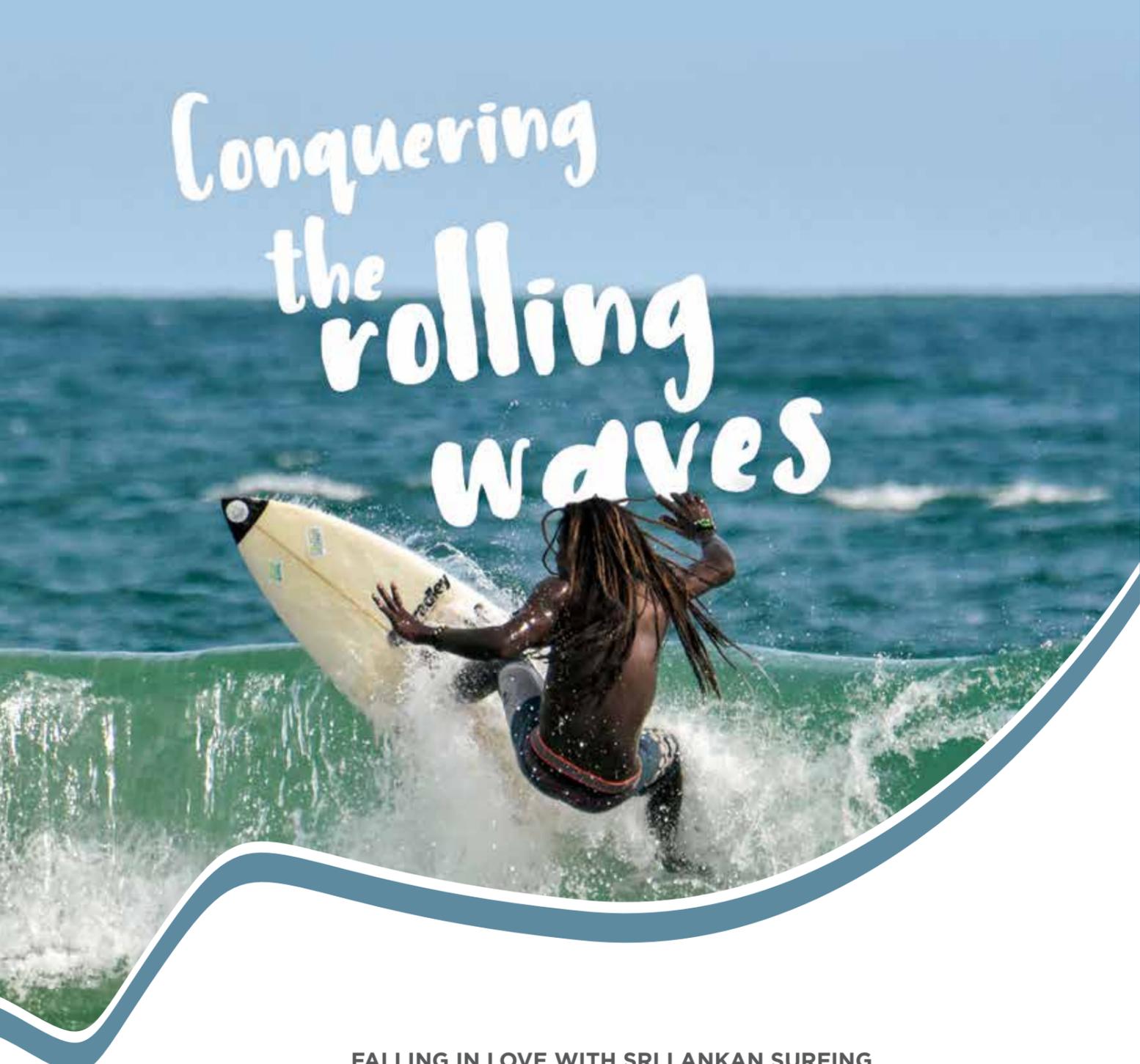
“I was well aware that the challenge is a stiff one. Every young player who takes up to golf with our background have to face some ground realities. At the same time there is a list of skilled players unlike in the women’s circuit. It’s a hard grind.”

He said that it was a real grind in the initial stages. “I was lucky that my employer Certis Lanka gave a set of golf equipment and the freedom to train. Yet, at the age of 25 things were not rosy. It was not so long ago that I was toying with the idea of seeking employment in a golf course in the Middle East. More often than not it is my father who has to bear the brunt of my up-keep. It was at this juncture that I annexed the 131st

Continental Sri Lanka Amateur Golf Championship, defeating G. P. Sisira Kumara 3 & 1 in the 36-hole final at the RCGC, to become the first Sri Lankan to win the Amateur championship after a lapse of five years, since 2012.

“Today I am at the top of my game. Still I am far away from my golfing dream,” Perera said. He says for instance, even in a country like Nepal the Amateur Golf champion has two sponsors and he is financially stable. He says that his next aim is to turn professional. “I am not afraid to work hard. I know the professional circuit is not a bed of roses; but, if I can make my mark there; the roses will find me.”

# Conquering the rolling waves



## FALLING IN LOVE WITH SRI LANKAN SURFING

**R**ight now Surfing in Sri Lanka is news and moreover, a VIP destination for the sport. How this came about is an interesting story narrated by none other than Vice President of Surfing Federation of Sri Lanka (SFSL) Lalaka Palliyaguruge who considers Surfing as a part of his life.

He began this story by the sea in this manner. "It's been a long journey

for us -- Surfing Federation of Sri Lanka. I need to tell you a bit about the federation's history before getting into the national competitions."

Palliyaguruge said that the initial effort to start a federation goes back fifteen years, when Sandika Thushara and Channa Kumara – the current Vice-President of Competitions and Technical Development, from Hikkaduwa put a lot of thought to

it, but did not work out since there was no backing from the government. Besides they also lacked a proper Surfing structure.

He said, "The closest we came to form a federation was in 2010 when the Association of Surfing Professionals (ASP) qualifying series was held in Arugam Bay. Petter O Rob and Tim Tanterm with Krishantha Ariyasena – the current Secretary worked hard to organize an event to select two wild cards for the ASP event -- the WQS 'World Qualifying Series'. Since then there was no proper guidance or government backing to the federation and it fell apart.

"For the success of the federation the credit has to go to Tim Jones for writing to the Sports Ministry of Sri Lanka and National Olympic Committee to form a Surfing Federation of Sri Lanka.

The man who came to guide the Surfing veterans in Sri Lanka was Hiran Ukwatte the current president. Hiran and a bunch of dedicated surfers from the East coast and the South coast, wanted to take surfing to the next level in Sri Lanka. They got together and started forming clubs along the coast and laid the foundation of Surfing Federation of Sri Lanka (SFSL)."

He said by this integration it has helped them to enhance the level of competition and improve the skills and techniques of the young surfers of the country. When you compare now and the past of Sri Lanka; the competency and skill levels of surfing have improved tremendously.

Besides in the post war situation, many more surfing hubs have become accessible and that has become a huge impetus to local Surfing community.





Hikkaduwa, Kabalana and Arugam Bay, each have a different wave, hence creating this opportunity for the surfers to showcase their talent in varying conditions. As a result, these three spots are the ideal location to have the national competition series.”

**Surf sport, and surf culture in Sri Lanka?**

The SFSL Vice President stressed: “This is the first time in history of Sri Lanka where a series of events are being organized to crown a national champion. Definitely this is a golden moment in history of surfing in Sri Lanka. In the past, surfing was a sport where it was popular among a handful of people closer to surf breaks. But since the first contest, we have attracted a lot of fans and the popularity of Surfing is on the rise. So, a few years down the road Surfing is going to be one of the most popular

sports in Sri Lanka for sure. There’s a distinct surf culture in Sri Lanka. As more and more people are attracted by surfing, I think it will evolve and even be more distinct in the future.

“If you wanted me to describe the spirit in just one word, I say it is ‘Unbelievable’. We actually didn’t think that enthusiasm among the surfers is going to be this much. You know, islanders never work on time, but! oh boy on competition days everyone was punctual. For the first contest we got 68 applicants and for the second and third it went up to 78 and 92. The spirit is there and growing and all the surfers are so eager to compete at the next competition.”

Palliyaguruge is convinced that Arugam Bay is a special place. That is his favourite spot to surf in Sri Lanka. He feels that you can expect the best surfers in Sri Lanka battling

for the National Championship title. Everyone is getting ready for the competition in Arugam Bay.

**Tokyo Olympics**

He says, “Yes, the Olympics was one of the major driving forces among the surfers and officials to keep the federation going. But the chances to represent Sri Lanka at the Olympics has become very slim due to factors beyond our control. Nevertheless we will hold annual contests to crown a national champion. At the moment it’s a series of three but in the future we are planning to add one or two more stops for the series. Our main aim now is to represent Sri Lanka in ISA events / world beach games and eventually produce surfers who are capable of competing at WSL qualifying series and World Surf League.”

The Eastern region of Sri Lanka has a Surfing history running back up to 1960 and some of the pioneers are no more. At present the Surfing Federation of Sri Lanka is planning to contribute a lot to the local Surfing communities and help them improve their life style and the education.

**The challenges**

Palliyaguruge said: “We had an enthusiastic team who were eager to form the federation in Sri Lanka and got things going. When we formed the federation there were nine surf clubs from South and the East Coast. Now the number has risen to 18 in just under a year in to operation, including the first women’s club in Arugam Bay.

“The challenges arose after we formed the federation. One of the biggest challenges was to keep all the club members interested, because at the beginning there was more talk than action. But finally we were able to hold three successive competitions.

“However, at this point I should rather talk about the current challenges we have. The main challenge now is to establish a women’s and children’s division at the federation. We understand, in order to represent Sri Lanka in international competitions it’s vital that we have all three divisions (Men’s, Women’s and Children’s).

**Hikkaduwa, Kabalana’s Rock and Arugam Bay**

“Hikkaduwa is where Sri Lankan surf culture was born. In fact the main point at Hikkaduwa is one of the most advanced, powerful and consistent A-Frames in Sri Lanka. I would say the Rock is the most powerful Left Hander in Sri Lanka. At the takeoff you have to pull in to the barrel and it comes out and gives you that section to do few more carves and turns.

“Arugam Bay on the other hand is one of world class point break right handers. On a good day it gives multiple sections to work. So







# 13th South Asian Games 2019

Pack your bags and pull your socks up - the SAG is on

By Susil Premalal

**A**fter a short period of uncertainty the 2019 South Asian Games are a reality; thanks to a group of forward marching officials, who did not take no for an answer. Now it has been decided the South Asian spectacle will be held from 1st to 10th December 2019.

Now, the Lankan athletes who were training for this purpose with some hesitation could put their eggs in the basket and start training for South Asia's top most athletic gathering, with concentration and hope of medals in their bellies.

Explaining about the games the NOCSL Secretary General Maxwell de Silva said "The organisers have earmarked to have twenty seven disciplines at the 13th version of the South Asian Games and the events will be hosted in two cities - Kathmandu and Pokhara a city which is thirty minutes flying time away from the capital city of Nepal.

"However the final list and the logistics will be ironed out at a subsequent meeting two weeks hence".

The South Asian Games is the premier regional sports competition featuring eight countries. It is a regional event similar to the SEA (South East Asian) Games.

The inaugural SAG was held in 1984 in Dasarath Stadium in Kathmandu, Nepal.

Initially it was called South Asian Federation (SAF) Games and later known as South Asian Sports Federation Games. It was in the Colombo Games held in 2006 that the event was rebranded as SAG (South Asian Games).

Seven countries participated in the SAG until 2004. They were India, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Nepal, Bhutan and Bangladesh. Afghanistan was



admitted as a new member at the Islamabad SAG in 2004.

Both SAF and SAG competitions have been held during a span of 35 years.

Apart from Bhutan, Maldives and Afghanistan, all other countries have hosted the Games.

The SAG will be held in Kathmandu for the third time this year. Nepal staged the inaugural Games in 1984 and the eighth edition in 1999.

Sri Lanka has hosted the Games on two occasions. The first time was in 1991 and the last occasion was in 2006.

In the past 12 editions of the SAG, India has won the most number of medals totally 2,046. Among them were 1,088 gold, 632 silver and 326 bronze medals leading the medals tally in every Game.

Pakistan are lying in second position overall having bagged a total of 1,128 medals.

Sri Lanka occupy the third position for the number of medals achieved totalling 1,114 medals. This includes 210 gold, 351 silver and 593 bronze medals.

In the history of SAG, Sri Lanka was dominant in athletics on one occasion during the Colombo edition of the Games in 1991. Sri Lanka's athletes won 15 gold, 7 silver and 11 bronze medals ahead of India who won 10 gold, 7 silver and 10 bronze medals.

The inaugural Games began with five sports: athletics, swimming, boxing, weightlifting and football. This year's 13th edition of SAG will have 27 disciplines.

Sri Lanka won a total of 37 medals at the inaugural Games in 1984. It

included 7 gold, 11 silver and 19 bronze medals. The gold medals came from athletics and swimming. The athletic gold medals came from Simone Van Heer (100 metres women), Ramani Mangalika (200 metres women), Hemalal Priyankara (100 metres men), Ruwan Chandratilleke (400 metres men) and 4 x 400m men's relay team (Ruwan Chandratilleke, E.K.C Gunawardena, George Sunil Rodrigo and Ranjith Aluwihare) while Julian Bolling won two golds in the pool. Incidentally, Ahmed Riyaz Nadheem of The Island was the only journalist to cover the event from Nepal.

In the history of SAG, swimmer Julian Bolling is the leading gold medallist for Sri Lanka. He also holds the record for representing Sri Lanka in five editions of SAG from 1984 to 1991 during which he won 15 gold medals.



# KARATE-DO

Back on stage after a long break

**T**he main challenge in Karate-Do at the upcoming South Asian Games (SAG) in Kathmandu will come from Bangladesh and Nepal.

Sri Lanka has many talented karatekas to vie for gold medals as well. Karate-do was not an event during the last edition of SAG in India in 2016. As a result Karate-do will be held at the SAG after a gap of nine years since it was last held during the 2010 Dhaka Games.

Sri Lanka's ranking in Karate-do cannot be assessed at this stage because of the long hiatus for the sport.

When Karate-do was last held during the Games in 2010, Sri Lanka won two bronze medals.

The Sri Lanka Karate-do Federation has formed a 66-member National pool to prepare players for the South Asian Games.

The pool comprising 40 men and 36 women train three days in a week at Torrington Indoor Stadium.

They were chosen from the National Championship, National Sports Festival and other international competition performances last year.





H.M. Sisira Kumara



**“WE ARE HOPING TO WIN AT LEAST FOUR GOLD MEDALS IN KARATE-DO, THREE FROM MEN AND ONE FROM WOMEN’S.”**

There are six medal winners in the current pool. They are four men and two women.

The pool is trained by a head coach, a women’s coach and six assistant coaches.

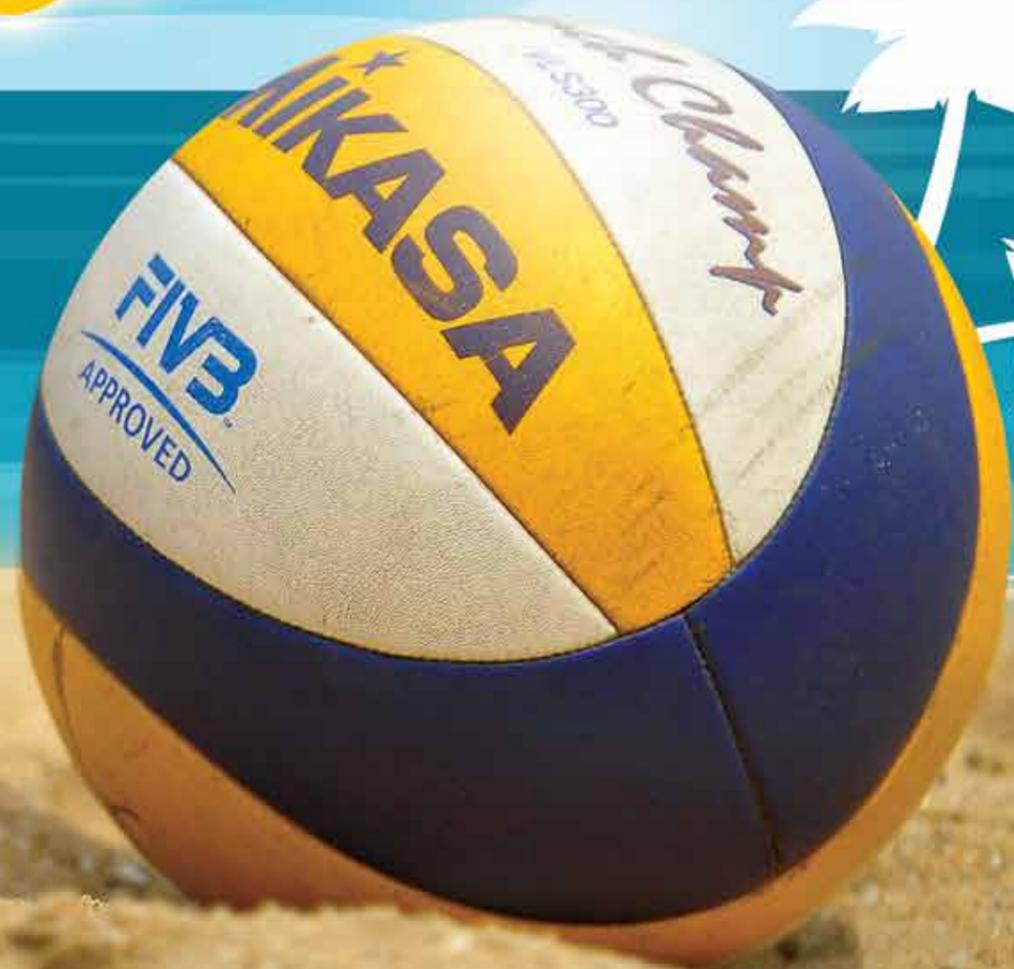
Karatekas have two international competitions lined up ahead of SAG.

One is the Asian Junior Karate Championships in April in Malaysia and the Asian Senior Championships in Afghanistan in July. Based on their performances at these competitions, the final squad for SAG will be selected in August.

For the South Asian Games, the federation hopes to get down a foreign coach either from Iran or Egypt and have made a request to the international body.

“We are hoping to win at least four gold medals in karate-do, three from men and one women’s,” said Keerthi Kumara Basnayake, Secretary of the federation.

# STRONG MEDAL CONTENDER



Beach volleyball is one of the newest sports in the South Asian Games (SAG) and will be held for the first time as a medal event in Kathmandu.

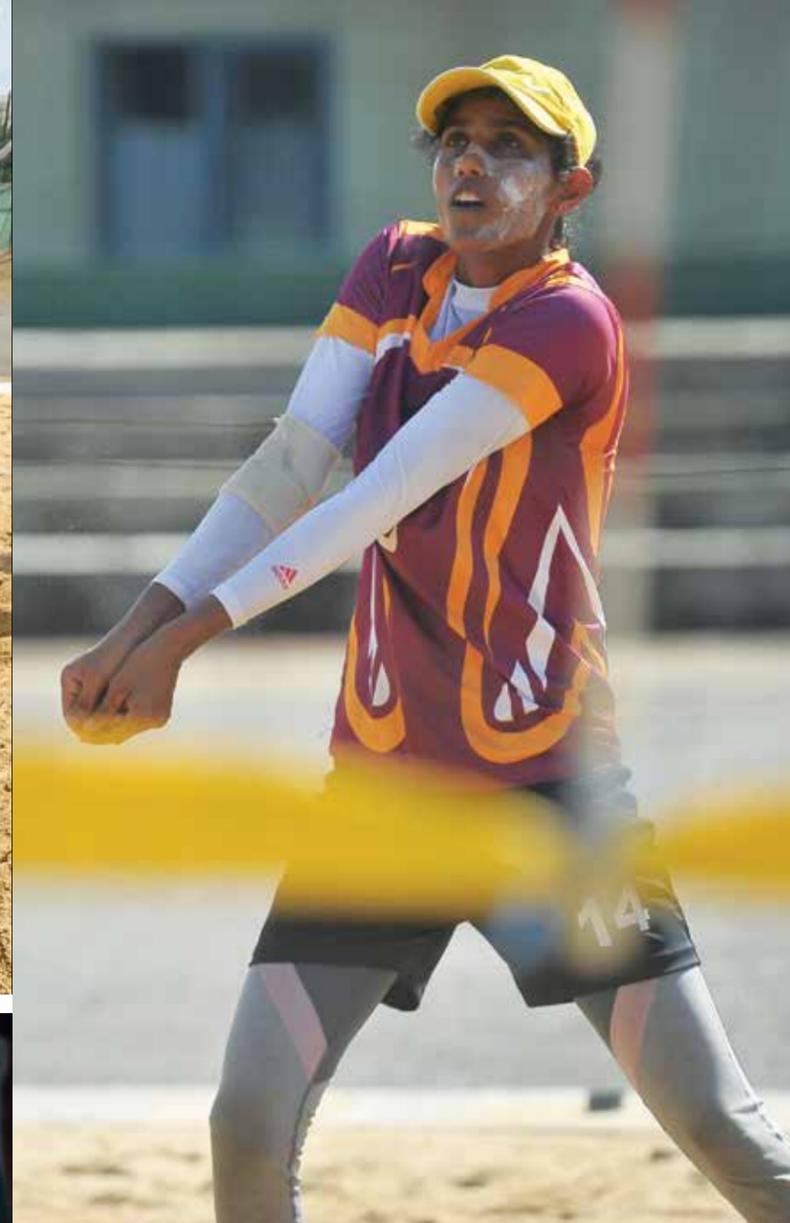
Sri Lanka has the distinction of being the pioneer in beach volleyball in the region.

The first national beach volleyball tournament was held in 1992 in Bentota.

Sri Lanka has won over 10 medals of all colours in international beach volleyball tournaments.

At the South Asian Beach Volleyball Championship held in Hambantota in 2011, Sri Lanka's men and women won both the gold and silver medals at this event.

In 2009, at the Asia Pacific Beach Volleyball Championship held in Bangladesh, Sri Lanka's men won the gold medal.



**THE NATIONAL POOL WAS SELECTED AFTER UNDERGOING TRAINING IN THAILAND AND INDONESIA AND IS CONFIDENT OF WINNING GOLD MEDALS IN BOTH EVENTS.**

The Vice-President of the Sri Lanka Volleyball Federation's beach volleyball section C. Ratnamudali said they will be sending two strong teams for the SAG and they are confident of winning gold medals.

"The National pool is training daily in a specially constructed beach venue site at the Sugathadasa Stadium," he said.

The final squad will be selected in July-August. The first selection trial was held recently.

In beach volleyball, a team comprises two players each.

There are eight players in the men's pool and nine in the women from which the final two-member team will be selected.

The national pool was selected after undergoing training in Thailand and Indonesia and is confident of winning gold medals in both events.

The men's national beach volleyball pool comprises Asanka Pradeep, Malintha Yapa, Tharindu Madushantha, Ashane Rashmika, Dileepa Chamika (all from Air Force), Indika Tyronne, Jayan Thanuja (both from Army) and Anjana Sandeepa.

**“WE ARE THE FAVOURITES TO WIN THE GOLD MEDAL BUT SHOULD NOT GET OVERCONFIDENT.”**

The women’s national pool comprises Sagarika Gunasinghe (Navy), Dinesha Prasadani (Air Force), Kasuni Tharaka Lakshani (Navy), Chathurika Weerasinghe (Army), Nethmini Gunasinghe (Air Force), Shami Malsha (Air Force), Hasini Malsha (Air Force), Monica Jayasinghe (Omega Line) and Deepika Bandara (Casual Line).

Mahesh Perera is coach of the men’s team and Pubudu Ekanayake is in charge of the women’s team. Both are former national beach volleyball players.

Mahesh Perera said there have very experienced players. “We are the favourites to win the gold medal but should not get overconfident,” he said.

Pubudu Ekanayake said they have the ability of repeating the success achieved in the past.





## One of South Asia's medal powerhouses

Weightlifting is one of the sports where the national pool of men and women train right throughout the year like cricketers. Now with the Kathmandu South Asian Games (SAG) as their target, they are training hard for the competition at Torrington Indoor Stadium.

Significantly R. B. Wickremasinghe has been associated with the sport as National Coach for more than 15 years producing many international medallists. Presently there is a National pool of 20 men and women in weightlifting training for the Games.

The national weightlifting pool comprises Commonwealth and SAG medalists. They are Chinthana Vidanage, Sudesh Peiris, Indika Dissanayake, Hansani Gomes and Chamari Warnakulasuriya.

Vidanage won the first ever weightlifting gold medal for Sri Lanka at the Commonwealth Games in 2006 Melbourne and a silver medal in the 2010 Delhi event. Peiris won silver medals in Delhi and Gold Coast Commonwealth Games last year. Dissanayake won a bronze medal at Gold Coast.

**VIDANAGE WON THE FIRST EVER WEIGHTLIFTING GOLD MEDAL FOR SRI LANKA AT THE COMMONWEALTH GAMES IN 2006 MELBOURNE.**





R.B. Wickremasinghe

"Sri Lanka faces a huge challenge in weightlifting at the SAG and Asian Games because of the regional powers. However, at the Commonwealth Games our prospects of winning medals is greater. India is ahead of us in weightlifting achievements in SAG, said Peiris.

"I have been taking part in the SAG since 2006 Colombo Games and this will be my fifth participation in the Games. I am the only lifter to have won a gold medal in weightlifting for Sri Lanka in the history of SAG when I won at the 2016 Games in India. I have been competing in the 62kgs weight category during the last four Games. This year I will be

**"WE CAN GIVE INDIA A GOOD RUN AT THE SAG AFTER GAINING EXPOSURE AT THE ASIAN EVENT."**

raising the bar and participating in the 73 kgs weight category in Kathmandu. We are hopeful of winning medals at these Games, including from women lifters such as Hansani Gomes and Chamari Warnakulasuriya. In addition we have Vidanage, a gold medallist the Commonwealth Games, and Indika Dissanayake who can bring us medals," said Peiris, a bronze medallist in the 2010 Commonwealth Games in Delhi and silver medallist at the 2014 Glasgow event.

Veteran coach Wickremasinghe said they cannot predict how many medals Sri Lanka can win at the SAG in Kathmandu.

"In weightlifting we can gauge our medal winning potential closer to the event. We will be taking part in the Asian Weightlifting Championships before the SAG. We can give India a good run at the SAG after gaining exposure at the Asian event," he said.

At the last SAG in India in 2016, Sri Lanka won 15 medals, including one gold, nine silver and five bronze medals. India swept the gold medals in all weight categories barring one event.

# CONFIDENT OF BAGGING FIVE 'GOLD'



**T**he Cycling Federation of Sri Lanka (CFSL) has prepared a comprehensive training schedule with the Kathmandu South Asian Games (Games) as target.

India poses the biggest challenge to win cycling medals for Sri Lanka.

Two national pools of both men and women have been formed.

In the men's pool there are 60 racing riders while there are 15 women racing riders. The men's national pool has been selected from the six leading cycling clubs in Sri Lanka. They are Army, Air Force, Navy, Police, Ports Authority and Dehiwela-Mount Lavinia Cycling Club.

The women have been chosen from the top ranked riders registered with the cycling federation.





Upali Ratnayake



Nihal Karunaratne

The national poolists are currently training individually with their clubs under the supervision of 12 coaches who submit progress reports to national cycling coach Upali Ratnayake.

Ratnayake, a qualified coach of the International Cycling Union (ICU), is one of the longest serving coaches in cycling having started as Sri Lanka's national coach in 2006.





At this South Asian Games there are three cycling categories: Road Race, Team Time Trial and Criterium.

For the first time at these Games, BMX mountain racing has also been introduced and Sri Lanka will also be participating.

President CFSL N. Karunaratne and Ratnayake said they are confident of winning five gold medals this time.

The preparations for the Games began with a three-day workshop for the SAG pool by the federation in Colombo. This is the first time that training for SAG began with a workshop like this. If the Games are held in October the federation hopes to conduct selection trials in April and reduce the national pool to 20 men and 12 women.



**IN 2016 SRI LANKA WON TWO GOLD MEDALS. AIR FORCE'S JEEWAN JAYASINGHE ATTAINED THE ACCOLADE OF BEING TAGGED AS SOUTH ASIA'S FASTEST RIDER.**

For Road Race cycling the federation hopes to pick a team of eight men and women each while for BMX mountain racing, teams of 10 each will be picked

Sri Lanka is ranked among the top riders in mountain racing and medals could be expected from this event.

The Sri Lanka riders have a lot to look forward to this year since apart from the SAG they will be participating in local races such as Tour de Air Force, T Cup and SLT Tour.

In the history of cycling in SAG, Sri Lanka has won eight gold medals. The biggest haul came in 2006 Colombo Games when cyclists won five out of six gold medals on offer.

In 2016 Sri Lanka won two gold medals. Air Force's Jeewan Jayasinghe attained the accolade of being tagged as South Asia's fastest rider.

Some of the top riders in the national pool are Dane Nugera, Buddhika Warnakulasuriya, Avishka Medonza, Jeewan Jayasinghe and Lasanthi Gunatilleke.

Lasanthi is the most experience women racing rider having represented Sri Lanka in three consecutive SAG since 2006.

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## 6th Olympic Solidarity Advanced Sport Management Course – 2017/2018

### Another cornerstone in Olympism

**T**he National Olympic Committee of Sri Lanka (NOC Sri Lanka) was offered the task of conducting the Olympic Solidarity Advanced Sport Management Course (OSASMC) in Sri Lanka by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) Olympic Solidarity (OS) in 2009.

Five editions were conducted successfully with the participation of senior executives from National Sport Associations/Federations, three Armed Forces and Police, Universities and other sport organisations.

This course is designed for one year, which consists of five sessions under the following modules:

Organising an Olympic Sport Organisation, Managing Strategically, Managing Human Resources, Managing Finance, Managing Marketing and Organising Major Sport Events.

The sixth edition of this course commenced in October 2017 and was successfully completed in October 2018 under the guidance of the Programme Director of the Advanced Sport Management Course, B.L.H. Perera and rest of the course facilitators were - Mr. Maxwell de Silva, Ms. Kinithi Jayatissa and Mrs. Lalitha Mendis.





Olympic Solidarity taking into consideration the expertise shown by all candidates in the six modules of study, recommended 21 successful candidates be awarded the certificate of Advanced Diploma in Sport Management. The selected candidates received the internationally acclaimed academic diplomas at an official award ceremony at the 'Hemasiri Fernando Auditorium', of the Olympic House.

Mr. Nikitha Grero, Chief Visionary Officer of Lyceum International Schools Network and Principal of Lyceum-Wattala was the Chief Guest. Mr. Dammika Muthugala, Director General of Sports, Ministry of Sports, Executive Board Members of NOC, NOC Officials, Officials from member National Sport Associations/ Federations and family members of the diploma recipients and past diploma holders were present at the occasion.

**The following successfully completed the Diploma in Management of Olympic Sport Organisations:**

- Mr. Sudath Gotabaya Aluthge*
- Colonel A.H. Lanka Gaya Amarapala*
- Dr. Ashoka Premadasa Athuluwage*
- Wg. Cdr. K. K. Thamara Damayanthi*
- Sqn. Ldr. H. A. N. Nalin Bandara Etipola*
- Mr. Pavithra Fernando*
- Wg. Cdr. Dineth Eranda Geeganage*
- Gp. Capt. D. Rajintha Wijesinghe Jayawardena*
- Dr. K.P. Achintha Rukmal Karunanayake*
- Air Commodore L.M.S. Kithsiri Leelaratne*
- Dr. Lalith Liyanage*
- Mr. Mohamed Ansar Mohamed Asif*
- Mr. D. Sameera Lakruwan Perera*
- Dr. E. Anton Suran Perera*
- Mr. K.J. Diluka Perera*
- Sqn. Ldr. M. T. Mohamed Safrask*
- Wg. Cdr. Sherika Aengalee Samarasinghe*
- Mr. Danuna Tillakaratne*
- Mr. H. D. Sameera P. Wijayagunaratne*
- Mr. Christie Mariathan*
- Mr. Jurian Druvi Ondaatje*



## Championing the women's cause the Olympic way

### Former beauty queen and sports woman is nominated for IOC award

If one describes Caryll Tozer as a multifaceted woman it may be an understatement; indeed she is more than that. She is a former beauty queen and women's rights champion. She is a National sports woman as well as a sports promoter. She is a mother, and a fitness fanatic who plays basketball, netball and tennis with players 20 years her junior. Also she has pioneered the cause of helping the under privileged.

She has led a life that is full, but, she still has many more chores to be completed. That is why the NOCSL women's wing decided to nominate Caryll for the International Olympic Committee's 2019 IOC Women and Sport Awards list. In all there were six applicants and three were shortlisted. The women's committee arrived at the final decision along with the input of NOCSL Secretary General Maxwell de Silva and now is awaiting the outcome of the exercise and see a person in the calibre of Caryll is recognized.

Initially on her 18th birthday, the Olympic Movement opened a window of opportunity to her through the Olympic Youth Assemblage '72 in the Winter Olympic Games in Sapporo, Japan. Taking that as a key, she has given back the Sri Lankan community opportunities to help the needy.

Her work with a group citizens for a Secure Sri Lanka addressed the issues of violence against children. Working through the post war carnage period where the North of Sri Lanka was devastated; her contribution in its rehabilitation with another group 'Citizens Initiative' was very noteworthy. She has continued, on her own, to build Wells and houses, for the needy, starting in the North. In 1986 she was crowned Mrs. Sri Lanka a title she used to find Women In Need along with a Canadian VSO.

An active sports woman in her younger days, she moved to sports administration

as matter of duty. She served as a member of the National Sports Council in 2015 and played a prominent role in the development of netball. She is the current vice president of the Western Province Netball Association.

She also initiated a unique programme – introducing a system to address gender equality by getting local lads to build a netball court for the girls on the promise of giving them a volleyball court, starting in a village south of Colombo. She continues to push in order to build Netball courts in various under-developed areas where only male dominant volleyball is the more established game.

Another mention worthy quality of her is her stance of gender equality, especially the action that she has taken to elevate and protect in the quality of life of young females in villages which goes to prove that she is indeed more than a multifaceted and multitalented person



# "TWO GOLD MEDALS"

That's our aim

**T**he Sri Lanka Volleyball Federation (SLVF) is aiming for at least two gold medals at the Kathmandu South Asian Games (SAG).

Targeting this in mind, the federation has formed two National Pools for men and women of 30 players each.

In addition the federation also has two under 23 national pools of men and women.

There will be six international competitions for the national spikers this year.

They are the South Asian men's and women's championships, Asian Senior Men and Women VB championships and Asian Under 23 Men's and Women's championships.

The National pools are training for these competitions.

The best squad will be selected from the performances at these championships for the SAG.

Cuban coaches will be in charge of training the national pools for the upcoming events.





**“THE REASON FOR GETTING DOWN CUBAN COACHES WAS BECAUSE WE HAVE A CROWDED CALENDAR OF INTERNATIONAL COMPETITIONS THIS YEAR. IF THE COACHES FAIL TO DELIVER THE GOODS, WE MAY HAVE TO TERMINATE THEIR SERVICES.”**

In the history of SAG, Sri Lanka men have never won a gold medal in indoor volleyball while the women’s team struck gold at the 1991 Colombo Games. They won a historic gold defeating India in the final. However, India clinched gold at every following SAG.

A. S. Nalaka, Secretary of the SLVB said that the Cuban coaches have been entrusted the challenge of winning gold for Sri Lanka.

“The reason for getting down Cuban coaches was because we have a crowded calendar of international competitions this year. If the coaches

fail to deliver the goods, we may have to terminate their services. The Sri Lanka team can gain plenty of international experience by taking part in the Senior Asian championship and Under 23 Championships ahead of SAG,” said Nalaka.

Volleyball is a national sport in Sri Lanka and is one of the oldest sports in the country. It is recorded that volleyball has been played since 1896.



# STRONG MEDAL PROSPECTS

**C** ricket has been reintroduced at the South Asian Games (SAG) after a gap of nine years for the upcoming event in Kathmandu, Nepal.

It was a medal event for the first time in the 2010 Dhaka Games. Sri Lanka emerged runners-up in the inaugural cricket event which was won by Bangladesh. Six countries took part in cricket held in the T20 format.

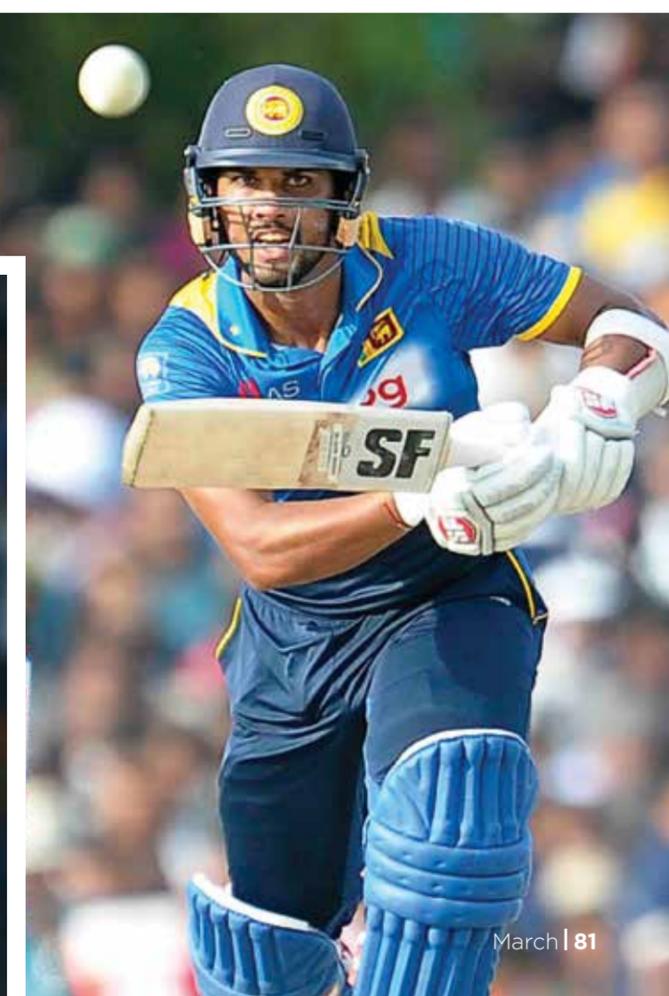
Sri Lanka has the distinction of winning the gold medal for cricket at the Asian Games in 2014 in

Incheon, South Korea when they beat Afghanistan in the T20 final. Sri Lanka's women cricketers also won a bronze medal in cricket in South Korea with Pakistan defeated Bangladesh to win the gold medal.

The tussle for supremacy in cricket which is an event for Under 23 players at the SAG is always between India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka.

Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) Chief Executive Officer Ashley de Silva says they are aware that cricket has been included at this year's SAG.

"However, the NOC and Sports Ministry has not informed us the dates of the event. We don't have to select a special pool for the SAG since we have several ongoing squads at school, development, Junior and Senior level. There are mostly under 23 players in these squads. Once we are notified of the date of the Games we can select the team. We can aim for the gold medals at the Games," said De Silva, a former Sri Lankan cricketer.



# AIMING FOR THREE 'GOLD' MEDALS

**T**he Boxing Association of Sri Lanka (BASL) has formed a 28-member National pool with the aim of preparing pugilists for the South Asian Games (SAG) in Kathmandu.

Boxers will be competing in eight weight categories at these Games.

The National boxing pool comprises 18 men and 10 women. They have begun training in five different centres for SAG.

"Army boxers are training at Army Cantonment, Panagoda; Navy boxers are training in Trincomalee; Air Force boxer are training in Katunayake; Police boxers at Katukurunda Police Training School; Unichella and Slimline boxers are in Pannala," says Hemantha Weerasinghe, Vice President of SLABA. Incidentally Weerasinghe represented Sri Lanka at the inaugural SAG in Kathmandu in 1984 and also the Asian Championships the same year.





**WE HOPE TO SELECT THE FINAL SQUAD FROM THESE TRIALS AND SEND THEM TO UNDERGO TRAINING IN THAILAND.**

“The first trial for SAG boxing was held in March. We hope to select the final squad from these trials and send them to undergo training in Thailand for two weeks in April ahead of the Asian Boxing Championships to be held from April 17-21 in Bangkok,” he said.

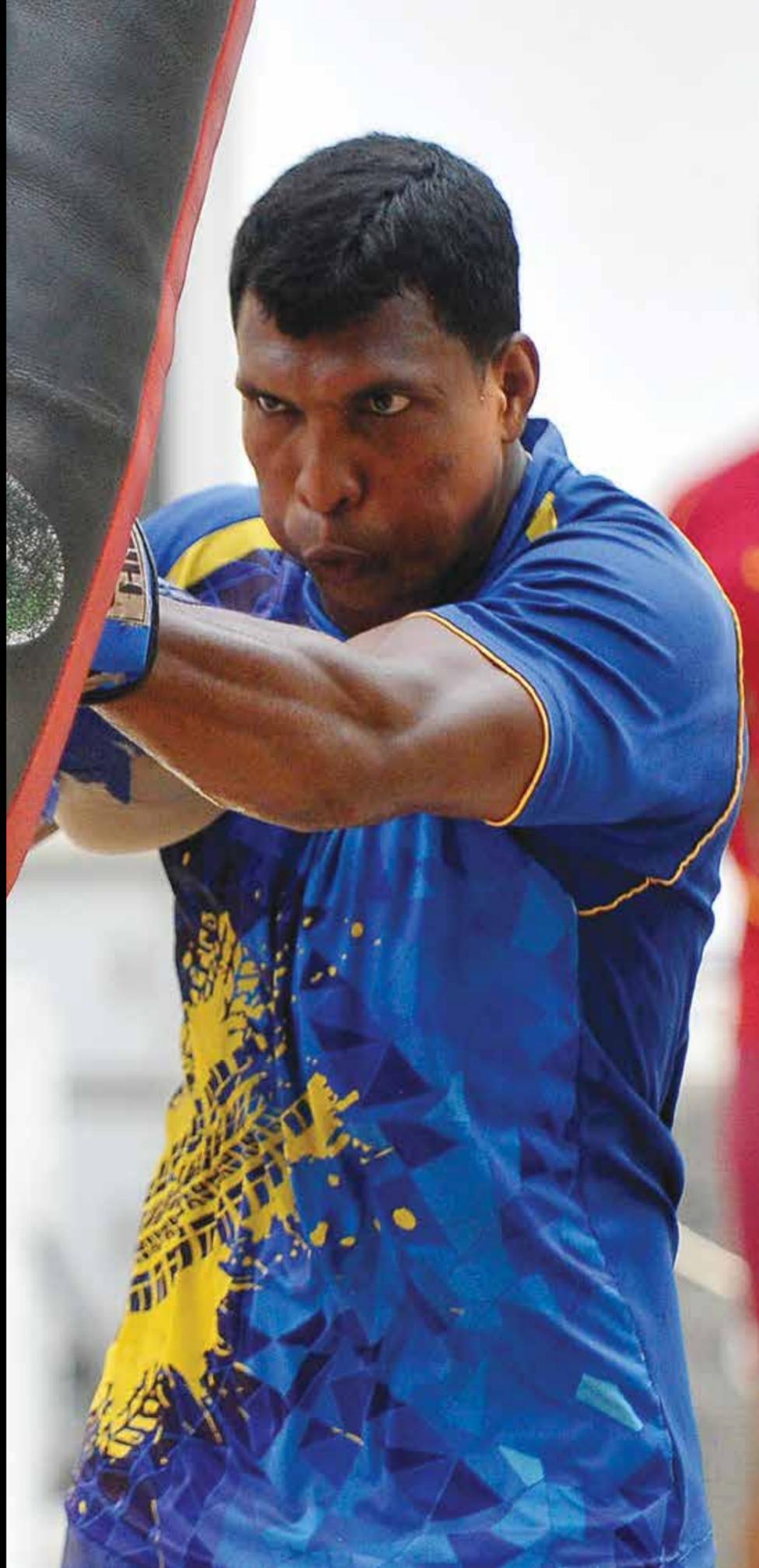
“However, there is no national coach for boxing at present which is a huge drawback for the progress of the sport. The last time we had a national coach was in 2015-16 for the SAG held in India after which his services ended. The national pool is trained currently by four national level coaches,” he said.

**“SRI LANKA’S BEST CHANCE IN WOMEN’S BOXING IS IN THE 57KG WEIGHT CATEGORY. IN THE MEN’S CATEGORY, MEDALS COULD BE EXPECTED IN THE 52KG AND 64KG WEIGHT CLASSES. INDIA IS A DOMINANT FORCE IN BOXING.”**

The BASL Vice-President was hopeful that Sri Lanka could win three gold medals in boxing at the Kathmandu Games, two for men and one in women’s boxing.

“Sri Lanka’s best chance in women’s boxing is in the 57kg weight category. In the men’s category, medals could be expected in the 52kg and 64kg weight classes. India is a dominant force in boxing in the region. We cannot expect to win gold in weight classes other than these three,” he said.

At the last SAG Sri Lanka won five silver medals and four bronze medals in boxing. India swept the gold medals in all weight classes.





# 8th Negombo Open International Tennis Tournament

## South Korea dominate

**S**outh Korea's Sang-Ho Oh beat R.A.L.S. Ranaweera in the final of the 8th Negombo Wheelchair Open International Tennis Tournament played at Negombo, recently. The Korean who was seeded number two won the match at 6-2, 3-6, 7-5.

The Korean Wheelchair Tennis players stamped their dominance by winning the men's doubles too. This time the top seeds Ha-Gel Lee and Sang-Ho

Oh of Korea got the better of D.S.R. Dharmasena and R.A.L.S. Ranaweera who also lost the singles final.

However Ranaweera had the honour of beating the No. 1 seed – Ha-Gel Lee of Korea in the quarter-final.

Altogether there were 32 singles and 16 doubles entries took part in this three-day tournament.

## Singles:

**Quarter-finals:** R.A.L.S. Ranaweera (Sri Lanka) beat Ha-Gel Lee (Korea) 6-1 6-3. Abu Samah Borahan (Malaysia) beat Ruwan Jayasundera 6-0 6-1. D.S.R. Dharmasena beat Mohamad Yusshazwan Bin Yousuf (Malaysia) 6-4 6-2, Sang-ho Oh (Korea) beat Ariffahmi Zaquan Ariffin (Malaysia) 4-6, 6-2, 6-1.

**Semi-finals:** R.A.L.S. Ranaweera beat Abu Samath Borhan (Malaysia) 4-6, 6-4, 7-6 and Sang-Ho Oh (Korea) beat D.S.R. Dharmasena 7-5, 4-6, 6-4.

**Finals:** Sang-Ho Oh (Korea) beat R.A.L.S. Ranaweera (Sri Lanka) 6-2, 3-6, 7-5.



## Doubles:

**Quarter-finals:** Ha-Gel Lee and Sang-Ho Oh (Korea) beat H.M.L Senaratne and W.P.J. Wijesiri (Sri Lanka) 6-1, 6-1, David Dalmasso (France) and Enrique Siscar Meseguer (Spain) beat K.D.M. Dharmaratne and Geeth Kankanamge Nadeeka (Sri Lanka) 6-2, 6-0, Mohamad Yusshazwan Bin Yusuf (Malaysia) and Firdaus Ibrahim (Malaysia) beat A.M.D. Jayaratne and W.A.S.P. Weerasinghe (Sri Lanka) 6-0, 6-2, D.S.R. Dharmasena and R.A.L.S. Ranaweera (Sri Lanka) beat Hussein Hamid Hel and Ibrahim Hussein Khalleel (Iraq) 6-0, 6-2.

**Semi-finals:** Ha-Gel Lee and Sang-Ho Oh (Korea) beat David Dalmasso (France) and Enrique Siscar Meseguer (Spain) 6-4, 6-2. D.S.R. Dharmasena and R.A.L.S. Ranaweera (Sri Lanka) beat Mohamad Yusshazwan Bin Yusuf (Malaysia) 6-2, 6-2.

**Finals:** Ha-Gel Lee and Sang-Ho Oh (Korea) beat D.S.R. Dharmasena and R.A.L.S. Ranaweera (Sri Lanka) 6-3 6-3.



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# E-SPORT IS HERE TO STAY

**W**e wonder if they indulge in rigorous physical exercises or do mountain climbing to maintain their peak fitness. Yet, E-Sport in reality is an Asian sport and someone walked home with a 'Gold' during the Palembang Games. May be in the future, the entire Olympic concept may be based on this. I feel E-sport is here to stay.

Walking into the Sri Lanka Exhibition and Convention Centre (SLECC) one weekend in December, the 40,000 square foot hall was abuzz with activity. Thousands of youth were gathered in front of hundreds of screens of various sizes, cheering-on

rows of seated gamers hyper-focussed on the monitors in front of them.

A large LED wall is positioned on the far side of the hall, framed by professional lighting that you could mistake for a high-end musical show. An audience follows each action taking place on the screen with intense interest - it is a Sri Lanka vs India League of Legends match happening on the main stage.

A Sri Lankan player pulls off a daring kill on his Indian opponent and the crowd cheers as the atmosphere turns electric with a celebratory light show and applause, while commentators



The Play Expo event which consists of a number of mini-events, including the Sri Lanka Cyber Games and multiple E-sports events by Dialog, featured a prize pool of Rs.5,000,000 making it one of the largest prize pools for a sporting event in Sri Lanka.

Globally, E-sports tournaments are best known for their large prize pools - with events like "The International" - a Dota 2 tournament organised by Valve - boasting a prize pool of US\$ 25 million in 2018. This is bigger than prize pools for the ICC Cricket World Cup, the NFL etc. E-sports is also showing a viewership growth trend that will position it firmly as the most watched sport in the world by 2024 - the year that advocates are hoping that it will be accepted as an Olympic discipline.

out the action in the background. The winner of this tournament will take home over Rs.500,000! They introduced it as Electronic Sports.

E-sports is the competitive play of Video Games - a movement considered the sport of the future. With viewership numbers increasing at record speeds, E-sports has been labelled the fastest growing sport in the world. This claim is true for Sri Lanka as well, with thousands of youth taking part in high-intensity tournaments boasting large prize pools.

E-sports has been growing steadily for the past 10 years in Sri Lanka with the first large-scale tournament - the Sri Lanka Cyber Games - being inaugurated in 2008 at the BMICH. The 11th edition of the event was held on the 7th, 8th and 9th December 2018 at the Sri Lanka Exhibition and Convention Centre. It also played host

to the first IGE South Asia Cup in the region - an invitational five-nation League of Legends tournament with a prize pool of US\$ 5,000. Teams from Bangladesh, India, the Maldives and Pakistan flew down to Sri Lanka to stay one week and take part in the 3-day championship.

E-sports has penetrated the University, School and Mercantile scenes with dedicated events being organized by Gamer.LK for these categories. The events boast some of the highest participation numbers for their respective categories. The Inter-University E-sports Championship had 40 universities registering to take part. The Mercantile E-sports Championship had over 100 companies registering to take part. The Inter-School E-sports Championship had over 110 schools registering to take part.



Olympic Councils globally have been observing the steady growth of E-sports and started to include E-sports titles into traditional sporting events such as the Asian Games, The Asian Indoor and Martial Arts Games and the South East Asian Games. The South East Asian Games organized by the Olympic Council of Asia has included E-sports as a medal event - which means an E-sports athlete representing their nation can win a medal for their country by playing video games. The Asian Games held a demonstration E-sports event at the last Games in 2018, and will be including E-sports as a medal event in 2022.

In 2018 Sri Lanka was able to send E-sports representatives to Indonesia with the assistance of the National Olympic Committee of Sri Lanka. E-sports athlete Amruth Alfred beat the competition in South Asia

to qualify for the main games in Indonesia in the game Starcraft 2. There he was able to play against the world's best E-sports athletes representing their country. E-sports athletes stayed and dined alongside traditional athletes residing in the athletes' village.

The Sri Lankan E-sports scene is governed by the Sri Lanka E-sports Association (SLESA), established in 2010 by E-sports pioneer Gamer.LK. SLESA consists of 10 E-sports clans and organisations working together to establish and enforce rules and regulations for the sport. The members of the association are as follows:

- **Gamer.LK (founding organisation)**
- **Death Pact**
- **Division E-sports**
- **Evox E-sports**
- **Maximum E-sports**

- **Noob Alliance**
- **Phoenix Gaming**
- **Tech Morph Gaming**
- **WolfGang E-sports**
- **Xiphos E-sports**

SLESA maintains a national ranking of clans and teams taking part in officially recognised events. Clan 'Noob Alliance' were awarded the best clan of 2018 title at the National E-sports Awards conducted in December within the Sri Lanka Cyber Games. Noob Alliance dethroned 4-time Best Clan winner Phoenix Gaming to take the crown.

With E-sports in Sri Lanka gaining more funding and viewership, 2019 is slated as the year the sport grips households in the island. The professional E-sports scene is set to grow significantly with more professional leagues with large prize pools scheduled for the year.





## Three Decades of 'Olympic Education'

Impact on strengthening pillars of 'Sporting Culture' in Sri Lanka

By B.L.H. Perera

'The mission of the NOCs (National Olympic Committees) is to develop, promote and protect the Olympic Movement in their respective countries, in accordance with the Olympic Charter' - Olympic Charter, 2015

### Introduction

The concept of 'Olympic Education' is derived from ancient Greek roots and evolved as a fundamental component of the Olympic ideals: this notion promotes one of the 'learning skills' using sport to build a 'harmonious person' to the society not a Olympic Gold medallist. The founder of the Modern Olympic Movement Pierre de Coubertin and the revival of the Olympic Games stressed on one of the important missing links of humans, focusing his vision to the sustainable future to the world:

"...My friends and I have not fought and worked to restore the Olympic Games to you as an object for museum or cinema, nor is it our wish that mercantile or electoral interest should seize upon them. In reviving this institution, twenty-five centuries old, we have wished you to become devotees of the religion of Sport in the same sense as it was conceived by your famous ancestors. In the present world, where possibilities are great, and yet threatened by so many risks of degeneration, Olympism may be

a school of moral nobility and purity, as well as of 'physical endurance and energy, provided that you always keep your conception of honour and disinterestedness in sport on a level with your physical powers. The future rests with you..." (OC 1933:10)

The emergence, development and expansion of 'Olympism' during Coubertin's years (1887-1937), continued with the struggle for survival through the period of the two World Wars and the start of the Cold



War years (1912-1961) and finally, it concluded with the escalation and the end of the Cold War, followed by a new era with global economic and political interests. The values associated with the ideology of Olympism have changed during the period of 111 years (1887-1998), while, having highlighted the culturally diverse meanings and values associated with Olympic sport in the contemporary world, it emphasized that Olympism may be defined, not as a set of immutable values, but as a process for consensus construction in terms of values in the world of global sport.

The two hundred and six (206) National Olympic Committees (NOCs) in the world is adhered by the above notion and are bound to carry out the roles as specified in the Chapter 4 of the 'Olympic Charter' (OC: 2017). The Rule 27 (1) and (3) clearly defines an important element that the NOCs need to focus on their operation.

In 1937, Sri Lanka (Ceylon) had the opportunity to be a part of the global mission by becoming a member of the International Olympic Committee (IOC). As a partner of the Olympic Movement, Sri Lanka had evolved for a little over seven decades. The National Olympic Committee of Sri Lanka (NOCSL), conducted several educational programmes to fall in line with the Olympic ideals, values, ethos of management and ideologies. During the last three decades the diversity and intensity of the Olympic Educational programmes started to grow with national and international recognition. Additionally, Sri Lanka took a leadership in Asia sharing experience and expertise to NOCs in the region to commence educational programmes.





**NOCSL Educational Programmes**

The educational programmes introduced by the NOCSL were able to benefit broad segments of the society, but not only sport participants. The purpose of the Olympic Education programme of NOCSL is to:

- Encourage mass participation and the expansion of opportunities for sport and play to create what de Coubertin called “the democracy of youth”; rather than limiting to competitive nature of sport and physical exertion,
- Create and development of opportunities that are genuinely educational, that assist both individuals and collective processes to gain knowledge,
- Achieve high standard of sportsmanship, that de Coubertin called “the new code of chivalry”,
- Inculcate ethnic harmony and cultural exchange by respecting different views and ideas,
- Achieve excellence through true Olympic values, and
- Improve the quality of management in sport organisations by maintaining ‘Autonomy’.

**True Essence the ‘Learning through Body’**

The study of human learning continues to grow with research finding, theoretical traditions and applied settings. Human Learning is an enduring change in behaviour, or development of human capacity to behave in a given fashion, which results from practice or other forms of experience. Throughout the human evolution the role of the body is treated as a place for housing the learning process, reinforcing a mind–body split (Barnacle). The learning involves change, time and occurs through experience and the process of learning occurs using cognitive, psychomotor and visual forms.

In ancient Greece during the 5th century BCE the learning was vastly “democratised”, influenced by the Sophists, Plato



and Isocrates. The Learning took place in a gymnasium school and considered an essential part of Greek culture. The value of physical education, learning through the human body was a unique practice of Greeks and Romans using two forms of education in ancient Greece: formal and informal. In recent years, much research studies have been conducted to study the impacts of incorporating learning styles into modern learning processes. The ‘Olympics’ is a festival; system and a process to celebrate and admire true bodily learners. The learning does not happen overnight, or through short cuts, it is dedication, commitment in one’s life. Considering the true role of a National Olympic Committee is beyond selecting athletes for games, it is a true educational mission, an institute, different to any form of school or university.

‘Olympism is a philosophy of life, exalting and combining in a balanced whole the qualities of body, will and mind. Blending sport with culture and education, Olympism seeks to create a way of life based on the joy found in effort, the educational value of good example and respect for universal fundamental ethical principles’. (Olympic Charter: 2017)

Pierre de Coubertin, initiator of the modern Olympic Movement and the Olympic Games in Athens in 1896 and founder of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), developed his ideology to develop peaceful development of youth in the world. As an undergraduate at ‘Science Pro’ and studying Law at the Catholic University of Paris, he found true love for his school, which had something of the scientific rigour and sacred atmosphere characteristic of the gymnasiums of ancient Athens. The ideologically rich background created the philosophical base for modern Olympic Movement and NOCs were given truly rich ideological base to educate youth in the respective countries.



### 'Education' Initiatives, National Olympic Committee, Sri Lanka

Over three decades from 1980s the NOCSL Olympic Education programme has evolved through national and international level support, guide and contributions. At the very inception education programmes was focused only towards training of sport administrators required to govern sport at national level. The change of operating environment, the programme nature and demand of the NOCSL Olympic Education programme changed with additions and adding quality into programme. At present the projected education programme mission/focus, nature and demand (Illustration 1).

The NOCSL recognises a two-fold approach on selected target groups generating broader impacts:

Introduce modern Olympic Ideals and 'Olympism,' and create competitive advantage in managing sport as a base for Olympic success.

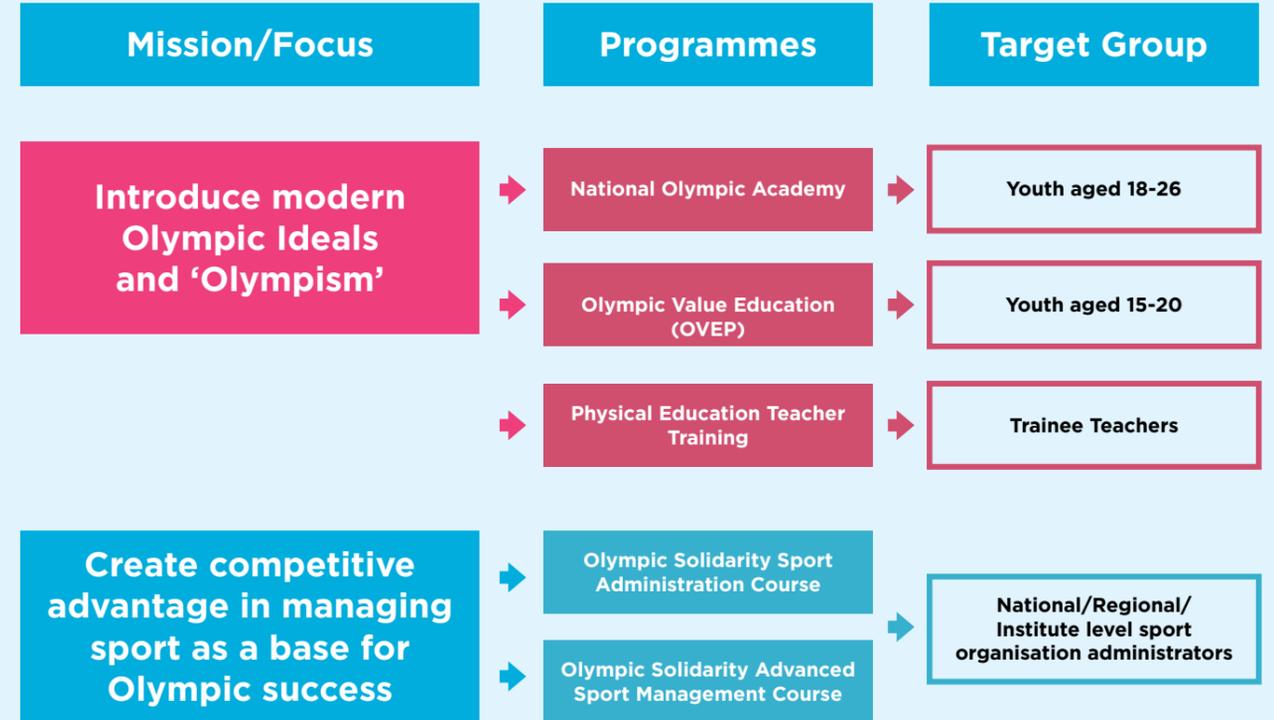


#### Illustration - 1

### NOCSL Olympic Education - The Focus, Nature and Demand

#### Olympic Education Implementation and Impacts

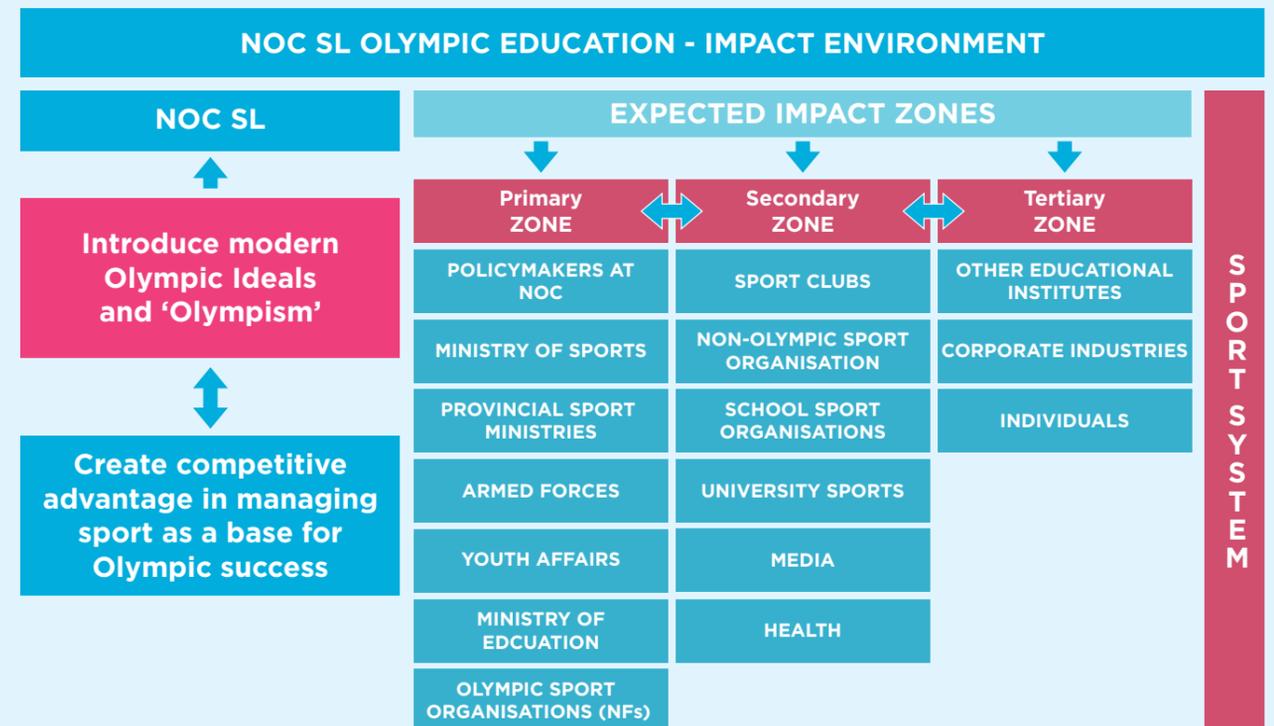
The Illustration two below has summary of programme impacts, three zones are expected to have direct connection. Future of NOCSL Education mission rests on the NOCSL stakeholder interest and motivation. Out of three zones the stakeholders belong to the Primary Zone and success and sustainability relies on the knowledge, skill and values earned through educational initiatives. Referring to IOC stakeholder connection 'Olympic museum' as an organisation has much closer links than any other organizations associated in IOC management environment. Similarly the NOCSL education efforts directly impacts on sport policymakers at higher level.



#### Illustration - 2

### NOC SL Olympic Education - Implementation and Expected Impacts

It is necessary to assess the level of impact on each organisation, the NOCSL task is to monitor and upkeep necessary adjustment, awareness initiatives, create policies and procedures and conduct audits quarterly. This will be a key organisational performance indicator for any NOCSL assistance. The programme implementation varies from country to country and it is the responsibility of the NOCSL to make decisions, elaborations and analysis to streamline the NOCSL Education work in the future.





## Sri Lanka Army bullet Himasha Eshan aims to become fastest man in Asia

By Susil Premalal

To run fast, faster and be the fastest is the goal of any sprinter. Sri Lanka has a healthy tradition of producing athletes with explosive bursts of speed. From double international Summa Navaratnam, a living legend who was dubbed the ‘fastest man in Asia’ to ‘Warakapola Rocket’ Susanthika Jayasinghe, an Olympic medallist, Sri Lanka has a proud history of churning out fliers who have scorched the track at international level.

Soldier Himasha Eshan dreams of emulating these Sri Lankan heroes by being crowned the fastest man in Asia before the end of this season. It is no idle dream but a realistic target having blossomed into one of the finest athletes of his generation.

The 23-year-old is at the peak of his career and has not only raised the bar to recharge himself to achieve glorious heights but also remodelled his running technique successfully as evidenced at the first National selection trials conducted



by the Athletic Association of Sri Lanka (AASL) in February at the Sugathadasa Stadium.

South Asia’s record holder in the 100 metres made a comeback after a one-year hiatus to recover from an injury to by smashing his own Sri Lanka record clocking an amazing time of 10.22 seconds. This also improved on his South Asian Games record of 10.26.

Interestingly, Himasha clocked wind-assisted times of 10.11 in the heats and 10.12 in the semifinals and declared thereafter that his aim was to do the 100 in 10 seconds this year.

“I’m happy with my performance in my first meet since returning from injury after nearly one and half years. My target is to run 100 metres under 10 seconds in the upcoming international competitions this year, including the South Asian Games. Definitely, I could have gone faster at

the selection trials if I had got tough competition,” said the precociously talented athlete who displayed his talent as a schoolboy at Kalutara Maha Vidyalaya. Himasha outclassed the field winning by a huge margin with second placed Vinod Sanjaya de Silva of Lanka Lions finishing a distant second in a time of 10.64 while C Ranaweera of Army lagged behind in third place clocking 10.67.

“This time I ran the 100 metres adopting a new technique. I have changed by technique of running. It has proved to be successful,” said the champion sprinter who has bagged six internationals in his fledgling career including three gold medals.

He burst into the international limelight when he won the silver medal at the Asian Junior Athletic Championship in Chinese Taipei clocking 10.49 seconds in the 100 metres.





The crowning glory came at the South Asian Games in India in 2016 when he erased the record of 10.29 seconds in the 100 metres set by Sri Lanka's Chinthaka de Soyza in the 1999 South Asian Games in Chennai when he clocked a winning time of 10.26 seconds.

The first National selection trial held by the AASL attracted some 600 entries both men and women as athletes prepare to bring glory to the country at three major international events this year. The first event is the Asian Athletic Championships to be held from April 21-24 in Doha, Qatar. The next event on the calendar for Sri Lankan athlete is the IAAF World Athletic Championships also to be held in Doha from September 28 to October 8. This will be followed by the 13th South Asian Games scheduled to be held in Kathmandu, Nepal.

There were some outstanding performances from both men and women during this maiden National selection trials heralding a new season for athletes.

There were two record breaking performances. Apart from Himasha's new mark in the 100 metres, another representative from Army Gratien Dhananjaya established a new Sri Lanka record in the men's triple jump event clearing 16.71 metres. In fact the three places were won by athletes from Army. Mohamed Ahamed was second clearing 16.02 metres and S. Jayasinghe took third place in 15.66 metres.

Dhananjaya was overjoyed after achieving a career-best performance to go farther than I.D.S.S. Jayasinghe's Sri

Lanka record of 16.39 metre set at Biyagama in 2017.

The former Joseph Vaz, Wennappuwa schoolboy has been a regular participant at national and international level since 2015.

"I can improve performance even more in the future since we have many international meets lined up this year. My main focus is to win gold at the South Asian Games," said Sri Lanka's triple jump national champion.

In addition to the Sri Lanka records, there were several outstanding performances especially in the 800metre women's event. The first four athletes achieved very good timings in this event.

Sri Lanka record holder Nimali Liyanarachchi of Air Force won the trials in a superb time of 2 minutes 02.83 seconds. Gayanthika Abeyratne of Navy clocked 2: 03.36. Shyamalee Kuamrasinghe from Kandy recorded a time of 2: 04.23 while N.M.C. Dilrukshi of Army finished in a time of 2: 04.51.





## What is sport technology?

**S**port technology are all devices, software and other designs to monitor or to improve the performance of athletes. It is impossible to imagine without these products what the records would have been. It is video analysis which diagnoses the movement of the athlete or capturing the heart rate during training or a match or race it all leads to very important data. Sport technology never stops and is constant in development. According to the leading experts at Olympic teams like in the Netherlands, the only way to measure fitness is heart rate monitoring and to see if athletes are performing to international standards. The heart gives us such a good number of information also when it comes to maximum heart rate or heart rate in rest. Heart rate in rest is important to know to avoid overtraining. The latest developments are given in this overview.

One of the unique examples is for instance the continuous measurement

of haemoglobin and blood sugar during training with an app on the smart phone and a non-invasive sensor. No more finger pricking but a sensor instead. The level of haemoglobin and blood sugar has tremendous influence on the performance of the athlete and to know the exact blood work can give massive information where to improve or to continue the good practice. For athletes the data on the long term is crucial to make their right schedule to prepare for international tournaments, when data is available 24/7 without blood laboratory and without disturbing their practice then is an important step forwards for them. Imagine what it tells the athlete what kind of diet and food choices gives the best outcome in terms of blood sugar or what kind of training has the best influence on the haemoglobin level. It is all available 24/7. Sport technology has changed the international sport arena tremendously.

## Video analysis and body performance analysis



It started 20 years ago, specific software to analyze and capture video images of matches and training, these days every professional and national team in football, volleyball, hockey, rugby, baseball and many other sports use this method. Hours of recording videos will be analyzed to specific movements of the athletes in a presentation of 4-5 minutes. Video analysis is specific very much in use in team sports but also more and more for individual athletes use these software systems. The important part is sportsman/sportswoman who can't see him/herself what has gone wrong and how to improve their skills. It is out of date to show athletes/sport teams hours of videos in a non-structural way what will distract the mind set and what focus of the athletes/sport teams and should be avoided at all times.

A good example is field hockey. Over the last 10 years every match at international level has been recorded by video analysts of national teams; most of the time national teams also share the video recordings reciprocal as good sportsman practice. With this practice of video recording and using the right sport analysis software most of the common situations like turn-overs, defending, penalty corners, long corners, attacking systems left/right/central or how a team build up the game are all captured for further analysis. National hockey teams and hockey teams at club level at the leading international competitions can't perform without a video analyst. It is an important part of the game.

Players want to improve and learning from videos is a mighty tool. A second step in video analysis is to make it as

simple as possible by drawing into the video and to show where the chances are to score, to improve or what not to do. Visualizations can be powerful than just spoken words. Also, the coach has a limited time to get his/her team ready for a match and too long discussions tracks the attention and focus away from the real point. It is important in sports to keep it as simple as possible to give the message. Presentations can be for individuals like an attacker or defender for a specific action but also for the entire team about detailed analysis.

In Soccer the video analysis is already well integrated and many hockey video analyst professionals make the cross-over to soccer to expand their knowledge.



## GPS heart rate monitoring

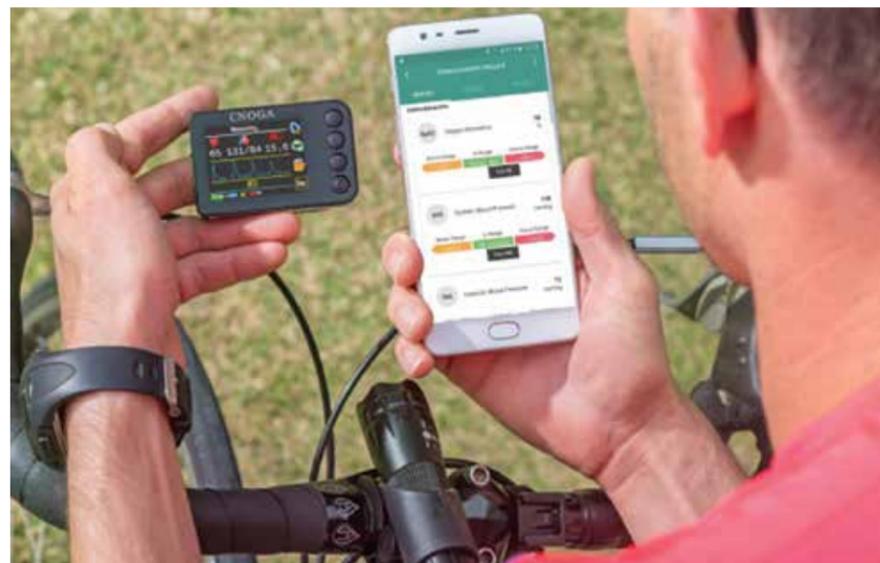
Heart rate monitoring (HRM) is a personal monitoring device that allows one to measure/display heart rate in real time or record the heart rate for later study. It is largely used to gather heart rate data while performing various types of physical exercise. In 1977 HRM started to be used in running, biking and extreme sports but nowadays it is in use with almost every sport. GPS HRM is a small sensor in the apparel of the athlete that can not only measure heart rate but can give data of 440 different parameters. Of course, these massive data need to be streamlined and only important and more relevant information will be collected. GPS can also tell more about the running lines, the number of kilometres the player has travelled during the match of training and many more data.

Why is heart rate monitoring important? As it tells the athlete and his coach the maximum heart rate, how long the training was done at which heart rate percentage and if the athlete is in the red-zone of his training zone. These important data make the difference between success and failure. The Dutch hockey performance specialist during the World Cup in India, high performance specialist is the expert on HRM and GPS performance and they provide training for each athlete the complete data for the most valuable parameters. By these methods the hockey coaches can adjust the training in specific periods or even during the preparation for an international tournament if some exercises have too much or too little impact on the maximum heart rate of the athletes. These methods are constantly monitored by the performance specialist and shared with the coaches. Some details can make the difference between winning and losing a match.



## Haemoglobin and blood sugar measuring with your smart phone

In scientific studies it is a well-known fact that normal blood glucose leads to optimal sport performance, but how can the athlete know without finger pricking? And what do we know about hemoglobin and what is the influence of higher or lower hemoglobin to sport presentations? Lower or higher levels can change the performance and it can be very valuable to know this on the long term. These parameters can give a good inside view about nutrition and hydration level and help the athlete and his/her coach to plan events/tournaments/training sessions much more in advance.



Next to this here are sensors on the sport market which make good ECG, saturation or blood gas analysis without any blood laboratory -- simple during sport exercises or a match. The uniqueness of these sensors is that the measurement takes place in a few number of seconds and it is non-invasive

## Strobe technology improves ball/eye coordination

Maybe you have seen them, athletes who wear a special spectacle where the light- and darkness has been constantly rotated what leads to a mysterious side. These spectacles are called strobe and come from stroboscope which means an instrument used to make a cyclically moving object appear to be slow-moving, or stationary. It consists of either a rotating disk with slots or holes or a lamp such as a flashtube which produces brief repetitive flashes of light. Usually the rate of the stroboscope is adjustable to different frequencies. When a rotating or vibrating object is observed with the stroboscope at its vibration frequency (or a submultiple of it), it appears stationary. These stroboscopes are also used to measure frequency.

Strobe spectacles are used to train the eyes of athletes, but it is also in use in healthcare to train the eyes of children in dyslexia or to train militaries in reaction speed. The question was for the last 10 years why do we train the body of an athlete but not the eyes as they play



a very specific role. Scientifically proven over the last 10 years the ball/eye coordination improves significantly and the results stay with the athlete for some time. It is very interesting development that eye-ball coordination can be trained and helps for a much better performance.

An overview of sports where strobes have been used in Europe and USA are tennis, baseball, hockey, football/

soccer, volleyball, basketball and some other sports. Also in cricket extremely, good improvements are to be expected. In the Netherlands visual performance has been well introduced. Two examples are shown below, one of the Dutch penalty corner stopper was trained with a strobe and also the Dutch umpire before attending the World Cup hockey in India trained his eyes with a strobe.



# To dream the impossible dream

By Saabir Cader.....

**I**n general the Ondaatje clan is multitasking and multitalented. With a pen in their hand an Ondaatje could be literary genius. If it is singing music; they pitch the same as Adel. Then when it comes to gymnastics – especially the Rhythmic version of it, they could be unique.

In Brisbane Australia at the Commonwealth Games Anna-Marie was just another Lankan expat performer trying to make a mark, but, alas when it came into the performance centre there was a sense of awe. Anna-Marie just dazzled and took the floor by storm. According to her own admission, it was only that recurring back injury that kept her away from a Commonwealth medal, but, till the final round it was just touch and go. Yet, for the mundane us, it was a feature to remember, especially by a Lankan athlete. Thus, Marie qualified for the Asian Games too, but, was beaten at the post once again due to injury.

Disappointment is the threshold of accomplishment. Marie is still behind that elusive Olympic medal that is haunting her day and night and she is willing to overcome her injuries and train 24x7 to make it to the 2020 Games in Tokyo.

Last month Marie left the cold climes of Canada where the Ondaatje's live and was competing in Hyderabad in India, just to stay in competition and she returned to Sri Lanka with three 'gold' medals for that effort.

In Canada, Marie's gymnastic career was mapped out. Marie represented Canada and even won a medal. There she was provided with all facilities and a stipend to back it.

We met her where she was staying in Nawala at a house owned by their family friend Aruna. We made it a point to ask her why all this fuss to turn out for Sri Lanka? With a quaint smile Marie replied "It was my father who thought that since our roots are from Sri Lanka why not travel back in time be a Lankan once again and at the same she would be the first to bring Rhythmic Gymnastics to Sri Lanka". At the same time Marie is hoping that her version of Gymnastics would catch on after her presence here with success.





as expensive as US \$ 1,000. Even for us it can be a bit pricy."

Marie's father Alastair has another dream for her. The father's dream is that one day she should become Miss Universe. Reason!! Alastair's grand aunt Maureen Hingert became the runner-up of the Miss Universe pageant way back in 1955 representing Ceylon. Now Marie's father wants his daughter to follow that dream once she's done with her Gymnastics.

Marie explained: "That is one of my second goals. After 2020 my eyes are on the Miss Universe event and win it. My great aunt Maureen Hingert was the runner-up in Miss Universe."

She said starting this discipline at the age of nine was difficult. "Most of the girls start preparing for this sport when they are around three or four years-old. They start to do their stretching at that age, to attune the body for the future. However I have been training with my coach who originated from Russia and that has helped me a lot in my endeavour."

"Right now my eyes are in the 2020 Tokyo Olympics. The first task is to qualify for the event. Then there is the Gymnastic World Cup also in 2020 and this year in September is the World Championships in Azerbaijan and there is no respite as training schedules are rigid," she added.

Anne-Marie is passionate about bringing Rhythmic Gymnastics to Sri Lanka. She said "I find there are several gymnasts who are into Rhythmic Gymnastics in Sri Lanka now and for sure they do need coaches. I think I could be of help in this department of activity. Yet, this sport could be very expensive. A Rhythmic Gymnastics competition costumes can be





## Sailing comeback was a huge success

**W**.A.R. Nishantha and Upul Gnanawardena of the Sri Lanka Sailing Unit won the coveted GP 14 class while Lalin and Radheeka Jirasingha of the Royal Colombo Yacht Club won the Enterprise event during the Sri Lanka Yachting Nationals held with great success at Crow Island Sea Front, Mattakuliya.

Altogether there were 98 participants taking part in this colourful event with all affiliated clubs in attendance with Chief Guest Vice Admiral Piyal de Silva, Commander of the Sri Lanka Navy at the helm of the day's proceedings.

The GP14 Class, Laser Standard Class and Windsurfing Class were by Sri Lanka Navy. The Enterprise Class and Laser Radial Class were won by Royal Colombo Yacht Club.



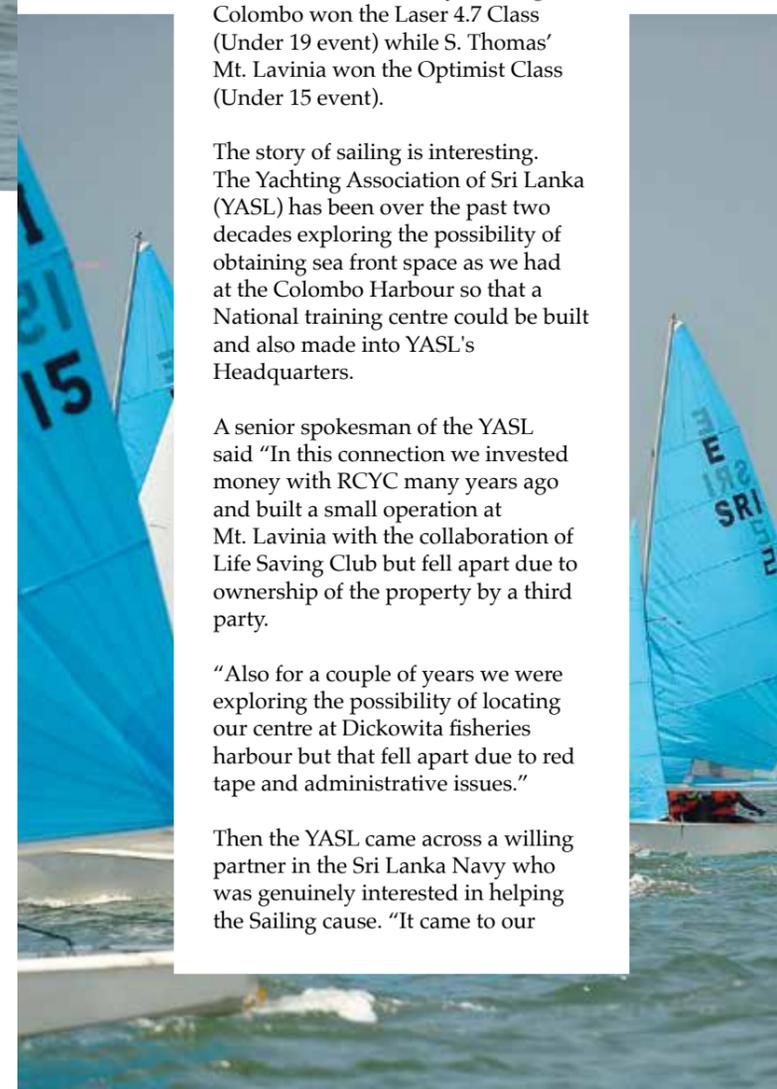
In the school events, Royal College Colombo won the Laser 4.7 Class (Under 19 event) while S. Thomas' Mt. Lavinia won the Optimist Class (Under 15 event).

The story of sailing is interesting. The Yachting Association of Sri Lanka (YASL) has been over the past two decades exploring the possibility of obtaining sea front space as we had at the Colombo Harbour so that a National training centre could be built and also made into YASL's Headquarters.

A senior spokesman of the YASL said "In this connection we invested money with RCYC many years ago and built a small operation at Mt. Lavinia with the collaboration of Life Saving Club but fell apart due to ownership of the property by a third party.

"Also for a couple of years we were exploring the possibility of locating our centre at Dickowita fisheries harbour but that fell apart due to red tape and administrative issues."

Then the YASL came across a willing partner in the Sri Lanka Navy who was genuinely interested in helping the Sailing cause. "It came to our





knowledge that the Sri Lanka Navy was having an operation at Crow Island where it was used for security purposes and some waste plastic conversion operation.

"We made some visits to this site with the assistance of the Navy Captain who was in charge of Sailing at the Navy and member of our Association and found that it was facing the Kelani River mouth and had easy access to the sea similar to when YASL had operation at the Colombo port."

Thereafter they had an official meeting with the Commander of the Sri Lanka Navy and made a request for YASL to start a Training Centre at Crow Island. The proposal was duly accepted and the Crow Island project for Sailing became a reality.

The YASL spokesman also added: "During the years 1970 and 1998 we have participated in Asian Games and was successful to obtain a Silver and Bronze Medal. As we were deprived the facility of a sea front training centre, we had been agitating for a long time to obtain one and now we have been successful in that.

"Since our country is blessed with a number of waterways and lakes in addition to the sea surrounding, improving and encouraging sailing undoubtedly would attract foreigners to visit Sri Lanka making it an ideal tourist resort bolstering our national economy."



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## Havelocks give league champs Kandy SC a run for their money

It has been a 'Super Rugby' season overall

By Allaam Ousman

**K**andy Sports Club lived up to their billing as the premier rugby club in the country when they emerged league champions for the fifth consecutive time but the 2018/19 season was not a one-horse race like in the past.

The perennial champions in the domestic rugby circuit are no longer invincible. They have to thank the introduction of the 'Super League' final round for the first time this season for keeping alive their title hopes after suffering three defeats at the hands of Army, CH and FC and Havelocks who were the table leaders at the end of the normal two rounds of competition.

In fact there was little to choose between the top two contenders in particular this season as evidenced during the 'Super' final at Havelock Park.

Kandy SC raced to an 18-0 lead at the interval. Havelocks despite missing the influence of their suspended coach Sanath Martis regrouped magnificently after the break to claw their way back into the contention scoring three tries in the second half.

However, it was so close yet so far for the Park club whose goal kicker Reza Mubarak must be agonizing for fluffing a crucial conversion. But credit should go to the tenacity of Kandy SC for stoically defending their line when Havelocks made an all-out assault with their forwards as a battering ram. As the final scoreline of 21-19 in favour of Kandy SC suggests, Havelocks came within kicking distance of savouring a deserving victory because they would have been declared champions if the league had run its normal course. The 'Super Final' gave a lifeline for Kandy SC to bounce back

and display their resilience by rising to the occasion like true champions.

It has been a 'Super Rugby' season overall with all eight 'A' division teams raising the bar to produce one of the closest league championships ever witnessed in the history of the sport in Sri Lanka. There were hardly any lop-sided contests with Army and CH and FC turning tables on Kandy SC while Havelocks rose Phoenix-like after an exodus of players including last season's captain Jason Melder. But remarkably the youngsters in the team raised their hand and with the guidance of seniors blended magnificently to keep alive their dream of regaining the league title which they last won in 2012.

Havelocks can be proud of their feat despite having to settle for

**HAVELOCKS CAN BE PROUD OF THEIR FEAT DESPITE HAVING TO SETTLE FOR THE RUNNER-UP SLOT.**

the runner-up slot just like they did in 2016 because they proved the naysayers wrong by locking horns with Kandy SC for the title showdown.

"To be honest when players started leaving the club, lot of people wrote us off. They said we will just finish fifth or six. However, eventually we made an impact and we can proud of our achievement," said former Royal hooker Azmir Fajudeen who has been one of the standout young players at Havelocks.



"It was disappointing to lose after having come on this long journey. Kandy has a habit of running away with the title but we gave them a run for their money," said the youngster who is only in his second season with the Park club. "We did not have many experienced players. But we had a lot of talented juniors who played their hearts out. The senior members of the side showed us the way through this journey," said Fajudeen who described this season as the "toughest" in his career.

Having lost to Kandy SC in Nittawela, Havelocks scored a stunning 28-26 win after trailing 19-0 at half time in the second round league clash. It was their 35-26 win over Police which saw them leapfrog over Kandy SC to head the table.

Kandy SC who suffered a 33-17 defeat to CH and FC after emerging 38-22 winners at home prevailed over the Colombo side 31-13 in the Super League qualifying match at Nittawela. Havelocks swept aside their arch rivals CR and FC 21-14 for the third time this season to book their berth in the Super League final.

For the Park club, Fajudeen, Reza Mubarak and playmaker Mithun Hapugoda were outstanding throughout season along with Sithum Peiris and Dinuk Amarasinghe.

Shehan Pathirana has been a consistent match-winner for Kandy SC while fly half Nigel Ratwatte, centres Oshan Perera and Dhanushka Ranjan and skipper Richard Dharmapala have been outstanding. Jayson Dissanayake, Sashika Jayawardene, Damith Dissanayake, Ashan Darling and Suhiru Anthony stood out among the forwards.

CH and FC full back Samuel Maduwantha was adjudged the highest points scorer of the 2018/19 League tournament while half backs Sudam Sooriarachchi of CH and FC and Hapugoda were the leading try scorers with 11 each.





## The Last Shot

**Nandasena Perera carved a niche in Lankan golf**

By Dian Abeywardena

**K**. Nandasena Perera born 29th August 1954, in Bandaranaikapura, Rajagiriya, a stone's throw from the Royal Colombo Golf Club, was a 'Sportsman Par-excellence' in every sense of the word!!!

Nandasena was a front runner in the Bandaranaikapura Football team and latterly he was the coach, with his intrinsic talent and natural ability. Nandasena working at the RCGC gradually became a caddy and the 'genius' in Nandasena sprouted wings. The uniqueness of Nandasena's capacity is the fact that he climbed a fruit tree at 15 years, fell to the ground and broke his left arm at the elbow and the elbow was set incorrectly, prohibiting the full extension of his left hand. Nonetheless, Nandasena's outstanding mental strength, exuding talent and natural genius, even the incorrectly set left arm was turned to positive and the magical touch round the greens, the capability to sink putts at will, the sheer brilliance out of any bunker simply

mesmerized all and sundry! Nande's long game was second to none, utterly accurate off the tee and length belied his slight build and small stature.

Nandasena burst in to prominence in 1983 when he fired an eight under par 63 in the RCGC Open 3rd Round to establish a new RCGC course record which stood since 20th July 1975. Renowned magnate and extremely talented Sportsman in his young days, Mr. Sohli Captain established the RCGC course record of 67, playing the Victoria Cup, the best individual Gross Trophy at the Sri Lanka Amateur Golf Championship in 1975. It took eight years to be overhauled and re-written by Nandasena Perera.

The victories of Nandasena locally and internationally are countless, the trophies in his trophy cabinet are priceless, as they depict sensational victories, crafted by sheer genius and brilliance on the Golf Course. Nandasena's incredible ability to manufacture shots, from unplayable positions was the real magic and genius of the man. Nandasena played in the Singapore Open at the Bukhit Tima Golf Course in 1983, his first international match, after the sensational victory in the RCGC Open, in which he established the new RCGC course record too.

Nandasena made the cut-off in a competitive Asian field and in the third round played the most amazing shot in a dog-leg Par 4, trapped among the trees, Nandasena hit a low 2 iron, 180 yards plus, below the radar of the branches lined along the ball path, to 3 feet from the hole and sank the birdie putt!

Nandasena's unique genius on the golf course caused the top Singaporeans, and many others in the Asian region to come to Sri Lanka and participate in the Sri Lanka Amateur Golf Championship, which he won in 1988, 1989 and 1990.

Probably, the greatest achievement of Nandasena Perera as an Amateur was the silver medal he won at the Beijing Asian Games 1990 in China. The exemplary story of the Beijing Games speaks volumes of the man. After 4 rounds of golf, Nandasena Perera was tied with Maruyama of Japan and in the sudden-death play-off, Maruyama pushed his drive to the rough whilst Nandasena was in the middle of the Fairway. In accordance with the Rules

of Golf the search time for a lost ball is 5 minutes and after 3 minutes the ball was not to be found. Nandasena instinctively walked in to the rough, and found the ball before the search time was elapsed.

As a great sportsman Nandasena found his opponents ball and Maruyama holed out from off the green to birdie the sudden death hole and win the gold medal for Japan. Maruyama, played the Japanese Tour and went on to the world stage, ranked in the top five in the world, whilst Nandasena sat in a hospital bed getting treatment for his knees and a chronic arthritis condition aggravated by the cold weather.

Nandasena Perera was gifted the deed to a 10 perch block of land, adjacent to the 13th hole at the RCGC, by the Late Hon. Ranasinghe Premadasa. The RCGC members contributed and completed the house. The RCGC bestowed Associate Membership on Nandasena Perera which he used with great responsibility and respect. The President and State honoured Nandasena with the status of Deshabandu for his outstanding achievements in Golf bringing credit and glory to Sri Lanka.

His recovery shots were graceful unorthodox and manufactured purely by Nandasena Perera. His ability to nominate and say with confidence that he will 'Hole a putt or a chip' and successfully do so every time can only be classified simply as Genius Golfer. His physical constraints especially due to Arthritis and the knees were affected only in cold climates and once the sun is on his back Nande was basically unbeatable.

Nandasena was fondly referred to as "God" for his sheer brilliance and his exceptional Bunker play in the All India Championship, which earned him the name 'Sandy Perera'.

In Singapore and even in India players and fans would want to check Nandasena's hands as his shots are simply Magical.

Nandasena Perera moved on at the age of 64+, leaving behind a magical legacy and pleasant memories of a genius golfer who walked our path, none of it to ever return.



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