

Official Publication of the National Olympic Committee of Sri Lanka

GoodSport

Volume 02 | Issue 01

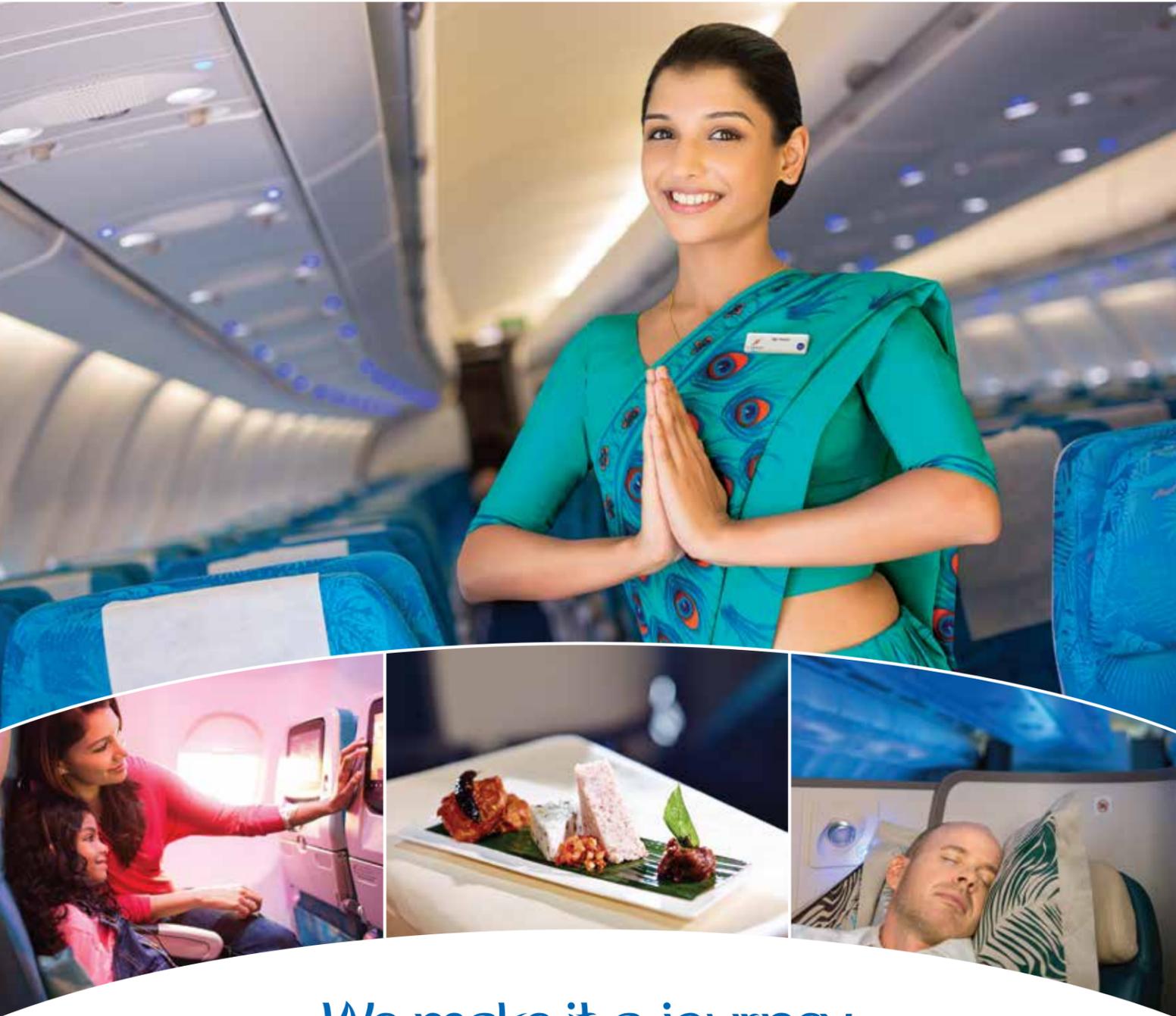
September 2019



**FORWARD
THINKING**
NOC SL AND
2020 OLYMPICS

Rs. 500/-





We make it a journey
to remember.

Fly SriLankan Airlines and enjoy the
inherent Sri Lankan warmth and hospitality

☎ 1979 🌐 srilankan.com

📘 SriLankan Airlines 🐦 @flysrilankan 📺 @srilankanairlinesofficial



"World's Leading Airline to the Indian Ocean 2018"
"Asia's Leading Marketing Campaign 2018"
"Asia's Leading Airline to the Indian Ocean 2018"

You're our world

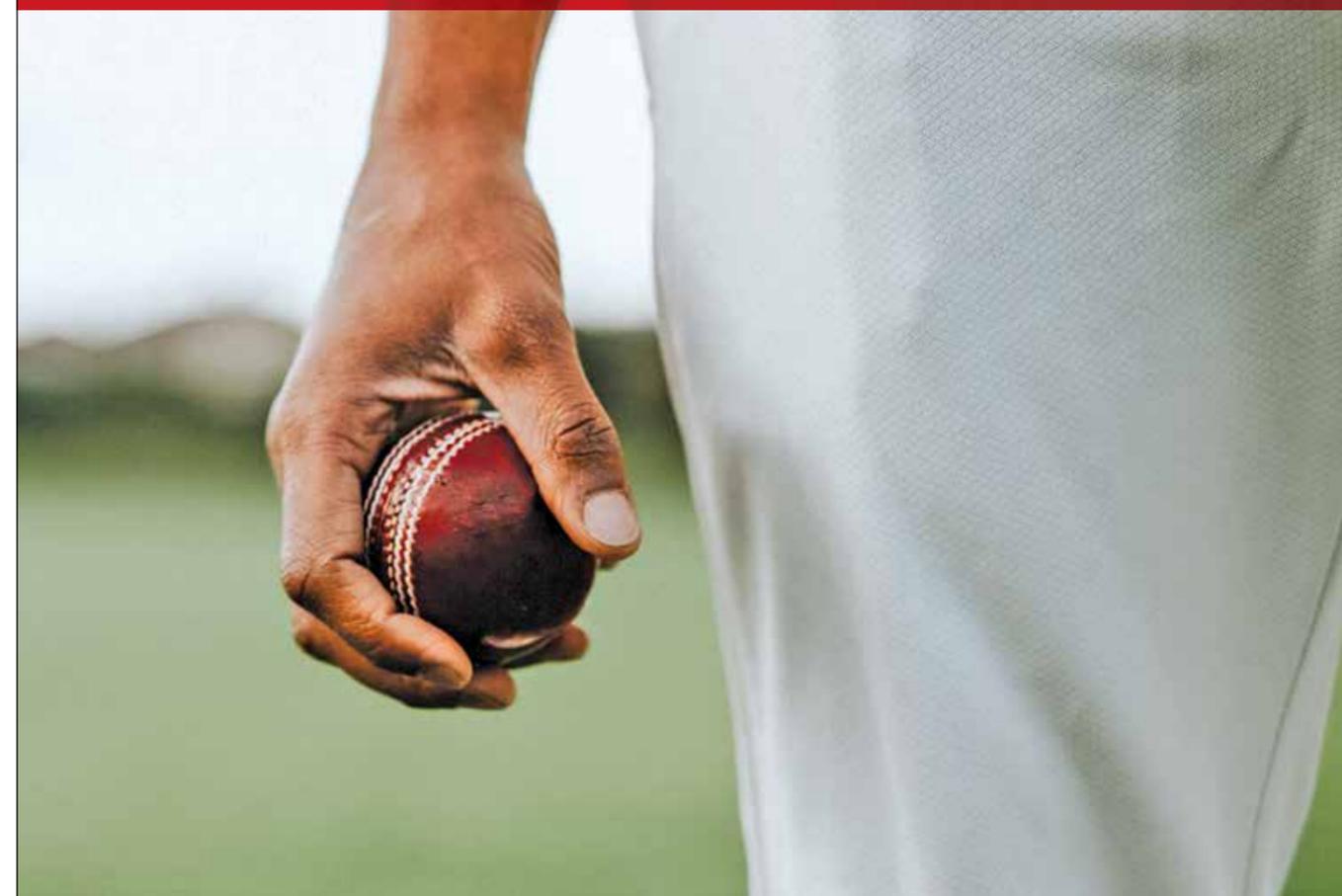
SriLankan Airlines



SINCE 1978
41st

**OBSERVER MOBTEL
SCHOOL CRICKETER**
OF THE YEAR 2019

Await
**THE MOST PRESTIGIOUS SCHOOL CRICKET
AWARDS CEREMONY OF THE YEAR.**



Recognizing talent, inspiring greatness.



We Care. Always.

CONTENTS

Official Publication of the National Olympic Committee of Sri Lanka

September 2019



04 FOREWORD BY SURESH SUBRAMANIAM,
PRESIDENT, NATIONAL OLYMPIC COMMITTEE

06 NOC NEWS



14 SUSTAINING THE REEF WITH AN EYE FOR TOMORROW'S
SPORTSMEN AND WOMEN

20 2019 OLYMPIC DAY RUN
MARATA WAS A HUGE SUCCESS

24 WHO IS THE BEST EVER IN LANKAN WATERS

32 HIRUNI'S PLACE IN THE SUN

38 THE CLIMB HAS BEGUN

46 ARMY, SLIMLINE AND UNICHELA
PUGILISTS LIGHT UP LAYTON CUP



50 FORWARD THINKING NOC SL AND 2020 OLYMPICS

56 DRIVING ON TO BETTER GREEN

60 LANKAN SPORTS LAW IS ARCHAIC

68 INDIAN GAY SPRINTER DUTEE CHAND

70 MOUNTAIN BIKING HAS COME TO STAY

76 RENU'S DREAM FOR BADMINTON



80 SAG'S MARATHON MEN AND WOMEN LOOKING FOR GOLD

88 AN ENDEAVOUR TO KEEP SPORTS ABOVEBOARD

90 LOOKING FOR THE 'GOLD' IN NEPAL

94 SAG ARCHERS LOOKING FOR THE 'BULLS EYE'



100 THARJINI STARS IN LIVERPOOL

124 THE LAST SHOT



EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

President: Suresh Subramaniam
Secretary General: Maxwell De Silva
Immediate Past President:
Hemasiri Fernando
Vice-Presidents: Joseph Kenny
Asanga Seneviratne
Maj. General (ret'd) Palitha Fernando
Senior DIG (ret'd) Sumith Edirisinghe
Treasurer: Senaka Ranasinghe
Assistant Treasurer:
Nishantha Jayasinghe
Assistant Secretary: Chandana Liyanage
Members: Chanaka Hashantha
Fazil Hussain, Ajith Thamel,
Niluka Karunaratne

GOODSPORT

Editor-in-Chief: S R Pathravithana
Saabir Cader
Allaam Ousman
Susil Premalal

IMAGES

Thusith Wijedoru
Thishan Dissanayake
Amila Gamage
Hiran Weerakkody
Kandula Yatawara
Saabir Cader
Kamal Wanniarachchi

GRAPHICS/DESIGN

Strategic Alliance (Pvt) Limited

MARKETING

Strategic Alliance (Pvt) Limited

PRINTING

Quality Printers (Pvt) Ltd.

CONTACTS

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

GOODSPORT is published by
the National Olympic Committee of
Sri Lanka. The articles published do not
necessarily reflect the opinions of the
National Olympic Committee
of Sri Lanka. No articles may be
reproduced without the permission of the
NOC Media and Communications
Department.

e-wis



We believe in approaching everything we do with the utmost commitment. With a passion for doing great things, by taking pride in team work and dedicating ourselves to the development of technology that will play an integral part in Sri Lanka's new technological infrastructure.

**Committed to innovative and inspired
technological development across the country**



www.ewispc.com Original Device Manufacturer - Sooriyawewa, Hambantota

Hotline: +94 117520520

FOREWORD

SURESH SUBRAMANIAM

President, National Olympic Committee

MANY ACHIEVEMENTS IN JUST ONE YEAR OF DEDICATION

Four quarterly issues ago to be precise, we set off on a journey of destiny with the launching of the GoodSport Magazine with a pledge of ushering an environment which will make it more favourable for athletes to achieve their dreams.

We took the first few steps in our endeavour by taking part in the Commonwealth Games in Gold Coast, Australia, The Asian Games in Jakarta and Palembang 2018, Indonesia and the Youth Olympics Games Buenos Aires 2018 in Argentina, where we saw the emergence of young Parami Wasanthi Maristella – taking part in

the steeplechase event and winning Bronze in the Women's 2000m .

As a newly elected President, I was mindful that the road ahead was full of uncertainties, but knowing the fact that every question has its own answer, I persisted upon it with courage and a thirst to conquer. I was also very much aware that I have a team that is ever willing to back my vision even it is full of tasks and challenges.

Among the very first tasks that we undertook was the setting up of the NOC SL High Performance Committee which is now shaping

up to be a focal point in today's athletes. So much so, the High Performance committee is on a forward march under Sri Lanka's only surviving Olympic Medallist, Susanthika Jayasinghe who has taken up duties as the High Performance Director.

A right move in direction was the signing of the MOU between the Chinese Olympic Committee and Sri Lanka seeking ways of honing the skills of Lankan athletes with an eye for the next Asian Games in China in 2022. We also have entered into an agreement with the Croatian Olympic Authorities too.

In our own backyard, the launching of NOC SL's own website in February was a huge success and it is being developed into an encyclopaedia of information on Sri Lanka's athletes with over 200 completed so far.

Speaking of being innovative, our team scored a first in the realms of the Olympic world, when we launched the first Environmental Sustainability Programme in Polhena, Matara and in exposure and media attention was hugely successful.

Our argument was that to sustain life and sport in and around the island, especially sea-related sports, the coral reef in Sri Lanka is very important. However, as it is being threatened of being destroyed owing different reasons and some of the coral cover is already dead, the NOC SL pioneered the "Give the reef another chance" programme. This effort was so successful; we got the Sri Lanka Navy, Tokyo Cement and the hotels around the Polhena Reef along with numerous other governmental and non-governmental organisations coming in as partners.

The Olympic Day Run was also another huge success was considering the fact that it was one of the first public rallies held in the country following the uncertainties

of the April 21 incidents that breached the peace in the country. It was also held on June 25 as the reef sustaining programme thus making it a noteworthy public event in the country.

At the time of penning down this note, the NOC SL had one completed audit in the KPMG Private audit followed by three other audits going on. They are the Annual Extern Audit, Gap Analysis Special Assignment and the IOC audit; they were being conducted concurrently. This proves that the present executive believes in keeping the house clean for better transparency.

We are also proud to say that in an effort to accentuate transparency, our Financial Committee is very active.

Besides, we also have embarked on the NOC Sri Lanka – Policy on Sexual Harassment – a paper that will safeguard the integrity and the right to perform without intimidation for our athletes.

With our own house in the throes of being transparent and efficient, we now have embarked on a mission to help our own associations getting clean and efficient.

Finally, all this effort has enabled to us to be in line for a budgetary allocation of Rs. 100 million for

the athlete of the present and the future in mind. Here we are hoping to strengthen the respective associations and in turn get the people responsible churn out Olympic medallists of the future. The vehicle for this vision would be the futuristic 2024 programme.

I am working with the current executive committee which has been very active and amiable during the past fifteen months and have achieved and implemented so many innovative ideas. Thus, now, it is necessary to focus on our vision towards the successive Games until 2024; so as to alert the athletes and national federations to achieve our goals. The NOC Sri Lanka feels it's the right time to prepare a four-year action plan including all the mega Games until the Paris 2024 Summer Olympic Games to be held from 26 July to 11 August 2024 in France.



S. Subramaniam

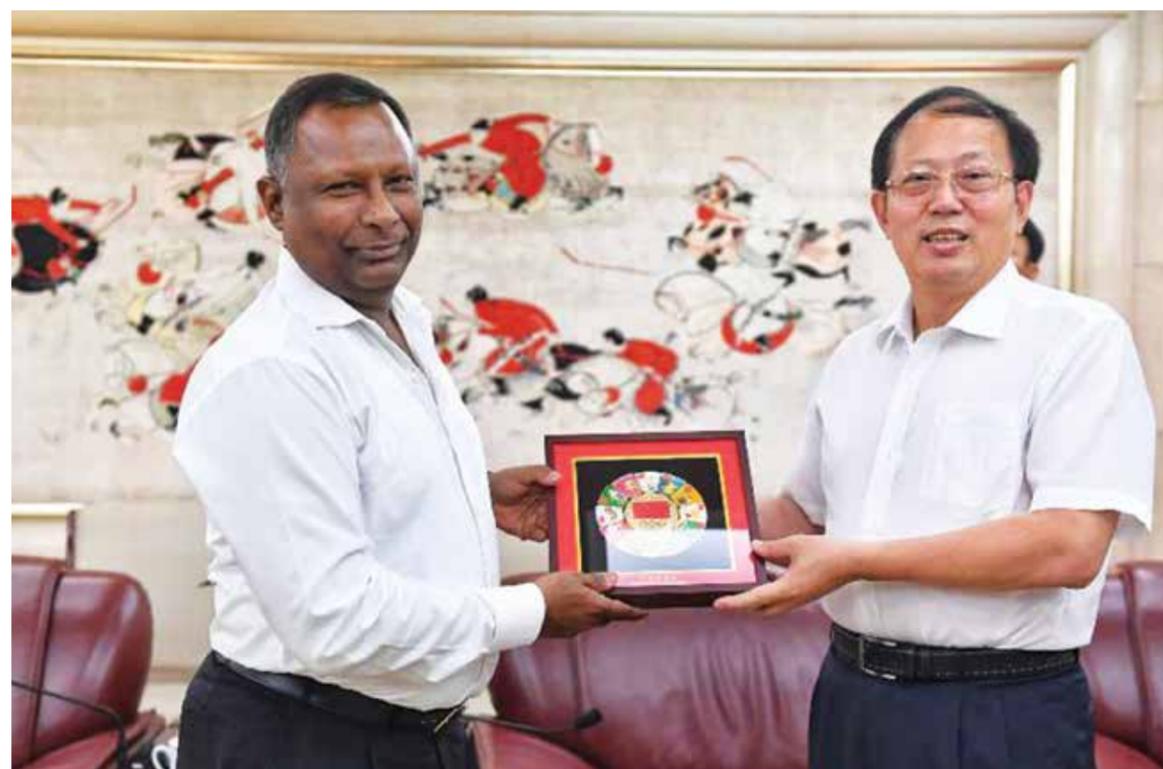


Photo: President, National Olympic Committee of Sri Lanka Suresh Subramaniam met Gou Zhongwen, the Director of the General Administration of Sport of China and the President of the Chinese Olympic Committee. There they discussed on the development of Wushu in Sri Lanka with support of the Chinese Olympic Committee





Susanthika signs up NOC SL

Sri Lanka's Olympic 'silver' medallist Susanthika Jayasinghe joined the National Olympic Committee of Sri Lanka as its High Performance Director from 1 August 2019.

The Lankan millennium medallist thus will be overlooking the performances of all athletes who are under the purview of the NOC SL High Performance programme and will be in charge of the development their skills,

through her unique exposure and experience.

The picture shows President NOC SL Suresh Subramaniam and its Secretary General Maxwell de Silva with Ms. Jayasinghe after signing the concept papers.

Karate coach Mahdi Karimi in Sri Lanka



Reputed coach Sensei Mahdi Karimi from Iran is in Sri Lanka to coach the Sri Lanka National squad in preparation for the forthcoming South Asian Games in December.

Mr. Mahdi Karimi made a courtesy call on NOC SL General Secretary Maxwell de Silva at the Olympic House on 19th July 2019.

Karimi has 27 years of work experience in Karate and 15 years followed Karate professionally. He was also a member of Iran's National Karate team in 2010. He also was a member of Azerbaijan team from 2015 - 2017.

Sensei Karimi is expected to be in Sri Lanka till the end of this year.

Serbian coaches for South Asian Games

A confident Lankan Handball chief Maj. Gen. Dampath Fernando (left), HFSL president welcomed Serbian coaches Matic and Nenad at a press conference at Olympic House. The Serbian coaches are in the country in preparation for the forthcoming South Asian Games which is scheduled to be held in Nepal later this year.

The Handball Federation of Sri Lanka (HFSL) have set their sights on winning a medal at the forthcoming South Asian Games (SAG) by getting down the services of two high performances coaches from Serbia Nedeljko Matic and Nenad Kraljevski, says Maj. Gen Dampath Fernando.

The two accomplished European coaches arrived in the island on August 1 and have got down to the business of raising the handball profile of Sri Lanka with enthusiasm. The duo is here on a four-month contract till the SAG which will be followed by a post-Games analysis for three weeks.

The handball national pool of men and women comprising 26 players each have been training for more than one and half months at the Panagoda Army cantonment indoor gymnasium.

ANOC Beach Games venue shifted

Qatar to host inaugural World Beach Games in place of San Diego. Lack of sponsorship and funding forced the Association of National Olympic Committees (ANOC) shift the inaugural World Beach Games from San Diego, California to Qatar later this year.

The Association of National Olympic Committees (ANOC) awarded the Gulf State the rights two weeks after San Diego withdrew because of lack of funding and sponsorship.

An elated Qatar government has offered financial guarantees San Diego was unable to secure, ANOC said in

statement, and the Games will go ahead likely from October 12-16 this year.

"There will also be no impact on the ongoing qualification process which has seen more than 70 NOCs qualify across the 14 sports, with athletes from up to 90 nations ultimately expected to compete", the statement added.

San Diego was awarded the Games in 2015 and they were originally due to be staged in 2017 but that was put back to 2019 to allow National Olympic Committees (NOCs) and international federations time to prepare athletes.



Tokyo 2020 Keeps a Balance between Sports and Environment through Medals



The Olympic medals for Tokyo 2020 are unveiled by the Tokyo 2020 Organizing Committee of Olympic Games (TOCOG) on July 24, 2019 exactly one year to go before the start of the Games.

Junichi Kawanishi, the director of the Japan Sign Design Association and the Osaka Design Society was selected among 4,400 entries to produce 5,000 medals. Kawanishi considers this job as a lifetime achievement and he said "I never dreamed that the design I submitted only as a memorial to this lifetime event would actually be selected".

Under the theme "Be better, together - for the planet and the people", the TOCOG aims to have the most environmentally friendly and

sustainable games. Therefore, the medals are moulded entirely from metal extracted from recycled consumer electronics over the past two years. Interestingly, more than 90 per cent of Japan's local authorities participated and a total of 78,985 tons of discarded devices were collected, a haul which included approximately 6.21 million used mobile phones, along with digital cameras, handheld games and laptops. Finally, they reached the goals of 30.3kg of gold, 4,100kg of silver and 2,700kg of bronze were reached by the time the collection cycle closed on 31 March 2019.

On the other side, Japanese public contributed around 45 tons of household plastic in order to create the 100 podiums for the Games.

IOC accolades Tozer with Achievement Diploma



Photo:
Caryl Tozer with the NOC SL EXCO

The apex body of world sports, the International Olympic Committee has conferred the 'WOMEN AND SPORT' Achievement Diploma in recognition of her outstanding contribution to promoting the development and participation of women and girls in Sport to inimitable Caryl Tozer.

Indeed Ms. Tozer is multifaceted. A fitness addict, she still does things that a woman twenty years her junior would still not dare. It was just the other day she walked across several countries while in Europe.

While starting at a very tender age, Tozer represented Sri Lanka for athletics, netball, and basketball since her age

of sixteen. Yet, it was netball all her sports achievements motivated her to be involved in many social works as a volunteer in supporting girls and young women in sports. She has been a guest speaker in many events and televisions to talk about the need for empowerment of girl children and the importance of parity when bringing up girl and boy children. Tozer was a member of the National Sports Council of Sri Lanka in 2015 and supporting women's netball and tasked with writing a policy document for all sports.

As a rolemodel, Tozer founded 'Women in Need' in 1987 with her partners to help abused women and girls with counselling and legal and

medical support. Further, she is running a Facebook page named 'Safe Sri Lanka for Children' to take a stand against abuse of children and protect them.

The International Olympic Committee annually confers 'The IOC Women and Sport Awards' to promote the advancement of gender quality in sport. The IOC's aim on this award is to recognise outstanding achievement and contributions made to develop, encourage and strengthen the participation of women and girls at all levels in the sport world, in order to close the gender gap.

IOC invited all the NOCs to nominate one candidate either a man or a woman or an organisation for the above award from each NOC for 2019. Then IOC selects one at world level and one each for each continent. National Olympic Committee of Sri Lanka called for the application for the first time and received six applications. A five-member evaluation committee of NOC Sri Lanka selected Ms. Caryl Tozer to nominate for the Award.

This special award was conferred by Senior DIG (Rtd.) Sumith Edirisinghe, the vice president of National Olympic Committee of Sri Lanka on August 6, 2019 before the start of the 8th executive committee meeting.

TAFISA Seeking Ways of Effective Partnership



Photo:
Stacey Kim

The Association For International Sport for All; better known as TAFISA which originated in Europe in 1991 and has gradually meandered itself to cover the globe almost two decades later. Now working under the banner "Sports for All" the programme has earmarked Sri Lanka to be a partner along with the coordination of the Korea International Cooperation Agency KOICA.

As the leading international Sport for all organization TAFISA is in the privileged position to bring joy, health, social interaction and development to communities and citizens around the globe

through the promotion of Sport for All and physical activity.

In this regard, TAFISA together with KOICA are working on a proposal to support Sri Lanka's Sports education and facilities. However to implement the actual project within the limited time and to make it feasible and effective they need the primary NOC Sri Lanka's support for that project.

Making a feasibility study of this programme in Sri Lanka was introduced by Stacey Kim from South Korea who is the Head of TAFISA President Office.

Explaining the programme Kim told GoodSport "The location

for this programme was weighed in between Zimbabwe and Sri Lanka; however I perceived notion that Sri Lanka would be the more feasible option in the long term".

He said that by launching this programme our primary aim is to develop a lineage of healthy Sri Lankan people, through our guidance. However he added "This could not be a short term project. This needs a lot of planning and in-puts. The initial three years it would run as a preliminary project and then in the fourth year we would embark on the setting up the "Sports for all Centre" proper. This is going to be a huge project where we would

be working along with KOICA together. The buck does not stop at that point. To make the project a success the National Olympic Committee of Sri Lanka along with the authorities of the Education Department and the Health Department also have to be equal partners and to their might to it."

Kim stressed if all partners do not run in the same direction we may fail in this endeavour. Nonetheless, TAFISA and KOICA have taken a decision to work towards the success of the project. He also emphasised that if the project is a success – it would be the people of Sri Lanka be the ultimate victors.

At this point the GoodSport asked on what sports that TAFISA hope to promote under this project and what sort of resource personnel would be needed. Kim explained "It may not be popular sports like football and volleyball be used towards the sports that be utilised most will be the kind of sports that could help the populace of the country to sustain their strength and vitality through their adult life. As a result it may be a sport that we have to introduce to the curriculum and the Lankans grow with it", Kim said.

Hockey veterans' destination 'down under'



Sri Lanka Masters Women, a group of hockey players consisting mainly National players from all parts of the island will travel to Australia for a list of games.

"We are proud that we are the only women masters team that have been able to take part at the World Masters Cup in 2018 in Spain from Asia and it was a great experience to take our little island to a continent that made us explore the game we love in a different perspective" says former three times National Hockey Captain Mrs. Sobitha Mendis.

Many feel it's the end of the road for us as we continue to show more love for the game we are passionate about.

"Yes, partly it's true, yet, how do you expect the younger generation to have hope if we don't create hope being senior hockey players in this field, without setting an example, Mrs. Mendis continues to express? I am proud to be leading a group of women full of superstars in my era. Many of our coaches during our days are very proud that we have gathered many former hockey players from different schools, namely Kandy, Pushpadana Girls School, Matale Sangamitta Girls School, St. Paul's Milagiriya, Colombo, Sujatha Vidyalaya, Colombo, Visakha Vidyalaya, Colombo, Musaeus College, Colombo, Yashodara Balika Vidyalaya, Colombo and also ex-national heroines from the Sri Lanka

Army to keep the fires burning for both homes and Sports Women in Sri Lanka".

This team will be captained by Manoji Pradeepika, former Sri Lanka Army Hockey player in years 1996-2004 and also 1996, Sri Lanka National Pool Hockey player. She is part of the Masters Women spinal cord and strength to the Masters Women operation in Sri Lanka. Her energy is felt miles ahead.

In 2018 Masters World Cup participation have inspired the ladies to do better in the next 2020 world cup, and is focused to enter two teams, over 35 and over 40 ladies teams this time. This visit down-under will boost these strong hockey players' energy more,

to achieve what they are determined to.

It is important the path to success is drawn from the roots, Mrs. Ruwaiza Sela, Manager of the team. There is so much we can influence our younger generation towards, and it is not only the sport itself. The attitude, serve your country, how you carry yourself as strong women in the society amongst strong men, dress code, dignity and most importantly to become an all-rounder in every aspect whilst you engage in a sport you love. "We have hockey moms who run businesses, lead corporate entities, qualified lawyers, engineers, and also moms of at least with children of two or more. It is amazing sometimes to sit back and think how we try hard to put everything together to achieve what we really want with all what runs through our heads on a daily basis, not forgetting it's the Asian culture we are trying to crack open, where women stays home" says Mrs. Sela.

The Masters Women hockey players are mentored and trained by Mr. A.N. Perera with his expertise, a coach who has trained many champions through his field, hockey career.

Research visit and lecture by Dr. Borja on NOC Sri Lanka and co-habitation

Dr Borja García, a professor on sport policy and management at Loughborough University, United Kingdom and lecturer in the 'Dream Together' Global Sport Management master programme at Seoul National University; visited Sri Lanka from 21 – 27 July 2019.

The purpose of the visit was to do a research on the relationships between National Olympic Committees and national government which is funded by the International Olympic Committee with one of their "Advanced Research Grants". The project is done by Borja and his colleague Professor Henk-Erik Meier, Munster University in Germany. As one country from one continent basis, Sri Lanka was chosen as the case study here.

The purpose of the project was to explore the different relationships of collaboration between NOC SL and Sri Lankan Government. Their prime objective was to identify the best practice and to map different types of collaboration in different countries; also to understand whether collaboration between NOCs and governments is regulated by any type of agreements, legislation or memorandum

of understanding and so on. Moreover, another objective of the research was to identify which are the areas of most fruitful collaboration:

In this research, the following key people from different organisations were identified and interviewed.

1. **Mr. S. Ranugge**
Former Secretary - Ministry of Sports
2. **Prof. B.L.H. Perera**
Programme Director Academic Programmes - NOC SL
3. **Mr. Deva Henry**
Former Vice President - NOC SL
4. **Mr. S. Wirithamulla**
Former Sports Ministry Secretary
5. **Mr. Roshan Watawala**
Senior Media Personnel - Sirasa TV
6. **Mr. Priyantha Jayakody**
Vice President - Sri Lanka Volleyball Federation
7. **Mr. Maxwell de Silva**
Secretary General - NOC SL
8. **Hon. Harin Fernando**
Minister - Ministry of Telecommunication, Foreign Employment and Sports
9. **Dr. Upendra Mudugamuwa**
Advisor - Ministry of Telecommunication, Foreign Employment and Sports
10. **Mr. S.R. Pathiravithana**
Head - Media of NOC SL
11. **Ms. Hiruni and Ms. Gayathri**
Admin Staff - NOC SL

Following the research, NOC SL invited Borja Garcia for a lecture on 'Good Governance in Sport: Why Do We Need It?' NOC SL invited the executive committee members of



NOC SL, NFs, university staff and students, ASMC alumni, and media. The lecture was held in the Hemasiri Fernando Auditorium, Olympic House on 25 July 2019 from 1500 to 1700. Approximately 100 stakeholders actively participated.

Dr. Borja began the lecturers with the definition of good governance and principles of good governance. He explained more practical ways of implementation and finally he proposed some self-assessment tools such as BIBGIS model and the ASOIF Governance Task Force to improve the quality of the governance of a sport organisation.

It was followed by a very interesting Q and A session with a lot of impact. Finally, the lecture came to the conclusion with a group photo of the participants.

ASMC is Underway



The 7th edition of the Olympic Solidarity Advanced Sport Management Course conducted by the National Olympic Committee of Sri Lanka started on August 17, 2019 at the Olympic House, Colombo.

For the first time, the ASMC showcases the gender equality by an equal number of 10 each males and females among the participants. The twenty participants represented different sport administrative sectors such as national sports

federations, Sri Lanka security forces, Schools, National Institute of Sport Sciences and Universities.

The ASMC is designed for seven sessions and each session consists of two days. The first session began with the participants' registration. Following by this, a welcome remark was addressed by Mr. Suresh Subramaniam, President of NOC Sri Lanka. The first edition of the ASMC participant Wing Cdr. Chandana Liyanage, the

Assistant Secretary of NOC Sri Lanka shared his ASMC experience of the Course.

The participants were issued with the manual 'Managing Olympic Sport Organisation' (MOSO) for the ASMC by the Olympic Solidarity. In the second part of the first day, the course introduction included course structure and administration process, and tools of the Course was explained by Professor B.L.H. Perera the academic director of the National Olympic

Committee of Sri Lanka. Further, he highlighted the contents of the MOSO and its objectives and learning outcomes.

On the second day, the first chapter of the manual 'Organising an Olympic Sport Organisation' was tutored by Professor B.L.H. Perera once again.

The second session of the Course will be held in October 2019.

NOC SL enters into futuristic sports MOU with Hashima City



Photo: Secretary General of NOC SL Maxwell De Silva and Mayor of Hashima City Gifu Prefecture Japan, pose with the GoodSport Magazine

The National Olympic Committee of Sri Lanka entered into a fruitful sports agreement with Satoshi Matsui, the Mayor of Hashima City Gifu Prefecture, Japan. Sri Lanka National Olympic Committee's Secretary General Maxwell de Silva signed this MoU looking beyond the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games which is also due to be held in Japan.

This multifaceted agreement has many features that would help Lankan athletes who are down to perform at the Tokyo 2020 over there and install certain programmes looking beyond the Japan Games.

Initially there would be an exchange programme for the

Sri Lankan Team that will take part at the Games. There the People of the City of Hashima would contribute in more than one way to help Sri Lanka's Olympic mission before and when the Games are on. The next phase will be beyond the Tokyo 2020 programme.

Already discussions are in place as to how this MoU could take place to promote the Lankan Olympic hopefuls' aspirations of the future.

The MoU between the NOC SL and the City of Hashima was signed when a Lankan Olympic team comprising its Secretary General Maxwell de Silva and his Assistant Secretary Chandana Liyanage were in

Japan to attend a three-day Chef de Mission Seminar at the Hotel New Otani in Tokyo, Japan. Every National Olympic Committee had been invited to take part in the event.

Speaking about the Hashima MoU the NOC SL Secretary General Maxwell de Silva said "Initially the person of Hashima City was very happy about our visit there. The conclusion was that we both would work even after the conclusion of the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games which will be held next year, bottom-line being working closely with the Hashima City and obtaining assistance from them and they were more than happy coming up with that gesture".

"The sport that we are looking at this point is Taekwondo,

as the City of Hashima is well equipped to provide assistance in this discipline. Besides, there is a top ranking businessman in the city who is interested assisting us with this programme and he is a big time supporter of Taekwondo there".

The NOC SL Secretary General added that during the Game, the city of Hashima would also be happy to host the Sri Lanka athletic team during the Olympics. There we will take the Lankan team to the City and we shall host a function during the Games are on. Besides that another item that is on the cards according to de Silva is a students' exchange programme benefitting the young Lankan athletes and vice versa.





Photo:
NOCSL President Suresh Subramaniam and Secretary General of NOCSL Maxwell De Silva open the Information Centre



“Help sustain the reef and help the child of tomorrow see a new dawn.”

The proceedings got into gear with a beach cleaning programme which involved schoolchildren, prisoners and volunteers from the area.

During the programme, the NOC SL projected the sports that could be continued to be a part of their daily life and thus grow up to the Olympic medallists of tomorrow. Some of the sports that were demonstrated were - Beach Volleyball, Kabaddi, a 400-metre sea swim, surfing and life saving.

The rejuvenation of the reef was done through placing a series cement domes on the dying reef and plant the corals on them so that the corals would begin to re-grow on them.

**“HELP
SUSTAIN THE
REEF AND
HELP THE
CHILD OF
TOMORROW
SEE A NEW
DAWN”**

SUSTAINING THE REEF with an eye for tomorrow’s sportsmen and women

It was a unique twist for the Olympic Movement. The National Olympic Committee of Sri Lanka (NOC SL) with the blessings of the IOC (International Olympic Committee) ventured into an avenue that they never travelled before. Mentored by NOC SL’s eagle eyed Secretary General Maxwell de Silva; they married the idea of Environment awareness and Olympism through their unique project ‘Give the reef another chance’ at the Polhena Beach, Matara.

The concept initially went to the drawing board when the NOC SL Secretary General picked the talent

of promising artist Dillai Joseph and hotelier cum environmentalist Hiran Ukwatte. They discussed the possibility of developing a project that sustains the environment, but, also had a conceptual relation to Olympic values and sports in general. Then after a few brain storming sessions, it developed and shaped into a project worth pursuing.

The project was the rejuvenation of the dying reef in Polhena. The tool they used to send the message across were a cross section of people who believe in the idea



Photo:
Beach Cleaning Programme



Photo:
Secretary General Maxwell De Silva planting an all weather tree



Once it begins to grow, the people of Matara should be educated in the importance of the sustenance of the reef. The tools that were used for this were the setting up of the Reef Information Centre and an art competition among children from 17 schools in the Matara area. The reciprocation was awe-inspiring. The organisers ended up with over 2,500 informative drawings done by the children and the top 70 exhibits were put on show next to the newly formed information centre.

On the day of the programme, 50 students, parents and their teachers were given the opportunity of going through a presentation on Coral Preservation.

To make this three-year event a success the organisers sought the guidance and assistance of different partners such as Tokyo Cement, The National Aquatic Resource and Development Authority (NARA), Sri Lanka NAVY combine with Coast Conservation, Coast Guard, Marine Environment Protection Authority, Ocean Resources Conservation Association (ORCA) and the Wildlife Authority. Besides, the respective hoteliers on such locations; especially Amaloh Hotel who is playing a pivotal part in the success of the programme and Polhena Reef Hotel (where the coral information centre is located) will also be partners of the project.

INTERVIEWS

Comments aired by the real stakeholders and the people of the area on the coral and reef preservation programme conducted by the National Olympic Committee Sri Lanka.



K. Samarawickrema
Tea Kiosk Owner at the Polhena Beach

"This is a very noble task. The people of the area should be aware of the value of the coral and the reef around it. Let me thank the Olympic Committee of Sri Lanka undertaking this timely task".

R.A. Premasiri
Fisherman from the Vicinity

"I back this concept wholeheartedly. By indulging in a task of this nature, the next generation of this country will also get the right sort of vibe. "The majority of the population of the area are connected to the sea and the tourist industry and they also get involved in recreational activity such as Surfing and Scuba Diving. In reality, the Polhena Beach has become world famous because of the reef that is situated in a low tide location. So, people must preserve the coral and reef around us. If there is a healthy reef, there is minimal sea-erosion and if the reef is dead, we end up with very critical sea-erosion".



Dhammika Perera
Scuba Diving Guide

"This unique idea is really out-of-the-box. This sort of tasks should be undertaken by the government, but we are very thankful for the National Olympic Committee of Sri Lanka for choosing our part of the country for preservation. "We understand there is fish here because of the corals and the reef and there are many turtles in this vicinity because of this reef and the beach that follows. So, the NOC has taken up a very noble task. "At the same time, you people also have given us a lesson or two about our own environment through the beach cleaning programme along with the coral replanting programme".

L.G. Wasantha
Three-wheeler driver in the Polhena Area

"This is timely, and the whole Polhena area is happy because you have undertaken this task. Olympic is a global word; and by the Olympic Committee getting involved in this mission, directly or indirectly you have put us on the global map. "As a result of the recent upheavals, tourism in the area is severely hampered, but with activities of this nature it will help the tourist get the right message about the prevailing situation. "Since the devastating Tsunami our coral cover is being hampered and so far, nobody has cared about the situation; but, you from the NOC has seen our plight and have come to our rescue.... thank you very much".



H.P.V. Jayaseeli
Housewife of the Area

"I am very happy. You have shown our children so many sports that they could get involved in and win Olympic medals in the future. Even now, there is surfing, sea swim and so many other sports that our children are involved in. "At the same time Coral preservation and beach cleaning are also timely activities for the learning of the children".

Sisira Gajanayake
Fisherman

"I like programmes of this nature. At present there are only a few tourists in our vicinity and the lack of a proper income has hit us very badly. I am happy that this programme was held in our area. It would help us turn a new leaf through the publicity that we received".



U.H. Leelawathi
Retired Teacher

"I am happy that the child of today is exposed to these workshops and as a result they are more environmentally conscious. I feel not only the children, even the adults like should be given the opportunity of learning about the environment and only then they also get conscious about what is going on".



Achini Gunatunga
School Teacher

"I teach about the environment as a subject in my school. It is a subject that children must be aware from a very tender age. Then they grow up to be aware of the environment and love it. Through your programme you have given them a very practical lesson. "At the same time, being aware of the negative aspects of the polythene is very timely. Through the beach cleaning programme even that aspect was exposed. Once again we must thank the NOC SL for this programme".



Navishka Hirushan
Student

"We got the opportunity of learning about Olympic Values and Coral Preservation. We must get more exposure to things like this because we could learn a lot about the country and the land that we live in through them".



K. Ranuda Sandury
Student

"From grade three I have been taking part in sea swims in the area in and around Polhena. I even took part in the sea swim that was held today, and I am happy that I was given a certificate at the end of the event".



P. Shantha Kumara
Scuba Diving Instructor

"I have been involved with this industry for over 35 years and I know this area like the back of my palm. Our Coral cover is diminishing fast. The 1969 floods and the Tsunami are hugely responsible for the situation. But, a group like yours, getting involved and helping us to rejuvenate the coral cover is a very good thing and this may help us to preserve our future in a better way".



“Since, the successful completion of the programme now we all know that we have sent the right vibes about the situation in Sri Lanka especially the Southern Coast, and it is a safe place to travel and have an event of this nature where there was a participation of over 1000 schoolchildren from seventeen different schools in the Matara area”.

Initially, the proceedings got underway with a lecture and presentation on Olympic Values which was followed by an art competition for fifty students also from the area. At the main ceremony the winners of the art competition were duly rewarded.

The Olympic Day proper, wound through the streets of Matara, flagging off from the Polhena Beach and finished at the Uyanwatte

International Cricket Stadium after a four kilometre trek.

During the celebrations Susanthika Jayasinghe who was the guest of honour pointed out the importance of unearthing raw talent from the village and said that she too came from the same background where her mother was a rubber-tree tapper while her father was just a humble driver. However, through her own perseverance she climbed the ladder success in athletics and now she lives in a different world. She said “If you have some talent you must know how to take the maximum use of what you are born with”.

President NOC SL Suresh Subramaniam said that it was his second Olympic Day Run in three days. He said “While in Switzerland I was fortunate to be a witness to the



Photo: President and Secretary General of NOC SL are with the Olympic Torch

2019 Olympic Day Run MARATA WAS A HUGE SUCCESS

It was a fitting birthday celebration to the Olympic Day by the National Olympic Committee of Sri Lanka at the Polhena Beach in Matara. To decorate the event a bevy of national and international sportsmen and women led by Sri Lanka’s only surviving Olympic medallist Susanthika Jayasinghe marked their participation. Besides, it was Susanthika who set the trail blazing by lighting the Olympic Torch to get the main proceedings in motion.

Unlike the preceding years, the 2019 proceedings were beset with obstacles. Even the initial part of the organising was not over when the Lankans experienced that horrendous massacre of the innocence on April 21.

Yet, NOC SL General Secretary Maxwell de Silva had a different view. There was a huge pressure to call it quits. Yet, he was of the view that if we succumb to the pressure there is no way out. Speaking about the task of launching this year’s programme the NOC SL Secretary General de Silva said “Soon after we decided to have the Olympic Day Run on June 25, we were heaped with the drawback of the April 21 carnage. I was under a lot of pressure to call off the Olympic Day Run citing safety measures, but, I was adamant that we should go head, because had we abandoned the programme it were the Lankans who were going to lose nationally and internationally.





Photo: Vice President of NOCSL Asanga Senevirathne handing over a prize to one of the art Competition Winners

Olympic Day Run proceedings at the IOC Headquarters and from the Bandaranaike Airport I drove direct to be a part in our run at Matara.

“It always holds me in awe! The five rings in Olympics depict the five continents and the colours of the rings are a part of every National Flag of the World. In 1894 French Educator Baron Pierre de Coubertin, conceived the idea of uniting the world through the medium of Sport. Thus the concept of the Modern Olympics was born and the

International Olympic Committee was formed on June 23 of 1894.

“This is what exactly the need of the hour in our land too. My wish too is to strive for amity and unity in this country through the medium of sports”.

The Chief Guest at the occasion was State Minister Seyed Ali Zahir Moulana and during his speech invited the NOC SL to have next year’s celebrations in Kalmunai.

“THIS IS WHAT EXACTLY THE NEED OF THE HOUR IN OUR LAND TOO. MY WISH TOO IS TO STRIVE FOR AMITY AND UNITY IN THIS COUNTRY THROUGH THE MEDIUM OF SPORTS”

Who is the best ever in Lankan waters

THE FUTURE WILL HAVE THE ANSWER

By S.R. Pathiravithana

May be, the future would decide who would be considered the best ever swimmer to occupy a lane in the Lankan swimming pool, but, definitely the twenty-five-year-old Mathew Abeysinghe is soon ticking off most of the required cages to step on to that pedestal.

We caught up with Mathew along with his brood vacationing at the Swim America pool at Longden Place recently. There the four brothers – Andrew, Mathew, Kyle and Dillon in spite of their break from work, they were in the pool engaged in light training.

Yet, the man in the main frame was Mathew who is training vigorously for two important assignments ahead – the SAG 2019 and Tokyo 2020. Mathew explained “this is strictly a vacation and a mental recharge. I have comeback may be a year and three months hence after studying and training at the Ohayo State University, USA. Thereafter I will be concentrating for the SAG and the Olympics and this will be the last time that I would be in Sri Lanka before the SAG”.

Photo:
Mathew Abeysinghe



Mathew explained that the regime that he has to follow was rigorous. He said "Monday, Wednesday, and Friday I have practice in the morning and evening. Then there is a weight session in the afternoon. On Tuesday and Thursday, I have separate training schedules and then on Saturday, I have one practice session leaving out only my Sunday off. That along with school, where I am a fulltime student where I have finished 100 credits out of the 128 need to graduate and thereafter I can go to graduate-school for my masters".

He said that besides the training sessions he also has been making use of every opportunity that has come his way. He said "We have meets against other universities all the time. Then we have the big ten championships which is a collection of schools and Eastern conference which is a really fast meet. Then at the season we have the NCAA men's swimming and diving championship which is one of the fastest meets in the world and most of the top swimmers in the USA make their appearance here. Besides, swimmers from

**"MONDAY,
WEDNESDAY, AND
FRIDAY I HAVE
PRACTICE IN THE
MORNING AND
EVENING"**



countries like Brazil who come to the USA for training to take part at this meet here. Then just prior to my travelling to Sri Lanka I took part in the US National Championships too. This means that I have been training and making myself ready for the South Asian Games challenge.”

In a pensive mood Mathew explained that the training in the United States has propelled his performances tremendously and has helped him perform abreast what the swimming world could offer. He said “the quality of competition is extremely high and we have guys who are a little faster than me or a little bit slower than me. We practise with each other at practice and keep pushing each other for greater heights. At the same time the quality of the meets are also very high. However the challenges in Nepal and Tokyo – I will take them as they come. I feel the competition against the Indian swimmers would be very competitive; yet, having said that I won seven gold medals competing against them at the last SAG.





Photo:
Four Abeysinghe brothers: Dillon, Kyle, Mathew & Andrew



“I am a much better swimmer now, so I would try to win as many medals at the SAG this time. I will try doing the best for my country. As for Tokyo the last time that went for the Olympics I went through the ‘B’ cut, but this time I am hoping to qualify with an ‘A’ cut – that the automatic qualification which is the highest form of achieving that. I am very close to qualifying for the Tokyo 2020 and that is one of my main goals. At the last preliminary stages I could not go ahead. At that time I was only 19 years old and just a kid. Yet, now I am aware of what ahead of me and I will be ready for that. So, my aim is to swim at least in a semi-final. I am a racer, so when I compete; maybe I can swim at the final”.

Amiable Andrew Abeysinghe said that he is hoping to take part as many events as possible at the South Asian Games so that he would be able to win more medals. However he said that at the Olympics, he would only concentrate in one or two events. I know my best events are the 100m free style, 200m free style so I would hone in and swim as fast as I could, and maybe go for a medal. To make the cut I have time till July next year - just a little less than a year. Last time around I was a lot slower and I did take part with a ‘B’ cut, but time around I am a lot faster”.

HIRUNI'S PLACE IN THE SUN

By Allaam Ousman

Right now she is the only Sri Lanka athlete to boast of a member of the true international athletic circuit, yet she was on show for the first time at the athletic nationals. The US-based Sri Lankan Marathoner Hiruni Wijayarathne qualified for the forthcoming IAAF World Championship 2019 after finishing second in the Düsseldorf Marathon 2019 held in April this year.

She clocked 2 hours 34 minutes and 10 seconds in the race, shattering her own Sri Lanka record set in January 2018 while also achieving the qualification standard for the forthcoming IAAF World Championship in Doha, which will be her second world championship.

Her time also bettered the South Asian record held by India's O.P. Jaisha in the marathon 2:34.43

seconds in 2015 IAAF World Championship.

The marathon commenced at 1.00 pm Sri Lanka time, with Hiruni aiming to approximate her own National record of 2:36.35 to qualify for the world championship which she did in emphatic fashion, shaving off 2 minutes 25 seconds off her earlier best timing.

When we met her, she was fresh from winning 5,000 and the 10,000 metre events at the Nationals at the Sugathadasa Stadium. She was at her residence at the Rajagiriya Gardens, but, she was ready to break her training even at home. She said that she loves to run on the road, and she was ready in all her running gears, waiting for the GoodSport team arrive.

Photo:
Hiruni Wijayarathne



Photo:
Winning the 5000m at the 97th National Athletic Championship - 2019

We inquired how she got to this Marathon business especially in the USA, where their family and she is living. She said "I began taking part in athletics at St. Bridget's Convent when I was eight years old and then when my family immigrated to the US, I continued sports. I got into the business of Marathon running five years in 2014. I had just finished my studies at the university in the U.S and the longest distance that I ran at time was 10,000 metres. But, I wanted challenge myself and I always had this idea that; the longer I ran the better I could be. Then I tried the half marathon and that went well. Then I pondered why not I challenge myself by taking on the marathon. I had immediate success. The first marathon that I ran I broke the National record of Sri Lanka in 2014. It was 2:43.00 breaking the

record of 2:47; and now its 2:34. It is also my own record."

Just curiously we asked while living in the United States why you chose to compete in Sri Lanka. With a wry smile Hiruni said "I was born in Colombo and we are Sri Lankan. We moved to the United States when I was nine years old. But my heart and roots are still Sri Lankan, so to me it was not a hard decision. My father (Punu Wijeratne) was a sportsman at Royal College and he was the first one who got me started in the sport. My parents have supported me every step of the way. Mother was not an athlete but she is a very good supporter."

Being a private citizen in the U.S; how do you manage to keep with your training schedules, we

"I WAS BORN IN COLOMBO AND WE ARE SRI LANKAN. WE MOVED TO THE UNITED STATES WHEN I WAS NINE YEARS OLD. BUT MY HEART AND ROOTS ARE STILL SRI LANKAN"

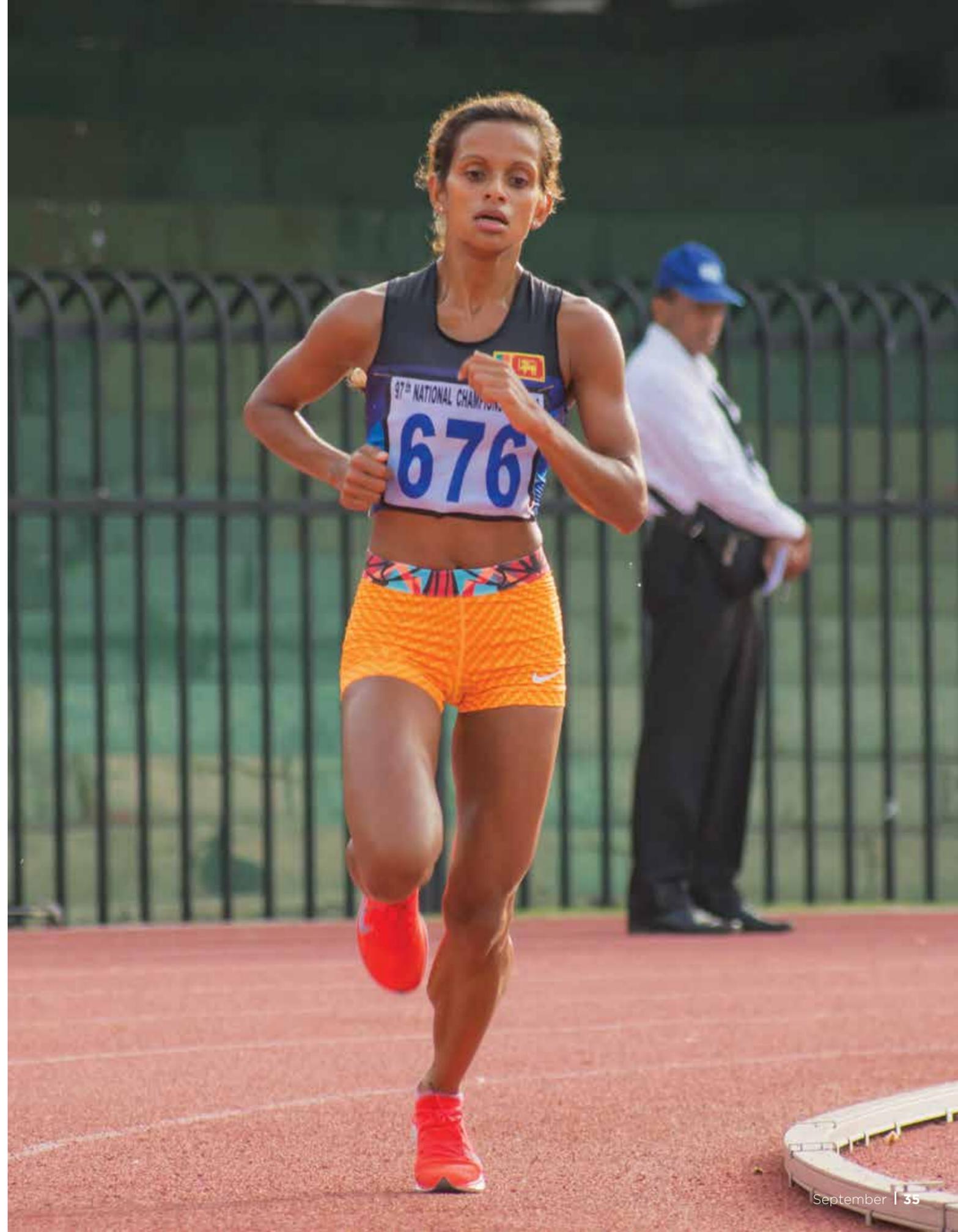




Photo:
With a helping hand to an injured Colleague

"I WAS 15 YEARS OLD. I HAVE SOME TRAINING PARTNERS ALSO IN THE PROCESS, THEY ARE GOOD TO PUSH ME TO MY LIMITS AND MAKE ME A BETTER RUNNER"

asked. Hiruni said "my training I do individually; I am based in Colorado but my coach is based just outside Washington DC. Peter Sherry we have been working together since I was 15 years old. I have some training partners also in the process, they are good to push me to my limits and make me a better runner. But my real passion is that I want to spread to word of running to the running community here and the USA".

"Just the day before my running event at the Sugathadasa Stadium, I was at the Independent Square and I met the Colombo night runners group. There almost one hundred

people came. There we had a small chat and I led them through some exercises and we went for a 5km run. Such things bring a lot of joy".

Hiruni explained that in the USA there they have a lot more resources and facilities do train. She said "the other day I was at the Sugathadasa Stadium, yet I was told that is the only such facility that we have in Sri Lanka. That was shocking to me because even the primary school that I went to the USA had a similar track – not a stadium but a track – in good condition. In the U.S it is an expectation and not a luxury.

They have everything there for the athletes – you have to pay for them – but they are available. With that there comes high competition, even when I went to the University I was the 7th or 8th best there in long distance events and I had to work really hard to prove myself there. I think that pushed me to be the athlete that I am today".

Hiruni explained that she does not find any difference in talent between Sri Lanka and the USA. The difference is that the process of training and the will to do better along with the stiff competition. She agreed that it requires weight room, a pool, gym, treadmill and good track are required and she feels these could be found here. However the difference is the process training and dedication all-round.

She then added "now that I have won the 5 and 10 thousand metre events at the athletic nationals and would be eligible to compete at the SAG at the end of the year. There I want to bring home gold. Then next year is an Olympic year and my aspiration is to be in Tokyo 2020".

"Right now I am ranked 87th in the world in the Women's Marathon event and if the Olympic happens next week it would be top 80 who goes there. Only if I could run minutes faster I could achieve the qualifying time. Yet, in a 42km event it is only a few seconds faster in each Kilometre. So if I could reach that I have a ticket to go to Tokyo. I think my attempt in being at the next Olympics and a place in the Sun is very realistic".



THE CLIMB HAS BEGUN

LANKAN BASEBALL

Sri Lanka Baseball hosted its first International Baseball Tournament at the Sri Lanka – Japan Friendship Baseball Ground, Diyagama with the participation of 6-International Teams.

More importantly Sri Lanka won the Prestigious West Asia Championship beating the much-fancied Pakistan National Team. Sri Lanka also beat India, Nepal and Iran on their way to the finals. What makes this victory so great is because Sri Lanka managed to beat the No. 23 ranked team in the world in the final -- 18 positions higher than us.

Players had worked really hard for 3-months under Coach Kazuto Nonaka, a reputed Japanese National, who is currently based in Indonesia. Credit also should go to Sri Lanka Amateur Baseball/Softball Association for taking the responsibility to host this tournament especially, after the tragic incidents which took place on the 21st of April.

The officials were even more determined to host this tournament to show the fact that Sri Lanka is a safe destination. This was the first major Sporting event after the Easter attacks.



Photo:
Naweem Kasthurimudali diving in to stay safe during the grand final game between Sri Lanka and Pakistan

The finals were telecast live and the other matches were live-streamed. We had over one million viewers around the world and 9,532 viewers in the US only watched the final, this is a remarkable achievement.

Baseball was relatively an unknown sport in Sri Lanka until this tournament. With this victory and also the exposure we had through Electronic and Print Media the sport has become an instant success. More schools want to start Playing Baseball. Sri Lanka Baseball went to Jaffna soon after the tournament and they introduced the sport to 8-schools. All these schools were given Baseball equipment, a package worth around Rs. 500,000/- to each school.

Baseball is one of the sports that can become really big in Sri Lanka considering we have some similar sports called Elle and Cricket which require hand-eye coordination. No sooner the tournament was over 6 of our National Baseball players were invited to Indonesia to take part in a training program which was attended by talent scouts from Japan and the US.

Suddenly doors have opened and there is an opportunity for Sri Lanka Baseball players to play overseas. This will be a huge boost for Baseball in Sri Lanka.

Sri Lanka Baseball wanted to show their gratitude to the Sports Ministry,

Sri Lanka Tourist Promotion Bureau and the National Olympic Committee for financial support. Without their help, they would not have been able to stage an event of this magnitude.

JICA is responsible for sending Japanese Coaches to Sri Lanka for Training and Development. This has been the key to the development of the Sport. Sri Lanka is the only South Asian country that has a fully-fledged Baseball stadium, the total cost of the stadium was sponsored by the Japanese government and the well-wishers.



Photo:
Iresh Kosala fails to dismiss Pakistan Arslan Jamashaid



Photo:
Iresh Kosala pulls of a blinder in the infield



Photo:
Gunapala Dhananjaya throws the ball to the keeper



Photo:
Amila Pushpakumara diving to his left to pounce on a catch in the deep



Photo:
Iresh Kosala celebrates competing a base with coach Nelanka Karunaratne



Photo:
Sashika Dulshan winning the Most Valuable Player (MVP) award in the final presentation ceremony from former Army Commander Gen. Daya Rathnayake



With the West Asia Victory, Sri Lanka now has the opportunity to play in the Asian Championships, which is also a qualifier for the Tokyo 2020 Olympics. The top 3 teams will automatically qualify for the Olympics. Since Japan is hosting it there may very well be an opportunity for another team to qualify.

Can Sri Lanka create history? Only time will tell. Whatever happens I think Baseball is here to stay.





Photo:
Unichela's R.K.A.A. Ranasinghe
Vs E. Krishan Wani (Uphill BC)
(Bantamweight fight)



the five days of competition and upsets galore in the semifinals with the two bronze medallists at the 23rd Indonesian President's Cup, Navy's Gayan Indika Bandara and Army's Piyal Dharmasena crashing out, along with Gold Coast Commonwealth Games bronze medallist Ishan Bandara of Army.

It was heart-warming to see young talented boxers overcoming seasoned campaigners displaying technical excellence without being overawed by rugged fighters or one-punch wonders, who forget that boxing is a scientific art and is one of the oldest disciplines in the Olympics.

The coveted Layton Cup awarded to the most scientific boxer of the tournament returned to the Army after a decade as Light Fly (49kg) national champion M.P.G. Sanjeewa Nuwan gave a 'masterclass' in ring-craft to a four-time Stubbs' champion 21-year-old Hasitha Nuwan Jinadasa of Slimline in a thrilling finale to the championship.

Hailing from Kekirawa in Anuradhapura, 27-year-old Sanjeewa Nuwan, a Corporal in the Armoured Corps of the Sri Lanka Army, provided the silver lining in a tournament which attracted 118 men and 34 women pugilists from 18 clubs.

ARMY, SLIMLINE AND UNICHELA PUGILISTS LIGHT UP LAYTON CUP

BOXING

By Allaam Ousman

There was plenty of talent on display at the 79th Layton Cup Boxing tournament for men and women pugilists organized by the Boxing Association of Sri Lanka (BASL) at Royal MAS Arena which served as a trial to select the final pool for the South Asian Games (SAG) scheduled to be held from December 1 to 9 in Kathmandu, Nepal.

Although the standard of competition overall did not match the high

expectations to connoisseurs of the sport, there were some quality performances with promise of potential to bring home medals. However, the competition was fierce, thanks to the healthy rivalry between Army who fielded about five teams, and Slimline and Unichela, while Air Force, Navy and Police boxers, also emerged as a potent force.

There were some outstanding individual performances throughout



Photo:
Army's W.R.T. Weerakkody (Red) Vs
P.A.R. Prasanna (Bantamweight fight)

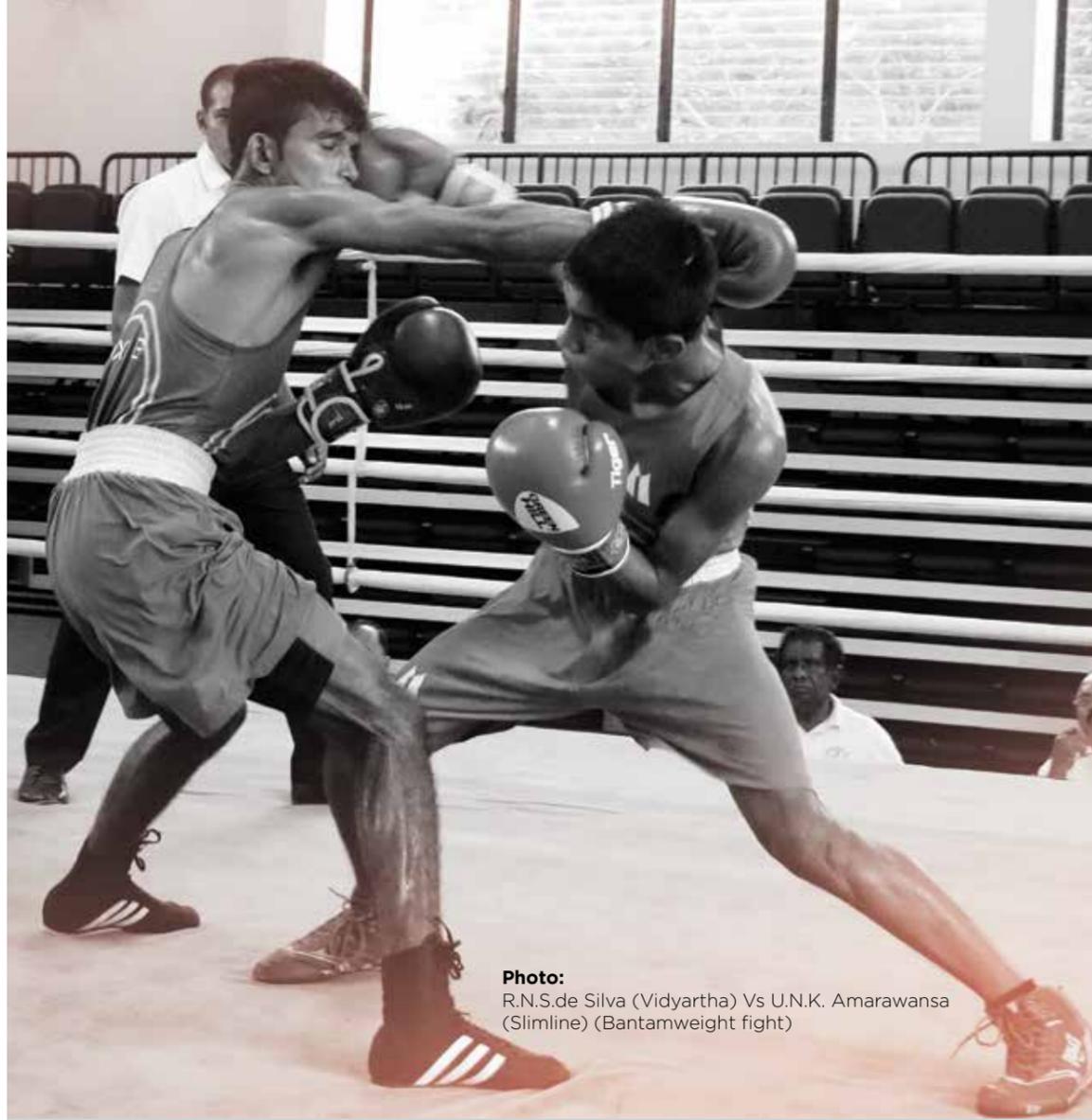


Photo:
R.N.S.de Silva (Vidyartha) Vs U.N.K. Amarawansa (Slimline) (Bantamweight fight)

Army coached by Sampath Jayatileke dominated the Men's division winning seven gold medals out of the 10 weight categories while Slimline Boxing Club had three winners. Jayantha Kumara in 2008 was the last Army pugilist to bag the coveted Layton Cup.

Sanjeewa Nuwan epitomizes the potential available in Sri Lanka despite not having started his career as a schoolboy. Like most boxers in the Defence Services, they learn boxing as regimens and perfect the art though all are not in the same level as Sanjeewa

Nuwan who eliminated Indonesia Cup bronze medallist Gayan Indika Bandara of Navy with a superb exhibition of scientific boxing. Having represented Sri Lanka at the Asian Championships and Thailand Open international meets, Sanjeewa Nuwan is a worthy investment as a future medal prospect.

There were upsets galore in the Fly Weight (52kg) with Gold Coast Commonwealth Games bronze medallist Ishan Bandara and Indonesian President's Cup bronze medallist Piyal Dharmasena, both from Army, being made to eat

humble pie in the semifinals. Roshan Sandaruwan and Lasindu Eranda, both from Slimline, featured in the final.

Light Welter (64kg) national champion Dinidu Saparamadu of Slimline captured the headlines in the first four days of the competition with power-packed performances but ran out of steam barely surviving to win a split decision in the final against a tough Policeman Dhananjaya Weerasinghe who fought back despite being floored twice in the first round.

Best Wishes from

EXPO
CARGO LINKS

Operation Office :
126/3/19, 3rd Floor, YMBA Building, Colombo 1, Sri Lanka.
Phone : (+94 11) 2330481, 2542731/ 3, Fax : (+94 11) 2441881
E-mail : expocargo@expo.lk

Head Office :
144/3, Pickerings Road, Colombo-13, Sri Lanka.
Phone : (+94 11) 2430968, 2337518 Fax : (+94 11) 2430969



FORWARD THINKING

NOC SL AND 2020 OLYMPICS

By S.R. Pathiravithana

Thinking out-of-the-box and being innovative are always beam lights to success. At the Special General Meeting of the National Olympic Committee of Sri Lanka held under the guidance of its President Suresh Subramaniam and Secretary General Maxwell de Silva, they pioneered the idea of giving full affiliation to the Surfing Federation of Sri Lanka and the National Association for Climbing and Mountaineering in Sri Lanka.

NOC SL President Suresh Subramaniam speaking on the issue said: "This is an era where a lot of countries put most of their eggs in the basket of track and field, weightlifting, boxing, Judo and other more established sports.

"As for we Sri Lankans, our whole country is surrounded by the sea and it is fast developing into a hotbed in Surfing internationally. With that influence we see many of our locals taking a cue and developing into surfers of repute. So, it won't be long that we could develop a medal hope in this field. In the same breath Sri Lanka has many sights that befit the sport of Mountain Climbing, so why not pursue this aspect too. Moreover, both sports are new to Olympics and we could grow together".

It may be a bit too premature to arrive at the conclusion that Surfing and Climbing would be part of the 2020 Olympics, but an interesting bit of news is that both these sports also will be making their debut at the 2020 Games.





SPORT CLIMBING AT THE 2020 SUMMER OLYMPICS WILL ALSO BE HELD IN JAPAN FOR THE FIRST TIME

Another pioneering effort by the NOC SL was to bring the National Roller Skating Association on board in 2017. Though skateboard may be a one-off event for the 2020 Games in Japan, already it has made many ripples globally, and it is seen as one discipline that could gain the attention of the younger generation according to Bloomberg Business.

Meanwhile, Surfing will make its Olympic debut appearance in the 2020 Olympics in Tokyo, Japan. The contest site for Surfing at the 2020 games would be Shidashita Beach located about 40 miles (64 km) outside of Tokyo in Chiba and it would be a two-day competition.

Sport climbing at the 2020 Summer Olympics will also be held in Japan for the first time. The proposed format will consist of three disciplines: lead climbing, speed climbing and bouldering. The winner will be determined based on who performs best in all three disciplines and the venue will be the Aomi Urban Sports Park, Tokyo.

Yet, there seem to be some ominous signs ahead. Undeniably, the Olympic Games perennially has been one of the world's premier marketing events with a guaranteed television audience of more than two-thirds of the 7.7 billion global population. Yet, it is now learnt that viewership numbers especially among the younger generation is waning. It is said that viewers among the 18 to 35-year-olds fell by at least 25% for the 2016 Rio Olympics. Reason: the viewership in the social media habits among the younger segments is ever increasing.





While talking to Bloomberg Business in May, International Olympic Committee Sports Director Kit McConnell said: “Young people still have an incredible interest in the Olympic Games. But the way they are consuming the Olympic Games — the type of content they are watching and the ways and the platforms on which they are watching — are fundamentally changing”.

The fundamental reality of this NOC SL move is that, they are forward thinking and are moving towards a goal that achievable because in the eyes of the Olympics three sports are yet in its infancy. So how could we become a part of this global change and make an impact in the rejuvenation of the Olympics and bring back the lost viewers back on screen? How could Sri Lanka be of help?

The global thirst to capture the younger generation is unquenchable. “We are maniacally focused on the

generations to come,” says Jenny Storms, chief marketing officer for NBC Sports Group. “The numbers prove that they are engaged and part of the Olympics, and what we have to ensure is that we are meeting these younger consumers on their platforms of choice”.

“The IOC’s earlier attempt to capture young viewers by adding snowboarding in 1998 drew scorn from some of the activity’s purists, who insisted its culture was incompatible with a competition such as the Olympics. But snowboarding became one of the most popular Winter Games events. At Pyeongchang in 2018, a video of American snowboarder Shaun White winning an historic third gold medal on the half-pipe led online coverage of the games, with almost 1 million views on YouTube,” said the Bloomberg Business in their article on the subject.



DRIVING ON TO A BETTER GREEN

By S.R. Pathiravithana

This is a story that most of us are familiar with, but I feel we are never tired of rocking back and sifting through the narration all over again. The story is about how the Lankans made that difference between a run of the mill cricket outfit to an out-of-the-box, Jack-in-the-box. This was the first step in Sri Lanka winning the cricket World Cup in 1996.

In the mid '90s Sri Lanka had one of the best and experienced batting line-ups with a list of names that read like – Asanka Gurusinhe (No. 3), Aravinda de Silva (No. 4), Arjuna Ranatunga (No. 5) Roshan Mahanama (No. 6) and Hashan Tillekeratne (No. 7).

So with a line-up of that nature there were gifted Sanath Jayasuriya and Romesh Kaluwitharana going to fit in. Both were natural stroke makers and run-getters; not afraid of

hitting the ball hard. So the batting hierarchy led by coach cum manager Duleep Mendis pushed them up at No. 1 and 2 and gave the duo the licence to kill, knowing well the rest of the brood could row the boat safely when things get rough.

Jayasuriya was also good for more than a few overs of left arm spin while Kaluwitharana had the job of keeping the wickets. With that, the Lankans made room for four frontline bowlers and nine frontline batsmen. It was a brand new ploy that no one else had dared to ponder and the rest is history.

With this in mind, I badgered golf fanatic Ana Punchihewa, who was incidentally at the helm of cricket when Sri Lanka won the coveted ICC World Cup, to talk on why Sri Lanka cannot have their own Sri Lanka golf tour and scale up our chances for Asian and Olympic medals.

Photo:
N. Thurairajah



Photo:
Anura Rohana



that would not mean that Sri Lanka could be an automatic part of the proceedings because there are around 140 countries that play golf and there is a ranking system. "Yet, I do not see why NOC SL take this up as a long-term challenge and make serious moves and work towards Asian and Olympic medals in a concerted effort. What the NOC could do is to develop this as a concept and sell it to potential sponsors", he said.

At one point of time they were working towards a programme of that nature launched by the then local golf authority, but, he feels that it has fallen by the wayside now.

"However we do have some players who once played in the Malaysian Tour at that juncture, but, most of them now only concentrate in the Indian tour for reasons of sustainability. We have Mithun Perera who now plays only in the Indian circuit, Anura Rohana, Thangarajah and Prabhakaran, who are in the professional circuit".

We asked whether since these players are professionals, playing for an Asian Games or Olympic Medal may not entice them because these medals do not bring monetary benefits. To that Punchihewa replied, "Of course these professional players will agree to play at high quality events like the Asian games or the Olympics. But, the Golf Union would have to find a way to back them monetarily. If these players qualify for the Asian or the Olympic Games it would be the responsibility of the Golf Union to see the way through. I see this is where a proper plan with the backing of the NOC SL and sponsorship could play a major role."

Once gaining Test status in 1982, Lankan cricket began to grow because the cricket as a whole believed in their inherent abilities and think out-of-the-box. That needs good leadership with vision, a team of officials who are willing to translate the thoughts into meaningful action and a team of players who are hungry for success.



Photo:
K. Prabhakaran, Anura Rohana, Mithun Perera

We pointed out that Justin Peter Rose; MBE (born 30 July 1980 and turned professional golfer in 1998) -- an English professional and the current world number four in the Official World Golf Ranking won the gold at the 2016 Summer Olympics in Rio de Janeiro.

So, we asked why golf, which also does not entail the body mass akin to cricket, depending a lot on eye-ball coordination, be a fighting force. Then by moving in the pro-circuit especially if there is a local tour, the Lankans could get opportunities – may be also in the PGA.

Punchihewa came up positively and said: "Yes, we can have our own tour in Sri Lanka – Colombo, Trincomalee, Victoria and Hambantota (Shangri-La). We can have it every quarter with prize money of around one million rupees.

Then we also can have an Asian tour event to be played here, but, we will have to find around 2 million dollars. The attraction here is that we can get a viewership in Asia about 3 million viewers. With around four days of live coverage and Sri Lanka will have the potential tourists watching the proceedings while giving our local golfers the chance to engage at a vantage point. At the same time the move would also entice the golf tourists, who are generally in the high-spending category also having a closer look at the Lankan golf facilities and opportunities".

At the same time Punchihewa pointed out that in the Olympic Golf scenario any country could not have more than two entries. Then according to the rankings and standings, the players are chosen for the Olympics. He said



Photo:
Ana Punchihewa





LANKAN SPORTS LAW IS ARCHAIC

By S.R. Pathiravithana

Aposer that the sports fraternity in Sri Lanka have been enveloped for the past few years is the role that is being played between the National Sports Associations in the country, the Sports Ministry and the National Olympic Committee.

According to Dr. Borja Garcia Senior Lecturer in Sport Management and Policy at Loughborough University, United Kingdom who was in Sri Lanka to study the situation in depth and report back to the International Olympic Committee; the situation in Sri Lanka is not unique, but, a matter that should be sifted through with care because there are glaring anomalies.



Photo:
NOC SL Treasurer Senaka Ranasinghe and Secretary General Maxwell de Silva handing over the Commemoration Plaque to Dr. Borja

Q: What was the purpose of your visit to Sri Lanka and what are your impressions so far?

A: The purpose of the visit is very concrete – I am a researcher and we are doing a research on how the National Olympic Committees work or not work with national governments, we are doing with the funding of the IOC and they need to know more about the relationships.

So, we selected Sri Lanka as one of our case studies for several reasons. Primarily we want to have one case at least from every continent, and there we need to have a mixture of big countries and small countries. We also want to have a mixture of successful countries in the Olympics as well as countries which are not so successful. In that case Sri Lanka is

in the medium size; we got Germany which is bigger and we have Botswana which is bigger in size but have only two million inhabitants, in comparison to Sri Lanka's 21 million. In terms of sporting success of course – I mean Olympic success – Sri Lanka is in the lower-end with only two medals.

The selection of the countries was pretty much academic. We had a list of criteria, we took into account the GDP per capita, and in that case Sri Lanka is very similar to the situation of Guatemala – another country which is in our purview. We also took into account a number of indexes elaborated by the United Nations – let's call it civil society. We believe that to develop sport we need an active civil society. So, that was the cross section in our study.



Q: Are there any other countries under your study where they have conflicts with their central governments?

A: Each country is different. However, what we have found in this project is that just because a country is developing it is not necessarily so that they have conflicts. It is very much assumed. We keep looking this through a Western vision. We in the West do everything right and those guys in the developing countries have political mess.

For instance the Guatemala is another country that has political mess as well; however the work in the Guatemalan National Olympic Committee could be better than some of the Western countries. Here, what we understand is we should not impose our Western vision on the rest of the world. Having said that, what Sri Lanka lacks is a proper structure and there are problems with good governance – certainly not a good structure for sport.

We need to begin and start building. I guess these are similar cases to that of South East Asia.

I do not think Sri Lanka goes to the level of Uruguay, India or Pakistan where there is much stronger intervention of the government, but is probably comparable to some countries in Africa like Tanzania or Kenya, they have rather interventionist governments. In Latin America it is a different issue; there the real problem is corruption.

Q: Are you aware of the Sport Law of Sri Lanka and if so what is your impression of it?

A: Yes, I read the 1973 Sports law of Sri Lanka. I know there have been some amendments but, for me the sports law together with the amendments in 2013 and the 2016 regulations are suppressing; they are exceptionally interventionist. Prior to my arrival, I was reading it and I was surprised the content and the level of micromanagement of the regulations on the sports bodies. At

Photo:
At work sessions



the end of the day, I was surprised with the level of micromanagement of federations. It reminded me of Eastern Europe before its fall. These are really interventionist.

Q: In this scenario could Olympism and the Sports Law work together?

A: In general terms it could. In Sri Lanka it's a different proposition. There is a need for a change. At the end of the day whether you like it or not it is a 1973 document – the Sri Lanka Sports Law. The sport is more competitive, it is much different, it has different dynamics as the world has changed and Sri Lanka too has changed. You need to modernise, we need a sports law which is up to times. Even the amendments are also very fundamental. They changed

the power of the minister and they changed the powers of the secretary, yet I feel there is a need for change. They have not taken into account about the telecommunication -- social networks and different ways of doing things. This plays a very prominent role in sports of today, yet in your sports law there is no mention of that. It is the integrity of governance. I feel you need sports constitutional movement, taking the stakeholders like the NOC together.

There is a need for a change involving all the stakeholders and you could start with a new consensus reflecting different views. Even the current act may be workable if there is sincere consensus and cooperation, yet it may be difficult because there



Photo:
Moderator Gobinath



Photo:
Crowd listening to the lecture





are some provisions in the law that are very interventionist. If the provisions of the law are used with restraint and in a transparent way; then you could say that it may work. However, if the provisions are used for political gain and appoint friends or to gain economic gain; then it will never work. What is the solution there? Change the instrument or change the law or get the instrument to work properly.

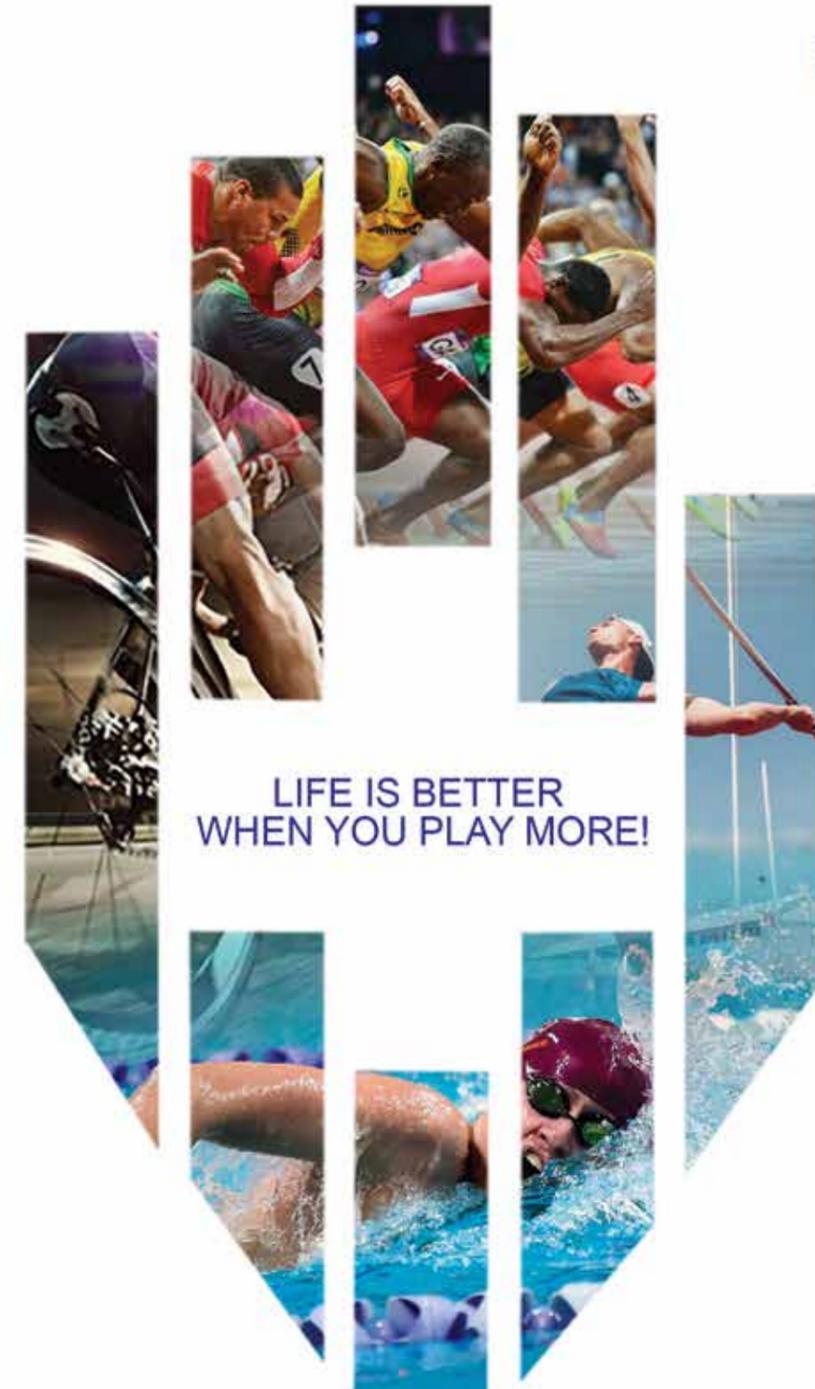
It is never the one side or the other, you may meet half way. It is okay for a government to ask for a hold if they are spending public money. But, they must have objective criteria. It has to be proportionate and have accountability measures. For a very effective modern preparation I think there is a need to change the law.

Q: You have spoken to a few experts and what are their impressions?

A: I suspect that the argument that is used often is that "It is the law of the land and no one is above the law". The other is that it is public money and there is a need have accountability. I agree with both. No one is above the law and there should be accountability. Yet, it is also about the level of micromanagement. We are long past the times of the USSR. So the State needs to regulate what it needs to be regulated. The State needs to provide to the development, I think it a waste to get involved in electing sports officials. They can have some criteria factors to be sure they are

suitable for the positions, but it stops there, but, it's another thing to say who is going to govern the sport. It's because the sports is there and it is immobile, but times have changed. It's like a civil court from the 18th century. If you have penal court from the 18th century, what are you going to do with a cyber attack? So, the legislation has to catch up with and the same applies to sport.

In Spain the Sports Law is from 1990 and it's starting to get old and we need to change it, and just imagine if it was 1973?



LIFE IS BETTER
WHEN YOU PLAY MORE!

We focus on getting you back
to what you love.





INDIANGAY SPINTER DUTEE CHAND

FACES HOME VILLAGE WRATH

Supporters of India's first openly gay athlete fears for her safety after her decision to come out prompted a backlash in her home village.

Local reaction was hostile in Chaka Gopalpur, a village of weavers in Odisha, after Dutee Chand, the country's fastest sprinter, told reporters on May 19 that her gay partner was her soulmate.

Chand's mother, Akhuji, told the Indian Express: "I had been supporting her all along for her special interest in sports but ... we belong to a traditional weaver community, which does not permit such things. How can we face our relatives and society?"

Prashant Behra, a villager, said: "It's humiliating for all of us. We have supported her all the way in her running but we cannot accept this relationship. Marriage can only be between a man and a woman. She should never have talked about it to the whole world. She should stick to running".

Chand, 23, was also praised for her courage in coming out. Many called it a watershed moment for Indian society, which has hardly any gay celebrities.

But the backlash is thought to have taken her aback and her partner has now left for another town because of hostile remarks by people in their village.

Chand said: "They have been telling me to marry a man and have children. That's the only tradition they know.

"But everyone I know in the city where I studied supports me. I don't know if my family and village will come round. I will have to wait and see".

Some are worried about her safety in the current climate, in which extremist Hindu mobs can appear from nowhere to assault or lynch Muslims or those of a different sexuality. On May 26, a 19-year-old woman in Odisha was dragged out of her house, tied to a tree and beaten by villagers for being in a lesbian relationship. Reports say the assault happened after villagers found the two women in bed.

Payoshni Mitra, a former government-appointed adviser to Chand who now works as an athletes' rights activist, said: "With the return of the rightwing Bharatiya Janata party to power, a series of attacks on minorities, including sexual minorities, are being reported.

"However, while it could be dangerous to be openly gay, one cannot live in fear of the consequences – and Dutee's coming out gives us that message".

While attitudes in urban India are gradually changing, in rural India, dating between young people of the opposite sex is still frowned upon and homosexuality is seen as beyond the pale. The supreme court last year overturned a colonial-era ban on gay sex, but the ruling found little backing in villages.

However, rural Indians can often turn a blind eye if same-sex relationships are conducted discreetly.

But Chand remained unbowed. "I am not a child who blindly does what her parents say," she said. "I am grown up. I will spend my life with who I want, but I will also fulfil my responsibility to my family".

COURTESY MSN



MOUNTAIN BIKING HAS

come to stay

By Susil Premalal

The birth of Mountain Biking as a sport in Sri Lanka came into being by coincidence. Two factors influenced this decision at the time. One being that an opposing faction of cycling administrators who were disgruntled with Cycling Federation teamed up to introduce a new wing to cycling. The group was headed by Amal Suriyage and were passionately supported by veteran riders Patrick Hapuarachchi, Wasantha Kahapolaarchchi, Nishantha Piyasena, Peter Bluck, Ivon Brown and a host of cycling enthusiasts. Secondly, at the time

Sri Lanka Army was organizing the Colombo Super Cross 2000 at the Water's Edge and the chairman of organizing committee, Major General Neil Dias offered an opportunity to introduce mountain biking during the interval to entertain the crowds. As a result, a junior and senior event was conducted and it was telecast live. This apparently heralded a beginning to a new sport in Sri Lanka and the National Mountain Biking Association (NMBA) was born simultaneously.



**"THE PUBLIC OPINION AND PARTICIPATION
GAVE US THE STRENGTH AND
AITKEN SPENCE HOTELS GAVE THE
SPONSORSHIP TO DO CYCLO CROSS"**

The public opinion and participation gave us the strength and Aitken Spence Hotels gave the sponsorship to do Cyclo Cross" gave us the strength and Aitken Spence Hotels gave the sponsorship to do 'Cyclo Cross' events within their hotel parameter offering Weekend packages patronizing local and foreign cycling families and adventures weekends. The NMBA grabbed the opportunity and did the organizing to the best of their ability with the hotel staff. This was an instant hit. Most of the star hotels took up for sponsorship of Cyclo Cross and this became a benchmark event in cycling calendar with 8 to 10 events during a year", said Suriyage.

This caused ripples in the Cycling Federation of Sri Lanka (CFSL) and splitting of hairs.

"As the controlling body rather than being supportive they tried to

obstruct NMBA by using their only weapon available, the controlling arm to restrict our movement which we strongly countered by organizing more and more events finally taking cycling to a new era. NMBA stuck to their goal and made a branding for 'Cyclo Cross' in the country. And for the first time within the first two years we bagged a podium win at the MTB Asian Championship in Indonesia", recounted Suriyage.

The President and his team of the Mountain Biking Association now affiliated to CFSL, however, is disappointed that although MTB is an Olympic discipline in the sport of cycling, neither the Sports Ministry or Education Ministry does not have this in their calendar of events still. The controlling body was not supportive for obvious reasons and gave prominence to a standard modified version of road racing which is not even in the SAARC games. Hence the





NMBA faced an uphill task running a calendar of events national and internationally, but was confident granted recognition it can drive this sport to another golden era.

According to Suriyage, change in cycling as a pro-sport happened in the '90s from a conventional sporting era to competitive road racing on par with global trends, whereby rider and machine got the right combination to become competitive in the world arena.

“The reason was at that time the administrators running cycling had one thing in common: to deliver to the best of their ability and when the sport does well rejoice as a

team. Unlike nowadays, the elected officials are cronies of the camp that put them to that position, so for them their first agenda is to silence the so-called opposing factor. I have seen this happening for the last two decades in cycling. Good leaders are the ones who get the job done irrespective of which camp they belong to as long as he/she can deliver. Leadership is the cue to development”, explained Suriyage.

He added the Ministry of Sports should change the attitude of the officials, rather than politicizing them and instill in them a sporting culture. “For this you need to have workshops not only for players but especially for sport administrators

driving them to perform well”, he added.

Suriyage confided with confidence, that all sport bodies can find volunteers who will take responsibility and bring all sports of Sri Lanka to another level. “Given the task, two years is sufficient to put any sport on the road map to yield results... not gold medals but making good players should be their first task. Take a cue from India. The investments made on sport and talented players in general during the last decade is paying dividends” he said.



RENU'S DREAM FOR BADMINTON

By S.R. Pathiravithana

Shuttler Renu Chandrika reminds me lot of good wine; the mature it gets, more potent it is. Chandrika is now ranked a senior of the game and is looking to conquer that category of international competition; but she is still within the top five in the national rankings.

Breaking the ice with the GoodSport, Chandrika said, "Besides the No. 1 and No. 2 in the women's rankings, I can hold my own with the best of the women's brood in national rankings. Yet, now I take it easy and concentrate my career with the senior world tournament. However my future eyes are set on coaching and my aim is taking a few junior players to the top rankings. I feel in that manner I could give back some of the niceties that I gained through my badminton career to the next generation".

Renu Chandrika de Silva is one of the most experienced female shuttlers in the country who successfully completed the International Coaching Course conducted by the University of Physical Education in Budapest in Hungary from 18th March to 7th June 2019. This was made possible through the efforts of the National Olympic Committee of Sri Lanka.

Chandrika got into the game quite by chance. In fact her older sisters – twins Nilanthi Sepalika and Lasanthi Sepalika - were in the court playing serious badminton and she as an 11-year-old was sitting on the fringes and watching her sisters at play. "One day my coach A.M. Wimalaratne requested me to start training without wasting my time sitting on the bench. He asked me to accompany my sisters with a racquet. This culminated in



Photo:
Renu Chandrika de Silva





me beating the rest of the players in a short time and becoming the women's champion in the North Central Province. He was the sports officer of the province and did not charge a cent for my training. I was 15 years old at that time.

"With this success I was a regular in the National School Games and my rise in stature as a player with potential kept on rising and by 1987 I was chosen into the National badminton pool. Ten years later in 1997, I won the women's singles championship and I managed to win that title till 2003. In 2004, I lost to another good player – Thilini Jayasinghe in the final. However in the very next year I won the crown (2005) and held on to it till 2010".

When playing with this intensity she automatically became a regular in the international circuit too. However, she marks her memorable victory as the win that she had while beating two of India's top stars. She explained, "At that time in 1997, badminton was not a feature in the SAG (South Asian Games). There were seven countries which were in the South Asian Games line up. The tournament took place at the S. Thomas', Mt. Lavinia courts and Sri Lanka ended up with the silver. However in the mixed doubles I partnered the then men's national champion Thushara Edirisingha. In this exchange we beat our Indian counterparts and won the gold for the mixed doubles. I am sure since, we have not beaten any Indian stars

and won gold in an international tournament".

Now she has set her sights in developing the next generation of badminton players in the country if she is afforded the opportunity. However, she has the notion that a foreign coach with good credentials could be of immense help. She is of the view that training, especially the mental part of it, is handled expertly by most top coaches. Because the equipment and the facilities in those countries are world class and the standards are two worlds apart. When it comes to coaching there are different aspects to it like nutrition, medicine and physiotherapy. So keeping a player in trim, especially to challenge

"WHAT'S HAPPENING HERE IS THE PEOPLE WHO RUN THE GAME STAY THERE FOR ONLY TWO YEARS AND THEN THEY MOVE ON"

players even from India, all these ingredients are needed."

Chandrika lamented the breakdown of the provincial system in Sri Lanka. "I came from the provincial system like so many others, but by the turn of the millennium this system began to fall apart. What was required was a coach, a few shuttle cocks and a court to play on. With the breakdown of that system a part of the game of badminton died a natural death", Chandrika said.

Right now she is looking after the Colombo University team and her own academy close to Wattala. However she says if she is to get involved, in her coaching programme she would like to see the authorities launch a long-term programme that would be at least for 8-10 years.

"What's happening here is the people who run the game stay there for only two years and then they move on. When that happens - the programmes, the coaches and the gamut of things is changed according to their whims and fancies. I am not interested in being a part of a system of this nature. It does not serve the purpose or my effort. However if I am given the opportunity I would like to work with an under 15 squad and work with them till I know the ultimate goal is achieved", Chandrika said.





SAG'S MARATHON

men and women
LOOKING FOR

G O L D

By Susil Premalal

Photo:
Tissa Gunerathne

Sri Lanka has traditionally produced great marathon runners who have represented the country with distinction at international level.

The first marathon race in Sri Lanka was held in 1959. It was organized by CT & FC and held from Colombo Campus to Homagama, Kendalanda and back.

It was won by Leenus Dias who became the first Ceylonese to represent the country in the marathon at the 1960 Rome Olympics where he achieved the 39th position.

Thereafter came Wimalasena Perera who took part in the 1966 Commonwealth Games in Kingston, Jamaica and at the Asian Games in

Bangkok. He also participated in the 1968 Mexico Olympic Games.

Wimalasena Perera's time of 2 hours 22.07 minutes is considered as the National marathon record set in 1967.

This record stood for 25 years before being broken by V.K.L. Samarasinghe in 1992 in Colombo.

Earlier, S.L.B. Rosa represented Sri Lanka at the Munich Olympic Games in 1972 in the marathon.

A tea estate worker R. Srinivasan achieved the distinction of participating in the 1978 Asian Games in Bangkok.

H.S. Piyadasa, W.G. Ariyasena, K.A. Karunaratne were other famous



Photo:
R.A.D. Arunasiri

THE FIRST GOLD MEDAL IN MARATHON AT THE SOUTH ASIAN GAMES WAS WON BY V.K.L. SAMARASINGHE IN 1989 IN ISLAMABAD

The current Sri Lanka record holder in marathon for women is Hiruni Wijeratne who clocked 2:34.10 at the Düsseldorf Marathon in Germany.

The Men's Marathon race was won by Pradeep Dhammika Arunasiri in a time 2:29.16 while the women's event was won by Nisansala Bandara clocking 2:59.40.

NATIONAL SPORTS FESTIVAL AND SAG PREPARATIONS

Marathon, Race Walking and Cycling was held at the National Sports Festival held in Anuradhapura in May. For the first in the history of the competition, it was an Open Race unlike in the past when they qualified from the provinces.

Arunasiri won the marathon title for the third time, having emerged winner in 2014 and 2017. A sailor attached to the Engineering section, 32-year-old Arunasiri hails from Maha Illukpallama in Anuradhapura. He has represented Sri Lanka at international level participating in the Asian Marathon Championships in 2017 in China where he achieved



athletes who represented Sri Lanka in the marathon at international competitions.

Rosa is the first Sri Lankan to achieve a record time of 2:14.31 in a marathon outside the country when he took part in the Fukuoka Marathon in 1975.

It was broken after 40 years at the London Marathon in 2015 when Anuradha Indrajith Cooray produced the performance of his life to finish 14th setting a new national record 2: 13.47.

Cooray is the only marathoner to represent Sri Lanka in three Olympic Games – Athens (2004) finishing 30th out of 113 with a time of 2:19.24, London (2012) and Rio (2016).

The first gold medal in marathon at the South Asian Games was won by V.K.L. Samarasinghe in 1989 in Islamabad. The first medal (silver) by a woman marathoner was won by D.A. Inoka in 1995 at the Madras SAF Games.



“MY MAIN AIM IS TO GET SELECTED TO RUN IN THE SOUTH ASIAN GAMES AND THEREAFTER TARGET QUALIFICATION FOR THE TOKYO 2020 OLYMPIC GAMES”

his personal best of 2:20.58 to clinch 10th place. This year he took part in a marathon in Taiwan clocking 2:28.18 to clinch seventh place.

“My main aim is to get selected to run in the South Asian Games and thereafter target qualification for the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games. However, there was not much competition in the marathon at the National Sports Festival because this was an Open meet, this time. As a result I could not achieve the timing I expected. Also some of the leading marathoners from the Forces

did not take part because they were engaged in national duty due to the situation that prevailed in the country during May. If I had tougher competition, I could have achieved a better timing. I also took part in the event without any training since even we were called up for duty after the Easter Sunday attacks”. said Arunasiri who also missed the best couple of years of his career while serving in the war-zone.

Despite being saddled with responsibility of looking after his



family, Arunasiri is determined to bring glory to Sri Lanka.

“I am the sole breadwinner in the family. But since I spend about Rs. 20,000 a month for my training purposes which I spend from my salary, I am unable to look after my parents and sibling. However, I hope we could get some training overseas before the South Asian Games. Since it is being held in cooler climes, I am confident of winning a medal for the country”, he said.

Women’s marathon champion Nisansala Bandara is a 24-year-old hailing from Warakapola, Nelundeniya. She studied at Perakumba Vidyalaya in Dedigama.

A soldier attached to Army’s Sports Section in Panagoda, Bandara has been a marathoner for the past nine years but this is the first time she has won a gold medal.

She first took part in a marathon in 2012 being placed 12th and took a break from competitive running before making a comeback last year where she won a bronze medal.

In addition to the marathon, Bandara also competes in the 5,000 metre and 10,000 metre races. She won third place in the 10,000m event at the Athletics Nationals clocking a time of 36:58 minutes. She also clinched third place in the 5,000m competition clocking 17:45.





“I WOULD HAVE GOT A BETTER TIMING IF I HAD TOUGHER COMPETITION AT THE NATIONAL SPORTS FESTIVAL”

“I have never gone on a tour before. My only hope is to represent Sri Lanka at the South Asian Games. I think I will get a chance to go to Kathmandu. I am confident of bringing glory to Sri Lanka at these Games”, she said.

“I would have got a better timing if I had tougher competition at the National Sports Festival”, she added.

Major General Palitha Fernando, President of the AASL (Athletic Association of Sri Lanka), said they intended to select the best two men and women marathoners for the pool from their performances at the festival for the South Asian Games.

“There is no problem in selecting the two men’s athletes, the winner Arunasiri and D.G.D. Sandaruwan who came second. However, there is an issue selecting the women’s athletes from this festival since Hiruni Wijeratne has already qualified for the World Championship. She is an automatic choice for the national pool. The winner at this festival Nisansala Bandara is most likely to be the second marathoner in the pool but her selection will depend on her timing which has to improve since there is another contender who has a better time than her in the marathon”, said Maj. Gen. Fernando.



AN ENDEAVOUR TO KEEP SPORTS ABOVEBOARD

By Kamanthi Wickramasinghe

Back in 2000, when Sri Lanka's Olympic medalist Susanthika Jayasinghe publicly accused a Cabinet Minister of wanting to have sex with her, her complaints fell on deaf ears. 19 years later, the National Olympic Committee of Sri Lanka's (NOCSL) Women's Committee has established a Sexual Harassment and Abuse Policy for the first time in the history of sports in the country. The Committee comprise of Chairperson Niloo Jayatilake, Secretary Ajith Thamel, Anoma Rathnayake, Chanaka Hasantha and S.R. Pathiravithana. The mechanism comes at a time when sexual harassment and abuse have

become topics which are being openly addressed.

As such the Policy has been established to develop a culture of dignity and safety in sports, to promote and protect the health of athletes by creating a safe and respectful sports environment and to protect the rights and well-being of all athletes, coaches and administrative officials etc. to optimize their performance. Speaking to the Daily Mirror, NOCSL Women's Committee Chairperson Niloo Jayatilake said that the Policy was formulated within the last one year and the legal draft was put in place. "We are

excited about the whole initiative and our sports body will be the first in Sri Lanka to address this. As a first step we will educate all current and future sports people that this kind of a policy is there for them as a covenant. Setting this Policy itself is a huge achievement for NOCSL and we will be following the ideologies of the Olympic Charter as we are advocating bringing about clean sports. Since there's no such Policy, people think they could do whatever they want since there were no ramifications".

The international sports arena is already bringing in education and policies to address sexual harassment and abuse. Therefore, Sri Lanka too is heading in the right direction as NOCSL under the purview of its President Suresh Subramaniam has begun to advocate for change within the sports industry. To make it a success, all sports federations that



Sexual Harassment
Prevention

**WE CAN'T EXPECT FOR CHANGE
OVERNIGHT BUT WE NEED TO CREATE
AN ENVIRONMENT WHERE THEIR
RIGHTS ARE PROTECTED**

come under the NOCSL which is the apex body, should be informed first. "The first step is to educate them on sexual harassment and abuse because some people might not be aware that they are actually harassing the sports people," she continued. "This will be done through conferences and education seminars. In future we want to invite foreign resource persons as well. Moving forward, one of our biggest initiatives will be raising awareness which will be done islandwide at school, national and international level. Therefore by participating in international events, the managers and other people will be made aware that this kind of policy is there".

Adding in his comments NOCSL Secretary General Maxwell De Silva said that only few people talk about sexual harassment and abuse. "So we need to change it. I'm very happy that this idea has come about. It's very difficult for any athlete to come forward and relate their story. So we need to build a mechanism where their identities are withheld. Females too are not attempting to make a big noise. This has to start from schools. But on the other side, males too are facing harassment and that too needs to be addressed. We can't expect for change overnight but we need to

create an environment where their rights are protected".

As a result of harassment and abuse, many athletes go through depression and mental trauma. Basically they had no place to tell their grievances, even if they did tell, there was no mechanism to address these issues. If there's a complaint, there will be a mechanism in which the complainant could send it through. In order to investigate on the cases, a separate complaints committee will be setup. Committee members include Dillai Joseph, Jayanthi Kuru-Utumpala, Caryll Tozer, Nedra Wickramasinghe, Dr. Nihal De Silva, Sharanya Sekaram, Sabrina Esufally, Preethi Adihetti and Shyamala Gomes who have volunteered to serve on the complaints committee. Most of them have been addressing on sexual harassment and abuse while others have a background in sports. Once they study the case after talking to the complainant and the accused, they will build up the case to be sent to the hearing committee. This committee will comprise of NOCSL Secretary General, a retired police officer and an elected representative from the national federation that the case has come from. They will then decide on a penalty depending on the gravity of the situation. Different cases will



Photo:
Chairperson Niloo Jayatilake

have different penalties and the relevant federation has to decide on it. In future the NOCSL website will include the process in which a complaint could be sent in.

Niloo further said that sometimes the athlete will be scared but there could be some observer who can trigger it off. "So there won't be a manager who will represent Asian Games after being charged for sexual harassment by athletes. In fact, they will not be accredited to go as a manager or coach. Those kinds of situations will not be tolerated. We need to safeguard our national assets and for that we need to create an environment. We shouldn't allow an athlete to go astray".

As such NOCSL invites all sports federations to join hands in this mission and advocate for clean sports in the country.



**Kamanthi
Wickramasinghe**
(Journalist Daily Mirror,
Sri Lanka)



LOOKING FOR THE ‘GOLD’ IN NEPAL

By Susil Premalal

“Our target is to win gold at the South Asian Games though we are certain to pick up either a silver or bronze medal in Wushu. There are two categories in Wushu namely Sanda and Thawulu. However, the weight categories for these events have not been finalized by the organizers.

Normally there are 11 weight categories in ‘Sanda’ for men and seven for women. ‘Thawulu’ has 10 events for both men and women. My aim is to win at least four gold medals”, said Manel Dharmakeerthi, President, Sri Lanka Wushu Federation (SLWF).

The federation has formed a 56-member national pool for the South Asian Games in Kathmandu.

It includes 39 men and 17 women players.

According to the Wushu authorities, Training has been ongoing at the Torrington Indoor Stadium. The coach for ‘Sanda’ events is Kapila Sabapathi while Ruchira Bodinayake is coach for ‘Thawulu’ events and they are training on Monday and Friday regularly for now.

Wushu was introduced to Sri Lanka in 1993 under the leadership of Dharmakeerthi and it was a medal event for the first time at the 2006 Colombo Games.

Sri Lanka won four gold, two silver and four bronze medals at the inaugural Wushu event. India also won four gold medals



Photo:
Manel Dharamakeerthi



However, India has gone ahead of Sri Lanka in Wushu because their National Olympic Committee and States support the sport of Wushu in India.

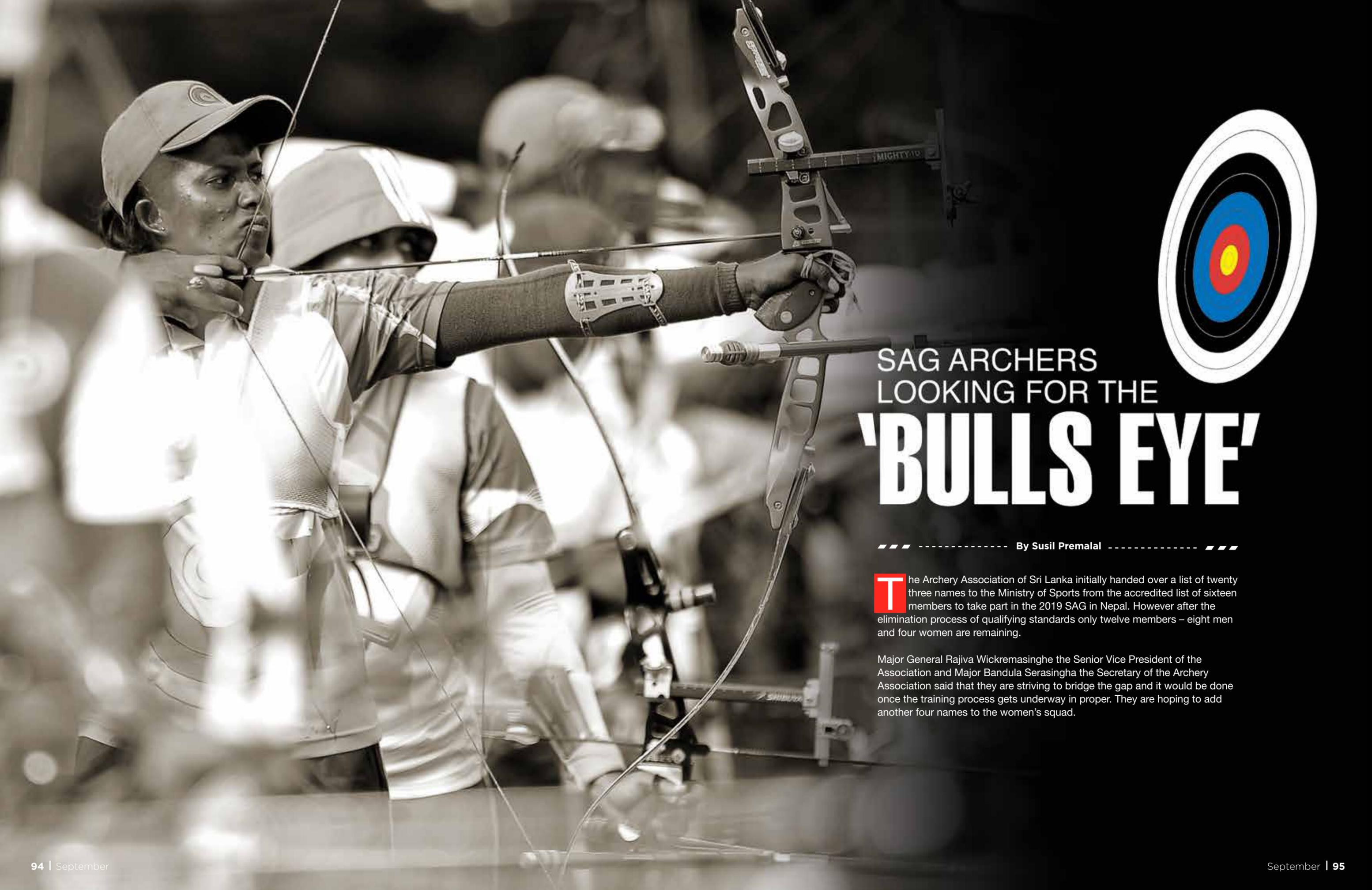
Another reason is because every district has two Chinese coaches to oversee the development of the sport.

“Sri Lanka Wushuites were trained by Chinese coaches at the start. But now they are trained by local coaches. It is a big drawback we can gain a lot from the expertise of Chinese officials”, said Dharmakeerthi.

At the last edition of SAG, Sri Lanka won six medals including one gold, one silver and four bronze medals. Hasitha Lakshan won the gold medal in Thawulu but he is no longer available having retired from the sport.

The medal hopes this time are Pethum Nuwan Balawardena in Thawulu. He excelled at the Jakarta Asian Games last year qualifying to the final round.

Another medal hope is Lakshan Gunasekera won a bronze medal in the 48kgs weight class at the 2017 World Championship in Russia.



SAG ARCHERS LOOKING FOR THE 'BULLS EYE'

By Susil Premalal

The Archery Association of Sri Lanka initially handed over a list of twenty three names to the Ministry of Sports from the accredited list of sixteen members to take part in the 2019 SAG in Nepal. However after the elimination process of qualifying standards only twelve members – eight men and four women are remaining.

Major General Rajiva Wickremasinghe the Senior Vice President of the Association and Major Bandula Serasingha the Secretary of the Archery Association said that they are striving to bridge the gap and it would be done once the training process gets underway in proper. They are hoping to add another four names to the women's squad.



Photo:
Mahesh Premaratne



Photo:
Anuradha Wijeyesinghe



Photo:
Udaya Perera

The pool already sent to the Ministry of Sports

Recurve Men

Ravien Kavisha Dalpatadu (Uva), A.W.S. Chandana Abeygunasekara (Police), Sajeev De Silva (RCAC), C.P.L. Maldeniya MGA (SL Army), P.S.K. Herath (SL Navy), R.M.M.P. Premaratna (SL Navy), CPL. Bandara MGS (SL Army)

Recurve Women

Rehana Tayabally (CASAC), Dilhara Salgado (Colombo), L/CPL. Silva WTM (SL Army), S.H.N. Roshani (SL Navy), Anurada Karunaratna (Police), Kalubowila LM (SLAF), L/CPL Waduge AWMD (SL Army)

Wickremasinghe also added that the recent past, the Archery had its own share of ups and downs due to the rule of an Interim Committee who had its rein till recently. However, since we took over the responsibility of a proper administration we are according to a proper plan and destination.

He added "At one point of time the sport was guided by a coach from Britain, Michael Peart but he had to relinquish his position due to some immigrations issues. Until such time the sport ran under a Sri Lankan coach. However, we mediated and brought back the former coach and he will be under contract with Sri Lanka until the year 2020".

"We have overcome that hurdle now and the consultant coach Peart is ready to get on with the act. Peart has loads of experience as a player and a coach and knows all facts of how to hit the bull's eye.

Ironically, we are facing a huge downside owing the lack of a proper training centre. The Ministry of Sports have assigned section of the Diyagama Sports complex to do our training, but that has its own drawbacks owing to the lack of technical facilities which is vital for proper international training".

However it is said that the Ministry of Sports has allocated a sum of LKR 13,446,400 for Archery.

Photo:
Mahesh Premaratne



**“OUR GOAL FOR THIS EDITION IS WINNING GOLD.
BUT, IT IS GOING TO BE STIFF TASK AS WE HAVE TO
COMPETE WITH ARCHERS IN INDIA”**

Archery as a competitive sport started in Sri Lanka way back in the year 2000 at the Sugathadasa Stadium under Rtd. Commander H.U. Silva.

When the game was at its inception Maj. Gen. Wickremasinghe was a budding competitor and was a member of the 2006 SAG which was held in Colombo and later captained the national team for the SAG in Dhaka, Bangladesh in 2010.

During the last SAG held in India in 2016, Sri Lanka won two silver medals in the men’s and women’s team events.

Maj. Gen. Wickremasinghe added “Our goal for this edition is winning gold. But, it is going to be stiff task as we have to compete with Archers in India who are much sharper in their individual skills. At the last edition, India won ten gold medals and four silver medals while Bangladesh is also in a better footing as with them having more international exposure. Yet, we are determined to make an impression at the SAG this time out with at least one gold”.

Initially, at the turn of the century when the sport started, there were

only a handful of Archers in Sri Lanka based mainly in Colombo. But, today, there are over 600 Archers from areas like Badulla, Bandarawela, Kurunegala and Matara.

Coming back to the SAG proper, the medal prospects at this year’s event would be Ravien Kavishka Dalpatadu from St. Thomas’ Bandarawela and Rehana Tayabally of Colombo Archery School, respectively in the men’s and women’s categories.

Photo:
Sanjeeva de Silva





VITALITY NETBALL WORLD CUP 2019

THARJINI

STARS IN LIVERPOOL

By Saabir Cader

The six-foot ten inch Tharjini Sivalingam, the tallest netball player in the world added another feather on her cap. She recorded the highest points at the concluded Vitality Netball World Cup in Liverpool, United Kingdom.

The Jaffna born superstar scored overall 348 points and recorded the highest individual point tally of 77 against Singapore in the final match played at M & S Bank Arena. Both efforts were the best at this edition of the World Cup by a huge margin.

It was an uphill task for the Asian Champions; Sri Lanka while playing against the physically bigger opponents like Australia, Fiji and Samoa. But, when it came to the same size opponents, Coach Thilaka Jinadasa's team beat the Asian runner-ups Singapore twice with ease in the competition. The score read 78 – 57 in favour of Sri Lanka in the 15th place challenge whilst the ladies thumped them again 88 – 50 in preliminary round two.

GAME 1

SRI LANKA 49 – 79 ZIMBABWE

Sri Lanka faced Zimbabwe in the opener and it was an end to end play as both teams showed equal potency in scoring. However, Zimbabwe went ahead 19 – 14 to the first quarter break. Sri Lanka bounced back with 23 – 22 after 5 minutes of play in the second quarter. Dulangi Wannithilake switched her position from wing attack to goal attack which was fruitful but only for few minutes thus Zimbabwe piled up with 9-goal lead to the half time Sri Lanka 29 – 38 Zimbabwe.

Third quarter was the closest as Sri Lanka fought hard to close the gap but the Africans took the narrow lead with a 15 – 13. The final quarter saw Sri Lanka was out of gas and conceded too many interceptions although maintained 99% accuracy in goal shooting. As a result momentum shifted in favour of Zimbabwe 26 – 07 and finishing the full time with 30 points lead.



NETBALL

HOMESIDE

INF
NETBALL
WORLD CUP
POOL 2019

GAME 2

SRI LANKA 50 – 67 NORTHERN IRELAND

The only possible chance to get in to top 12 of the competition was by winning at least one pool game. Skipper Chathurangi Jayasuriya's team looked like they will be on top of the Northerner's in the first few minutes. Ireland edge 18 – 13 at the first quarter gave Sri Lanka a glimpse of hope to counter, however, it was Ireland approached aggressively to lead at half time with 34 – 25 points.

Tharjini was well marked and pressurized but Irish defence, coach Jinadasa replaced the newcomer Elilenthini Sethukavalar to take the shooting control. Defensive errors and slow reflection and miscommunication haunted Sri Lanka as their opponent led 17 -12 third quarter lead. Sri Lanka fought hard in the final quarter with the closest margin of the game with 16 – 13 loss. Ireland became victorious with a 17 point deficit and Sri Lanka's hope vanished with two early losses in the competition.





GAME 3

SRI LANKA 24 – 99 AUSTRALIA

Defending champions Australia who eventually felt short by a point to Silver Ferns in 2019 edition, showed immense skills and power. It was too much for Sri Lanka to hold on to. Tharjini did not start but she came off the bench as the team in gold accelerated the scoring. The first quarter ended 20 – 07 and the second with 27 – 08 as the team Diamonds had a comprehensive lead of 47 – 15 at half time.

The third quarter saw immense attacking skills and off-loads by Australians which gave a further lead of 28 – 07 and the final quarter was the worst out of all as Sri Lanka conceded 24 points to 02. However, quite astonishingly Sri Lanka escaped out of embarrassment not conceding three figures.

Diamonds were just short of 3 goals to make it 100 points had 4 minutes on the clock for the full time whistle. Dulangi, Chathurangi and Gayanjali managed to fox the Australian defence moving the ball out of reach with multiple off-loads ways to kill time.



GAME 4

SRI LANKA 88 – 50 SINGAPORE

After three defeats in the first round, Sri Lanka thumped their familiar foes Singapore. The ladies needed this win to lift their momentum and they did it in style. Sivalingam scored a record 76 points which seemed inevitable pressure for Singapore in defence. End of first 15 minutes Sri Lanka made their way with a 10 point lead 21 – 11 and the second quarter was even better as the Lankans stretched the lead further as the half time stood 45 – 22.

A robust third quarter was all about piling up more goals. The body language and the mindset was what the team exactly missed in the first round of play. Sri Lanka led 71 – 33 at the end of the third quarter and was a bit lackluster in the final quarter which Singapore won by 17 – 14. Overall it was a dominant effort by team Sri Lanka.



GAME 5

SRI LANKA 55 – 65 SAMOA

It would have been a big sigh of relief if Sri Lanka could have unsettled the big and strong Samoa. They did lead the first quarter with 17 – 13 eventually the Samoan counterpart re-bounced with a 19 – 10 lead in the second quarter. It was physical challenge once again also very intense game until the half time as the Samoans led 32 – 17 points.

Third quarter saw some fatigue factors in the Lankan camp as they were playing back to back matches which they have never done. Samoa once again led 17 -13 in the third quarter. Sri Lanka tried hard to cut down the deficit and produced some magic. However, Samoa's plan to stop the ball going to Tharjini was simply brilliant. Much close final quarter ended 16 -15 in favour of Samoa. As a result Sri Lanka lost to rank 14th team in the world by 10 points.

GAME 6

Sri Lanka 44 – 59 FIJI

Yet again some a promising start in the first quarter against the rank 17th Fiji. Skipper, Chathurangi and Gayani Dissanayake was outstanding in terms of defensive work rate. Sri Lanka led 11-10 in the first quarter but Fiji accelerated their scoring as they scored 17 goals to Sri Lanka's 9 at the half way mark.

Fiji men who were the Rio-Olympic Gold medalist in the rugby sevens, they women had similar qualities with the skill set, pace and physicality in terms of this netball is concern. It was very smart play in the third quarter as they went on a big 20 – 08 lead. Although Sri Lanka was impressive in the final quarter with a 16 – 11 win it was who won the game.



GAME 7

SRI LANKA 78 – 57 SINGAPORE

Tharjini Sivalingam renewed her individual best scoring tally from 76 to 77 with a final minute stunning goal shoot. Singapore did try to force a lot of pressure in the first quarter but Lankans led 23 – 15 points. Sri Lanka had different ideas in the second quarter with long passes and giving the ace striker Tharjini to nail the points which gave a 43 – 28 scoreline at the half time.

Another 10 point margin at the penultimate quarter 22 – 12 in favour of Sri Lanka, Gayanjali, Hasitha Mendis and Jayasuriya controlled the game from the middle saw Singapore struggling to get possession. However, yet again Singapore bounced back in the final quarter with 17 – 13 as their Game four finish.



UPSETS GALORE AT THE COLOMBO TENNIS CHAMPIONSHIP

By Susil Premalal -----

There were upsets galore in Sri Lanka's oldest tennis tournament, the 104th Colombo Championship worked off at the Sri Lanka Tennis Association (SLTA) clay courts which was completed despite inclement weather prevailing at the time. Being one of the Category 'A' grade tournaments in the local tennis calendar, it attracted the cream of the players in the country with over 800 entries being received for 11 events. The boys' under 12 and 14 singles attracted the largest number of 128 entries each.

The events ranged from juniors (Boys/Girls - under 12 to 18), Men's,

Women's, and Veterans' (for Over 35, 45, 55 and 65), giving every segment of the tennis playing community an opportunity to participate.

When the action commenced on July 5, there were a slew of upsets in both the boys' and girls' age group events making a mockery of the seeding.

In the heavily contested Boys' under 12 singles, third seed Tharuk Marasinghe beat the top seed Methvan Wijemanne 6-2, 7-5 to claim the title.





Photo:
Dineshkanthan



Photo:
Angelika Kurera



Photo:
Anika Seneviratne



Photo:
Alana Seneviratne



Photo:
Tania Doloswela



Photo:
Thehan Wijemanne

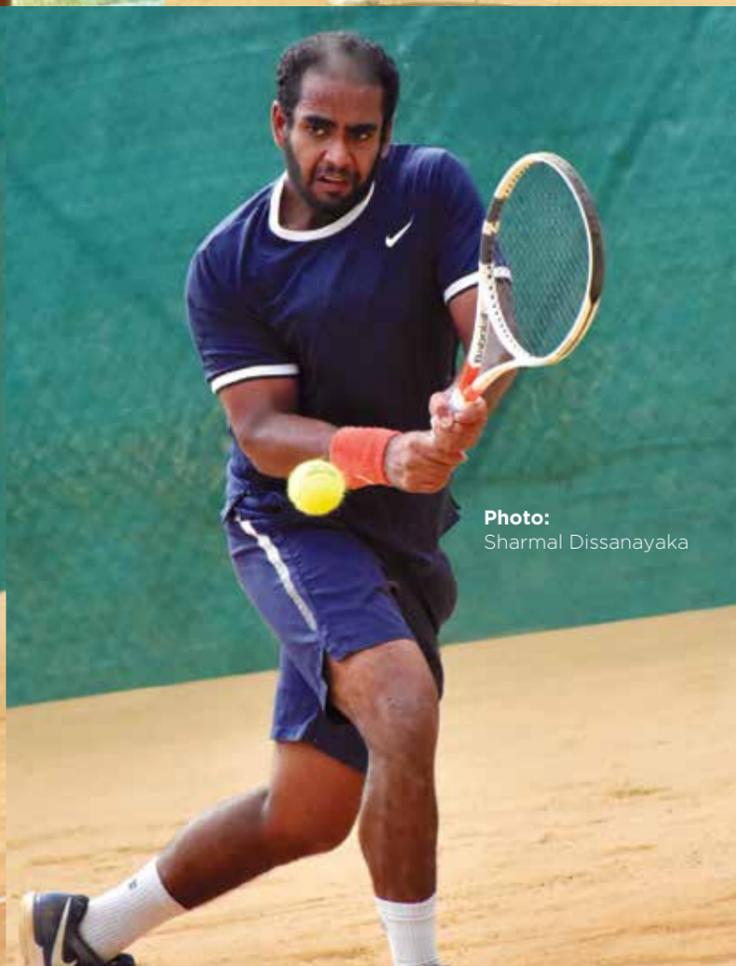


Photo:
Sharmal Dissanayaka

In the Boys' under 14 singles, second seed Hasal Ahangama also defeated the top seed Zaidh Zihar 6-3, 6-1 in the final.

In a Royal-Thomian clash, Royalist Thehan Wijemanne lived up to his top ranking in the Boys' under 16 final defeating fourth seed Shivendra Perera in a tense final 6-3, 6-1. Thehan claimed a double when he partnered Royalist Kavisha Ratnayaka to claim the under 18 Boys' doubles title defeating the pair of Praneel Jasinghe and Sean Sanderson 6-1, 6-1.

Chathurya Nilaweera of Stafford International School clinched the under 18 boys' singles title defeating Shivendra Perera 6-1, 6-2 in the final and partnering with

his brother Vichinthya Nilaweera won the under 16 Boys' doubles title defeating the pair of Jaitra de Saram and Zaidh Zihar in a thrilling final 6-4, 2-6, 10-5.

There was also an upset result in the Wheelchair Men's singles final when third seed R.A.L.S. Ranaweera stunned top seed D.S.R. Dharmasena in another thriller 2-6, 6-3, 6-3.

However, Sharmal Dissanayaka lived up to his top billing in the Men's Open singles final against Dineshkanthan Thangarajah winning a close contest in straight sets 7-6(4) 6-4.

However, Thangarajah partnered Anika Seneviratne to clinch the Mixed doubles title when they





Photo:
Chathurya Nilasweera



Photo:
Kaveesha Supunsara

beat Liu-Hui Retallick and Alana Seneviratne 6-1, 6-3 in the final. The two sisters from Ladies College Anika and Alana Seneviratne reigned supreme in the Women's doubles outclassing Oneli Perera and Sethmi Sumanaweera in straight sets 6-0, 6-0.

Angelika Kurera of Ave Maria Convent, Negombo was the cynosure of all eyes as she claimed her second successive Women's singles crown in addition to the Girls' under 18 singles title.

Angelika was in splendid form throughout the tournament and qualified for the singles final by beating seasoned campaigner Anika Seneviratne in the semis 6-2, 6-4 before the fourth seed demolished third seeded Rukshika Wijesooriya in straight sets 6-2, 6-2 in the final. She claimed a double success by coasting to 6-2, 6-0 win over Tania Doloswala of Gateway College in the Girl's under 18 final to stamp her class.

The Girls' under 12 singles title was won by Ruvi Lewkebandara who

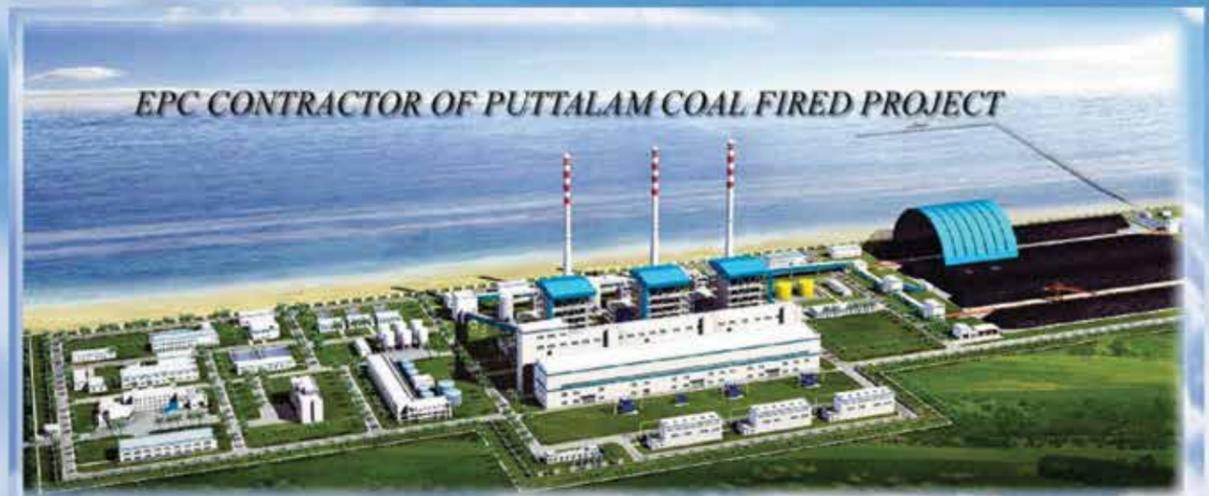
defeated Oneli Samarawickrema 6-4, 6-3 in the final; Saajida Razick won the Girls' under 14 singles title defeating Lewkebandara in straight sets 6-3, 6-3; while rising star from St. Bridget's, Oneli Perera clinched the Girls' under 16 singles title with an easy win over Preethika Chandramohan 6-1, 6-0 in the final. However, partnering Tuvini de Alwis, Preethika won the Girl's under 16 doubles title upsetting the top-seeded pair of Oneli Perera and Sethmi Sumanaweera in a closely contested final 2-6, 7-5, 10-7.

"GOING ABOVE AND BEYOND" WATER TREATMENT AND POWER PLANT EPC CONTRACTOR

CONTRACTOR OF GAMPAHA,ATTANAGALLA AND
MINUWANGODA INTEGRATED WATER SUPPLY SCHEME



CMEC is China's first national large corporation integrating foreign trade with industry engaged in the business of foreign trade and foreign economic and technical cooperation. Its main business is the contracting of international engineering projects, export of complete plants and equipment as well as import and export of machinery and electrical products, and one of the executing projects is the Puttalam Coal Fired Project in Sri Lanka. Issued by the Ministry of Commerce in 2008, CMEC ranked 3rd among the top 50 China's enterprises that engaged in the business of contracting international engineering projects in terms of its annual business turnover.



EPC CONTRACTOR OF PUTTALAM COAL FIRED PROJECT

Main office: No.178, Guang An Men Wai St., Xuanwu Dist., Beijing 100055, China [http:// www.cmec.com](http://www.cmec.com)
Tel: (86-10) 63440508 Fax: (86-10) 63477491

Colombo Office: Level 25, East Tower, World Trade Center, Echelon Square, Colombo - 01
Tel :- 0094-11-7591100 Fax :- 0094 - 11-7591124 / 25
Email : qianhj@mail.cmec.com



The Last Shot

Prema's Journey of Destiny

By Susil Premalal

His Olympic dream began way back in 1948 as a young athlete at St. John's Panadura, Olympian K. Edwin, who was a member of the boxing team representing the games that year, invited all his co-members to come his school to have a round of discussions on Sports. There, the speech made by Duncan White spurred him on and from that point, he set upon a journey that is still to see its culmination.

It was at that point the Former Secretary General of the National Olympic Committee Sri Lanka Prema Pinnawela decided "I am going to witness the Olympic Games one day".

Then graduating the university athletics Pinnawela became a member of the University 4x400 yard relay team and in one of the meets we established a university records that held firm for twenty years. He was a keen student of Hockey also at that time.

After his graduation Pinnawela took up an appointment at the Insurance Corporation that is the point where he made his breakthrough in Sports Administration. He got involved with the Nationalised Services Athletics and also became an official at the Hockey Federation and ended up being the President of the Federation for twelve years. Pinnawela continued. "I gradually moved on to the matters involving the Olympic

Committee as a member. There the then president Ranjit Weerasena said 'you are a general manager of a conglomerate like the Insurance Corporation and we certainly need your assistance'; this culminated in my being selected as a vice president of the movement – it was in 1974".

Ten years later the then president Roy de Silva coaxed Pinnawela to run as his Secretary General. He said "just imagine beating a figure like Hallam Perera – a sports giant in that era. Besides he was a senior secretary of the ministry wielding a lot of power behind him".

"Once taking up that appointment we set up a permanent home for the Olympics for the first time and that was by occupying a portion of the Insurance Corporation. I met my then chairman Chanaka de Silva who was heading the Insurance Corporation and he being a sportsman hailing from Royal Collage and with the blessings of his subject minister Lalith Athulathmudali, the Olympic Dream became a reality. Once our little Olympic conclave was set in motion I invited the multifaceted Michael Karunatileke to become its administrative secretary. This trinity worked like clockwork".

Soon Pinnawela noticed the crying need for professionalism within the Olympic movement. Soon he had the good fortune of inviting the IOC President Julian Samaranch to Sri Lanka, in 1987. There he made a request from the IOC President asking him to open the doors for some our members to be trained in the Olympic Solidarity. The aim of Olympic Solidarity is to organise assistance for all the National Olympic committees (NOCs), particularly those with the greatest needs, through multi-faceted programmes prioritising athlete development, training of coaches and sports administrators, and promoting the Olympic ideal.

Soon Dick Palmer of the Olympic Solidarity arrived in the island and selected five members including me to

be the first recipients of that training structure; the others were B.L.H. Perera, Nalin de Silva, Olivia Gamage and Ranil Dias. When Pinnawela was re-elected as Secretary General of the NOC SL, a very prominent member of the Olympic movement complemented saying "You have carved a niche in the movement which you now have to abide by". At the same time he was also appointed as a course director and he visited four Olympic member countries lecturing on the subject.

Then in 1998 Pinnawela finished his tenure with the Olympics and moved to full time athletics as secretary of AASL. Once he finished his assignment with the NOC SL it was the then sports minister S.B. Dissanayake who coaxed Pinnawela to get involved with athletics. "We have a programme to win a medal at the next Olympics in Sydney, he said that he had a programme at hand and he needed someone to handle the spadework. So he asked me to come in as the secretary to the AASL".

On a sentimental note Pinnawela added "I met my wife Jayani while in university. I was very popular as an athlete and when I proposed to her I told her that athletics would always be my second love and still we have stuck by that agreement". Another moment that Prema really cherished was being appointed a Commissioner and the very first Sri Lankan at that. Only at that meeting in Lausanne, it was decided that every country has the opportunity to have six athletes at the Olympics without qualification. This was under the Olympic Universality Programme in the year 2000. Prior to that he was awarded the veterans pin in 1995 in honour for his contribution to global athletics.

Finally the Former Secretary General of the NOC SL said that "I feel that the duo of Suresh Subramaniam and Maxwell de Silva have taken up the challenge and they could do a good job even though I do not agree with some of the things that they do".

UPLIFT YOUR LIFESTYLE BY ADDING A MODERN TOUCH OF ELEGANCE.

Apartments available for
out right purchase and rent



ASTORIA
DREAMS ARE BUILT THIS WAY



Rafkhan 0768-88-88-88 Gayathri 0771-55-71-11
Maneka 0769-11-11-11 Wasantha 0765-55-55-77
Niki (张禾林) 0768-28-88-88

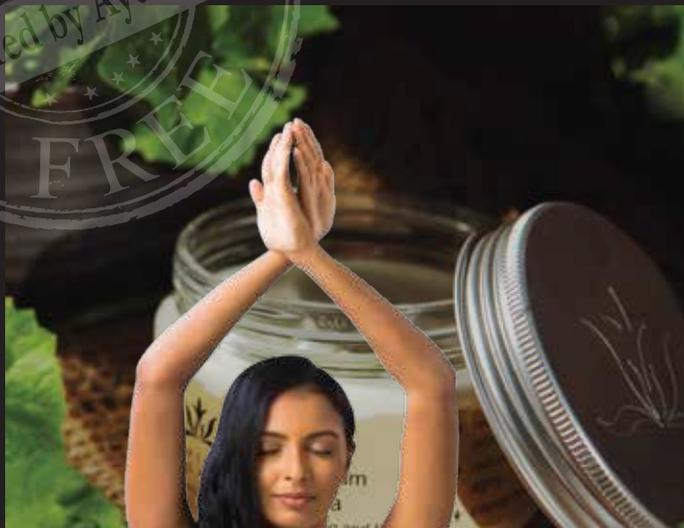
Sales Office: No. 418, R. A. De Mel Mawatha, Colombo 03.
Web: www.astoria.lk | Email: avic_astoria@163.com | Tel: 0114-68-66-66



Home Loans Available



MYSTICAL SECRETS BY SPICE ISLAND



The exotic ingredients used in **Spice Island** products are **100% natural** spices, herbs, botanicals and super - fruits of Sri Lanka blended into perfect synergy. Enjoy the mystical art of holistic beauty with our exclusive range of nourishing and revitalizing personal care products to indulge your hair, body and face

All **Spice Island** products are free of harmful chemicals and toxins and certified **GMP, ISO 9001** and **ISO 14000**



Level 15B, Parkland Building, No.33 Park Street, Colombo 02, Sri Lanka.
Tel : +94 112 307 212, +94 112 307 213 Fax +94 112 307 729,
Visit www.spiceislandbeauty.com to order now.

