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Lecture Title

Punjab's Sports Culture and Heritage

Introduction

Hello and welcome to this special module on Physical education. Today we are talking about the contribution of Punjab in sports. The state of Punjab had always enjoyed a pre-eminent position in the field of Sports. To retain/improve the pristine glory and the pre-eminent position in realm of sports, an independent Department of Sports came into existence in the year 1975. Under the able guidance of the Department of Sports Punjab, many athletes of Punjab have given a par excellence performance and achieved exceptional positions in International sports arena, flying Sikh Milkha Singh, Olympian and Arjuna Awardee S. Surjit Singh, Olympian Prithpal Singh, Olympian Jarnail Singh, Arjuna Awardee Prem Chand Dogra and Padam Shree Pargat Singh are the few examples. Punjab had produced many stars of an International repute in all the disciplines recognised in India.

In the early nineties, a downward trend in the standard of sports in different disciplines created a cause of anxiety. Accordingly in the year 1993 a re-organisation of the sports set up was done by merging the Sports Wing of Khed Parishad, Sports Wings of Education Department into the Directorate of Sports to give a uniform direction to sports in the State of Punjab. At present, Punjab is only state which is having maximum numbers of Astro Turf hockey fields and Synthetic Tracks and Ultra Modern Sports infrastructure in the Country. The Punjab Sports Department has been also doing exceptionally well in handling the sports activities in the state which speaks of the fact that Punjab established its supremacy by winning the overall Raja Bhalindra Singh Trophy in 31st National Games held in Punjab in the year 2001 by bagging 163 medals. Punjab got 2nd Position in 32nd National Games held at Hyderabad in the year 2002 by winning 146 medals (54 Gold, 37 Silver and 55 Bronze). The performance of Punjab State in the different National Games as well as National Championships held so far speaks of the efforts put in by the Punjab Sports Department in the development and promotion of sports in the state.

2. Various Sports Popular In Punjab

Punjabis play a wide variety of sports and games, ranging from modern games such as hockey and cricket, to the more traditional games such as Kabaddi, Kushti (wrestling) and Khuddo khoondi (similar to hockey). There are over 100 traditional games and sports of Punjab.

Some of the prominent sports practised in Punjab are:

Gatka

Gatka is a traditional South Asian form of combat-training, developed by Sikhs, in which wooden sticks are used to simulate swords in sparring matches. In modern usage, it commonly refers to the northwestern Indian martial arts, which should more properly be called shastara vidyā (from Sanskrit shastra-vidya or "science of weapons"). Attacks and counterattacks vary from one community to another but the basic techniques are the same.

Gatka can be practiced either as a sport (khel) or ritual (rasmi). The sport form is played by two opponents wielding wooden staves called gatka. These sticks may be paired with a shield. Points are scored for making contact with the stick. The other weapons are not used for full-contact sparring, but their techniques are taught through forms training. The ritual form is purely for demonstration and is performed to music during occasions such as weddings, or as part of a theatrical performance like the chhau dance. A practitioner of gatka is called a gatkabaj while a teacher is addressed as Guru or Gurudev.

Punjabi Kabaddi

Punjabi Kabaddi, also called Kauddi is a contact sport that originated in the Punjab region. The term Punjabi Kabaddi is a generic term used to describe the following:

A number of styles traditionally played in the Punjab region; and Circle style, also called Punjab Circle Style, which is played at state and international level and is governed by the Amateur Circle Kabaddi Federation of India.

Kabaddi World Cup

Punjab has been coordinating the Kabaddi World cup since 2010 which is based on the Punjab Circle style. The Men's final in the World cup of 2014 was played between India and Pakistan and was won by India 45-42. The Women's final was between India and New Zealand with India winning 36-27 for the second time in a row.

The closing ceremony was held at the Guru Gobind Singh Stadium, Sri Muktsar Sahib.

The World Kabaddi League (WKL) is a professional Circle style Kabaddi League in India, United States, Canada, Pakistan and the United Kingdom. It is the first worldwide circle style kabaddi league.

There are 8 international teams that play in 14 cities throughout 4 different countries. The World Kabaddi League will feature 144 international players with over ₹15 crore in players' salaries. The regular season will be four months long then an elimination tournament will take place in Mohali, Punjab, India for the top four teams to determine a champion. This is the first season World Kabaddi League.

Traditional Punjabi Kabaddi styles

Lambi Kauddi

There are 15 players with a circular pitch of 15–20 feet. There is no outer limit. The players can run as far they can. There is no referee. The raider will say "kauddi, kauddi" throughout the attack.

Saunchi Kauddi

Saunchi Kauddi can best be described as being similar to boxing. It is popular in the Malwa area of Punjab. It is unlimited players with a circular playing pitch. A bamboo with a red cloth is dug into the ground which is paraded by the winner.

In sauchi kabaddi, the raider will hit the defender but only on the chest. The defender will then hold the raiders wrist. A foul is declared if any other part of the body is grabbed. If the defender hold the raiders wrist and restricts his movement, he will be declared the winner. If the raider loses the grip of the defender, then the raider will be the winner.

Goongi Kabaddi

A popular style is "Goongi Kabaddi" (silent Kabaddi) where a raider player does not speak and say the word kabaddi but just touches the opponent's team player and the whom he touches only that player will try to stop the player. The struggle will continue till he reaches the starting line or acknowledge the defeat and loses a point, or if he safely reaches the starting line, he will get the point.

3. Special Mention of Hockey

Hockey has been played in Punjab, the heartland of Sikhs, since 1896 and was included in the Punjab University Sports tournaments in 1903. One of the earliest photographs of Sikhs playing hockey in India is of the Sikh Regiment playing in 1904.

Punjab Hockey Association which was formed in 1925 was one of the State's instrumental in the formation of Indian Hockey Federation.

The representative Indian Army team that toured Australia and New Zealand in 1926 included five Sikhs and have been the backbone of India's teams since then.

Contribution of Sikhs and Punjabis in Hockey in India has always been immense and they have played in every Olympic Games since India entered the competition in 1928 and have been a part of every gold medal winning Indian Olympic team since then.

The 1968 Mexico Squad of eighteen had thirteen players and both the Team Coach and Team Manager were also from Punjab.

Players from Punjab have captained and coached the national side at Olympic Games, World Cups, Champions Trophy, Asian Games and Asia Cups.

On the administrative front, Sikhs are involved in all aspects of the game and Punjabis and Sikhs have held the post of President and Secretary of the Indian Hockey Federation.

Sansarpur is a village in Jalandhar district in the Indian state of Punjab. Among all the Indian villages, Sansarpur has produced the largest number of Olympians for the country. The village in its heyday produced 14 Hockey Olympic players, who represented India, Kenya and Canada at the Olympics. In one particular Olympics, 7 players from Sansarpur represented their respective countries. 5 from India and 2 from Kenya. In present-day Sansarpur though due to the lack of support from the Indian government and lack of facilities like astroturf, the standard of Hockey players emerging from this village is falling, but still its contribution is immense.

Here are the names of the players from this village:

- Gurjit Singh Kullar,(1958) Asian games
- Gurdev Singh Kullar, Olympian
- Udham Singh Kullar, Olympian
- Darshan Singh (field hockey), Olympian
- Ajit Pal Singh Kullar, Olympian
- Colonel Balbir Singh Kullar, Olympian
- Balbir Singh Khullar, Olympian
- Colonel Gurmit Singh Khullar, Olympian & Freedom Fighter

4. Training and Academic Institutions

Now let's talk about the training and academic institutes which Punjab has provided:

Surjit Hockey Academy, Jalandhar

This academy was established in the year 1991-92. 60 talented boys in the age group of 12 to 19 years, are admitted and provided free sports equipments, diet [at] Rs. 120/- per day per head, education, transportation, pocket money, medical & sports kits. The admitted Hockey players have been showing excellent results at the national & international level and some of the promising players like Jugraj Singh, Tejveer Singh and Vikramjit Singh (Junior) have already donned Indian colours.

Football Academy, Mahilpur

To impart intensive training to young and upcoming Footballers of the State, the Department, in the year 1997-98 established a Football Academy at Mahilpur where training is provided to the players. The players are also paid Rs. 150/- per head per month as pocket allowance and diet. Trained coaches of the department are deployed for training. Number of players admitted to this academy have represented the State in National School Games and All India Rural Sports Games

and have won Gold Medal. Sakattar Singh of this academy represented India in Asian School Games held in China in 2003.

State Sports School/ Colleges, Jalandhar

In the year 1961, then Chief Minister of Punjab Mr. Pratap Singh Kairon laid the foundation of Sports School cum Sports College at Jalandhar. The purpose of establishing this institution was that children should study and play at this institution so that they can get better jobs after retirement from the sports arena.

This institution has been established over 10 acres of land having modern Olympic size synthetic track, International 50 meters pool, International Gymnasium, 2 basketball courts, 4 volleyball grounds, 1 handball ground, Indoor wrestling arena and multipurpose gyms.

Speed Fund Academy, Ludhiana

To groom the distinguished players who have already excelled at National/State level, with an eye of winning medals in International competitions, the Sport Department in the year 1999-2000 started Speed Fund Academy for outstanding players (only boys) in the age group of 13-21 years, at Ludhiana.

In this academy players are given a diet of Rs. 100/- per day per head, free education, medical, transport facilities, accommodation and sports equipment. The players are also provided a sports kit worth Rs. 10,000/- per annum. There is a provision of participation of the players in Domestic as well as International competitions on actual basis. Already a number of boys of this academy have represented India in the International competitions and have created new National records. Jugraj Singh, who proved to be a class drag flicker penalty corner specialist who got injured in September 2003, is the byproduct of this academy. He represented country in Champions Trophy Edition 2002, Cologne (Germany), Busan Asian games 2002, Senior World Cup (MAS) and Champions Trophy 2003 at Holland, he scored a number of goals in each tournament. Yadvinder Singh another student of this academy represented the country in Asian cup 2001 held in Malaysia and was the part of the gold medal winning team.

Another judoka of this academy Navjot Challa won gold medal in Junior Asia Cup held at Damascus (Syria) in the 50 Kg category. Amrit Pal Singh, an athlete of the academy created sensation by shattering the 30 year long jump record of T C Yuhana. He jumped 8.08 mtr. He also participated in Junior World Athletic Championship and Junior Asia Cup in 2002. He won Bronze medal at SAF Games in 2004. Another athlete of this Academy, Amritpal Singh Jr. and a Disc Thrower is showing consistent performance since he joined the Academy. He represented the country at the Junior Athletic Championship in the year 2002. In this very year he created a new record of Under-19 and a new national Under-18 record. Further improving, he shattered the old record and created a new All India Inter University record in the year 2003-04. Mr. Pargat Singh, another upcoming athlete is a Hammer Thrower. He won Gold Medal in All India

university games during 2003-04. He also created a new Pb. University Inter-College record with a throw of 60.92 meters.

5. Achievements & Conclusion

Achievements (2007-12)

- Rs. 200 crore spent on up-gradation of Sports infrastructure
- Set up 6 Astroturf hockey stadiums, 7 multi-purpose stadiums, Sports complex at Mohali, Punjab Institute of Sports at Ghudda & International Sports hostel
- Successful conduct of three World Cup Kabaddi Tournaments in 2010, 11 & 12 to promote Kabaddi, which is considered mother game of Punjabis
- First ever Shaheed-e-Azam Bhagat Singh Punjab State games organized.
- 5000 Rural gyms and 9000 Sports Kits worth Rs. 22 crore distributed amongst youth
- Comprehensive Sports policy worth Rs. 9.81 crore cash prize to medal winners of Olympic, Asian and Commonwealth Games
- Rs.1 crore for World Cup winner Indian cricket team's members from Punjab
- 3 percent quota for sports persons in government jobs
- 10 eminent sports persons given category 'A' jobs
- Rs. 91 crore provision for upgrading various sports facilities
- Rs.40 crore for centres of excellence in sports besides arranging quality international and national coaches for medal prospects.
- Rs.27 crore for creation as well as upgradation of sports facilities in Jalandhar.
- Rs.13 crore for Panchayat Yuva Krida Aur Khel Abhiyan (PYKKA) scheme for developing playgrounds in 1233 villages.
- Rs.1.75 crore for scholarship to 2200 sports persons of 13 disciplines on the grading lists of Punjab Sports Department. Players below 16 years and above 16 years to get Rs.500 and Rs.1000 per month respectively.
- 2nd Shaheed-e-Azam Bhagat Singh State Games to be organized during the current year.
- Punjab to establish Shaheed Baba Deep Singh Centre of excellence in Sports in Mohali with 4 regional campuses at Bathinda, Jalandhar, Ludhiana and Amritsar at a cost of Rs.100 crore.
- 2000 sports persons would be selected for these training centres and be provided quality training.
- Multi Gyms and Sports kits in large numbers to be provided to the youth throughout the state for creating health consciousness besides encouraging them for sports.

I hope that the things that we have discussed in this lecture were of some use to all of you. Thank you so much for watching.