ROWING INDIA Page 12021



IF YOUR MIND CAN CONCEIVE IT AND YOUR HEART CAN BELIEVE IT THEN YOU CAN ACHIEVE IT



PRESIDENT'S NOTE

RAJLAXMI SINGH DEO

From the President's desk

Dear Friends in Rowing,

The period from Mar 2020 to Apr 2021 has been rather tumultuous as we were hit by the 2nd wave of the Pandemic with vengeance, which derailed all our plans to resume competitive Rowing in our centres as well as the postponed Nationals.

On 9 May 2021 we received the sad news of the passing away of Late Shri Kalyanmoy Ghosh, past President of Rowing Federation of India, who will be missed among the Rowing circles of Kolkata, where he was omnipresent at all Regattas.



After much uncertainties, the Olympic Qualification Regatta for the 2021 Tokyo Olympic was held from 2 May 2021 to 7 May 2021. Our preparation for the event was very promising and our Federation had entered four boats - Jakar Khan in the Men Single Scull (M1X) and the pair of Arjun Lal Jat & Arvind Singh in the Lightweight Men Double Scull (LM2X). Ms. Khushpreet Kaur – Women Single Scull (W1X), Ms.Rukmani and Vindhya Sankat in the Lightweight Women Double Scull (LW2X). The M1x & LM2X qualified with excellent racing, but we were forced to drop the M1X due to FISA's policy of "One boat per Country". This was very disappointing since Jakar Khan had trained very hard and our expectations were that both the Men's crews would be at the Olympics. The girls could not qualify and we need more effort in our Women's programme to reach the standard to Asian levels of our senior women rowers.

We expect easing of the pandemic by Nov/Dec 2021 and the plan is to hold the Sub Junior, Junior and Senior National Rowing Championships during last week of Dec/1st week of Jan 2022.

The Lightweight Men crew accompanied by Ismail Baig will be traveling for Tokyo on 17 July 2021 and we wish them best of luck for a very good placing at the Games.

In closing, I wish the Indian contingent all the very best at the Olympic Games and request you all to join in cheering for Team India at Tokyo 2020.

Jai Hind!

Warmest Regards,

Rajlaxmi Singh Deo President

Rowing Federation of India

Newsletter | Quarter-3

The Sri Ramachandra Water Sports Centre (SWSC), attached to Centre for Sports Science, inside the serene Sri Ramachandra University campus at Porur, Chennai, with proximity to Chennai Airport & city centre, both about 12 kms away.SWSC is India's first flood-lit Water Sports facility with a 650m length man-made lake. It is a clean eco-friendly waterbody where exotic aquatic life and migratory birds from far across the globe thrive in large numbers. . It is an ideal water sports centre to cover many events.

KNOW YOUR CLUB

SRI RAMACHANDRA WATER SPORTS CENTRE

It has a large boat-house with a full fleet of new fibre-glass racing crafts for Rowing, Kayaking & Canoeing. SWSC has experienced coaches and a scientific performance enhancement system including BATLOGIC at par with the best in the world.

SWSC is recognized by the Rowing Federation of India (RFI), Indian Kayaking & Canoeing Association (IKCA) and affiliated to the Tamil Nadu Amateur Rowing Association (TARA) and Tamil Nadu Association for Kayaking & Canoeing (TACK). It is also approved as the Centre of Excellence for Rowing by SAI and houses our Khelo India Rowing Academy.



ATHLETES & ACTIVITIES

Top Indian Olympic rowers Sawarn Singh and Dattu Bhokanal, Asian medallists Dushyant Chauhan and Rohith Maradapa, have trained and undergone rehab camps at SWSC. Khelo India Rowers at SWSC have won several medals at the National & Asian level championships.

SWSC has hosted several national Rowing **Competitions & Camps including:**

Sub-Junior & 1st Inter-State Challenger Sprint National Rowing Championships

2016

Sub-Junior & 3rd Inter-state Challenger Sprint National Rowing Championships

2018

National Sub Junior Rowing Camp

2018

Indian Masters Nationals

2018

Khelo India Rowing Talent Identification Camp

> **APRIL** 2019

VISION

SWSC aspires to become a hub of water sports activities in our country by blending scientific methods and high-quality coaching to produce Olympic medals winners for our country, with a focus on women empowerment and equal participation



THE ART OF BEING AN ADMIN

DR. S ARUMUGAM

Founder, Centre for Sport Science

You are one who dons many hats, from being a doctor specialized in both surgery and medicine, to Professor, Dean of Sports Medicine at Sri Ramachandra Medical College, to the President of the Indian Association of Sports Medicine and founder of India's most State-of-the-art sports science centre.

- CSS.

A true polymath, you have also been an avid rower. How did you foray into rowing?

It was by a sheer twist of fate that I happened to get into rowing. During the summer vacations of 2010, I had enrolled my elder son into the Rowing summer camp conducted by Madras Boat Club. I used to drop him at the camp early every morning, and head out for a run. While waiting to pick him up, I would watch the kids rowing. Gradually, I got intrigued by the sport and joined as a PUC Member.

It was during my time as a PUC member that I met other like minded oarsmen, who shared a passion for rowing and formed a crew. While we put our best,most sincere efforts in training for the regattas, we left no stone unturned to have a jolly good time outside of the boat. The successes we had from the first regatta, egged us further into pursuing a more competitive level of rowing. To sum up, I would say, the hard work that we as a crew put on the water, followed by fun times we shared outside of the boat, is what I enjoy the most about Rowing. We call ourselves 'D-force'.

You have rowed and won medals at 3 Master's National Championships, could you share your most memorable moments?

My participation at the First Rowing Championship in the Men's Pair was for a pair event, which almost did not materialize, because my pair partner could not meet the minimum age criteria announced in the event. We were being coached by our friend and fellow oarsperson, Balaji Maradapa. Upon my partner's insistence, Balaji and I put in our entry for the Nationals and eventually won the Bronze medal!

However, my pick of championship races that I participated in, was most definitely the Gold medal race in the Men's 4 event at the Masters National in Kolkata. We were up against a formidable crew of ex-service men, who were past National Champions and Indian colours. They were much more experienced and physically better built than any of our crew members. In-fact even their Cox, was probably physically fitter than our crew members.

Even today when we recall every bit of the final race, the constant commands from our Cox in front of me and the shouting from the Bow, sitting furthest behind. Honestly, we never expected to win the race... but we went there to prove we could put up a good fight. Stealing the race and Gold from the crew who were pegged to win, we felt ecstatic!

Your experience at the World Master's Regatta.

After our gold at the second National Rowing Masters, we were keen to try out the competition at an international level and put in our entries for the World Masters Rowing at Ballarat, Australia. Unfortunately, after 4 months of practice, we could not make to this event. The subsequent year, we put in our entries for the World Masters at Brussels, Belgiumwhere our team rowed in the Pair, Fours, and an Eights.

"It was only after we reached Belgium, that we realised what we were up against. The seriousness of the races hit us hard, we were now rubbing shoulders with Olympic veterans from various nations. We got demolished by the competition in our 4's race, absolutely outsized, outqualified and thoroughly beaten.

Feeling disgusted with ourselves, we set a more realistic target of finishing the race with a decent timing, for our upcoming 8's race. However, as it stood, this too was an absolute no go! It is difficult to express the feeling that runs through an athlete when they stand at the start line of a race representing their country. We, though unintentionally, had this opportunity in our 8's race. We were lined up against crews from other countries on the start line and suddenly we hear them refer to us as 'Team India'. The feeling is incomparable, we felt numb this emotion was followed by a guest sense of responsibility dawned on us. It was at that moment, we all decided that we would do whatever it takes to put up our best effort and avoid embarrassment to our country, it was no longer about us. From the first stroke of the race to the finish, 2000 mts away, the race felt like eternity, we could feel every breath exploding in our lungs, but still gasping away, we gave it all we had. Of course we did not win the race, but we didn't lose either! By the time our Cox gave us the call of easy oars, we came in 5th, beating Denmark. Sitting in the boat at the finish, we were absolutely famished and the only thing we could hear was our breath. Recovering slowly, we heard the crowds applaud, so we too turned to applaud the winner of our race. However, what we witnessed can never be recreated in our lives. The judges, the winning crew, our competitors, and the audience were applauding us for putting up a great duel against Denmark, beating them by a whisker. That has been the most rewarding moment in my rowing experience till date. Many people feel that Masters Rowing events are just casual events where some elderly set of wannabe athletes gather together to compete and have a good time. Let me assure you, it is not! Every single athlete who participates at the World Masters is, dead serious when it comes to the sport, this is the moment they would like to relive their prime time as rowers and feel the adrenalin pump again."

66 ONLY AN OARSMAN CAN UNDERSTAND THAT FEELING!

As mastermind of the CSS, which boasts a High-Performance Centre, Biomechanics lab and 6 Sport Academies amongst many other things, you started this at a time when Sports Science in India was in its infancy? What prompted you to do this?

Sports persons of today require scientific training of the highest quality standards to compete at the international level. Even though India has enormous human resource potential, many of our sports persons are not able to reach international levels consistently due to lack of proper scientific training. India, being the second most populated nation in the world, should have theoretically won more than 10,000 Olympic medals so far, but we have won only 28 medals in total. If our dreams of becoming a Sports Super Power have to be realized, it is important that we lay the foundation for the scientific assessment and enhancement of sports performance of athletes in our country. I have had the opportunity to witness the scientific methods of sports development and athletic care being practiced.

Apart from Sports, your departments at Sri Ramachandra Medical College, also offer students Graduate and Post Graduate Degree in Sports Science? Could you elaborate on this?

My department offers various Sports Medicine and Sports Science courses at Undergraduate, Post-graduate and PhD levels along with some innovative certificate and fellowship programmes. We started the M.D. (Sports Medicine) for medical doctors first time in India. B.Sc. (Hons) Sports & Exercise Sciences at undergraduate level along with M.Sc. Sports & Exercise Psychology & M.P.T. Sports Physiotherapy at postgraduate level. We have partnered with the Sports Authority of India's National Institute of Sports, Patiala, and offer innovative Certificate Courses in Sports Sciences including Sports Physiotherapy. Sports Nutrition, Sports Psychology and Strength & Conditioning These are offered through a blended learning mode with a combination of online and face to face sessions. Many such certificate courses are planned for the future too.

You have several Khelo India training centres and athletes training under CSS, which goes to show that you are betting big on sport in India. Your vision for sports science in India.

At CSS, we have the Govt. of India approved "Khelo India" Academies currently for Rowing, Shooting and Weightlifting. We are expecting to approvals for many more sports academies in the near future. The sports scenario in our country is becoming better, with various stakeholders including the Central and State Governments, etc starting to work together. Indian sports community can look forward to a bright future. India, as an evolving Super Power, need not depend upon foreign training centres in the future since state-of-the-art facilities will be offered in Sports Medicine, Sports Education and Research in our country itself. Having already made an impression in the fields of Medical Tourism and Information Technology, the day is not far when the entire sporting world will be coming to India seeking our sports services.

Several international athletes train at the CSS, Doctor. Could you tell us about your work with them and share some of your favourite success stories?

Along with international athletes, many elite national athletes representing India at the Olympics and other major international events have been training and getting treatment at CSS. We are the official sports medicine & performance partners to the Chennaiyin FC team who are 2 times ISL champions. International cricket teams from Netherland, Afghanistan & Nepal have held training camps at our centre. We have had elite international coaches like Dav Whatmore for Cricket and currently partnered with M.S. Dhoni for fostering young talents in Cricket. Shri V Baskaran, Olympic Gold medallist, former Indian Hockey Captain and coach is at the helm of affairs in the Hockey front at our centre. Elite coaching, excellent infrastructure and strong sports science support is what we require to transform our sports history.

THE COACH'S JOURNEY

CHACKO KANDATHIL

Chacko Kandathil is amongst the most marquee coaches in the country. He holds the distinguished accomplishment of being both a FISA Coach, International Umpire & National Coach of the 1st women's team at the 1990 Asian Games. Ask those who know him and you will hear countless tales on the precision and impeccable work ethic that he espouses.

By ROHITH MARADAPA

Could you tell us about your journey into Rowing?

I happened to live close to Madras Boat Club. Joined the club in 1973 and there started my foray into rowing. Like everybody else I started in the maiden boats and quickly graduated thereon. My first coach was Raffath Sayeed, a Macklin Scull winner. I picked up my basics from him. He was pretty organized in his training methods. Soon I was selected to row for the Madras Colombo in the 'B' fours and started training under Borun Chanda. It was then that I discovered that I had a medical issue that prevented me from training hard. I persisted for a while but had to ultimately give up on medical advice. I actually had only a short stint of active rowing. But I had picked up enough form the 2 coaches to be able to guide other rowers.

You transitioned to coaching at an early age, how did you make the journey?

Yes, I did. When I had to give up active rowing, I was advised by the then Captain to take to coxing. Although I weighed 65 kgs, not the ideal weight for a cox, I was always invited by crews to sit in their boats essentially to

coach and guide the rowers. I took to this like fish to water and there began my journey into coaching.

I represented MBC at the 1975 ARAE in Calcutta as its cox. I later represented Tamilnadu in the first Nationals again in Calcutta in 1977 as a cox and won the silver medal. The concept of a cox-coach suited MBC perfectly as we did not have the facility of a follow boat. Even today I feel comfortable sitting in the boat and coaching rather than from outside it. When I sit as a cox it gives me a

better feel of the boat and picking up errors from each of the blades becomes easier.

Then came the big-ticket event, The 1981 Nationals in Pune which was the basis of selection for the 1982 Asian Games. I was Captain and Coach for the Tamilnadu team which won 4 of the available 6 Gold medals and made a real splash not only on the water but also in the media as we beat the much-fancied Army crews both in the coxless pairs and the single sculls. This performance was recog-

nized by the Tamil Nadu Sports Journalist's Association (TNSJA)and were later given the 'Best State Team' Award. This was the first time a Rowing team was awarded the same.

Your experience as a coach for India at the 1982 Asian Games.

My performance at 1981 Nationals prompted the selectors to put me down as one of the coaches for the 1982 games to be held at Jaipur, India. Until the 1982 Asian games we were like frogsin a well. The only knowledge that we could get on training and its methods were from seniors in clubs. There was no internet and no books available in these clubs. It was Mike Spracklen, who was appointed as the foreign, advisor, coach who

internet and no books available in these clubs. It was Mike Spracklen, who was appointed as the foreign advisor coach, who opened the doors for us to what happens in the international scene. Until that time we used to concentrate excessively on technique. He came to bear upon us the importance of physical training and long-distance rowing in order to be able to cope with the rigors of rowing 2000 m

Having Mike, a legendary international coach with us made a great deal of difference as he guided us through the process of coaching in a very systematic fashion. He backed every statement of his with sound logic and reasonina.

You successfully took the first Women's team ever to represent India at the '89 Asian Championship, Chandigarh and then the '90 Asian Games, Beijing.It certainly must have not been an easy feat?

In the year 1988 four girls from the boat club approached me and wanted me to train them. That was the time when women's rowing was gaining some degree of popularity in the country with it being included in the Nationals as an event. At first, I did not take them very seriously as I thought it was just another set of girls, who would come for a few days and then disappear. These four girls proved me totally wrong as they were there every day on time for the training. With the passage of time I started taking more interest in them as they seemed very keen. Starting with the win at the 1988 ARAE in Calcutta there was no looking back. With the performances coming, they got even more interested and some of them even put aside their studies to concentrate on rowing. This was extremely encouraging and I started giving more time to the crew at the expense of even the boy's crews for which there were complaints from certainsections of the boys.

The next big event was the Nationals in Pune, in 1989. In view of the Asian Championships coming up in Chandigarh that year the Nationals was to be conducted over the full 2000mtrs. This was extremely challenging both for the girls and for me as a coach. There was no prior experience in training for a 2000 mtr race. Thankfully the experience I gained in 1982 under Mike Spracklen, I was able to put the crew through the right processes. Finding enough water to train was extremely challenging at the MBC. They had to do long distance rowing by going up and down the river several times which is not the ideal way to do the same.

They came up with a satisfying performance at the Nationals winning the gold. They were immediately selected to train for the Asian Championships coming up in November that year. Considering the fact that they trained under challenging conditions and that the girls were not physically matched in strength and body weight they came up with good performances at the Asian championship with 2 Silver medals.

This took them to the next level, of planning to enter the 1990 Asian Games which was never done before by a women's team. They went through a grueling 9 months of training and they came up trumps by performing the qualifying time set by the Sports Authority of India.

At the Asian Games itself we could not perform as expected because we had to row in local boats that were twice as heavy as what our opponents had. We were given the option of rowing in the Men's boats without changing the settings which would have been equally bad and therefore we rejected the offer. The unique thing about this crew was that they were all from the same State and the same club. They incidentally won 3 consecutive ARAE's 1988, 1989, 1990 and set the trend for other women rowers.

They were also awarded the TNSJA award for the 'Best State team!

This is only the second time this award was given to the sport of Rowing and both the times I happened to be the coach.

Could you share your experiences on being both an International Umpire and a FISA Coach?

I took my International Umpires Exam in 2000. The exam was conducted in Chandigarh by Mike Tanner for all the Asian countries. I am proud to say that I stood first in the exam and this announcement was made by none other than Mike Tanner himself. That was indeed a proud moment for me. I am probably the only person in the country who has attended an Asian Games both as a Coach in the year 1990 and as an International Umpire in 2010.

What is your favorite memory from the sport?

There were several memorable moments, but if I am to pick one that stands out, it was when Mike Spracklen hailed me as the best Coach in the country, after an exhaustive examination both written and practical that he conducted in Pune in 1985. He told the Pune boys that I was the kind of coach the country required, and he marked me First in the examination too. That was indeed the proudest moment that I can think of as it came as a surprise and that too from a man like Mike who everyone respected as a coach par excellence.



Chacko - Indian team at Asian Games 1990 Opening Ceremony

MIKE SPRACKLEN TO THE PUNE ROWERS

66 THIS IS THE KIND OF COACH

(REFERRING TO ME)

YOUR COUNTRY REQUIRES >>



THE ROWERS SPEAK

The young Duo of Arjun Lal Jat & Arvind Singh, secured a convincing 2nd place in the Light Weight Men's Double Scull event (LM2x) at the Asian & Oceania Olympic Qualification Regatta, held in May, 2021 at Japan's Sea Forest Waterway. By doing so they have managed to keep up India's record of consecutively qualifying for the Olympics since the Sydney Games in 2000.

Arjun and Arvind, who hail from small towns in Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh made their way to rowing by chance.



ARJUN LAL JAT ARVIND SINGH

ON BEING ASKED HOW THEY TOOK UP THE SPORT, ARJUN SAID,

"I didn't know about rowing before, as a child I wasn't all that great at studies, but was very involved with field work and agriculture. But in 2018 soon after I joined the army we were introduced to rowing, and entered the National camp based on our performance at the Army selection regatta, since then we haven't looked back. I felt I found my passion."

During the camp for the Asian Games in 2018, all camp rowers were made to scull, to assess fitness and soon after the best rowers in the country were teamed up, through a rigorous process by the National coaches. That is when Arjun and Arvind, barely 20 years of age, had been paired together. Now they had been rowing together for 4 years. And have represented India at the Asian Games, World Rowing Championship, Asian Championship and even the Olympic Qualifiers. All the exposure from the events seems to have helped them. The boys say that it was indeed the exposure at the 2018 Asian Games and experience winning a medal at the 2019, Asian Rowing Championship which taught them about the nuances of the sport.

"We learnt how to pace our race, when to pick up, settle down and when to apply pressure on our competition. We learnt a lot about race strategy from these regattas" the boys quipped.

While the duo is known for their high spiritedness, they credit their success to team work.

Arjun declares "We've got to be together, understand and trust each other one hundred percent of the time". There's no place for misunderstanding, Arvind quips "Both our minds must be one."

With the team approaching the final leg of training for the Tokyo Olympic Games, the boys have big plans, they look forward to continually put their best step forward and aspire for Gold in the 2022, Asian Games. "Apart from rowing my biggest passion is Gold, and we will do our best to secure it' Arjun signs off. We are sure that their dedication along with support given by their coaches, management and the government they will realize their dream.



ASIAN & OCEANIA OLYMPIC QUALIFICATION REGATTA 2021



The 7-member contingent that went to Japan for the Olympic Qualification Regatta brought laurels, with the LM2x rowers qualifying by placing 2nd. Even, Jakhar Khan, the sculler came in 4th place, meaning he was eligible for qualification, but rules stipulate, only one boat per country can qualify via the Continental Qualifier Regatta, and hence the LM2x with a better ranking will be the only team to represent India at the Tokyo Olympic Games.



National Coach, Ismail Baig, says that despite the struggle of training for nearly a year in bio bubble conditions has paid off with Arjun Lal & Arvind Singh qualifying for the Olympic Games.

The most difficult part of the Qualifying Regatta was the Covid testing protocols where the entire crew and support staff were temperature tested around 8 times a day. Ismail Baig was quoted in Sportstar saying, 'With the kind of strict protocols in place, we were worried more about being disqualified for any breach or rules or testing positive for reasons beyond our control than on the qualification itself.'

Kudos to our entire contingent for their performance at the Qualification Regatta. We wish our LM2x all the very best for the upcoming Olympic Games.



SPECIAL GENERAL BODY MEETING



The Special General Body Meeting of the Rowing Federation of India was held virtually over the zoom platform on the 18th April 2021 from 10.35am. The main agenda for the meeting was to amend the existing Memorandum and Articles of Association of the Federation. It was a marathon session, with a tea and freshening up break in between to enable delegates to take a breather and come back and join the online meeting. It was







a first of sorts for the federation to embark on this massive exercise of altering the Memorandum and Articles of Association through screen sharing and discussion, in one go.

As many as delegates from 13 states actively participated with their questions and suggestions. The meeting lasted close to 2 hours and 45 minutes with a ten-minute break in the middle.

The new rules are compliant and closely aligned to the Sports Code of the Government of India, under whose directions we had to embark on this exercise.

These new rules come into immediate effect i.e. from 18.04.2021 and a copy of the same has been upload to our website www.indiarowing.com

OBITUARY



ANIL KUMAR

Champion rower who had represented India four times and had won 8 silver medals for our country from 2009 to 2013. Born in 27th Dec 1987, he was a winner all his life. He had joined the Indian Army and was considered an asset

always in any boat. He joined Haryana Police as an Inspector after retiring from Indian Army. He will be greatly missed by all members of Rowing fraternity.



KALYANMOY GHOSH

One of the founder member of Rowing Federation of India (RFI) & West Bengal Rowing Association (WBRA). He was also the past president of RFI & WBRA and Calcutta Rowing Club, oldest rowing club in Asia.

He became the first Indian Captain of boats of CRC, when British Expatriate left Kolkata. He was a Calcutta University Blue in rowing and was passionate lover of the sport. His contribution towards the development & betterment of Rowing is immeasurable. He will be greatly missed by all members of Rowing fraternity.

NATIONAL NEWS

INTERNATIONAL OLYMPIC DAY

The International Olympic day celebrates the founding of International Olympic Committee and the modern Olympic movement. This year the day was exactly a month before the much awaited Tokyo Olympics which will start from 23rd July. The International Olympic Day is observed to celebrate sports and health.

Rowing is one of the oldest Olympic Sports and India has come a long way in rowing under the administration of RFI. Many states of India celebrated Olympic day by either hosting state or club competitions or by setting a specific fun workout activity routine for that day. However, this year due to the pandemic situation, competitions in rowing were not so much held, but the only theme this year was to stay healthy, stay strong and active with some workout on that day.



AS FAMOUSLY ORGA KORBUT PUTS IT

66 THIS ABILITY TO CONQUER ONESELF IS NO DOUBT THE MOST PRECIOUS OF ALL THINGS SPORTS BESTOWS.



ROWER & IOC YOUNG LEADER MEETS



DR. NARINDER BATRA

Rohith Maradapa, rower and International Olympic Committee's Young Leader from India (2019-20), met with Dr.Narinder Dhruv Batra, President, Indian Olympic Association during his visit to Chennai in April, 2021. Upon the successful delivery of his social impact project 'Just Play India', Rohith presented to Dr.Batra, the project completion report. Panasonic and the IOC supported the project.

The project aims to empower disadvantaged youth through sport, using a community learning based approach. Several national and state team rowers have contributed to the project.

PUNJAB STATE INDOOR

ROWING CHAMPIONSHIP

Punjab Amateur Rowing Association successfully hosted the State Indoor Rowing Championship on 28th March 2021. More than 200 rowers had participated in various category events covering, Sub junior, Junior and Open category.













