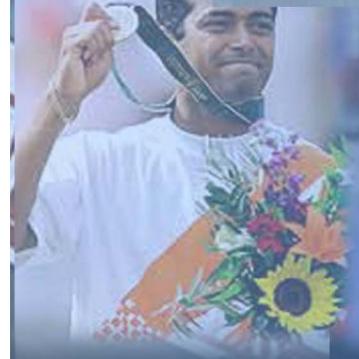




# REPORTING SPORTS



ATLÉTICO DE KOLKATA

Season

INDIAN PREMIER LEAGUE

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RUNE WARRIORS INDIA

# Reporting Sports

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## **Preface**

The condition of sports and sports journalism in India is almost similar. Despite being home to over one billion people, India has failed to become a sporting powerhouse in the world. Similarly, despite having a long cherished history of the press in the country, sports journalism is yet an emerging profession. This is quite in contrast with some of the most developed countries of the world.

Countries like the USA, UK, France, Australia etc. are not only developed, but are also sporting powerhouses where sports journalism share equal status, concerns and pride along with other streams of journalism.

In India, sports journalism still suffers from old biases and myths. It is still believed by many that this is a profession for the 'non-serious' types of journalists; that one doesn't require much hard work and intelligence to become a sports journalist. All such beliefs should now be kicked into a dustbin.

Sports Journalism, as a profession, these days is as challenging as any other branch of journalism. Now it is not only about the happenings of a sporting event, but also about its various implications. It is also about the law of the land, crime, controversies, scams, trends, statistics, history, implications, personalities, politics, diplomacy, economics and many other items which constitute the major ingredients of news every day. This can be understood from the fact that sports stories these days regularly find some space on the front pages of newspapers and in the prime time programmes of TV news channels.

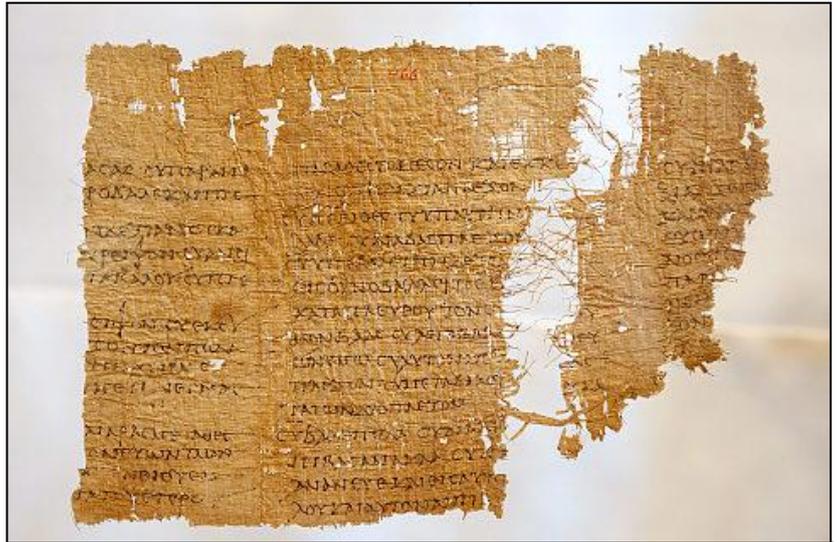
Sports Journalism these days is also about public opinions, their expectations and their interests. People love to play and read about various

sports. While this is an exciting prospect for sports journalists, it also offers challenges for them as their readers are most of the time well aware of all the happenings in the world of sports.

Happy reading.

# 1. Sports Journalism: A Historical Perspective

The word 'sport' comes from the Old French *desport* meaning 'leisure'. American English uses the term 'sports' to refer to this general type of recreational activity, whereas other regional dialects use the singular 'sport'. The Persian word for "sport" is based on the root *bord*, meaning 'winning'. The Chinese term for *sporttuyu*, connotes 'physical training'. The Modern Greek term for 'sport' is *athlitismos*, directly cognate with the English terms "athlete" and "athleticism".<sup>1</sup>



Columbia's Butler library displays ancient wrestling coaching manual dating to 200 A.D. (Howard Simmons/News)

The oldest definition of 'sport' in English (1300) is of anything humans find amusing or entertaining. Other meanings include gambling and events staged for the purpose of gambling; hunting; and games and diversions, including ones that require exercise. Roget's defines the noun sport as an "activity engaged in for relaxation and amusement" with synonyms including diversion and recreation. An example of a more sharply defined meaning is "an athletic activity where one competitor or a team of competitors plays against another competitor or group of competitors (with) a conclusive method of scoring...not determined by a judge"<sup>2</sup>

There are artefacts and structures that suggest that the Chinese engaged in sporting activities as early as 4000 BC. Gymnastics appears to have been a popular sport in China's ancient past. Monuments to the Pharaohs indicate that a number of sports, including swimming and fishing, were well-developed and regulated several thousands of years ago in ancient Egypt. Other Egyptian sports included javelin throwing,

<sup>1</sup> The Sociology of Sport and Physical Education by Dr Anurag Saxena (Published by Pinnacle Technology, 2011)

<sup>2</sup>ibid

high jump, and wrestling. Ancient Persian sports such as the traditional Iranian martial art of Zourkhaneh had a close connection to the warfare skills. Among other sports that originate in ancient Persia are polo and jousting.

A wide range of sports were already established by the time of Ancient Greece and the military culture and the development of sports in Greece influenced one another considerably. Sports became such a prominent part of their culture that the Greeks created the Olympic Games, which in ancient times were held every four years in a small village in the Peloponnesus called Olympia.

Sports have been popular in India since ancient times. Historians believe that many sports (games) like hockey, archery, wrestling and chess originated in India. Indian history also beckons of an interesting link between Greece (The Motherland of Sports in the world) and India which dates back to 975 B.C. when both the nations pioneered in the sports (games) like chariot racing and wrestling. The golden history of sports in India is also evident in epics like *Ramayana*, *Mahabharata* etc.<sup>3</sup>

Whereas *Ramayana* mentions games like hunting, archery, horse riding, swimming as royal sports, *Mahabharata* mentions sports like dicing, gymnastics, wrestling, chess (*Shatranj*) and *gilli danda*. rope fighting, discus, sword fighting, etc. have been mentioned in the *Puranas*. In the late Vedic Era, besides sports, Yoga and Meditation, the inevitable parts of the toughest "Yogashastra" made India, acquire the seat of spiritualism, all over the world.



Sports in ancient Egypt

During the Buddhist period also, Indian sport reached the very peak of excellence. Gautam Buddha himself, is said to have been an ace at archery, chariot - racing, equitation and hammer- throwing. The technique of *Pranayama* or breathing control, which is a prominent feature of Tae-kwan-do, Karate, Judo and Sumo wrestling

<sup>3</sup>[www.thisismyindia.com/sports/](http://www.thisismyindia.com/sports/)

was one of the many techniques spread in the Far East by Buddhist pilgrims from India. The Mughal emperors were avid patrons of sports, especially wrestling.<sup>4</sup>

Sports have been organised and regulated from the time of the Ancient Olympics. However, the story of the birth and the growth of sports journalism is not very old. In fact, horses, which some palaeontologists believe may have originally evolved from dinosaurs, may claim to have provided the first glimmers of sports journalism. In 1727, *The Racing Calendar* offered information about races and their results. In 1791, *The General Stud book* was added. The English were curious about the lineage of their horses too.<sup>5</sup>



Daniel Mendoza

Boxing was also a very popular in London. In 1789, the boxing champion Daniel Mendoza wrote a book titled *The Art of Boxing* giving birth to what became known as the Mendoza School (or Jewish School), a novel form of boxing where brains in effect supplanted brawn.<sup>6</sup> From these times, the publications for men told of great battles between men and if they fought for fun, exercise or settling a wager. Even back then, the details involving blood, bruises and broken bones excited men. Sports gained popularity after readers caught on to the idea of beating someone without getting in trouble. Women were not allowed in any sports establishment in London, and most had no desire to change

this rule.<sup>7</sup>

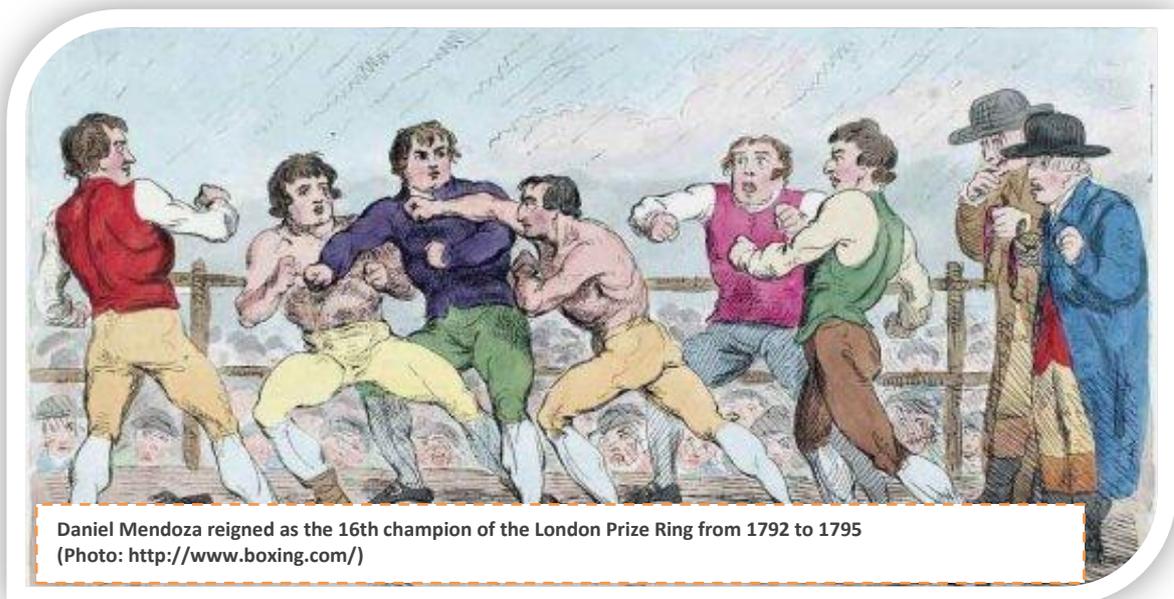
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<sup>4</sup>[http://sports.indiapress.org/ancient\\_indian\\_games.php](http://sports.indiapress.org/ancient_indian_games.php)

<sup>5</sup><http://www.worldissues360.com/index.php/a-brief-history-of-sports-journalism-2-55854/>

<sup>6</sup>[http://www.boxing.com/daniel\\_mendoza\\_is\\_bigger\\_always\\_better.html](http://www.boxing.com/daniel_mendoza_is_bigger_always_better.html)

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.worldissues360.com/index.php/a-brief-history-of-sports-journalism-2-55854/>



In the 1800s, the idea of basketball took shape. It was invented in December 1891 by Canadian James W. Naismith. An instructor at the YMCA Training School in Massachusetts, he sought a suitable indoor game to keep his students fit and warm during the cold New England winters.<sup>8</sup> With the advent of mass media, the popularity of sports, aided with the fruits of industrialisation, increased like never before.

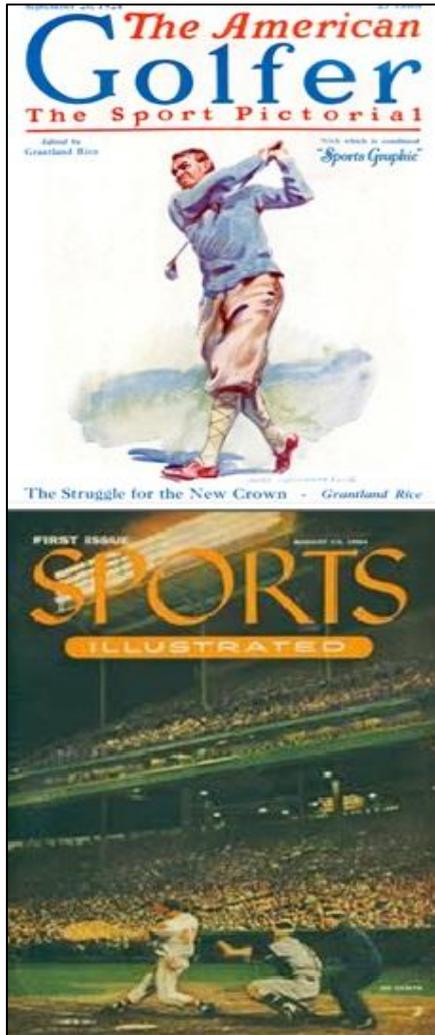
The years preceding the First World War, golf, which has its early origins in Scotland, brought a new life for golf in America. The first US Amateur Championship and the US Open were played at Newport Country Club, Rhode Island in 1895.<sup>9</sup> It became a popular game and had several magazines devoted to it. This included *The American Golfer*. Founded and published by Walter Travis, one of the world's most prolific amateur golfers of all time, in 1908, the magazine was considered as the most influential golf magazine of its time. Its covers featured golf greats, including Bobby Jones, Walter Hagen and Byron Nelson. Travis, and other authors, used it as an effective voice for their views.<sup>10</sup> The magazine was later acquired by Conde Nast in 1928.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>8</sup><http://www.olympic.org/basketball-equipment-and-history?tab=history>

<sup>9</sup><http://www.igfgolf.org/about-golf/history/>

<sup>10</sup><http://www.worldgolfhalloffame.org/walter-travis/>

<sup>11</sup><https://www.condenast.com/about-us/heritage/1928/american-golfer-acquired>



The Depression and World War II affected the both the popularity and growth of sports. It was the time when millions of men across the USA, the UK and most of the European countries left home to fight for their countries. However, sports returned with all its glory after the end of the Second World War. People all over the world now wanted to forget the memories of the war and enjoy life. Thus began the Golden Age of Sports and also the birth of present day professional journalism.

*Sports Illustrated* (SI), arguably one of the most popular sports magazines was published in August 1954. It was started by Henry Luce, the creator of *Time* magazine, as an attempt to diversify the publications owned by Time Inc. The first issues, however, lacked focus, covering both popular spectator sports and elite activities such as rugby; as a result, the magazine struggled in its early years.

After 1960, when Andre Laguerre took over as managing editor, *Sports Illustrated* focused on premier sporting events, allowing people to read more about what they had seen on television or read about in newspapers. Laguerre was thus able to gain millions of new readers and generate billions of dollars in profit. With Laguerre at the helm, *Sports Illustrated* began to feature both high-calibre photography and outstanding sports journalism. The magazine also published occasional pieces by such literary giants as William Saroyan, Robert Frost, and William Faulkner.<sup>12</sup>

During Laguerre’s reign, the advertising revenues of SI grew from \$12 million to \$72 million and circulation increased to 2.2 million from 900,000. In addition, Laguerre assembled an editorial team who elevated sports writing to more than merely reporting on the winners and losers of particular games.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>12</sup><http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/1476721/Sports-Illustrated>

<sup>13</sup> Michael MacCambridge, *The History of Sports Illustrated Magazine*(Hyperion Books)

In January 1964, the first issue of "Sports Illustrated swimsuit issue" showing a woman with a white two-piece suit caused an instant reaction, though the picture was "tame by today's standards." In the early days of the magazine African Americans did not enjoy social equality. But SI made no distinction and regularly featured black athletes including Muhammad Ali and Michael Jordan. In fact Ali and Jordan were featured on the front cover more times than any other athletes. It featured non-athlete faces too, including Bob Hope, Ernest Hemingway and President John F. Kennedy.

Newspapers in USA and UK provided sports coverage from the first days of publishing, although the coverage was basic and sparse. Writers often did not know much about the sports themselves. Occasionally, a sportswriter would actually have a working knowledge of the game.

Times changed when accuracy and details became more important. This was when the focus was on the sensational bits of news and facts often went unverified, if they were facts at all. As credible papers debuted, sportswriters needed more knowledge of the sport they covered. In the age of TV and internet, sports has become a multi-billion dollar industry now, demanding better, exhaustive and in depth coverage.

## **Sports Journalism in India**

Sports journalism in India does not have a long history. It began in the early thirties. As M.V.Kamath wrote (in Media Mimansa, July-Sept. 2008), "*The Free Press Journal (FPJ)* was practically the first newspaper in India to devote a full page to sports. S. Sadanand, the founder editor of *FPJ* appointed A.F.S. Talyarkhan, then the most celebrated sports commentator, as his first sports editor and it made *FPJ* very popular. Both circulation and revenues boomed."

It was in late thirties that *Times of India*, Bombay (now Mumbai) started a separate sports page. This bold and 'revolutionary' step was resented by some readers who had no interest in sports but the majority of the readers liked it. Its sports page became so popular that other

newspapers followed suit. But till independence few newspapers had regular sports page.

Among those few was *The Hindu*. Apart from being the pioneer in designing and developing the concept of the sports page, *The Hindu* also played a consistent and committed role as a promoter of sports, long before the theme of sponsorship acquired its present day dynamics.

The initiative towards devoting a separate section to sport in the daily newspaper came from the then publisher, Kasturi Gopalan, ‘the father of the sports page’, as Rangaswamy Parthasarathy noted in “A Hundred Years of *The Hindu*.” Lending a helping hand to Kasturi Gopalan, a fine hockey and tennis player in his college days was the first sportswriter of *The Hindu*, Murugesu Mudaliar.<sup>14</sup>

It was the Hindu Group (Kasturi and Sons), which launched the first sports journal in India: *Sports and Past Time*, in 1947 at a time when Test cricket and Wimbledon resumed after the Second World War. S.K.

Gurunathan, a fine sports journalist of his time started the Indian Cricket Annual in 1946 and one year later the *Sports and Past Time*.<sup>15</sup>

It established its primacy thanks to the articles and features from renowned writers such as Neville Cardus, Jack Fingleton, S. K. Gurunathan, Alex Bannister and top columnists in each discipline.

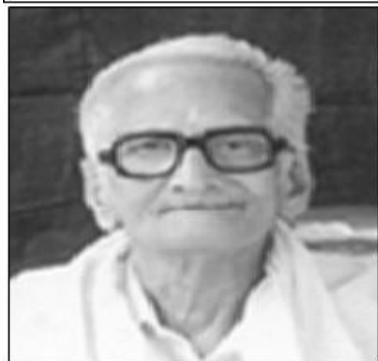
Sports journalism started developing after independence. It developed fast. At present almost all mainstream newspapers have separate sports page/s and



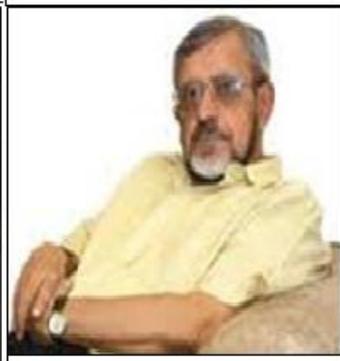
K. Sundar Rajan



Muli Narudi



V. M. Balachandran



Kishore Brimani

<sup>14</sup>An enduring love affair with sports, S. Thyagarajan, *The Hindu*, September 13, 2003

<sup>15</sup><http://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Visakhapatnam/the-hindu-launches-redesigned-sportstar/article3686311.ece>

dedicated staff to generate and design content for the sports pages. During major sports tournament, sports news occupies prominent position in the front page. Periodicals devoted to sports are published in almost all languages. Ananda Bazar Patrika Group published *Sportsworld* in mid 1970s from Calcutta. It nurtured young journalists such as Rohit Brijnath, Mudar Patherya and quizmaster Derek O'Brien.

It closed down in mid 1990s. The Hindu Group published *The Sportstar* in Madras in 1978. It switched to the tabloid form before reverting to the magazine format in 1980. From the January 28, 2006 issue, the magazine changed its name from *The Sportstar* to *Sportstar* and moved from the magazine format to a tabloid one.

Sports journalism gradually evolved as a specialized field. Among all sports cricket is the most popular in India. In fact 'crime, cricket, cinema' form the bulk of news in tabloid press. After television made its entry in a big way, sports journalism further developed. As television showed 'what is happening', print media journalist tried to focus on the intricacies of the game. It tried to focus on 'why and what next'. Internet came as a boon for sports journalism, as it had the plus points of both the media. At present there are several hundred sites focusing exclusively on sports in India.

An interesting aspect of present state of sports journalism is, along with the journalists, sportspersons are also actively engaged in the field. They write columns and commentary, and anchor sports-based television shows.

This was what veteran sports journalist K. Sundar Rajan wrote about the change in sports journalism in India in the last 6 decades: "It has been a long way from TT journalism to LT journalism. By TT I mean telegram and telephone and LT represents laptop. In my early days I had to depend upon the good offices of the postal department, particularly the telegraph section if my reports had to reach in time. It is not so now — the reporter carries a laptop, types the report as the match is in progress,

connects the wire and instantly the copy is relayed to the desk for editing.”<sup>16</sup>

Among the pioneers of sports journalism in India mention must be made of Kishore Bhimani<sup>17</sup>, K. Sundar Rajan<sup>18</sup>, Moti andi<sup>19</sup>, V. M. Balachandran (popularly known as Vimsy)<sup>20</sup> and T. D. Partha.

### **Sports Journalism in Odisha:**

Sports Journalism does not have a long history in Odisha. In fact, till 1970s many editors in mainstream Odia newspapers did not consider sports newsworthy. It was only after early Eighties that sports got wide coverage. There were two reasons. The first was the spread of television. People saw Asiad in 1982. India won Cricket World Cup in 1983. Interest for sports increased many fold. The second reason was the arrival of off set printing, which made printing of photographs easy and cost effective. *Sambad* started the trend of giving one full page to sports with large photographs. Other newspapers followed suit and soon it became a trend. *Indian Express* has also been encouraging sports journalism from the inception of its Odisha edition. *Samaja* used to publish sports news sporadically. But it devoted more space and attention to sports only in the last two decades.

Several Odia sports magazines were published from early Eighties, mostly in Cuttack, which happened to be the centre of Sporting as well as Publishing activity in Odisha. Sports journalism is assuming greater importance in Odisha as interest of common people regarding sports is increasing. Athletes of Odisha are doing well in several disciplines.

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<sup>16</sup> *Everything has changed, yet the spirit remains*, K. Sundar Rajan, The Hindu, September 13, 2003

<sup>17</sup> Kishore Bhimani studied in London School of Economics. Strayed into cricket commentary, and stayed put to become one of the finest sports commentator and writer. He wrote extensively in The Statesman.

<sup>18</sup> K. Sundar Rajan was associated with The Hindu for over four decades as a sportswriter.

<sup>19</sup> Moti Nandi (10 July 1931 - 3 January 2010) one of the pioneers of Bengali sports journalism was also known for being a brilliant novelist. Most of his novels were based on sports and sportspersons. Among his most famous novels are ‘Striker’, ‘Stopper’, ‘Koni’, and ‘Kalabati’. These novels depict the fighting spirit and struggle of sportspersons and their ultimate triumph over all odds. Nandi was awarded the ‘Sahitya Academy Award’ for his novel *Sada Kham* in 1991.

<sup>20</sup> V.M. Balachandran, a pioneer in the field of sports journalism in Kerala died on 9 January 2010.

People want to know more about them and the sporting discipline. Media houses are trying to cater to the information need of people. Almost all mainstream newspapers and television channels have started having a separate sports desk with dedicated personnel. Although cricket is the staple of the sports page, other sports also found their way in. In fact it now occupies more pages. Coverage of tournaments in rural areas also finds coverage now, which was practically unthinkable before 1980s. The sports pages are replete with colour pictures, titbit about major tournament and players, columns by prominent sports persons. Sport news and analysis is increasingly finding more space and time on television. Once an exclusive male bastion, it is now being frequented by female journalists as well, some of them doing exceptionally well.

It is finding space on internet too. The first website on Odisha sports: [www.orisports.com](http://www.orisports.com) was launched on February, 2008.



Amal Ray and Bhairab Mohanty<sup>21</sup> used to contribute reports and features on sports to *Samaja*. Shyamakanta Pattnaik was a football referee. He used to send sports news to *Samaja*. Later he joined *Samaja* and handled the Sports Desk.

Sanatan Pani (born 20 Jan. 1958), a Law Graduate started his career in Sports Journalism in Cuttack with a couple of Sports magazines including *Sports Information*. He joined *Sambad* in 1984 and worked there till 1995. He left *Sambad* and did freelancing for several publications for two years and then joined *Indian Express* in 1997. By early 2013, he is working as Principal Correspondent-Sports in *Indian Express*, Bhubaneswar edition.



Sambit Mohapatra also started his career as a sports journalist from *Sambad*. Later he shifted to visual media and on end 2010 came back to print media. Among the other sports journalists active in the Nineties through present time, mention must be made about Sanjeeb Biswal, Suresh Swain, Niranjana Reddy and Devi Prasanna Mohanty. Sports and Youth Services Department of Government of

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<sup>21</sup> Bhairab Mohanty, an able sports administrator, was instrumental in establishing Barabati Stadium in Cuttack in 1958.

Odisha has instituted Biju Patnaik Outstanding Sports Journalist Award for distinguished Sports Persons and Sports Journalists of the State from 2001. Journalists who have won this award are Sanatan Pani (2002), Sambit Mohapatra and Ms Samikhya Pattnaik (2003). Ms Samikhya Pattnaik was the first person from the visual media and first lady to have won this award. In 2004 this award was conferred on Himansu Shekhar Pati Mishra. Susanta Kumar Mishra won this award in 2005. In 2006 it was given to Suresh Swain. Sanjeeb Biswal, Debi Prasanna Mohanty won this award in 2007 and 2008 respectively. D. Niranjan Reddy and Gyan Ranjan Mishra won it on 2009. Tapan Swain, Debasish Sundaray, Sarbeswar Mohanty and Umakanta Mishra won this award for 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013 respectively.



Debasish Sundaray (Sambad)



Sarbeswar Mohanty (Samaya)



Tapan Swain (Dharitri)



Umakanta Mishra (ETV)

## 2. Reporting Sports: Basics

**T**he fundamental objective of journalism is to serve the people with news, views, comments and information on matters of public interest in a fair, accurate, and unbiased manner. To this end, the media is expected to conduct itself in keeping with certain norms of professionalism, universally recognised. The norms enunciated below and other specific guidelines appended thereafter, when applied with due discernment and adaptation to the varying circumstance of each case, will help the journalist to self-regulate his or her conduct.<sup>22</sup>

There are no specific guidelines for sports journalists. However, they must follow the norms of journalistic conduct issued by the Press Council of India (PCI) and the commonly accepted best practices like upholding truth, objectivity, fairness etc.

### 1. Accuracy and Fairness

- i) Journalists should eschew writing/publication of inaccurate, baseless, graceless, misleading or distorted material. All sides of the core issue or subject should be reported. Unjustified rumours and surmises should not be set forth as facts.
- ii) Newspapers should play a positive role in response to rumours affecting the credibility of financial institutions having public interface.
- iii) While it is the duty of the press to expose the wrong doings that come to their notice, such reports need to be backed by irrefutable facts and evidences.

### 2. Pre-Publication Verification

On receipt of a report or article of public interest, the editor should check with due care and attention its factual accuracy apart from other authentic sources- with the person or the organisation concerned to elicit his/her or its version, comments or reaction and publish the same alongside with due correction in the report where necessary. In the event of lack or absence of response, a footnote to that effect may be appended to the report.

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<sup>22</sup>This section has been adapted from 'Principle and Ethics' by the Press Council of India ([http://presscouncil.nic.in/Content/62\\_1\\_PrinciplesEthics.aspx](http://presscouncil.nic.in/Content/62_1_PrinciplesEthics.aspx))

**3. Caution against defamatory writings**

- i) Journalists should not write/publish anything which is manifestly defamatory or libellous against any individual/organisation unless after due care and verification, there is sufficient reason/evidence to believe that it is true and its publication will be for public good.
- ii) Truth is no defence for publishing derogatory, scurrilous and defamatory material against a private citizen where no public interest is involved.
- iii) No personal remarks which may be considered or construed to be derogatory in nature against a dead person should be published except in rare cases of public interest, as the dead person cannot possibly contradict or deny those remarks.

**4. Right to Privacy**

The Press shall not intrude or invade the privacy of an individual, unless outweighed by genuine overriding public interest, not being a prurient or morbid curiosity. So, however, that once a matter becomes a matter of public record, the right to privacy no longer subsists and it becomes a legitimate subject for comment by the Press and the media, among others. Special caution is essential in reports likely to stigmatise women.

**5. Recording interviews and phone conversation**

- i) Journalists shall not tape-record anyone's conversation without that person's knowledge or consent, except where the recording is necessary to protect the journalist in a legal action, or for other compelling good reason.
- ii) Journalists shall, prior to publication, delete offensive epithets used during such conversation

**6. Conjecture, comment and fact**

- i) Journalists should not pass on or elevate conjecture, speculation or comment as a statement of fact. All these categories should be distinctly identified.
- ii) Cartoons and caricatures depicting good humour are to be placed in a special category of news that enjoy more liberal attitude.

**Eschew suggestive guilt**

Journalists should eschew suggestive guilt by association. They should not name or identify the family or relatives or associates of a person convicted or accused of a crime, when they are totally innocent and a reference to them is not relevant to the matter being reported.

7. **Eschew obscenity and vulgarity**

Journalists shall not publish anything which is obscene, vulgar or offensive to public good taste.

8. **Headings not to be sensational/provocative and must justify the matter printed under them**

9. **Avoid crass commercialism**

While newspapers are entitled to ensure, improve or strengthen their financial viability by all legitimate means, the Press shall not engage in crass commercialism or unseemly cut-throat commercial competition with their rivals in a manner repugnant to high professional standards and good taste.

10. **Avoid professional misconduct**

Blackmailing or extortion of money from people under threat of maligning them through the columns of newspaper amounts to gross violation of journalistic norms.

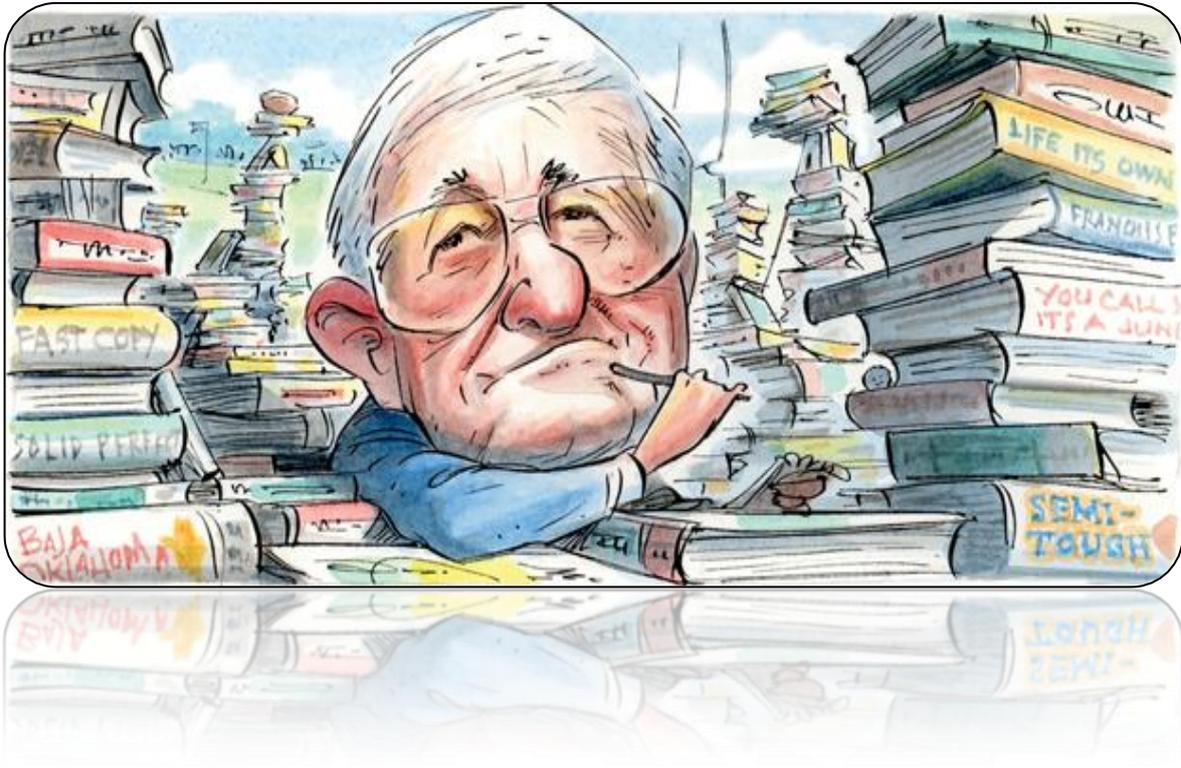
11. **Avoid plagiarism**

Using or passing off the writings or ideas of another as one's own, without crediting the source, is an offence against ethics of journalism.

12. **Avoid unauthorised lifting of news**

The practice of lifting news from other newspapers publishing them subsequently as their own, ill-comports the high standards of journalism. To remove its unethicity the 'lifting' newspaper must duly acknowledge the source of the report.

### 3. Writing Sports Stories



**T**he world of sports today is the most profitable part of the round-the-clock news cycle that relentlessly churns out news stories. Writing sports stories for print and web media, therefore, require proper planning, understanding of various issues related to sports and the style which is a bit different from other kinds of news stories.

Sports journalists enjoy a certain degree of freedom to be informal yet informative. They have to present the facts, statistics, and all other details yet remain creative. They should not only be updated about their domain area but also understand their audience/readers.

#### **Know your audience first**

There are at least three categories of people who are interested in sports-related contents. As a sports journalist, you should try to write or report while keeping their expectations, interests, demands, and preferences. Attempt, however, to stay clear of controversies and biases.

### 1. Participants

People who play sport, even at a fairly low level, want to see the results of their own team and of their future opponents published or broadcast, and the league tables published, so that they know how good their next opponents are likely to be. They also want to read or hear reports of their matches, especially when they have just won.

### 2. Spectators/followers

People who regularly watch or follow a sports team want to see the results and reports of their team's matches, and information about the team. Most of the times they like to read about their teams' matches even if they have already watched themselves, especially if their team won.

### 3. Casual audience

While most sports audiences are very keen and knowledgeable, there are some who casually follow sports, or are occasionally interested in sports-related content. To gain their attention, you should try to innovate, be creative and write in a way that anyone can understand. For example: A keen golfer will know what a birdie, an eagle, a chip and a putt are, but a casual reader may not. Therefore you may consider carrying a panel occasionally, alongside a sports report, explaining the terms used in that sport.



Sports stories should be informative as well as entertaining. At the same time, it should be balanced. It shouldn't be over critical of a team or a player or over praising for another team. There is always a tendency, however, among journalists to be hyper-supportive of the teams belonging to their own countries, states, localities etc.

This is more so visible in the sports pages of Indian newspapers where journalists often resort to jingoism. This is not advisable as sports journalism can fully evolve as a respectable profession only by promoting analytical sports journalism. And effort should be made in this regard not only by the media houses or

regulatory bodies, rather by individual journalists.

Among the several benefit of sports, the most significant for the society are the inculcation of sportsmanship and the sportsman spirit. Sports journalism should also be aimed for promoting this idea.

### **Steps for writing sports stories for print and web media**

1. Generation of story idea
2. Understanding of various issues related to sport to be reported
3. Writing

Sports stories do not have fixed templates. Every story is different and thus requires different treatment. However, the process of writing starts with the generation of the story idea.

For example: If you are required to cover a World Cup Hockey match in New Delhi, then you should start with thinking and noting down various story ideas that can be used for developing your stories.

While the easiest story will be about the match results and performances of players and teams, generation of other stories would require more attention, planning, and research. These stories could be about:

- People's interest in hockey. Whether the number of spectators of hockey matches have increased or decreased or remains constant in India at a time when the performance of the Indian hockey team has been very poor in recent times.
- Behaviour, opinions, body languages of hockey administrators, players etc
- Strength and weakness of rival teams, popular players, interviews etc.
- Security forces, vendors etc. How international matches affect their lives? etc.

The second step is about the understanding of various issues related with the sport you are supposed to report. This can be done only by following, reading, listening and talking over a period of time.

The third step is writing. Like all other news stories, a sports news story also consists of three important parts.

- Headline
- Lead
- Body

However, the difference lies in its use of sharp and lively language. In past, sports writers used to be fond of flowery prose. However, most of them now avoid flowery language. Today's sports pages consist of more balanced writing than ever before.

### **Examples of some sports news Headlines**

- Sreejesh earns India first points with 1-1 draw against Spain
- Ronaldo tops riskiest online searches list for footballers
- Brazil coach predicts WC final against Argentina
- Sreejesh earns India first points with 1-1 draw against Spain
- Indian Bank, IOB storm into quarters
- India slips to third; Kohli remains on top
- 'Athletes have to endure tough conditions'
- Mayookha wins gold, qualifies for CWG
- Sharapova makes it back to French Open final
- Hockey World Cup: Aussie women prevail 3-2 over Belgium

### **Examples of some Leads of sports news**

- As far as scheduling of matches go, the opening blockbuster between the Netherlands and Spain on June 13 might go some distance in determining the final outcome of the group.
- After a spectacular haul of trophies with Barcelona, Lionel Messi has a chance to lead Argentina to glory on the World Cup stage and build on his reputation as one of the all-time greats.
- Allrounder James Faulkner has been endorsed as a future candidate for Test captaincy after being named skipper of Australia A.
- Eight-time French Open champion Rafael Nadal goes into his ninth Roland Garros semifinal on Friday warning of the dangers posed by opponent Andy Murray who has never won a clay court title.
- India finally managed to earn their first points in the World Cup Hockey as they held Spain to a 1-1 draw as custodian PR Sreejesh effected at least four brilliant saves.
- Portugal have Cristiano Ronaldo as their clinical penalty marksman, but if England are thrust into another World Cup sudden death clash their heads may turn to Steve Peters.

- The renowned sports psychologist has been hired to put steel into a squad often shown to lack killer instinct and which has the World Cup's worst penalty shootout record.
- Cristiano Ronaldo's chances of being fit for Portugal's opening World Cup clash with Germany were thrown into further doubt Thursday when coach Paulo Bento refused to put a time-frame on his return.
- Total Football, it was said during Germany '74, was but the common Dutchman's reflection of its avant-garde society. As Holland's music and literature scene thrived with refreshingly new thoughts, ideas and innovations in the early 1970s, the very definition of art floated freely in the country's marijuana-soaked air — inspiring its footballers such as Johan Cruyff to pioneer a most silken game.

### Examples of some good sports news stories (excerpts)

From *India's Golden Girls: How Sports and the Olympics Can Uplift Women* by Nilanjana Bhowmick<sup>23</sup>

After winning her bronze medal at the London Olympics, Saina Nehwal's homecoming attracted the sort of fervor usually reserved for India's tournament-winning cricket teams. Hundreds of fans turned up at the airport despite it being late in the night. In all the excitement, the 22-year-old badminton player got hit in the face by a flower bouquet before standing atop an open-top bus to wave to the throngs below. The euphoria about her medal — one of six India took home from London — was such that her win on August 5 even stole the thunder from India winning a cricket series against Sri Lanka four games to one the same day.

The first Indian shuttler to win a medal in the Olympics, Saina says her success should be an inspiration in a country not known as being the ideal place for girls to grow up. "In India I feel the girls are a little shy. They don't come out and play a lot of sports," Nehwal told *TIME* in an interview this week. "But I hope that my success will change that and more and more girls will come forward to play. I can already see the change in my academy [where I trained]. A lot more girls are coming in and they all want to play like me."

Nehwal, along with a whole host of women athletes including the London bronze medal winner boxer Mary Kom, represents a breed of new, aggressive and ambitious athletes who are forcing many in India's traditionally stodgy middle class to think differently about women and sports.

Behind Nehwal's success lies the hard work of her parents who took out loans and borrowed money from friends just so Nehwal could fulfill her dreams. Their effort is part of a growing breed of middle-class parents in India who are breaking free from the notion of a traditional future for their daughters and going to lengths to help them pursue their goals.

In a country where as many as 50 million girls and women are "missing" — the result of female feticide and high mortality of girl children — and where even now

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<sup>23</sup><http://olympics.time.com/2012/08/21/indias-golden-girls-how-sports-and-the-olympics-can-uplift-women/>

300 women die every day due to childbirth and pregnancy related causes, role models like Nehwal have the potential bring about a long-lasting change.

From ***There will be blood*** by Shivani Naik <sup>24</sup>

She sits there with her long legs crossed, smoothening the pleats of her short dress, fiddling with her dainty bracelet intermittently, drawing attention to her brightly painted red nails. The Burberry checks peep out from where she has neatly tucked them to the side in her celebrity box, where she sits as a guest.

As fighters take on each other amidst well-heeled spectators, nearly half of whom are paid to watch, and as one or the other is beaten to pulp, she brings together her manicured hands in a measured applause of appreciation.

In the ring, there will be blood and there will be guttural celebration; outside, an appreciative audience and her. A celebration of beauty and the beast, that's India's Super Fight League, a mixed martial arts (MMA) spectacle.

With a win bringing in Rs 27,000 on an average for each bout and even a loss of Rs 13,000 minimum, mixed martial arts is on the rise in India. TV is a massive incentive for the young Indian fighters, particularly with the sport gradually moving mainstream from Colors to Neo to Star Sports channel...

From ***Pete Sampras ascends to the Everest of Tennis*** by Nirmal Sekhar<sup>25</sup>

At three minutes to nine on Sunday evening, as night was licking its lips in anticipation before eating up what was left of the day for a sumptuous supper in silver grey rather than golden twilight, one of the truly extraordinary sportsmen of this or any era raised his arms skyward in a familiar gesture on the centre court at Wimbledon.

Mark that moment — 8.57 p.m. to be exact, three minutes before 1-30 a.m. on Monday morning in India — for you'd find few like it in the entire history of organized sport. And, those of us privileged enough to have been a part of it on tennis' greatest stage, will perhaps find nothing to match it the rest of our lives. It was a historic moment when all arguments ceased, a moment that answered one big question and many small questions, a moment that put an end to all comparisons.

Step forward, Mr. Pete Sampras, wet eyes notwithstanding ... the greatest of 'em all! Argue if it pleases you, but the moment Pat Rafter failed to direct a Sampras serve back into the court in the men's singles final of the millennium championship in gathering gloom, arguments and comparisons became meaningless...

From ***FIFA World Cup: Total working-class heroes*** by Aditya Iyer<sup>26</sup>

Total Football, it was said during Germany '74, was but the common Dutchman's reflection of its avant-garde society. As Holland's music and literature scene thrived with refreshingly new thoughts, ideas and innovations in the early 1970s, the very definition of art floated freely in the country's marijuana-soaked air — inspiring its footballers such as Johan Cruyff to pioneer a most silken game.

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<sup>24</sup><http://indianexpress.com/article/news-archive/print/there-will-be-blood/>

<sup>25</sup><http://www.hindu.com/2000/07/11/stories/07111021.htm>

<sup>26</sup><http://indianexpress.com/article/sports/football/fifa-world-cup-total-working-class-heroes/>

The Holland of 2014 does not play Total Football. Far from it. The runners-up from the previous edition in South Africa are known to play a far more 'normal' brand of football, thanks to its working-class players. Meet Nigel de Jong, a crucial component in the Dutch starting eleven, who is known as much for his entrepreneurship as for his presence as a holding midfielder.

"Some people say footballers are thick and not bright enough to be entrepreneurs," de Jong once said.

"But when I see that a company has potential, I move the borders and go all the way for it." Sure he can. When not kicking the ball about at the San Siro for AC Milan, de Jong spends his time far more constructively than most of his mates. His car dealership company is not just a hit in Europe, but has currently expanded to the Middle-East as well, where oil barons and business tycoons are said to be among his clientele.

A life beyond football, claims de Jong, came from the difficulties he endured during his childhood. Born to a single mother living on the benefits of the state, de Jong decided to make a career outside of sports. Just as Holland's striker Dirk Kuyt did, who ensured that he learned his father's trade of being a fisherman by joining him daily on his trawler in the North Sea.

"I am not your typical Dutch player like Cruyff, Gullit, Van Basten or Rijkaard," Kuyt is quoted as saying. "I always knew that. So I told my father to teach me everything (about fishing), I told him I wanted to be just like him."

In fact, Kuyt's wife Gertrude, is a bird of the same feather. Far from being your typical footballer wife, she is a round-the-clock nurse at a local hospital, who only took a break to deliver the couple's first child.

From *IS That All* by G S Vivek<sup>27</sup>

"Is that all? Where is the rest of the contingent?" Mahendra Singh Dhoni asked very seriously as the press corps here in Colombo trooped in for a chat.

It's rather unusual for an Indian cricket captain to be sitting with just five cameras and a handful of print reporters. The Sri Lankan team was equally flabbergasted. "I've always seen a big media team from India. I can't see it here. What happened?," asked one player.

Eventually Brendon, the local manager of the Lankan team, asked almost with a tinge of guilt, if the global economic slowdown had affected the Indian media. "Is it really bad in India?" he enquired, before adding with a smile, "the players in the Indian team must be missing the rest of your guys?" Well, not exactly.

From the look of it, the Indian team doesn't mind the extra space at all. "Who says nothing has changed from the last time we came to Sri Lanka," says one member of the side. "Yes, the team hotel is the same, the décor is the same, and so is the breakfast menu, but the media team is cut by half!"

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<sup>27</sup><http://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/web-edits/is-that-all/>

Adds another senior player in a joke: “As it is there is stifling security, and then the media really scrutinizes us. It’s a good change, we’re not missing the journalists who’re not here.

We have enough former cricketers to keep us entertained with their views about us. A bit of more breathing space is welcome.”

With just 15 journalists on tour from India, some players feel it is much easier to build a personal rapport with them because there isn’t a mad rush for sound-bites. If the trend continues, some even say, it could make a difference in how players are written and talked about, and how they perceive the media.

### From *India’s Medal Count Is Worse Than it Looks by Margherita Stancati*<sup>28</sup>

India won more medals at the London Olympics than ever before. A total of six: two silvers, four bronze and no gold. This was a great achievement for all the athletes involved, better than the pre-Games target of five, and evidence India’s sporting record is improving.

But let’s face it, the bigger picture is far from glowing: for a country of over 1.2 billion people that boasts one of the world’s largest economies, this is an unimpressive tally.

You have to scroll way down before you get to India in the Olympic rankings: it’s 55<sup>th</sup> out of 79, below the likes of North Korea (20), the tiny Caribbean archipelago of Trinidad and Tobago (47) and nowhere near fellow BRIC economies. (Note that the official medal rankings take into account also the type of medal, so gold is worth more than silver and so on.)

If you adjust the medal tally to its population and the size of its economy, the result is even less remarkable: India comes last in both tables. A total of six medals for India averages to one medal for roughly every 207 million inhabitants. Compare that to China, with one medal for every 15.5 million people (for a total of 87 medals) or the U.S., with one medal for every three million Americans. Adjusted to its gross domestic product, India’s medal haul is as disappointing, with the lowest ratio of Olympic medals to GDP size.

With an annual GDP of \$1.848 trillion, India is the world’s 10<sup>th</sup>- largest economy, according to 2011 World Bank data. Yet its number of medals is far lower than that of countries with economies of comparable size. Take Russia: although its GDP is marginally larger than India’s, it won 82 medals at this year’s Olympics. So what’s the reason for India’s disproportionately poor performance at the Summer Olympics? This is a question many have grappled with in recent days....

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<sup>28</sup><http://blogs.wsj.com/indiarealtime/2012/08/13/why-indias-medal-count-is-worse-than-it-looks/>

## 4. Reporting Sports: Look beyond Sports



**R**eporting sports is always an interesting exercise. It has never been monotonous. It requires same amount of preparation, research and travelling as any other branch of journalism would do. Sports Journalism, as a profession, these days is as challenging as any other branch of journalism.

In fact, sports journalists work under some of the tightest deadlines in journalism and are still expected to uphold all the same professional, legal and ethical standards.

Now it is not only about the happenings of a sporting event, but also about its various implications. It is also about the law of the land, crime, controversies, scams, trends, statistics, history, implications, personalities, politics, diplomacy, economics and many other items which constitute the major ingredients of any news publications every day. This can be understood from the fact that sports stories these days regularly find some space on the front pages of newspapers and in the prime time programmes of TV news channels.

Sports Journalism these days is also about public opinions, their expectations and their interests. People love to play and read about various sports. While this is an exciting prospect for sports journalists, it is also offers challenges for them as their readers are most of the time

well aware of all the happenings in the world of sports. Sporting events provide all the necessary ingredients that are considered as news. Such as:

### **Politics**

Sports in India have never been alien to the world of politics. Their relationship has grown further in recent times as large numbers of politicians have taken control of the sports bodies in India. Such as: Arun Jaitely, Sharad Pawar, Prafulla Patel, Ranjib Biswal, Suresh Kalmadi, Anurag Thakur etc. Any action by these persons regarding their stake in sports bodies automatically becomes a political story.



### **Court cases**

Legal disputes in courtrooms are prominently publicised by news organisations. At present, almost all sports organisation of the country are fighting cases in court room. Some of the popular cases are: The IPL betting scam dispute, the Rajasthan Cricket Association Vs BCCI case, dispute regarding Indian Olympic Association etc.

### **Crime, controversies and scams**

For example: The Commonwealth Games scam, the IPL betting scam, controversy regarding stranglehold of N Srinivasan over the BCCI etc.

### **Trends, statistics**

Significant trends and statistical data are always publicised by news organisations. For example: trends like increasing popularity of IPL despite of criticisms, involvement of Bollywood stars in sports events, continuous decline of India's sports infrastructure etc have found place in newspapers and TV news in recent times. According to survey by research agency TAM, the 39 crore spectators watched the world T20 matches on the TV channels while 2.24 crore fans watched matches through video streaming on the internet.



Sports stories are often published on the front pages of newspapers now. This image shows a front page of *The Times of India* in which the lead story explains why Indian Cricket team didn't deserve to be the World's No. 1 after getting whitewashed in Australia and England.

**History**

News organisations never miss to report about important historical events. India's record in various sports has been very dismal in past. So whenever, Indian players emerge winners in international events, their triumph becomes an historical event. For example: India winning medal in the Olympic games, India winning world cup cricket etc.

**Diplomacy**

Sporting events often becomes diplomatic events of international significance and they are thus reported by journalists. For example: India inviting Pakistan's Prime Minister to watch world cup cricket in 2011 was famously reported as India's 'cricket diplomacy' by the media.

**Economics/Business**

Large amount of money is always news. Major sporting events these days involve large amount of money and hence qualify to be reported as business news also.

While the commercial dynamics of sport and entertainment have always overlapped, the two are now closer than ever before.

According to a report, "despite the recent troubled economic times, sport has continued to thrive, with major events appearing to become more popular than ever. However lower tier events have to work harder to attract support. We are also seeing more focus on providing value for money, for example by providing added entertainment through offers such as post-event concerts.

“The popularity of major events is supported by ongoing improvements in broadcasting and technology, which allow higher-quality coverage than ever before. At the same time, TV companies are embracing social media to engage with fans and deliver a greater intensity of experience.

“Meanwhile, sponsors remain eager to contribute to – and be associated with – sports events and teams as part of their marketing mix and are using sophisticated data mining to gain increasing levels of intelligence and insight into their target markets.”<sup>29</sup>

### Personalities

Actions of popular personalities always become news. Indian sports has produced several personalities who have massive fan following. Any action of them, even if it is a joke, gets reported. For example: MS Dhoni writing jokes about Ravindra Jadeja, Sachin Tendulkar investing in football, etc.



### Drama

Dramatic events are often reported as soft news. For example: The following excerpts from an editorial show how *The Economic Times* explained the increasing popularity of the Indian Premier league.

“Even more than the presence of skimpily clad cheerleaders, the unending procession of scandals has injected a component of excitement to the tournament that has probably brought in hordes of new viewers.

“When a team or player's inclusion (or exclusion) is no longer dependent on conventional norms such as league positions or fitness, but on imponderables such as betting cartels and intra-cricket rivalries, the

<sup>29</sup>PwC Outlook for the global sports market to 2015 [ <http://www.pwc.com/gx/en/hospitality-leisure/changing-the-game-outlook-for-the-global-sports-market-to-2015.jhtml> ]

potential for crowd-pulling surprises rises. The recent inclusion of a family drama – allegations of funny business complete with wayward scions - has increased IPL's attraction for a non-sporting audience.

“The IPL means different things to different people depending on whether it is viewed via a sports or news channel, but a whole family's evening entertainment is taken care of, either way. All we need now is a serial with IPL and its shenanigans as the backdrop, so that interest does not flag between each edition of the tournament.”<sup>30</sup>

### Human triumph

Stories of human triumph are always considered to be news worthy. Sports provide numerous such stories regularly as sports persons continue to emerge from tremendous personal and social troubles and become popular nationally. There are many such examples of sports persons who have appeared in news. For example: Boxer Mary Kom, cricketer Munaf Patel, teen Odia sprinter Amiya Kumar Mallick, etc.

## Myths about sports journalism

Sports journalism in India still suffers from old biases and myths. It is still believed by many that this is a profession for the ‘non-serious’ types



of journalists; that one doesn't require hard work and intelligence to become a sports journalists. All such beliefs should now be kicked into a dustbin. Some of these misconceptions have been explained here:

### Myth 1. Reporting sports is easy

Fact: Nothing is easy unless you can enjoy it. This formula applies to sports journalists as well. They watch sports as an audience but

<sup>30</sup>[http://articles.economicstimes.indiatimes.com/2013-05-28/news/39580034\\_1\\_the-ipl-family-entertainment-family-drama](http://articles.economicstimes.indiatimes.com/2013-05-28/news/39580034_1_the-ipl-family-entertainment-family-drama)

their life doesn't end with watching alone. They have to be alert always to write interesting news stories and look out for scoops and trends.

**Myth2: You need to know only about sports**

Fact: This is not true as present day sports journalists are expected to possess all the good qualities of a journalists. S/he needs to be well acquainted with the nuances of journalism.

**Myth 3: You can pass your personal opinions as news/truth**

Fact: Readers have their own opinions. A journalist's opinion can be published separately but not as news. People follow sports news reports for authentic information, not for lies.

**Myth 4: You must be a trained journalist to write on sports**

Fact: For becoming a sports journalist, one doesn't need to enrol herself/himself in a journalism school. But s/he must be able to quickly learn the nuances of journalism. Training of course helps to acquire the skills required for reporting and editing.

**Myth 5: You need not worry much about your language deficiencies**

**Fact:** Clarity and accuracy are the backbone of journalistic writing. For this one must have a good command over her/his language. This is true even for visual medium like television.

**Myth 6: Sports journalists write only about sports**

Fact: This is not true all the time. At present media is moving towards convergence and all journalists under the new circumstances should be multi-talking. He needs to have not only prowess over latest communication technologies but also general awareness of almost everything. That can make one a better journalist.

**Myth 7: Sports journalists spend most of their times in the play ground**

Fact: Only players and team staff spend most of their times in the playground. Sports journalists may have to spend most of their time working on their desks in the office. This is so because it is not logistically possible for media organisations to depute all of their sports journalists in the ground. Also these days all major sporting events

already appear live on TV and internet. Sports writers can take inputs from these sources to write their stories.

### Myth 8: I can become rich simply by writing about sports

Fact: Journalism is a challenging profession and often less rewarding in terms of money. Nevertheless, people who pursue this profession seriously are inspired more by their thirst for finding out, talking about or writing about new events, developments, processes, people, places, things etc. than thinking about the amount of money they might make.

### What audience expect from sports journalists?

Sports are an important part of most societies. They stimulate the people's physical development in the same way as education stimulates the development of their minds. Sports readers and listeners demand accuracy and sound judgment. They expect the sports reporter to know when to praise a performance and when to criticise; when to offer support and when to call for changes.

Sports enthusiasts like to play and watch sports. They also like to talk about past performances and future prospects and about decisions which the team manager or coach has made or should make. They also like to pass judgment on sports administrators, referees and umpires.

The audience for sports stories are dedicated. Generally, they read sports pages before any other part of the paper. That is why street sellers often display one pile of papers showing page one and another pile showing the sports section.

Sports journalists should also try to write about locally popular sports in their societies along with the popular international sports.



## 5. Sports Journalism: New trends and prospects



*Is there a future for sports journalists in India?*

If asked 10-15 years before, this question would have largely attracted negative replies. As in the years before 2000AD, the number of avenues for sports writers was limited. There were limited numbers of media houses, with limited potential for hiring sports journalists.

This has changed now because of increasing penetration of Internet and popularity of social media all across the country. There are now numerous web-based sports publications, and increasing, which offers employment opportunities for sports writers/journalists capable of producing unique content. Sports journalism, however, is still slowly evolving as a specialised field in India.

Sports stories often occupy the front pages of newspapers and prime time television programs. This is not only because people love to talk about sports or like to play. The new development could be rather attributed to recent grand changes in the socio-economy of sports in India.

If compared to Western countries where sports journalism has been in vogue for last many decades, it can be said that India is slowly catching up with her Western counterparts and still have a long way to go. Nevertheless there are some visible changes in the practice of sports journalism in India.

These changes are also reflective of the changes in the sports arena in the country. Most of these are in tune with the changes happening outside India. Such as:

## Internationalisation



Sourav Ganguly with the owner & CEO of Atletico Madrid, Miguel Angel Marin unveiling the name of the Kolkata franchise of the Indian Super League (ISL) in Kolkata.

The space between the national and the international is shrinking. Major sporting events in the country are no longer domestic events as a large number of international players, coaches and other specialists are allowed to participate in tournaments held in India. Not only in cricketing events like IPL, but also in other events like Chennai Open for Tennis, Indian Hockey league, Indian badminton

league, Pro Kabaddi League, etc. international personalities actively participate. Even in sports like Football, in which India's position is very poor worldwide, internationally famous European club, Atletico Madrid, has recently invested in the Kolkata-based team of the newly announced Indian Super league.

## Corporatisation



India's richest businessman and owner of the Mumbai Indians team of IPL, Mukesh Ambani at Wankhede Stadium, Mumbai.

A large number of corporate bodies have started investing in Indian sports.

Companies like Reliance, India Cements, GMR, Sahara, Pepsi, Coca-Cola etc are some of the leading examples.

## Commodification of sports

Sports is no longer just about passion, entertainment, rivalry, struggle or pride. It is also an opportunity for selling goods. Sports and various other items related with sports are now being packaged as commodities in which people can invest and enjoy.

## Emergence of celebrity culture



Sania Mirza being applauded by audience while walking on the ramp during a fashion event in Mumbai

The days of wilderness of the sports stars are over. They are now treated as celebrities and they also live like celebrities.

Sachin Tendulkar, MS Dhoni, Saina Nehwal, Sania Mirza, Baichung Bhutia, Vishwanathan Anand, Vijender Singh etc. are only a few names in the list of celebrity sports stars which is perennially growing.

## Reduction of the gap between movie stars and sports stars



Boxer Vijender Singh (right) is one of India's leading sports celebrities. He has also appeared in a Bollywood movie *Fugly* in 2014.

The gap between cinema stars and the sports stars has reduced. Famous actors like Sharrukh Khan, Preity Zeinta, Salman Khan, Shilpa Shetty, Abhishek Bachchan have actively invested their time and money in sporting events recently. Not only this, several players have tried their luck on the silver screen.

At present all mainstream newspapers have separate sports pages and dedicated staff to generate and design sports pages. During major sports tournament, sports news occupies

prominent position in the front page. Periodicals devoted to sports are published in almost all languages. Among all sports cricket is the most popular in India.

In fact 'crime, cricket, cinema' form the bulk of news in tabloid press. After television made its entry in a big way, sports journalism further developed. As television showed 'what is happening', print media tried to focus on 'why and what next'. It tried to focus on the intricacies and finer points of the game; and also on the personal lives of the popular sports persons.

The internet in India is proving to be a game changer in the field of sports journalism. This medium has not only the positives of both the television and print but also it is extremely user friendly. The benefits of internet has prompted several organisations to come up with dedicated sports websites and also forced all prominent media houses to employ dedicated staffs to promote sports content on their websites. With the help of internet:

Outside of the Boot  
[www.outsideoftheboot.com](http://www.outsideoftheboot.com)  
 By Sami Faizullah from Bangalore  
[SHAupdates](http://SHAupdates.com)  
[www.shaupdates.com](http://www.shaupdates.com)  
 By Hitesh Kumar from Delhi  
 Indian Exponent  
[www.indianexponent.com](http://www.indianexponent.com)  
 By Ishaan Mohan Bagga from Delhi  
 Voice from the Rooftop  
[www.voicefromtherooftop.com](http://www.voicefromtherooftop.com)  
 By Vincent Augustine D'Souza,  
 Mumbai

### 1. Anybody can now write about sports

The internet has led to flooding of sports-related content as now anybody can write and publish and have her/his own audience.

It has allowed individual sports lovers, writers, administrators, researchers and others to come up with their own websites or blogs for publishing and promoting sports content.

Here are a few examples of blogs/websites by individuals (In the box):<sup>31</sup>

### 2. Promotion of sports other than cricket



Even though the monopoly of cricket continues to rule the sports scene in India, the democratic potential of internet has allowed writers of other sports to flourish. Here are some examples of websites which focus on sports other than cricket:

[www.90minutes.in](http://www.90minutes.in) is a premier website dedicated to the promotion of Football in India.

[www.slumsoccer.org](http://www.slumsoccer.org)The Slum Soccer organisation reaching out to the Indian homeless using football as a tool for social improvement and empowerment.

[www.indianchessnews.com](http://www.indianchessnews.com) Indian Chess News is a partner chess blog of India's first chess features print magazine Black and White published from Lucknow since 2004.

<sup>31</sup> Source: [www.topindianblogs.com/#sports](http://www.topindianblogs.com/#sports)

### 3. More job opportunities for sports journalists

The internet has increased avenues for sports journalists as now a larger number of sports writers can gain employment while continuing to follow their passions. Most of the mainstream media houses now supply sports specific content through their websites for which they hire



writers/journalists who wants to specialise in sports journalism.

There are also some other popular standalone sports websites that provide employment opportunities to sports journalists. Such as:

However, the internet has also created challenges for

sports journalism in India and elsewhere.

### 1. Internet has allowed players/ team owners/ administrators to have come up with their own sites for disseminating news about themselves or their organisations.



Thus, allowing the news sources to publish themselves. This situation is challenging for sports journalists because it allows the newsmakers to promote the kind of content they want.

For example: the Board for Control of Cricket in India (BCCI) has come up with its own website ([www.iplt20.com](http://www.iplt20.com)) which not only provides live streaming of cricket matches but also with news and interviews related to players, team etc.

During the recently held seventh edition of the Indian Premier League, many mainstream newspapers published stories with quotes from various items published on this website.

### I knew Manish will win it for me: Shah Rukh Khan

.... That grin on SRK's face never seemed to fade away. And even as he was over the moon after his team's victory, the ever-passionate Shah Rukh Khan was more than willing to express his emotions in a quick chat with **IPLT20.com**.

### Gambhir is IPL's best captain: Akram

....The praise didn't come from Akram the bowling mentor of KKR. It came from a former fast bowler, who knows what impact your captain's leadership style has on you as a player. In a chat with **IPLT20.com**, Akram explains what makes Gambhir a special leader for the bowlers. He also talks about his fast bowling wards at KKR, especially Umesh Yadav.

## 2. Internet poses a challenge to independent sports journalism

Journalism thrives because of autonomy and independence. Honest and vigilant sports journalism is a necessity of present times, especially at a time when wrongdoings of sportspersons and sports administrators are getting exposed regularly. Sports person or their organisations disseminating news while blocking the pursuit of journalists is never desirable.

These trends are not unique to India. Infact, major sports leagues/bodies in different countries have been following this practice for last many years now. While examining the future of sports journalism in an article in 2009, columnist Denis Cummings has outlined four themes which have challenged the conventional notions of sports journalism in the United States of America.<sup>32</sup> These themes also explain the direction in which sports journalism is moving in this country.

<sup>32</sup> <http://www.findingdulcinea.com/news/sports/2009/july/Examining-the-Future-of-Sports-Journalism.html>

## 1) Questioning the Objectivity of League-Controlled Media

Cummings quotes Justin rice, who in a four-part series for Harvard University's Nieman Journalism Lab, examined the trend in sports "where the subjects of coverage are becoming the creators of coverage"; where independent newspapers, radio and television stations, Web sites and other forms of media were once relied on to provide coverage of sports, now, teams and leagues provide their own news and analysis through their outlets.

While Rice wondered whether this has compromised the League's ability to break legitimate news, Cummings says, "League-owned media outlets are just one of the ways sports is cutting out the middleman — the independent media — and disseminating information directly to fans, worrying some who believe it is creating a conflict of interest and leading to biased reporting."

Writer and Media Consultant Jason Fry comments: "It's that teams, leagues, associations, athletes and agents are all increasingly bypassing journalists and using digital tools to communicate directly with fans. Right now, this stuff is mostly marketing. But as sports organisations become more sure-footed digitally, they will become journalists' competitors. And that will lead them to reassess bargains struck with newspapers generations ago."<sup>33</sup>

In the past (the pre-digital world), says Fry, "Sports was an odd duck, simultaneously news and entertainment. Unlike many newsmakers, teams wanted reporters to cover what they were doing. That led to a tacit bargain: Newspapers got access and readers, while teams got publicity and customers. And that bargain held, even as sports reporting matured to include economics and race and performance-enhancing drugs and injuries and other concerns that teams and athletes would rather not have discussed."

But now, says Fry, "that bargain is imperiled. Because now anybody can publish, and anybody turns out to really mean "anybody." That includes teams, leagues, athletic organizations, agents and athletes

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<sup>33</sup><http://www.poynter.org/latest-news/top-stories/146069/rules-of-the-game-change-as-sports-journalists-compete-against-teams-they-cover/>

themselves – all those who used to speak through sportswriters. As a result, the rules of the game are swiftly being rewritten.”

## 2) Teams Owned by Media Companies

“Many teams have close relationships with the media sources that cover them. Traditionally, this occurred when a media company owned the team, though, as *Business Week* recently reported, media companies have been more likely to sell a team than buy one this decade.”



Members of Sunrisers Hyderabad rejoice after the team registered a five-wicket win against Kolkata Knight Riders to progress to the play-offs during IPL 6. The SRH is owned by one of the leading media houses of the country.

Cummings says, “Several prominent teams are still owned by media companies; Cablevision owns the Knicks and Rangers, The New York Times owns nearly 18 percent of the Red Sox, and the Tribune Company, pending a sale, still owns the Cubs. The relationship between teams and the

sources covering them has unsurprisingly led to suspicions of bias.”

“The Boston Globe, which is owned by The New York Times, has frequently been accused of being a mouthpiece for the Red Sox front office. Players and officials who fall out of favor with ownership are often criticized in Globe articles.”

There are genuine concerns over the authenticity of news published by such media organisations about a team they own. According to Cummings, “Even if the reporting is not in fact biased, fans may not trust it.”

## 3) Media Outlets Owned by Teams

According to Cummings, “...this situation can lead to biased reporting.”

#### 4) Athletes and Social Media

The rise of social networking sites such as Twitter and Facebook has allowed leagues, teams and fans to reach out to fans without having to go through the press.

Cummings says that although most fans find that this use of social media brings them closer to players, it may actually allow athletes to construct their image without actually revealing their true identity.” He quotes ESPN’s Bill Simmons who has described how athletes can control the media now: “Control the access, provide your own filter, say nothing profound, play apart, derive the benefits.” He continues, “LeBron ushered in the ‘I’m-controlling-every-interaction-I-have-with-you’ era. We’ve been hearing from him since high school, and yet I can’t remember reading a single memorable feature about the guy.”

In the Indian context, there are some other challenges before sports journalists. These are:

##### 1. Former sports persons becoming sports journalists

An interesting aspect of present state of sports journalism in India as well as all over the world is, along with the journalists, sportspersons are also actively engaged in the field. They write columns and commentary, and anchor sports-based television shows. In India, this trend started very early in the 1980s. A story published in the November 1989 issue of *India Today*, explained how a “bevy of syndicates” had started selling sports news contents written by sports stars to newspapers.

Following are excerpts from the story:<sup>34</sup>

*It started as a trickle, turned into a flood and now threatens to engulf the sports pages with a new brand of commercialism. Suddenly, media coverage of major sporting events has been virtually taken over by a bevy of syndicates: Dev Features, Professional Management Group (PMG), Radiant Sports Management (RSM) and Playmakers.*

*The once drab sports pages are today dotted with glamorous bylines while sponsoring companies are laughing all the way to the nearest bank. .... Kapil Dev's Rs.5 crore syndicated column agency, Dev Features, offered reports by Tony Lewis and Gary Sobers on the Indian cricket tour of the West Indies this*

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<sup>34</sup><http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/string-of-new-firms-busy-hawking-columns-by-sports-stars/1/324097.html>

*year for diverse newspapers, including Aajkal of Calcutta and Dainik Bhaskar of Bhopal for a mere Rs.300-Rs.600 per piece.*

*...Says Kapil Dev: "Companies like us are making sports much more paying than it was ever before. And it is the reader who benefits." Last year, in the India-West Indies series, Sunil Gavaskar's PMG had Ravi Shastri and Gavaskar lend their literary talents to 21 newspaper editions, including regional newspapers like Pratap in Urdu and Parvasi in Gujarati. Former Indian hockey captain, M.M. Somayya, was roped in to write on the Champions Trophy hockey tournament in West Germany... Even Geet Sethi and Michael Ferreira are potting in more than prize money through syndicated columns.*

*...Predictably, newspapers lap up columns of only a few star-names - Ravi Shastri, Vijay Amritraj, Tony Lewis, P.T. Usha are some major attractions...It's not just cricket stars who're benefiting. Chess champion S. Vishwanathan gets as much as Rs.2,500 for a column. Vijay Amritraj demands and gets Rs.20,000 a piece. And Michael Ferreira netted Rs.3.5 lakh from RSM in a single year....P.T. Usha expresses her views in Malayalam, which are then translated into English. So most use ghost writers, an increasingly important appendage in the syndicate game.*

However, this doesn't mean there is no scope for quality sports writers. Former players engaged in the business of sports writing and commentary can enrich this field by putting forth their own experiences. But still they can't be an alternative to seasoned sports journalists who come to this profession because of their love of all sports (not just one or two sports like former players) and their ability to provide unmatched insight, analysis and entertainment to their readers and audiences.

## **2. Press is not allowed during deliberations of Sports bodies**

Sports correspondents are generally not allowed to be present during the meetings of national sports federations and committees. They are provided information by the concerned organisations during a press conference organised after such meetings. This is an ironical situation for journalists in India, as they have access to even court rooms, Parliament and assemblies, yet they are not allowed to be present in the meetings of sports bodies.

### **The way forward**

Is there any future for sports journalists in India in the presence of these challenges?

Can they still become popular like famous sports writers of yester years?

Can they make their own place in the sports jungle crowded by former sports stars, leagues, blogs, websites and social media handlers?

Can one still remain unbiased and sport sportsman spirit while reporting about sports?

These are some of the questions which might make one to harbour a pessimistic view of the future of sports journalism despite of the presence of so many lucrative opportunities. However, it needs to be understood that the basics of the game has not changed yet. Sports Journalists are still expected to write accurately and with insight. Technology now enables them to do it faster than the past times.

This was what veteran sports journalist K. Sundar Rajan has written about the change in sports journalism in India in the last six decades: "It has been a long way from TT journalism to LT journalism. By TT I mean telegram and telephone and LT represents laptop. In my early days I had to depend upon the good offices of the postal department, particularly the telegraph section if my reports had to reach in time. It is not so now — the reporter carries a laptop, types the report as the match is in progress, connects the wire and instantly the copy is relayed to the desk for editing."<sup>35</sup>

### **Journalists are also expected to express themselves clearly and concisely**

Michael Bradley, who teaches sports journalism at Villanova University, says, "What can't be ignored amidst the wave of the new is the enduring need for journalists to do their jobs properly, delivery methods be damned. If you can't report, interview, cultivate sources, organize facts, and yes write, it doesn't matter how many Twitter followers you have. You won't be relevant or reliable."

According to Bradley, the heart of journalism has not changed and may not change ever in future. "The heart of journalism remains the ability to write clearly and directly. It doesn't matter whether you are on TV, radio or the web, if you can't express yourself with the written word,

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<sup>35</sup>*Everything has changed, yet the spirit remains*, K. Sundar Rajan, The Hindu, September 13, 2003

you won't be successful. The industry may change, but its fundamentals don't..."<sup>36</sup>

At a time when the market is getting flooded with in-house sports stories published and promoted by sports leagues/bodies, some suggestions made by Jason Fry for sports department of media houses shows the way forward. These are:

- First, think about what news teams will hold back to break themselves, and get out of the business of competing with them for it.
- Next, discuss which stories are me-too fare that readers can get anywhere, and that waste reporters' valuable time.
- Having done that, think about what niches teams *can't* fill. Fortunately, there are lots of these — statistical analysis, investigative reporting, scouting upcoming opponents, minor-league reports and historical perspective, to name just a few. Think about if any of those approaches make sense for your news organization, and brainstorm how middlemen can use their status to add value. (For instance, become a great curator, using news judgment to collect the must-reads for a team's fans whether things are good, bad or ugly.)

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<sup>36</sup><http://sportsjournalism.org/sports-media-news/new-term-new-technology-new-trends-same-old-fundamentals/>

## 6. Popular Sports of the World

### Cricket

Cricket has evolved into its present-day form over at least 500 years, with the earliest references to organised games coming from the 16th Century. The Marylebone Cricket Club, famed as the former global governing



body of cricket, was formed at Lord's Cricket Ground in 1787. Almost 100 years later, the Ashes series of matches between England and Australia first came into being, in 1882.

International Test Match cricket, the longest version of the game (lasting up to five days under modern rules), is the format preferred by cricket purists, however, the shorter versions of the game prove to be popular, and the introduction of Twenty20 has proved to be very popular with cricket supporters.

### Tennis

While the modern game of tennis originated in late 19th-Century England, most historians believe the sport developed from a game played in 12th-Century France, where players struck the ball with the palm of their hand. Between 1859 and 1865, the modern game was developed in Birmingham by Harry Gem and Augurio Perera. The duo combined elements of rackets and the Basque ball game pelota, and helped formed the world's first tennis club in 1872.

Five years later, the first organised tennis tournament was played at Wimbledon.

Some may begrudge tennis its slot in the Olympics, but it was held in the original modern Games in 1896

before political in-fighting led to the event being absent from 1928 until 1988.



## Football

Football has its roots in ancient China and the streets of medieval England, and first appeared on the Olympic programme in Paris in 1900.

Men's football was introduced as a demonstration sport at the 1896 Olympics and was one of the first team sports to be introduced to the Games. It became an official Olympic sport in 1908 but was dropped from the Games in 1932 following the inaugural FIFA World Cup.



It returned in 1936 but the growth of professional football after the Second World War meant the best players were ineligible to take part - unless they lived in Communist countries, resulting in dominance for Eastern Bloc nations.

In 1984 some professionals were allowed to compete, but European and South American nations were restricted to using players who had not yet featured at a World Cup. In 1992 all professionals were eligible, provided they were under 23 years old.

At the 1996 Games in Atlanta, teams were allowed to field three over-age players in the final tournament and women's football was introduced with no age restrictions.

## Archery



India's Bombayala Devi Laishram in action during Commonwealth games 2012 in New Delhi. The Indian archery team won gold during the event.

Archery is one of the oldest sports in the world, with records of competitions dating back to the Egyptian pharaohs and Chinese Zhou dynasty well over 3,000 years ago. Back in 1363, a royal decree required all Englishmen over the age of seven to practice on Sundays and holidays, such was the importance attached to the bow and arrow by the English army.

In modern times, The Lord of the Rings trilogy prompted a 10% increase in UK archery club members. The power of the big screen transferred

to television at the last Olympics, when archery's average viewing audience was in the top 10 of the 28 sports.

The sport first appeared in the Olympic Games in 1900, was contested again in 1904, 1908 and 1920, and then returned after an absence of 52 years in 1972.

Archer Neroli Fairhall of New Zealand was the first paraplegic to compete at an Olympic Games in Los Angeles in 1984.

## Swimming

Swimming was not widely practised as a sport until the early 19th Century but has been an Olympic sport since the first modern Games in 1896, when all the disciplines were held in open water. London 1908 was the first to use an indoor pool. The first Olympic swimming competition in 1896 featured just three races and was staged in the Mediterranean Sea in the Bay of Zea.

Swimming can be dated back to the Stone Age, but did not truly become an organised sport until the early 19th century. Prehistoric man learnt to swim in order to cross rivers and lakes – we know this because cave paintings from the Stone Age depicting swimmers have been found in Egypt. Swimming was also referred to in Greek mythology.



## Basketball



The popularity of basketball spread quickly following Dr James W. Naismith's invention of the sport in 1891, with students from abroad who had studied in Springfield taking the game far and wide. The first game involved a football and two baskets normally used to carry peaches as the target. Someone would retrieve the ball after every basket, with the bottom only removed in 1906 to create the hoop

now used today.

An Olympic demonstration sport as early as 1904, the first international games were played in the 1920s and men's basketball was introduced to the Olympics in 1936

By 1950, the first World Championship for men was held in Argentina. Three years later, the first World Championship for women took place in Chile, with the opening Olympic competition following in 1976.

Over 450 million people now play basketball at a competition and grassroots level, and the sport claims to be closing on football as the world's most popular.

## Table Tennis

In the late 19th Century table tennis was a sedate after-dinner pastime among the high society in England and British army officers abroad, with cigar-box lids used as rackets and a carved champagne cork for a ball. Early names for the sport included gossima, whiff-whaff and ping pong.

The first World Championships were held in London in 1926, but it did not become an



Olympic sport until 1988 in Seoul. It is estimated there are 40 million competitive table tennis players and countless millions playing recreationally, making it the sport with the most participants worldwide. Table tennis started as a genteel, after-dinner game, but is now a fast, high-tech sport. It also has the most participants of any sport in the world.

## Motor Sports



Motorsports have been a part of British sporting fabric ever since motor vehicles became a standard fixture on Britain's roads. Each sport has its roots in a different era but all can point back to the invention of the internal combustion engine.

Of all motorsports rallying is one of the oldest. The Monte Carlo rally of January 1911 is considered to be one of the first instances of

rallying within Europe.

Formula 1 and the Grand Prix that preceded it can be linked to the 1920s and 1930s, before developing into Formula 1 in the 1950s.

The Grand Prix Motorcycle World Championships were established in 1949 but its origins extend back to road races such as the Isle of Man Senior Tourist Trophy.

Karting, unlike its motorsport counterparts, was developed in the United States rather than Europe, where the first kart was built in California in 1956.

## **Martial Arts**

Martial arts history is one of complex stories and traditional sports made famous by the far-east disciplines of karate, judo, taekwondo, Ju-jitsu and others. Some historians argue that martial arts originated in Europe during the 1500s as a form of combat, but martial arts in its popular form is primarily Chinese. The term martial arts is Latin and literally translates as "Arts of Mars" - Mars being the Roman god of war.

Many modern-day versions of martial arts originate from the early 20th Century, when some traditional fighting disciplines gave way to competitive sports. With the rise of immigration from east to west, martial arts saw a boost in popularity that helped to develop its standing in the UK and Europe. In later years, the rise of martial arts within popular culture - most people can list a martial arts movie or two - helped to make martial arts a popular sporting activity for people across the globe.



Yokio Tani, a champion wrestler, and AJ Davey giving a display of Kine-no-Kata as part of an exhibition of the Japanese art of self-defence in 1924.

## **Hockey**

Hockey gets its name from the French word 'hocquet', which means shepherd's crook. There are records of a similar game being played in Persia in 2000 BC and the modern sport developed in London in the 19th century before being spread throughout the British Empire. It became an Olympic

sport for men in 1908, but it was not until the Moscow Games of 1980 that women's teams were admitted.

From the 2000 Games in Sydney, men competed in a 12-team tournament and women in a 10-team one, but in London this changed to allow 12 teams in each tournament.

India were the dominant force in the sport either side of World War Two. Between 1928 and 1960 they won 30 consecutive matches at the Olympics, scoring 197 goals and conceding just eight.

India's men have won eight Olympic golds in all, although the last of these came in 1980 and they did not even qualify for the Beijing Olympics. Zimbabwe were the inaugural women's winners in the



boycott-affected 1980 Games, while the German men and Dutch women were the 2012 Olympic champions.

Canoe sprint has two different types of craft, the kayak and the canoe. The kayak probably originates from Greenland, where it was used by the Eskimos, primarily for hunting, fishing and transportation. The canoe was used all over the world as a method of transportation, trade and war. The first official sporting events were created utilising both of these crafts during the mid-19th century. Canoe sprint has been the traditional form of racing since the inception.

## Golf



Golf's origins stretch back for hundreds, maybe even thousands of years, but the modern game is closely associated with Scotland. The Old Course at St Andrews - considered the home of the game, and world governing body the Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St Andrews (R&A) - has seen action since the 1500s.

The Open Championship, the oldest golf tournament still in existence and the first of four top-level international events referred to as "the

Majors", was first contested in 1860. Only in the 20th Century were the dimensions and form many of golf's crucial elements, such as the ball and clubs, standardised. The equipment used to play golf now is far removed from what would have been available a century ago.

## Badminton

In the 17th Century, battledore and shuttlecock was an upper-class pastime in England and many European countries. A contemporary form of the sport called Poona was played in the 19th century in India and picked up by British Army officers, who brought the equipment back to England.



Saina Nehwal in action

In 1873 it was played at the Duke of Beaufort's country retreat, Badminton House, from where the sport gets its name. It was almost a century after the Duke of Beaufort was credited with introducing the sport to Europe that badminton made its debut as a demonstration sport at the 1972 Olympic Games in Munich. Badminton has a cosmopolitan history. The rules of the modern game were developed in England, but it is now Asian countries that dominate the sport.

## Volleyball

Volleyball was designed as an alternative to basketball in the 19th Century, but is now one of the fastest and most energetic sports at the Olympics in its own right. Volleyball was created in 1895 by William G. Morgan, athletics director of the YMCA training school in Holyoke, Massachusetts.



He invented the sport, which he called 'mintonette', for older members of the YMCA club. It took the name volleyball the following year.

It has been part of the Olympics since 1964 and the International Volleyball Federation is currently the largest international sporting federation in the world, with 220 members.

Cuba won gold in the women's volleyball at three consecutive Olympic Games from 1992 to 2000

## Taekwondo

Taekwondo is a traditional Korean martial art dating back to 50BC. It began as a defence-based martial art called "subak" or "taekkyon," and developed as a way of training under the name of "sunbae."

In the middle ages, the practice of martial arts were restricted to just the military and people in Korea began to lose interest in the discipline.

The situation changed during the Japanese occupation from 1910-1945 where all traditional Korean sports and martial arts were banned. The Korean martial art 'soobakgi' was practiced in secret, while Japanese martial arts such as karate, judo, kendo and aikido were taught in schools.

This sparked a revival in the martial arts in Korea and the different disciplines of Korean martial arts were unified under the name, taekwondo in April 1955.

In 1962, the Korean Amateur Sports Association recognized the Korean Taekwondo Union, which later became known as the Korean Taekwondo Association (KTA).

The World Taekwondo Federation was founded in 1973 and the first world championships were held in Seoul that year. It made its debut as a demonstration Olympic sport at the 1988 Seoul Games and, at Barcelona in 1992, Great Britain's Jane Broadbent won an (unofficial) Olympic bronze.



## Rugby Union



In the words of the Rugby Football Union (RFU), the sport is "a territorial, full-contact, team game, inclusive of all shapes and sizes, where 20-stone bulldozers are valued just as highly as small, pacey whippets". The invention of rugby union is famously credited to William Webb Ellis when, in 1823, he supposedly ran with the

ball in his hands during a football match at Rugby School.

That story may or may not be true, but the game in the 21st Century is alive in thousands of teams up and down the United Kingdom.

The Rugby Football Union came into being in 1871, the same year as the sport's first international match, contested between England and Scotland. By the 1880s all four home nations were playing each other, and tours to Australia and New Zealand would take place before the century was out.

Rugby made four appearances at the Olympic Games, beginning with the 1900 Paris Games and including London 1908, Antwerp 1920 and a second Paris appearance in 1924. The sport was subsequently dropped from the Olympic programme but rugby sevens has now won entry to the 2016 Rio Games, as well as being a staple of the Commonwealth Games. Unlike rugby league, which split from union in the 1890s, rugby union remained amateur until 1995, following which the sport entered a new era with competitions like the Heineken Cup.

## Ice Hockey

The McGill University Hockey Club, formed in 1880s Canada, became the first recognised ice hockey club as the sport established itself in North America. The Great Britain men's Olympic team have a chequered history.

Despite being one of the founder members of the International Ice Hockey Federation, they have struggled to make an impact on the sport in recent years. Their last Olympic medal came in 1936, when they won gold in Germany.



Great Britain facing Sweden at the Garmisch-Partenkirchen Winter Olympics, Bavaria, Germany.

## Cycling

The sport of bicycle racing has been around since the early 1800s when the precursors to modern bikes, the 'velocipedes' were invented. Road racing's most popular and enduring event, the Tour de France, was then established in 1903. A number of road-race



disciplines were present at the inaugural Modern Olympics in 1896, including an 87km contest that started and finished in Athens, as well as a 12-hour timed-event.

There was no road racing at the next three Games, before it returned to the schedule in 1912 and has remained a permanent part of the Olympic programme ever since. The 1984 road race in Los Angeles marked the first time women had competed at a cycling event at an Olympics. Road racing has gone on to become the highest-profile cycling discipline thanks to the Tour de France, which attracts global viewing figures of around 44 million each year.

## Boxing

Boxing was one of the cornerstones of the ancient Olympic Games in Greece from the 23rd Olympiad in 688BC. Pugilism, as the Greeks called it, prohibited clinching and had no weight classes, rounds or time limit. Boxing wasn't on the itinerary of ancient Olympic sports that made up the first modern Games in 1896 as it was considered "ungentlemanly, dangerous and practised by the dregs of society".



Cassius Clay - who later became Muhammad Ali - won the light heavyweight gold medal in 1960. The 18-year-old won a unanimous decision over Zbigniew Pietrzykowski of Poland

Things have moved on considerably since boxing was introduced to the ancient Olympic Games in the 7th century BC, and even in the 108 years since the sport made its Olympic debut there have been major changes, such as headguards being made mandatory in 1984 and electronic scoring arriving in 1992.

However, none of those can match the significance of the three women's events - flyweight, lightweight and middleweight - scheduled for introduction in London.

## Baseball and Softball

Baseball is often seen as an all-American game but recent research argues that early games actually took place in England. As early as September 1749, references were made to a game of baseball between the Prince of Wales and Earl



The Oxford University baseball team face their counterparts from Creisea in 1925

Of Middlesex. The modern form of baseball began to take shape when, in 1871, the first professional league was formed. The early 20th Century saw the introduction of the two major US leagues, the National and American, which remain to this day as the foundation for Major League Baseball.

## **American Football**

American football evolved slowly from a combination of football and rugby, with a number of universities changing the rules of each to create new types of sport.

In the 1880s, a man named Walter Camp introduced standardised rule changes into this new hybrid sport, which resulted in the first evolution of the sport we know today.

The National Football League was formed in 1920 and was the principal league until the 1960s, when the rival American Football League became a legitimate competitor.

In 1966, the two leagues agreed to play a season-ending fixture to decide the best team in both competitions. This was the start of the Super Bowl. The leagues fully merged in 1970, creating the two "conference" NFL that is still in existence today.

(Source: BBC Sports and International Olympic Committee)

## **Kabaddi**

Though kabaddi is primarily an Indian game, not much is known about the origin of this game. There is, however evidence, that the game is over 4,000 year old. It is a team sport, which requires both skill and power, and combines the characteristics of wrestling and rugby. It is a rather simple and inexpensive game, and neither requires a massive playing area, nor any expensive equipment. This explains the popularity of the game in rural India. Kabaddi is played all over Asia with minor variations. Kabaddi is known by various names viz. Chedugudu or Hu-Tu-Tu in southern parts of India, Hadudu (Men) and Chu - Kit-Kit (women) in eastern India, and Kabaddi in northern India. The sport is also popular in Nepal, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Japan and Pakistan.

In Kabaddi, two teams compete with each other for higher scores, by touching or capturing the players of the opponent team. Each team consists of 12 players, of which seven are on court at a time, and five in reserve. The game consists of two 20-minute halves, with a break of five minutes for change of sides. The kabaddi playing area is 12.50m x 10m, divided by a line into two halves. The side winning the toss sends a 'raider', who enters the opponents' court chanting, 'kabaddi-kabaddi'. The raider's aim is to touch any or all players on the opposing side, and return to his court in one breath. The person, whom the raider touches, will then be out. The aim of the opposing team will be to hold the raider, and stop him/her from returning to his own court, until s/he takes another breath.

Kabaddi was officially recognized in 1936, when the first demonstration match was played at Berlin Olympics. However it was in 1950s that All India Kabaddi Federation was established and rules of the game was formalised.

## 7. Paralympics Sports



**T**he Paralympic Games are a major international multi-sport event for athletes with physical disabilities. This includes athletes with mobility disabilities, amputations, blindness, and Cerebral Palsy. It is organised to motivate the athletes to participate in competitive sporting activities as part of the global Paralympic movement.

The Paralympic Games showcase the achievements of athletes with impairment to a global audience and act as a primary vehicle to change societal perceptions and leave lasting legacies. They were first held in Rome, Italy in 1960 and featured 400 athletes from 23 countries competing in 13 sports. Since then the Games have taken place every four years in the same year as the Olympic Games.



In 1976, the first Paralympic Winter Games were held in Örnsköldsvik, Sweden and attracted over 250 athletes from 17 countries. Ever since the Seoul 1988 and Albertville 1992, the Games have also

taken place in the same venues as the Olympics. This arrangement has been formalized with the IOC since 2000 through a co-operation agreement.

Over the years the Paralympic Games have grown dramatically attracting more athletes, countries, sports, spectators and media coverage. The Beijing 2008 Paralympic Games saw 3,951 athletes from 146 countries compete in 20 sports. Around 3.5 million spectators saw the Games in the venues and the cumulated worldwide television audience was close to 3.8 billion.

The London 2012 Paralympic Games broke all records with more than 4,250 athletes from 164 countries taking part in 20 sports and a record 2.7 million tickets were sold to spectators.

### Guide to reporting on Paralympic Sport<sup>37</sup>



Paralympic Games are already the world's second largest sporting event by athlete number, featuring elite performers who train just as hard as their Olympic counterparts.

It is crucial that Paralympic athletes are therefore portrayed or referred to as elite athletes first and foremost, rather than seen primarily as people who have overcome great adversity.

While that is undoubtedly part of the story, nothing irritates world class

Paralympic athletes more than being patronised or pitied, or made to feel that

their impairment is being utilised ultimately to define them or their achievements.

Performance, sporting ambition, training, competition and the emotions associated with winning and losing are all relevant subjects that our athletes and sports would expect to focus on. Anything specifically relating to, or focussing on, an elite athlete's impairment is generally considered unnecessary, and certainly secondary, and should really only be considered within a sporting context.

<sup>37</sup> Guide to Reporting on Paralympic Sport issued by British Paralympic Association during 2012 Paralympic Games, London

## **The Olympic and Paralympic Games**

Both the Olympic Games and the Paralympic Games are large international multi-sport events, held in the same city, often in the exact same sporting venues a few weeks apart.

However they are not the same. Both Games have separate histories, separate identities and separate global governing bodies in the International Olympic Committee and International Paralympic Committee respectively.

You should therefore refer to the Olympic and Paralympic Games by their respective names. Some media refer to the Olympic Games as the 'main Games', which is not acceptable and derogatory to all involved.

### **Describing medical conditions**

Language is important and can help shift perceptions of disabled people. Please support us by using the right language in your articles.

#### **The Ideal**

Paralympic athletes want to be referred to as elite athletes first and foremost and as disabled people secondarily - if at all. Therefore the ideal way to refer to a Paralympian or Paralympic hopeful is as 'a Paralympian', 'a Paralympic hopeful' or 'an athlete'.

Often it is not necessary to refer to an athlete's impairment.

Where you feel you need to refer to an athlete's impairment, a passing reference is always preferable to going into detail. We believe information on impairment is irrelevant to an athlete's achievements. If you want to include it, try to make sure it is a reference rather than the focus of the article.

## LANGUAGE: Describing athletes

Description	Correct	Incorrect	Why not?
An athlete who has competed at a Paralympic Games.	Paralympian	Para-Olympian, Para-olympian, Para-athlete, Para-athlete Olympian etc	These are all misspellings or misunderstandings of Paralympian
A disabled athlete who is likely to be selected for a Paralympic Games	Paralympic hopeful	Paralympian	Paralympian should not be used to describe any, or all, other disabled people that compete in sport at any other level.
A disabled athlete	Disabled athlete, or just athlete	Paralympian, Paralympic hopeful	Paralympian, Paralympic hopeful should not be used to describe any, or all, other disabled people that compete in sport at any other level.
A Paralympian who has retired	Retired Paralympian	Former Paralympian, Ex-Paralympian	Paralympian is a title for life, it is not removed after retirement. If an athlete was not a Paralympian, simply say retired athlete.
An athlete who has been selected to compete at an Olympic Games	Olympian		In rare cases (for example: Natalie Du Toit of South Africa) athletes have competed in both the Olympic and Paralympic Games. Natalie is both an Olympian and a Paralympian.

The title Paralympian is a specific one and, just like other important titles such as Lord, Professor, Doctor and Baroness, should be used in its appropriate context.

Preferred terms			
Description	Correct	Incorrect	Why not?
To describe a person who has an impairment	Disabled person	Person with a disability	This is in line with the Equality Act 2010
To describe a person who is not disabled	Non-disabled person	Able-bodied, normal	"Non-disabled" gives a clearer distinction as to what you are describing than "able bodied"
A phrase to describe an impairment	A person/athlete who has a spinal cord injury, a person/athlete with paraplegia	A spinal injury athlete, a paraplegic	A person might have an impairment or medical condition but it does not actually define them as a person. Avoid describing the person as an impairment.
A phrase to describe someone who uses a wheelchair, either occasionally for additional mobility or independence, or for everyday living needs or independence.	Wheelchair user or a person who uses a wheelchair	Wheelchair bound, confined to a wheelchair	Terms like 'bound' or 'confined' should be avoided as they infer entrapment. Instead a wheelchair is an aid or tool, which a person uses.

Make sure that some words and phrases are totally avoided. In particular 'suffers from', 'sufferer', 'victim of' and 'normal' / 'abnormal' are still commonly used when they should not be.

#### **BEHAVIOUR: Being with and around disabled people**

Offer assistance, but remember it will not always be accepted: You should always ask if an individual would like assistance before rushing in and imposing yourself on them.

Your help may not be required. However, don't feel awkward about offering to help, it is perfectly polite and acceptable to do so. Also, if your assistance is declined on one occasion, do not be offended or put off asking in the future.

**Be direct:** Always speak directly with the person rather than their companion, assistant or interpreter. Remember to use your usual manner and speak in your normal tone – a physically disabled person does not

necessarily have a hearing impairment or learning disability so be aware that you could sound condescending.

## Phrases to avoid

Phrase / word	Why avoid?
Suffers from, afflicted with, victim of	These portray the individual as being in a weak, frail or tragic position. A lot of athletes would say that they do not 'suffer from' their impairment.
The disabled, the blind	Grouping disabled people by their disability in this way implies all disabled people in that group share the same characteristics, which stereotypes them
Abnormal, defective and deformed	These adjectives all have negative connotations in the English language and should not be used
Spastic, retard, handicap, invalid and cripple	These nouns all have negative connotations in the English language and should not be used
Normal	What is deemed normal is highly subjective. Using the word normal to draw a comparison between non-disabled and disabled people or between Olympians and Paralympians should be avoided. In a sporting context this is particularly unhelpful as the physiology of an elite sportsperson is unusual - would you describe Chris Hoy or Usain Bolt as "normal"?

**Learning disability:** If you are talking to someone with a learning disability, always use simple, plain language and give them time to answer your questions. Tell the person if you did quite not understand what was said and ask them to repeat what they have said, rather than letting them believe that you have understood them.

**Wheelchair users:** Be aware that a wheelchair is part of a person's personal space so do not lean on it or hold on to it unless of course offered permission to do so.

**Behave naturally:** For example, shake hands with a disabled person as you would any other person, even if they are wearing a prosthesis or have limited movement of their hand or arm. It is a universal sign of greeting. Everyday phrases: There is no need to feel self-conscious about using everyday phrases. Some everyday phrases are perfectly acceptable; some people whose wheelchairs will state themselves 'I'm going for a walk'. It is also perfectly acceptable to say to a visually impaired person 'I will see you later'. Using common sense, everyday phrases of this kind are

most unlikely to cause any offence. If in doubt, ask. If you are unsure of what to do in a particular situation, ask.

### **Being with and around disabled athletes**

There is no need to treat Paralympic athletes any differently than how you would treat any other elite athlete.

For example, you need to remain mindful of their training commitments, the fact that they need to stay rested, hydrated and get enough food and recovery in order to train.

Some medical conditions mean that athletes tire more quickly than non-disabled athletes. This means that sometimes interview times are limited. We ask for your understanding in these circumstances.

## **Paralympic Committee of India (PCI)<sup>38</sup>**

The PCI is a non-partisan, non-profit organisation dedicated for the development and upliftment of Physically Challenged Sports & Wheelchair Athletes. Established in the year 1992 for promotion and development of sports for physically challenged, it was initially named as Physically Handicapped Sports federation of India

The initial objectives of this organisation was to promote sports for the disabled of India, identifying disabled sports persons at all India level, imparting necessary training to them and preparing them to take part in State, National and International Sports meets.

The PCI is affiliated to the International Paralympic Committee, Germany, which is the supreme body for disabled sports in the world. It is also affiliated to the International Wheel Chair and Amputee Sports Federation, UK, covering Wheel Chair and Amputee Sports world wide, FESPIC Federation, Japan, covering the countries in Far East and South Pacific regions and Asian Paralympic Committee, Malaysia.

## **International Paralympic Committee<sup>39</sup>**

The International Paralympic Committee (IPC) is the global governing body of the Paralympic Movement. Its purpose is to organise the summer

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<sup>38</sup> [www.paralympicindia.org.in](http://www.paralympicindia.org.in)

<sup>39</sup> [www.paralympic.org](http://www.paralympic.org)

and winter Paralympic Games and act as the International Federation for nine sports, supervising and coordinating World Championships and other competitions.

IPC is run by 200 members with a vision "To enable Paralympic athletes to achieve sporting excellence and inspire and excite the world." The Committee was founded on 22 September 1989 as a non-profit organisation in Bonn, Germany.

It employs nearly 70 people from 17 countries and is composed of a General Assembly (highest decision making body), a Governing Board (executive body), a Management Team and various Standing Committees and Councils.

Approximately 50 percent of the IPC's funding comes from the Paralympic Games revenue as the IPC grants all the related marketing rights to the local Games Organising Committees in exchange for a fixed rights fee. Additional funds are also source from other, smaller sporting events, however longer term these have the potential for revenue growth.

The IPC enjoys the support of a number of IOC and Olympic Games TOP partners as well as other large global players in the corporate market.

## 8. Awards for sports in India



Sachin Tendulkar being awarded with the Bharat Ratna, India's highest civilian award, by the President Pranab Mukherjee

### Padma Shri Awards

Padma Shri (also spelt Padma Shree, Padmashree, Padma Sree and Padma Sri) is an award given by the Government of India generally to Indian citizens to recognize their distinguished contribution in various spheres of activity including Arts, Education, Industry, Literature, Science, Sports, Social Service and public life.

### Arjuna Awards

The Arjuna Awards were established by the Indian Government in 1961 for the excellent performance by the sportspersons in various events. The award holds a cash prize of INR 500,000, a bronze statue of Arjuna and a scroll. The Government has recently modified the format of the award. As per revised guidelines, a sportsperson must have a constant excellent performance for the previous three years at international level to be eligible for the award, along with extraordinary qualities like leadership, sportsmanship and a sense of discipline.

## **Tenzing Norgay national Adventure Awards**

The objectives of the Award are:

- To recognize the achievements of persons in the fields of adventure.
- To encourage young people to develop the spirit of endurance, risk-taking, cooperative teamwork and quick, ready and effective reflexes in challenging situations.
- To provide incentive to the young people for getting exposed to the adventure activities.

The status of the Award is same as Arjuna Awards conferred by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports.

## **Dronacharya Award**

Instituted in 1985, the Dronacharya Award is presented by the Indian Government for brilliance in sports coaching. The award consists of a bronze figurine of Dronacharya, a cash price of Rupees 500,000 and a scroll of honor. Since the best sportsperson award is named Arjuna Award, it would be appropriate that the best coaching award is named Dronacharya, the Guru of Arjuna.

## **Dhyan Chand Award**

The Dhyan Chand Award is the highest lifetime achievement award in sports and games in India and is presented by the Indian Government. Initiated in 2002, the award bears a cash prize of Rs 500,000 rupees, a figurine, ceremonial dress and a scroll of honor. It is named after the renowned Indian hockey player Dhyan Chand.

## **Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award**

Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award is the highest honor given for accomplishment in sports in India. The term "Khel Ratna" translated in Hindi literally means "sports gem". Named after the former Prime Minister of India, Rajiv Gandhi, the award carries a medal, a significant cash price of Rupees 750,000 and a scroll of honour. The award was initiated in 1991-92 to offer a highest national tribute in the field of sports. The award was formulated to present the utmost honour for

exceptional sporting performance, whether by an individual or a team in all sporting disciplines in a year.

### **Other Sports Awards in India**

The **Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Award** is given mainly to the overall top winners in the Inter-University Tournaments.

In Punjab, the **Maharaja Ranjit Singh Award** is given by the Government of Punjab for excellent achievement in the field of Sports.

The Government also confers some cash awards.

Many State Governments also give awards to the sports personalities of concerned states. Some State governments (for example Odisha) also give awards to Sports Journalists.

## 9. World Cup Football 2014

### Media Coverage: An Overview

The FIFA World Cup 2014 presented spectacular moments to fans all over the world. Be it Germany's methodical domination of the host nation in the semifinal; a 22-year-old Neymar's appearance on the world stage as the "next big thing" in this global sports, currently dominated by the likes of Lionel Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo; the World Cup was replete with moments of fun, anxiety, unhindered flow of emotions and many others to which any sports is associated with.



People interested in watching sports events whether in the playground or on television are more than often also interested in reading about their favourite sports. Their number extends in millions. For journalists, thus, it becomes imperative to explore and provide all sorts of stories to attract readers.

A global sporting event like the FIFA World Cup provides a sea of story opportunities. Sporting events of this scale are often replete with a number of controversies, new records, new trends and popular incidents etc. This World Cup also was no exception. Indian newspapers covered World Cup extensively. Most of them devoted at least three pages for a comprehensive coverage of the everyday developments in Brazil during the World Cup. Here we shall take a look at different kinds of story angles, headlines and leads published by four Indian newspapers – *The Hindu*, *Indian express (IE)*, and *The Times of India(TOI)*.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>40</sup>All the news stories mentioned in the section has been taken from the web edition so the respective newspapers.

## Politics, protests and controversies

The World Cup started under the shadow of massive protests against huge expenditure of public money for building stadiums for the tournament. The event also proved to be an exciting opportunity for politicians all over the world to connect with their people and to also carry forward their diplomatic agendas. There were also several controversies related to football and other issues. Newspapers in India covered all of these extensively.

Here are the examples of a few headlines and leads:

### Brazil's ignominious football World Cup, (The Hindu, June 7)

On May 10, Brazilian street artist Paulo Ito painted a telling graffiti on the doors of a Sao Paulo public schoolhouse. It showed a young boy crying for food with nothing but a football on his plate.

For a month beginning June 12, the eyes of the world will be on Brazil.



Food for thought: A man walks past Brazilian street artist Paulo Ito's graffiti on the entrance of a public schoolhouse in Sao Paulo, Brazil, ahead of the football World Cup.— Photo: AFP

The quadrennial football World Cup, which the country will host this year, is after all the closest thing we have to a truly global experience.

But for many Brazilians, the tournament represents at best a dreadful distraction and at worst a source of unending graft and misery. Its image, which has since gone viral on social media, reflects a popular view — of a country plundered

not only by FIFA, world football's tyrannical governing body, but also, more terrifyingly, by its own government... (by Surith Parthasarathy)

### Home fans, away supporters (IE, May 30)

Millions of Brazilians will be cheering like crazy during the World Cup, but not all of them for Brazil. With kickoff two weeks away and tensions simmering over the costs of hosting the month-long soccer event, some

are showing their anger by saying they will root against the national team, perhaps Brazil's most prominent symbol on the global stage.

"Never before has the World Cup incited these feelings of hatred among Brazilians," said Ugo Giorgetti, a prominent filmmaker and soccer commentator. "There are people who love soccer, who love Brazil, but are cheering against the team like they have never cheered before."... (Reuters)

### **Venezuelan President accuses European powerhouses of 'inventing case' against Luis Suarez (IE, June 28)**

Venezuela's president has weighed into global controversy over Uruguay striker Luis Suarez's World Cup expulsion, saying he had been unfairly punished for helping eliminate Italy and England.

"They can't forgive Uruguay that a son of the people has eliminated two of football's big nations, so they invented a whole case," Nicolas Maduro said late on Friday...(AP)

### **FIFA member behind illegal World Cup ticket sales: Brazil police (The Hindu, July 4)**



This file photo shows a \$90 ticket for the Spain vs. Chile game, bought by a fan on Stubhub.com for \$775 U.S. dollars, in Puerto Rico. Brazilian police have widened their investigation into ticket scalping at the World Cup. (Source: AP)

Football's powerful governing body came under renewed scrutiny after a Brazilian police chief said a FIFA member provided thousands of World Cup tickets sold illegally at games for millions of dollars.

Police commissioner Fabio Barucke said

"someone from FIFA" and "an intermediary from Match Hospitality", FIFA's ticket agency, had channelled the

tickets onto the black market... (AFP)

## **Belgian Prime Minister offers Barack Obama beer bet over World Cup clash (IE, June 27)**

Belgian Prime Minister Elio Di Rupo challenged U.S. President Barack Obama to a bet over Belgium's impending World Cup knock-out match against the United States, offering the prospect of some "great Belgian beers" should the U.S. team win.

On Thursday, Belgium beat South Korea 1-0 to top Group H, setting up a clash with the United States after JuergenKlinsmann's team pipped Portugal to second place in Group G on goal difference despite losing to Germany... (Reuters)

## **Spain: End of a reign; beginning of another (IE, June 19)**

Spanish newspapers mourned the end of the country's soccer dynasty after the champions' stunning exit from the World Cup in Brazil though front pages on Thursday were more focused on a new reign – of King Felipe VI.



The Spanish newspapers did carry articles about the football team's disastrous show in Brazil, but main cover pictures remained of King Felipe's swearing in. (Source: Reuters)

Champions Spain lost 2-0 to Chile on Wednesday, their glory days consigned to history books on the same day that King Juan Carlos signed his abdication papers, handing over to his heir Felipe who will be sworn in on Thursday...(Reuters)

## **FIFA tightens its defence as social media runs riot (IE, July 4)**

First came Robin van Persie's gravity defying header against Spain. Then came its recap on Vine. And now, the crackdown. These days social media can work wonders for any event until it involves copyrights and trademarks, as sports broadcasters across the world seem to have discovered over the last couple of weeks.

For the millions spent by dozens of broadcasters to acquire the rights of World Cup matches and beam them live to billions of homes across the

world, it's the social networking websites that are stealing the spotlight. Hundreds of short video clips of World Cup matches have gone viral on Twitter and Facebook, giving FIFA officials sleepless nights.

Sports channels pay FIFA millions to legally own the footage. The world governing body earned a minimum of \$2bn in TV and media rights deals for the 2010 World Cup... (by ShamikChakrabarty, MihirVasvda)

### **Putin inherits World Cup baton, promises 'unforgettable' 2018 (TOI, July 14)**

Moscow: Russia's President Vladimir Putin on Sunday vowed "an unforgettable football feast" when his country hosts the 2018 World Cup.

After spending more than the \$50 billion on this year's Sochi Winter Olympics, Putin faces another multi-billion dollar bill for the project...(AFP)

### **Gambling assets worth \$2.9b seized in China in two days (TOI, July 15)**

Beijing: Chinese police have made record seizure of 18 billion yuan (\$2.9 billion) worth of illegal assets used for gambling on two days, July 12 and 13, on different aspects of 2014 FIFA World Cup, the Ministry of Public Security said. It did not indicate the actual amount of money involved in World Cup gambling but it is likely to be several times the size of seizure. ... (by Saibal Dasgupta)

### **World Cup drunkenness worries Fifa (TOI, July 2)**

Rio De Janerio: Fifa secretary general Jerome Valcke has expressed concern about the level of drunkenness in Brazil's World Cup stadiums.

Brazil had banned alcohol in stadiums, but football's governing body insisted on an exemption for the World Cup. Beer multinational Anheuser-Busch InBev, is a major Fifa sponsor.

### **Sex is good for footballers, at least in this Fifa World Cup (TOI, July 3)**

Sao Paulo: It might be hard to stand up in court but evidence is mounting that sex is good for footballers - at least in this World Cup.

All eight of the teams through to the quarterfinals allowed their players to have sexual relations with partners during down time, according to Brazil's Lance! newspaper. All of the teams that banned it have been knocked out, the paper added.

### **Business and sports**

A grand event like the football World Cup is an excellent example of the interplay of sports and business, something of special interests for journalists. The World Cup this generated huge revenues for the FIFA, small businesses associated with sports, hospitality and tourism industries in Brazil and sports merchandise etc. Newspapers covered all developments related to these regularly. Some of these also appeared occasionally on the front pages.

Here are a few examples:

#### **World Cup cash split: FIFA is the real winner (IE, July 12)**

The most valuable and expensive World Cup ever will earn billions of dollars for FIFA, millions for the competing countries and thousands for the more than 700 players selected. From its near \$4.5 billion in revenue from broadcasters, sponsors, hospitality and licensing deals, FIFA distributes just over \$400 million to the 32 national federations taking part in the tournament... (AP)

#### **The \$14 Billion Tragedy, Brazil's one chance to salvage some pride (IE, July 12)**

The 7-1 humiliation Brazil suffered at the hands of Germany can never be forgotten. The episode will reverberate around the country's streets for generations to come. For a football crazy nation, winning the sport's most valued trophy in their own backyard would have sparked scenes of wild celebrations for months. Or, at least that was what President DilmaRousseff had hoped.



The official FIFA World Cup 2014 soccer ball

The morning after the crushing defeat, one of Brazil's leading papers had the headline "VergonhaVexameHumilhação (Shame,

Grief, Humiliation).” Another headline read “Historic Disgrace.”...(by Saahil Mehta)

### **Pakistan to produce World Cup soccer balls,(The Hindu, May 21)**

Pakistan may be known as a cricketing nation but not many know that the soccer balls for the upcoming FIFA World Cup in Brazil will be imported from the 159th-ranked football nation.

When World Cup’s Chinese supplier Adidas failed to keep up with the demand of soccer balls in Rio de Janeiro, a report in *Express Tribune* said that a Sialkot ball manufacturing company then stepped in and got the contract.

### **Football world cup scores for merchandise (TOI, May 12)**

New Delhi: Most Indians swear by their allegiance to cricket. But when it comes to buying sports merchandise, they invariably tilt towards football.

On the eve of the 2014 FIFA World Cup to be held in Brazil next month, marketers like sportswear giants Adidas and Nike, are scrambling to make the most of this year's biggest sporting event. While Adidas, which is the official sponsor of the World Cup, is counting on its brand ambassador Lionel Messi to sell its boots, apparel and accessories, archrival Nike has pinned faith on Cristiano Ronaldo to help sell its team kits and off-pitch collection... (by John Sarkar)

### **Adidas nets one past Nike in World Cup, Puma watches(TOI, July 17)**

New Delhi: Going into FIFA World Cup 2014, the largest sporting event of the year, global sportswear giant Nike played the 'beautiful game' aggressively, almost brutally.

The US-based company sponsored more teams than competitors Adidas and Puma, including tournament favourite Brazil. It struck major sponsorship deals with stars such as, Brazil's Neymar and Portugal's Cristiano Ronaldo, the second-most-expensive soccer shoe endorser in the world after David Beckham. Its 'Risk Everything'

campaign garnered millions of views on social media. It looked like an easy game.

Nike figured that it might finally shoot one past arch-rival and soccer-sales leader Adidas. It didn't... (by John Sarkar)

**Sony Six sees Rs 200-cr ad revenue from football World Cup (The Hindu, May 29)**

The 2014 FIFA World Cup is expected to be the next big ticket property after the Indian Premier League (IPL) for official broadcaster, Sony Six, as the company is projecting advertising revenue of about Rs 200 crore from the football extravaganza.

“We are selling ad spots at Rs 2.5 lakhs for 10 seconds and expect revenue to almost touch Rs 200 crore for the 64 matches,” said Rohit Gupta, President, Network Sales, Multi Screen Media (the owner of Sony Six).

However, there will be less airtime at 800 seconds for a FIFA match compared to an IPL match at 2,400 seconds, where ad revenues already crossed Rs 500 crore this season, according to the official broadcaster...(by Purvita Chatterjee, Meenakshi Verma Ambwani)

**New Trends**

The FIFA World Cup 2014 witnessed several new trends which were extensively noted and reported by the newspapers.

For example:



The vuvuzela was a key feature in South Africa

**The noise of a nation silenced (IE, June 5)**

What is your overpowering memory of the 2010 World Cup in South Africa? Close your eyes and let the images come flooding back. Do you see Carles Puyol leap in the moist Durban air and head Spain

into the final? Or are your memories more aural than visual? If so, can you hear the drone of the vuvuzela, the never-ending screech of the tuneless trumpet whose intensity ranged from blaring to bone shattering?

Before the biggest football carnival had descended on African shores for the first time in its history, many had wondered whether South Africa would host a World Cup worth remembering. Four years on, the sound of the vuvuzela still forces us to shudder at the soundtrack it lent to the event and perhaps even making us bless the souls responsible for making the migraine machines extinct.

Only, they aren't extinct... (by Aditya Iyer)

### **Germany takes 'tiki-taka' to another level (The Hindu, July 11)**

Germany has taken the 'tiki-taka' passing game so intrinsically used by Spain to another level at the World Cup in Brazil, by adding ruthless efficiency to the possession philosophy.

Germany likes possession, just as Spain did, but Low's team avoids endless wide passing and prefers to push forward at every occasion.

When Germany wins the ball in its half, Low wants his players to pass it quickly forward, hoping to outnumber the opposing defence...AP)

### **Thieves choose football over stealing in Kenya (IE, June 18)**

A town in western Kenya has reported a sharp drop in serious crime, with police concluding that criminals were too busy watching the World Cup to go out and steal.

"At least now the youth have something to keep them occupied so they are not involved in criminal activities," local police commander in Kisumu, David Ng'etich, was quoted as saying by *The Star newspaper*...(AFP)

### **Goalkeepers shine brightest in 2014 World Cup (TOI, July 13)**

Despite being a tournament labelled as the return of attack-minded football after the caution shown in South Africa four years ago, Brazil 2014 has been a platform for the world's best goalkeepers to shine.

Sunday's final features the widely regarded best stopper in the world in Germany's Manuel Neuer, whose sweeper-keeper ability to rush from his goal could lead to a revolution in how the position is played.

However, even those less widely recognised at club level have shone in the bright lights of Brazil over the past five weeks...(AFP)

### **Latin Americans rally behind un-Latin American Argentina (IE, July 12)**

With a reputation for arrogance and illusions of European-styled grandeur, Argentines have long been the objects of scorn and the butt of jokes across Latin America. But for at least 90 minutes on Sunday, when Argentina takes on Germany in the World Cup final, most Latin Americans will put aside their disdain for their proud neighbors as they look to Lionel Messi and his teammates to salvage what's left of the region's soccer pride... (AP)

### **Cross-border rivalry reignites (IE, July 11)**

Sergio Romero, Argentina's goalkeeper and hero in the penalty shootouts, arrived below the throngs of Argentines in the Arena Corinthians shortly after his saves had placed the Albiceleste in their first World Cup final in 24 years.

Then, Romero yanked his fluorescent yellow keeping suit off and swirled it in the drenched air, even as the thousands placed above him did the same – with a heart-felt song in their throats.

At first, it seemed like Argentina's manic supporters were singing Creedence Clearwater Revival's 'Bad Moon Rising' to a dancing Romero. But, of course, they weren't... (by Aditya Iyer)

### **Rain of goals drowns out fears of troubled tournament (IE, June 18)**

In the buildup to the World Cup, the Brazilian catchphrase of “Jogo Bonito” — The Beautiful Game — was drowned out by the bangs of frantic construction work and the shouts of angry protesters. Not now. The football — it’s been open, attacking and packed full of goals and great moments — is doing all the talking.

Neymar kicked Brazil into gear, Robin van Persie soared and scored with one of the most spectacular headers you’ll see, and Argentina wizard Lionel Messi conjured up a little left-footed magic at the Maracana. On Monday, it kept coming: Thomas Mueller scored a hat-trick for Germany in a shock 4-0 rout of Cristiano Ronaldo’s Portugal and Clint Dempsey hit the net just half a minute into the United States’ World Cup in an end-to-end 2-1 win over Ghana. The first round of group games isn’t even done yet... (AP)

### **FIFA World Cup study praises risk-taking, fast breaks (TOI, Aug 15)**

Zurich: A FIFA study of tactics and technical trends at the World Cup says risk-taking and counterattacks are in fashion.

Teams now "play positively and do everything to win a game rather than merely 'not lose'," FIFA's panel of coaching experts working in Brazil reported Friday.

The best teams were rewarded for being "not afraid of losing their shape for brief moments," the 284-page document noted...(AP)

### **40% of Fifa World Cup's desi TV audience were women (TOI, July 25)**

Mumbai: The recently concluded Fifa World Cup saw Indian women lap up football like never before with more than 40% of the overall television viewership coming from female audiences. The month-long tournament, one of the biggest sporting events in the world, saw 55 million Indians tune in to watch the matches, out of which 32 million were male while 23 million were women, according to data made available to TOI by the official broadcaster of the tournament Sony Six, sourced from TAM... (by Samidha Sharma)

### **On the wings of football, (The Hindu, July 3)**



Kerala has always been known as a football loving State. So it came as no surprise when the football World Cup hit our shores with an intensity that made the monsoon pale in comparison. As loyalties were worn on hearts and sleeves (literally) and football

lovers gathered to watch matches and debate outcomes, the World Cup has seen expected results and upsets as it races to its conclusion with a few nail-biting finishes.

The tournament has also spawned quite a lot of interest among fans, with a few events and trends marking its progression.

### **The luxurious FIFA World Cup (TOI, Jun 17)**

For many, *football* being synonymous with Brazil is as much a social comment as it is a sporting one. It emphasized game's real following and aspiration value.

No surprises that the tournament being held in the 'home of football' apart from highlighting the social disparities in Brazilian society is also seen as giving this mercenary sport a truly luxurious image. The popular sport that usually had sportsapparel or beer brands adorning any soccer tournament is in for a luxe makeover this time...(by Amin Ali)

### **Craze for football on mobile phones, PCs rises, (The Hindu, July 12)**

As the nail biting FIFA-2014 World Cup reaches its final stages, craze for playing football matches online and on mobile phones has increased manifold among teenagers.

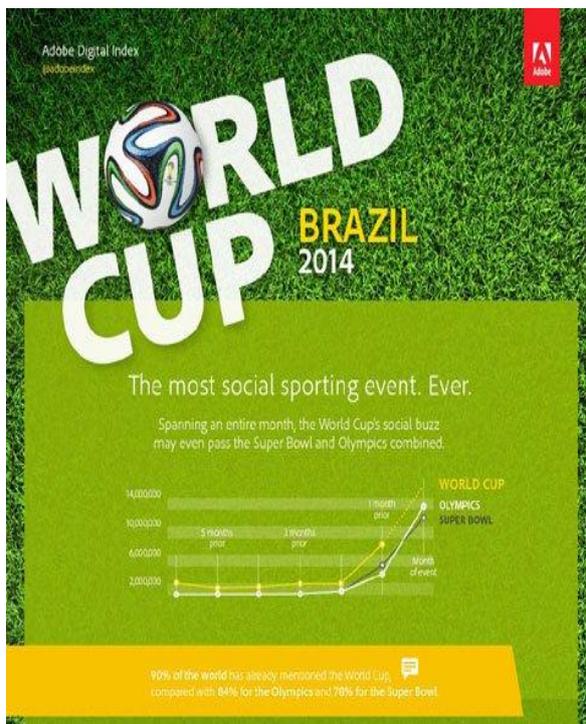
Thanks to its branding by different multinational companies (MNCs), popularity of the matches has gone up considerably compared to the previous World Cup. With this trend, more and more teenagers are playing matches on android mobile phones, tablets or personal computers during their leisure time... (by M Srinivas)

## Game for the World Cup, (The Hindu, June 19)

Football frenzy's taken over the app world too. In keeping with the trend two city-based IT firms have come up with free apps, especially for the World Cup. Here's a quick look....

## Social Media and Football

### FIFA World 2014 Cup the most social sporting event ever: Adobe (IE, June 12)



New data from Adobe has confirmed the 2014 FIFA World Cup is the most social sporting event ever, surpassing the Sochi Olympic Games and the 2014 Super Bowl. Since June 2013, the World Cup has generated more than 19 million social mentions.

Adobe Digital Index has been capturing data through Adobe Social, covering buzz from social channels including blogs, Facebook, Google+, Reddit, Twitter, Dailymotion, Flickr, Instagram, Tumblr, Foursquare and YouTube. More than 69 million social mentions have been included in the sample from 230 countries and territories talking about the

World Cup....

### 36.5 million tweets rolled out during the Germany-Brazil game (IE, July 9)

Brazil's record defeat at the hands of Germany in the World Cup semi-final sent social networks into overdrive, with Twitter and Facebook beating previous marks of activity for sporting events.

A total of 35.6 million tweets were sent during the match on Tuesday that saw the Germans thrash Brazil 7-1 the host nation's worst loss in its 100-year footballing history... (AFP)

### **Messi, Ronaldo top online searches during World Cup (TOI, July 18)**

New Delhi: He may not have been able to deliver the World Cup to Argentina but Lionel Messi topped the Google search results for forwards during the just-concluded event in Brazil along with Portuguese star Cristiano Ronaldo. "Portuguese star Cristiano Ronaldo and Argentina's Lionel Messi may have not performed to the expectations of fans this World Cup, but online search trends reveal that they retain the top spot when it comes to being the best strikers in the World Cup," Google said in a release. ..(PTI)

### **How can you equate a football victory with rape: Angry netizens (TOI, July 13)**

Brazil's loss to Germany was already an emotional moment, but fans have had enough after controversial 'rape' comments went viral after the semifinals.

While celebrating their epic victory in the semifinals, fans of the German football team managed to irk people with their celebratory messages.

Among many other jokes, memes and tweets, fans termed the match as Germany's 'rape' of Brazil. A day later, people from around the world responded with angry replies to the joke... (by Aanchal Tuli)

### **World Cup final breaks social media records, (The Hindu, July 16)**

The hard-fought thrilling World Cup final between Germany and Argentina set new Twitter and Facebook records as the encounter was trending on all social media platforms.

The final set a new Twitter record of 618,725 tweets per minute discussing the match, according to a data.

Facebook also said the game hit record numbers, prompting 280 million interactions, with 88 million people engaged globally, CBS News reported.

**Neymar tops charts as Twitter World Cup kicks off  
Hindu, June 13)**

**(The**

Brazil hero Neymar topped the Twitter charts as football fans in more than 150 countries sent out 12.2 million tweets during the opening match of a World Cup set to represent a landmark in the development of social media.

The Barcelona striker's two goals in Brazil's controversial 3-1 win over Croatia ensured he was the most mentioned player on the micro-blogging site, according to Twitter's own monitoring of Thursday night's big kick-off in Sao Paulo... (AFP)

**History and Football**

**When footballers inspired an anthem (IE, June 12)**

How deep can a World Cup team's impact be on its nation? Hristo Stoichkov, Bulgaria's most inspirational footballer, who ended up as the top scorer in USA '94, has a village named after him. That, however, is small change as compared to what Russia's national side achieved before, during and after France '98.

Unlike Bulgaria in 1994, when they beat Germany in the quarters to reach the last-four for the only time in their history, Russia did precious little in 1998. In fact, they didn't even make it to the main draw, having lost during the qualifiers and failing to qualify for the first time since 1978. So, when a state-sponsored tribunal was held to look into their failures, the reason for their humiliation was overwhelming as it was unanimous — Russia's national anthem... (by Aditya Iyer)

**Old scores to settle (IE, June 30)**

If revenge is a plate best served cold, Algeria will hope to dish it out to Germany in their World Cup Round of 16 match on Monday 32 years after one of the most shameful games in the tournament's history. In all likelihood, however, a powerful Germany side will bring the Desert

Foxes' run to an end and deprive them of retribution and further glory. But it might not be easy.

The Germans, champions in 1954, 1974 and 1990, arrived in Brazil as one of the favourites. They showed their credentials by demolishing Portugal 4-0 in their opening game but stumbled slightly against Ghana, drawing 2-2. They then dismissed the United States with a strong performance that still left some room for improvement, although Thomas Mueller showed again what a lethal striker he is...(Reuters)

**'Romario and I were among the deadliest duos in World Cup history' (The Hindu, June 14)**

Brazil's 1994 World Cup triumph in the USA was largely possible because of the telepathic partnership of Romario and Bebeto, responsible for eight of the team's 11 goals in the competition.

A voluntary worker for the Local Organising Committee for this edition, Bebeto took time out for an email interview with *The Hindu*...(by Ayon Sengupta)

**When a few centimetres can change football history (The Hindu, June 30)**

Success in modern football largely depends on talent and resilience — but sheer good fortune also plays its part.

This timeless truth was again shown to the watching world on Saturday, when Chile went within centimetres of astonishingly eliminating hosts and favourites Brazil from the World Cup. In the final minute of extra time, with the score at 1-1 and with a dreaded penalty shootout looming, Chilean forward Mauricio Pinilla played a one-two with Alexis Sanchez and unleashed a tremendous drive that beat Brazil goalkeeper Julio Cesar — but then rebounded off the crossbar...(DPA)

**1986 World Cup: Maradona gets a hand on the trophy (TOI, Jun 1)**

Paris: Mexico, with its searing heat and thin air, hosted the 13th World Cup finals less than a year after being hit by a massive earthquake that left 30,000 dead.

The quarterfinal between Brazil and France, who had already knocked out holders Italy, was the match of the tournament. A flowing match finished 1-1 before France won the penalty shootout 4-3.

Diego Maradona's infamous 'Hand of God' goal, when he punched the ball into the net, and a spectacular solo effort gave Argentina victory over England in the last eight. He produced more magic to see off Belgium in the semifinals....(AFP)

### **1978 World Cup: Kempes goals seal Argentina win (TOI, Jun 1)**

Paris: Despite a threatened boycott over the host nation's military junta, all 16 qualifiers turned up for the 1978 finals which Argentina won on home territory.

The Argentines, for whom long-haired striker Mario Kempes was a revelation, romped to a 6-0 win over Peru in their final second-phase match to oust Brazil on goal difference, prompting cries of fixing from South American rivals... (AFP)

### **1974 World Cup: 'Total Football' revolution (TOI, Jun 1)**

PARIS: The tenth World Cup was hosted by West Germany only two years after the murder of Israeli athletes that shocked the world at the Munich Olympics.

The tournament saw the birth of "total football". Finalists the Netherlands, led by Johan Cruyff, and Franz Beckenbauer's West Germany were the leading exponents of the new art which involved players switching positions at will to open up defences...

## **India and the World Cup**

### **Music, food and football come together in Goa's inter-village tournaments (IE, June 8)**

Siesta time in Anjuna-Caisua, north Goa. The laterite-stone houses are silent, their inhabitants clustered under trees, or



enjoying a snooze. The football ground, a clearing hemmed in by the village on one side and rolling hills on the other, is even more desolate.

Thirty minutes later, however, it is a scene transformed. A bunch of 10 people have materialised out of nowhere. Two megaphones blare out Remo Fernandes's latest Goan numbers, tables and chairs are laid out, and the ground is ready for a match... (by Chinmay Brahme)



Shot at glory: Oinambem at practice in Imphal

**Bend it Like Bembem: The feisty captain of Manipur women's football team opens up (IE, June 8)**

Oinambem started playing football with the boys in her colony in Imphal city when she

was 12. She didn't know much about football then, it was just a game that she enjoyed with her friends. But the boys in the team quickly recognised her talent. Before she knew it, she had cut her hair really short, taken on a boy's name (Bobo, or sometimes Amko) and was playing against rival localities. The only girl on the football ground. "My own teammates knew," she says. The subterfuge worked and her reputation grew...(by Esha Roy)



Neymar fractured his back during the quarters clash against Colombia in the ongoing World Cup

(Source: Reuters)

**Kerala offers ayurvedic help to injured Neymar (IE)**

Thiruvananthapuram, July 8: Kerala government is looking into the possibility of offering its traditional ayurvedic treatment to Brazilian footballer Neymar for his fractured vertebrae.

Amidst rumours in a section of media that

Brazilian Football Federation has sought Kerala help, Chief Minister OommenChandy told The Indian Express that the idea to give ayurvedic treatment to Neymar was mooted by Kerala Football Association (KFA).

“When they (KFA) approached us with the idea, I have asked the health department to examine the issue. Heath Minister V S Shivakumar has convened a meeting of higher officials,” said Chandy....( by Shaju Philip)

### **Kicking out sexism (The Hindu, July 5)**



Mumbra girls at a practice session.

They weep, they scream, they explode with anger, they dance with joy — millions of football fans around the world are right now focused on only one thing — World Cup Football in Brazil. The controversies that preceded it have been all but forgotten as lovers of the game, men and women follow every move.

But the players are all men. Football remains, in popular

imagination, a man’s game.

Yet, women also play football. Including Indian women. You would not know that as precious little is written about them. But this year, for a change, there has been some welcome reporting on the women who also kick the ball around.

One of them is a remarkable 36-year-old from Manipur — Oinam Bembem Devi. Her claim to fame is that she plays excellent football, so good that she captained the Indian Women’s Football team thrice. Yet, at the age of 12 when she began kicking a ball around with the boys in her neighbourhood, she could not have imagined this. In fact, according to reports about her, Bembem was so keen to play football that she cut her hair short and changed her name to Bobo so that she could continue to play with the boys.... (by KalpanaSharma)

**Kolkata couple gears up to watch ninth World Cup in a row( The Hindu, June 12),**

Football is a passion for Kolkata's couple Pannalal (81) and Chaitali (71), which has taken them to eight World Cups previously and the 2014 Brazil edition will be no exception either, though this could be their last.

It all began in 1982 when the football-crazy couple, who live in a narrow bylane at Kidderpore in the south-western part of the city, when they spent one summer at their friend's place in London and decided to go to Spain to watch the World Cup...(PTI)

**Football fever grips Prime Minister Narendra Modi (IE, June 12)**



Prime Minister Modi with Communications and Information Technology minister Ravi Shankar Prasad and Minister of State for Youth Affairs and Sports Sarbananda Sonowal. Mr. Modi said that India too was preparing to host the U-17 World Cup. (Source: PTI)

Joining millions of football lovers across the world, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 12 June released commemorative postage stamps on the 2014 FIFA World Cup and hoped that the international event becomes a "bridge for connecting nations".

He used to occasion to underline the need inculcating the love of sports

among children within the country with his slogan "jo khele, wo hi khile" (those who play develop well)...

**Is Neymar the Sachin Tendulkar of Brazil? (IE, July 12)**

Every team needs a hero, a poster boy who signifies victory, signifies success. A star on whom the media can focus its coverage. Every successful campaign has one. Pele for Brazil, Maradona for Argentina.

But then some are not so lucky, there is Tendulkar – until he won the cup in 2011, Jayawardene – until he won the T20 World Cup in 2014, and then there is a Neymar.

A couple of days ago, ex-Brazil coach Dunga stated that Neymar “was too raw to play in South Africa”. And yet, in the span of four years, Neymar rose through the ranks at the Santos; soon came into the media limelight and hence caught the eye of ‘Big Phil’.

A rampaging Neymar was then the talk of the town in 2011 Club World cup against Barcelona. On a high, he then came to the Confederations cup and won many accolades... (by Saikat Ghosh)

**For octogenarian Ahmed Khan, Brazil revives memories of the lost chance (IE, June 9)**

Ahmed Khan will follow the FIFA World Cup, which kicks off later this week, with special interest and considerable regret.

The last time the world’s biggest single sporting event took place in Brazil, India had qualified for it. They were placed in Group C alongside Paraguay, Italy and Sweden. And Khan was the pivot of a fledgling team that was making rapid strides in international football...(by Mihir Vasavda)

**Writer astounds football fans with his golden predictions (TOI, July 15)**

Kannur: When Germany’s Mario Goetze scored an amazing goal against Argentina he just looked at the clock and smiled under his breath. Seven more minutes left for the long whistle to blow - to declare the winner of the 2014 Fifa World Cup, thus proving the last in a series of his predictions become correct once again. And exactly that did happen. ...( by P Sudhakaran)

**It’s ‘Ola Brazil’ as Indians fly in hordes for FIFA World Cup(TOI, Jun 6)**

Chennai: Cricket may well be a religion in India, but football is not far behind. Well-heeled Indians are spending heavily to travel halfway across the world to watch FIFA World Cup matches live in Brazil. Interest in the World Cup has grown 15-20% this year in terms of outbound traffic to Brazil compared with World Cup 2010 in South Africa, tour operators say...

## World Cup and the Stars

### JLo, Pitbull sparkle at opening ceremony (IE June 13)



*Brazilian singer Claudia Lette, left, US singer Jennifer Lopez, right, rapper Pitbull, perform during the opening ceremony (Source: AP)*

Jennifer Lopez, rapper Pitbull and pop star Claudia Lette bounced around a giant stage resembling a peeled melon singing the World Cup theme 'We Are One' as Brazilian band Olodum banged drums below on this nation's Valentine's Day.

JLo, dressed in a low-cut sparkling green outfit, turned up for the performance despite earlier reports that she wouldn't be able to attend.

Brazil is ready to samba, and plans to teach the world to join in for the coming month during the showcase tournament for the world's most popular sport. The futebol-crazed country hoped Thursday's Croatia-Brazil opener would be the start of a run to extend its record to six World Cup titles.

### The one man stand (IE, June 22)

Ronaldo had been reduced to going for long-rangers and speculative efforts against Germany. He had few scoring opportunities after Pepe's red card.

Cristiano Ronaldo stands with his feet pressed together in a goal-scoring position. Those legs are customarily apart when it's his turn to take a free-kick or a penalty. But when awaiting a corner-kick in the box, it's his eyes that spread wide across. His dilated pupils scan not just the kick-taker, but his every body posture and surrounding environs



Figure 1 Injured Brazilian star Neymar declared on Thursday he wants Lionel Messi to lead fierce rivals Argentina to victory over Germany in the World Cup final. Picture shows youngsters playing football in front of a mural of Argentina star Lionel Messi (L) and

### **Neymar backs Messi for World Cup final victory (The Hindu, Jul 11)**

Injured Brazilian star Neymar declared on Thursday he wants Lionel Messi to lead fierce rivals Argentina to victory over Germany as the countdown to the World Cup final began.

Neymar, who missed Brazil's 7-1 humiliation against Germany through injury, told a press conference he wanted Messi and Argentina to win the title.

"Messi's history in the sport is so important, he has won a lot of trophies and I will be cheering for him," said Neymar, a team-mate of Messi's at Barcelona. "He is a friend, he is my team-mate and I wish him luck." (AFP)

### **FIFA World Cup: Flea, Noodle, Tiny ... intimidating stars, underwhelming names (IE, June 10)**

What happens when Chiquita passes to El Pintita, who in turn plays it into the path of Pipita before El Fideo's cross finds La Pulga who finds the back of the net? It means Argentina just scored through Lionel Messi. Whenever that happens, expect even the poker-faced Pachorra or the 'sloth' to get animated on the sidelines.

By now, we're accustomed to South American teams dishing out catchy monikers for their players. But the Argentines have always taken it to the next level of creativity. It's no different this time around either. Where else would you find players nicknamed after a witch, a noodle or a donkey?... (by Bharat Sundareshan)

### **Messi special ignites Argentina campaign (IE, June 17)**

Lionel Messi can never be the man Argentina wants him to be, since that man is Diego Maradona, and in their eyes not even Messi— no matter what genius he conjures — will ever measure up to Maradona.

So Messi's best hope to win over his countrymen is with victories. The first came Sunday night at Estádio do Maracanã, where Argentina opened Group F play with a 2-1 victory over Bosnia and Herzegovina...  
*(New York Times)*

### **Montegrappa honours Pele with a Rs 57,99,995 pen (IE, June 18)**



With football fever gripping the world, Montegrappa's Icons Pens will celebrate the legend of Brazilian footballer with two limited edition Pelé Icons Pens.

But the pens will be for the Black Pearl's greatest fans, those who can spend at least Rs 57,99,995 for the gold edition or Rs 2,24,995 for the P10 silver version.

"The Heritage features models with solid gold or solid silver trim. The top of the cap is shaped to represent a football, atop a crown that reads around its circumference 'All Hail The King'. The colours of the Brazilian flag form the surface of the cap in yellow, with green surrounding the crown. Inspired by the original championship trophy, the spring-loaded clip features cabochons on each side," said a product release.

### **Sex is good for footballers, at least in this Fifa World Cup (TOI, July 3)**

Sao Paulo: It might be hard to stand up in court but evidence is mounting that sex is good for footballers - at least in this World Cup.

All eight of the teams through to the quarterfinals allowed their players to have sexual relations with partners during down time, according to



Brazil's Lance! newspaper. All of the teams that banned it have been knocked out, the paper added... (Reuters)

### **Shakira, Santana and Samba light up World Cup closing ceremony (TOI, July 14)**

Rio De Janeiro: The mournful cries of millions of

Brazilians were drowned out in the high-decibel musical gala during the Fifa World Cup's closing ceremony, which was graced by crowd pullers such as Shakira, guitar king Carlos Santana and also had a dash of samba on Sunday.

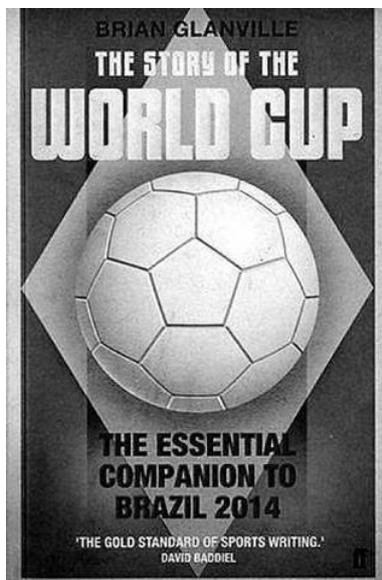
### **Pele, the idol with as many slip-ups as goals (The Hindu, June 11)**

If Pele was aware of the fact that he is accumulating as many slip-ups as goals he scored, maybe he would not insist so much on his career total of 1,281 goals.

The three-time World Cup winner is the undisputed king of football.

However, off the field, the legendary player has built up an extensive history of mistaken predictions and controversial declarations, which have made him the target of harsh criticism from his compatriots — and which have affected his popularity.... (DPA)

### **Books and authors**



#### **The football World Cup's complete story**

Some people think football is a matter of life and death. I assure you, it's much more serious than that — so said William 'Bill' Shankly, the great Liverpool manager.

The Scot, though, doesn't figure at all in Brian Glanville's *The Story of the World Cup* as Scotland did not participate in the first three World Cups — even England, the birthplace of the game, decided to participate only from 1950 onwards... (by S V Sriram)

#### **The kick-starter! (The Hindu, May 31)**

About four months ago, the publishing house Hachette contacted Novy Kopadia to undertake a project he had considered for years. The idea was to write a book on the FIFA World Cup. Although Kapadia had dedicated his entire life to football, the answer came easily to him. He refused.

“I never thought I could finish it. There was little time to finish the book. But upon insistence, I changed my mind,” reveals the author of *The Football Fanatic’s Essential Guide* – an eminently readable collection of stories, trivia, statistics and more from, arguably, the biggest show on earth... (by Priyansh)

## **Fans and Football**

### **Brazil fans disgusted with defeat (IE, July 13)**

Brazil fans expressed disgust with their team after the hosts lost 3-0 to the Netherlands in World Cup third place play-off with many hoping Germany will win the final.

Although it was Germany who thrashed the Selecao 7-1 on their own turf in the semi-final, fans said they would rather have Germany lift the trophy than see neighbors Argentina lift it in Rio on Sunday...(AFP)

### **Crestfallen Brazil have nothing to be optimistic about (IE, July 13)**

Brazil coach Luiz Felipe Scolari was hoping to send an optimistic message to the team’s supporters in Saturday’s World Cup third-place match but their lifeless performance in a 3-0 defeat by the Netherlands did exactly the opposite.

Brazil’s defensive woes manifested themselves once again as they fell 2-0 behind in less than 20 minutes, but their problems were evident all over the field. ..(Reuters)

### **Seven deadly minutes (IE, July 10)**

It wasn’t an own goal, but it may as well have been one. And once again, it could well have been credited to the man who reverse-kicked this tournament into play with a deflection into his own net —Marcelo.

Jogging down the inside right of his flank, Marcelo, Brazil’s over-smart left-back, looked to back-heel a pass to his sweeper, Luiz Gustavo.He could’ve sought to roll the ball ahead, to either Hulk on the left, Fred down the middle or even Bernard on the right.But when his fellow

defenders had set the precedent in the first 10 minutes of the game by only hurling long balls ahead, Marcelo perhaps found a simple pass ahead beneath his style.] ... (by Aditya Iyer)

#### **World Cup 2014 draws 20% more fans from India (The Hindu, July 10)**

Twenty-two-year-old Vaibhav Manchanda can barely contain his excitement. An executive with the Delhi team of the Indian Super League (ISL, the 8-city Indian football league set to kick off in September 2014), Vaibhav was surprised by his father, who arranged the trip to Brazil for him and his brother to watch the World Cup as a graduation gift. "I've been thinking about somehow making it for one of the matches for the past year," says Vaibhav, "But I never dreamed I would be able to watch the final." ... (by Suhasini Haidal, Lalatendu Mishra)

#### **Confessions of a woman World Cup football fan (The Hindu, July 20)**

The FIFA World Cup tournament that happens every four years is the only sport I follow — that's a big confession I wish to make at the outset. I do not follow club football and have no idea about the celebrity players or the prices they command for a Manchester United or a Liverpool. My love for the gentleman's game lasted till Sourav Ganguly was playing, including IPL. I keep track of big tennis and chess tournaments to the extent that I am up-to-date on my current affairs. That says a lot about my interest in sports and my association with it... (by Anmol Sherpa)

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