

Nagendra Prasad Sarbadhikari – The first visionary of Indian football



The first Indian to kick a football back to the Britishers, in 1877, Nagendra Prasad Sarbadhikari is credited with starting a revolution that changed the way sports was to be played in India. A football fanatic, as most are in Bengal, Prasad was a bulky but agile centre-forward who played for his school and college team but harboured dreams of turning out for a football club in Calcutta. With only Britishers being allowed to play the sport in clubs, Prasad's battle, then, was for equal opportunities, as he believed that sports should be aloof of class and caste.

Nagendra Prasad Sarbadhikari was born in 1869 to Dr. Surya Kumar Sarbadhikari and Hemlata Devi. His early life was unremarkable but it would change on a September morning in 1877. Accompanied by her son, his mother had the habit of taking a dip in the holy river Ganga to start off the day. On that day, en route to the river, their horse drawn carriage passed through a road just north of Calcutta FC training ground. Nagendra Prasad was intrigued when he saw a number of British soldiers practicing with a circular ball. He got down from the carriage, moved closer to the ground to observe. After a while, the ball rolled towards him, prompting Nagendra Prasad to pick it up and marvel at how light the thing was. One of the soldiers came

up to him and laughingly asked, "Kick it to me, boy". He obliged. According to legend, this was the first time an Indian had kicked a football. Whether it was the first kick or not is a matter of conjecture, but this seemingly insignificant incident and that young boy would play a major role in snowballing the popularity of football in India – making the country arguably the most vibrant footballing scene outside Britain in the Victorian age.

A popular incident that saw the Indian footballer embroiled in controversy was when he stood up in arms against Wellington Club for not letting Moni Das, a player from the lower caste, play for the team. After fighting with the members and the officials, Prasad left the Wellington Club, but not before pledging that he would help budding stars follow their passion. He went on to form the Sova Bazaar Club in Calcutta with help from the Royal Family of Sova Bazaar, and also formed the Howrah Sporting Club with Bama Charan Kundu. Through marriage Sarbadhikari had gotten linked with the Sova Bazaar royal family, a powerful entity in socio-political stage of Bengal. Sova Bazaar Club was founded in the premises of famous Sova Bazaar royal palace in Northern Calcutta. It contained over 500 members who had left Wellington Club along with players from Boys Club and Friends Club. Moni Das was one of the first members to be inducted. Sarbadhikari was joined by Jishnendra Krishna Deb Bahadur, a member of the Sova Bazaar royal family as joint secretary and Bhupendra Narayan Bhup Bahadur – the Maharaja of Cooch Behar, as club president. Remarkably, the club's principle was to recruit players irrespective of caste, religion or creed – a significant step in a society still divided on those lines.

The greatest football folklore remains the tale of eleven bare-footed Indians playing for Mohun Bagan and defeating the mighty Englishmen of the East Yorkshire Regiment Mentoring the youngsters and encouraging them to play to their full potential, Prasad played a huge role in helping Sova Bazaar Club to take part in the Trades Cup, in 1889. Not only did they become the first all-Indian club to turn out in the prestigious event, they also became the first all-India team to defeat the British in a football game, in 1892, when they defeated East Surrey Regiment 2-1.

Prasad's efforts prompted a number of youth to take up football as a profession as now they could hone their skills without fear of discrimination. This led to the formation of a large number of football clubs in Calcutta, and to monitor each club's progress, Prasad persuaded the British representatives of some clubs to keep a proper tab on the upcoming sports stars in an organized manner. This led to the formation of the Indian Football Association (IFA) in 1892, a body that still oversees football in West Bengal. The first event that the governing body conducted was the IFA Shield from 1893, a tournament that is still hosted annually. While Sova Bazaar Club was the only all-India team to take part in the event at first, clubs like Mohun Bagan and East Bengal soon started participating as the craze for football, not only in Bengal but also in India, grew.

The greatest football folklore remains the tale of eleven bare-footed Indians playing for Mohun Bagan and defeating the mighty Englishmen of the East Yorkshire Regiment in the finals of the IFA Shield in 1911 2-1, which set the precedent for not only the growth for football in India but also gave rise to pent-up nationalist sentiments that influenced the National Independence Movement in Bengal. Prasad, for all his efforts in making football more accessible, was conferred with the unofficial title of the Father of Indian Football, and it is largely due to his efforts that the club culture in the sport stands strong in India.

THE FACT CORNER



A rat can last longer without water than a camel can



If you eat a polar bear's liver, you'll overdose on Vitamin A



Bumblebees may be capable of scaling Earth's tallest peaks, flying higher than Mount Everest



Before trees were common, the earth was covered in giant mushrooms

BRAIN TEASERS

1 Q. Which word does NOT belong with the others?

A. parsley B. basil
C. dill D. mayonnaise

2 Q. Which word does NOT belong with the others?

A. tulip B. rose
C. bud D. daisy

3 Q. Which word does NOT belong with the others?

A. guitar B. flute
C. violin D. cello

4 Q. Which word does NOT belong with the others?

1. Mayonnaise. 2. Bud. 3. Flute 4. Letter 5. Tape
6. direction 7. Sleep

others?

A. heading B. body
C. letter D. closing

5 Q. Which word does NOT belong with the others?

A. tape B. twine
C. cord D. yarn

6 Q. Odometer is to mileage as compass is to

A. speed B. hiking
C. needle D. direction

7 Q. Marathon is to race as hibernation is to

A. winter B. bear
C. dream D. sleep

English Proverbs and Meanings

* Every man for himself.

You must think of your own interests before the interests of others.

* He who hesitates is lost.

If you delay your decision too long, you may miss a good opportunity.

* He who plays with fire gets burnt.

If you behave in a risky way, you are likely to have problems.

* He who wills the end wills the means.

If you are determined to do

something you will find away.

* If you chase two rabbits, you will not catch either one.

If you try to do two things at the same time, you won't succeed in doing either of them.

* Lightning never strikes in the same place twice.

An unusual event is not likely to occur again in exactly the same circumstances.

* Many hands make light work.

Sharing work makes work easier.

Garlic Cheese Corn Roll



Ingredients:

5 boiled, mashed potato
1 cup corn, 5 green chilli
1 tablespoon sesame seed
1 tablespoon red chilli powder
salt as required
1/2 tablespoon garlic paste, 2 cup cheese cubes
1/2 tablespoon ginger paste
2 tablespoon coriander leaves
1 tablespoon fennel seeds, 5 tablespoon breaderumbs
1 1/2 cup refined oil

Method:

Make a dough of potatoes with breaderumbs, add salt and red chilli powder mix well and bind it properly. Now, take grated cheese and corn and mix it all with other ingredients. Make balls from the dough and press it with thumb for enough space for filling.

Now, stuff cheese corn filling in the gap created by the thumb and lock it properly so that it does not break while frying. Give any shape to the ball of your choice.

Put a pan over medium flame and heat some oil in it. When the oil is hot enough, deep fry the potato balls till they become golden brown. Serve hot with cheese dip.

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Soyabean, Pea and Oat Kebabs



Ingredients:

2 cup boiled, soaked overnight soybean
1/2 cup ground oats
3 cloves garlic
salt as required
3/4 cup boiled peas
1 chopped onion
1 teaspoon cayenne pepper

How to Proceed:

To prepare this easy kebab recipe, add boiled soybean, boiled peas, oats, onion, garlic in a grinding jar and grind them together to make a mixture. Add salt and cayenne pepper to this mixture and transfer to a bowl.

Now, use this mixture to make long kebabs. You can also use a stick to give these kebabs proper shape. Meanwhile, preheat the oven at 180 degrees Celsius.

Cook these kebabs in the preheated oven for 12-15 minutes and bake them till they are brown. If you have an electric tandoor, then these kebabs will come out better.

When these kebabs are made, insert bamboo skewers in them. Meanwhile, cut an avocado roughly and wash mint and spinach leaves. Grind them together to make the nutritious dip.