

DISTINGUISHED HOCKEY PERSONALITIES AT KILA RAIPUR RURAL SPORTS FESTIVAL

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ABSTRACT

Kila Raipur; a village of Ludhiana district in Punjab is well known for its rural sports festival called 'Rural Olympics'. Purpose of the present study was to explore the salient features of this famous rural sports festival that has its origin in pre independence era. Grewals of this village has played a significant role to organize this sports festival successfully since its inception. Grewals are the descendents of Chandel Rajputs; the ruler of Budhel Khand, and comes in most educated classes among the Jatts of Punjab. In July 1934, the first sports meet was organized including volleyball, Kabaddi and a few athletic events. Information for this study was collected from primary and secondary sources. In the beginning only local players took part in different events, but now it has become the competition arena of many national and international players including Olympians. Many eminent Hockey personalities have participated here including Dhayan Chand, Dharam Singh, Prithipal Singh, Ajitpal Singh, Pargat Singh and many more. Kila Raipur is the only rural sports festival where 33 hockey Olympians have participated.

Key words: Rural, Kila Raipur and Festival.

INTRODUCTION:

Festivals, mirthful or joyful celebrations, have been considered an important part of human life among all nations and in all ages. Many festivals including those of Olympic Games were regular features among the ancient Greeks. Saturnalia and Luper Colia were the important Roman festivals in which the Romans amused themselves and engaged themselves in games. It was customary among the ancient Greeks to suspend wars during the period of the Olympic Games so as to provide safe travel and transport to the participants and spectators from different states to the venue of the festival. This shows the high esteem in which the festivals were held. According to American Educator Encyclopedia, "festivals or feasts are certain days or periods

set apart for the celebration of some events”. These days, therefore, may be said to be a period to enjoy and make merry.

History of Games and sports in India, Indian Mirror says, has a rich heritage. In the Indus valley civilization, people were much civilized and health conscious. They had swimming pools and perhaps indulged in water sports. People engaged themselves in different types of recreational activities using marbles, balls and dice of different shapes (Reet Howell, 1994)

Punjab is called the land of fairs and festivals. Almost every type of fair is held in the Punjab. Most of these fairs and festivals are held in rural areas. It shows the special need of rural people for such gatherings. Nijjar (1968) says ‘Fairs and festivals were very fairs and common with the rural people of Punjab’. Many of these are largely attended by the people from every walk of life. People of Punjab select certain spots for their meetings on certain occasions.

Almost seventy four years ago when people of Kila Raipur began to hold competitions in rural sports, none would have thought that this tournament will become a ‘movement’ in the Punjab. Now it has become the most popular village sports festival in India. This festival represents a great spirit of games and Punjabi culture.

EMINENT HOCKEY PERSONALITIES:

Rural sports festival started in 1934 with few events has now become the competition arena of national and international players. Many national and international hockey players have been participating here. Kila Raipur is the only rural sports festival where 33 hockey Olympians have participated. Name of some eminent Hockey players who participated here are given below.

- Dhayan Chand (Olympian 1928, 32 and Captain 1936) played an exhibition match at Kila Raipur in 1967.
- Dharam Singh Sr. (Olympian 1952,) played at Kila Raipur in the years of 1959 & 1960.
- Udham Singh P.P. (Olympian 1952, 56, 60, 64) played at Kila Raipur in the years of 1961 & 1962.
- Gurdev Singh P.P. (Olympian 1956) played at Kila Raipur in the years of 1959, 1960 & 1961.

- Shankar Laxman Services (Olympian 1956, 1960, 1964) played at Kila Raipur in the years of 1967 & 1968.
- Balkishan Singh Railways (Olympian 1956, 1960) played at Kila Raipur in the years of 1955, 1961, 1962, in 1970 & 1971 when he was coach at NIS Patiala; he played in NIS hockey team.
- Hardayal Singh Services (Olympian 1956) played at Kila Raipur in the year of 1962.
- Joginder Singh Railways (Olympian 1960, 64) played at Kila Raipur in the years of 1956, 1958, 1970 & 1971.
- Darshan Singh P.P. (Olympian 1964) played at Kila Raipur in the years of 1957-58, 1961-62.
- Dharam Singh Jr. (Olympian 1964, 68) played at Kila Raipur from 1957 to 1962.
- Jagjit Singh B.S.F. (Olympian 1964) played at Kila Raipur in the years of 1960 & 1961.
- Charanjit Singh P.P. (Olympian 1964 Captain) played at Kila Raipur in the years of 1959-1962.
- Prithipal Singh P.P. (Olympian 1964, Captain 1968) played at Kila Raipur from 1956 to 1962.
- Harbinder Singh Railways (Olympian 1964, 68) played at Kila Raipur in the years of 1953 & 1963.
- Balbir Singh Punjab Retd. D.I.G.-P.P. (Olympian 1964, 68) played at Kila Raipur from 1959 to 1962.
- Gurcharan Singh Bodi (Coach of 1975 World Cup Winner Team) played at Kila Raipur in the years of 1960 & 1961.
- Tarsem Singh P.P. (Olympian 1968) played at Kila Raipur in the years of 1961, 1963 to 1965.
- Ajitpal Singh P.P. (Olympian 1968, 72, 76) played at Kila Raipur in the years of 1963 & 1964.
- Mukhbain Singh Railways (Olympian 1972 Vice Captain) played at Kila Raipur in the years of 1962 & 1963.

- M. P. Ganesh Services (Olympian 1972) played at Kila Raipur in the years of 1969 & 1970.
- M. Kindo Services (Olympian 1972) played at Kila Raipur in the year of 1970.
- Harmik Singh (Olympian 1972 Captain) played at Kila Raipur in the years of 1964 & 1965.
- Varinder Singh Railways (Olympian 1972, 76) played at Kila Raipur in the years of 1969 & 1970.
- Surjit Singh P.P. (Olympian & Member of 1975 World Cup Winner Team) played at Kila Raipur from 1969 to 1980.
- H. S. Chimni Services (Member of 1975 World Cup Winner Team) played at Kila Raipur in the year of 1970.
- Col. Harcharan Singh Services (Olympian 1972, 76 and Member of 1975 World Cup Winner Team) played at Kila Raipur from 1969 to 1971.
- Sukhvair Garewal (Member- 1976 World Cup Team, 1978 Asian Games, 1982 Asia Cup) played at Kila Raipur in the years of 1971 & 1974.
- Pargat Singh P.P. (Olympian 1988, 92, 96) played at Kila Raipur in the years of 1987 & 1988.
- Harpreet Singh P.P. (Olympian 1992, 96) played at Kila Raipur in the years of 1987 & 1988.
- Jagdev Singh Railways (Olympian 1992) played at Kila Raipur in the years of 1987 & 1988.
- Ramandeep Grewal P.P. (Olympian 1996, 2000 Captain) played at Kila Raipur in the years of 1986 to 1988 & 1998.
- Baljit Singh Saini Punjab & Sindh Bank (Olympian 1996, 2000) played at Kila Raipur in the year of 1994.
- Baljit Singh Dhillon P.P. (Olympian 1996, 2000, 2004) played at Kila Raipur in the year of 1997
- Gagan Ajit Singh (Olympian, 2000, 2004) played at Kila Raipur in the year of 1995.

WOMEN SECTION:

- Saini Sisters - Rupa, Sawarna, Prema (International Players) played at Kila Raipur in the year of 1965 & 1966.
- Chanchal Randhawa (International Players)
- Rajbir Kaur P. & S Bank (Asian Gold Medalist) played at Kila Raipur from 1982 to 1984.
- Sharanjit Kaur (international) played at Kila Raipur in the year of 1980.
- Pritpal Kaur (international) played at Kila Raipur in the year of 1980.
- Amrit Bose (Gen. Sec. Indian Women Hockey Federation & International Player) played at Kila Raipur from 1958 to 1960.
- Rajwinder Kaur (international) played at Kila Raipur from 1987 to 1989.
- Harjit Kaur (international) played at Kila Raipur from 1987 to 1989.
- Bhupinder Kaur (international) played at Kila Raipur from 1987 to 1989.
- Shashi Bala (international) played at Kila Raipur from 1987 to 1989.
- Manjit Kaur (international) played at Kila Raipur from 1987 to 1989.
- Sukhjit Kaur (international) played at Kila Raipur from 1987 to 1989.

CONCLUSION:

No doubt, it is a rural competition, but it is organized as any national or international competition. The tournament was started with three events. Now it attracts more than 4000 sportsmen and women-both of recognized and traditional sports. Kila Raipur Sports Festival got this honor that many prominent sportsmen and women participated here including Dhayan Chand, Dharam Singh, Prithipal Singh, Ajitpal Singh, Pargat Singh and many more.

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