

## Feature

For most Indian sportspersons until now, climbing to the top of their game was a challenge that went beyond their talent or dedication. Prakash Padukone has spoken often enough of how he honed his early badminton skills in a hall that also served as a venue for weddings. His story has changed only marginally for many upcoming athletes, for whom the lack of world-class sporting infrastructure in India makes all the difference in making the country proud or returning home empty-handed from an international tournament.

In such a scenario, a state-of-the-art sporting facility like the Padukone-Dravid Centre for Sports Excellence can have an almost immediate impact on the calibre of sportspersons who train there. So at CSE, we are especially proud when athletes who continually strive for excellence at one of our experienced Academies are able to win laurels for our country at a global sporting event, because they trained here. In this month's ***Game On!*** feature, we raise a toast to some of our rising stars who carry the mantle of sporting excellence into the Asian Games to be held in August.

### *Shuttle Success!*



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PPBA protege **Aakarshi Kashyap** has been selected as part of the 20-member Men's and Women's squad announced by the Badminton Association of India (BAI) to represent India at the 2018 Asian Games to be held in Jakarta, Indonesia from August 18-28, 2018.

In addition, **Lakshya Sen** of PPBA has been selected by the Badminton Association of India to spearhead the Indian challenge in the Badminton Asia Junior Championships to be held in Jakarta, Indonesia from July 14 to 22. Incidentally, Lakshya Sen also had the distinction of being selected to represent India in the Thomas and Uber Cup badminton finals held in Thailand last month. Other PPBA players who are part of the Indian team are India No. 3 (U-19 Boys) **Kiran George** and India No. 1 (U-19 Girls) Aakarshi Kashyap.

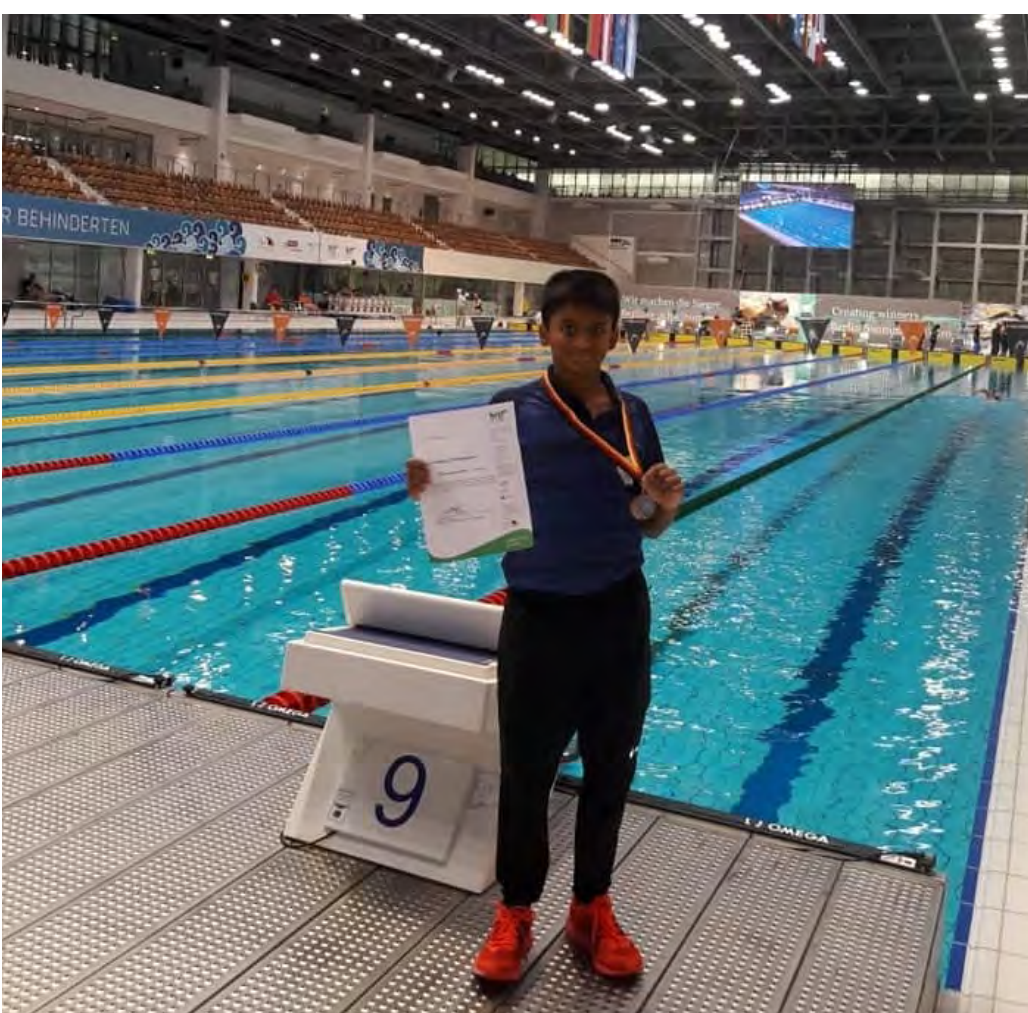
### *A Swimming Story*

The Basavanagudi Aquatic Club (BAC) is a name to reckon with in the history books of competitive swimming in Karnataka. The BAC has dominated the State swimming championships for over 30 years, with only one other team - the K.C. Reddy Swim Centre - having lifted the trophy way back in 1996.

That was until the **Dolphin Aquatics** team showed up this year, fresh from their rigorous training schedule at the **Padukone-Dravid Centre for Sports Excellence**, and raring to have a go at the record books. Breaking the stranglehold of BAC, Team Dolphin lifted the Overall Championship trophy at the Karnataka State Sub Junior and Junior Aquatic Championships 2018 in Mysore. The stars of the show were **Suvana C. Baskar**, **Kapil Shetty**, **Vidith Shankar** and **Navaneeth Gowda**, who won individual championships in their respective age groups.



If that were not enough, the Dolphin team won its first ever medal at an international meet since they began their training at the CSE facilities. **Tejas Nanda Kumar** won the Bronze in the 400m Freestyle at the World Para Swimming Championships in Berlin in June.



Team Dolphin continued their medal run at the 35th Sub-Junior & 45th Junior National Championships 2018 in Pune. **Suvana C. Baskar** and **Sahil Laskar** shattered the National records in 50m Butterfly and 100m Backstroke respectively, with **Manavi Varma** winning Gold at her very first Nationals in the 50m Butterfly. Other Golds went to **Lohit. M.**, **Nina Venkatesh** and **R. Navaneeth Gowda**, while **Sanjay. C. J.**, **Kapil Shetty**, **Renukacharya Hodmani**, **Karthikeyan Nair** and **Niva Sharma** made great placings, setting the pace for better races to come.

**Nihar Ameen**, the backbone of Dolphin Aquatics and the recipient of the National Dronacharya Award 2015 for outstanding coaching and mentorship, is enthusiastic about the premier facilities that CSE offers the Dolphin swimmers. CSE's Olympic-sized swimming pool is the training ground for **Virdhawal Khade** and **Sandeep Sejwal**, who are among India's best hopes to win laurels at the upcoming Asian Games 2018 in Indonesia this August. At the Asian Games trials held at CSE on June 16 and 17, Virdhawal Khade touched in at 50.66 seconds in the 100m Freestyle and created a new best in the 50m Freestyle, clocking 22.52 seconds. Sandeep Sejwal clocked his best time at 1:01.72 seconds in the 100m, and created a new best in the 50m at 27.70 seconds.



This came fresh on the heels of the Singapore National Swimming Championships 2018 earlier this month, where Sandeep Sejwal won Gold in the Men's 50m Breaststroke with a time of 27.59 seconds, and also gathered the Silver in the Men's 100m Breaststroke with a time of 1:02.33 seconds. Virdhawal Khade won Gold in the Men's 100m Freestyle with a time of 50.26 seconds, and as he qualified for his second event for the 2018 Asian Games, he cruised past Olympic Gold medalist Joseph Schooling of Singapore, who finished third with a time of 50.49 seconds. Khade also won Silver in the Men's 50m Freestyle with a time of 22.68 seconds.

The duo is confident that the Asian Games will be their moment in the sun, training hard as they are at CSE. Needless to say, the CSE family will be cheering our athletes all the way as they make their way to the winners' podium!



## Badminton

The Prakash Padukone Badminton Academy (PPBA) had the privilege of being selected to conduct the first ever South Asian Region & National Sub-Junior Badminton Coaching Camp sponsored by the Badminton Association of India, which is being held at the Padukone-Draavid Centre for Sports Excellence in 2 phases.



Inaugurated by **Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma**, President of the Badminton Association of India and Vice-President of Badminton Asia Confederation on June 25, 2018 at CSE, the camp welcomed 45 Under-13 and Under-15 players from across India in the first phase, as well as players from SAARC countries Sri Lanka, Nepal, Maldives and Bangladesh in the second phase, in a first-of-its-kind regional initiative.

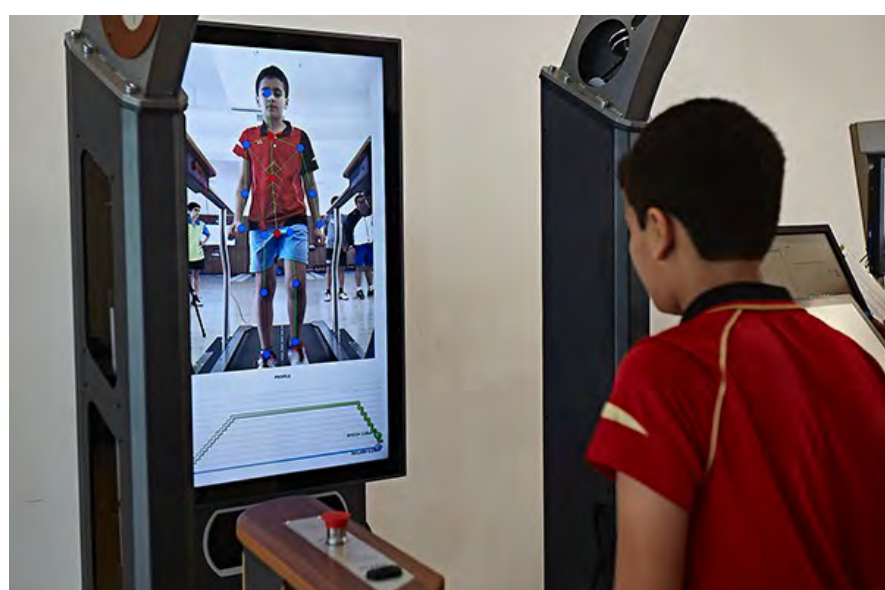
On this occasion, the BAI President and Dy CM of Assam, Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma also officially inaugurated the Badminton Block at CSE by cutting the ribbon on the 10-courts as well as the 6-courts. He enjoyed a few rallies with Prakash Padukone and spent time interacting with the players in the 10-court hall, before spending time visiting the other sports facilities at CSE.



Dr. Sarma shared the positive feedback and requests for more such camps already being received from several State badminton associations, upon conclusion of the first phase of the camp. He announced plans to conduct more such camps in the future focused on encouraging and grooming promising youngsters, including providing scholarships and sending selected players for advanced training overseas.



Participants of the camp are focusing on improving their on-court and off-court training, developing physical fitness and also attending sessions on the importance of diet, nutrition and sports psychology. The young athletes of the first phase of the camp underwent health assessments conducted by the **Abhinav Bindra Targeting Performance Centre**.



They also benefitted greatly through a highly motivational group interaction with CSE mentor **Rahul Dravid**, besides getting pointers from watching medal-winning badminton matches of Indian players from the past.



## At the Academies



Our Football partners Boca Juniors have made Karnataka proud by becoming the only 4-Star Football Academy in South India, having been certified by the All India Football Federation during its 2018-19 AIFF Academy Accreditation process. Congratulations to Boca on this distinction!

The PBI Tennis Academy continued its Summer Camp programme at CSE with 15 children participating in two age groups, over a fortnight. The Academy now has a full day programme, two after-school programs and several weekend classes for various ages. PBI's Junior programme now has a waitlist of aspiring tennis enthusiasts, resulting in increased classes and a new tennis instructor to help with the load. With over 40 full-time students taking part in PBI's programmes, the Academy is now also supplementing its regular schedule with students who avail of private lessons.



On the tournament front **Vishal Gautam**, one of PBI's full-time students, recently placed as Runner-up in the Under 16 AITA Championship Series held in Bangalore. Kudos to Vishal and his coaches at PBI!

SIX Cricket Academy commenced its Annual Training programmes at the end of June, offering both weekday and weekend sessions. The Academy has now signed up 130 trainees, and all weekend slots are full. CSE's full-sized cricket turf will be functional in the last week of July, and will be an added attraction for these cricket lovers. The Academy's athletes are currently participating in the ongoing U-19 KSCA League.



## Samiksha

Young players often hear statements like “all the best”, “give your everything” or “don’t be nervous, just go and play” as they enter the field after warming up; while the intention behind these phrases is meant to be encouraging, the players are often left confused and pressurised due to the ambiguity surrounding these statements.

How one can give his/her best, handle nervousness effectively, and push themselves is something that has to be communicated to them **regularly in training first** for them to be able to **apply in matches later**. This is where a sport psychologist steps in to help a player understand the mental demands of their sport and break down the thinking process and mental approach that he/ she requires.

When players progress, they are often expected to pick up mental qualities like putting in consistent effort, being focused on oneself, staying determined, communicating freely, being adjusting and so on. What’s often missed out on is that just like physical training, which is done everyday, mental training also requires a player to work on their mental skills regularly with conscious effort.

As a shuttler practices drops, a defender works on his interceptions and a tennis player works on her serve, understanding each individual’s mindset towards training, his/her mental demands and their awareness about themselves becomes vital for everyone in this picture - players themselves, coaches, parents and the support staff. In order to get an elaborate understanding of how to support the development of players, it is essential that sport psychology also be introduced to them at an early age and be integrated in their regular training program!

In June, The Badminton Association of India (BAI) conducted the National sub- junior badminton coaching camp for under 13 and under 15 boys and girls. During this camp, Samiksha was invited to conduct a group session on mental training, to give the players an idea of what mental training is and how it can help them during their matches and in training. The session introduced mental training and taught the players certain techniques to apply to help them improve their focus and develop their self- awareness. The session ended with an interactive Q & A session during which the players and coaches were encouraged to ask questions about mental training and the techniques that were taught.



*The young shuttlers from the first phase of the BAI Camp after their Mental Training workshop*

***For more details on how Mental Training can help your game, [click here!](#)***