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THE TOSS

— SPIN THE WHEEL —

TEENAGE ATHLETES TAKING THE SPOTLIGHT:

PROS & CONS



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Director's MESSAGE



Dear Readers,

As the May sun shines brighter and the mercury rises across our state, I hope each one of you is taking good care of your health and well-being. Summer brings with it a spirit of vacation and relaxation. However, I would like to remind all the trainees at our sports academy that discipline comes first for a committed athlete. Hence, this month, as others wind down, you should utilize this time to level up. Treat this as a time of quiet growth, to stay grounded, stick to your routine practice sessions, and be game-ready.

This summer might have fewer competitions on the calendar. But it brings you the unique gift of time and leisure to refine your techniques and work on areas you often overlook in the busy season. But the key word here is balance. Strive to create a balance between your training and recovery. Your physical and mental fitness should be your top priority. Eat healthy, stay hydrated, get enough rest, and allow yourself time and space to recharge mentally.

The biggest motivation for training without any event in sight is discipline. And it is this discipline that builds champions. So, my sincere advice to all aspiring athletes is to stay consistent and connected to their purpose.

Remember, this isn't just about any event, victory, or medals. Every single day that you show up for training and put in sincere effort is shaping the athlete you are becoming.

Stay strong, stay on track.

Warm Regards,

Prasanta Kumar Puhan
Director, IIG Sports Academy

Campus Feed



Silicon Chess Tournament



IIG Sports Academy is proud to be associated with the 33rd King All Odisha Chess Championship conducted by King Chess Center at Silicon University,

Bhubaneswar. This tournament attracted around 160 participants from different districts of the state. IIGSA is committed to collaborating on more such sporting events in the future.

Solar Cricket Club vs KT Global School

The KT Global School Cricket Team was thrilled to play a tournament against the Solar Cricket Club, Cuttack. Both teams displayed excellent cricketing skills, resulting in many nail-biting moments. The Solar Cricket Club won the match by 6 wickets.

Handball Tournament

IIG Sports Academy and Rotary Club came together to organise an Inter-district Handball Tournament at Puri. Around 8 sub-junior teams participated in this tournament. All teams played enthusiastically, bringing forward their best skills. The Puri team won the winner's title by defeating the Nimapada Team.

U-16 Cricket Series



In an exciting clash of young champions, the KT Global School U-16 team battled it out against NNCA, Chhattisgarh, in a three-day cricket series organised by IIG Sports Academy

at the KTGS cricket ground. The players showcased their techniques and prowess, keeping the spirit of the game high throughout the three matches. KT Global School lifted the winner's trophy, with Roshan Choudhury and Sansarya Saha stealing the spotlight with their excellent performances.

In the spotlight...

20th KT Global School

International FIDE-Rated Open Chess Championship



IIG Sports Academy proudly hosted the 20th KT Global School International FIDE-Rated Open Chess Championship in the KTGS campus from 26th April – 30th April 2025. This grand tournament witnessed over 340 participants from 15 states across the nation, turning the venue into a battleground of strategy and skill. The participants included both aspiring and internationally rated chess players, many of them medal winners.

After 9 intense rounds, the champions who emerged victorious are as listed below:



Shri Prasanta Kumar Jagadev, MLA, Khorda, graced the closing ceremony as the Chief Guest. Dignitaries from KT Global School and the chess fraternity also attended the event as the Guests of Honour. Expert officiation by Chief Arbiter, IA Nihar Ranjan Sasmal and Dy. Chief Arbiter, IA Bhabesh Mohanty ensured the seamless and smooth execution of the event.



This successful event, conducted by IIG Sports Academy, also made it to the news and was featured in leading Odia daily newspapers.

Congratulations to all the participants for showcasing true sportsmanship and making this event truly memorable.

Sports Science and Wellness

Boost Athletic Performance & Prevent Injuries with **The Recovery Pyramid**

A

thletic excellence isn't just about how hard you train, but how well you recover, too. An amateur might just push it harder in the gym or on the field to boost performance, but the smarter athlete knows that training and recovery are two wheels that equally balance the journey to peak performance.

Recovery isn't a luxury; rather, a crucial element to boosting performance as well as preventing injuries. Here's where the Recovery Pyramid comes in, offering a science-based, structured approach to optimise recovery by prioritising key areas in a hierarchical model.

The key areas from base to top of the pyramid are explained as follows:

Sleep and Downtime

Sleep and rest are the foundational levels of the recovery process. Sleep has a restorative effect on the body. Adequate sleep and rest are required for physical recovery, cognitive function, and emotional well-being. 7-9 hours of sleep per night is recommended for an average adult. Athletes may require more sleep due to the physical demands of their training. Rest days are also an essential part of the training program, as they allow a necessary break for the body to repair and strengthen itself.

Nutrition and Hydration

Proper hydration and good, well-timed nutrition are critical for energy recovery and maintaining homeostasis. While hydration helps in maintaining blood volume, facilitating nutrient transport, and regulating body temperature, nutrition provides the energy required for exercise as well as aids in the repair and rebuilding of tissues post-exercise.

Water Immersion

Hydrotherapy or water immersion, though not backed by sufficient scientific evidence, has been a very popular area of recovery for years. Athletes might use cold water immersion (CWI), hot water immersion (HWI), or contrast water therapy. The main aim of CWI is to reduce body tissue temperatures and blood flow, which then leads to reductions in swelling, inflammation, cardiovascular strain, and pain. Similarly, HWI is believed to help by relaxation and easing of muscle tension.

Compression, Active Recovery Techniques, or Stretching

These recovery techniques have varying degrees of evidence about their effectiveness. They can only be helpful after you get the foundation level right. Active recovery (e.g. walking, slow run, swimming) can have positive psychological effects, promote blood flow to 'flush out' that heaviness, and allow lower-impact activities that don't take up as much metabolic energy. Myotherapy, sports massage, and hands-on treatments help manage delayed onset muscle soreness (DOMS), reduce pain, and improve tissue mobility.

Advanced Recovery Methods

Advanced recovery methods constitute the fifth level of the recovery process. This involves sophisticated techniques such as cryotherapy, compression therapy, and electrical muscle stimulation. These techniques are designed to speed up the physical regeneration process and enhance athletic performance. However, these are mostly recovery fads and are affected by multiple factors.



Monthly Motivation



A Journey from Darkness to International Spotlight

NILAM SANJEEP XESS

No shoes, no gear, not even the basic facilities covered – yet Indian hockey player, Nilam Sanjeep Xess, made no excuses as he pushed through his journey from a non-descript village to the global stage.

Born on November 7, 1998, in the remote village of Kadobahal, Odisha, Nilam's early life was marked by economic hardships as he grew up in a thatched house with no electricity, drinking water, or gas connection till 2017. However, hailing from Sundargarh district, often referred to as the 'Cradle of Indian Hockey' for producing more than 60 international players, Nilam was naturally drawn towards the game since childhood.

As a child, Nilam played hockey with his elder brother and friends using bamboo sticks and balls made from torn clothes. This leisure activity changed into a serious practice as he got selected for the sports hostel in Sundargarh. His talent got noticed by Coach Kalu Charan Choudhury, under whose guidance Nilam honed his skills. He chose to be a defender as everyone else was chasing the position of a striker to score goals.

After helping Odisha win the Junior National title in 2015 and 2016, he steadily rose through the ranks and made his way into the Odisha senior team, which finished third in the Senior Nationals that year. His international breakthrough came soon after with his debut at the 2016 South Asian Games. The same year, Nilam captained the Indian team to victory at the Boys U-18 Asia Cup.

Nilam's leadership qualities, defensive prowess, and grounded attitude have been instrumental in the Indian team's performance at major tournaments, including the FIH Hockey Pro League and the 2023 Men's World Cup. Despite his rising fame, Nilam remains humble, hardworking, and hungry to do better, often reflecting his roots and the struggles that shaped him. His story serves as a beacon of hope for countless young athletes to chase their dreams, regardless of the obstacles they face.

Yusra Mardini

Carrying Hope, Against the Current

In 2015, as the civil war in Syria worsened and life became increasingly difficult, 17-year-old Yusra Mardini and her 20-year-old sister Sara decided to flee to Germany, planning for their family to join them later. The Mardini sisters arrived in Turkey on a plane and hoped to reach Germany via Greece on a boat.

As they sailed on the chilling waves of the Aegean Sea, the motor on the overcrowded dinghy carrying 18 other asylum seekers suddenly stalled. Without hesitation, the Mardini sisters jumped into the water, grabbed hold of the ropes with two other passengers, and used their swimming skills to pull the boat to safety. That day, their 45-minute boat ride turned into a three-and-a-half-hour swim, etching a remarkable story of survival and heroism by the siblings.

Resettled in Berlin, Yusra resumed her swimming training under coach Sven Spannekrebs to chase her Olympic dream that she had treasured since 9 years of age. Despite a lot of anti-migrant prejudice and discrimination in Europe and cultural, linguistic, and emotional barriers, Yusra relentlessly trained.

In 2016, Yusra was selected for history's first-ever Refugee Olympic Team—created to give displaced athletes a chance to compete under the Olympic flag. She competed in the 100 metres freestyle and the 100 metres butterfly at the 2016 Summer Olympics in Rio de Janeiro. She continued to inspire by participating in the 2020 Tokyo Olympics and serving as a UNHCR Goodwill Ambassador.

Yusra's journey from a refugee to an Olympian has been chronicled in her memoir "Butterfly". It has also been adapted into a movie named "The Swimmers", theatrically released and distributed on Netflix. Now studying cinema and visual arts at the University of Southern California, she continues to advocate for refugees worldwide.

Yusra's story exemplifies the unyielding human spirit and transformative power of sports and will continue to inspire every athlete chasing their dreams through life's struggles.



Teenage Athletes Taking the Spotlight: **Pros & Cons**



In April 2025, the internet buzzed with a viral question: “What were you doing at 14?” The trigger? A historic moment in the cricketing world as 14-year-old Vaibhav Suryavanshi, playing the IPL match for the Rajasthan Royals, scored a blistering 101 off just 38 balls against the Gujarat Titans. A feat that instantly shot this teenager to the limelight, making him the youngest player to score a century in IPL history, breaking multiple records, and drawing comparisons to legends.

Suryavanshi's rapid ascent—from debuting in the Ranji Trophy at 12 to becoming a T20 sensation—highlights a growing trend: teenage athletes making significant impacts on professional stages. Not just cricket, prodigious athletes are galloping to success in diverse sports, the world over, challenging norms about age and experience.

Consider the example of **Alysa Liu**, the figure skater from the USA who clinched the national championship title at age 13, or **Olivia Moultrie**, the youngest American woman soccer player to go pro by signing a professional contract at 13 years old. While these early success stories are fascinating, they also spark a debate about the implications of early specialisation in sports.

Studies indicate that specializing too early can cause a host of issues that drive kids away from sports and make young athletes more vulnerable to injuries. Neeru Jayanthi, a doctor at Emory Sports Medicine who studies specialization, estimates that, on average, specializing can double the risk of injury for young athletes. Another issue for kids who specialize very early is that they don't always develop a range of good motor skills.

Beyond physical injuries, burnout is also a risk. Moreover, in this age of instant fame and social media stardom, the pressure to perform and maintain peak performance can prove quite overwhelming for young athletes. There are many cautionary tales about young phenoms burning out, or least taking a break, seemingly before their time was up.

ALYSA LIU
American Figure Skater

OLIVIA MOULTRIE
American Professional Soccer Player

Sonny Pike, once hailed as a prodigy in English football, later revealed the psychological toll of premature stardom. "At 17, my head was finished. I was suicidal," he told the Guardian in 2016.

Conversely, early exposure to high-level competition can accelerate skill development and provide invaluable experience. Athletes like Suryavanshi benefit from advanced coaching, mentorship, and the opportunity to compete against seasoned professionals, which can fast-track their growth and maturity in the sport.

But the cautionary tales also exist for a good reason- to exercise balance. Because the key lies in balancing ambition with well-being. Ensuring that young athletes receive comprehensive support—physically, mentally, and emotionally—is crucial.

As teenage athletes continue to break barriers and redefine age norms in sports, stakeholders must prioritize their holistic development. By doing so, we can celebrate their achievements while safeguarding their futures.



SONNY PIKE
Former English Footballer

SPORTS CROSSWORD PUZZLE

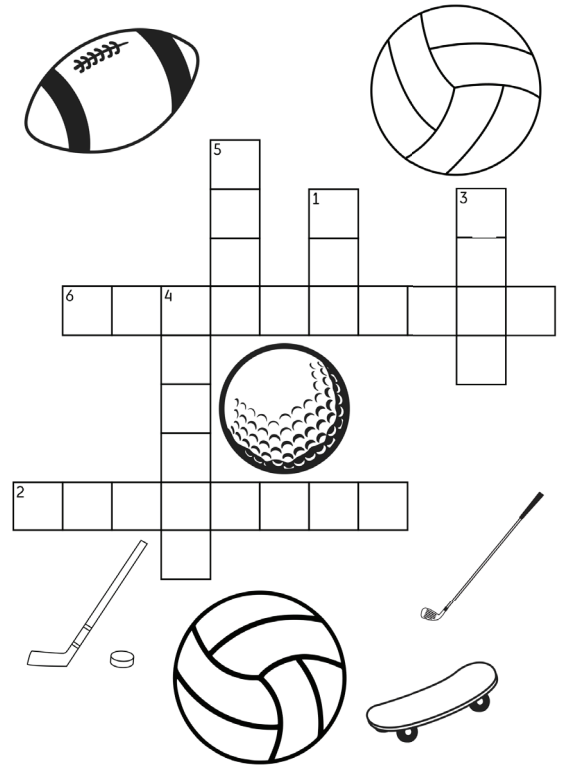
Solve the clues and fill out the grid

DOWN

1. Used to hit a baseball
3. Trying to hit a small white ball into holes in the ground
4. Association Football
5. Hockey disk

ACROSS

2. America's passtime
6. Sport of the NBA



Solution to the Sports Word Scramble of our April Issue

- | | |
|---------------|------------|
| 1. Ifog | golf |
| 2. elkbaatbls | basketball |
| 3. ocserc | soccer |
| 4. nntsie | tennis |
| 5. balsable | baseball |
| 6. teaark | karate |
| 7. gbryu | rugby |
| 8. botafoll | football |
| 9. rwate oopl | water polo |
| 10. igsnrwtel | wrestling |

- | | |
|-------------------|---------------|
| 11. hoceyk | hockey |
| 12. scroasel | lacrosse |
| 13. rkate | track |
| 14. lbfsloa | softball |
| 15. gwimnsim | swimming |
| 16. srocs uroyctn | cross country |
| 17. xoinbg | boxing |
| 18. lqutlrecbaa | racquetball |
| 19. ivgnid | diving |
| 20. ngnecef | fencing |

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