



Golden Yardstick: In Quest of hockey excellence by Balbir Singh (Field Hockey Publications, 170 pages, illustrated, Price: Not mentioned)

Prime Minister of India, Dr. Manmohan Singh released the 'Golden Yardstick: In quest of hockey excellence', written by the 84-year-old Padmashri Balbir Singh, affectionately called Balbir Sr., in New Delhi on 2nd June 2007. Those who count in the contemporary sports administration in India, from Sports Minister Manohar Singh Gill, Indian Olympic Association Secretary General Randhir Singh, Ad-hoc Selection Committee Chairman Aslam Sher Khan to Balbir's former colleague Cmdr. Nandy Singh, Col. Balbir Singh, and a few personalities who helped him during the 1975 World Cup preparations such as Prof. KL Gupta, V.N Vohra, besides a few kith and kin of the author, were present on the great occasion

This is the legendary player's second book after 'Golden Hattrick: My Hockey Days' which he wrote in the late 70s. When that book was brought out both MS Gill and Balbir were working in the Sports Department of Punjab Government.

About the book: Hockey players showcase their skills on exotic flat green turf to entertain the spectators. This book is an iconic player's treatise on assessment and development of those captivating skills, based on his association with the game for over five decades. The test outlined in the work, aim at perfection to achieve excellence at every level. With an eye on



Indian Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh releasing Balbir Singh Sr.'s Golden Yardstick. Right: Balbir in his mid 20s.

details, the author uses his vast experience as a successful player, coach, manager and administrator to educate and train prospective players. Each of the twenty chapters deals with specific skills and their governing rules with easy but effective drills to acquire them. They are both traditional as well as innovative; told in a simple way with the assistance of numerous diagrams. Besides basic skills, the contours of physical fitness and mental toughness are also adequately outlined. Hockey lacks a yardstick that could measure the fundamental skills of a player, which this labour of love seeks to address.

About the Author: Born in October 1924, Balbir Singh Sr. rose to fame at the 1948 Olympic Games where he spearheaded India's attack. He went on to win gold at Helsinki (1952) and Melbourne (1956) Olympics as well. Till date he continues to remain closely