

2000 has to be

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been on the forefront in high-fighting the Cricket Board's achievements and failures. We have always promoted cricket's right to the Bangabandhu Stadium.

We have played many of our innings with a straight bat. In fact, so reliable is our reporting that the game's leading Web site, CricInfo, regularly lifts items verbatim from DS Sport. Not many newspapers in the world can be held guilty of similar boastfulness.

We have also driven shots that have ruffled the net behind the goalkeeping or executed strokes to leave the blameworthy stranded on centre court. We have brought you exclusive reporting from the England World Cup, ACC Trophy in Nepal, the SAF Football at Goa, the Asian Test Championship in Calcutta and the SAF Games at Kathmandu, not to speak of the many home events. We have brought you the haughty behaviour of our football officials and their ludicrous treatment of national football coach Samir Sakir.

The list of our failures begins at home. At the beginning of the year we ventured to bring you a roundup of sports and relevant facilities in the districts, one every month. Here our ego has been punctured miserably as we could only cover Rajshahi. We also failed to bring you colleagues with local sporting stars except for the parlour with TT's evergreen Zobera Rahman.

There are several other areas of failures. We should have provided you with more local photographs, pictures and news. We will admit losing out to some of the Bangla dailies on the issue of actress Lovely Begum and her alleged harassment by some Federation officials. Perhaps we could also have livened up our page with cartoons and more competitions for readers. But then we are the only ones to run a quiz for school children for the last five years. That's good track record for you.

Like any losing captain I will admit responsibility to all our failures because I could not inspire the team to flourish in some of the important areas. Sport reporting is not plain journalism; it is, I discovered,

reporter has to love his job, the game or the competition in this case. In the same breath I will also assure our readers that the team can only get better in the future in the sectors where we have shortcomings.

Like the snakes and ladders situation DS Sport experienced over the past year, two of our eligible team of eight entered the blissful life of conjugal and two were blessed with bubbly babies. That's fifty-per cent success for you. Not a bad year after all, but 2000 has to be better. My team is trained to not only pick up my challenge, but also capable of giving it a real good wallop. Many happy returns, my friends!

Call of century

From page 13
recruited with little or no credentials, authority not being sincere to the cause of sports and selection being manipulated through corruption and nepotism etc.

The last good batch of talented players passed out in the early 90's and since then BKSP has been represented itself as a classic case of a White Elephant. Education, which is such a vital part of the modern sportsmanship, is the most neglected department in today's BKSP.

On the training front, the situation is chaotic especially in cricket. There are two cricket grounds in BKSP, one of which is used by the national cricket team for half the year. Nearly a hundred students crowd the only other available ground for practice.

There are also a few properly qualified coaches in BKSP. The random recruitment of ex-players with hardly any coaching background has severely affected the already deteriorating standard of training.

BKSP has enormous potential if it is run properly.

It needs a massive overhauling in order to get back on track of its original objective in the next millennium.

GO PROFESSIONAL: Sports have to be run professionally if we are to improve our standard. The word professionalism never exists in the dictionary of our sports administrators. At present, there is no transparency or accountability in the activities of National Sports Council, the regulatory body of local sports. Like the NSC its affiliated organisations are also being run by the wills and whims of the officials, appointed mostly on political qualification and proper connection. Due to the absence of professional administrative structure in federations clubs call all the shots in sports. Clubs however have been the pioneer promoters of sports in this country. But they don't have also any professional set-up. The bulk of their earnings come from laundered money, donations and gambling. Quite understandably, their expenditures also are never put down on paper, in black and white. Sports persons on the other hand don't have to pay taxes as they play as amateur players. Sports arena has to go professional if we want to be world-class in this century.

PARTING THOUGHTS: The general Bangladeshi psyche is to plan big and then leave its implementation to the mercy of God. If that remains the case in this century, sports will never see any light. In order to change that glum prediction, we have to change ourselves first.

Long term planning and training have no substitute for success. Let's set a pattern for the youngsters to follow. Let's give the next generation a sense of purpose, a chance.

Success should bring success

Hasan Masood

January 28 in Sri Lanka.

As the non-participating hosts Bangladesh also fared well last year. The country earned the distinction of holding the final of first Asian Test Championship between Pakistan and Sri Lanka in March. That was the first Test match played in Dhaka after 30 years.

Bangladesh however had some miserable memories in cricket also. They lost all the four first round matches against Zimbabwe and Kenya in the tri-nation Merit Cup held in March.

Meanwhile, football lovers will remember 1999 as a year of refreshing revival. FIFA, the world football's governing body, recognised Bangladesh as one of the best 27 movers across the globe. Of the five best Asian movers (others are Uzbekistan, Iraq, Indonesia and Jordan), Bangladesh scored highest 100 points.

The rise of football began when Bangladesh emerged runners-up in the SAFF Championship in Goa last April.

Placed in a group for the first round along with India and Pakistan, Bangladesh drew with favourites India (0-0) and handed Pakistan a 0-4 defeat. In the semifinal, Bangladesh edged past Nepal 2-1 before losing to India (0-2) in the final.

Being coached by Samir Shakir, Bangladesh then went on to break the long-standing SAFF jinx when they clinched their first ever gold in the seven-nation Games in Kathmandu last October. The team, led by Jewel Rana, avenged their SAFF final defeat eliminating India by 1-0 in the semi-final on October 2. They then edged past Nepal by a solitary goal at the Dasharath Stadium to lift the much-sought-after gold after a dozen of abortive attempts at regional meets.

Success in football continued as Bangladesh played quite creditably in the Asian Cup qualifiers in UAE in November. Despite losing to Uzbekistan (0-0) and UAE (0-3), Bangladesh beat Sri Lanka (3-1) and managed a 2-2 draw with India.

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With the whole nation back

Scottish triumph, Bangladeshi cricketers went into record books with a comprehensive 62-run win over Pakistan at Northampton on May 31. Bangladesh scored 223 for nine in 50 overs and went on to bundle the hot favourites out for 161 in 44.3 overs. Vice-captain Khaled Mahmud, who scored 27 runs and captured three vital wickets for 31 runs, was adjudged man-of-the-match.

Another cheer also came from cricket when the Bangladesh (under-19) team clinched the Asian Youth Cup with a six-wicket win over neighbours Nepal in Singapore in July. The victory also ensured Bangladesh a berth in the World Youth Cup that ended on

September 22.

In chess, International Master and national champion Ziaur Rahman earned his first Grand Master norm at the British Championship in Au-

gust.

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