

Superstitions in Sports

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Most of us in this day and age still believe in our own handful of superstitions, no matter how many times you deny the assertion. It is us who subconsciously utter "You'll live a long life!" to a person who shows up right when we were discussing about them and believe that spending the first day of New Year well will make the rest of the year a little less sad. Lacking of any logical explanations, superstitions are nothing but mere remains of clichéd habits.

Whether you are a believer or not, chances are that you hold at least one superstition close to your heart. Once in a while, I give second thoughts about stepping over someone or get ecstatic when I spot butterflies in my house. Even though I know it won't bring anything significant, I still feel inclined to believe the old wives' tale because it feels like an unrealistically interesting part of our lives.

Being a sports lover, there are a few superstitions in sports that I can't help but consider. If you have ever scrutinized cricket players, you will notice that numbers make an important part of the game. Many sportsmen like to have lucky numbers on their jerseys, and admit it, the presence of a lucky number does feel really soothing. Don't call me superstitious – seven is truly the most significant number. There are seven days in a week, seven continents and seven colours of the rainbow. Snow White lived with seven dwarfs and Ginny Weasley is the

seventh child of the Weasley family.

Many cricketers are also known to believe that padding a particular leg before the other brings good luck, such as Sachin Tendulkar, who always padded his left leg before the right one. Carrying things like a favorite bat and lucky objects are also widespread. Steve Waugh always carried a red handkerchief. As of footballers, I have never seen Cristiano Ronaldo step onto the pitch with his left foot first. Believing in superstitions is considered fine unless you are shoving it down anyone else's throat or making it a completely preposterous issue. Barry Fry, former Birmingham City, would urinate on four corners of the pitch to "ward off evil spirits".

Pele once sent a friend to retrieve a shirt he gave to a fan because he thought the new shirt was causing him to perform badly and the friend found it and gave it back to him. His form instantly recovered. However, there is a devilish twist at the end—the friend had lied about finding the shirt and instead had handed him the same shirt he was playing badly in. The fact that Pele believed he had gotten back his lucky shirt caused him to perform better! Some superstitions give us confidence, and we tend to stick to them in the long run. Only if we believe more in ourselves, we can achieve greater success in life.

Zarin Rayhana is a self-aggrandizing ambivert who ponders over philosophical epiphanies during rainy evenings and waits for her crush to jump straight out of her favorite novel. Treat her with novel suggestions at ericaavianazarin@gmail.com



How NOT to Play Badminton

FATIUL HUQ SUJOY

I can't decide what is more aggravating about our winters – the absence of snow, the lack professionalism in playing badminton, or the foul stench of mula. While mula will be cooked regardless of nationwide protests, I can contribute to making badminton less of a "Hey it's a seasonal sport, let's play it casually" and more of a "NO WE MAKE OLYMPIC GOLD MEDALISTS OUT OF EVERY NINE YEAR OLDS".

So sit tight, wrap your shawl and listen up.

Don't just swat the cork

Badminton isn't about strength. It's about speed, stamina and tactics. Ever faced someone who condescendingly commented that badminton is a "woman's game"? He's the manly man who just couldn't suppress his manly arms from shooting the cork outside the court every time. His condescension comes from not being given a chance to play all evening. Play smart, utilise the gaps, assess the opponents' formation and weaknesses, and you won't ever be called a loser or misogynist.

Don't do overhand serves

If you do overhand serves, Roger Federer will be very proud of you. You know who won't be? The people you're playing with. You know why? Because they came to play badminton and not tennis. There's one huge difference between these two games that you may



blaming the wind or the lights or any other force of nature.

Don't buy cheap rackets

The shop that sells bashmoti chaal and salted biscuits isn't supposed to have good rackets. What were you even thinking? Go to a sporting goods shop. Analyse all the rackets, touch the strings to see if you have a spiritual

not have noticed – tennis isn't dominated by the Chinese.

Don't lie and make excuses

I've seen too many games getting spoiled and friendships breaking irreparably because the two teams saw the cork land on different sides of the court. We all know one of them was lying. Don't be that person.

Also, it's bad enough that you missed a shot or mishit it, don't make it worse by

connection with it and make occasional discussion about the geopolitical influence of badminton with the shopkeeper. After that buy the one with the coolest cover.

Don't make cork jokes

This isn't 1908. Stop making cork jokes. Just because it resembles the

name of a domesticated bird with a very different meaning in urban culture doesn't mean it's funny. If you stop laughing at the "just bought this cork, now I have two *wink wink*" joke you just made, you'll find everyone surrounding you considering their rackets as murder weapons.

Don't not curse

Badminton is a game of passion. Your signature smash hit the net? The cork hit the edge of your racket and dropped outside the court? Your teammate messed up? Scream out profanity, unleash your inner kamla, make your boro bhai proud, make it awkward for the passing uncles and aunties, educate the kids in the general vicinity.

Fatiul Huq Sujoy is a tired soul (mostly because of his frail body) who's patiently waiting for Hagrid to appear and tell him, "Ye're a saiyan, lord commander." Suggest him places to travel and food-ventures to take at fb.com/SyedSujoy.