

A case study of life, professional career and contributions of Padma Shri Shankar Laxman to Indian hockey

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to highlight the contributions and achievements of Padma Shri Shankar Laxman towards Indian hockey, to enlist his professional leadership qualities and to study his philosophy with regards to Indian Hockey. The data for investigation were derived from personal records, pictorial records, published material and secondary sources. Survey technique was used to obtain responses and reactions about Padma Shri Shankar Laxman from selected eminent sports persons, contemporaries, coaches and physical educationists from all over the country through opinion rating questionnaire to get desired information. He was the first Goalkeeper Captain in the world. He was member of the Olympic Gold medal winning hockey team in 1956 at Melbourne, 1958 Asian Games Silver medal at Tokyo, 1960 Olympics Silver medal (Rome), 1962 Asian games Silver medal (Jakarta), 1964 Olympics Gold medal Tokyo. He Captained the Indian hockey squad in 1966 Asian games at Bangkok and won Gold medal for the country. He was honoured with Padma Shri award in 1967 and was the recipient of Arjuna award in 1964.

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Key Words: Contributions, pictorial records, opinion rating questionnaire.

Hockey is the National Game of India. Hockey has been played in India from time immemorial. There was a golden period of Indian hockey when India ruled the game. On the International scenario, there were no competitors to match the magical hands of Indian hockey players. The mighty and power of Indian hockey made India synonymous with the game. Unmatched excellence and incomparable talent of Indian players became folklore. The ball juggling feats of players like Major Dhyan Chand made people to think that Indian players used some kind of black magic.

Hockey is the only sport in which India has won Gold medals, that too not once or twice, but eight times, with six of them coming consecutively. Unmatched excellence and incomparable virtuosity brought India this string of Olympic gold medals.

Methodology:

A case study was designed to investigate the contributions and achievements of Padma Shri Shankar Laxman towards the promotion of Hockey in the country and also to study his philosophy with regard to sports as a profession in India, his quality as a player, his professional leadership qualities, and his contribution to the game of hockey at national and international level.

Data/Information for this investigation was derived from the primary i.e. personal records, pictorial records and secondary sources.

Investigator personally contacted Padma Shri Shankar Laxman for the interview by taking prior appointments with him. The focus of the interview was mainly around his family history, environment influence, childhood, education, sports participation, sporting career and achievements.

Survey technique was used to obtain responses and reactions about Padma Shri Shankar Laxman of 96 selected eminent sports person from all over the country through opinion rating questionnaire to get desired information. Opinion rating questionnaire regarding Padma Shri Shankar Laxman was constructed with the help of experts.

A questionnaire was formed and constructed by investigator in consultation with the experts. An extensive review of Literature and research studies conducted on case studies up to 2009 were used for collection of items of questionnaire, formal and informal discussion was done with the experts. Almost all care was taken and ensuring maximum coverage of the data needed for study so as to get maximum, worthwhile and meaningful responses from respondents, the draft question was devising the principles of questionnaire preparation.

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Sports Career of Padma Shri Shankar Laxman

- Member of the Winner Team Gold Medal in 1956, Olympic Games held at Melbourne (Australia).
- Member of the Winner Team Silver Medal in 1958, Asian Games held at Tokyo (Japan).
- Member of the Winner Team Silver Medal in 1960, Olympic Games held at Rome.
- Member of the Winner Team Silver Medal in 1962, Asian Games held at Jakarta.
- Captain of the Indian Hockey Team against the Visiting British Hockey Team in 1963.
- Member of the Winner Team Gold Medal in 1964, Olympic Games held at Tokyo.
- Captain of Gold Medal Winner Team in 1966, Asian Games held at Bangkok.

Honours and Awards

1. **Padma Shri Award 11th April 1967:** Shankar Laxman was honored with Padma Shri in 1967 for his contribution in the field of Indian Hockey as goalkeeper of exceptional merit.

2. **Arjuna Award 1964:** Shankar Laxman was got an Arjuna Award for his achievements in Field of Hockey as an excellent Goalkeeper.
3. **Jaswant Singh Trophy 1963-64:** He had been declared Best Services Sportsman of the Year.

Padma Shri Shankar Laxman as a Coach

Padma Shri Shankar Laxman was the first coach of the Services team from 1971 to 1973 which won many laurels in the Inter-Services tournaments. Many of his trainees represented services team in Inter-Services Sports Tournaments. He was the **Coach of Junior Indian Hockey** team in 1988.

Results and Discussion:

To assess the different dimensions of Padma Shri Shankar Laxman's personality, opinion rating survey was conducted. 96 eminent sports persons who were associated with him as players, admirers, colleagues and his contemporaries were chosen. For the analysis of data, statements were separately recorded and presented in percentage of the responses.

Opinion Rating Questionnaire (%) of Padma Shri Shankar Laxman's Personality

S. No.	Statement	S.A.	A.	D.A.	S. D.A.
1.	He possessed a very pleasing personality	75	25		
2.	He was very regular in his exercise	66	34		
3	He was health conscious	41	57	2	
4	He had good physique	61	39		
5	He was friendly and Co-operative	61	39		
6	He never used to lose his temper	48	30	22	
7	He had lot of patience and perseverance	64	36		
8	He was not stubborn	45	41	7	7
9	His attitude towards others was always humane	59	41		
10	He was a religious person	30	68	2	
11	He had great aspirations	62	36	2	
12	He was role model for others	70	28	2	
13	He was very popular among his colleagues	75	25		
14	He believed in learning by doing	50	50		
15	He knew how to influence others	41	52	7	
16	He had pleasant manners	52	48		
17	He was among the best Indian Hockey Goalkeepers ever produced.	82	16	2	
18	He did not use his position for personal benefits	52	48		
19	He was very hard working and industrious	75	23	2	
20	He did not compromise with his principles	48	43	9	
21	He was a good example to others	66	34		
22	He was proud of his country	89	11		
23	He was fond of reading books and sports magazines	0	59	36	5
24	He did not believe much in social service	7	61	27	5
25	He was a source of support and strength to every body	36	57	7	
26	He had the ability to overcome obstacles	45	55		
27	He was very straightforward	53	45	2	
28	He had very good public relations	45	50	5	
29	He had good sense of humour	52	41	7	
30	He was popular among his trainees	57	43		
31	He was emotional and got upset quite often	9	30	43	18

Opinion Rating Questionnaire (%) On Padma Shri Shankar Laxman as a Player

S. No.	Statement	S.A.	A.	D.A.	S.D.A.
1	He was a good Goalkeeper	100			
2	He kept complete record of his matches	25	64	11	
3	He maintained warmth and friendly relationship	59	41		
4	He had faith in his teammates	52	48		
5	He always supported his team-mates	62	36	2	
6	He was technically sound in goalkeeping	89	9	2	
7	He was best goalkeeper of the world	70	21	9	
8	He was fond of doing vigorous exercises	59	36	5	
9	As a Goalkeeper he had very good reflections	84	16		
10	He maintained his performance for a long period	66	34		
11	He had natural talent for goalkeeping	84	16		
12	He never suffered from sleeplessness	43	46	11	
13	He never had ill will towards his opponents	48	52		

Opinion rating questionnaire (%) on Padma Shri Shankar Laxman as a coach

S. No.	Statement	S.A.	A.	D.A.	S.D.A.
1	He had very vast knowledge about Hockey	57	41	2	
2	He was a very knowledgeable person	20	64	16	
3	His teaching and coaching was very scientific	7	77	16	
4	He inspired players by giving examples of outstanding sportsmen	43	55	2	
5	His daily schedule for players was always on scientific lines	23	61	16	
6	He honored all good suggestions	43	57		
7	He was very good at spotting talent	45	50	5	
8	His approach to sports was most scientific	25	57	18	
9	He was a committed professional as a coach	45	28	27	
10	He had treated all trainees equally	46	52	2	
11	He never showed favour towards few players	48	45	5	2
12	He used to encourage trainees for mutual discussion	30	39	30	1
13	His coaching was interesting and inspiring	43	50	7	
14	He was receptive to new ideas	45	50	5	
15	He was very good in providing motivations	46	52	2	
16	He kept complete records of his trainees	0	70	30	
17	He was a good coach / trainer	45	41	14	
18	He was very sincere in his efforts	59	36	5	
19	He did things in meticulously planned manners	25	57	18	

Opinion Rating Questionnaire (%) on Padma Shri Shankar Laxman as a Sports Promoter

S. No.	Statement	S.A.	A.	D.A.	S.D.A.
1	He was very knowledgeable and well read person	20	57	23	
2	He was honest and sincere to his assignments	55	45		
3	He always encouraged responsible and efficient coaches / workers	50	45	5	
4	He inspired all who came into his contact	48	52		
5	He gave recognitions and status to the players who performed well	61	39		
6	He considered the role of sports important for the development of personality of players	59	41		
7	He encouraged young players more than seniors	41	59		
8	He was interested in research orientation in the field of hockey	16	48	36	
9	He favoured establishing coaching camps at all levels in India	41	50	9	
10	His contribution & philosophical thinking was always useful to others	36	59	5	
11	He had vast knowledge about goal keeping	91	9		
12	He was always a source of strength and support to every athlete	50	43	7	
13	He was role model for majority of hockey players	70	30		
14	He had very natural ability of spotting talent	59	36	5	

S. A. – Strongly Agree

A. – Agree

D. A. – Disagree

S. D. A. – Strongly Disagree

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Padma Shri Shankar Laxman- Indian Hockey hero, goalkeeper and Captain of the Indian Hockey team in the 1966 Bangkok Asian died on 29th April 2006, of a Heart attack at Mhow.

Conclusions:

1. Padma Shri Shankar Laxman was the **first Hockey Goalkeeper Captain in the world.**
2. Padma Shri Shankar Laxman was the outstanding hockey goalkeeper India has ever produced.
3. He was a thoroughly committed professional.
4. He was very efficient, honest and dedicated administrator and a strict disciplinarian.
5. Padma Shri Shankar Laxman contributed a lot for the promotion of sports in India.
6. Padma Shri Shankar Laxman was very friendly, cooperative and regular in daily exercise.
7. Padma Shri Shankar Laxman had lot of patience and perseverance.
8. He had very good relations with his teammates and competitors.
9. Padma Shri Shankar Laxman never had ill will towards his opponents.
10. Padma Shri Shankar Laxman is a role model for other hockey goalkeepers.

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