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# A most remarkable community: Anglo-Indian contributions to sport in India<sup>1</sup>

MEGAN S. MILLS

**ABSTRACT** *The Anglo-Indians are one of India's constitutionally recognized minorities, a microscopic community of combined South Asian and European ancestry that emerged after the arrival of the Portuguese and other Europeans on the subcontinent. Among the Anglo-Indians' contributions to modern India has been a remarkable involvement in sport that is altogether disproportionate to the community's size. Anglo-Indian schools have long promoted Western sports, and Anglo-Indians have often been India's instructors, coaches and Olympians. As in other fields, Anglo-Indian women pioneered Indian women's sport. A lasting imprint has also been made with regard to organized games, which continue to be the primary leisure activities of countless Indian service workers. The subject at large encourages a different view of Western cultural influences in South Asia as they now tend to be rather uniformly rejected. In Anglo-Indian contributions to sport in India, we find insight into a Western cultural feature that has been thoroughly integrated into everyday Indian society. The article makes use of textual sources as well as contributions from Anglo-Indian families located in India and several countries of re-settlement.*

India's love affair with Western games owes much to its principal Eurasian community, the Anglo-Indians. Their chain of 300 or so English-medium schools have imparted Western sports to diverse enrollments throughout the subcontinent for more than 150 years and continue to do so today. In 1947, there were perhaps 500,000 Anglo-Indians in South Asia, and current assessments suggest an ongoing presence of 250,000–300,000 amid a total Indian population of one billion. Perhaps another 300,000 Anglo-Indians have resettled in the West since India obtained Independence. In spite of the community's microscopic size, it has produced numerous Olympians, as well as coaches, organizers and technical delegates at every level. Anglo-Indian sporting life continues to prevail among emigrants from India now found in the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand and Canada.<sup>2</sup>

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## A hampered population

The Anglo-Indians' 500-year history is one of hills and valleys. It has often been commented that the community was effectively made by its struggle for survival.<sup>3</sup> At first, the British in South Asia followed the approaches of other European powers in India by encouraging Eurasian enclaves, as they appeared to lend an impression of permanence in India. No distinction was made between East India Company servants of European or Eurasian origin and, into the early nineteenth century, a great many Britons continued to marry Indian women of varied South Asian, Portuguese, Dutch, French and/or British descent. However, in the 1780s and 1790s, persons of combined ancestry were excluded from the Company's military and higher civil posts because the 'Indo-Britons' or 'East Indians', as they were then known, were seen as a potential security risk. It was observed that educated Mulattos had aided the Santo Domingo rebellion, and the loss of the American colonies had sensitized opinion to threats of insurgency everywhere. In short order, colonial law and policy came to distinguish Anglo-Indians from 'pure' Europeans. As Eurasians would always out-number Europeans in colonial India, from the late eighteenth century it is possible to discern an official aim of keeping the population down to prevent its political influence. Until the 1830s, Anglo-Indians were forbidden to own land, to migrate beyond East India Company stations, or to send their sons to Britain for education as had been customary, they could not inherit automatically.

The aftermath of the 1857 Rebellion and the expansion of India's lower colonial services brought reserved service roles for Anglo-Indians as a useful, English-speaking population that had demonstrated its loyalty through the course of the uprising. This preferment was a mixed blessing in its long-term result of discouraging economic diversification. Furthermore, Anglo-Indians earned a fraction of what was accorded Europeans in the same services, and they remained ineligible for responsible military service until the twentieth century, although now and then members of this community were conscripted for assorted conflicts. Many Anglo-Indians served with distinction, and their history regularly presents a compensatory 'magic' in the outstanding performances of individuals, often at the eleventh hour.

The nineteenth century also brought new exclusion related to the arrival of scientific and popular racialism as, ironically, a people now associated with athletic and military prowess became a focus of the day's belief in miscegenation, which assigned degeneracy to persons of mixed descent who were thought to inherit the worst 'racial' traits of their different ancestors. An American social scientific offering of 1918 reported that:

the Eurasians (Anglo-Indians) are slight and weak ... they are naturally indolent and will enter into no employment requiring exertion or labor. This lack of energy is correlated with an incapacity for organization. They will not assume burdensome responsibilities, but they make passable clerks where only routine labour is required.<sup>4</sup>

The Anglo-Indians' struggle in the twentieth century involved different connec-

tions to this notion of racial ‘impurity’. Britons and members of Indian communities frequently avoided persons who displayed a daub of the proverbial ‘tar brush’, assigning them a second-class status (just as domiciled Europeans could be prone to ostracism because their long residence implied some South Asian ancestry, somewhere along the line). Until India’s independence in 1947 and the firm assignment of Indian citizenship, Anglo-Indian status ‘approximated’ that of the British in India for the purposes of education and defence, while in all other respects they were designated as Indians. In general, the obligations of British citizenship were required of them with few of its benefits.

### **A compensatory culture**

More creative Anglo-Indian responses to social exclusion and economic limitation helped to generate a culture of great attachment to service, school, church, and communal social life. Sporting diversions were an important aspect of a separate Anglo-Indian way of life. The community’s English-medium schools, many of them directly traceable to the late-eighteenth century experience of racial exclusion had been aided by Christian religious orders that began arriving from the West in the 1830s. Families engaged in service work of regular rotations or remote postings frequently dispatched their children to boarding schools that typically demonstrated an ideal of competitive sports as a natural adjunct of education. Athleticism became a strong element of Anglo-Indian family and communal life. The colony-born, when writing of their youth, often mention railway colonies or other service enclaves in which there were always sufficient participants to allow for what could be a rather incessant round of hockey, cricket, soccer and other sports as leisure activities.

The ‘cult of character’ attributed to Victorian and Edwardian values throughout the British Empire took firm root in an Anglo-Indian community that had come to predominate in British India’s uncovenanted services, led by the massive South Asian railway infrastructure in which Anglo-Indians served into the 1960s and beyond. Anglo-Indians were also very visible in the subcontinent’s other transport and communications networks as well as in the police, forest administration and public works. Such involvements further consolidated a distinctive Anglo-Indian world apart in which enclaves became accustomed to making their own fun. As various other Indians often recall, the different service leagues and teams were much followed and particular centres or services were known for their expertise in one sport of another.

The return of Anglo-Indians to military life in the twentieth century brought another connection to sport. The link between battle and playing fields are obvious. Lt.Gen. Sir George MacMunn was among a few to notice Anglo-Indian suitability<sup>5</sup> in the days when the authorities hesitated to extend officer opportunities to non-Britons, as a lingering belief in the pitfalls of Anglo-Indian degeneracy fitted with the limitations earlier placed on the community.

A perusal of the 1930 issues of the *Bengal–Nagpur Railway Magazine* attests to the everyday prominence of sport in railway life. A July 1930 issue refers in

its opening pages to football enjoyed by the young, an upcoming football tournament, two women's bowling teams, and the arrival of a tennis expert, S.A. Yusoof, in what is now Orissa.<sup>6</sup> In general, the depth of Anglo-Indian athletic talent would owe much to the railways and other service communities. It is also plain that a great many Anglo-Indians through time have been sportsmen, representatives of an Anglo-Indian culture that has greatly valued sportsmanship. Countless 'Anglo-Indian gents' of the twentieth century have demonstrated an array of sporting interests. One example is the late Kenneth Wyllarde Blythe-Perrett, a dedicated amateur youth who won national championships in discus, javelin and shot-put, and was also a successful sprinter. His boxing career subsided only at his young wife's objection to bloody noses, although he carried on as a boxing referee. Another example is electrical engineer Mr Blythe-Perrett, who held several posts around Bengal and, at each one, served as the Railway's sports officer.<sup>7</sup> Quite recently, Jim Bannister of the same region's Chakradharpur junction, wrote of his life and career on the railways, referring to the local community of his youth as one 'alive with sporting activities'.<sup>8</sup> Bannister later became a national boxing organizer in his home area. While depictions of Anglo-Indian life such as John Master's *Bhowani Junction* suggest a somehow pathetic community of limited prospects and isolation,<sup>9</sup> there was most definitely another story afoot, and one that continues to present a strong thread of the Anglo-Indians' heritage.

### **Hockey: India's national game**

At the time of writing, the saga of Anglo-Indian hockey prevails in India and beyond. Hockey was introduced at the 1896 Olympics and, 20 years later, Indian players, most of them drawn from clubs inseparable from the railways, the telegraphs, customs or port services, were highly visible at the international level. A Bengal Hockey Club appeared as early as 1908, while Karachi's Sind Hockey Association, established in 1920, did much to systematize Indian hockey. The game's modest needs in terms of equipment and facilities rendered it a sport suited to South Asia and, as was the case elsewhere in the British Empire, hockey was regarded as a healthy outlet for both sexes.

Eric Stracey's memoir of Bangalore in the 1920s and 1930s refers to the sports in which he and most other Anglo-Indians were involved. Cricket was played in the summer and soccer belonged to the monsoon season, but hockey had year-round appeal and, as Stracey wrote, it was hockey that his community made especially its own.<sup>10</sup> He might have added that it was the Anglo-Indian fondness for hockey that helped to bring Anglo-Indians into friendly contact with other Indians. Stracey recalled the Bangalore Indians and the Sappers & Miners as regular rivals of the best Anglo-Indian elevens.<sup>11</sup>

Indian hockey gained impetus after the 1920s due to its promotion within the Indian Army and the coordinating work of an Indian Hockey Association, established in 1925. Talented players often emerged from the service leagues, many of which were lowly or obscure collectivities of railwaymen and others

familiar with sometimes makeshift fields. The encouragement of team sports by the various services rendered hockey a usual aspect of the Indian whirl. In Bengal, the Calcutta Hockey League's annual tournament was won by Anglo-Indian teams 17 times between 1905 and 1924.<sup>12</sup> For many years, Calcutta Customs was considered unbeatable, with other outstanding players belonging to the Calcutta Port Commission or the Bengal–Nagpur Railway. In Bombay, the Aga Khan Tournament was won by Anglo-Indian elevens, year after year. When Bombay Customs played Christ Church School's Old Boys of Jabalpur in 1926, it was an Anglo-Indian showdown between players having many times faced one another, with victory alternating between them. The All-India Scindia Gold Cup was won repeatedly by elevens chosen from fewer than 50 of the Ajmer railway workshop's apprentices. In 1926, an Indian Army team toured New Zealand, and on the eve of their departure, were beaten soundly by an Anglo-Indian team of the Northwestern military. A Golden Era of Indian hockey is found in the interval 1928–1956 when India won six consecutive gold medals in Olympic competition (the country again won gold in Tokyo in 1964, and Moscow in 1980). At the 1928 Olympics, eight of eleven male players representing India were Anglo-Indians.<sup>13</sup> The late Anglo-Indian lawyer and parliamentarian Frank Anthony wrote that his community might easily have summoned at least six more teams of equally high standard.<sup>14</sup> The 1932 Olympic team included seven Anglo-Indians (Allen, Tapsell, Hammond, Brown, Penniger, Carr and Sullivan), while R.J. Allen had played on the 1928 team and was regarded as the world's best goalkeeper. At the 1936 Berlin Olympics, Anglo-Indian history was to present one of its many dramatically colourful turns. There were six Anglo-Indians on the gold-winning Indian team (Allen, Tapsell, Cullen, Emmet, Michie and Gallibardy).<sup>15</sup> In the final, played amid Nazi Germany's attachment to ideals of racial purity and athleticism, a most 'miscegenated' Indian team defeated none other than Germany, 8–1.

Most of the 1928 and 1932 players hailed from northern and central India. Several of the day's principal hockey centres were Bhopal and its environs Gwalior, Jhansi and Indore, as well as Allahabad, Aligarh, Lucknow and Delhi. Early inter-zonal competitions had begun in Punjab, Bengal, Gwalior and Delhi, but also in Bombay and Madras. The international players of the 1930s often knew one another well. Hammond, Penniger, the Carr brothers and Allen were students of Oak Grove, and Cullen and Emmett attended St. George's College, both facilities of Mussoorie, UP. Some players obtained international followings. Broome Penniger, for example, was known outside of India as the world's best centre. Leslie Hammond and Dickie and Laurie Carr were famous arrivals in Australia, where they later emigrated.<sup>16</sup>

The cessation of sport through World War II and the spectre of India's independence in 1947 produced a perfect background for another flourish of Anglo-Indian history, as the official British departed leaving an Anglo-Indian population firmly designated as citizens of India after some 150 years of discrepancy. In 1948, India's hockey team (including 'the Wizard' Dhyhan Singh, Patrick Jansen, Leslie Clausius, Lawrie Fernandes, Gerry Glacken, Leo Pinto,

Reginald Rodrigues and Maxie Vas)<sup>17</sup> proceeded to become the World Champions in London. The 1952 Olympic team also won easily, and is remembered as a well-balanced eleven. The same coordination was observed at the 1956 Melbourne games, and again at Rome in 1960, with top-level Indian hockey continuing to be led by Anglo-Indian players and coaches.

Anglo-Indian emigration was producing interesting developments abroad. At the 1960 Rome Olympic Games, India defeated Australia by a single goal in the quarter-final, in which Indian team captain Leslie Claudius faced Australian captain and fellow Anglo-Indian Kevin Carton. Indeed, Western Australian hockey, as promoted by Anglo-Indian immigrants, was to become a national institution. Fred Browne became Australia's first Olympic hockey coach in the 1950s, while Eric Pearce represented Australia at the 1968 Olympic Games in the company of his brothers, Gordon and Julian. Of a total of five Pearce brothers, each played for Australia at least three times! This Anglo-Indian family's sporting tradition continued when Pearce's daughter, Colleen, played on the Australian women's hockey team at the 1984 Los Angeles Olympic Games.<sup>18</sup>

Mention must also be made of the Anglo-Indians who remained in what became Pakistan in 1947, as India lost P.P. Fernandes and several other hockey players to her sister country. Indeed, the defeat sustained by India at the 1960 Olympic Games was to Pakistan. Current hockey followers in Pakistan continue to refer to the Anglo-Indians in a sport still concentrated in Karachi, Lahore, Rawalpindi and Peshawar—places of once-large Anglo-Indian populations and the usual cultural concoction of schools, clubs, service and armed forces teams that generated most competitive hockey.<sup>19</sup>

The 1970s altered Indian and international hockey, mainly due to the advent of astroturf as encountered at the 1976 Montreal Olympics. Whereas Indian players excelled in dribbling, as perfected on hard or uneven playing surfaces, the new artificial surface's more damp and regular texture demands less holding of the ball and more aggressively physical play. International rules also produced a new system of penalties dictating other adjustments.

In India at the present time, controversy is associated with the coaching career of Cedric D'Souza, a former goalkeeper and Air India employee, who was India's national coach before a disappointing performance at the 1996 Atlanta Olympics (although his team had earlier performed well at the 1994 World Cup in Sydney, and after Atlanta had won gold at the 1998 Asian Games). D'Souza argues that Indian hockey requires superior funding and organization if teams are to improve in a sporting climate that is now more attuned to professional cricket. Since 1998, D'Souza has headed the hockey academy at Jullundur and staged hockey camps about the country.<sup>20</sup> He is a technical director of the Indian Hockey Association and has a central ambition of rebuilding Indian hockey from the grassroots level, an approach shared by the Indian Hockey Federation's executive director, Robert 'Panther' Lawrence a former cricketer and a public relations employee of Tata International.<sup>21</sup>

The Anglo-Indian love affair with field hockey possesses an extensive lore of

personalities and legendary performances. Perhaps most famous is Leslie Claudius who, in 2000, was honoured by the Ballygunge Institute and the West Bengal sports minister as the ‘best Bengali athlete of the century’. Claudius has three Olympic gold medals and a silver to his credit. Awarded the Padma Shri in 1971, Claudius is a native of Bilaspur, Madhya Pradesh, but has lived for many years in Calcutta.<sup>22</sup> In 1956 and 1960, Claudius was the halfback star of the Indian Olympic team. Claudius’s first love had actually been football. Dickie Carr of the 1936 Olympic team discovered him in 1946 when he happened to attend a match between the Bengal–Nagpur Railway’s A and B teams at Kharagpur, then the main centre for railway sports.<sup>23</sup> Carr asked Claudius to substitute for a missing player and, within a fortnight, he was a member of the first eleven. He played for Port Commissioners and, in 1949, joined Calcutta Customs, carrying on until 1965 when he retired from top-level hockey. Claudius’ son Bobby showed similar ability and had been selected for the national team at the time of his tragically premature death.

## Boxing

Boxing appeared in India as an activity of the British Army and was quickly adopted by Anglo-Indian schools. Through the interval in which Anglo-Indians served the Auxiliary Force India (AFI) as a term of their service employment there was much friendly yet heated competition with British regiments’ best boxers.<sup>24</sup> Many Anglo-Indians learned to box as part of their growing-up years or by way of service and military life. Stracey’s memoir mentions his brother Patrick who was once insulted by a British Tommy, possibly on account of his darker complexion, and how their father had promptly sent him off to learn to box!<sup>25</sup>

At the national level, India’s middleweight champion of 1934–1937 was Duncan Chatterton of Jhansi, later an undefeated All-India Inter-Railway light-heavyweight champion. Bombay’s Edgar Brighte was the Indian lightweight champion for many years. Milton Kubes was another well-known name. Kid d’Silva, a fellow of thin and slight appearance but terrific endurance, became Calcutta’s boxing idol. Another legend of the 1930s and 1940s was Arthur Soares who, in his youth, defeated western India’s Jack deSouza and Harry Bell of Australia. As an all-India champion, Soares made several tours of Ceylon, Burma, Malaya and Singapore, later turning down an American boxing contract. He enlisted in the Royal Army Medical Corps (RAMC) in World War II, continued boxing and donated his prizes to the War Fund. After 1942, Dusty Miller emerged the Indian Navy’s best middleweight boxer. In the 1951 revival of north India’s boxing scene, Miller defeated Capt. Charles Campagnac of the 3rd Gurkha Rifles, another well-known Anglo-Indian who would later lead his regiment in the 1965 war against Pakistan. Miller held India’s middleweight title during 1941–1945, was a 1945 title holder of the China–Burma–India servicemen’s tournaments, and took the India and Ceylon heavyweight championship of 1951–1952. In 1963, he emigrated to Australia where he resides in Perth. Peter



Prince, many times a champion, also became an Australian, as did Gene Raymond after boxing in India and in Britain. Other notables of the time were the lightweight Maurice Monnier, and Aaron Joshua, Dennis Barbaro, Ron Wilmer, and Ralph Janz, the latter belonging to an Anglo-Indian family of Ceylon. In 1948, and again in 1952, most of India's Olympic boxers were Anglo-Indians: Nuttall captained the 1948 boxing team and later emigrated to England, where he emerged a 1950s middleweight champion. The sporting Norrises made their mark, too, as Ron Norris became Madhya Pradesh's lightweight champion and, in 1952, took the All-India championship before heading for the Helsinki Olympics with Capt. Oscar Ward, a fellow Anglo-Indian. Rudy Hourigan had various wins while serving in the Indian Air Force after 1944. He had earlier defeated Havelock Norris in the Bombay All-India championship to become India's featherweight champion at the age of 19. Boxing, then, was a popular and successful sport for Anglo-Indian endeavour.

## Cricket

Those familiar with contemporary Indian sporting life may find it difficult to envision an India minus this remarkably popular spectator sport. However, Anglo-Indian schools took up cricket before it had any real following in India. Jabalpur's Christ Church Boy's School was among those Anglo-Indian schools to fast develop a reputation for fine cricketers. Bangaloreans, in particular, gave the game much support and the city's Richmond Town's earthen oval facilitated soccer, hockey and cricket, while New Field, purchased by St. Joseph's College in the 1920s, accommodated three pitches. Also in that decade, an Indian Board of Control for Cricket was set up in Delhi, led by Anthony de Mellow.

The post-Independence era has produced such notables as Keith Fletcher and, here and there, Anglo-Indians crop up in a sport that was far from achieving its current popularity in India. In the 1960s and 1970s, Lyn Edwards played for Hyderabad State as one of a great many well-known regional cricketers. Mark Lavender requires little introduction to international cricket followers; born in Madras in 1967, he is now of Western Australia. One of India's best-known cricket coaches is Bangalore's Salis P. Nazareth, a former national selector who organizes coaching camps in conjunction with St. Joseph's High School. In an example of the Anglo-Indian community's fondness for volunteer activities, Nazareth also coached the Au-India Deaf and Dumb Team to play in Australia in 1995–1996.

Bangalore's Sir Roger Binny remains an Anglo-Indian and Indian cricket fixture. An ace bowler and all-rounder able to bat at any position, he contributed to assorted international victories and was the darling of India's 1983 World Cup triumph. He was a member of the Indian team to tour Australia in 1981, 1984–1985 and 1985–1986, and has since resumed coaching, producing the winners of the 2000 Under-19 World Cup and the national 'A' team.<sup>26</sup> He is a selector for the state of Karnataka and, in rather typical Anglo-Indian fashion, his sporting activities are not limited to cricket; he is a weekend golfer with a

handicap of 6. He is currently engaged at Bangalore's National Cricket Academy when not representing his state's 12,000 or so Anglo-Indians as a member of the Karnataka legislature.<sup>27</sup>

## Track and field

Track and field, emerging everywhere about the subcontinent in a now recognizable admixture of school, club, service and military activities, was the sport of India's first Olympian. Norman Gilbert Pritchard was born an accountant's son in Calcutta in 1875, attended St. Xavier's College, and taught in Lucknow for some years. At the 1900 Paris Games, Pritchard finished second in the 200 metres to J.W.B. Tewksbury of the United States to become India's first Olympic medalist; he finished second again in the 200 metre hurdles. Pritchard received a hero's welcome on returning to India and was later appointed an honorary secretary of the Indian Football Association. It was well known that, on the eve of Pritchard's departure for Europe, he had been opposed by authorities who pronounced that he must compete as a Briton. However, the Anglo-Indian Mr. Pritchard insisted on representing India. In keeping with an historical multitude of multi-talented and unconventional persons to find their places in the history of his community, he later went off to California to embark on another career—in silent film!

A further step forward was heralded by the 1927 formation of the Indian Olympic Association in the expectation that Indians be encouraged to compete abroad. The 1932 Los Angeles games saw an Anglo-Indian hurdler, Mervyn Sutton, reach the semi-finals in the 110 metre hurdles. At the 1948 Olympics, the sprinter Eric Philips competed, as well as hurdler John Vickers. Henry Rebello was born in Lucknow in 1928 and, after his family relocated to Bangalore, became a regular 1940s winner of what were then called Hop, Step and Jump competitions. He was the favourite of the 1948 Olympics in triple jump, but was injured before he could compete. Rebello also excelled in the high jump.<sup>28</sup> Derek Boosey of Karnataka's Kolar Gold Fields (KGF) superseded Rebello's record in the Hop, Step and Jump and, in 1960, became India's national champion just as his father, Leslie Boosey, had been 20 or so years before. Derek Boosey emigrated and reappeared on the British team at the 1968 Mexico games. Another native son of KGF was Kenneth Powell who ran in the 1964 Olympics. Powell had broken the Indian national and Asian records at the 1964 All-India Open Meet and, at the Olympics, gave a good performance in the 200 metres and the 4 × 100 men's relay. In 1965, Powell and also Barry Ford set new Indian records for the 100 and 200 metres at Pune.<sup>29</sup> Other Anglo-Indians competing in track and field events at the national and international levels have been Larry Pinto and Edward sequeira; N. Nugent represented England in 1952 at Helsinki and won a bronze.

More recent developments point to ongoing recognition of the Anglo-Indian contribution to track and field. The Dronacharya Award honours the work of outstanding Indian coaches. In 2000, one of three recipients was Kenneth Owen

Bosen, a graduate of the Doveton Corrie Boys School, Chennai, and Staines School, Coimbatore. Bosen was a fine track and field athlete in his youth and also a promising cricketer. He represented India in javelin at the Second Asian Games before a round of meningitis interrupted his competitive career. Bosen was engaged by the Southern Railways and was the Indian Railways Athletics Coach before joining the National Institute for Sports teaching staff at Patiala, from which he had been a first-of-class graduate. He has contributed to coaching as well as administration and planning, is an appointee to the International Amateur Athletic Association, and has had two terms as national coach of the Indian athletics team, retiring as chief coach. He now trains India's female hammer-throwers, contributing to a newly-introduced sport.<sup>30</sup>

The 2000 Sydney Games torch relay was not without Anglo-Indian participation as Ivan Jacobs, originally of Quilon and now of both Australia and South India, ran a segment of the relay and was the first Indian to do so. Jacobs represented India at the Helsinki Games after breaking the Indian 400 metres record. He joined the Tamil Nadu police and continued as a sprinter in All-India police and national competition. He later went into the private sector, emigrated to England in the mid-1960s and thence to Australia.<sup>31</sup>

### **And the ladies, too**

Anglo-Indian females were often pioneers in many of the occupations and pursuits now taken for granted by other educated Indian women. When women's work beyond the home was not considered respectable in other communities, Anglo-Indian individuals went forwards into education, nursing, office roles and military support services. Middle-class Indian families, especially the Anglo-Indian community, have long favoured English-medium education that entails immediate exposure to Western sports. My research evoked endless commentary from other Indians concerning sports mistresses and others of old; for example, indefatigable Anglo-Indian ladies having vowed at some point in their careers that every one of their pupils would learn to swim. Those belonging to orthodox communities, including an informant raised in strict purdah, have spoken of their girlhood exposure to netball, hockey, or long-distance running. The pattern prevails in Anglo-Indian and other schools of the sports mistress happening to be a former or ongoing Anglo-Indian competitor, or a product of Anglo-Indian instruction in one sport or several in combination. Thus, until the 1960s, the majority of India's national and international women hockey players were Anglo-Indians, as were most females engaged in other competitive sports, with the possible exception of tennis. It was usual for most provincial women's athletic championships to be won by Anglo-Indians and for the finals at the majority of national and international venues to be dominated by Anglo-Indian teams.<sup>32</sup>

As with the men, field hockey was the preferred sport of Anglo-Indian women. A 1953 women's hockey team that travelled from Bengal to Britain was captained by Betty Catchick and included Vanda Williamson, Mary d'Sena, Doreen Stephenson, sisters Yvonne and Dorrel Smith, and Philomena Norris, daughter

of the noted hockey player and coach Rex Norris (whose other daughter Wendy played in a 1956 team invited to Australia, led by Smith).<sup>33</sup> Smith also captained the Madhya Pradesh women's hockey team from 1947 to 1957. Among other women's hockey notables was Ann Lumsden, in 1962, the first Indian woman to receive the Arjuna Award for her contributions to Indian sport at national and international levels. Ida Stokes was a famous long-term director of the All-India Women's Field Hockey Association who encouraged Indian women athletes to set their competitive sights higher as part of a mobilizing effort that has been many times manifested in the small Anglo-Indian community. Some readers will also remember Shirley Briggs or Eileen di Sisi. In 1982, Eliza Nelson of Bombay captained the Indian women's hockey team towards gold at the Asian Games in New Dehi, and was later awarded the Padma Shri and Arjuna Award. Nelson first played in Pune where she lived to the age of 12, and continued in Bombay. More recently, she commented on the change of atmosphere of Indian hockey in view of greater opportunities for international exposure.<sup>34</sup>

As for India's most popular sport today, 1973 saw the formation of the Women's Cricket Association of India and a broadening of enthusiasm for the new sport. Anglo-Indian female cricketers have also resurfaced in Australia; Kathy McGready of the Australian ladies team is the daughter of Roland McGready, formerly of the Great Indian Peninsular Railway.

Other notable Anglo-Indian female athletes include Deanna Syme, who shone in both track and field and hockey when a student at Mysore University. As Deanna Tewwari, she later became games mistress at Sophia High School, Bangalore. Her aunt, Marjorie Soares, was a pre-war winner of the National Athletics Championship for women and a tireless promoter of women's sport in South India. She captained the Karnataka women's hockey, basketball and athletics teams and, with Barbara Webster, represented India in the first Asian Games held in New Delhi. Soares taught physical education for more than 30 years at the Bishop Cotton School for Girls, Bangalore. There were various Anglo-Indian ladies to show similar versatility and excellence. In the 1930s, Veronica Rutland Bassett of Allahabad had set several records around the then United Provinces. Christine Forage was placed second in the high jump at the 1961 National Games at Trivandrum, at the age of 12, and in 1962 won a national award for Physical Efficiency after a 2-day test that no other competitor could complete. Equally at home in sprints, hurdles, jumps and throws, she was invited in 1962 to train in the Societ Union. Her generation's athletic successes represent rather an endless procession: Christine MacInnis was a high jumper of note, and Barbara Beck a fine sprinter. Betty Davenport was a discus and javelin champion before becoming the sports mistress at the Frank Anthony Public School, New Delhi.

### **Anglo-Indians abroad: cultural transfer**

Australian hockey improved dramatically in the 1960s and 1970s as India's level of competitiveness in this sport began to decline. One factor in this shift is that

the 1960s brought a large wave of Anglo-Indian emigration from India to other Commonwealth countries, and much onward migration to Australia of earlier migrants to the United Kingdom. In central Canada, Anglo-Indian community life prevails, replete with summer gymkhanas, golf tournaments and other informal patherings manifesting a distinctive culture in which sport is part and parcel of life well lived. Quite predictably, expatriate journals run Indian cricket or hockey write-ups, whether or not these pertain to Anglo-Indians. In the Canadian province of Ontario, the promotion of a women's hockey league has been the project of an Anglo-Indian gentleman who is engaged in numerous religion, charitable and social activities. From my own Canadian point of view, I was not surprised to spot Robin d'Abreu, formerly of Bombay and now of British Columbia, on my country's Olympic hockey team in Sydney. Similarly, Paul Gaudoin, a veteran of the 1996 Atlanta Games, played for Australia.<sup>35</sup> Perth's Harlequin Hockey Club, to which Gaudoin belongs, is among several in which Anglo-Indian families are involved.<sup>36</sup> At Australia's National Hockey Centre in Lyneham, the third pitch has been named Powell Field in recognition of an Anglo-Indian family who have given much to hockey from the late-1950s to the present, and to Indian sporting life at large.<sup>37</sup>

Of the Anglo-Indian sporting record in general, it can be said that various Indian communities present similar achievements. However, the Anglo-Indian case is one of outstanding successes originating within what is a relatively minuscule community, a not especially wealthy one and, as already explained, a community to know some disadvantage through time. It also seems plain that Anglo-Indians have tended to excel in more than one pursuit and, perhaps generally, in more than one sport. An especially endearing aspect of their uncanny record of achievement pertains directly to the community's size, so that a world famous Olympian is apt to be referred to as simply 'Uncle' or 'Dear Old Betty'.

## Conclusion

S. Sarkar has criticized a scholarly fashion in contemporary studies of British and post-colonial India that tends to conflate colonial exploitation with Western cultural domination.<sup>38</sup> Researchers given to condemning every British innovation in colonial India must concede that constructive phenomena were also in progress that had precious little to do with politics or economy. When a different range of viewpoints is examined, we are left with the reverence shown by millions of very ordinary Indian citizens for this athlete or team as an everyday, endlessly manifested detail of Indian life. Let it be said that the lads gathered round a bazaar television screen of an afternoon are not entranced by classical music, the national budget, nor the utterances of Nobel laureates. Sports, including the masses' love of *krickhet*, offer much compensation to Indian lives that are far more challenging than those of the intellectual ethnic group. *Leander-bhai* or *Claudius-uncle* remain of far greater importance to Calcutta's more numerous citizens than the same region's many academic 'batsmen'.

Western-derived sports also remain the foremost leisure pursuits of other Indians engaged in both public and private sector organizations.

A visit today to an Anglo-Indian school in any part of India will present immediate evidence of sport. Boys and girls of every community engage in games as part of an educational experience familiar to what must now be *lakhs* of people in India, or of Indian origin throughout the world. Persons who grew up in the new Republic of India were certainly aware of their country's fine showing at several Olympic games and, in days when much else seemed uncertain and as a genuinely All-India presence, Anglo-Indian athletes did their bit towards a pan-Indian unity of spirit through their various successes in India and abroad.

## Notes and references

1. Special Thanks to Mark Soares and family of Bangalore and Australia, and all other contributors; particularly those of 'The India-List'.
2. J.A. Mangan (ed), *The Cultural Bond—Sport, Empire and Society* (London: Frank Cass, 1992).
3. See, for example, Anthony D Smith, 'Chosen peoples—why ethnic groups survive', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Vol 15, 1992, pp 436–456.
4. E.B. Reuters, *The Mulatto in the United States including a Study of the Role of Mixed-Blood Races Throughout the World* (Boston, MA: Gorham, 1918), pp 29–31.
5. Lt. Gen. Sir George MacMunn, *The Martial Races of India* (Delhi: Mitall reprint, 1979), p 268.
6. Thanks are extended to Subhasis Ganguly of the Indian Railway Service for his contributions from different archives in Orissa and West Bengal. Ganguly plans to write a study of the Anglo-Indian contribution to Indian railway development.
7. Mr K.W. Blythe-Perrett was born in Sri Lanka and served on the S.E. Railway from the 1940s to the late 1960s, at which point he took retirement in England. He died in 1991 in Canada where his daughters had settled. I am grateful to Carol McFarlane, now of Colorado, USA, for her recollections of a sportsman who amassed hundreds of trophies through the course of his life.
8. J. Bannister, 'Through the eyes of an Anglo-Indian', *Indian Railways*, July–August, 1998, pp 69–71.
9. J. Master, *Bhowani Junction* (London: John Murray, 1954). The novel, like the subsequent film, was considered offensive and even lurid by Anglo-Indian readers.
10. E. Stracey, *Growing Up in Anglo-India* (Chennai: East West Books, 2000).
11. *Ibid*, p 12.
12. F. Anthony, *Britain's Betrayal – The Story of the Anglo-Indian Community* (New Delhi: Allied, 1968), p 227.
13. The team was managed by Mr A.B. Rosser.
14. Anthony, *op cit*, Ref 12, p 229. The team's Anglo-Indians were: goal, Allen, Bengal; backs, Michael Rocque, Central Provinces, and Hammond, UP; halfbacks, Penniger, Punjab, and Cullen, UP; forwards, Michael Gateley, Punjab, G.E. Marthins and Seaman, UP; general utility, Rex Norris, Central Provinces; reserve, Deefholts, Bengal. Both Ernie and Willie G. Cullen played on Indian national teams, as did L.G. Emmett.
15. var. Joseph Gallabady.
16. Melbourne's Noble Park Hockey Club would also benefit from Rudy Pacheco, Marcus Syms and Julian Maughy.
17. Other members of this much applauded team were Keshav Dutt, Ranganathan Francis, Randhir Singh Gentle, Akhtar Hussain, Amir Kumar, Jaswant Singh Rajput, Latif-ur-Rehman, Balbir Singh, Grahanaandan Singh and Trilochan Singh.
18. The Pearcees were known as Lucknow Anglo-Indians. They emigrated from Jabalpur in 1947. Eric Pearce played in the 1956, 1960 and 1964 Olympics for Australia, Gordon Pearce played in 1956 and 1960, Mel Pearce in 1956, and Julian Pearce in 1960 and 1964.
19. The annual Lahore Gymkhana was once a focal point of South Asian hockey.
20. D'Souza, 'Indian hockey needs money', *The Chandigarh Tribune*, 6 May, 2000.
21. Like many a sportsman of western India, Lawrence attended St. Mary's in Mazgaon.
22. Claudius and his athletic brothers attended the Bishop Cotton School, Bangalore.

23. Dickie Carr, Carl Tapsell and Joe Gallibardy are also said to have been former footballers.
24. The AFI was a militia organization, disbanded in 1947, that was widely deployed to contain nationalist agitation. Anglo-Indians were especially visible within the Force as service came to be a term of colonial government employment.
25. Stracey, *op cit*, Ref 10, p 27.
26. Previously, Binny coached Karnataka and Goa, as well as the Kenyan cricket team.
27. Rajan Bala, Aaj Ka MLA, *Cricket Talk* (Calcutta), 13 April 2000, pp 36–37.
28. Rebello today lives in Gurgaon, Haryana.
29. At the 1964 Games, Powell was the only Indian to reach the 100 metres qualifier.
30. Bosen is the author of several titles pertaining to sports and coaching, and twice won India's National Award for Sports Literature for *Training without Straining* (1972) and *The Complete Guide to Pole Vaulting* (1977). See 'Kenneth O. Bosen—the Dronacharaya Award winner', *Anglos in the Wind* (Chennai), Vol 2, August 2000, p 3.
31. Like various other Anglo-Indians, Jacobs has returned to live in Chennai several times since emigrating to the UK in the mid-1960s. His children are settled in Australia. See 'Ivan Jacobs—the first Indian Olympian to participate in an Olympic Torch Relay', *Anglos in the Wind*, Vol 2, August 2000, p 6.
32. Anthony, *op cit*, Ref 12, p. 240.
33. Rex showed early promise as a centre-half before going on to coach the Dutch hockey team in 1954–1956, the Italian team in 1960, and then the Mexican team before the 1968 Olympic games.
34. M.M. Rizvi, 'Eliza Nelson looks back', *Mid-Day* (Bombay), 10 October 1999, p 4.
35. Gaugoin's two brothers have also played top-level hockey in Western Australia and their father is a noted coach originally of Madras. Paul Gaudoin is a schoolteacher when not on the playing field.
36. The Harlequin club has featured Baldin Edmons, Charles Gaudoin, Rex and Rodney Farmer, Robert Rodrigues, Errol and Aubrey LaFrenais, Chris Carpenter and Brian Bird.
37. Bill Powell is a well-known coach and administrator. His brother, Chris Powell, also remains involved, as do Margaret, Lisa, Katrina and Michelle Powell. Lisa and Katrina Powell have played for the Canberra Strikers and for the Australian national team.
38. S. Sarkar, *Writing Social History* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1997), p 4.