

Project Report

SATPULA SUPER SERIES - II

The cricket matches of the Satpula Super Series-I, initiated by the international artists, David Brazier and Kelda Free in the Khirki community, generated immense enthusiasm and excitement amongst the children and youth alike. Carrying forth this fervor, KHOJ happily offered to facilitate more cricket matches for the youth in the community, in response to their passion for the game and eagerness to organize and play several such series in Khirki. More so, as the Indian Premier League (IPL) – Season 3 matches had caught the nation's imagination, grabbing all headlines for over a month; the elation and delight of having our very own 'Satpula Super Series-II' to match the nation's current cricket euphoria, was stupendous.

The Satpula Super Series- II was organized in April 2010 in collaboration with the youth in the community, amidst huge cheer and gusto. The matches were played on the open grounds in the Khirki village, against the backdrop of the ancient 'Satpula' (the seven arched bridge) - the spectacular 14th century water harvesting dam, dating back to the Tuglaq dynasty. Built during the reign of Sultan Mohammad Shah Tuglak, Satpula also formed an integral part of the city walls of the then fourth city of Jahanpanah in Delhi, protecting it from foreign invasions.

Through several informal gatherings and meetings with the local youth in various pockets within the community, the call for team formulation for the cricket matches and a common meeting place and time for future gatherings was announced and spread. Owing to its centrality, the park adjacent to the Khirki DDA flats was chosen as a meeting point. As the word spread, increasing number of youth, keen on participating in the series, started dropping by, from various pockets in and around Khirki. Animated discussions regarding the number of players, overs to be bowled per innings and matches to be played, length and duration of the games, date and timings, nature of possible prizes etc. started shaping up. KHOJ offered to buy new T-shirts for the teams, fund prizes, bring in a professional commentator for the final match of the series and also document the match via an audio-video recording, for further exploring the possibility of a local cable-cast in the community.

Eventually, four teams of nine players each, in the age group of 15-20 years, emerged. The teams chose to name themselves based on their residential blocks and so, the Cricket Clubs of Khirki Village, Khirki Extension, Khirki DDA Flats and Panchsheel Vihar were born. The captains of the four teams in consultation with their players decided to play two semi-final matches amongst themselves, the winners of which would then qualify and play the finals. The semi-finals were to be shorter matches, comprising of six overs per innings, while the final match would be for ten overs per innings. The teams chose senior boys within the community as umpires, who were neutral to the teams and ensured fair play. It was agreed that all matches would be played on weekends during early evenings, enabling most from the community to enjoy the games and also to escape the hot summer afternoon sun.

The first semi-final match was played on the evening of 10th April 2010 around 5 pm between the Khirki Village Club and the Khirki Extension Club followed by the second semi-final on the next day, the 11th April between the Khirki DDA Flats Club and the Panchsheel Vihar Club. The Khirki Village Club and the Khirki DDA Flats Club came out to be the

winning teams, to then play the final match of the Satpula Super Series-II on the evening of the following Sunday, 18th April 2010.

High on energy and zest, the games were much enjoyed not only by the players but drew friends and younger fans within the community to cheer and support their respective teams. Many watched the games from the balconies and terraces of their houses, adjacent to the ground. For the final match, the qualifying teams looked impressive as they changed into their new orange and white T-shirts before the commencement of the match. The buzz was unmistakable and the commentary by Mr. Salim Zaidi during the final match, peppered with the mimicking of popular Bollywood stars, had the crowds reeling with laughter and joy. The high-spirited matches demonstrated amazing friendliness and sportsmanship amongst the teams.

Finally, the Khirki Village Club emerged as the overall winners of the Satpula Super Series-II, winning the prize money of Rs. 1000/- offered by KHOJ, while the Khirki DDA Flats Club, as runners-up, was awarded a handsome cricket bat. All the four teams were thereafter invited to the KHOJ Studios, where all celebrated the huge success of the fun-filled cricket series over cups of chai, samosas and soft drinks, eager to continue to organize further such series in the Khirki community and looking forward to the Satpula Super Series-III.