Conceptulizing, Creating & Executing

SPORTS HERITAGE

MUSEUM JALANDHAR

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Introduction .................................................................................................................. 2

2. History of Sports Equipment Manufacturing Industry in Jalandhar .......................... 3-4

3. The Idea of Sports Heritage Museum ........................................................................... 5-7
   3.1 The Purpose
   3.2 Who would it benefit?
   3.3 Location

4. The timeline of the Industry .......................................................................................... 8-10

5. Method of collection of vintage products documents & information ......................... 11-13
   5.1 Social media
   5.2 Appeal to the sports industry
   5.3 Appeal through print media
   5.4 Personal visit & outreach

6. Museum concept & display ........................................................................................... 14-15

7. Evolution of sports equipment manufacturing in India ................................................ 16-20
   7.1 Cricket
   7.2 Football
   7.3 Hockey
   7.4 Football Shoes
   7.5 Basketball

8. Inventory of Products Collected .................................................................................... 21-22

9. Conclusion ....................................................................................................................... 23

10. Acknowledgment .......................................................................................................... 24
1. Introduction

The whole idea of starting this Museum triggered from a single football in my Dadu's* office which he used to show me and my elders brother whenever he used to take us to his factory trip. He used to tell us the story of how this 18 Panel un-pigmented leather ball changed the fortunes of Jalandhar- our hometown. He would passionately go on about how the first lace-less ball was developed in India and how Jalandhar dethroned Calcutta as the sports equipment manufacturing capital of India.

I would hear similar stories from my grand-fathers friends, tales of how the products made in Jalandhar had been used in numerous Hockey World Cups, Olympics and Rugby World Cups.

I was privileged; I had my grandfather and his friends to tell me about our proud heritage. When I used to narrate these stories to my friends in school, they’d be amused and sometimes refuse to believe this. Jalandhar being a small town in the state of Punjab, I could understand their disbelief. Frustrated, I always wished I could take them to Dadu's office and to the offices of his friends to show them the products and the glorious history this small town carries.

My Dadu, during his later years, very seriously started collecting the balls made in his factory only to preserve the history of his company. He would talk about making a museum for the town, often jokingly. When he passed away in June 2017, to say the least, it moved me and I decided that as a way of thanking my Dadu for everything he had done for me, I would go ahead and formalize his little dinner joke. I decided that it would be a Museum dedicated to the Heritage of Jalandhar and its industry. It would be dedicated to all small and large manufacturers, traders, workers, craftsmen and their contribution of building up this society and aim to encompass the effort of every strata of the industry.

* Dadu= Paternal Grand Father
2. History of Sports Equipment Manufacturing Industry in Jalandhar

The birth of the industry in Jalandhar carries history rooted deep into the Partition of Pakistan from India. With my grandfather himself having migrated from Pakistan during the Partition. This history of Jalandhar is one small story in the history of South-East Asia, its struggle for independence from British Empire, the partition of India, the 10 million displaced refugees and their struggle for survival.

Sialkot and Jalandhar were cities that were part of the state of Punjab in undivided India. However, due to the partition, Sialkot ended up in Pakistan while Jalandhar came to India. The core of the sporting industry in Sialkot was composed of Hindu manufacturers and to flee the religious violence that resulted due to the partition they fled from Sialkot and set up base in Jalandhar and another city Meerut (also a sports manufacturing hub in India).

These initial refugees from Pakistan were the first people to set up sports manufacturing in Jalandhar and others soon followed after seeing a concentration of sports manufacturing knowledge that was beginning to accumulate in this city.

The industry was founded on 13th April 1883 in Sialkot, by Sardar Ganda Singh Oberoi. In the year 1885, Sports Equipment became the first Indian industrial products to be exported.

Situated in the foothills of the mountains, it was an ideal place to grow trees needed for wood, called Willow, to make cricket bats and hockey sticks. Production started off with a British colonel suggesting Mr. Ganda Singh Oberoi, a local wood dealer, to manufacture tennis racquets out of mulberry, which was then used only as domestic fuel.

The items taken up for manufacturing, in the beginning, were tennis balls, footballs, cricket bats, cricket balls and hockey sticks.

In addition to being culturally similar to Sialkot, Jalandhar provided a number of advantages that allowed it to become the new hub of sports goods manufacturing.
Why Jalandhar?

a) Jalandhar was in close proximity to Sialkot (135 miles) and happened to fall on the migration route from Pakistan to India.

b) Although, it was not a manufacturing city, there existed medium sized network of sports shop-owners that bought goods from Sialkot and sold it in Jalandhar and nearby cities.

c) Jalandhar in its pre-partition days was a hub of leather works and the woodwork industry and these two products were the essential raw materials for the core products of the earlier sports industry: hockey sticks, football and cricket bats.

These conditions were essential for its early start and it soon took off. Today, the Sports Cluster in Jalandhar contributes over 65 percent of the sports good manufacturing and exports in India. It is essential for the livelihood of the city as it provides employment to over 170,000 people.
3. The Idea of Sports Heritage Museum

3.1 The Purpose

The concept of this museum is different from many museums that exist. Whereas most museums try to tell a story of every object and link it to a significant piece of history, the Sports Heritage Museum of Jalandhar seeks to tell an evolutionary story of the industry and how it grew through the evolution of its sporting equipment and machinery. The stars and the main focus of this museum are antique hockey sticks, cricket bats, football, tennis racquets and a wide plethora of sporting equipment. Existing from different eras and techniques these seek to show how the technical expertise of the industry gradually grew and how the equipment gradually changed as the industry grew.

The story of the industry is the story of the growth of India. As India progressed, the knowledge progressed and the country became more at par with the Western World.

The main purpose of the Museum is to exhibit these vintage sports artifacts & tools that chart the evolutionary journey of this uniquely historic industry of India, however, at the same time a major focus is to create a sense of community. Thus, the museum contains a number of fixtures and charts that greatly detail the history of the industry came to be, technical information on the manufacturing of sports goods and how they were produced and how they are produced today, interviews and stories that were personally told to me by my grandfather’s friends who are the heads of various big firms in the city and a number of other small artefacts and pieces such a invoices of documents of sponsorships and government awards that were pivotal in the industry’s growth and also recognize its importance and success.

[Image of a group of people outside a factory, labeled 'FREEWILL & COMP']

Israel Volleyball team visiting sports factory at Jalandhar 1960’s
3.2 Who would it benefit?

A wide number of the older generation understand its significance, however, many people my age fail to grasp the impact of this cluster on their lives. They may play every day with a NIVIA football shoe, a BAS cricket bat or CHAKRAVARTI hockey stick (all household Indian brands that are based out of Jalandhar) but they don’t know its story, where it came from and what all sacrifices and effort went into making something that looks so simple but is so complex and is the result of society’s numerous synergies coming together. It is not only the present but a work of generations.

I believe that this museum will help create a positive community environment. Often, the labourers and workers that manufacture the bulk of the sporting goods are ignored and looked down upon in society. By showcasing the skill and the technical knowledge that goes in and has gone in through the years into the making of these goods, I hope to instilling in my local society a respect for these people and their profession. My aim is to create a sense of pride for the families of these workers and respect from others towards these people for what they do and what they give to society.

This museum is not only meant for Jalandhar but to put Jalandhar in a national spotlight. By highlighting the struggles people in this city had to go through and how they overcame these hurdles to establish such a successful industry model, I am to instill a sense of pride into the combined consciousness of the city’s people for their achievements and their generations of ancestors. My aim is for this museum to showcase the strength of Jalandhar and put it on the tourist map of Punjab (my home state) so that in the future young students and adults alike come to my city to learn about its rich sporting history.

I believe as a city we had all faltered on our path to preserving our history and showcasing it to the youth and as to keep the legacy of the predecessors alive. It is, therefore, the goal of the museum to keep this fire alive and spread this flame.

While most sports businesses and many other businesses today outsource their business to other countries, the sports industry in Jalandhar has always made its products and its labourers have always been Indians. It’s a uniquely ‘Made in India’ enterprise and is deeply linked to the history and growth of this country. This museum’s aim is to showcase to the nation and the world how faith in one’s own resources and belief in one’s own ability can help become one successful.

3.3 Location

My Dadu (Grand-Father) started a Charitable Trust to help the poor workers of the Sports Industry. The trust runs a small dispensary, injury rehabilitation center and a few other activities. There are a hall and reception area, which is still not occupied. I discussed this proposal among the Trustees and I got the go-ahead to do the needful. The Trustees also promised to finance the expenses needed to build up the displays.
Why this Location?

Though I did not think about it earlier, the location happens to be very ideal for this Museum because of certain factors.

1. It is off the National Highway leading to historic city of Kapurthala. There is lot of tourist traffic moving in this area.

2. The Science City and Open University campus is located on the same road. Lots of schools from all over India visit Science City every year and they can be persuaded to visit this Museum as well.

3. This location is close to Basti Bawa Khel, where lot of Sports Factories and located.

4. It is located in a Village, many of whose inhabitants either work in the sports factories or have worked in the past. They all were very welcoming of the idea.

5. Distances
   - From International Airport, Amritsar 90km (1h 49m)
   - From Domestic Airport, Adampur 32km (55m)
   - From Jagatjit Singh Palace, Kapurthala 13km (19m)
   - From Basti Danishmandan, Jalandhar 6km (14m)
4. The time of the Sports Industry

1834
Wagle & Company
First Sports Shop Opens
in Mumbai

1883
Sardar Ganda Singh Oberoi
Established Sports Industry
in India

1923
HRM
Mr. Hans Raj Mahajan
started manufacturing
hockey sticks

1933
Western India Sports Ltd.
Sports Retail Outlet
opens in Rajkot

1934
Freewill & Co.
established by
Mr. Nihal Chand Kharabanda

1947
Partition of British India
British India divided in two parts on
15th August, 1947. After partition
Mr. Nihal Chand Kharabanda
moved from Sialkot (Now in
Pakistan) to Mumbai & then to
Meerut.

1950
Pioneer Sports
factory owned retail stores
in different metros all over
India

1957
Enkay India
put up bladder
manufacturing plant

1960
First Made in India
hockey balls used
in Olympic

1935
Beat All Sports (BAS)
Started Manufacturing
Cricket Bats
1962
- NIVIA: laceless football manufacturing starts in India.

1975
- Bhaizada Co.: Started making Australian Rugby in India.

1978
- Stitched rubber ball manufacturing starts in India.
  - Gives football & rugby balls exports a big boost.

1980
- Cosco India: moulded basketball manufacturing starts in India.
  - Football Shoes manufacturing starts in Jalandhar.

1982
- Asian Games comes to India.
  - Jalandhar Sports Industry gets a big boost.

1986
- PU & PVC stitched football manufacturing starts at Jalandhar, replacing natural leather.

1987
- Graphite Hockey Sticks manufacturing started in India.

1988
- Moulded football stud shoe manufacturing starts in India.

1982
- First made in India ball gets FIFA approval.
1995
Rugby World Cup
Gilbert Barbarian Rugby was used in Rugby World Cup in South Africa.

1999
Sports Goods Foundation of India
Formed to eliminate & rehabilitate child labour in the sports industry

2002
GRAY-NICOLS
Builds their own factory in Jalandhar (India)
The largest manufacturer of Cricket in the World becomes the first Foreign Direct Investor (FDI) in sports industry at Jalandhar

2007
Machine stitching replaces hand stitching in sync with international brands.

2015
Machine Stitching
Manufacturing starts at Jalandhar

2018
Thermobond Stitchless Football Manufacturing starts at Jalandhar

2018
Composite Cricket Bat Manufacturing starts at Jalandhar

Countdown for replacing wooden cricket bat starts
5. Method of collection of vintage products documents & information

5.1 Social Media

The appeal for contribution was made by me on Facebook & Instagram which was shared by family & friends & various people contacted me with the vintage products they had in stock.
5.2 Appeal to the Sports Industry
I approached the Sports Goods Manufacturers & Exporters Association (SGMEA) with a request to outreach to their members with a request to contribute information & vintage products. The Chairman Mr. Ajaya Mahajan & Secretary Mr. Vipin Mahajan’s response was highly welcoming the chairman went to the extend of offering SGMEA office as a temporary location for the start of museum till the better arrangements were made.

TO ALL THE MEMBER OF SGMEA

Dear Members,

Below is a mail from a student of town school which is self-expository. It is a very good effort and need to be appreciated. Members willing help him in his mission are welcome to come forward for this noble initiative.

Best Regards

Vipin Mahajan
Secretary General

SGMEA circulated my request to all its members which spread the awareness about this initiative. Later when I went to meet these individuals, they would be ready with the vintage products and the stories on how they started looking for these products from the old forgotten warehouses and boxes in their factories and workshops.

5.3 Appeal through Print Media
During one of my trips to the old city sports manufacturing hub Basti Nau, I met this journalist Ms. Aakanksha N Bhardwaj who was writing a story the effect of the recently introduced GST( Goods and Service Tax) and demonetization on the small sports goods manufacturers and factory owners. We started talking and she became really interested in my work. We met again the next day where she clicked photographs of the collected products and inquired about my efforts. She promised that she would publish the article next day in The Tribune- a major national newspaper. As promised by her I found myself on the sports page of The Tribune, a 137-year-old of English newspaper. I was amazed by the sheer size and prominence of the coverage. This was the turning point of my effort. I was a local hero. I even got calls from different parts of Punjab with the assurance of contributing the samples. It is another story that very few of these promises actually resulted in collection.
Ruthless Federer marches on
Beats German Jan-Lennard Struff 6-3 7-5 6-2 to enter the Wimbledon fourth round

London, July 12
Top seed and defending champion Roger Federer advanced to the Wimbledon last 16 without dropping a set after a 6-3 6-4 6-2 win over German Jan-Lennard Struff on Friday.

Federer, seeking a record ninth Wimbledon title, entered the first set without a break point in his service game and followed by a stunning drop down the line. The 37-year-old Swiss proceeded to win his 38th consecutive set in the All-England Club to set up a quarter-final clash with Germany's Dominik Koepfer.

Lahiri shoots 61 to take lead

New Delhi, July 12
Indian golfer Anirban Lahiri shot his best round on the PGA Tour— a career-best 61-under par 61— and took a one-shot lead at the third round of the Zurich Classic of New Orleans on Sunday.

Federer returns to Jan-Lennard Struff in their third round match in London on Friday.

Teen inspires Jalaludin sports museum

Jalaludin sports museum

The idea of developing a hub of sports goods was inspired by two factors, said the museum’s director of a sports goods manufacturing company. The Hong Kong-born said he grew up watching the changes in sports goods in one of the oldest businesses in the area. The idea was to start a movement to inspire sports goods companies to make the products more affordable. The museum has been reaching out to other industries and is planning to launch a new venture.

Lahiri's round of 61 put him at 24-under par after three rounds. Lahiri had never been in a round of 61 before in his career. Lahiri had three birdies on the front nine and six more on the back nine. Lahiri's round of 61 tied him for the lead in the third round of the Zurich Classic.

Dhoni pulls India to 148/5 against England

England, July 12
Mahendra Singh Dhoni scored 76 not out to lead India to 148 in 50 overs against England in the first ODI at Trent Bridge on Thursday.

5.4 Personal visit & outreach

During my various breaks from the school I made a point to meet all elders of the Industry from my Dadu’s generation who were still living and collected various stories documents & vintage products from them.
6. Museum Concept & Display

The outcome of the collection of Vintage products could be classified into three categories.

1. Documents, certificates, letters and price list belonging to different eras.

2. Vintage products including sportswear, sports shoes, balls, hockey sticks, golf sticks, badminton racquets, boxing equipment and many more.

3. Posters and Information is the key to any museum. In sports particularly, I felt the need for displaying pictures of products from various eras as I, till now, have not been able to collect various vintage products, I wanted visitors to learn about the actual history.

With these brief, I went to our family friends who are the Architects and Interior Designers. They were kind enough to give time to my thought and finally, all of us together reached some basic extensive presentation.

The concept
The idea was to break the linearity of the space by changing the movement pattern in the space the randomness in the movement gives a surprise factor every time one move towards the next display. The movement pattern was superimposed on the plan which becomes the framework for the vertical display. Another factor influencing the display was the junction where there is a shift in the display panel, creating a void which is then compensated by the solid mass which behaves as the horizontal display unit. The experience of mass and void is generated not only between the horizontal and vertical display but also within the vertical display. The junctions thus act as the guiding factor for the cut-out created in the display panels.

Initial Drawings
7. Evolution of Sports equipment manufacturing in India

7.1 Cricket Bat

Initial days of cricket saw no fixed shape or size for the cricket bats. Over the years experimentation has led to a widely accepted shape.

**1720**
Looking more like a hockey stick, it’s hard to believe that the earliest cricket bats looked like this, although some believe that the game was first played using Shepherd’s crookes.

**1750**
Somewhat of an improvement on the previous stick/crooke, we still wouldn’t fancy facing a 160km/h ball with this spatula-shaped bat.

**1774**
These flat-backed bats started to much more closely resemble today’s cricket bats, although the blade was smaller and the bottom of the bat still quite rounded.

**1790**
Slightly taller bats were introduced, but still look awkward to play with due to the thin blade and the asymmetrical rounded bottom.

**1800**
The most noticeable difference is the much flatter bottom on this bat. At this time the entire bat and handle was still thought to be made out of one piece of willow.

**1840**
The bat became slightly shorter and more symmetrical, with flat edges and a flatter bottom. Whalebone “springs” started to be used in bat handles.

**1900**

**Cricket bats manufacturing Started in Sialkot**

**Today**
Today's wider blade means more surface area for striking the ball. Today's bats are still made out of the willow - either English or Kashmir Willow.
7.2 Football

In the earlier days, the leather was marked by the expert ball maker who used to cut the leather panel by a hand-tool called “rambi”. The holes in the leather were created one by one by piercing the leather with another hand-tool called “aar”. Cutting presses were further improved and by 1980s electronic pressure cutter was put into use.

In India, till 1960, “Laced” football was the only technique by which all stitched balls were made. Each section was stitched together by hand and a small lace-up slit was on one side. All of the stitching was done with the ball cover inside out. Once completed, the cover was reversed with the stitching on the inside. An uninflated bladder was then inserted through the slit. Along stem neck (aperture) extending from the bladder was used to inflate the ball. Once inflated, the tube was inserted through the 15cm slit and then the opening was laced up tight.

Enkay India Rubber Company Limited introduced the first valve bladder in the 1960s and introduced the Pump Hole valve. This technique was actually similar to the valve we have to date, with further improvement. This transformed the way the stitched balls were made and India finally caught up with the quality of balls made in Europe. This also spelled the end for nozzle bladder footballs. Freewill & Company was the first Indian company to do so in Jalandhar and by doing so, established Jalandhar as the centre for making quality football, dethroning the reputation earlier held by Calcutta.

The leather balls which were manufactured world over and also in India had one big drawback. They absorbed a lot of water when played in wet condition. In 1970’s the Pigmented balls were introduced in the market. These balls had a pigment cover and were smoother and aesthetically much better than the raw look footballs which were made for the last 100 Years. With pigment also came the printing and decoration. Balls started looking more attractive.

In 1950’s European manufacturers had shifted from 18 Panel or 8 Panel footballs to the new technology of 32 Panels. India was still making hand stitched ball in the same style. Again, Freewill & company took the clue from the European manufacturers and introduced Buckminster football in India. The American architect Richard Buckminster Fuller came up with the design when he was trying to find a way for constructing buildings using a minimum of materials. Jalandhar started manufacturing 32-panel football in 1975.
7.3 Hockey

In the year 1923/24, Mr. Hans Raj Mahajan came to Sialkot for further education. Some friends and well-wishers of the family suggested that instead of making a mere 3 Rs, he should be imparted training of Swadeshi Dastkari. He first worked as an apprentice with Oberoi (Firm’s name of Ganda Singh). He learned the craft with all his dedication. In one year, he excelled in the manufacture of hockey sticks. He constantly nurtured the idea of having his own business instead of working for someone.

In the year 1954/55, his firm started to Export Hockey Sticks. To begin, he started exporting to Kenya followed by Australia, New Zealand, Belgium, Holland, Germany etc. It proved to be a BIG Smash. In the year 1955, the National Hockey Championship was held in Jalandhar where leading players from all teams participated. The teams took with them the sticks that were manufactured. Thereafter, when these players and teams toured foreign countries, these sticks were seen by other people in the sport of Hockey and were much liked. Orders started pouring in.

In 1956, The German Hockey team visited India and expressed a desire to see how hockey Sticks were manufactured. They came down to Jalandhar and saw for themselves how hockey sticks were made. They were thrilled.

By and by, Jalandhar flourished in the Sports Goods Industry and thus became its Hub. A team from UNIDO (United Nations Industrial Development Organisation) came down to Jalandhar to suggest ways and means to improve the quality of Sports Goods and was successful. Mr. Peter Ray was the leader of the team and Mr. P.J. Fernandes, Cabinet Secretary, Govt. of India was accompanying him.

After having experimented with their quality & performance, Jalandhar the industry ventured in their Export. The results were a huge success. In the 1960 Olympics in Rome, Italy for the first time, these balls were presented. The brands in use at that time were 'Duke' from England or 'Kookaburra' from Australia and they had a monopoly.
7.4 Football Shoes

By 1980, Jalandhar was the undisputed manufacturing hub of all sports articles produced in India. The key products manufactured were inflatable balls, hockey sticks, cricket bat & equipment & boxing gloves.

The Indian sports traders were heavily depended upon Calcutta and Agra for manufacturing of football & hockey shoes. The first football shoe unit with 6 craftsmen from Agra was started by Freewill & Company to make leather football studs.

This revolutionized Indian football & sports shoe market. Soon Jalandhar became the center for sports shoe manufacturing in India. With less than 1% share in the Indian shoe market in 1980, today Punjab is estimated to produce 90% of all football shoes made in India.

*Innovation & Development of football shoes at Jalandhar in the last quarter of 20th Century.*

*Traditional tools used in manufacturing of hand crafted football shoes*
7.5 Basketball

There is no early history available about a basketball game in India, therefore I presume that basketball was played with balls imported from other countries or was played with a football. The earliest possible basketball in record is made of leather in 32-panel format. Surprisingly, nowhere else in the world, a basketball was ever made in 32 panels.

In 1976 Cosco an Indian rubber company put up the plant to manufacture molded basketball in India.

The basketball is one sport where the ball sees new innovative designs constantly, ranging from dimples on the surface or grip to a surface layered with sweat absorbing polyurethane to a microfibre design introduced by Spalding coupled with an inbuilt pump. It's an exciting sphere open to interesting developments.

Recent Innovation & Development of basketball at Jalandhar.
8. Inventory of Product collected
8. Inventory of Products Collected

Full inventory can be found on www.kharabanda.in
9. Conclusion

The initial idea of the Sports Museum has come a long way. Now we have a large range of goods to showcase and a flood of information to accompany it. The support shown by the whole industry has been overwhelming and has allowed me to smoothly collect everything that was needed. Everyone has been more than welcome to supply with whatever information I needed and it is this information that has truly pushed this idea forward.

While all the initial steps have been taken and motion is in order, this is only the start. In reality, we still only have a limited amount of artefacts, which cover a limited amount of our history and culture. The journey of creating this museum is a long journey, one that is not only limited to these 2 years or only to me, but it is also an investment for many more years to come. Work will continue to be put in and collection would not stop, but it gives me immense joy to know that at least considerable work has already been done.

I would like like to see this Museum becoming the part of the bigger heritage of my town, my state and the struggle of refugees of 1947 Partition of India. Through my school i am already in touch with the Partition museum of India (www.partitionmuseum.org) to include my research and collection as part of their story.

The official website www.sportsheritagemuseum.in is registered for building a website which would be accessible to everyone around the world.

I see this as a project as a passion which I would continue to work on for rest of my life.
10. Acknowledgement

Mr. Anuj Mahajan Grand Son of Sh. Hans Raj Mahajan for the contributing facts about development of hockey sticks in India & Pakistan.

Mr. Jasmeet Walia for digging into family history & highlighting about the fact of most successful sports chain in India ever and contributed various products.

M/s. Western India Sports, Rajkot for proving some most interesting, invoices & price list dating back to 1940’s.

Dr. Girish Sharma for Hockey Sticks.

Ms. Supreet Kaur Grewal for Hockey Sticks


Mr. Tilak Raj for providing Tools used for stitching leather balls

Mr. Baljeet for contributing hockey stick signed by Indian Olympic Gold Medal Winner

Ms. Rupinder for Golf Sticks

Ms. Bhavnoor Kaur Bhaizada for Rugby