

Football at IIMA: More Than a Game

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"The sport that captivated the campus from the 1970s through the 1990s was football. IIMA had a dedicated men's football team consisting of staff and a few students who participated in leading local tournaments such as the 1st Division League Trophy of the Ahmedabad District Football Association and Paulin Cup. Mahindra & Mahindra would host an open football tournament on our campus grounds (in an area now part of the New Campus). In fact, there was a time when some members of our staff were recruited because of their footballing prowess!"



Football at IIMA (1970s)

Source: <https://archives.iima.ac.in/article/4/2022-Issue-1-History-of-Sports-at-IIMA.html>

*Eventful Year for IIMA
Football Team*

The Institute's football team bagged the First Division League Trophy of the Ahmedabad District Football Association in August 1977 by winning the nine matches played in the league. The team won friendly matches against Khanpur Youngsters (5-1), Reserve Bank of India (4-3), and Gujarat State Road Transport Corporation (3-0). The team won the first rounds of the Kavita Memorial Football Tournament and the knock-out tournaments of the Ahmedabad District Football Association. The match against St. Xavier's College ended in a draw (3-3) while the team lost to State Bank of India (2-4), Mahindra and Mahindra, Bombay (0-5), and Ahmedabad Electricity Recreation Club (0-3).

T. P. John was Manager of the team and he was assisted by Vishnu Nambudiri. N. Bhargavan captained the team, and the other members were Sanjay Dalvi, Utpal Datta, Danny D'Souza, Rahul Gupta, A. Jain, Gautam Nair, Jaidev Pillai, and



Dr. Samuel Paul, Director, IIMA, being introduced to the IIMA, and Mahindra and Mahindra teams. From left : T. K. Jose (IIMA), Sidharthan (IIMA), Sivadas (M&M), K. G. Pillai (IIMA), and Iras Periera (M&M).

P. D. Rai (PGP students), and Suresh Babu, John D'Souza, Sagar Hussain, T. K. Jose, K. T. Menon, Ram Milan, K. G. Pillai, Sidharthan, Jagdish Singh, and C. Vasudevan (members of the staff). □

Source: IIMA Alumnus, January 1978

Focus on IIMA Football



Football has become a serious pastime on the campus. And the IIMA **Football** Club has proved it so. The team is a compact bunch of youngsters making a steady progress. It lifted the trophy of the 1977 First Division League of the Ahmedabad District **Football** Association. It has played in the semi-finals of the ADFA knock-out tournament for the Prakash Trophy and a dispute is pending over the IIMA team's protest.

The 1978 **football** season started for the IIMA team with the Paulin Cup Tournament. It lost a tough match, 2-4, against Youngmen, a senior team. It stood sixth in the Senior Division League conducted by the ADFA.

The 1978 season for the IIMA team reached the climax with the Knock-out tournament for the glittering rolling trophy donated by Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd., Bombay. Deservedly, it reached the finals. "The home side should have less difficulty than their rivals considering their present form" wrote **The**

Times of India. But luck did not favour. The other Finalists, Ahmedabad Electricity Recreation Club, walked away with the trophy.

Till recently, the IIMA **football** activity was part of the IIM Staff Recreation Club. Today, there is a **Football** Club which functions as a separate identity. Its office-bearers are: U. K. Harindran, Co-ordinator, P. K. Radhakrishnan, K. V. Patel, M. K. Madhavan, C. Gopalkrishnan, N. Venu, S. M. Dalvi, and V. K. S. Nair, members. The club conducted the Knock-out tournament with the help of the Institute.

IIMA Football Team

N. Bhargavan (Captain) Sagar (Vice-Captain), Alok Banerji, Tari Waman, Tulsidas, Saleem, Suresh Babu, K. T. Menon, Chakravarthy, S.M. Dalvi & Jaidev Pillai, (PGP II), K. G. Pillai, Surya, Dilip Naik, Sidharthan, C. P. Williams, Joy George Fagun Cardoso, Anthony, Dhuru, Abdul Aziz, and Kunji Mohammed. Manager: T. P. John, and Assistant Manager: K. S. S. Nair.



Football Tournament

The Institute football team captained by P. K. Suresh Babu of the Alumni Office won the Deepak Memorial Open Football Tournament conducted by the Gandhinagar District Football Association and won the trophy for the first time.

Source: Alumnus, VOL. 19 NO. 2, May 1987



And then we come to **football!**

Ah! Football! Football!
So clearly do we hear your call!
You can bet your life
At half past five
We'll be there - boots and all!



Football! This Bong-dominated sport recorded the most number of inter-institute matches, and even notched up one 'international' fixture (CCCF: The 'firangi' dominated CEPT side). While we won the 4-a-side tournament in CEPT, we held the United Nations team (CCCF: *ibid*) to a draw. The combos boasted 11-a-side (Ninjas won) and 7-a-side soccer (as yet unfinished). An inter-dorm tournament was held, which is - you guessed it - unfinished.

Providing a ready substitute to football, in the finest spirit of competition and free market enterprise, is Frisbee; a homegrown hybrid of rugby, football, ring, and such like. Despite its confused parentage, this sport, too, has managed to chalk up a sufficiently large following. However, since the time at which this game is played coincides too closely with that of football, and given that both graze on the same pastures (Tower Lawns/LKP), there is, understandably, some animosity between those whose religion is football, and those

i i m year book 1994

who swear by frisbee. If you walk past Tower Lawns at 5:30, you'd stand a good chance of seeing both parties 'amiably' negotiating territory rights and drawing and redrawing borders between Soccerland and Frisbee City. Borders are defined depending upon population, in an effort to make uniform the number of players per square foot - a point that world leaders would do well to take note of. Frisbee, in the combos, was won by the Mafia.

Source: IIMA Yearbook, 1994

IIMA wins Ahmedabad Football Tournament (or how to be at IIMA and still participate in sports)

Not in living memory has a football team from IIMA participated in any inter-college footer tournament, leave alone winning one. (Understandable, given IIMA's dedication towards the cause of uplifting management education in the Republic of India.) History, however, was written in July, 1997, when a bunch of IIMA footballers outfoxed reputed football teams in and around Ahmedabad to win the Printer Fest Inter-College Football Tournament.

Though the announcement for the tournament came up in the first week of July, MANAC and MRIS kept this team from practicing together even once. On July 17th they set out for the tournament - with an assortment of white T-shirts thrown over their backs and a football for good measure. Chacha Neeraj, our stocky captain, was heard joking about the amateur instincts of professional managers. Renny was seen checking up the First Aid Box to ensure that sufficient amount of pain killers were packed in. The others were trying to figure out what the entire team looked like.

The first match started off with a whimper, to say the least. Soon after half-time we were 0-1 down, what with the players having atrophied over the past one year. That is when our attack rose to the occasion. Fueled by the mesmerising skills of Neeraj and Hotshot

Ram, the attack came into its own. Pretty soon, 'Bullet' Renny found the net with his dazzling footwork. Into the extra time, Renny scored again and the golden goal was ours.

The semis was where the entire team consolidated itself. One match wiser, all the departments clicked, scoring an emphatic 3-1 victory. Renny with two goals (he went on to win the Best Player

Award) and Neeraj with one goal were the heroes again. So were Shankar and Chow and Ilango - all manning the midfield. And suddenly, we were into the finals.

The final match is where the defence showed its true colours. With Tony's frame tirelessly guarding the left flank, George sealing off the attackers on the right, Sumeer marshaling the center and Shubendu in the goal, the rock-solid WIMWlan defence repulsed wave after wave of incisive attacks. After a 0-0 game, Renny's silky caress and George's piledriver of a shot settled the issue for us in the shootout. We were the

Ahmedabad champions!!!

Won three matches. Big deal ! There have been better matches. And more convincing victories. But long afterwards, as we recount the presentations and the quizzes and the submissions at IIMA, some of us might also add, "And then there was this football tournament...."



IIMA students attested their supremacy in the Nirma organized inter-management **football** tournament by beating Nirma 6-0 in the finals after scoring more than 25 goals in the tournament and having the unique distinction of every team player being on the score-sheet. The volleyball team also beat Nirma in a best of three play-off.

Source: 45th Annual Report, 2006-07

Sports Activities

Sangharsh 2006 became such a grand affair that this year people were looking forward to it with much more excitement. The event was held this year in IIM, Bangalore, with a contingent of 75-odd people from IIMA flying to IIMB for the very first time in the history of the Institute for a sports meet. Students from both institutions fiercely competed in all events. A warm welcome by IIMB Director, Professor Pankaj Chandra, made IIMA students feel completely at home followed by a guest session by Mr. C.G.K. Bhupati (Mahesh Bhupati's father). This set the tone for the rest of the two days to come. Sangharsh had 13 competitive sports, two up from 11 of the last time. The visitors got shell-shocked by the Bangaloreans as the home team took 3-0 lead in the event marked by the biggest defeat for IIMA in **football** which was supposed to be a cake-walk. This completely demoralized the contingent and ultimately IIMA lost to Bangalore 9-4, only managing wins in TT boys and girls, chess, and volleyball.

Source: 46th Annual Report, 2007-08



Source: IIMA Yearbook, 2009



Aashish Sadhu, son of Mr. Hasmukh P. Sadhu, who works as a technician (Audio-Visual Section) has been selected for the Gujarat state **football** team in the 47th Junior National

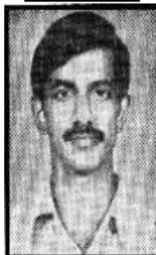
championship, held at Kolkata from 5th to 15th June 2010. He has also won the IIMA Welfare Committee's Special Achievement Award for sports/cultural activities. On behalf of the IIMA community, we wish him all success.

Source: IIMA Alumnus, Volume 42, No 2, June/July 2010

In Memoriam

Who would have thought that for the silver jubilee reunion of our batch we would need this section, but, sadly, three of our batchmates are no longer with us.

KV Srinivas



“The bravest among us... a fighter to the core... a restless bundle of talent and energy. Academics, Football, Volleyball, Basketball – all these fields missed a star this year. An unhappy accident on the **football** field last year had put Srinu out of action. We pray for his speedy recovery and hope that he returns to the institute to finish his PGDM.”

Intelligence, talent, energy, modesty and above all a decent, good person; this is how I remember Srinu. A natural athlete, he excelled in football, volleyball, basketball effortlessly.

He sustained a serious head injury during an Inter-combo football match on campus on 27th January 1987. He suffered concussions and was unconscious for 3 days after the injury. While he seemed to recover thereafter, and even returned to campus and insisted on attending classes (he was in the running for being first in academics after the first two terms), but he was not fully well. He contracted meningitis (as it was discovered later), and had to be moved to Jaslok hospital, Mumbai for advanced treatment. He slipped into a coma and never really recovered from that state. He remained in that state for the next four years and passed away in August 1991.

At campus, Srinu was extremely popular owing to his sweet nature and straightforwardness. For the few days when he returned to the campus, post his injury, he wanted to thank each person for the help they had extended to him during the past few days, but he found that he could not recollect their names. He insisted that he should send “thank you” notes to all those he could not seem to remember or did not know had helped him, including those not connected with IIMA. In Srinu’s passing away before he could blossom, we lost not just a batchmate, but a wonderful human being.

- R-cubed, Vatsan, Ramesh

Source: 2012 IIMA yearbook, Silver Jubilee Reunion, 1988



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CP WILLIAMS a footballer par excellence during the eighties
He has represented Gujarat State in Santosh Trophy and he was associated with Indian Institute of Management as a player and employee
Williams was very popular among the football lovers of Ahmedabad
He breathed his last at his home town Trissur Kerala
May His Soul Rest In Peace
ADFA mourns his death



Source: Ahmedabad District Football Association Facebook Page, 11 Feb 2025



The IIMA Faculty Football Fanatics beat the IIMA PhD students 1-0 in a historic encounter on 6 November 2025. In the picture, the faculty are wearing the green bibs while the students are wearing the red ones.