

# Indus's sporting civilisation

At Indus International School, sport is a major part of growing up and the students are living by it, writes **Nandini Kumar**

**O**f the 94 students who passed

out of the 12th grade from Indus International School in 2010, 90 per cent received scholarships totally worth 3.2 million dollars from various prestigious institutions around the globe, an achievement for the school that was born not so long ago (2003) in Bangalore. This was largely possible not just because the students were academically-inclined but sports were part of the curriculum, says Sathya Rao, the sports director of Indus International School.

"Education is not the lone criterion at the Indus International. Top universities abroad look for that extra something in a student and sports gives the students an edge over the others. Most of our students go abroad for higher studies and they are able to get up to 50 per cent scholarship because of the extra curricular activities we provide in school," says Rao.

For a while now, experts have been insisting on sports being introduced as a part of the curriculum in schools that would give talented students enough backing which would help them build a career in sports. Though this has not been accepted by the education system in the state or the centre, Bangalore's residential schools have certainly opened to the idea and are facilitating students who are keen on taking up sports as a career option.

Take for instance Akshay Sundaram, an average student who showed remarkable potential in horse riding. Sundaram wasn't promising to begin with, but his parents were worried about his non-academic education. Indus International School Sports department pitched in.

They designed a training programme for the aspiring rider in Ireland, though funded by their parents, the boy was let off from school for a year to train abroad and today, the boy is a certified jockey at the Kolkata Race Course. "Akshay's was a classic example of a student who was keener on sports than academics. We ensure to facilitate these students by accommodating special provide them



with separate exams," says Col Rao, an ex-Army officer.

In an era where kids are clued into online gaming more than taking up a sport, parents are often encouraging than denouncing their kid's interest in sports. Several parents even keep a track of their child's progress in sports through the school's online information system. "We have never had issues in convincing any parents about their kid taking up sports full-time. In fact they are more encouraging and are particular about their children taking up sports because kids these days are engrossed more in their laptops and find hardly any time for physical activities," says the sports in-charge.

At their campus in Sarjapur Road, the school sports facilities are spread across four acres.

During the start of an academic year, students are asked to pick one individual sport that various from badminton, squash, swimming, tennis, riding etc and one team sport that includes soccer, basketball, hockey, volleyball and throwball.

The idea of introducing a compulsory team sport was to develop a sense of



## Infrastructure at Indus International School

Sports facilities spread over four acres

The 5000 sq feet indoor sports complex includes: Four badminton courts; one squash court; one basketball; six table-tennis tables; one multi gym; yoga hall

Short-course swimming pool

International standard football field (grassed)

Two outdoor basketball courts (synthetic)

Six-a-side hockey ground

One tennis court

One volleyball court

Indus Riding Club - seven horses

Tie up for golf facility with Clover greens for coaching students

team spirit and helps the kids bond with each other, which is essential in a boarding school. They also have a tie-up with the Clover Greens for golf. "We also send students on camps or to play tournaments abroad and from what we have heard from the students and parents, it is an enriching experience because they get to see the system that is followed there," he says. So far, the Indus School cricket team has traveled to Colombo, Sri Lanka for friendly tournaments and their soccer team has participated at the World School Games held in Athens.

**(This is the third article of a series exploring schools with the best infrastructure for sports)**