

## Major Dhyan Chand – The Legend in the Indian Hockey

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### Abstract

*Major Dhyan Chand was the first superstar of hockey, considered a wizard or magician of the game. He was the chief protagonist as India won three consecutive Olympic hockey gold medals Amsterdam 1928, Los Angeles 1932, and Berlin 1936. He is said to have wowed the watching public with his sublime skills, intricate dribbling and gluttonous scoring ability. Major Dhyan Chand was the most illustrious sportsperson, India has ever produced in the whole world. Due to his extraordinary performance, he earned the title of "the Magician of hockey". He achieved fame all over the world due to his outstanding feats. His contribution to the world of games is immense.*

**Key Words-** Major Dhyan Chand, Hockey, Achievements

### Introduction

**I**ntroduction Hockey a popular English school game was introduced in India by British Army regiments and the game soon found favor among the native Indians. Spreading internationally, the popularity of the game was especially effervescent in India. It became popular in India when the British Regiments played the game here and introduced it in the British Indian Regiments who quickly picked up the game.

Dhyan Chand who is considered as the wizard of hockey, was born on the 29th of August 1905 at Prayag (Allahabad), Uttar Pradesh to a Bias Rajput family. His father served the Indian Army as a Subedar, and played the game of Hockey. Initially Dhyan Chand was known as Dhyan Singh. He had 2 brothers named Mool Singh and Roop Singh, the latter one too being an accomplished Hockey player. Dhyan could not resume his studies after 6th standard as his family used to move from one place to another, before finally settling down permanently at Jhansi.

In his younger days, Dhyan was not much interested into sports although he liked wrestling a lot. He started playing Hockey with his friends who used to themselves make Hockey sticks from tree branches and balls from ragged clothes. At the age of 14 years he visited a Hockey match with his father, where one team was down by 2 goals. He insisted his father to

allow him to play from the losing side, and an Army Officer let him do so, Dhyan scored 4 goals for the losing team. He Impressed the Army Officer by his skills and the Officer offered him to join the army. In the year 1922 at the age of 16, Dhyan was inducted into the Punjab Regiment as a Sepoy. The Hindi word Chand literally means the moon.

Since Dhyan Singh used to practice a lot during the night after his duty hours, he used to wait for the moon to come out so that the visibility in the field (during his era there were no flood lights) improved. He was hence called "Chand", by his fellow players, as his practice sessions at night invariably coincided with the coming out of the moon.

In the year 1926 Dhyan Chand was selected for the Indian Hockey team which was going to visit New Zealand. During the tour, the Indian team scored 20 goals in a match played at Dannkerke, and Dhyan Chand alone had scored 10 of them. India played 21 matches on the tour, out of which it won 18, lost 1 and drew 2 matches. The team scored a total number of 192 goals and Dhyan Chand alone had scored over 100 of them. After his return to India, he was promoted to the post of Lance Nayak in the Army.

### Aim of the Study

The aim of the study is to present a biographical sketch of the master player and trace his inspirational journey from his early life, evolutions as

a player and ultimately his rise as an international phenomana.

### Methodology

Secondary source reference of national and international literature, newspaper clippings, internet references were used for current study.

### Outstanding Achievements of Dhyan Chand

Dhyan Chand scored 14 goals at the 1928 Amsterdam Olympics, finishing as the leading goal-scorer at the event. When India beat USA 24-1 in the 1932 Summer Olympics hockey final, Dhyan Chand scored 8 goals, while his brother Roop Singh netted 10. The duo scored a combined 25 goals at the tournament. After India won their first game in the 1936 Olympics, Dhyan Chand's stick-work attracted spectators from other sports venues. In his career spanning from 1926-1948, Dhyan Chand scored over 1000 goals.

Dhyan Chand led India to three Olympic gold medal wins in 1928, 1932 and 1936. After winning the gold medal in 1936 Berlin Olympic Hockey, It completed its hat trick for India Under the Chand – The Hindu. A leading German newspaper carried a headline: 'The Olympic complex now has a magic show too. Next day, there were posters of Dhyan Chand all over Berlin: Visit the hockey stadium to watch the Indian magician Dhyan Chand in action. Impressed by watching him make a mockery of the opponents at Berlin Olympics, Adolf Hitler offered Dhyan Chand German citizenship and an offer to promote him to the rank of a Colonel. Dhyan Chand replied in chaste hindi, "India is my Country, and I am fine there". In Holland, the officials broke his hockey stick to check if there was a magnet inside. Once, an old lady sitting in the stands asked Dhyan Chand to play with her walking stick. He scored with it also. There is a sports club in Vienna which boasts of a statue of Chand bearing four arms and four hockey sticks illustrating just how magical his skills were. During India's tour of Australia in 1935, two legends Don Bradman and Dhyan Chand once came face to face in Adelaide. After watching Dhyan Chand in action, Don Bradman said "He scores goals like runs in cricket." (Times of India.indiatimes.com)

Even the Astro-turf hockey pitch at the India Gymkhana in London is named after Dhyan Chand. A tube station in London is also named after this hockey legend. Times of India, 6 April 2012. In the year 2002 Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports instituted a Life time achievement awards to felicitate the great wizard of Indian Hockey for achievement in sports. It is awarded every year to sportsperson who contribute to sports not only by their performance, but also after their retirement. (Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports). In 2002, the National Stadium in Delhi was renamed the Major Dhyan Chand National Stadium in his honour. Indian hockey legend Major Dhyan Chand was conferred with the 'Bharat Gaurav' Lifetime Achievement Award by NRI organization Sanskrit Yuva Sanstha at the House of Commons inside the British Parliament on July 25.

### Honors

Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award is named after him to honour his contribution to Indian sports by Government Of India (GOI). Sports ministry every year give this award annual to India's best performer on international level championships. Dhyan Chand award, A lifetime achievement award named after Dhyanchand.

Dhyan Chand on a 1980 stamp of India  
Dhyan Chand statue at Sipri hill, Jhansi.

Dhyan Chand remains a legendary figure in Indian and world hockey. His skills have been glorified in various apocryphal stories and anecdotes. A number of these revolve around the fact that Singh had extraordinary control over dribbling the ball. Chand's birthday, 29 August, is celebrated as National Sports Day in India. The President gives away sports-related awards such as the Major Dhyanchand Khel Ratna, Arjuna Award and Dronacharya Award on this day at the Rashtrapati Bhavan, India. The 20th National Award, 2012, the Gem of India, awarded by the Union Minister of India, was given to Dhyan Chand. The award was received by Dhyan Chand's son, Ashok Dhyan Chand (a hockey Olympian in his own right), on behalf of his deceased father. The award was given by Journalist Association of India under the flagship of Journalists Federation of India, Sirifort Auditorium, New Delhi, India, on 22 September 2012. India's highest award for lifetime achievement in sports is the Dhyan Chand Award which has been awarded

annually since 2002 to sporting figures who not only contribute through their performance but also contribute to the sport after their retirement. The National Stadium, Delhi was renamed Dhyan Chand National Stadium in 2002 in his honour. A hostel at Aligarh Muslim University, of which he was an alumnus, has been named after him.

He scored over 1000 goals in his entire domestic and international career, from 1926 to 1948, making him the highest goal scorer in Hockey history. BBC called him the "hockey's equivalent of Muhammad Ali". An Astro turf hockey pitch, at the Indian Gymkhana Club in London, has been named after Indian hockey legend Dhyan Chand. Government of India has issued a commemorative postage stamp and a First Day Cover in honour of Dhyan Chand. He remains the only Indian hockey player to have a stamp in his honour.

### Conclusion

Dhayan Chand's contribution to the world of hockey is immense India scored 338 goals in 37 matches. Dhyan Chand scored 133 of them. He scored over 1,000 goals in his career. . Dhyan Chand was also known as "The Wizard." He scored more than 400 goals in his international career. Though the world has seen several iconic sportspersons like Legendary Australian Cricketer Sir Don Bradman, God of Cricket and Master Blaster Sachin Tendulkar of India, Jesse Owens sprint king of USA, Michael Phelps World renowned Swimmer of America, Abdul Jabbar Kareem Basket Ball Player of America and so many others world fame sports leuminaries, none of them can match the magnitude of the greatness of Dhyan Chand. His contribution to the world of sports is immeasurable and unmatched till today. Major Dhyan Chand was an iconic Indian hockey player who is remembered as a magician of Indian hockey. Major Dhyan Chand is a name that every Indian can take with pride.

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