



HALLMARKS OF FINIAN'S PLAY

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TWO-TIME Olympic and three-time World Cup hockey player R Ramakrishnan, whose death on February 28 at a relatively young 72 years of age, touched off a spate of reminiscences that dwelt on his worth to the national teams of the 1970s.

In particular, the remembrances contrasted the quiet of his deportment with the utility and sensibility of his play as a halfback for the Malaysian teams of that era.

Absent from the encomiums poured out on him was any mention of where "Rama" (this affectionate diminutive was the preference of all who knew him) may have acquired the aspects of what could be regarded as his cultured play.

Rama's game was bred in St Anthony's School in Teluk Intan (when he schooled there in the 1960s the town was known as Teluk Anson).

St Anthony's was a mission school and was

fortunate to have had in the 1950s and '60s a La Salle Brother, named Finian, who was an outstanding hockey player and ardent coach.

A good teacher, Finian was slated for elevation up the hierarchy of the La Salle Brothers but before his promotions, he laid down the rudiments of a hockey culture in St George's Institution in Taiping and at St Anthony's, two schools to which he was posted.

Rama may or may not have come under Finian's tutelage, but the elements of that cultured play were infused in players that underwent hockey training in Anthony's. Malaysian internationals A Francis, Rama, Anthony Cruz and M Shankar, to cite the more famous names, were all to that manner born.

There was a certain class to Rama's play, in the hallmarks he displayed in his composure on the field. He had been bred well in the Finian school of cultured play.