

REMEMBERING C. PARAMALINGAM

HE WAS UNMATCHED

It takes me back over half a century when I came across the name C. Paramalingam.

I was just a rookie 18 year-old training with Malaysia's 1972 Munich Olympics Games squad. The seniors would throw names of our great players from the past.

They would mention Param, Yugeswaran, Big Shan, Doraisamy, M, Arulraj and others. These players were adored.

I was intrigued by what the seniors told me of Coach Param. A centre-forward who not only was menacing but was also a great goal-scorer.

However I really had a real taste of him when he coached the Selangor State team for the National

Pentangular in 1980 and I was the skipper.

By the time I played the 1982 Bombay World Cup, my relationship with Param (he was assisting Chief Coach R. Yugeswaran), I already had a good rapport with him.

When I was not included for the 1982 New Delhi Asian Games, Coach Param insisted on my services. Though still in my peak, I declined the call-up due to personal matters.

I was surprised when Coach Param made a personal request to me to join his team for the 1984 Los Angeles Olympic team.

I was looking forward to it but before the official announcement



1982 Bombay World Cup Team

BACK ROW (from left): C. Paramalingam (assistant coach), Ow Soon Kooi (captain), Aytar Singh Gill, Foo Keat Seong, Chin Boon Gee, Surya Prakash, Mohinder Singh, Wallace Tan, Abdul Rahim, R. Yugeswaran (coach). **FRONT ROW (from left):** Zulkifli Abbas, Tam Chiew Seng, M. Shurentheran, Poon Foke Loke, Stephen Van Huizen, Colin Sta Maria, Len Oliveira, Ahmad Fadzil.

could be made, I fractured my wrist and had to disappoint Coach Param once again

Whenever Malaysian players come up in conversations, Coach Param is always mentioned. He was regarded as an exemplary player and a great centre forward. He was menacing up front with speed and instinctive at goal scoring

I knew him as a very dedicated hockey coach. Hockey was in his blood. He talked and walked hockey.

To all of us, he was the smiling coach, a good listener of our problems, a good leader, motivator, disciplinarian with no nonsense attitude and most importantly - cool under pressure.

Coach Param left behind a hockey legacy which is unmatched. Sadly for all his undying contributions he was never recognised by our country.

MOHINDER SINGH GREWAL
(OLYMPIAN 1976)