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**‘Contributing to the team’s success gave me immense satisfaction,’ says 15-year-old Hockey Haryana forward Shashi Khasa**

*~Shashi Khasa was Haryana’s top goal-scorer during the Phase 1 of the National Women’s Hockey League 2024~*

**Ranchi, 10th May 2024:**With four wins in regulation time and two wins in shootouts out of their seven games, Hockey Haryana finished on top of the table in the National Women’s Hockey League 2024 (Phase 1) with 16 points. The league concluded on Thursday night at the Marang Gomke Jaipal Singh Astroturf Hockey Stadium in Ranchi, Jharkhand.

Playing a pivotal role in the success of the team was 15-year-old forward Shashi Khasa, who scored three field goals and converted two penalty corners. Her contributions ensured that she ended up among the leading goal-scorers of the tournament.

Hailing from Hisar in Haryana, Shashi didn’t have to look too far for inspiration to take up the game. She watched her two elder brothers Amit Khasa and Ravinder Khasa, also two national-level hockey players, wield the stick and decided to join them. “I used to watch my brothers go out and play together. It seemed like a lot of fun so I decided to play the game with them. That’s how it all began when I was six years old,” Shashi said.

Shashi Khasa represented Hockey Haryana at the Hockey India Sub-Junior National Championship in 2021 as well as the Khelo India Youth Games earlier this year. However, the National Women’s Hockey League 2024 has undoubtedly been the best tournament in her young budding career. With two Player of the Match Awards (against Hockey Bengal and Hockey Madhya Pradesh), the swift forward made sure everyone took notice of her performances.

Speaking about her experience in the tournament, the youngster said, “I was a little nervous before the start of the tournament, but it all went away once I took the field. Yes, I scored five goals but that only matters when it benefits the team. There would be no point in scoring plenty of goals if it doesn’t help a team in winning games."

"It has been a tremendous team effort and we've reaped the rewards collectively. Contributing to the team’s success gave me immense satisfaction. It is a wonderful feeling to end the first phase of the tournament on top of the table," she added.

Coming from a state that has produced a lot of players who have gone on to represent the country and produce spectacular results, Shashi looks up to her seniors and vows to learn from them. “I haven’t yet gotten an opportunity to interact with any of the seniors. That is something I look forward to. I have grown up watching all of them play and do well for our nation. I’m sure there’s plenty for me to learn from their experience,” she said.

Representing the country at the Olympics is the goal of millions of kids who take up the sport and Shashi is no different. “I want to play for India on the biggest stage, the Olympics. It is something I have dreamt of for a long time and I hope to one day make it a reality,” she said.

“For now, I will keep working on my game, try and get better every day, with every training session and every game that I play and become the best player I possibly can,” Shashi concluded.

Please see attached pictures.

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**About HOCKEY INDIA**

HOCKEY INDIA (HI) is the governing body with exclusive mandate to direct and conduct all activities for both men and women's hockey in India. It is recognized by the Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports, Govt. of India as the sole body responsible towards promoting Hockey in India.

Headquartered in New Delhi, Hockey India was established on 20th May, 2009 and is affiliated to the International Hockey Federation (FIH), the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) and Asian Hockey Federation (AHF).

Committed to the development of Hockey in the country, Hockey India with the assistance of Sports Authority of India and Department of Sports, Government of India, trains players at sub-junior, junior and senior level. The governing body engages in Coaching the coaches with International Standard certification programs, educates and equips technical officials and umpires to find a foothold in international arena, provides world-class infrastructure and International exposure for the players besides regular international competition. Hockey India has also pioneered in bringing top International hockey events to India such as the FIH Men's World Cup in 2010 and 2018, FIH Champions Trophy in 2014, FIH Junior Men's World Cup in 2016 and 2021, FIH Hockey World League Final in 2017. With its vision to popularize the game and constantly promote it, Hockey India brought the Indian Men's Hockey Team into the top three in the world. Hockey India is also dedicated to getting the Indian Women's Hockey Team into the top three in the world.

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**About ODISHA**

Odisha - the Eastern State of India - is known for its love for Hockey and over the years it has evolved to be the Global Hub of Hockey. The State successfully hosted the Odisha Hockey Men's World Cup Bhubaneswar 2018, followed by the FIH Men's Series Finals Bhubaneswar Odisha, FIH Olympic Qualifiers Odisha, and FIH Hockey Pro League 2020-21. Odisha has previously hosted the Champions Trophy 2014 and the Odisha Men's Hockey World League Final Bhubaneswar 2017. Odisha also hosted the FIH Men's Hockey Junior World Cup in 2021.

Kalinga Lancers, the team owned by the State, were the winners in the Hockey India League 2017. Taking a step further towards realising the dream of restoring the glory of Indian Hockey at the global level, the State is sponsoring the Indian Hockey Teams till 2033.

Odisha also hosted the FIH Odisha Hockey Men’s World Cup 2023 and the Rourkela and Bhubaneswar legs of the FIH Hockey Pro League 2022/23 and 2023/24.

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