

## DR. H. D. KANGA LEAGUE MATCHES

The story of this League, the only major tournament run directly by the Association, is narrated in detail elsewhere in this Volume. My purpose is to record, in very brief, its origin, as the delineation of the History of the Association would be deemed incomplete without a reference to its origin and growth.

As stated earlier, the year 1948 is undoubtedly the year of its inauguration; but the concept of organising such matches belongs to a much earlier date. For this, one has to study the activities of a specialist sub-committee of the Association, which functioned very effectively in the early days of the Association. This Committee was named as the 'Sub-Committee for improvement of Cricket', which after some years of useful contribution, mysteriously ceased to exist ! One wonders whether the Association at its nadir of success and triumph, suffered from the dangerous disease of complacency and thought that it need not have a Committee to improve cricket further ! The disease may prove fatal and it is time that someone resurrects the sub-committee for in its resurrection lies the seeds of rejuvenation !

It was this improvement committee which first recommended 'the institution of League Matches' The proposal was accepted by the Managing Committee at its meeting held on 26th March 1941 and the Jt. Hon. Secretaries were directed to prepare a scheme to give effect to the proposal. The Jt. Hon. Secretaries acted promptly and the scheme prepared by them was forwarded to the General Body for consideration.

The General Body, accepted in principles the starting of the League Matches. The Managing Committee therefore at its meeting held immediately after the General Meeting appointed a Sub-committee, named as 'League Matches Sub-Committee' to frame rules for the conduct of the tournament. Rules were framed but the idea of holding the tournament in 1942 had to be stalled and kept in cold storage for some time thereafter because of the "War Condition and other difficulties."

The decision of naming the tournament after Dr. H. D. Kanga, a great patron of the game and the President of the Association during the years 1930 to 1934 and 1943 to 1946, was taken after his demise in 1946. At the meeting convened to mourn the death of Dr. Kanga, the Association appointed a sub-committee under the chairmanship of Shri A. A. Jasdenwalla, to consider the question of perpetuating memory of the late lamented Dr. H. D. Kanga. The report of this committee came up for consideration at the meeting of the Managing Committee on 14th January 1946. Amongst four major recommendations of the sub-committee, one pertained to the League Matches of the Association, it stated.

"The Cricket League scheduled to start soon be named after Dr. Kanga".

The Report was adopted and that is how the League came to be designated as Dr. H.D. Kanga League.

Begun in a moderate style, this monsoon tournament played on 13 Sundays soon assumed a grand size. Ninety eight teams divided into 7 divisions, each division having 14 teams, now participate in this tournament. For the last 10 years because of the restriction laid on the number of divisions and the number of teams participating in each division, a qualifying tournament is organised every year to take in new entrants to replace those who stand at the rock bottom of the lowest divisions.

Only Maidan clubs are allowed to enter the tournament, thus debarring the office teams, for whom there are several other pastures to feed on. A tour round the Maidans in the South and the Central part of the Bombay on a Sunday in the Monsoons will unfold the new discerning, visiting eyes a grand spectacle of these matches. It is a tribute to the disciplined, methodical administration of the Bombay Cricket Association !

Since the very inception of the Tournament, the Jt. Hon. Secretaries of the Association had managed the administration of the Dr. H. D. Kanga League Sub-committee. The activities of the Association have now enormously increased, because of which the appointment of an independent Hon. Secretary for the sub-committee was thought necessary. Shri S. D. Kotnis has been shouldering the responsibility for the last 2 years.