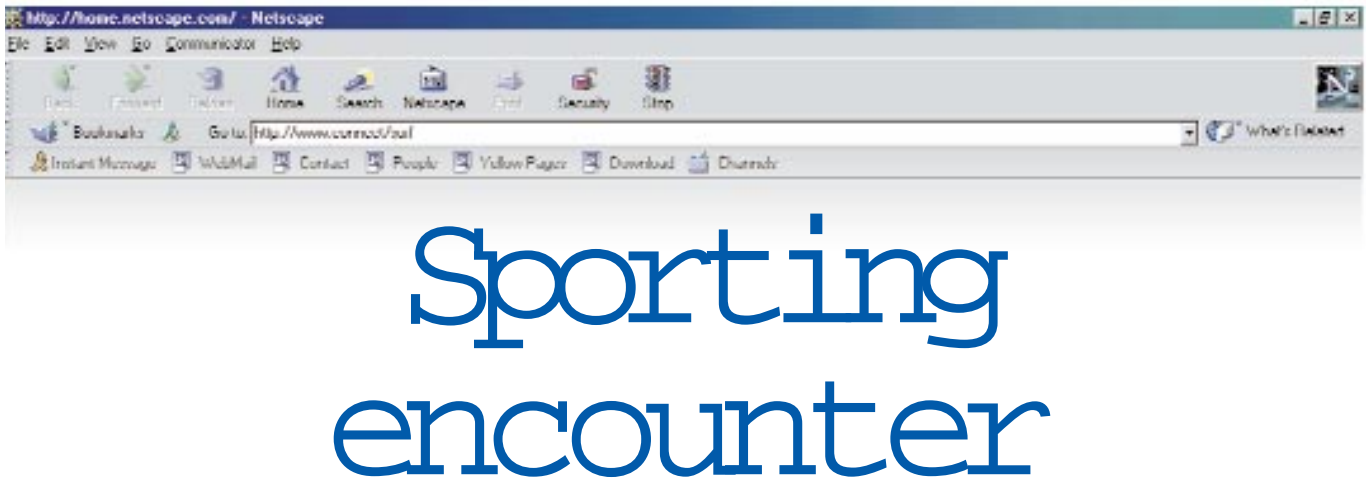


connect

Surf



This is not just about hu-tu-tu, gulli danda or cricket in your mohalla... it is about non-stop unadulterated sporting action!

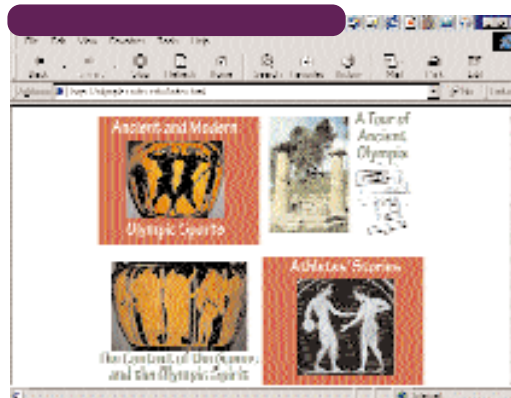
Sports is perhaps the only field where every loser is also a winner in spirit. From bouncing a basketball to gliding in the air, it is one of the few things that set your pulse racing and adrenaline pumping.

As the cricket fever skyrocketed last month, statistics revealed that the Internet was a very popular medium to get the latest on the World Cup. Statistics also reveal that cricket is not the only sport making its innings in cyberspace. Games like soccer, boxing, tae-kwon-do, paragliding and tennis have their own cyber fan following.

Here is a virtual tour of some of the sports sites that are worth a visit.

When in Olympia...

For years 'sports' has been synonymous



with the Olympics. In the ancient Olympic games held in Olympia only free men who spoke Greek could compete. At <http://olympics.tufts.edu/index.html> one can

tour the site of Olympia as it stands today, learn about the games and the Olympic spirit, or read about the athletes who were famous in ancient times. Three versions of the Olympia tours are available as QuickTime or Shockwave movies (under construction at the time of

writing this) for those with fast connections. The less fortunate still have the comprehensive pictures to help with the tour, and to take you to Olympia. A very educational site where you can actually trace the roots of sports and the psyche of the participants when the Olympics was initiated.

Femme fatale

Unlike in the ancient Olympics games where only men were allowed to compete, sports events now have many female participants. One site that bears testimony to this trend is www.justwomen.com. It features the latest news, statistics, polls and standing of women in various sports like golf, tennis and the Olympics, among many others.

A section called 'locker room' functions as a chat forum where you can hang out, share stories and talk about... well, anything. State your opinions at 'Your call', where you can also pick a controversial subject to discuss. The topic under debate when reviewing this site was 'Would you rather have a woman coach?', for which many thought provoking responses were posted. A section called 'Scrapbook' comprises an album of pictures and words contributed by the online community. You will also find advice and tips offered by experts and



INDIA SITES.IN

<http://world.conk.com/world/roast>



If you love to hate Indian politicians and are not much of a Bollywood fan, this is a good place to laugh at corny jokes. Psst! There is also a Laloo cursor for download. The pointer is a picture of Laloo preaching to the world and when your computer is busy, you see Laloo behind bars.

The issues are topical and then turned into spoof. There are jokes about the onion crisis and even the Asian games! The Forum is thought-provoking and makes interesting reading. You can also vandalise the featured personality and hit them to give vent to your frustration. When you find yourself idle and need some mindless entertainment, this is one site you must visit.

www.hum.fm

The site claims to be the first Hindi-Urdu 24-hour music station, featuring classical and contemporary hits. The variety of songs is staggering and you are not subjected to the boredom of listening to the numbers that frequent the FM waves. Those using Real Player 5.0 plug in will be able to enjoy the superior sound quality. Primarily designed in hues of green and yellow, the site has an upbeat mood. If Hindi-Urdu music is a part of your diet, then don't give this site a miss.



accomplished sportswomen. The site proves to be an active forum for those who want to keep abreast of women's achievement in sports.

Tune in for the phoren news

If international sports is what you dig, check out the sites <http://espn.go.com> and www.cnn.com. They cover all departments—tennis, golf, hockey, boxing and soccer among others. Browse through the



plethora of multimedia clips to relive a sports event that you participated in. These sites are updated by the minute, so much so that you might think tomorrow's news has been put up today!

No fear?
How's this for a recipe for adventure? Take one BMX and a parachute; add a 450ft

vertical drop and throw in (read, throw out) someone who has scant regard for his own safety. No, it's not a scene out of a science fiction flick. It's a way of life for those who look danger in the eye and defy it by embracing extreme sports.

Those who believe in "A man is only as big as the dreams he dares to live" must not miss www.awesome.com.

The site is in sync with the theme and sports a very snazzy look, with a black background and a roll-over menu that displays breath-taking pictures and information about snowboarding, mountain-biking, motorbikes, surfing, skiing and bodyboarding.

The developers do seem to be partial to wind surfing though, with pictures, wallpapers, history, statistics, articles, tutorials, jargon and books reviewed on the subject. For those who are not familiar with 'extreme' sports, you know where you have to go.

The 'Xtreme files' link leads you to personal accounts of the adventure sports community. You can also read equipment reviews in a section exclusively devoted to that.

Another compelling section is 'No Fear', which has some really cool graffiti, loads of attitude and interesting anecdotes.

The bottomline of the site can be understood by reading this anecdote: "Some guy climbed up a



connect

Surf



water tower to spraypaint something. Fell 60 odd feet to his death. What was he spraypainting? No Fear.”

Can't fly? Glide

So you would want to fly, but don't know how to. Try paragliding. A paraglide is a foot-launched, ram-air, aerofoil canopy,



designed to be flown and landed with no other energy requirements than the wind, gravity and the pilot's muscle power.

www.takeoffindia.com/nirvana/default.htm

is easily navigable and has a fast download, though the design could do with some improvement. It has all the paragliding information that a novice in India would need, right from the various locations, courses, and even flyer's experiences. There are places like Panchgani, Kamshet and Virar (in the vicinity of Mumbai) where you can drift with the wind.

The 'Basic' course teaches you launching and landing skills on gentle nursery slopes, and then moves on to higher slopes, doing small hops and before you know it, you are flying! A little theory and flying practice later (five days), one can become a student pilot and could be all set to acquire a paraglider.

Paragliding enthusiasts can get in touch with Nirvana Adventures, the developers of the site and organisers for the excursion programmes, through this site.

Muscle power

World Wrestling Federation or WWF, the hot favourite (mock) sport has made quite an impact on the young and impressionable minds of children. It has also managed to capture the interests of adults. The well-designed and easy-to-navigate www.wwf.com is home to this sport, and contains all the information one could want on these brutes.

Apart from the profiles of the wrestlers and their track records in the 'Talent Bios' section, you can buy anything from the 'Stone Cold Gym T-shirt' to 'WWF-the music volume III' CD.

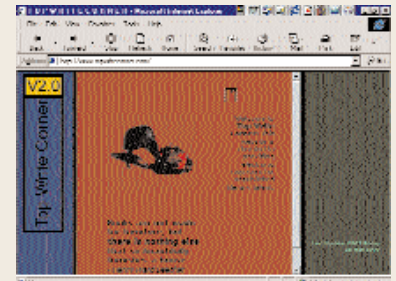
And if you still want more, tune into the latest news, audio and video snippets or choose from the stock of wrestlers' photographs.

Under the Sea

20,000 leagues under the sea is someplace not many of us would

SITES.IN

www.topwritercorner.com

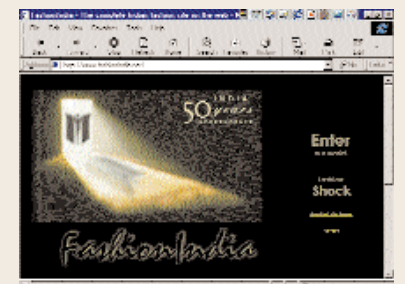


Topwritercorner.com is devoted to providing exposure for unpublished literary talent. It has a poetry and fiction corner and even a list of publishers across the country for budding writers who aspire to release a book of their own some day.

Mushy writing seems to be the order of the day, but there are some philosophical and humorous expressions too. Ashok Banker, well-known author and columnist, is developing a mystery novel exclusively for the site. This concept must be the first of its kind to make an appearance among Indian Web sites and does hold an odd promise and consistency to the readers.

www.fashionindia.net

This site features links to several designers, boutiques, reviews, models, choreographers, fashion professionals, and other fashion-related details. The Reviews section is informative, and features articles on current trends such as tattoos, summer and party wear, as well as a brief history of Indian costumes and an account of changing fashion trends.



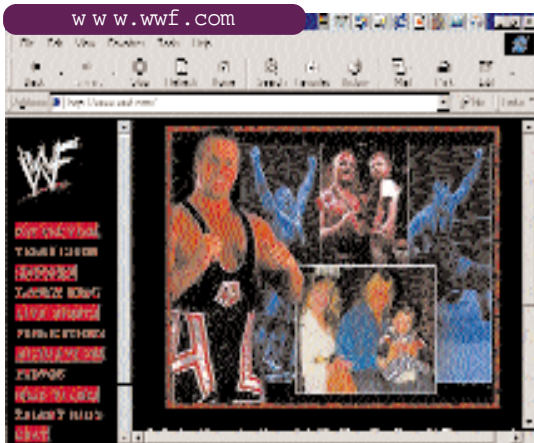
Fashionable? Yes, but the site itself could do with some better design, and speed. A decent site to brush up your knowledge on the current trends and fashion.

WWW.HUNGAMA.COM WWW.HUNGAMA.COM WWW.HUNGAMA.COM

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Win Prizes.
Every hour.
By the hour.



have the opportunity to visit. But www.artgraphic.at/artgraphic/samudra is where you might come close to unraveling the mysteries of the deep blue sea. Simple though very appealing, this site will allow you to liberate yourself and capture the sights of the virgin territories. Samudra is recognised by Professional Association Diving Instructors (PADI) and its certifications comply with international standards of recreational diving.

The courses they offer include 'The open water class', which provides basic diving skills for up to a maximum of 60 feet (20 metres). The 'Advanced Diver Course' (5 dives) is designed to impart more practical experience.

It enables students to participate in various underwater tasks that broaden their awareness of the environment and their capabilities as divers. And then there are the Core Dive, Night Dive, Deep Dive, Navigation Dive, from where you advance to the 'Rescue Diver Course' and 'Dive Mas-

ter Course' after which you are an accomplished diver free to explore the Andamans.

'Foul!'

Being an umpire is not an easy job, and www.referee.com tells you what it takes to be one. Referee is a monthly online publication devoted to sports officiating and has useful links to other sports-related sites. It offers educational material for a price, and souvenirs too.

Another such site www.naso.org (National association of Sports Officials) is a national organisation solely dedicated to officiating with membership at all levels of sport. Right from the National Football League to Pop Warner, from Major League Baseball to Little



League of America, and from the National Basketball Association to youth and recreational programs across America.

Stumped?

Don't know the difference between mid on and mid off? Don't have a clue about the schedule for the forthcoming cricket tournaments? Not to worry, help is now just a click away.

This article would not be complete



without the mention of the most popular and exhaustive cricket site www.cricinfo.com. The information repository of this site details the forthcoming matches, statistics, records and a live update during current matches. If you fancy multimedia, you could even watch matches online.

The downside is that since it is frequented so often, the site is almost inaccessible when the traffic is high, which was the case during this World Cup.

PREETI KAMANI

