

**St. Joseph’s College (Autonomous)**

**IV Semester Examination — July - Aug 2022**

**GE 418 - General English (BCOM/BBA Special course)**

Time allotted: 2½ hours Marks: 70

This paper contains **FOUR** pages and **THREE** sections

**Instructions**

* This paper is for **IV semester BCom/BBA** students who have opted for the special course on **Leisure, Identity and Writing: Sport**
* Please write **BCom/BBA Special** on the front page of your answer booklet.
* You are allowed to use a dictionary, during the examination.

**I. Read the below excerpt from an article by Ayan Acharya published in The Sportstar:**

Neeraj Chopra is an amiable interviewee, and to an almost disorienting degree, his vibe is normal. Talking to him is like conversing with a former college classmate you didn’t know well but always thought fondly of.

“I’ve gone through all phases; even travelled in general compartments of trains for Nationals,” Neeraj says, bounce in his ﬂoppy hair and veins popping in his arms. It is late March, and the Olympic gold medalist is speaking on a smoggy Sunday morning at The Chambers of The Taj Mahal Palace in Mumbai, telling Sportstar how, despite being exposed to fame, wealth, and success, he remains relatively untouched by the historic triumph on August 7, 2021.

Neeraj can almost disappear, as both an athlete and a public ﬁgure. He is the nice fella, who could live next door. He is talking about how he still loves the casual stroll and hangs out with his friends like any 24-year-old. “I just step out wearing a cap, and mask. I never think that I won’t go out because it’s too hot outside,” he says with his nimble voice — sometimes high and ﬂuttery, other times earthy and low.

Neeraj, the contemporary athlete, feels connected, almost umbilically to his roots. But he relishes the modern indulgences just as much. He has come for the interview wearing a Steph Curry Tshirt and sporting red sports shoes. He “loves” basketball shoes. When he is not training or competing, Neeraj likes to play volleyball. “Helps with the reﬂexes?” we ask. “That’s not why I play it. It’s just a lot of fun. Playing with friends,” he replies.

Today, one of India’s most sought-after sports stars follows his love for photography when he wants to “switch oﬀ” from the stress. “I enjoy clicking pictures, shopping, riding bikes. But when I am abroad, it’s not always easy to go on rides, so I either engage in photography or watch movies with high IMDB ratings. The last ﬁlm I saw in Patiala was a James Bond thriller.”

(Neeraj became the ﬁrst Indian to win an athletics gold medal at the Olympics by winning the men’s javelin throw at Tokyo 2020 with a best throw of 87.58m)

**I. A. Answer the questions that follow in 5 sentences each. (3x5=15)**

1. “Neeraj, the contemporary athlete, feels connected, almost umbilically to his roots.” How would you rewrite this sentence? Give reasons for the words you have chosen.

2. Is there any evidence for the phrase, “he remains relatively untouched by the historic triumph” in the above excerpt?

3. What headline would you give the article on the basis of this extract? Give reasons why your choice is apt.

**I. B. Answer ANY ONE of the questions that follow in 100-150 words each. (1x10=10)**

4. “It’s just a lot of fun. Playing with friends.” What sports or games do you enjoy playing with your friends?

5. Why do you think the author uses descriptions like, “bounce in his ﬂoppy hair and veins popping in his arms.” What effect do words like this achieve?

**II. Read the below excerpt from an article from the *Times of India* titled ‘How Racing Came to Bengaluru’ by Petlee Peter:**

Somewhere on the border of what are now Austin Town and Domlur once stood an open plain. In the earlier half of the 19th century, this was once an animal fighting arena – where spectators watched battles with cheetahs, and between other big cats. According to historian BN Sundarrao, the author of Bengalurina Ithihasa (Bengaluru’s History), first published in 1983, describes the arena – complete with wooden galleries for the audience. Tigers and leopards that were captured from the wild were brought to the arena and grand events where men fought these wild beasts were arranged for the Bengaluru people. “Sundarrao records two incidents at the location when large crowds gathered to watch a group of British military men, named Lieutenant Audrey, Captain Sapper and Captain Cole fought tigers using spears and guns,” says Vemagal Somashekar, historian and author.

1857 changed everything for Bangalore. The first war of independence led to large scale deployment of British troops in the cantonment area. And with them came a passion for thoroughbreds and therefore, horseracing.

Ancient History

Horse racing has been around almost from the beginning, from when humans domesticated horses, in what is present day Kazakhstan, about 5,000 years ago. Chariot racing was part of the ancient Greek tradition of funeral games – sporting contests held to honour the recently deceased. They also became one of the biggest sports – and attractions – at the ancient Olympic games, when they were introduced in 680 BC.

British Institution

Horse racing as a professional sport in the UK can be traced back to the 12th Century after the English knights returned from the Crusades with Arab horses. These horses were bred with English horses to produce the thoroughbred horse. Later, during the reign of Charles II from 1660 to 1685 the king held horse races between two horses on private courses or open fields with prizes awarded to the winners and Newmarket was the venue for the first horse racing meetings in Britain. Racing as a spectator sport – with betting – took off in the early 1700s, and racecourses were built all over England. In 1750 horse racing’s elite met at Newmarket to form the Jockey Club to oversee and control English horse racing. The Jockey Club wrote a comprehensive set of rules for horse racing, and these rules were the basis of racing rules in their colonies – and therefore in India as well.

Colonial Heritage

The first racecourse in India was set up in Madras, back in 1777. From there, other turf clubs took hold. In Bangalore, the old animal fight arena was slowly converted to a racecourse.

Training for Courses

According to Captain Horace M Hayes, a British racing aficionado and expert on racing who lived in India in the nineteenth century, there were 74 racecourses in India in 1890. The Bangalore racecourse was a mile and two furlongs in length, and was one of the shorter courses in the country, but it made up for it by being on uneven ground. “I believe that the Bangalore Course, for one and a half miles, is six seconds slower than that of Madras,” Hayes wrote in his 1892 book, Training and Horse Management in India.

Not all races were run by the British, and they trained local men – preferably young teens to ride their horses, both during the training as well as the race. These boys were usually paid from Rs 6 to Rs 10 a month with a Rs 5 bonus every time their horse won. (An English jockey in India, on the other hand, was paid Rs 150 a month and Rs 100 for winning.

The New Club

In 2020, the Bangalore Turf Club celebrated its centenary. But racing in Bengaluru is much older than the club. The presence of the British soldiery in the city also saw the import of horses from the Middle East – most notably by Ali Asghar and others. The Mysore cavalry had rows of stables outside the city’s fort – in what is now Kalasipalayam. And as for Bengaluru’s original race course? The only remnant is in the name of a thoroughfare in Austin Town: Old Race Course Road.

**II. A. Answer ANY THREE questions that follow in 100-150 words (3x10=30)**

6. What does the difference in wages between the local teens and the English jockeys reveal about the colonial mentality? Have you noticed wage differences in sports in the present day and age?

7. According to the article, horse racing has been around for five millennia and over two centuries in India. Is it still cruel to race animals? Can the racing be justified as a tradition?

8. Horse-racing has a bad reputation because it is associated with betting. In what context have you heard of horse-racing?

9. Do you know anyone who is very superstitious when they watch sports? What practices and rituals do they follow?

**III. Look at the below image and answer ANY ONE of the question in about 150-200 words. (15x1=15)**

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10. What equipment shown in the image is not required to play the game of football? Explain why using anecdotes.

11. Write the opening paragraphs of a story featuring the child in the above image.

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