

SPORTING LEGENDS: ASHOK KUMAR

SPORT: HOCKEY

COMPETITIVE ERA: 1966 - 1979

Ashok Kumar (b. 1 June 1950, Meerut, Uttar Pradesh), is a famous Indian hockey player from Jhansi. He is the son of the Indian hockey legend Dhyanchand. He brought glory to his family when he bagged the Arjuna Award in 1974 and one year later scored the winning goal against Pakistan to achieve India's lone triumph in the World Cup.



Ashok started playing hockey when just six years old. He played for junior school team and graduated to club level hockey, representing Uttar Pradesh continuously for four years. Even at the young age, his extraordinary ball control and flair for the game was evident, prompting experts to draw hasty comparisons. He played for Rajasthan University in 1966-67 and All India Universities 1968-69. Thereafter, he moved to Calcutta to play for Mohun Bagan Club and represented Bengal in the National Championship in Bangalore in 1971.

He made his international debut in 1970 when he was included in the teams Asian Games in Bangkok, losing the title to Pakistan, He also took part in 1974 and 1978 Asian Games held at Teheran and Bangkok respectively winning Silver Medal in those two Asiads.

Ashok twice represented India in the Olympic Games, first in 1972 at Munich and then in 1976 at Montreal. On both occasions India finished third settling for a mere Bronze. He played the Pesta Sukha International Tournament in Singapore in 1971 and captained the team to the 1979 Esenda Hockey Tournament at Perth. He played for All-Asian Star team in 1974 and selected twice for the World XI team.

He was member of the team that won Bronze at the first World Cup at Barcelona in 1971 and Silver at the second World Cup in Amsterdam in 1973. The highlight of his career was the 1975 World Cup in Kuala Lumpur where he scored the all-important goal to win the Gold Medal for India.

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Scott Burton's Final Thought

Ashok Kumar played many games in a distinguished international career that lasted for more than a decade.

However, it is for his World Cup-winning goal in 1975 that he shall always be remembered, and that is a fine legacy in itself that no-one can ever take away from him.



The most famous goal in the history of Indian Hockey