

PICTURE EXCLUSIVE



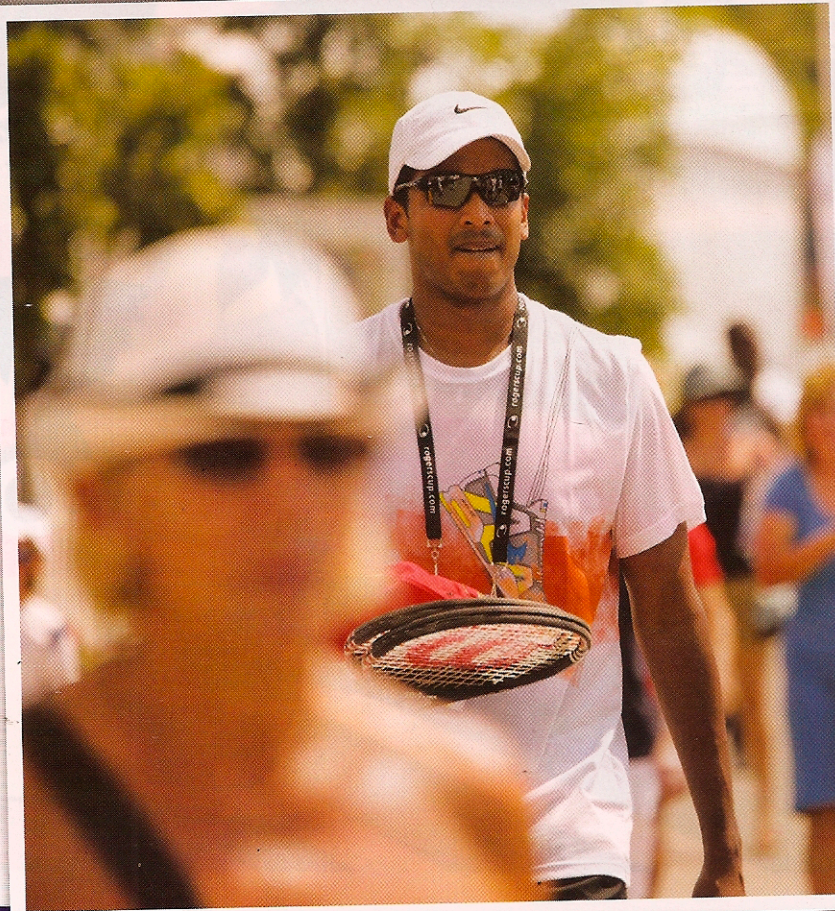
BIKRAM SALUJA

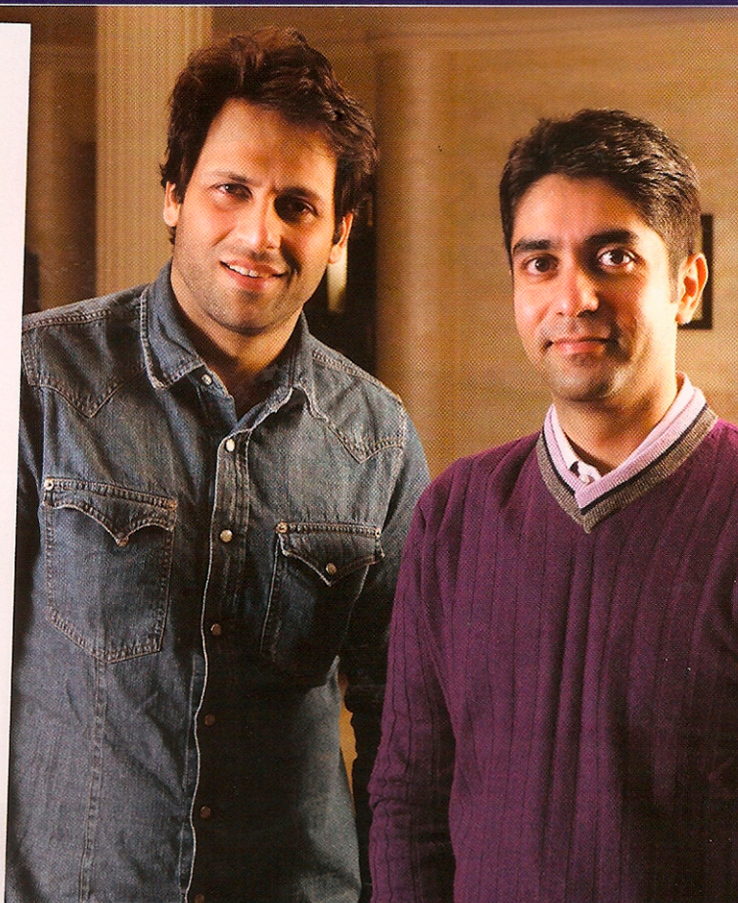
SPORTING ENCOUNTERS

Model-turned-actor-turned-writer Bikram Saluja has a new passion. For over two years, Bikram has been shadowing Indian sporting heroes like Mahesh Bhupathi, Sushil Kumar, Jeev Milkha Singh, Narain Karthikeyan, Pankaj Advani, Abhinav Bindra and Saina Nehwal, to put together footage for hour-long documentaries that he has conceptualised and directed. It has been quite a journey — across seven sporting events in seven different countries — and the result is a smashing series titled *Travelling with the Pros*, airing on ESPN starting June 2.

From Li Ning China Masters in Changzhou to the Rogers Cup ATP Masters in Toronto, Bikram travels from event to event following seven different Indian sporting greats, offering up unrestricted access to their life on the road. A national level tennis player himself, Bikram actually set out to make a documentary on Mahesh Bhupathi alone. "When I was working on that, it got me thinking about exploring other sports. The project has been a logistical nightmare, but each episode is an unfiltered look into each of these icon's lives and they are incredible," Bikram tells OK!. From their fitness regimes to the moments before the sporting action begins, OK! gives you a first look at Bikram's show, taking viewers closer to these champions than ever before.

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"Intense competition, constant travelling and packed schedules means that players find it tough to relax. A player's support-staff becomes his or her family," Bikram tells OK! about his discoveries on the road with Indian sporting icons, including Abhinav Bindra (above) and Sushil Kumar (below).





"Having been a sportsman myself, I understand the rigour that is required of them. They are all so focused," says Bikram about Saina Nehwal (above), Narain Karthikeyan (below) and Jeev Milkha Singh (right).

