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Bikram and the seven stalwarts

Minakshi Saini, Hindustan Times

New Delhi, May 17, 2012

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First Published: 17:15 IST(17/5/2012)
 Last Updated: 01:05 IST(18/5/2012)

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Model-actor Bikramjeet Singh Saluja has added another feather to his cap by turning director with a seven-part documentary series called Travelling with the Pros. It features seven sports stalwarts — golfer Jeev Milkha Singh, tennis player Mahesh Bhupathi, motor racer Narain Karthikeyan, shooter Abhinav Bindra, snooker player Pankaj Advani, badminton player Saina Nehw and wrestler Sushil Kumar.

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Revealing that tennis ace Mahesh Bhupathi was the inspiration behind the documentary, the director said: "I used to play tennis. So, I'm familiar with what goes into making a sports person. I'm friends with Mahesh. The idea was to make a documentary on him, but it expanded to include all who braved it, then made it big", said Bikramjeet at the launch of the docu series in the Capital. "I wanted to show not just the final event, but the journey that these legends take to stand as winners," he added. The series will be telecast on weekends from June 2 on ESPN.

For Bikramjeet, the most challenging bit was to get permissions, be it from the athlete, the global sporting body or the event broadcaster. "But I managed it and followed the players with a camera at their respective sporting events internationally," he said.

Talking about the experience, wrestler Sushil Kumar said, "It used to be a little weird when the camera followed us. Other athletes used to stare at me. But the documentary will prove beneficial for others who wish to venture in these sports." Also present at the event, golfer Jeev Milkha Singh wishes to represent India at Olympics. "My goal is to represent India at the 2016 Games," he said.

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