SUMMARY

The pre-historic period and even in the proto-historic period, wrestling was merely not only a sport but a necessity also. It was one of the methods to face the wild animals too. The wrestling game might have developed during the pre-historic times when man was forced to defend himself from sudden attacks of ferocious beasts. They used to form groups of individuals and attack the animals (Bhullar, 2006).

India’s contribution to the world of sports has been as old and significant as its achievements in the field of culture and art. After independence games and sports in the country have received much greater attention of the government as well as of the public and industrial/business houses. (Bhullar, 2006)

Various states of India like Punjab, Haryana, Maharashtra, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and various social organizations have done so much for improving the standard of wrestling and given so many well renowned wrestlers of high caliber to the nation. Wrestling Akharas of Punjab also had been the feeding agency of wrestlers to the nation. Besides winning many international and national level tournaments, these akharas have raised the prestige of the nation at international level and brought laurels to the country.

The purpose of the study was to know and highlight the contribution and achievements of different wrestling Akharas of Punjab in the promotion of wrestling in India.

“A Tool for wrestling Akhara Appraisal” was used to collect data required for this study. The original material/information were also collected from the records of various wrestling akharas of Punjab.

Data/information, collected was analyzed quantitatively and descriptive statistics were used and percentage was worked out for interpretation of the data. Wrestling akharas were classified into private-government, rural-urban,
mud-mat akharas and on the basis of places such as religious, common, individual and government for the purpose of comparison.

The information collected on profile of the wrestling Akharas of Punjab had disclosed that there were nineteen Akharas in rural area and fifteen Akharas in urban area. As per their residential status nineteen akharas were residential whereas fifteen were non residential Akharas.

The information collected has depicted that seven akharas were located on religious places, eight were running on common place, twelve akharas were on individual land and seven akharas on government places. Similarly Fifteen Akharas of mud surface, three had mat and sixteen Akharas had both mud and mat surface facilities. Majority of the Akharas had mud surface and wrestlers prefer to practice on it. The number of mat surface Akharas was very small.

The information collected on profile of the Akharas had revealed that there were thirty one Akharas for boys wrestlers and three Akharas were for boys and girls wrestlers and no Akharas exclusively for girls. Fourteen Akharas were outdoor, four were indoor and sixteen Akharas had both outdoor and indoor infrastructure.

Twenty seven Akharas under this study were managed by private organizations and only seven Akharas were governed by government sports department.

It was evident from the collected data that Government and Individual resources jointly provided infrastructure/facilities to four Akharas whereas Government supplied infrastructure/facilities to seven akharas, while individual resources afforded infrastructure/facilities expenditure of eight akharas and Managing Committee provided infrastructure/facilities to fourteen Akharas. Only one akhara was funded by Government and Management Committee jointly.

Salary of coaches was provided by different organizations such as government and individual resources. These funded the salary of coaches of ten akharas
each whereas management committees provided salary to the coaches of fourteen akharas.

Government owned Akharas, in spite of being lesser in number, were having mostly regular, more experienced coaches as compared to privately owned Akharas. The study had brought to light that government Akharas had appointed much higher number of coaches as compared to private ownership Akharas to get their wrestlers trained for different wrestling competitions.

The data regarding strength of wrestlers in all Akharas indicates that the number of wrestlers enrolled in rural Akharas was more than the urban Akharas. The wrestlers enrolled in individual land Akharas out number their counter parts from akharas located on government, common and religious places.

The information regarding Akhara’s budget given by the Akhara’s coaches indicated that urban Akharas had spent more on TA/DA, in organizing Chhinjh (wrestling competitions), wrestling camps and on training whereas rural Akharas had more expenditure on equipment, boarding, diet, honorarium to coaches, maintenance of Akharas and purchase of prizes. Similarly religious place Akharas had spent more on the organization of Chhinjh (wrestling competitions). Most of the religious, common place and individual land Akharas provided free lodging and free diet.

It was indicated that urban Akharas had been providing necessary infrastructure and environment to wrestlers. This study revealed that most of the urban Akharas had mat as per standard specifications, wrestling halls, and specific sports equipment. Similarly, seven Akharas located on Government, five on individual Akharas, two on common and one on religious place akhara had provided mat facility. The study indicated that Akharas located on government and individual land had been providing sufficient sports infrastructure whereas Akharas on religious and common place had less infrastructure facilities. Very few located on religious and common Akharas had been providing basic wrestling infrastructure.
All the akharas were providing training programme, which varied from akhara to akhara. Akharas were also organizing competitions and were having wrestling promotional policies.

The gathered information also highlighted that few akharas were having collaboration with government agencies such as SAI and Punjab Sports Department which provided scholarships, infrastructure and coaching facilities to these akharas.

The study depicted that urban akharas attained more medals than rural akharas at national/international levels. It also showed that akharas located on government land had edge over akharas on religious, common and individual places. Wrestlers who practiced on both mat and mud surface had shown better performance than wrestlers who practiced on mat and mud surfaces.

Collected data showed that many wrestlers/coaches from these akharas of Punjab had won different prestigious awards in wrestling.