

News monitored for: Pepsi - Brands

## Statesman - Marquee

**CHANGE THE GAME**

**Ranbir Kapoor takes a break from films to speak about his other passion - football**

Long ago the Indian football team was quite a force. What do you think needs to be done to promote football among youngsters.

It is heartening to see that football in India is gaining popularity and is not just limited to a few states. It is a great start and to sustain this, it needs a push from corporate houses and sports authorities and I am happy that Pepsi has taken an initiative to popularise the sport. I am confident that football will soon get the attention it deserves and one day we might make it big in this sport too.

How does the idea for the Pepsi ad contribute towards the cause of football?

The campaign is not just limited to an ad film, which is just the beginning. We have a great grassroots programme called Pepsi T20 Football. It is football T20



style. There are new rules that make the game more exciting and entertaining for both players and audiences. The 20-minute game with seven-a-side teams inside a cage is an innovative format. The winners will get a chance to play football against Indian cricketers and get an opportunity to be coached by an international football star. Pepsi T20 Football is truly a game-changing idea and I am glad to be associated with it.

Your favourite football team.

I am a big fan of FC Barcelona.

Do you play football?

I love playing football. I represented my school at state level in under-16 tournaments. In fact, had I not been an actor, I probably would have become a footballer. I still play it for fun with my 16-year old cousin, who is so much better than me. . . While we were shooting for the Pepsi ad, we played between shots. The youngster with whom I worked with in the ad was passionate about the game and we had a great time.

Any message for young football fans in India?

Keep playing football and if you'd like to make it your profession, don't be afraid. . . young, budding footballers will define the future of the sport in our country, which looks bright. Play with passion and change the game!