

From Typing To Triumph

Revanna Umadevi's Journey to Becoming a
World Champion

By Vartika Srivastava & Shahrukh Khan



Career Milestones



WORLD BILLIARDS CHAMPION



WORLD SENIOR SNOOKER CHAMPION



7 TIMES NATIONAL BILLIARDS CHAMPION



13 TIMES STATE BILLIARDS CHAMPION & 9 TIMES RUNNER UP



4 TIMES STATE SNOOKER CHAMPION & 8 TIMES RUNNER UP



RECIPIENT OF EKALAVYA AWARD



RECIPIENT OF SHRI. KEMPEGOWDA AWARD



RECIPIENT OF NARI SHAKTHI PURUSKAR



RECIPIENT OF KALA NEKARA AWARD



RECIPIENT OF VOCATIONAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

Acknowledgement



My Father

- To my coaches, M/s Arvind Savur, S. Jairaj, and M. G. Jayaram, I express my heartfelt gratitude for their dedicated efforts in perfecting and shaping my game. Special thanks to Sri. B. Bhaskar for his consistent and valuable guidance. Without their collective contributions, I wouldn't have evolved into the champion player that I am today.
- To my friends and well-wishers at the Karnataka State Billiards Association (KSBA) and the Karnataka Government Secretariat Club (KGS) for their unwavering support during practice and tournaments.
- To the successive administrators of KSBA and the National Federation (BSFI) Presidents, both present and past, for their invaluable patronage.
- To my employer, The Horticulture Department, Government of Karnataka, for their crucial backstage assistance and support.
- To Mr. Shahrukh Khan from Kolkata for creating my website and assisting in compiling this book, alongside Ms. Vartika Srivastava from Lucknow.
- To the referees, markers, and scorers for their services during practice sessions and tournaments.
- To various agencies, both governmental and private, for recognizing my talent and bestowing awards and titles.
- And finally, to the media, both print and visual, for their extensive coverage, showcasing my periodic performances.

An Untold Story of Umadevi

Revanna Umadevi Nagraj; a name that resonates with the world of cue sports. A world-renowned billiards player who has made her mark in the Indian and international cue sports.

Umadevi's journey, starting from an ordinary family with a looms factory, to becoming a world champion, serves as a true inspiration for many aspiring sportspersons considering cue sports as a career. Let's now listen the untold story of hard work and perseverance crafted by this lady with discipline - *Revanna Umadevi Nagraj*.



Family Background

Born on February 11, 1965, in the town of Kikkeri, Mandya District, Karnataka, Umadevi belonged to a lower-middle-class family. Her father owned a looms factory, and her mother was a homemaker.

As a part of an ordinary low-income family with five daughters and one son, making ends meet was a constant challenge. Despite the financial constraints, Umadevi's parents wholeheartedly encouraged their daughters to pursue education and sports.



With mom & husband



With my sisters



Umadevi family from mother's side

Couldn't be more prouder. Best wishes from Neelappashetty
Lakshamma's family from Kikkeri.



Early Life

Umadevi completed her schooling in Bangalore and later pursued typing in Kannada and English. After completing her studies, she began her career as a typist in the Horticulture Department of Bangalore.

However, her passion for sports never waned. During her childhood, Umadevi frequently played table tennis with her sisters and friends, which eventually paved the way for her involvement in cue sports.



An Inspiring Memorable Day

It was one memorable day at *Shri Saraswathi Vidya Mandir School* near Lalbagh, an experience that would forever stir Umadevi's soul. She was in primary school when she learned that *Shri V.V. Giri*, the President of India at the time, and *Mrs. Indira Gandhi*, the Prime Minister, would be passing by her school. Along with her classmates, she stood on the roadside waiting for their arrival.

Seeing them for the first time filled her with immense inspiration, fueling her desire to lead a life that could inspire others. This magical day took an even more special turn for Umadevi when she discovered that her Uncle, *Shri S. Mahalingappa*, who held an M.Tech degree from Annamalai University in Chennai, received an award of appreciation from *Shri V.V. Giri* on the same day for achieving the Gold Medal in B.Tech from Bangalore University. It became one of her most inspiring and memorable days, and *Mrs. Indira Gandhi* also extended her appreciation for his achievements.



My Uncle Sri Rajanna Shivalingappa, B.Tech, received President Award for his Excellence in Industrial Import Substitute for Electronic devices for Metro Train in Delhi. My Aunt Leela Rajanna also supported in this project.





Umadevi family from Father's side

We are all proud of Uma on her extra ordinary achievement.

Best wishes from Shivalingappa Lakshamma Family



Introduction to Billiards

Umadevi's involvement in table tennis began during her working days. She would play with her colleagues during lunch breaks and after office hours, though she never took it seriously. However, one fateful day, she was introduced to billiards at KGS Club. The moment she held the cue, she knew that this was the sport she wanted to pursue.

Although Umadevi was initially unfamiliar with the rules and basics of cue sports, destiny had chosen her to be on the green baize, earning accolades for her nation.



Membership Over Ornaments

Umadevi found solace in Billiards and relished the company of some of the finest players. One of the snooker players, Sridevi from KGS Club, introduced her to the *Karnataka State Billiards Association* (often referred to as the Mecca of Cue Sports) to obtain a membership. The membership fee was Rs. 4000, a sum she could hardly afford.

She remembered that she had saved around Rs. 4000 to purchase jewelry for herself, but she made the choice to invest in a membership instead of jewelry, without knowing that one day she would earn the title of *World Billiards Champion*. This choice transformed a piece of coal into a diamond.



Racquet to Cue Stick

In 1995, Umadevi made the switch to billiards and snooker after being introduced to the game by a colleague. She found the game both fascinating and challenging, leading her to make the life-changing decision to pursue it as a career.

She began her journey at the KGS Club in Bangalore and quickly discovered her natural talent and flair for the game.



Initial Training & Practice

Umadevi embarked on a journey of regular practice in billiards and snooker, and her potential began to shine through. Yet, she lacked formal training and relied on keen observation of other players. Hours spent at the club, dedicated to practice and skill refinement, were her training ground.



Her English teachers, Smt. Sunanda Devendra Sharma (left) and Smt. Sheila Nagaraj (right)

The Moment

Umadevi's journey to KGS Club from Lalbagh was a multi-bus affair, involving two to three buses. Whenever she arrived earlier than her Table Tennis coach, *Shri Kannan*, she would wait eagerly, closely observing other sports and their enthusiasts. Her curiosity led her to a large green table, which she gazed at in utter surprise, wondering about this unfamiliar sport.

The turning point came when she finally had a chance to be introduced to cue sports. She grasped the cue, took a few shots, and that moment changed the course of her life. The sheer amazement she felt made her a regular at billiards and snooker, playing every Sunday. *Shri Krishna Kumar*, Secretary of KGS Club, initially lent a helping hand in her journey at the KGS Club



Shri Hussain Ali and R.Umadevi with
Champion Shri Pankaj Advani at KGS club

Joining KSBA

In 1996, Umadevi's decision to join the Karnataka State Billiards Association (KSBA) marked a pivotal moment in her career.

Under the guidance of some of the nation's finest coaches, including Arjuna Awardee and Dronacharya Awardee Shri. *Arvind Savur*, former Coach of the National Billiards Team, *S. Jairaj*, *M.G. Jayaram*, and with the opportunity to play alongside Billiards Champion *B. Bhaskar* and her fellow billiards enthusiasts at KSBA and KGS Club, she honed her skills to perfection.

Participating in state-level tournaments, Umadevi quickly earned recognition. Her outstanding performances led to her winning the *State Billiards Championship* an impressive 13 times and the *State Snooker Championship* 4 times.

With Sri. M.G.Jayaram (Coach) , Sri. Arvind Savur (Coach),
Afroz Pasha, Pankaj Advani, S.Jairaj (Coach)



Playing with Professional
Billiards Player Shri B.Bhaskar



with Sri. C. Ravindranath

Daily Practice Routine

Umadevi's daily practice routine was rigorous and demanding. She rose early in the morning to practice yoga, prepared breakfast and lunch, and then headed to work.

After her workday, she dedicated another 3-4 hours at the club, where she engaged in intense practice and played alongside other players. Her unwavering commitment and hard work did not go unnoticed; the state recognized her dedication to fair play and encouraged her to continue.



Struggle and Ridicule

Taking the first significant step is often the most challenging part of any journey. Umadevi encountered numerous struggles and endured ridicule during her early days as a billiards player.

Balancing the demands of being a woman in a cue sports environment with her family commitments was far from easy, and she found herself needing to prove her worth at every turn. Many people taunted her and suggested she should quit. Nevertheless, Umadevi remained resolute, undeterred in her pursuit of her passion.



*With her husband
- the pillar of strength*

Tipsy Turning Point: 2002

In 2002, Umadevi achieved a major milestone in her career by winning the *National Billiards Championship* held in Ahmedabad, Gujarat. This victory not only marked a significant achievement but also instilled in her the confidence to set her sights on even greater sporting challenges.

It was a pivotal moment that transformed the trajectory of Revanna Umadevi's career. Subsequently, she began actively participating in various tournaments and competitions, both at the national and international levels.



Umadevi with her family

A Supporting Spouse

Despite the arduous journey, Umadevi never gave up, thanks to the unwavering support of her spouse.

Her father-in-law, Shri. Bidare Gangadhar from Manavarthepete, Bangalore, was a notable football player renowned for his ability to score goals with his head.



Shri. Bidare Gangadhar with his teammates

Her husband, Mr. B.G. Nagaraja, understood the depth of his wife's passion, having witnessed his father's struggles in sports.

He stood by her side, offering unwavering encouragement and support throughout her journey, regardless of her wins or losses. Through all the ups and downs of her life, he remained her steadfast pillar of support. She always credited him for every victory she achieved.



with my husband



Spending some quality time with husband in Egypt.

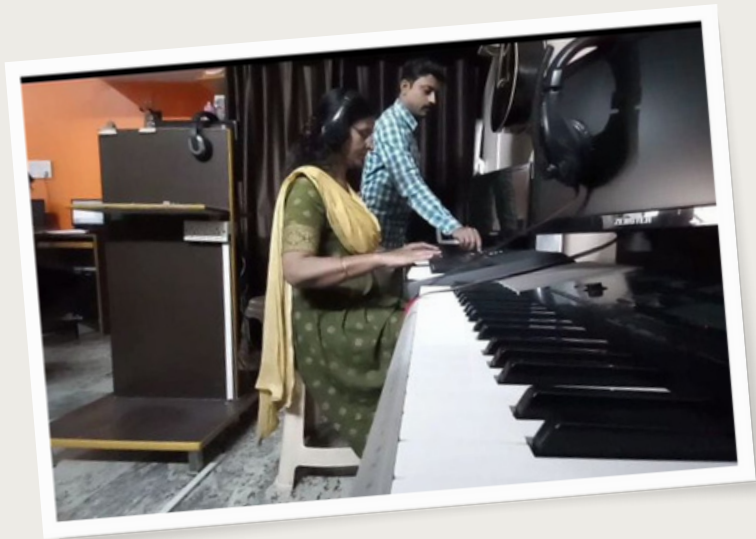


Fame & Recognition

After clinching the *National Billiards Championship*, Umadevi firmly established herself as a professional billiards player. In 2000, she participated in the *All India Snooker Invitation Championship* at the Cricket Club of India, Mumbai, and continued to impress her fans by winning the championship.

Her remarkable winning streaks, combined with her ‘Never Say Die’ attitude, transformed her into an influential figure for numerous aspiring players. She amassed an impressive collection of 7 *National Billiards Championship* titles along with several runner-up recognitions.





Learning music for her concentration from Sri Kiran



Vocational Excellence Award 2022



Bharath Fritz Werner factory honoring
after the Nari Shakthi Award





Sri Kempegowda Award
2018



Memories of Bombay Gym tournament with Sir Wilson
Jones & Simi Garewal & all my snooker friends

The Big Billiards Game

In 2012, Umadevi participated in the World Billiards Championship, hosted in Cambridge, UK. Despite the formidable competition from some of the best players in the world, Umadevi exhibited exceptional skill and determination, ultimately advancing to the final.

That very same year brought more fortune her way as she secured victory in the *8 Ball Pool National Championships*.



Receiving the price from Sri S Balasubramaniam,
President, BSFI

Defeating World's # 1

In the final of the 2012 World Billiards Championship, Umadevi found herself pitted against Emma Bonney, the world's #1 billiards player.

The match was a tense battle, but Umadevi displayed remarkable composure and determination. She emerged victorious with a 3-1 scoreline, becoming the third Indian woman to claim the *world billiards title*. This triumph marked a historic and unforgettable moment in Umadevi's career.



Received Rolling Trophy from Mr. Clive Scott, Billiard Tournament director, Cambridge, UK

Becoming The Champion

Umadevi's victory at the 2012 *World Billiards Championship* stood as a remarkable achievement, and the same year saw her crowned as the *World Senior Snooker Champion*, defeating the world's #13-ranked player, Eva Palmius.

Her journey, from hailing from a middle-class family and working as a typist, to becoming a world champion, served as a powerful testament to the idea that with unwavering determination to pursue one's passion, anything is possible.



Received World senior snooker championship trophy from international referee Daniel Lewis at Cambridge, England, 24-04-2012

Reining The World of Billiards

The victory at the 2012 World Billiards Championship marked a momentous achievement in Umadevi's career. It led to an invitation to compete in the men's Billiards Championship in 2012, held in Leeds, UK. She also had the golden opportunity to play alongside Billiards Star *Geet Sethi* in the Time Format, and later, she faced off against the Billiards legend *Mike Russell* in the Points Format.

Furthermore, Umadevi had the privilege of participating in the Billiards Tournament with India's Golden Boy, Pankaj Advani, at the East Cultural Association in Bangalore. Her participation in these events not only showcased her talent but also demonstrated that women in India could excel in sports and compete with the best players in the world.



Played with my husband B.G.Nagaraja, in the mixed doubles world Championship which was held at UK, 2012

Tough Competition

Umadevi's participation in the *World Women's Snooker Championship* showcased her exceptional skills and talent. She faced formidable competition from some of the world's best players, yet she not only held her ground but also advanced to the quarterfinals. Her performance in the championship served as a testament to her perseverance in the sport.

Up to this point, Umadevi had attended 20 various *World Championships*, often at the expense of a significant portion of her salary, as she had to take earned leaves to participate in these prestigious events.



Treasurer of BSFI H R Rathan Kumar

Leading as an Inspiration

Umadevi's success in billiards served as an inspiration not only for aspiring female players in India but also for women around the world. She exemplified that with discipline, dedication, and determination, women could attain remarkable achievements in the field of sports.

Her victory at the World Billiards Championship sent a powerful message of hope and encouragement to all women who harbored a passion for cue sports, reaffirming that dreams can indeed be pursued and realized.



World Billiards Champion Mike Russel and our Star Pankaj Advani

The Homecoming

Umadevi received felicitation from the Karnataka government in acknowledgment of her remarkable achievements in the *Billiards Championship*. The recognition celebrated her outstanding performance in cue sports.

In 2009, Umadevi was honored with the *Eklavya Award*, a prestigious recognition, for her unforgettable contributions to the world of Cue Sports.



With Governor Sri. H.R. Bhardwaj receiving
Eklavya Award - 2007

Feathers in the Cap

Umadevi has garnered several other awards and honors in recognition of her outstanding achievements in billiards. In 2013, she was honored with the *Kala Nekara Award*, and in 2018, she received the *Shri Kempegowda Award*, among others.

These awards not only celebrate her exceptional contribution to Indian sports but also serve as an inspiring example for young women, encouraging them to embrace cue sports as a viable pursuit.



Kala Nekara Award from Weaver's Community

Nari Shakti Puraskar

Umadevi's remarkable achievements are a testament to her unwavering dedication, hard work, and valuable contributions to the world of billiards. Her exceptional qualities rightly earned her the Nari Shakti Puraskar, which she received on March 8, 2018, from the then Honorable President of India, Mr. Ram Nath Kovind. The award was presented under the Chairmanship of Smt. Maneka Gandhi, the Minister for Women and Child Development, and it placed her among the list of 30 great women of 2017 in India.

In the same year, she was nominated in the survey for sports in India, further solidifying her prominent standing in the world of sports.

With Shri. Ram Nath Kovind,
Honorable President of India





With Smt. Maneka Gandhi, Minister for Women and Child Development Department, along with other Nari Shakti Puraskar recipients.

Meeting with Prime Minister

When Umadevi had the privilege of interacting with the Prime Minister, Sri. Narendra Modi, he inquired, 'Aap kaise type karte ho?' (How do you type?). This encounter with the Prime Minister was a cherished moment for her.



Media Coverage

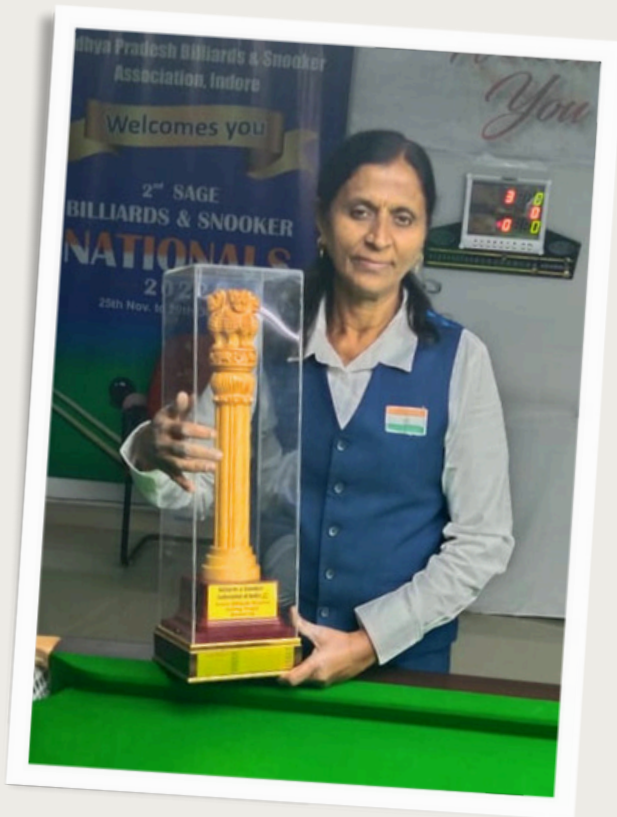
Umadevi's victory at the World Billiards Championship garnered extensive media coverage, both in India and across the globe. She was celebrated as a hero and a trailblazer, and her story became a source of inspiration for many.

Leading newspapers, magazines, and television channels featured her success, and she was a sought-after guest for interviews and talk shows, where she shared her remarkable experiences. Umadevi's precision and perseverance led her to meet the honorable Prime Minister, Mr. Narendra Modi, at his residence, where she received appreciation for her significant contribution to cue sports.



Contribution to Indian Sports

Umadevi's impact on Indian sports has been nothing short of significant. She has elevated Indian billiards to global recognition and serves as an inspiration for countless young women to embrace cue sports. Her unwavering dedication and relentless hard work have paved the path for a new generation of Indian billiards players, instilling in them the potential to achieve remarkable feats on the world stage.



The Legacy

Revanna Umadevi Nagraj's legacy is one that defines real hard work, dedication, and perseverance. Her journey has inspired a generation of young women to take up cue sports, and her impact on Indian billiards will be felt for years to come.

Her achievement is a testament to the fact that these sports require not just physical skill but also mental ability and discipline along with precision and skill.

Her continued participation in billiards is also a reminder that age is no bar when it comes to pursuing one's passion. Her dedication and love for the sport have kept her going, and she remains an inspiration to people of all ages.



M.C. Uttapa, Former President of BSFI

Women's Brigade

Umadevi along with her billiards and snooker champions & friends.



Stepping into Mentorship

Despite her numerous achievements, Umadevi has not stopped participating in billiards. Her passion for the sport remains undiminished. When asked about her plans for the future, she expressed her intention to coach children after her retirement from her services.



Umadevi's mother family

Future Ahead

Standing next to the billiards table with her cue stick, whenever she reflects on her journey from humble beginnings to revolution, Umadevi finds herself immersed in what she truly loves and the passion she's built over the years. Even today, when she holds the cue in her hands, she exudes the same confidence she carried into the finals of the *World Billiards Championship* in 2012.

Now, she eagerly looks forward to sharing her skills and knowledge, which she has gathered throughout her remarkable journey, with aspiring players in the world of cue sports. Her aim is to mentor and guide children, paving the way for them to build better careers in sports.





Arvind Savur

Arjuna & Dronocharya Awardee

Around 18 years ago, I was invited to KGS Club to give away prizes for tournament and was impressed to see ladies playing in the tournament. It was very rare to that ladies would be playing at that time. Among them was Umadevi. I saw her play and was quite impressed with her game. I thought she could be taught and made a champion.

Testimonials



Vartika Srivastava

Content Writer & Co-Writer for this eBook

I would like to express my genuine regards and love to honourable Revanna Umadevi Ma'am for choosing me as a part of her significant life story through this write-up that will surely inspire many hearts to win what they dream of.

Every chapter has brought a small quanta of motivational vibes to me which eventually landed with a peace of mind and emotional fauna, to pursue something great, something challenging and something that brings thrill in your life.

Testimonials



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TO WHOMSOEVER IT MAY CONCERN

KSBA is proud that one of its members Mrs.R.Umadevi has achieved great heights in the game of Cuesports.

We wish her all success in her future endeavours.

We have great pride in acknowledging the release of her biography.


H.E. ANAND
Hon.Secretary





Shahrukh Khan

Software Engineer, Umadevi's Tech Person and Co-Writer for this eBook

I have had the privilege of working closely with Umadevi for over six years, providing technical services for her website. Her remarkable success is a testament to the extraordinary power of hard work and unwavering dedication. Yet, amidst her achievements, she remains remarkably humble, emphasizing the importance of staying grounded and true to oneself. I am confident that her inspiring journey will continue to impact and inspire countless others in the years to come. I am truly grateful to have played a part in her remarkable story.

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Let's get started on creating your website, Web Apps, eBooks, or any software you need. Together, we'll turn your ideas into action!

A Thank you note to Readers



Revanna Umadevi

I want to express my heartfelt gratitude for taking the time to read my story. The support and interest you've shown in my life journey mean more to me than words can ever convey. It is a true privilege to have the opportunity to share the highs, lows, and the invaluable lessons I've learned along the way.

Having you as readers has been an incredible honor, and I hope that my words have left an indelible mark on you as well. Your constructive feedback and kind words are deeply appreciated.

You can reach me through my website.