

SYNOPSIS: KOHIMA AND IMPHAL – THE BATTLE OF THE TENNIS COURT

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Treatment: Since most of our readers are knowledgeable about sports philately but not military history, I needed to clearly and succinctly set the stage for the military conflict in Eastern India during World War II. The map provided critical information, which I dramatized with carefully selected covers that showed the difficulties in communication in this region as well as the soldiers' experiences on the march from Burma to Imphal. I designed the written material and illustrations to complement each other. Every illustration is necessary for understanding the story, and each one is fully described in the nearby text.

Originality, Significance, and Research: When I first read about the Imphal and Kohima campaign, I soon realized that there were no stamps or postmarks that showed the tennis court battle. It required several years of searching to discover the philatelic items that illustrate this story in order to bring to life the military conflict across this tennis court in Eastern India. It was important to include a philatelic item from both the Japanese and British forces that personalized the story.

I believe sports philately should exist not just in its own world, but as a part of the larger community of philatelists and historians. I have written with that in mind, to encourage others to also look beyond the usual borders of their specialty, to find unusual stories that can have a wider appeal.

To write about this subject, I needed to research the history of British India, including the military campaigns, as well as the philately of India during World War II. The military covers provided an opportunity to educate readers about an area of philately that most sports collectors do not study. To my knowledge, this is the only philatelic article devoted to the battle of the tennis court, and it is written to be useful to future historians as well as current readers.

Technical Matters, Production and Legacy: This article includes both print and online references, including videos of the battle. Credit is given to those who have contributed their knowledge. The journal is professionally printed and bound, and this article has been written to be easily read in both print and digital versions. The article is currently available only to subscribers, but 5 years after publication it will appear on the websites of the American Philatelic Society, the Association Internationale des Collectionneurs Olympiques, and Sports Philatelists International, at no charge.