

'6-ball snooker similar to T20'

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IT IS being touted as T20 equivalent of cue sports and India's reigning world billiards champion (time format), Pankaj Advani reckons 6-ball snooker, just like cricket's shortest version, has the potential to change the face of the sport.

For that, Advani says the shorter version of baize sport needs to be marketed and packaged well to popularise it.

"I definitely see that 6-ball snooker has the potential to make its mark but it needs to be packaged and marketed properly. Television coverage is a must for it to succeed," Advani told *HT* on return from

Pakistan where he helped the Indian team win a five-nation six-ball snooker tournament.

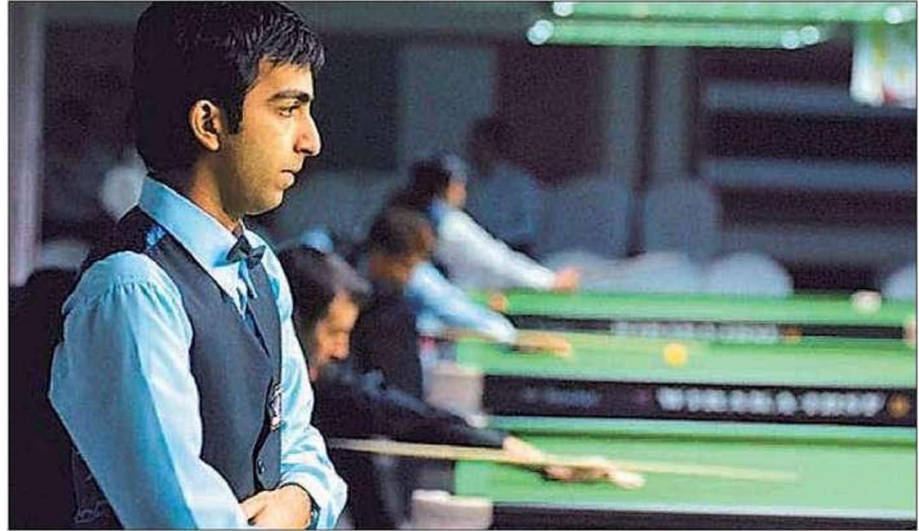
India edged out Bahrain 8-7 in the final, having got the better of hosts Pakistan in the previous round.

Though Advani and Manan Chandra won in the final, India had to scrape through to the title as Yasin Merchant lost 2-3 to Mohammad Omar. But the two frames that Merchant won were enough to give India the title.

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PANKAJ ADVANI,
World billiards champion



Pankaj Advani feels the 6-ball version of the game needs to be packaged and marketed properly.

duces quick results and there is not enough time for the player to think strategy and plan his game," he said.

"Till now only two tournaments have been held in 6-ball snooker and we need to hold a tournament on a larger scale with more participants and promote it so as to make it popular," Advani added.

Advani said the five-nation 6-ball competition was good for the Indians and beating Pakistan in their own den is always difficult.

"It was a good tournament for us and I played very well and won all my three matches," he said.

At a time when the International Cricket Council was forced to postpone the Champions Trophy, Advani said the Indian team had no security concerns during their stay there.

"For us security was never an issue. Pakistan is like a second home for us and Karachi has been a lucky venue for me. So we had no second thoughts about going and playing

there," he said.

Despite the limitations of the format, the tournament indicated that Advani is in good form as he readies to defend his title in the World Billiards Championships, to be held in Bangalore from September 1-10.

"I am looking forward to defending my time-format title in Bangalore, which will be hosting the point-format event also," said Advani, who will be one of the favourites.

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