

The Making of Lakshya Sen - Indian Badminton's Next Great Hope

Lakshya Sen is an Indian badminton player who chiefly competes in the singles category. Sen was born in Uttarakhand's city of Almora in a badminton family. Sen first came to prominence in 2016, where he had a successful junior badminton circuit. The following year, he became the No.1 in the BWF World Junior ranking. Lakshya clinched that feat in 2018 when he became the champion at the 2018 Asian Junior Championships after defeating the top-seeded World No. 1 Kunlavut Vitidsarn in the final. Sen has time and again, demonstrated sparks that he could be India's next World No. 1 after Prakash Padukone and Pullela Gopichand.

Lakshya Sen always had the 'shuttler genes' in his blood. His father, Mr D K Sen, is a national coach whereas his brother, Chirag Sen, is a renowned international badminton player. Lakshya was always intrigued by the sport that his father and sibling already played so much. As a result, whenever his father would take Chirag to the Union Bank Sub-Junior tournament, the youngest of the Sen member would convince him to accompany. The aspiring young shuttlers swear by the competition since it is a platform where Vimal Kumar, director at the Prakash Padukone Academy, scouts his next pupils. Chirag won the U-13 title with relative ease, boosting his chances of a admission in one of India's most revered badminton academies. Watching his brother play, Lakshya got seriously inspired. Before he knew, he straightaway asked Vimal if he could play at the academy too.

Success

He was instantly picked by the coaches along with Chirag. After coming under the aegis of the Prakash Padukone Academy, the youngster's badminton journey took off instantly.

Over the next 6 years, Sen won the U-13, U-17 and U-19 National tournaments among other international competitions in the same age group comfortably. What was surprising was that he was just aged 15 when he achieved the U-19 National Medal. Clearly, the hopes were high. Performing well in the Juniors is a daunting task, considering age-cheating is so rampant in the country. But nothing could hold the young Lakshya back, who, as his name goes, was 'focussed' on his target. As he spent more time at the academy, his game began to evolve and he started to develop new skills. Gone was the boy who would cry vehemently after every defeat. Lakshya became more mature and calm. Playing at Padukone's academy did give Sen some of his mentor's traits. For starters, he is strong at the nets from where he controls the proceedings pretty well, just like Prakash in his playing days.



Although, he has many traits that are unique. For example, he has a decent hit, a property which was not as evident in Prakash. He uses immense smashing power to take his opponent by surprise.

Also, having grown up in the hilly terrains of the mighty Himalayas, Lakshya has been bestowed upon with the gift of strong legs and bellow-like lungs. (Almora, the city where he was born and grew up is over 5,000 feet above sea level.) As a result, he has developed speed and stamina that allows him to slog for extensive hours without showing even a hint of fatigue. Add to that his immense presence. He stands at

5'10", and being just 17, he still has room to reach the 6 feet mark, which is an excellent height for badminton players.

2016

2016 was a brilliant year for the youngster. He first won the bronze medal at the Asian Junior Championships, where he noteworthily defeated the juniors World No. 1 in Thailand. However, he eventually lost out to China's Sun Feixiang.

The later again summoned Sen at the World Junior Championships in Spain. Nonetheless, even though he lost at the junior-level, he more than made amends for it by winning a medal in the senior-level. The event was the All-India Senior Championships in Itanagar. That was followed by another phenomenal feat when Sen won his first international medal at the senior level in the form of Sats India International Series in Hyderabad.

2017

2017 was an eventful year for the teenager, as he added many titles to his name. He won the prestigious India International Series and the Eurasian Bulgarian Open, both of which are BWF International Challenge/Series. Sen was also a runner-up at the Tata Open International.

2018

However, it was 2018 that proved to be a landmark year for him. It was this year that he claimed the ultimate honour – the Asian Junior Championship title. Sen defeated World No. 1, Thailand's Kunlavut Vitidsarn in the finals to clinch the coveted title. Consequently, he became only the second Indian after Gautam Thakkar in 1965 and PV Sindhu in 2012 to reach the heights.

Then, at the 2018 Buenos Aires Youth Olympics, the youngster went on until the finals of the men's singles. However, he was defeated in the finale by China's Li Chifeng. Nevertheless, by clinching the silver, he became the first Indian shuttler to win a medal in the Youth Olympics.

Achievements

Bronze at the 2016 Asia Juniors Championships
Gold at the 2016 India International Series
Silver at the 2017 Tata Open India International
Gold at the 2017 India International Series
Gold at the 2017 Eurasian Bulgarian Open
Silver at the 2018 Buenos Aires Youth Olympics
Gold at the 2018 Asian Junior Championships, Bangkok.

Kids Craft: CD Coasters



Supplies

Recycled CDs or DVDs
Colorful fabric, Sand paper
White spray primer
Felt, Hot glue gun
Sharp scissors, Mod Podge Hard Surface

Instructions

Trace a CD onto your fabric. Repeat for as many different fabrics you want to use. Lightly sand off the side of the CD that has a design or writing on it. You don't have to sand everything off, just take the gloss coat off.

Spray 2 coats of primer onto the CDs, allowing for proper dry time in between coats. Cut the circles out of the fabric, cutting them a little smaller than the traced circle to allow for some "border" around your coasters.

For each coaster, cut a 3-inch circle from the felt. When primer is dry, hot glue the felt circles to the bottom of the CDs. To the top of the CD add a coat of Mod Podge. Gently press the fabric circle onto the coated CD and press out any wrinkles or creases. Allow to dry for 20 minutes before continuing.

Apply two coats of Mod Podge to the top of the CD over the fabric, allow 2 hours dry time in between coats.



FUN RIDDLES

I am always running,
but never get tired or hot.
What am I?

English Proverbs and Meanings

* **A friend's eye is a good mirror.**
A real friend will tell you the truth.

* **A good beginning makes a good end.**
If a task is carefully planned, there's a better chance that it will be done well.

* **A leopard cannot change its spots.**
It is not possible for a bad or unpleasant person to become good or pleasant.

* **A stumble may prevent a fall.**
Correcting a small mistake may help you to avoid

making a bigger one.

* **Better the devil you know than the devil you don't know.**
It's better to deal with some body difficult but familiar, than change and risk dealing with somebody worse.

* **Better untaught than ill-taught.**
It's better not to be taught at all than to be taught badly.

* **Blood will out.**
A person's background or education will eventually show.

Paneer Dosa



Ingredients:

For Dosa

Whole wheat flour – 1 ½ cup
Salt – to taste
Water – enough for making batter

Filling

Paneer – 1 cup, crumbled
Onion – 1, medium sized
Turmeric – A pinch
Red chilli powder – 1 tsp

Green chilli – 1
Salt – As needed
Coriander leaves – 2 tbsp, chopped
Oil – 2 tsp
Cumin seeds – 1 tsp

How To Make:

In a deep kadai, heat oil and allow cumin seeds to splutter. Add onions and green chilies and fry until golden brown. Add spices and give a quick mix. Add crumbled paneer and coriander leaves and cook for 2 more minutes. Keep aside.
Mix water with wheat flour and salt to make a batter of pouring consistency.
Heat a griddle and brush a little oil.
Pour ¼ cup of batter on the griddle kept on medium heat and spread out in concentric circles.
Drizzle a few drop of oil and cook until the bottom portion turns golden. Flip over and cook for 2 more minutes.
Once again, flip. Take about 1 tbsp of the filling and spread it on one side of the dosa.
Fold dosa into half and press the edges.
Serve hot with spicy mint coconut chutney.

JUNIOR CHEF

Mini Carrot Coriander Idlis



Ingredients

For Idli Batter:

Idli rice – 1 cup
Urad dal – 1/3 cup
Salt – to taste

Others:

Carrot – 2, medium sized, peeled, finely grated

Onions – 1, medium sized, peeled, finely chopped,
Coriander leaves – 1 tbsp
Red chili powder – ½ tsp
Dhaniya powder – ½ tsp
Salt – to taste

How To Make:

Soak idli rice and urad dal separately for 3 to 4 hours after washing thoroughly in clean water.
Grind rice with water in a food processor or blender until it becomes smooth.
Grind urad dal with a little water. Add more water when required to make the batter fluffier.
Mix both the batters and season with salt to taste.
Keep aside for about 8 hours to allow fermentation.

How To Proceed:

Saute onions in a little oil until it becomes golden brown. Add carrots, onions, green chilies, and coriander leaves along with the spice powders to the idli batter. Grease the mini idli pans with very little sesame seed oil. Add a tbsp each of the batter on each of the space in the plates.
Steam for about 10 to 12 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the centre of the idli comes out clean.
Serve hot with tomato ketchup.