

Sai Praneeth – The Phenomenal Indian Badminton Star



India's only participant in the men's singles badminton event at Tokyo Olympics, B Sai Praneeth, was inspired by his aunt -- a former national level player -- to take up the sport. Born into a humble family in Hyderabad on October 10, 1992, the Indian shuttler would travel around 18 kilometres a day and then follow it up with another four-hour

long train journey for training during his school days.

The hard work paid off as Sai Praneeth impressed at the age-group levels, including former All England Open champion Pullela Gopichand.

In fact, Gopichand was so taken in by the youngster's talent that he included Sai Praneeth among the first batch of

trainees at his academy which opened in 2008.

Under the guidance of one of India's best badminton coaches, Sai Praneeth soon started making waves at the international stage.

His first major achievement came in 2010 when the Indian shuttler, as an 18-year-old, managed a bronze medal at the BWF Junior World Championships in Mexico.

From there, Sai Praneeth competed in several Challenger and Grand Prix competitions to climb up the rankings.

His next big moment came in 2013 when Sai Praneeth lined up against badminton legend Taufik Hidayat at the Indonesia Open, a Superseries Premier event.

Hidayat, playing his farewell event in front of home fans, was the overwhelming favourite. Instead, Sai Praneeth went on to script a phenomenal win for his first big scalp defeating the Indonesian in a three-game thriller.

Though he lost to Malaysia's Lee Chong Wei in the subsequent round, Sai Praneeth continued his fine form to get the better of the then world No. 4 Hu Yun of Hong Kong at the Singapore Open Superseries event later that year.

But just when things were looking bright for the young Indian shuttler, a shin injury sidelined him for two years.

Sai Praneeth returned to competitive action in 2015, but it wasn't until a year later that he was challenging the best in the business.

The 2016 season saw Sai Praneeth beat three-time Olympic silver medallist Lee Chong Wei at the All England Open before wrapping up the season with a gold at the South Asian Games and his maiden Grand Prix title at the Canada Open.

The performance also saw Sai Praneeth make the top 30s in the singles rankings and that helped him compete in a number of big-ticket events on the BWF Tour.

In 2017, the Indian shuttler made the final of the Syed Modi International, a Grand Prix Gold event, before clinching his first-ever BWF Superseries title at the Singapore Open. Thus, Sai Praneeth became only the fourth Indian to win a BWF Superseries competition after Saina Nehwal, PV Sindhu and Kidambi Srikanth.

The Indian continued his fine run in 2018 with last-eight appearances at the India Open, Australian Open, Syed Modi International and the BWF World Championships.

Struggling to get past top-quality opponents in the business end of competitions, Sai Praneeth went back to the drawing board and tweaked his game to give him a chance against the top-ranked shuttlers of the world.

It soon paid dividends as Sai Praneeth clinched a bronze medal at the 2019 BWF World Championships and became only the second Indian men's shuttler to achieve the feat since the legendary Prakash Padukone in 1983.

The win also reflected in rankings as he rose to world No. 11. Though the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted the 2019 and the 2020 seasons, Sai Praneeth kept working on his game knowing very well that Tokyo 2020 could be his maiden Olympic bow.

Major Achievements

World Championships

- Silver - Men's singles, 2019 Swiss Open
- Bronze - Men's singles, 2019 BWF World Championships
- Gold - Men's singles, 2017 Thailand Open
- BWF Super Series title - Men's singles, 2017 Singapore Super Series
- BWF Grand Prix title – Men's single, 2016 Canada Open
- Gold - Mens' singles, 2016 South Asian Games
- Bronze - Men's singles, 2016 Asian Team Championships

THE FACT CORNER

Did you know?



Norway, one of the wealthiest countries in the world, has a pension fund worth more than \$1 trillion for its 5 million citizens. This works out to about \$200,000 for each person

Did you know?



The Bagheera kiplingi spider was discovered in the 1800s and is the only species of spider that has been classified as vegetarian

Did you know?



Octopuses and squids have beaks. The beak is made of keratin the same material that a bird's beak, and our fingernails are made of.

Did you know?



In Rwanda plastic bags are illegal and carry with them a \$100 - \$150 fine. In fact, at airport customs all plastic bags are confiscated which has resulted in Rwanda being one of the most litter free countries in Africa

BRAIN TEASERS

1 Q. Three coins are tossed in the air and two of the coins land with heads face upwards. What are the chances on the next toss of the coins that at least two of the coins will land with heads face upwards again?

2 Q. Add three consecutive letters of the alpha bet to the group of letters below, without splitting the consecutive letters of the alphabet, to form another word.
GERE

3 Q. In a right-angled triangle what is the length of the hypotenuse if the two shortest sides are 10 and 24 cm respectively?

4 Q. In eight years time the combined age of me and my two sons will be 124. What will it be in five years time?

5 Q. In a game of eight players lasting for 70 minutes, six substitutes alternate with each player. This means that all players, including the substitutes, are on the pitch for the same length of time. For how long?

6 Q. If five men can build a house in 16 days, how long will it take just two men to build the same house, assuming all men work at the same rate?

SOLUTION:
1. 50 percent
2. GESTURE.
3. 26
4. 115.
5. 40 minutes.
6. 40 days.

English Proverbs and Meanings

*** Better be the head of a dog than the tail of a lion.**

It's better to be the leader of a small group than a subordinate in a bigger one.

*** Better flatter a fool than fight him.**

It's better to avoid disputes with stupid people.

*** Better lose the saddle than the horse.**

It's better to stop and accept a small loss, rather than continue and risk losing everything.

*** 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.

*** He who plays with fire gets burnt.**
If you behave in a risky way, you are likely to have problems.

*** One today is worth two tomorrow.**
What you have today is better than what is promised for.

Red Velvet Pancake



Ingredients:
10 Cups All-purpose flour
1-1/4 Cup Sugar
2/3 Cups Baking cocoa
6 tsp Baking soda
4 tsp Baking powder

5 tsp Salt
Additional ingredients (for each batch)
2 Cups Buttermilk
2 Eggs
2 tsp Red food coloring
Butter and Maple syrup
Method
In a large bowl, combine the flour, sugar, baking cocoa, baking soda and salt all together.
Place 2 cups in each of five resealable plastic bags or containers. Store in a cool, dry place for up to 6 months.
Prepare pancakes:
Pour the mixed ingredients into a large bowl.
In a small bowl, whisk the buttermilk, eggs and food coloring.
Stir into dry ingredients just until moistened. Pour batter by 1/4 cupful's onto a greased hot griddle; turn when bubbles form on top.
Cook until the second side is golden brown.
Serve with butter and syrup. Flip the dosa, lower the flame and cook for 2 to 3 minutes more.
Serve hot with ghee or butter, toasted almonds, and freshly sliced fruits.

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Strawberry Jam Shortbread Biscuit



Ingredients:
1/2 Cup Sugar
1 Cup Butter
2 Cup Flour
1 Egg
Heart shape moulds
200 Gram Strawberries
50 Gram Sugar
5 Gram Gelatine
How to Proceed:
First make short bread by slowly mixing together sugar, butter and flour. Also add an egg once it all come together to make a dough, dust some more flour and roll it flat like a chapatti. Cut it with a heart shape ring mould then take another bigger cutter to make a layer of shortbread to form boundaries. Bake it for 180 degree for about 9 minutes .
To prepare strawberry jam:
Blend strawberries and sugar together and add gelatine. Boil it until thick. Chill the jam down and fill between heart moulds along with some generous icing of sugar on it before serving.