

# Kidambi Srikanth's Tale Of Redemption: 'A Story Of Guts And Grit'

From being at the pinnacle of global rankings to hitting nadir by failing to qualify for the Olympics, K Srikanth has seen it all in a matter of four years. So, it was hardly a surprise that the seasoned shuttler's celebrations seemed muted after the history-making world championships silver.

He is not the one to celebrate comebacks. Instead, Srikanth displayed the equanimity that has helped him stay afloat during his struggle with fitness and form.

It was India's first ever silver medal in men's singles at the prestigious tournament but there were no fist-pumps or "dream come true" quotes.

All he could gather was "this is something I really worked hard for, and I am really happy to be here today." Chief coach Pullela Gopichand understood what the 28-year-old was going through and was glad that he did not get swayed by the success that has followed months of toiling and heartbreak, the biggest one being the Olympic miss.

"I am happy with the way he reacted, he celebrated this win after the end of his career, now it's time to tie his head down and look for consistency. It is good to be on the positive side ahead of a big year," an impressed Gopichand told PTI.

Even if he had let his hair down a bit, who could have judged him? Because for a while now, the biggest believer in his ability to do something big was Srikanth himself.

Faced with a visa issue, he was not even sure of making it to the tournament, leave alone winning a medal and he was just happy to be competing.

It was in 2001 when the man from Guntur followed in the footsteps of his brother Nandagopal to pick up the racquet. Soon, he was training at the Pullela Gopichand academy and earned early success as a doubles player but he switched to singles on the advice of the chief coach and burst into the scene with the Thailand Open win in 2013.

He was hailed as the next big thing when he shocked five-time world and two-time Olympic champion, Lin Dan in the final of China Open Super Series Premier event, a performance that also held out promise of a medal at the Rio Olympics.

But Srikanth faltered at the quarters at Rio after Lin Dan avenged his loss at the biggest stage. However, the Indian soon returned to stun the badminton world by claiming four super series title in five finals in 2017, a feat achieved only by the likes of Lee Chong Wei, Lin Dan and Chen Long in a calendar year.



Soon he was the toast of the whole country but then he injured his knee during the French Open in November that year and aggravated it at the national championships.

He recovered to claim the coveted Commonwealth Games gold at Glasgow, 2018 and earned his place at the top of the world ranking for a week in April too but then came the slide.

The knee injury and other niggles, especially related to his ankle, affected his performance. With the Olympic qualification round the corner, Srikanth also rushed his return from injuries and the haste expectedly backfired.

His movement was a slow, his precision was fractionally off and as a result, the number of internationals wins dwindled because of which his ranking started plummeting and he was out of the top 10 in November 2019.

He stayed committed to the process and while he was beating the top guys once in a while, Srikanth lacked consistency. A series of quarterfinal and semifinal finishes kept him afloat but he needed a title win, a taste of what it feels to stand at the podium again.

The COVID-19 pandemic first seemed like a blessing in disguise as he could get back to his best shape but then the second wave hit, leading to cancellation of three Olympic qualifiers and his hopes of making it to the Tokyo Olympics evaporated.

When the international circuit resumed, Srikanth once again looked for that one win which could reinstate his confidence.

Although wins were difficult to come by, his gritty show in a three-game thriller against two-time world championships gold-medallist Kento Momota at the French Open in October gave him a boost.

He turned a corner after that, reaching the semifinals at the next two events -- Hylo Open and Indonesia Masters. But he still needed some luck to get closer to the title.

It came his way when he emerged as the highest seeded player in his half following withdrawals of Momota, Jonatan Christie and Anthony Ginting in Spain.

Srikanth grabbed the opportunity with both hands and on Sunday achieved his long cherished dream of a world championship medal but it was clear he was not going to sit on the laurels. There will be a lot at stake in 2022 and he can't wait make his comeback story a bit more enchanting.

"I'll just try and continue to work hard, it's a process. Lot of tournaments next year with Asian Games, CWG, another Worlds. Big year... will try and learn from this experience and work on it."

## THE FACT CORNER

Did you know?

**SWEAT** is odorless, it only smells when combined with **BACTERIA** found on your skin

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Did you know?

Positive emotions **ENHANCES** the brain's ability to make good **DECISIONS**

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Did you know?

Always **EXHALE** when your left foot hits the ground to **AVOID** cramps while running

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Did you know?

The **TONGUE** is the only muscle only attached to **ONE** extremity

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## BRAIN TEASERS

1 Q. Which word does NOT belong with the others?

- A. parsley B. basil  
C. dill D. mayonnaise

2 Q. Which word does NOT belong with the others?

- A. tulip B. rose  
C. bud D. daisy

3 Q. Which word does NOT belong with the others?

- A. guitar B. flute  
C. violin D. cello

4 Q. Which word does NOT belong with the

others?

- A. heading B. body  
C. letter D. closing

5 Q. Which word does NOT belong with the others?

- A. tape B. twine  
C. cord D. yarn

6 Q. Odometer is to mileage as compass is to

- A. speed B. hiking  
C. needle D. direction

7 Q. Marathon is to race as hibernation is to

- A. winter B. bear  
C. dream D. sleep

**SOLUTION:**  
1. Mayonnaise.  
2. Bud.  
3. Flute  
4. Letter  
5. Tape  
6. direction  
7. sleep

## 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.

## Pumpkin Flower Pakoda



### Ingredients:

- 2 handfuls pumpkin flower  
1/2 teaspoon sugar  
4 cup mustard oil  
200 gm gram flour  
3 green chilli  
1 teaspoon baking soda  
1 teaspoon turmeric

- 8 cup water  
2 onion  
pumpkin flower as required

### Method

Firstly, wash carefully all of the pumpkin's flowers and after that, cut them horizontally. After that, you need to soak all the flowers properly for some time. After soaking them, keep in a pot for later use.

Secondly, peel the onions and cut them in round slices. After the onions, cut the green chillies properly.

Thirdly, take a pot and take besan in the pot. Then mix six cups of waters with gram flour. Also mix baking soda, sugar, chilli, and turmeric with it. Mix it properly with your hand. Rubs it properly for around 1-2 Minutes. After 1-2 minutes you mix now the onions. Rub again it with your hand.

Now, go into your kitchen and start your oven. Take mustard oil in your frying pan. Now add all of the pumpkin's flowers in the gram flour. And rub properly all of their cutting flowers. Pick one by one and drop in your frying pan. Fry all of the flower for around 30 seconds. Finally, Your Pumpkin's Flower Pokora is ready to serve.

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## Coconut Bread



### Ingredients:

- 2 cup grated coconut  
2 tablespoon vanilla extract  
1 cup butter, 1 cup granulated sugar  
2 tablespoon baking powder  
1/2 teaspoon salt

- 3 cup all purpose flour  
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon

### For The Main Dish

1 cup milk

### Method

Preheat your oven to 180 degree Celsius. Now take a bread loaf pan and spread some butter on it. Now gently spread some flour in the pan and make sure it is evenly spread. Tap the backside of the pan and dust away any excess flour from it. Keep it aside until needed further. Now take the remaining flour and carefully sieve it. Once done, keep the sifted flour aside until needed further. Now, in a deep bowl add in some sugar, baking powder, cinnamon, salt and sifted flour. Mix all the ingredients well. Add in the grated coconut to the mixture. Once done, slowly add the milk in the mixture and keep stirring so that its thoroughly mixed. Continue till you use the remaining milk. Add in some butter (melted) in the mixture and stir well.

Pour the prepared mixture in the bread loaf pans. Leave some space from the top to allow the bread to expand and rise. Bake for 60 minutes until you see a golden crust on the top of the bread.