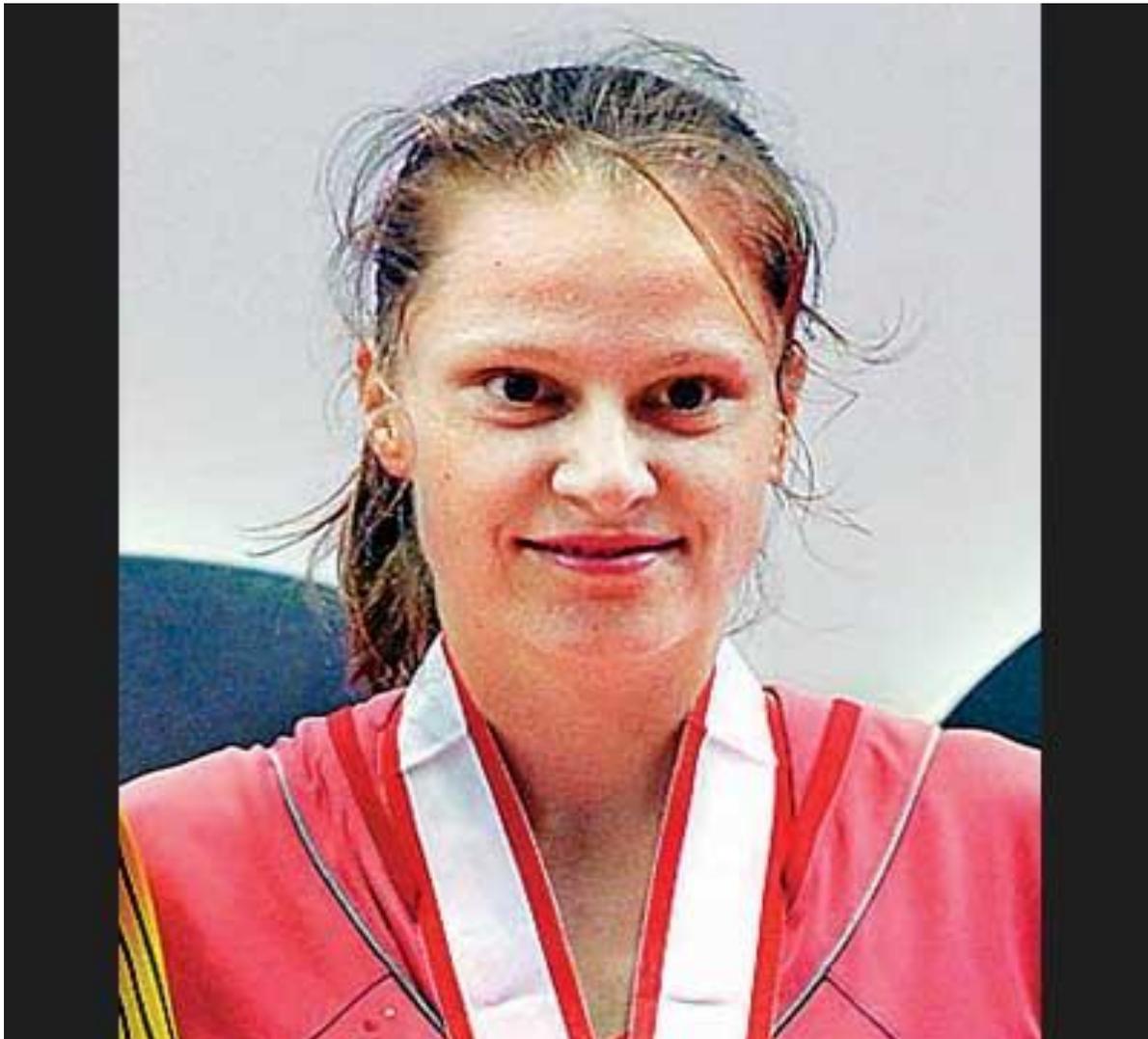


Where is Chinese dominance?: Juliane Schenk

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World No. 4 Juliane Schenk of Germany tells G Krishnan it's time badminton world focused on Malaysia, Thailand and, of course,

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At 30, how tough is it to stay fit?

It is not about being fit, it's more being motivated. I started playing at the age of 18. Now, players are starting at 15 or 16. I won't judge that. I have to make sure I don't start getting tired. I will never set my eyes on Rio (2016 Olympics) as yet but I will take it each single moment, each single tournament, each single week.

You have beaten Nehwal only thrice in 11 meetings. How would you describe her as an opponent?

We last played at BWF Super Series Finals and she won. I am playing OK. But in the final, deciding moments, I lack a bit. Maybe I should be a little more mentally strong. I am waiting for another chance to make the record better. I appreciate her spirit, her style, what she has done in the past. Ratchanok Intanon is also one of the biggest challenges for me.

Do you think the gap between China and the other countries is narrowing?

I don't want to talk about Chinese dominance anymore because there are so many other countries that are doing a great job and they deserve a note of appreciation. Where is the dominance of China, tell me? Of course, they somehow manage to do well at the Olympics. I don't know what the secret is. But come Rio and I think it is going to be more and more interesting, especially the ladies competition.

Why is European badminton on the decline?

Asian countries are doing much better. I wonder how they manage to produce skilful and talented players, almost complete players. The Japanese, the Thai, the Indians. Saina Nehwal is a specialist. Now, PV Sindhu is coming up.

There are a whole lot of youngsters coming and saying, 'hey, here I am'. That's incredible.

Although we Germans are European champions, Denmark is doing a better job in men's doubles, mixed doubles and women's doubles. We still have to focus and look at ways to improve, otherwise, I don't think badminton in Germany has a good future.

Do you like playing in India?

I totally enjoy it here. I love the people, the food. This is my third visit to India and second time to New Delhi. I have very good memories. Maybe I will come back again. I found a place where you get good food. But the temperature is quite high. Early mornings, I enjoy being outside and get some fresh air. Evenings and night times are OK. Rest of the day, it is really hot. Compared to Germany, here it is 39 degrees Celsius. (In) Germany, (it) is 20-25.

Your take on the review system...

I haven't heard much about it. If you find technology to develop the sport, it is good. It is going to be a good thing. I think they should work on it. Having said that, I would never judge about line calls. They (linesmen) are human beings, sitting the whole day. Of course, emotions belong to sport. One should ensure people getting paid do their jobs like we do ours.