

# **Special fitness plan working for star shuttler**

## **P. V. Sindhu**



HYDERABAD: Indian teenager PV Sindhu's stunning win over China's defending champion [Wang Yihan](#) and Shixian Wang of China in the World Championship spread a wave of cheer among all Indians and left her parents, father PV Ramana and mother Vijaya, delirious with happiness.

However, one man who must be truly elated is Pullela Gopichand. The Indian team's Chief Coach, who has been training Sindhu at 4.15 am every day for the last three years, had in fact worked out a special fitness regimen to get the best out of his player.

An incident in Gopi's life had a profound impact on his training methods. During his playing days, Gopi happened to watch China's Lin Dan warm up before a match.

The former All England champion was stunned to see the way 'Super Dan' got ready for business. The Chinese superstar's warm-up drill was even better than Gopi's three-day training session. This made Gopi realize that training hard and in a unique way was the secret of success in badminton.

And for a player like Sindhu, who is five feet, 11 inches tall, Gopi knew that

normal training methods would not help. He kept looking for physical trainers who think differently and finally zeroed in on Christopher Paul, popularly known as Chris.

The trainer, whose methods have often been described as "crazy", has been working with Sindhu for the past six months. Gopi instructed Chris to concentrate on Sindhu's core strength and balance with a specific emphasis on fast movement on the court.

"For the last three years I have always had the first morning session with Sindhu so that Saina's training is not disturbed. After a period of time I realized that Sindhu's physique is different and to get her to give her best, we had to work differently," Gopi said.

Chris developed an unorthodox system of fitness for Sindhu. "We realized that we needed to work on her lower body strength and some personal muscles that were not developed. I worked on the area between her neck and shoulder.

We identified that the finer points on the knee needed improvement and we also laid emphasis on her back thigh. Whenever Gopi works on her speed and agility on the court, I concentrate on strength and vice versa.

I don't go by the book and some of my methods are unorthodox but Gopi has given me full freedom... he has so much confidence in me," Chris told TOI.

Lauding Sindhu for the manner in which she held her nerve in the second game, Gopi said, "She was amazing today. The way she worked her way back from a difficult position was great. We have been working on these things but to do that against a great player is simply superb. All credit to our support staff like Kiran, Chris and others."

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