

Indian shuttler Siril Varma attains BWF Junior World number one Ranking

- In a matter of six months, India's Varma has gone from being unseeded to world number one.

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(Siril Varma with Silver Medal at BWF World Junior Badminton Championship – 2015, Peru)

A prodigal World Junior Badminton Championship Silver Medal has seen Indian shuttler Siril Varma climb to number one in the recently released BWF Rankings with 13021 points.

While we lap up laurels being brought in by the Sainas, Sindhus, Srikanths and Kashyaps at the senior level, here's another suave shuttler who has burst onto the international stage. Siril Varma is the new kid on the Badminton block.

"After the first two rounds, everyone I faced was a seed and so I was nervous initially, but then I got into rhythm. Once I beat ninth seeded Kantaphon Wangcharoen of Thailand 21-13, 21-13 in the third round, I gained a lot of confidence which powered me on," the Indian Junior No.1 explained.

The shuttler then accounted for third seed Anders Antonsen of Denmark 21-12, 18-21, 21-15. Up next in the quarters was the 10th seed from Thailand R. Satheishtharan, whom Siril silenced in straight games 21-15, 21-14. The scoreline was a repeat in the semis where Siril stunned another Thai, 14th seeded Adulrach Namkul before going down in three games to Chia Hung Lu, the sixth seed from Chinese Taipei, 21-17, 10-21, 7-21 in the title round.

That effort should boost his ranking a great deal. "In all probability, I will break into the Top 10 at the junior level (he is currently World No.29) when the next rankings are released," says the Class XII student of Glendale Academy, which according to him has played its part in his success.

Last year in November, Varma entered the 128 shuttler World Championship main round unseeded. He would go onto win six matches, including victories over seeded opponents such as Anders Antosen from Denmark and Thailand's Adulrach Namkul. The 15-year old narrowly missed out on the World Title, losing 21-17, 10-21, 7-21 to Chinese Taipei's Chia Hung Lu in the final.

The shuttler, who is represented by Olympic Gold Quest (OGQ) trains under Pullela Gopichand at his Academy. OGQ Chief, Viren Rasquinha said, "Full credit to P. Gopichand for Siril Verma's ascent to the top of the junior rankings, OGQ has been supporting him for last 4 years."

Siril showed sparks of development at the age of 13, when he was crowned the Asian Junior Champion. He was also the first ever Indian to achieve this feat. In 2013, he would go onto lift the Asia U-15 Championship Trophy as well.

In 2014, Siril was admitted to the hospital, after playing 10 straight matches in just three days. The hospitalisation didn't stop him from making a comeback to play the All India Junior Badminton final. He went onto defeat Lakshya Sen convincingly in the final.

Indian Shuttlers Chirag Sen is at 3rd as per BWF Junior Ranking with 12571 points and Rahul Yadav & Lakshya Sen at 18th & 23rd Ranking of BWF Junior.

With the likes of young Siril Verma, Ruthvika Shivani Gadde and Lakshya Sen are also moving in the right direction, the Junior scenario seems to be set. While Siril's World Junior Championships final showing at Lima last year grabbed attention, Ruthvika and Lakshya claimed International Titles. Ruthvika has been on the radar for a while and the 18-year-old is the current Senior Women's National Champion.
