

# Saina Nehwal shines for Indian Badminton

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## **Highlights of 2015:**

- Saina and K Srikanth continued their good run, winning two Titles each.
- PV Sindhu, Parupalli Kashyap and Ajay Jayaram battled through injuries to claim a Title each.
- Manu Attri and B Sumeeth Reddy duo won the Belgian International Challenge and Lagos International Challenge.
- Jwala and Ashwini also lay claim to a Title this year, winning the Canada Open Grand Prix.

**NEW DELHI: Saina Nehwal continued to break new grounds in a year that saw her reach the pinnacle of World Badminton.**

**Saina and K Srikanth continued their good run, winning two Titles each, while PV Sindhu, Parupalli Kashyap and Ajay Jayaram battled through injuries to claim a Title.**

Continuing her rich vein of form, Saina clinched the Syed Modi Grand Prix Gold and then broke the jinx of never winning the Indian Open Super Series with a splendid performance which catapulted her to the World No. 1 position.



The Olympic Bronze Medalist also produced stellar performances at three of the most prestigious events in World Badminton calendar, reaching the finals of the All England and World Championship and the China Super Series Premier.



However, the girl from Hyderabad suffered an ankle injury at Fuzhou in November which forced her to skip the Hong Kong Open and also posed a serious question mark on her performance at the season-ending BWF Super Series Finals but Saina stunned the world with a superlative win over World No. 1 Carolina Marin in the second match.



In Men's Singles, Kidambi Srikanth had emerged as the next big thing last year when he had beaten two-time Olympic Champion Lin Dan en route to his China Open triumph and the 22-year-old from Guntur continued his rampaging run in the first half of the season, winning the Swiss Open and India Open in March and reached the World No. 3 ranking in June. He also came close to winning a Title was when he reached the finals of the Indonesia Masters early this month.



Sindhu, who had mesmerised the world by bagging five Bronze Medals including a World Championship medal last year, suffered a stress fracture on her left foot and it affected her game throughout the season. Despite recovering from injury, Sindhu struggled with her form before making her maiden Super Series Final at the Denmark Open in October. The 20-year-old, however, ensured she has at least one crown in her kitty as she completed a hat-trick of Titles, winning the Women's Singles at Macau Open Grand Prix Gold.



Commonwealth Games Champion Kashyap started the season with a Title win at Syed Modi Grand Prix Gold and clinched a win over World No. 1 Chen Long en route to his Semifinal finish in June at Indonesia Open. He also reached the semifinals of Singapore Open. However, Kashyap suffered a calf muscle injury during the French Super Series and was left on the sidelines for the rest of the season.

28-year-old Jayaram, who lost a lot of time because of a shoulder injury, had reached the semifinals at Malaysia Masters, Swiss Open and Russia Open earlier in the year but it was his maiden Super Series Final at Korea Open which made headlines and he capped it by defending his Title at Dutch Open Grand Prix in October.



Fast-rising shuttler H S Prannoy reached his career-best ranking of World No. 12 this season. However, his twin victory against Denmark's Jan O Jorgensen in India Open and Singapore Open respectively and five-time World Champion Lin Dan in October found its place in Indian Badminton folklore.



It was also a good year for rising Men's Doubles pair of Manu Attri and B Sumeeth Reddy as they played a lot of Grand Prix, Grand Prix Gold and International Challenge tournaments to reach the World No. 19 spot. The duo won the Belgian International Challenge and Lagos International Challenge, besides reaching the finals of Dutch Open Grand Prix, Prague Open International Challenge, Guatemala International challenge and US Open Grand Prix Gold.



2010 Commonwealth Games Champions Jwala and Ashwini also lay claim to a Title this year, winning the Canada Open Grand Prix in June and reaching the finals of US Open Grand Prix Gold.

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