

Saina Nehwal Wins China Open Title



FUZHOU (China) November 16, 2014: This is Saina's third title of the year as the Indian had won the Australian Super Series in June, besides clinching the Syed Modi International Grand Prix Gold early in the year.

In her sixth appearance in the prestigious tournament, Saina had to draw from her reservoir of experience to stave off the challenge of the athletic Akane.



In the opening game, Saina led 3-1 early on and extended it to 8-4. She lost few points due to miscued strokes but the Indian managed to go into the interval with a four-point lead with the help of an angled stroke and down the line smash. Saina controlled the shuttle and the pace of the game and forced her young rival to commit errors, opening up a healthy 14-7 lead.

Akane produced a better performance in the second game. The 17-year-old was quick on her legs and bothered Saina with her straight smashes to enter the break with a slender 11-9 lead. The closing moments of the second game turned out to be nerve-wrecking as both the shuttlers engaged in aggressive rallies before the experienced Indian clawed her way back at 14-14.

At 18-18, Saina earned a point with a disguised net shot but the Indian hit one long and then missed another point to allow Akane to close in at 20-19. However, a couple of long shots by the Japanese swung the match other way, sealing the title in the Indian's name.

For Saina, the entire tournament, she has played really well. It was a complete performance from her. She has been fantastic throughout. She has been getting some very good results recently and this will give her the confidence of doing well in the future," Gopichand said.
