

THE FUTURE OF INDIAN ATHLETICS

Emerging Athletes

RAVI KIRAN (17)

100 Meters timing : 11.71 s



NAMITA SIDDI (14)

100 Meters timing : 12.89s



Battling poverty and other adversities to win medals

Hailing from one of the most isolated communities in India with little or no exposure to athletics before our intervention, these young athletes are now being trained to break records at national and international levels.

This bunch of overly enthusiastic and talented children, spread out at different geographies, is indifferent to the concept of societal fragility. All they carry with them is a faith that gives them victory over their past, the demons in their souls and all that voices that tell them what they cannot do and what they cannot be.

Fighting against the odds

These athletes belong to economically and financially weak backgrounds where they have to start working at a very young age to make ends meet and support their family.

Despite the lack of resources, infrastructure and proper nutrition in the springtime of their lives, these youngsters

DURGESH MARAPPA (17)

10k timing : 36.46 min

5k timing : 17.53 min



DEEPAK KACHWAHA (17)

10k timing: 36.49 min

5 k timing: 17.58 min



haven't stopped dreaming big. Their athletic dream isn't just a fantasy propelled by the desire to pursue stardom and upward mobility through participation, but a vision, a vision to change the face of Indian Athletics. Bridges of sports supports these youngsters to strive for excellence by providing them with specially crafted training modules and by supplementing their nutrition and diet.

How often do we attach sprinting montage to an Indian athlete? Clocking 12.89 seconds in her first month of training for the 100-meter event, 14-year-old **Namita Siddi** isn't less than a prodigy. Born in a village called Ujenkeri, in Northern Karnataka with agriculture as the sole income of the family, Namita, just 0.8 secs shy of the national record is now being trained to break these records and sore higher towards world championships.

Ravikiran Siddi is another such athlete who has been training with us, since our inception. Not allowing the odds to overpower his ambition, this young athlete from Yellapur, has shown immense potential and has been continuously improving his 100m timings. Today he is just 1.5 seconds away from the shattering the world record for his age.

Poornima, one of our coaches, has been instrumental in recognising another such talent. **Durgesh Marappa** started working at the agriculture fields at a mere age of 12 to support his impoverished family. Owing to his natural flair in long distance running, he was spotted effortlessly running ahead of everyone in one of the village cross-country runs. When urged to register himself in athletics, he astounded the local coaches by clocking 36 minutes in his first ever timed 10km run.

Working with these kids has not only inspired us but also taught us to count our blessings. One such example is **Deepak Kachwaha**, once a state gold medallist in Wushu, took up running since he was rejected at several sporting events due to his lean physique. Not only he did he take it constructively but made the best out of what he had by taking up endurance running events which were perfectly suited to his physique and innate capabilities.

These are just a few of the achievers, together they have not only bagged several medals at state, district and taluk sports meet, but 14 of them are just paces away from their respective national and international records. Scouted out of their local communities through diligent screenings, physical tests, and local competitions, they bring with them, a renewed sense of hope and optimism. These raw talents, if nurtured properly will undoubtedly emerge victorious and bring us global glory.

OTHER EMERGING ATHLETES

VEENA BS (16)



100m timing: 14.45s

SUNIL SN (17)



100m timing: 11.23s

ARUN FRANCIS (18)



100m timing: 11.96s

SHALINI S(13)



100m timing: 14.05s

NAYANA GK (16)



100m timing: 14.65s

SHWETA SIDDI(16)



100m timing: 13.80s.

SAMPATH N (13)



100m timing: 13.60s.

KERMI B (16)



100m timing: 11.70s