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A 52-year-old sub-inspector turns back time with gold medal streaks in athletics

PRAGYNESH
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Sub-Inspector Suman

ASA 21-year-old graduate student at Kurukshetra University, Suman would wake up around 5 am, milk buffaloes and help at their family's farm before cycling around 8 km to Hisar's Mahavir Stadium to train for shot-put, long jump and other athletic events.

Three decades and multiple breaks later, Suman, now a 52-year-old Sub-Inspector posted at the Delhi Police Academy, is as active an athlete as ever with two gold medals in shot-put within five months — one each in Masters Athletic Championship held in Pune in August and third Veterans Sports & Games Championship in Nasik last month.

Suman credits her father, who was in the Haryana police, for her feats. "He always encouraged me to participate in sporting events at police clubs. I did my undergraduate in sociology and represented my college in athletic meets as well. Karan Singh used to be my coach. He never saw a girl but the player," says Suman. A year after her graduation, Suman joined the Delhi Police in 1994 and a year later, she was married and gave birth to a son in 1996. "Life happened, and my job and children became my first priority. I was completely cut off from sports."

In 2000, encouraged by her husband Jai Kishan, also a Sub-Inspector in Delhi Police, she took part in the Delhi Police Meet where she went on to bag a gold in shot-put and Javelin, and a silver in discus throw. She qualified and participated in the All India Police Meet in 2001. But then, a long hiatus followed as career and children took priority.

She turned her attention back to athletics after her children's marriage. A routine involving regular training drills helped her turn back time. In August, Suman participated in the Masters Athletic Championship and clinched gold in shot-put. The gold medal at the Nasik event followed.

"Only a sound body can have a sound mind," says Suman, who was also awarded the prestigious Delhi Police Best Trainer award in 2024.