



THE HINDU

[Home](#) [Sections](#)



The Hindu : Sport / Tennis : Rishika Sunkara has great future

Watch her for ten minutes in a match, and you realise that Rishika Sunkara has the potential for big time tennis.

Built like a strong wire, Rishika moves smoothly on court and has the confidence to swing into her strokes gracefully. She is one of the few players in the Indian women's tennis circuit, who is able to transfer her body weight, however light, into her smooth strokes.

The 16-year old girl drew everyone's attention by reaching the quarterfinals of the \$10,000 ITF women's tennis tournament in Delhi, as a qualifier. She gave a good account of herself before losing to the eventual champion Emily Webley-Smith of Britain.

The following week, Rishika missed her chance in the third set against the second seed Poojashree Venkatesh in the first round.

It was her suspect serve that undid Rishika's good work in that match, at 4-4 in the decider, but she regrouped herself to march into the doubles final with her long-forgotten friend, Nova Patel, as the duo beat the top-seeds and champions of the previous week, Emily Webley-Smith and Alexandra Kolesnichenko of Uzbekistan along the way.

"I do have a good serve, but don't have the confidence when I am in tension during the match," says, Rishika, with a disarming smile.

Strong foundation

Coached by Aditya Sachdeva from 2002 at the Team Tennis Centre at Siri Fort Sports Complex in the Capital, Rishika has been able to get her foundation strong. She has represented the country for three years in the under-14 and under-16 teams.

She has also been playing the ITF under-18 circuit with encouraging results, as Rishika has won four doubles titles at the Grade III and IV levels, two of them with Rashmi Teltumbe, and one each with Aishwarya Agrawal and Adnya Naik.

"I missed playing with Nova. She has come back after a long time and I hope to get more good results," she says.

For a player so young, Rishika has been able to win the support of the GVK Group quite early. She gets flight tickets for herself and her mother for tournaments around the world.

"I have been enjoying the support of GVK for three years. First year it was only for tournaments in India, but in the next two years, I have been able to play in tournaments abroad with their support," says, Rishika.

She has racquet sponsorship from Head and attire support from Adidas.

"I want to play the Grand Slam junior events next year." says Rishika, who has a junior ranking of 189.

With the best points taken from six tournaments, a player has to do well in the big events to make a big jump in the rankings.

Gaining confidence from every match at various levels, Rishika, who had started playing game watching her elder brother Rithvik in action, is determined to show her mettle in the higher levels of the ITF junior circuit.

“I will try to play all the women’s ITF tournaments in India, and at the same time keep improving my junior rankings so that I get to play the Grand Slams,” she says.

A tenth standard student of Delhi Public School, Rishika travels from Dwaraka for tennis at the Siri Fort Complex, at times twice a day, when she has to do the physical fitness session separately.

If she tunes her serve into a weapon, from the current state of it being a weapon of self-destruction, Rishika Sunkara will serve Indian tennis for a long time.

Keywords: [Rishika Sunkara](#), [tennis](#), [ITF](#)

More In: [Tennis](#) | [Sport](#)

Share

Tweet



Share this story



[Home](#) [Sections](#)

 [Desktop Version](#)

Text Size [A-](#) [A+](#)

The Hindu, 2011

Mobile experience powered by [MobStac](#)