



For Suma Shirur, the goal is to create an enjoyable sporting culture

The Olympian's academy aims to produce not only quality competitors but wants shooters to enjoy peace of mind.

2 min

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Suma SHIRUR



Former Indian shooter [Suma Shirur](#) achieved plenty in the sport, including winning medals at the Commonwealth Games, Asian Games and the Asian Championships.

On the back of those experiences, she has been coaching young Indian shooters through the Lakshya Shooting Academy, which she set up in 2006 in Navi Mumbai.

Though Suma Shirur initially intended to groom youngsters, she also realized that it could also create a culture she never had growing up.

"The goal for the club was creating that sports culture that I missed in my time so that's one thing," the former Indian shooter told winter Olympian [Shiva Keshavan](#) on his Instagram Live show, *'Inspire'*.

"For me, sport is not just a competition, sport is also something that we all need to pursue because it's good for the soul, it's good for the body and it's a culture that we all need to develop.

"So, I want to get the best out of everyone and create the joy of the sport."

The accidental coach

The biggest moment of Suma Shirur's career came at the Athens 2004 Olympics when she qualified for the 10m Air Rifle final.

At a time when the infrastructure around the sport was not optimal, it was a great achievement and it also served as a pathway for the Indian shooter to enter the world of coaching.

"When I made it to the finals, the local administration was motivated to set up a shooting academy and they approached me to help out with it. That's how I got into coaching," revealed Suma Shirur.

And though it was an unexpected development, she was up to the task.

"I think at that point of time I was really ready for it. I was already 10 years into the game," she added.

The 46-year-old currently serves as the high-performance coach of the junior rifle team and with 15 Indian shooters set to take aim at the Tokyo Olympics next year, one of her students may very well fulfil her Olympic dream.