

# Pressure hinders athlete's performance, so I make it a point to avoid it: Sushil Kumar

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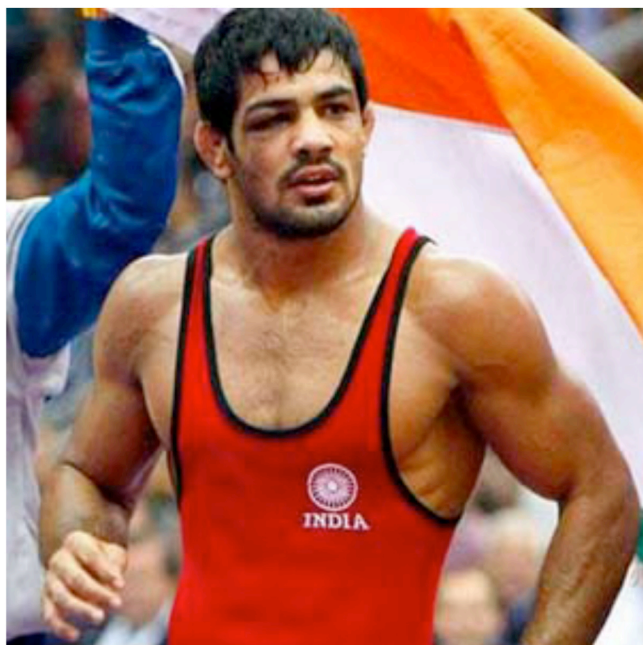
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He made India proud at the Beijing Olympics by winning the bronze medal in wrestling. But the star Indian wrestler was not done and after keeping the national flag flying high at the biggest stage of them all, he backed up his performance with a World Championship gold in Moscow, Russia. But his performance dropped after that and Sushil failed to qualify for Olympics on two occasions.

But he finally made up for that and qualified for the London Games with a gold medal winning feat at the Taiyuan, China. Sushil would now appear for his third successive Olympics at the 66 kgs freestyle wrestling.

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Here are excerpts of the interview with the champion wrestler at the sidelines of the unveiling of a docu series 'Travelling with the PROS' by model-turned actor Bikram Saluja.

**ISN: How does it feel to have qualified for the Olympics for third successive time?**

**Sushil:** It feels great to qualify for the Olympics. It is a great feeling to represent your country at the Olympics.

**ISN: Your form dropped after 2010 and people started to think you were done. So did you ever feel pressurized at this?**

**Sushil:** Every player goes through good and bad phase and I am no exception to that. There are people who love you and at the same time there are others who hate you. I do not get pressurized by anything because if I would then I do not think I could have qualified. Pressure hinders an athlete's performance. So I make it a point to avoid it.

**ISN: Did you on a personal note never felt bad that you missed out on two qualifying chances?**

**Sushil:** Very few people knew that I had an injury on my right hand which did not allow me to perform well. But then I always had belief in me that I would qualify once I am all right and I did. My coaches, well-wishers had faith in me and that kept me motivated.

**ISN: What are your expectations from London Olympics?**

**Sushil:** I will go to win a medal in Olympics. I am quite confident now and training hard. I have always given 100 percent and would do that in Olympics. I am optimistic of putting up a better show at London. This win in China has motivated me a lot. And also it is very good that I qualified for the Olympics late because now I have the momentum with me which definitely would help in performing well at the Olympics.

**ISN: Five wrestlers have qualified for London. So what are your expectations from the contingent?**

**Sushil:** It is a very good contingent and I am confident that we would do well and give our best at the Games. We do not have any sort of pressure on us and all of us will go there with the mindset of bringing glory to the country.