

My Palmares in brief:

(1993-2006)

11 times champion of Mauritius

7 Gold medal at the Indian Ocean Island Games

Vice Champion of Africa

Bronze medallist at the african games

Most promising sportsmen of the year in 1993



My greatest pride was winning the mens singles at the Indian Ocean island Games in 2007, Madagascar.

1. Mr Rajessen Desscann, you form part of a family who is very well known in the field of Sport, in particular Table Tennis. You have personally represented Mauritius on several occasions. How do you explain this family passion for sport?

It all started with my grandfather who was a table tennis player and he inculcated this passion to his children, that is my father, Gassen and my two uncle, Siven and Kadress. Who in turn passed the relay to myself, my brother and sister.



However I decided to take up this passion as a career and today I am very proud of having done so, as it has brought me a lot of success not only in table tennis but in my life in general. And now even the younger generation is playing table tennis, my nephew and niece, Ivana and Ryan aged 10 and 8 years old. And surprisingly my son, who is only 15 months old, even knows how to hold the racket and imitate a forehand. My passion for sport being so strong, that I found my better half in sports. Aarti, my wife, is a table tennis player as well, and we represented Mauritius in several international tournaments. I think when two sportspeople get married it's easier for both partners to understand their spouse better. Today I am very grateful to my father who took me on this path.

2. What are the qualities that made you and your elders in your family so inclined towards Sport, and towards a discipline in particular?

First of all my father was a physical instructor and he always used to talk about sports at home, as he was also an international football referee. My brother who also did his degree in sports, and is today working as Senior Sports Officer at the Ministry of Youth & Sports, so I guess it was something obvious and as a child usually takes his father as a reference and his hero. And I always got the support of my siblings. But especially my mother who was always behind the scenes, as she was the one giving me the strength and energy thanks to her good cooking. And now I have my wife who is a member of the Mauritius Olympic Committee. So the whole family is linked to sports.

3. You are very young, and still you have been given important responsibility at national level. How do you manage to shoulder such high responsibilities?

It was a logical career path, after being an athlete I wanted to continue sharing all the knowledge I acquired with the younger generation. It is true I am a young national coach but after the end of my career as athlete, the Mauritius Table Tennis Association asked me to take over the national team, at the beginning it was a difficult decision to take as it involved a lot of responsibilities, as a player the stress was only on myself whereas as a national coach I have the pressure of the whole team as well as the country, which expects that you perform. As from a young age I used to be adventurous and risk taking, I was never afraid of new challenges. I took part in an international referee exam for table tennis this year, and I am now recognised as an International referee for table tennis.

All this being possible thanks to the support of my wife, being a sportsperson, it is easier for her to understand me and help me shoulder these responsibilities. In sports like in any other field you have the ups and downs, but the most important is how you manage to see in each problem the solution and overcome the obstacles and identify the challenges. At the Mauritius table tennis association we work as a team, as it is important if we want to progress and take the discipline to new heights.

4. Being very busy with your professional life, do you have time to participate in religious and cultural celebrations? Do you find them important?

I try to find time, as spirituality is also very important, it helps you to think back and realise the importance of life. I obviously do not have much time to be involved in all religious celebrations, but I do make it a point every year to go to Cavadee and for the past ten years I have carried Cavadee. Being in a kovil for me it's a great source of inspiration, where I am in harmony with myself and it gives me a feel good factor.



5. What would be your advice to our youth?

I strongly advise them to have a balance in life, you must know how to combine studies, social activities, religious celebrations, sports activities. Even if they do not practice sports at a high level, at least as an activity to keep fit, stay healthy, as they say a sound mind in a sound body. The most important thing is not to win but to take -part.

Myself as an athlete, when I used to lose, I would sit down and analyse what went wrong and this helped me to improve and to never give up in all situations. If a youngster wants to achieve success, to always bear in mind, practice makes perfect. My greatest wish to the young generation is to always live in peace and respect the others, as you will be the ones taking the lead of our country in the years to come.

6. What is your opinion on Pathirikai, and how do you think it can contribute for the goodness of the community?

Pathirikai is a very good initiative, as it helps the tamil community to keep track of what is happening in their culture and it is also a good way to share and communicate our culture to other communities around the world.

7. Any other information you would like provide to our readers?

I am married since 2 years to Aarti Gulrajani and have a son Nikhil Rajessen Desscann of 15 months old. I am also a fond lover of dogs and I have one teckel and one labrador, who both form part of my family. Apart from table tennis I also play tennis and usually do my jogging and swimming during the week end. I also follow closely everything which concerns my country especially politics.