

Mithun Perera's 65 powers Navratna Ahmedabad to top position

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Take Chennai, Puravankara Bangalore and Dev-Ellora Chandigarh complete semi-final line-up

Bangalore: Navratna Ahmedabad finished as the highest-ranked team after day two of the Louis Philippe Cup 2012 at the KGA golf course in Bangalore. Mithun Perera's sublime seven under 65 and Vikrant Chopra's four under 68 powered the Ahmedabad team to a total of 273 for the first two rounds. The other three teams to enter the semi-final stage along with Navratna Ahmedabad were Take Chennai (274), Puravankara Bangalore (276) and Dev-Ellora Chandigarh (278).



Navratna Ahmedabad, the top-ranked team after round two, will now take on Dev-Ellora Chandigarh which was ranked fourth, in one of the semi-final clashes on Friday. Second-placed Take Chennai will play third-ranked Puravankara Bangalore in the other semi-final. The teams outside the top-4 will play for fifth to tenth position. The semi-finals and other matches on Friday will be played in the match-play format with three singles matches comprising each encounter.

Navratna Ahmedabad (140-133) sealed the top spot on Thursday after firing 11 under 133 for the day.

Mithun Perera posted a 65 while Vikrant Chopra shot a 68 to propel their team into the semis. Perera made eight birdies against a bogey in his extraordinary round. The Sri Lankan landed shots within three feet from over 100 yards on three occasions to set up birdies on the fifth, 12th and 16th.

Perera said, "I hit some good tee shots and approach shots today. I hit it very close to the pin through the day. I'm really enjoying the conditions over here. The only disappointment was missing a few putts from four to five feet. I'd like to continue playing like this over the next two days.

"The camaraderie in the team has helped us perform to our potential. I'm looking forward to the match-play format over the next two rounds as I have done well in match-play in the past."

Anura Rohana, the other Sri Lankan in the tournament, continued his golden run with a bogey-free 65 to guide Take Chennai (138-136) to second position. SSP Chowrasia's 71 meant the team finished with a second round score of 136.

Rohana, who had the best individual score (68) in round one, as in tremendous chipping form

as he chipped-in from the edge for birdie on the seventh and narrowly missed eagles on two occasions when his chip shots from the edge landed within one foot of the pin.

The home team Puravankara Bangalore (139-137) shot a 137 on day two to be placed third. Anirban Lahiri with seven birdies and a bogey in his round of 66 was the star performer for Bangalore. Manav Jaini's 71 also contributed towards the team total.

Dev-Ellora Chandigarh (139-139) edged out Ansal API Lucknow (140-138) for the fourth and last semi-final spot in dramatic fashion. Chandigarh's Gaganjeet Bhullar (70) made a tricky chip-putt for par on the final hole while his team-mate Harendra Gupta (69) holed a 10-footer for birdie on the same hole to equal Lucknow's two-day tally of 278.

Chandigarh made it through to the last four on account of a better score by their third player Sujjan Singh (72) as compared to Lucknow's third player Sanjay Kumar (74). The top two scores for Lucknow were posted by Md Siddikur Rahman (67) and Vijay Kumar (71).

One of the most exciting clashes slated for Friday is the match-up between two of India's all-time golfing greats Jeev Milkha Singh (Shubhkamana Noida) and Jyoti Randhawa (DLF Gurgaon). These two giants of Indian golf go head-to-head in a singles match-play encounter for the first time ever as their respective teams fight it out for ninth and 10th positions.

In the Intercity Pro-Am competition, DLF Gurgaon emerged winners with a score of 566. DLF Gurgaon comprised of professionals (with their respective scores in brackets) - Jyoti Randhawa (72), Himmat Singh Rai (72), Digvijay Singh (72) and amateurs - Gurmehar Singh Sethi (70), Kanwaljit Singh Cheema (71) and Manmohan Chopra (78). Navratna Ahmedabad was placed second at 570.