

Puravankara Bangalore continues pursuit for gold at Louis Philippe Cup

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Anirban and Abhishek win closely fought matches against a very promising TAKE Chennai

Bangalore: In match that went down to the wire, Puravankara Bangalore's "Anirban Lahiri beat fancied Anura Rohana of TAKE Chennai on the final hole to see his team into the final.



A few minutes earlier, All India Match Play Champion Manav Jaini from Puravankara Bangalore had lost his tie against seasoned campaigner S S P Chowrasia by a margin of 3 holes, home town boy Abhishek Jha levelled the score for Puravankara Bangalore by winning his match with a score of 1 up against veteran Gaurav Ghei. It was then upto Anirban Lahiri to finish the job for Puravankara Bangalore and despite trailing for much of the match, he came back strongly and closed it out against the formidable Sri Lankan by a 2 up margin.

Anirban, commenting on his performance, said, "Match-play is all about the momentum we create and at the beginning of the game Rohana seemed to have that momentum till I won three consecutive holes at the 8th, 9th and 10th. I definitely need to improve my putting and shall be working on it this afternoon" Sounding happy with the performance of his teammates, he added, "I was following the scores of Manav Jaini and Abhishek Jha who started before me. They both played well and Manav Jaini's hole in one on the 8th hole followed by winning another hole back on the 9th , swung the tide our way and gave me a lot of confidence."

Speaking about his win over seasoned campaigner Gaurav Ghei, Jha said, "I missed a few short putts, I three putted the 6th and 13th hole. You just don't 3 putt in match-play, but it was the last two holes that decided the match. I was very relaxed while playing the 18th hole, and I really like the way I putted in the last few holes." Adding to this Manav commented, "I started walking with Abhishek on the last two holes and witnessed some inspired golf! His five iron shot over the tree on 17 and his nine iron to 20 feet over water on the final hole were remarkable."

Manav Jaini, who scored the only hole in one of the tournament so far claims that it was pure luck. However, commenting on the game he opined, "I went into the game as the underdog and I was always striving to fight back. S S P started beautifully with a 12 feet birdie, and while I made a few great saves and was in the match at the halfway stage, S S P outputted me to win a crucial point for his team."

Based on Anura Rohana's scintillating performance over the last few days, TAKE Chennai went into the semi-finals as hot favourites. However, Anirban Lahiri and Abhishek Jha fed off home support to create a dream final for the home crowd. Puravankara Bangalore will now face off against Navratna Ahmedabad who beat Dev Ellora Chandigarh by two matches to one to enter the final contest of this very prestigious tournament.

Considered the underdogs, Navratna Ahmedabad's in form Mithun Perera won his match 2 up against Dev Ellora Chandigarh's Harendra Gupta while fellow team mate Vinod Kumar lost to Sujjan Singh 2&1. Vikrant Chopra emerged the star for Navratna Ahmedabad as he beat the more fancied Gaganjeet Bhullar by the widest margin of the day - 4 & 3.

In the marquee match of the day, Jyoti Randhawa playing solid golf closed out Jeev Milkha Singh 3 and 2 as a result of not dropping a single stroke to par and making three birdies. The gallery favourites, both agreed this was a match up that they as players enjoyed along with the spectators. "The match was intense and we both pushed ourselves to do our best. I ended up playing very solid golf and didn't make any mistakes. I will always remember this experience of both us playing this historic match during the first edition of the Louis Philippe cup."

Tomorrow 's matches will see the fight for third place between Chandigarh and Chennai while the match for fifth place will be between AVT Kolkota who beat Oxford West and 3C Delhi, who beat Ansal API Lucknow. In the match for seventh place, Oxford West will face off against Ansal API Lucknow.

The inaugural edition of the Louis Philippe Cup has been heralded as a phenomenal success with a super star cast of players, huge fan involvement, excellent quality of play and high drama. Players and sponsors give it a huge thumbs up and say this is going to become the biggest event on the calendar in successive years.

Rishi Narain, MD, RN Golf Management promoters of the tournament said, " It's great to see the matches coming down to the final hole; keeping the excitement at a high. The competition was intense and standard of play was extremely high. Jeev himself could not believe the quality of scores. Hats off to the players for a great show."