

City squash players shine at Little Masters tourney

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Maharashtra's top juniors featured in the Little Masters Junior Squash tournament, an Squash Rackets Federation of India (SRFI) 3-Star ranking event recently, in the U-9, U-11, U-13, U-15, U-17 and U-19 categories for both boys and girls.

U-19 top seeds Mahesh Mangaonkar and Urvashi Joshi, both students of Thane-based academies clinched the boys' and girls' U-19 crowns, respectively, with contrasting victories while the girl's U 13 title match was an extremely well contested clash between the two talented juniors Diya Jokhani and Shrishti Nagar.

This high voltage and quality encounter went in favour of Diya in four extremely tight sets. Shrishti earlier beat 3rd seeded Abhilasha Bhasin 3-2 in a tense semi-final game of fluctuating fortunes. Top seeded Megha Bhatia from Delhi grabbed the girl's U 11 title defeating the rapidly improving Thane's 3/4th seed Ananya Dabke in straight sets.

Earlier Megha defeated Thane's Aaryaa Ogale in straight sets in the semifinal and Ananya beat J S Krithica from Chennai in a 3-1 win in the semi-finals. Aarya finished third beating Krithica in the play off.

Ananya More did well to reach the quarter finals and Avani Nagar, the 2nd seeded girls U 11 players also reached the last eight where she was upset by Krithica in a shock result. 5/8th seed Siddhant Iyer playing in the U 15 boys category did well to reach the quarter finals where he lost to 2nd seeded Robin Mann from Delhi.

Thane was represented by Siddhant, Yash Randive, Ansh Bharganwar, Varun Babbar Shrishti, Avani, Anannya Morey, Ananya Dabke, Aarya, Shashi Pandey, Aishwarya Singh, Akhilesh Yadav, Ajit



ANANYA DABKE



AISHWARYA BHATTACHARYA



SHRISHTI NAGAR

BOYS:

- U-11: 1-Yash Fadte bt 2-Advait Adik 11-7, 12-10, 6-11, 11-2
- U-13: 1-Chaitanya Shah bt 2-Tushar Shahani 11-7, 11-7, 14-16, 11-4
- U-15: 1-Velavan Senthilkumar bt 2-Robin Mann 11-8, 11-9, 9-11, 11-2
- U-17: 1-Madhav Dhingra bt Yohan Pandole 11-9, 4-11, 6-3 (conceded)
- U-19: 1-Mahesh Mangaonkar bt Deepak Mishra 11-0, 11-3, 11-3

GIRLS:

- U-11: 1-Megha Bhatia bt 3/4-Ananya Dabke 11-3, 11-7, 11-6
- U-13: 1-Diya Joukhani bt 2-Shrishti Nagar 11-7, 8-11, 11-8, 11-9
- U-15: 2-Jui Kalgutkar bt 1-Aishwarya Bhattacharya 11-8, 11-5, 9-11, 11-3
- U-19: 1-Urvashi Joshi bt 2-Vishruti Sahni 11-4, 11-4, 8-11, 5-11, 11-5

Sharma and Urvashi Joshi.

Top seed Velavan Senthilkumar from Chennai won the U-15 boys' title beating 2nd seeded Robin 3-1 while 2nd seeded Jui Kalgutkar from Mumbai upset arch-rival and top seed Aishwarya Bhattacharya with an identical 3-1 score in girls U-15 final. Earlier in the semifinals Aishwarya beat Riddhi Sampat in straight sets 11-5 11-2 11-5.

Earlier Yash Randive displayed commanding performance against a strong opponent Aryan Hemdev and registered a convincing win 11-9, 10-12, 11-6, 11-7. He lost to practice partner and friend Siddhant 11-4, 11-7, 11-7 in the next round. Other notable performers were Ansh Bharganwar who reached the quarter finals and lost to Chaitanya Shah. Thane junior

player Varun Babbar lost to Aryan Parekh in pre quarters while Akhilesh reached the quarter-finals in the boys U-17 category losing to Arjun Kochar 11-5, 11-0, 11-7 in straight sets. Aishwarya Singh also playing in the boys U-17 category played very well to beat Deepak Tiwary 11-2, 11-3, 11-4 to enter the semi finals. Aishwarya then lost to Yohan Pandole 15-

13, 9-11, 8-11, 13-11, 11-6 in a nerve wrecking semi-final.

Playing in the boys U-15 category, Ajit performed creditably in the tournament by defeating 5/8th seeded Pranay Jain 3-1 before losing to Yash Bhargava from Delhi in the quarter-finals. Shashi Pandey too had a great outing where he finished 3rd in the boys U 19 category.