

SARDAR MANMOHAN SINGH – 42ND NEHRU SUB-JUNIOR HOCKEY TOURNAMENT
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NITISH YADAV'S HATTRICK GOES ABEGGING AS TATAS EDGE OUT SAIFAI 5-4

SONEPAT, ROUND GLASS, KHUNTI JOIN JAMSHEDPUR IN LAST FOUR

NEW DELHI, Oct 16 - It was a final played during the best-of-12 round!

Holders Naval Tata, Jamshedpur were given scare by Maj Dhyan Chand Sports College, Saifai, Etawah before making the last four grade of S. Manmohan Singh 42nd Nehru Sub Junior Boys hockey 5-4 in a thrill-a-minute match.

For Saifai a stupendous three-in-one effort (two penalty corners and a field goal following a goalmouth melee) by Nitish Yadav went abegging.

Tatas now play another brilliant team from Govt School Khunti, Jharkhand for a place in the final. Round Glass Hockey Academy will play Govt Hockey Academy Sonapat in the other semi final.

Sonapat made the grade beating Guru Gobind Singh Sports College, Lucknow 2-1. Round Glass entered the last four beating Services Sports Board 3-0. Semi-finals streaming live on YouTube will be played at 12-30 pm and 2-30 pm.

Shivaji Stadium stands repeated broke into thunderous applause as Saifai boys and their seasoned rivals from steel city of Jamshedpur matched each other move by move and goal by goal. They took turns to take lead. From 1-1 the two talented teams moved to 2-2 and were locked 4-all before Karan Kumar netted match-winner 11 minutes before the hooter turning a cross from captain Ashish Purti.

Nitish found the post for Saifai team in the fourth minute through a penalty corner. Sanjeet Bhengra made it 1-1 in the 13th minute scoring for Tatas.

First minute into second quarter Tata team moved ahead with Amit Kongari turning a long ariel pass into a goal. Nitish struck again twice before the second quarter to register his hattrick and give 3-2 lead to Saifai colts. Next minute Ashish Purti produced a bullet-like shot from a penalty corner to have the score 3-3. Shivam made it 4-3 for the UP team with judicious effort. Amit Kongari and Karan Kumar scored in quick succession in the last quarter to seal fate of Dhyan Chand Sports College outfit.

Former Indian centre forward Harbinder Singh Chimni and commentator Anupam Ghulati on the dias agreed it was a match that rose great heights and was as good as final.

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Govt Hockey Academy were had to work hard to edge out Guru Gobind Singh Sports College, Lucknow 2-1. They led 2-0 at half way through stage. Veer Kumar having already established himself as good deep defender and penalty corner specialist made it 1-0 in 11th minute. This was the second PC that team got. Wristy Aryan made it 2-0 for Sonapat. Lucknow team showed signs of late recovery by launching a series of attacks. Dhiraj Pal converted the fourth penalty corner the team got. Sonapat boys were able to hold on to their own thereafter.

After a goalless two quarters where Round Glass and Services team had fair share of their chances but their forwards were goal shy.

It was in the first minute of third quarter that Yuvraj converted a penalty corner to put Punjab boys head. Two more penalty corner conversions by skipper Sanmukh Singh, once each in third and fourth quarter to carry the day for Round Glass. Services boys were little disjointed.

Govt Sr Sec School, Palol, Khunti already having made the grade with a match to spare completed the formality of trouncing Namdhari XI Jiwannagar 10-1 with Birsa Hemron finding the post four times.

Sachin Bhengra (2), Sukuwan Bhengra, Akshay Aind, Amit Bodra and Saket Pradhan were among the other scorers. Sukhman scored the only goal for Namdharis.