

Press Release

Pistol prodigies Esha Singh, Harshawardhan Yadav hope to blaze happy trails

Pune, January 8: Pistol prodigies Esha Singh (Telangana) and Harshawardhan Yadav (Maharashtra) expect to blaze happy trails when they compete in the Khelo India Youth Games shooting championship here this week. They know no fear and, at 14 years of age, are clear about their desire to stay in the present.

Esha backed up her exploits in the National Championship in Thiruvananthapuram where she won three 10m air pistol gold medals, including a sensational victory over Asian and Commonwealth Games star Manu Bhaker and Olympian Heena Sidhu, with a fine showing in the two selection trials in Delhi.

Daughter of motor rallyists Sachin Singh and Srilatha, Esha is keen to come up with her best performance here.

“Shooting is a sport in which you are not really out to beat someone but to keep focusing on doing your best,” she says, showcasing wisdom far beyond her tender age.

I see my fellow competitors as friends who are out to do their best and will focus on myself and shooting as well as I can. I know it is important to be consistent.”

Harshawardhan Yadav, son of former Maharashtra wrestler, Mahanand Yadav, is another mentally tough kid. Blessed with the physique of a grappler, he demonstrates a sharp intellect that keeps him grounded.

As someone who has secured victory over the renowned Gurpreet Singh in the 25m rapidfire selection trials in Delhi, he knows that some of the spotlight will be trained on him.

“When I step on the range, I believe that my technique will stand me in good stead,” he said. “I have learnt to not be worried by what anyone else says or does. If I focus on my technique, the scoring will be good.” says Harshawardhan, now benefitting from national coach Ved Prakash’s guidance.

Olympic medallist Gagan Narang, who has a role of play in both their careers, says the remarkable thing is that these young shooters evolved in two years unlike his generation which took longer while to imbibe many aspects of the sport.

For instance, these teenagers are well aware of expectations and the different pressure of shooting in qualifying vis-à-vis final.

“Fortunately for them, they are blessed with a good support system at home. And, they have arrived on the scene when shooting has gained so much ground in India,” Narang said.

“Importantly, they train right from the early days, given the growing knowledge-base in the country. It is a phase for them and they will learn to cope with the roller-coaster ride that our sport offers us.” Together with other young shooters like Saurabh Chaudhary, Manu Bhake and Elavenil Valarivan, Esha Singh and Harshawardhan Singh will provide much for the Indian sports community to look forward to.

