



Press Release

New Delhi: 15th December 2021

Deepika does star turn for India Juniors with hat-trick against battling SAI B

New Delhi, December 15: India Juniors scored a hard-fought 6-0 victory over Sports Authority of India B in its opening Group A match in the inaugural Khelo India U21 Women's Hockey League (Phase I) at the Maj. Dhyan Chand National Stadium here today. Deepika did the star turn for the National side with four goals, including a hat-trick in the final quarter.

Anjali Panwar went one better in scoring five goals for Khalsa Hockey Academy (Amritsar) in another Group A match that saw her team post a 15-0 win against Mumbai Schools Sports Association. Earlier Odisha Naval Tata High-Performance Centre, Bhubaneswar, beat Raja Karan Hockey Academy, Karnal 1-0 through a Priya Toppo penalty corner in the 26th minute.

A second-half hat-trick by Poonam Mundu was the highlight of the 7-1 victory by Sports Authority of India A over Odisha Sports Hostel, Bhubaneswar in the first Group B match of the 14-team tournament on an eventful opening day which saw Minister for Youth Affairs and Sports Shri Anurag Singh Thakur unveil the trophies and declare the League open.

It was natural that there was greater attention on the Indian Juniors' squad, preparing for the postponed FIH Junior Women's World Cup in South Africa. It was off to a slow start against SAI B, intent on crowding out the attackers and defending well. But the 18-year-old Hissar girl Deepika scored off a penalty corner in the 12th minute to break the deadlock.

Deepika slotted home two minutes into the second quarter and completed her hat-trick with a penalty corner conversion early in the second half. Hard as SAI B tried to keep the scoreline down, India Juniors doubled the tally in the final quarter through Mumtaz Khan and Beauty Dung Dung whose penalty corner goals sandwiched a field goal by Deepika.

The India Juniors' Coach Erik Wonink said the team was delighted at the opportunity to play competitive matches and was happy with the cohesion that it displayed while complimenting SAI B for putting up a stiff challenge. "While Deepika scored four goals, I liked how others were in positions to score or create penalty corners," he said.



Simranjeet Kaur joined Anjali Panwar as the two Khalsa Hockey Academy players who found the target often, her four goals ensuring that the pair accounted for nine of the 15 goals by the team. Mumbai Schools Sports Association would draw consolation from stopping the Amritsar squad from scoring in the third quarter after conceding 13 in the first half.

EOM