

## Press Release

### KIYG, the first step in a long journey for tennis star Manish

**Pune, January 20:** Manish Sureshkumar, 19, who has a ITF Pro-Circuit title and ATP Challenger experience, lived up to the expectations and produced a dominant performance at the Centre Court at Balewadi. He did not drop a set; in fact his serve was never broken.

Ranked 578<sup>th</sup> in the world, he has the goods to get better and maybe even inside the Top-100, but he needs to keep working his way up.

Manish has every tennis shot in his game, stamina to play long rallies, a double-handed backhand return that goes down the line and moves swiftly across the court.

He is already making waves on the pro-circuit ever since he defeated Vladyslav Orlov of Ukraine winning the ITF Futures in June 2018 at Sri Lanka.

His connection to tennis started at the age of nine when his father Sureshkumar put him in a tennis academy next to the house. Initially, he used to play it as a hobby but slowly his interest started growing.

Manish's father couldn't travel with him due to the heavy workload in office, so his neighbour, 'Uncle' Lionel travelled with him a lot during the tournaments and supported him at crucial times.

Manish won several U-10, U-12 tournaments and turned to play seriously at 14. In today's era where coaches are changed quite frequently, he is still with his childhood coach Suresh Sonachalam at Chennai tennis academy.

Manish, who could be seen as skinny, has been doing a lot of weight training and gym sessions under the guidance of his fitness coach Mr. Thygarajan.

Talking about his future prospects, Manish said, "After KIYG, I'll be playing the ATP Challenger in Chennai next month and my aim is to finish in the top 300 by the end of 2019. If things go right, I aim to play ATP 250 Tata Open Maharashtra here in Pune at the same Balewadi stadium."

On asking if he has practised with top Indian players, he revealed, "Yes, I do practice with India's no.1 Prajesh Gunneswaran and Ramkumar Ramanathan when they are in Chennai. Both advise me a lot on every aspect of the game as they have played with big names across the world. It's always great learning playing with them and they want me to grow and are my well-wishers too."

Manish added, "KIYG is a big platform, it felt like Olympics. The scholarship that could come with winning a gold medal will definitely help me but playing tennis professionally involves huge cost. One can play freely if supported financially well."

Manish also won a bronze medal in boys U-21 doubles partnering Abhinav Sanjeev of Tamil Nadu.