

Press Release

Chip off the old block Manavaditya Rathore and Manisha Keer claim Trap gold in shooting

Pune, Jan 12: Manavaditya Singh Rathore (Rajasthan) pulled himself together after an uncertain start, reminding himself to stick to the basics, and blazed to the men's under-21 trap shooting gold medal at the Khelo India Youth Games 2019 at the Shiv Chhatrapati Stadium Sports Complex on a breezy Saturday afternoon.

If the son of 2004 Olympic Games double trap silver medallist Rajyavardhan Rathore, Minister for Youth Affairs and Sports finished on top in the men's final, it was a fisherman's daughter, Manish Keer (Madhya Pradesh), who claimed the women's under-21 trap gold. Manisha, a World Junior Championship silver medallist trained by Olympian Mansher Singh, ran out a 38-35 winner over Delhi's Kirti Gupta.

Just around the time when Manavaditya Rathore found his rhythm, 2018 Asian Games silver medallist Lakshya Sheoran lost his and finished in fourth place behind Bhowneesh Mendiratta (Haryana) and Uttar Pradesh's Shardul Vihan. Lakshya Sheoran was in red-hot form in topping qualification but missed a series of birds in the second half of the final.

Manavaditya Rathore shot down only five of the first 10 targets in the high-pressure final but bounced back by shooting nine of the next 10 to be in a comfortable third spot with five shots left before the first of the six finalists would be eliminated.

"You have two options – to either give up or to fight," he said of his comeback. "When you put in so much effort in training, your conscience doesn't allow you to give up. You fight back to get what is right for you. I had the time to introspect on the mistakes I was making and eliminated them."

He first ensured that he would not be out of the medal bracket and then asserted his domination with a consistent show. "I had one or two misses in the middle, but I felt confident when I picked up the gun," he said. "It was a good competition and since I am working to make it to the senior team, it was good preparation for the trials next month.

"I had missed two targets in the final stages of the second series in qualification today. I should have held myself till the last target. I will learn from the mistakes and I will ensure that I don't repeat them," he said.

Qualifying in third place with a total of 116 from 125 shots, he knew not to let the sub-par showing affect him in the final. In fact, plugging music in his ears – he said he was listening to Highway to Hell – he prepped himself well. His strong mindset came into

evidence when he stood back at his station and reflected on how things had panned out in the windy conditions.

The 19-year-old Manavadiya Rathore said he felt pressure in the final and, in fact, throughout the competition. "I think pressure is very important as it makes you stay alert. You just have to stop yourself from overthinking," he said. He also said his pedigree also brought a hint of pressure and responsibility. "My father and mother guide me, and I know I am in good hands."

Manisha, who dominated the qualifiers in the morning won comfortably 38-35.

The results (finals):

Men's under-21 Trap: 1. Manavadiya Singh Rathore (Rajasthan) 39; 2. Bhowneesh Mendiratta (Haryana) 34; 3. Shardul Vihan (Uttar Pradesh) 26.

Women's under-21 Trap: 1. Manish Keer (Madhya Pradesh) 38; 2. Kirti Gupta (Delhi) 35; 3. Aadya Tripathi (Delhi) 25.