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Perera, Rohana star for champs; Joshi's show in vain



Mithun Perera (from left) along with team-mates Anura Rohana and Shankar Das with the trophy. —R. SAMUEL

Ahmedabad snatch victory from Chennai

CHITRANGADA DC | DC
BENGALURU, JUNE 13

In a thrilling finish to the fourth edition of the Louis Philippe Cup, defending champions Navratna Ahmedabad won the trophy for the third time at the Karnataka Golf Association on Saturday. Ahmedabad's Mithun Perera rose to the occasion to snatch victory from Take Chennai, who had headed into the final day with a massive five-stroke lead. Upsetting their apperant, Sri Lanka's Perera turned in the day's best card of five-under 67. His Lankan team-mate Anura Rohana turned in one-under 71 to finish for a team total of 13-under-419, which tied them with overnight leaders Chennai.

With no play-off to decide the winner, the team with the best total on the final day walked away with the winner's cheque and Ahmedabad ended up defending their trophy once again.

Getting off to a slow start with even par scores on the first two holes and a bogey on the third, Perera did not look threatening. But he upped the ante, blazing the course with six birdies, with one on the front nine (8th hole) before reeling off five on the back nine (10th, 11th, 14th, 17th and 18th).

Perera, who seems to have made the tournament a happy hunting ground was overjoyed as he anchored the win, after being a part of the winning team in both the 2012 and 2014 editions. "I had a really

good back nine. We had a good team combination with any of us able to take the game away at any moment and we supported each other throughout. It's special as we won the first edition here at the KGA," said the Lankan.

"Through the week I've played good golf but I wasn't able to read the lines too well the past few days, but thanks to my caddie today I had really good putts," said the 28-year-old pro.

While Perera anchored the win, 41-year-old Rohana added the finishing touch carding a 10-foot birdie on the last hole to level scores with Chennai. "Coming from five-strokes behind and beating Chennai is really great. The 18th was a pressure putt as we were second and a birdie

would level us and give us a chance, so it was a relief."

Chennai were left dejected as they failed to complete a wire-to-wire finish after being in excellent form over the past two days.

Local lad Khalin Joshi managed to turn in a card of two-under 70 in the final round, with his team-mates S Chikkarangappa and SSP Chawrasia coming up with identical cards of one-over 73.

Needing a birdie on the last hole to take the trophy, Bengaluru golfer Chikka buckled under pressure. The 22-year-old Khalin was disappointed, despite walking away with the pay cheque for the highest individual score, finishing with a total of 12-under 204.