

Mumbai shooter bags medal in Germany



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Indian junior shooters had a fruitful twin trip to Czech Republic and Germany earlier this month. Benefitting most from these trips was Panvel's Tejas Karle, who shot a personal best of 591 in 10m air rifle and was part of the bronze-medal winning Indian team at the meet in Suhl, Germany. This was one point more than 590 he boasted of in Plzen, Czech Republic, a week prior to Suhl, the score placing him fourth in the final.

This was Karle's maiden India selection and he was pleased with his performances, also making his coach at the Lakshya Shooting Club, Olympian Suma Shirur proud.

"I was so tense in the finals as it was my first international experience," Karle said. "I did not expect to shoot 590. Standing with seven other top shooters and with only 75 seconds for one shot, the pressure was too much. I have only got better with experience."

Karle was not the only one from Mumbai on the trip. Shivaji Park's 17-year-old Priyal Keni was on her third such trip, though she did not do as well. Keni, who took part in the 50m rifle prone and 50m rifle 3 position, finished with "very very average scores" as Shirur put it. "The scores don't reflect her true potential," said Shirur, under whom Priyal took guidance in rifle shooting until a couple of years ago.

Priyal said that she had little time to prepare between her Class 12 exams in March and the trials the next month. Priyal, who trains at the Maharashtra Rifle Association in Worli, said it will be during her college years at Podar that she will decide if she will make a career from the sport. She, however, said that she'd go back to Shirur to train and perfect rifle shooting.