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New Delhi (IND), 28 February 2017

ISSF Press Release 08/2017

Japan takes all: Tomoyuki Matsuda and Toshikazu Yamashita claim the two Gold medals up for grabs on Day-5

The Japanese shooting team broke the Chinese hegemony in the Rifle/Pistol discipline, securing both the 10m Air Pistol Men Gold and the 50m Rifle Prone Men Gold. Vietnam and Poland pocketed their first medal in New Delhi.

New Delhi (IND), 28 February 2017 - Reigning Olympic Champion Hoang Xuan Vinh of Vietnam, 42, and the 2010 World Champion Matsuda Tomoyuki of Japan, 41, duelled atop of the scoreboard of the 10m Air Pistol Men final, at the ISSF World Cup in New Delhi, today.

The two experienced athletes shot head and head right to the 18th final shot, when Matsuda gained some advantage on Hoang, defending his lead until the last shot.

With a score of 240.1 points, the Japanese shooter pocketed the brightest medal and set the new air pistol world record. He had won his last ISSF world cup gold in this event six years ago, in Sydney. Olympic Champion Hoang followed him in second with 236.6 points.

But spectators' spotlight was on the home hero, Jitu Rai, a 29-year old world-cup multi-medallist who turned out to be protagonist of the day. The Indian athlete had a rough start. After shot 12 he ranked 7th, and survived the first elimination with a narrow 0.2-point margin. That was the turning point of his match. Supported by an enthusiastic and loud home crowd, Rai zeroed in.

Through a series of excellent 10s, he climbed up the scoreboard shot after shot, overtaking Vietnam's Tran Quoc Cuong (6th with 155.8 points) and Yang Wei of the People's Republic of China (5th with 176.2).

After shot 18, Rai put the pedal to the medal, firing two consecutive 10.6s that lifted him up in third place, and finally sealed an odd-defying Bronze medal with a total tally of 216.7 points for the joy of the Indian supporters.

On his way to the podium, Rai left behind Xu Zhanyi of the People's Republic of China, who closed his first appearance in an ISSF World Cup in 4th place with 197.9 points.

Scoring a disappointing 8.5 on his 14th shot, Horimizu Kojiro of Japan, 35, dropped down in the placements, landing in 7th place with 135.6 points. The third Chinese finalist, Pu Qifeng, 31, was the first to be eliminated after shot 12, placing in 8th with 117.1 points.

Day-5 of the ISSF World Cup in New Delhi (IND) was closed by the 50m Rifle 3 Positions Men final.

As New Delhi's is the first World Cup stage of the year, the first after the Games and the first of the new Olympic cycle leading to Tokyo 2020, many teams identified this competition as the proper stage to introduce their new, up-and-coming athletes. Indeed, 4 out of today's 8 rifle prone finalists had never appeared before in an ISSF world cup final event.

One of them, 19-year old Asian Champion Liu Yukun of the People's Republic of China, challenged the experienced 39-year old Japanese shooter Yamashita Toshikazu right to the last shot.

The two athletes shot neck and neck throughout the second half of the final, exchanging position in first and second place. After shot 18 they were tied. After shot 20 Liu moved up in the lead by 0.4 points. Two shots later, Yamashita overtook him by 0.1, to then seal the victory at shot 24 with a 10.5 and a total tally of 249.8 points (setting the world record).

Liu was left in second place 0.5 points behind, setting the new junior world record with 249.3 points.

Two other first-time participants, Daniel Romanczyk of Poland, 31, and He Denghua of the People's Republic of China, 25, secured the Bronze medal and the 4th place, with 226.6 and 205.7 points, respectively.

Kenneth Parr of Great Britain, 28, led through the first 10 shots of the final match, but then slid down in the placements as he fired two disappointing shots in the ninth ring, eventually landing in 5th place with 184.0 points after shot 18.

Andre Link of Germany, 22, also made today his first world cup final appearance in this event. A titled 50m Rifle 3 Position shooter, the German athlete seldom competes in the prone event. Today, he scored 161.8 points, following Parr in 6th place. India's Rio 2016 Olympian Chain Singh, 27, was eliminated after shot 14 with 141.9 points, taking the 7th place. The 2012 Asian Champion Yajima Midori of Japan, 31, followed him in 8th place with 121.3 points.

The ISSF World Cup Stage 1 in New Delhi will continue tomorrow with three more finals: the 25m Pistol Women at 11:00 am (UTC+5:30), the 50m Pistol Men at 1:00 pm, and the Skeet Women at 3:30 pm. All the three finals will be streamed live on www.issf-sports.org and on the ISSF [official Facebook page](#).

News and updates about the competition are available on the [ISSF website](#) and on its social media profiles: [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#), [Weibo](#) and [Youku](#).

Notes for the editors:

The International Shooting Sport Federation is the governing body of the Olympic Shooting events, and it has over 160 affiliated National Federations worldwide. Shooting is an Olympic sport since the very first edition of the modern Olympic Games, Athens 1896. Find out more about the International Shooting Sport Federation at www.issf-sports.org.

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