

Arvind proves a cut above in pool

GUWAHATI, DHNS: Bengaluru teenager M Arvind made it a Sunday to remember after sweeping to glory at the 12th South Asian Games here on Sunday.

Watched by his father A Mani from the stands at the Dr Zakir Hussain Aquatic Complex, the 19-year-old civil engineering student of RV College made hay of the weakened field in the men's 200M backstroke event, romping to glory with his personal best timing of 2:08.00.

The only offset for the teenager was that he couldn't push for the Games record with the weak field of just four swimmers forcing him to take things rather lightly.

"The event was pretty easy actually. There were just four competitors. It is the event with the least amount of competitors. The pressure was comparatively less and as result, I couldn't give my best and I missed my record by three seconds," gushed Arvind after being congratulated by his personal and national coach Pradeep Kumar.

"This was one of the biggest international meets which I've attended. Winning a medal will turn me around. Before this, I've won medals in Portugal and Dubai meets. This event obviously ranks much higher than all of them. This is the perfect start to the season in a very important year. I hope it acts as a catalyst."

Arvind's father hailed

Pradeep for his son's success. "All credit goes to Pradeep. He has been training under him for the last 14 years. If not for Pradeep, my son wouldn't have won a medal. He really knows how to push my son hard. I'm delighted."



M Arvind

There was cheer for another Bengaluru girl Shraddha Sudhir in the 400M individual medley event. Another trainee of Pradeep at the Basavanagudi Aquatic Centre and 11th standard student of Jain College, the teenager set the early pace, touching the pad first after the opening butterfly leg. But West Bengal's Sayani Ghosh took charge from the backstroke leg before galloping home over the final two segments.

"It's my fault. I should have trained harder. I've got two more events to go and I shall push for gold," said Shraddha with mixed emotions.