

Indian Badminton League: Krrish Delhi Smashers ropes in five local players

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New Delhi: With an aim to give exposure to talented youngsters from the National Capital, Krrish Delhi Smashers today decided to rope in five players from the city as part of the team for the inaugural edition of the Indian Badminton League that will be played across six cities from August 14 to 31.

Out of the five, one will be part of the team proper while the remaining four will be associated with the team for gaining experience.

Local star Utkarsh Arora would be the 11th player in the squad of Krrish Delhi Smashers. He is currently ranked 41st in the U-19 national junior singles ranking. He had won individual gold at 2012 School Nationals. According to tournament rules, an U-19 player will have to be included and he will be travelling with the team during the whole period of the competition.

"The whole idea behind buying the Delhi franchise was to provide a boost to Badminton in the National Capital. To achieve that goal, it was essential that we provide exposure to local talent and hence we have decided to include Utkarsh (Arora) He is a talented player and we hope he can pick invaluable experience being part of the team and playing with international players four junior players who will be travelling with the team," said Vagish Pathak, co-owner of Krrish Delhi Smashers.

Another Delhi player and India number 12 Mohita Sahdev will also become part of the team. Mohita was part of the Indian Badminton League (IBL) auction. Mohita too will be travelling with the Krrish Delhi Smashers and will be gaining opportunity to pick valuable coaching tips from Rashid Sidek.

Winner of 2012 Bahrain International Challenge in mixed doubles with Tanvir Gill, Mohita won the doubles crown in the state championship thrice before being employed by Airport Authority of India.

The Delhi franchise has also decided to provide three more youngsters -- Rishabh Sahdev, Gaurav Deswal and Tushar Aggarwal -- an opportunity to train with the squad in the run-up to the tournament, which will kick off at the Siri Fort Auditorium on August 14.

A former Junior State Champion, Rishabh Sahdev is the doubles partner of Utkarsh Arora. Gaurav Deswal was part of the School National Team that bagged the bronze medal in 2012.

Tushar Aggarwal is a former Junior State Champion in doubles and had represented Delhi state at Nationals.

"Our vision is that in next few years is representation of Delhi players in the National and International arena should increase and Delhi players should form the core of Krrish Delhi Smashers. This is just one step towards that direction," added Pathak.

The Delhi squad will be led by World Championship bronze medalist and Commonwealth Games gold medalist Jwala Gutta with 1996 Atlanta Olympics bronze medalist Rashid Sidek guiding them as the chief coach.
