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WOMEN'S INDIAN OPEN GOLF

Pranavi top Indian; MacLaren, Hillier in lead

Gurugram, Oct. 3: Teen amateur golfer Pranavi Urs nailed two late birdies to emerge as the best-placed Indian at Tied-10th after the opening round of the Hero Women's Indian Open here on Thursday.

The 16-year-old from Mysore, a past winner on the domestic pro tour, brought home a card of one-under 71 at the DLF Golf and Country Club to lie four shots behind the two leaders — England's Meghan MacLaren and Whitney Hilliers of Australia.

Meghan and Whitney

shared the lead at five-under 67.

Norwegian Marianne Skarpnord and England's Liz Young were tied third at four-under 68 each, while Swede Linda Wessberg (69) was fifth.

Four players, including Europe's Solheim Cup-winning captain, Catriona Matthew, were tied-sixth on two-under 70 and another eight players shot 71s to be Tied-10th including Pranavi.

Adding to the action on the first day was Lucknow-based 19-year-old Jyotsana Singh, a late entrant, who

aced the par-3 16th. She had an interesting finish — four bogeys between 13th and 18th with an ace in between on 16th for 73. She closed with two bogeys.

Pranavi, teeing off in the afternoon, played a steady out-bound nine to make the turn on level par 36. Though she dropped a shot early, back to back birdies in the final two holes made sure she would be the only Indian to go under par on the opening day.

Among other Indians, Diksha Dagar and domestic tour regulars Amandeep Drall and

Tvesa Malik were Tied-18th after carding 72 each.

Amandeep mixed three bogeys in her round, finishing off with an excellent birdie on the ninth hole, her last of the day with the pin awkwardly placed on a shelf right at the back of the green.

Diksha had an even more adventurous day in the course in which she hit five birdies but squandered those gains with three bogeys and a double, while Tvesa had a more sedate round, her two birdies cancelling out two

dropped shots. In each case, the final score for the day could have been a better one.

One shot behind them on one-over 73 and tied in 28th place were Neha Tripathi, Gaurika Bishnoi, Astha Madan and 19-year-old tour rookie Jyotsana Singh, who recorded the only hole-in-one on Thursday.

A further shot behind at 74 in shared 42nd were amateurs Seher Atwal and Jahnavi Bakshi, along with Vani Kapoor, for whom the DLF G&CC is her home course. — PTI