

India's Manu Attari –B. Sumeeth Reddy duo makes first Grand Prix Gold final at US Open GPG – 2015

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New York: After years of struggle, Manu Attri and B. Sumeeth Reddy finally reached the summit clash of a Badminton Grand Prix Gold event in Men's Doubles finals of the US Open – 2015 and become 'Runners – up'.

Though at World No. 26, the Indian pair was ranked higher than their opponents Chinese pair of Junhui Li and Yuchen Liu (No.29). The Chinese combine's skill, speed and agility proved better as they won 21-12, 21-16 to clinch the title at the Suffolk County Community College US Open GPG - 2015 on Sunday.

The Men's Doubles outfit of Manu Attri and Sumeeth Reddy tasted some International success as they waltzed into their maiden Grand Prix Gold final with a 21-17, 21-17 victory over fourth seeds Takeshi Kamura and Keigo Sonoda in the \$120,000 US Open in New York on Saturday.

Despite doing well in Singles, Indian Badminton has been struggling on the Men's Doubles front. But the performance of Manu and Sumeeth is likely to end that long wait.



(Manu Attari (left) and B. Sumeeth Reddy)

Doubles duo — Sumeeth Reddy and Manu Attri — have been quietly creating ripples in World Badminton. This pair is riding the crest of a wave of success as they became just the second Indian Men's Doubles combination, after Rupesh Kumar and Sanave Thomas, to make it to a Grand Prix final.

Ranked 26th in the world, Reddy and Attri continued their dream run in the US Open Grand Prix Gold tournament in New York when they ousted No 4 seeds Takeshi Kamura and Keigo Sonoda of Japan 21-17, 21-17 in 34 minutes to set up a summit clash with the Chinese pair of Junhui Li and Yuchen Lui, who are ranked 29th.

Twenty-four-year-old Reddy and 23-year-old Attri had earlier upset second seeds Hirokatsu Hashimoto and Noriyasu Hirata (15th) in three tough games in the second round, before beating the English duo of Marus Ellis and Chris Langridge in the next round.

Their previous best show in an International Tournament was a Semifinal place in this year's Syed Modi Grand Prix Gold Tournament at Lucknow, where they lost to Vladimir Ivanov and Ivan Sozomov (Russia).

National coach Pullela Gopichand was happy with the result. "It was on the cards as they've been playing consistently and have beaten many of the top ten pairs. It's only that they are not able to back it up with that one big win, which has been their undoing. I'm sure this final would put them in a better frame of mind for future Tournaments," said Gopichand, who in a way may have silenced his critics who were clamouring that he has not been encouraging doubles in the country.

Nevertheless, the finish is likely to take Manu and Sumeeth in the top-25 when the Badminton World Federation (BWF) releases its rankings come Thursday.
