

# Gill expected to come out stronger

Will Dean Mascrenhas be able to repeat his first round magic?

## MOTORSPORTS

RAYAN ROZARIO  
COIMBATORE

In Chennai a couple of months ago, even as all eyes were on India's most celebrated driver Gaurav Gill (co-driver Musa Sherif), a 26-year-old from Mangaluru – Dean Mascrenhas (Shruptha Padival) – backed by JK Tyres, stunned the field to win the opener.

Gill was at his best, but not his car (Mahindra XUV300), which ran into some minor issues. But, this time the Delhi star is expected to come out faster and stronger when the second round of the FMSCI Indian National Rally Championship (Rally of Coimbatore) for four-wheelers gets underway here on Saturday.

### Rains wreak havoc

Gill, the three-time APRC champion, believes in his own style of driving and has always been the man in form. But it's going to be



**Let the best man win:** The first round champion Dean Mascrenhas, shares a light moment with Gaurav Gill. ■SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

tough for him and even the best of the field the next two days as the rains have wreaked havoc.

"I have never seen a situa-

tion like this in a rally here. Obviously, it's going to be a big challenge for all. It's not against the competitors but the rally itself," said Gill. "It

is probably the first time in over two decades, I will be driving in such conditions at Coimbatore. The force of nature is such," he added.

But the Team Mahindra Adventure's star driver was fortunate enough to come out clean after the reece on Friday. There were quite a few who got stuck and it's only going to be worse from here for the participants if it continues to pour as it did the other day.

### No major drama

"There was no major drama for us, but it was extremely slushy. I appreciate the efforts of the organisers in bringing the terrain to shape quickly every time," said Gill, and quickly added that his car was doing fine with the new parts and rubbers (JK Tyres).

"We did some pre-testing too," he added. And, it's time for Gill to deliver.

The rally, which will cover a total distance of 141.09km, with 119.70km earmarked for eight special stages over two days, has attracted a record number of 65 entries of which Team Champions have fielded 25.