

Bihar retain junior Rugby 7s title in Dehradun

The Under-18 girls' team from Bihar extended their dominance over Odisha to successfully defend their title at the 2025 Junior National Rugby 7s Championship in Dehradun. Entering the final without conceding a single point, Bihar secured a hard-fought 14-5 victory, marking their third consecutive win over their closest rivals. Bihar and Odisha have firmly established themselves as the two leading teams at this level, regularly clashing in tournament finals in recent years. This year's showdown was a repeat of the 2022 and 2024 Junior Nationals finals, as well as the Khelo India Youth Games 2025 final held earlier this year in Patna - all won by Bihar.

Bihar seized early control of the final, scoring two tries and converting both to build a commanding first-half lead. Odisha launched a spirited fightback in the second half and became the first team to score against Bihar in the tournament, but it wasn't enough to dethrone the reigning champions. With this win, Bihar have now captured three of the last four Junior Nationals titles. In the third-place playoff, Maharashtra edged out surprise package Uttar Pradesh 17-12 to complete the podium.

Maharashtra, who also finished third last year, had to rally from a 12-0 deficit. Uttar Pradesh impressed with their first-ever appearance in the top four, signalling their emergence as a competitive force in youth rugby. Anshu Kumari led Bihar's campaign with an impressive tally of 11 tries. However, the tournament's top scorer was Aliyajasmin of Karnataka, who finished with 56 points, just one more than Anshu. The spotlight now shifts to the boys' U18 competition, with matches scheduled for July 12 and 13.

Results Summary: Final: Bihar 14-5 Odisha

For Bihar:

Alpana Kumari (Score: 10)

Saloni Kumari (Score: 4)

For Odisha:

Manisha Majhi (Score: 5)

Third Place Playoff: Maharashtra 17-12 Uttar Pradesh

For Maharashtra:

Anushka Sadashiv Sankpal (Score: 5)

Londhe Aditi Sakharam (Score: 2)

Rutuja Vasant Kamble (Score: 5)

Pranjali Bandu Bharate (Score: 5)

For Uttar Pradesh:

Khushi (Score: 10)

Alhama (Score: 2)