

Mohun Bagan duo Debjit and Sony shines, as rivals

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KOLKATA: It seemed appropriate that Sony Norde and Sameeh Doutie would come closest to scoring in the first half, given that Thierry Henry, one of football's best wide players in the last two decades, was watching.

Doutie failed to put Atletico de Kolkata ahead because he slipped after Iain Hume put the South African through and was denied by Romanian central defender Lucian Goian. But if Mumbai City FC's Norde wasn't on the scoresheet, it was because Debjit Majumder, the Haiti international's teammate at Mohun Bagan for two seasons, had his number on Tuesday night.

Majumder could do nothing when Diego Forlan blasted home in the 78th minute leading to ATK's first defeat of the season and taking Mumbai City FC to the top of the standings.

Norde, whose work ethic was applauded when he was substituted, had done the hard work. Having looked forlorn till then -- once he also had the ball easily taken away by Stephen



■ Diego Forlan of Mumbai City FC celebrates his goal against ATK during the ISL match in Kolkata on Tuesday. SUBHENDU GHOSH/HT

Pearson -- Forlan scored after Norde's pass took a deflection.

Sparsely used by Mumbai City FC in ISL2, Majumder denied them early and in the 33rd minute, kept Norde from

putting them ahead with a reflex save.

Two minutes later, he fisted out a Forlan free-kick even as Norde barreled into him. Used in all six games by a coach who

has played in goal for Spain, Majumder has shown he can make the jump from I-League to the ISL and, after Subhasish Roy Choudhury and Amrinder Singh, continued the trend of ATK playing Indian shot-stoppers who have been consistent.

Using three central defenders, Mumbai City FC crowded the midfield. They succeeded in the first half but ATK camped in the rival half for most of the second.

True, barring Hume's try, saved on the rebound, the home team didn't have clear chances but if substitutions indicate which team is in control, it could be had by ATK replacing central midfielder Pearson with striker Juan Beloncoso.

After the goal, ATK desperately lobbed deliveries into the box. Javi Lara's free-kick after Hume was fouled was their last chance but goalie Albino Gomes saved it. "We showed we had character after some bad results," said Goian.

Near the end of the match ATK coach Jose Molina was told to leave the field by referee Sandro Ricci.

RESULT: Mumbai City FC 1 (Forlan 78) ATK 0.