

WRESTLERS FLOOR STUDENTS

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London Olympics medal winners Sushil Kumar and Yogeshwar Dutt during a felicitation function at Velammal Matriculation Higher Secondary School in Chennai on Monday

London heroes in Chennai, city accords them a regal reception

Susan Ninan | TNN

Chennai: They had fought and won war on the mat for India. And they were welcomed back like true war heroes into the city.

Atop a silver chariot driven by a pair of white horses amid 'naadaswaram' and flower showers, the city welcomed Olympic medallists Sushil Kumar, Yogeshwar Dutt and coach Yashvir Singh in regal style on Monday.

Velammal Matriculation Higher Secondary School Mogappair played host to the occasion, felicitating silver medallist Sushil with ten lakh, bronze medallist Yogeshwar and coach Yashvir with five lakh each.

The city school, known for its penchant for honouring sporting icons and Olympians from the likes of Rahul Dravid

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The wrestlers, along with their coach, honoured students of the school who had excelled in sports both at national as well as international level.

barriers, they earnestly reached out to the students. They patiently heard out each query, offered replies in Hindi, which were translated into English by a student. When quizzed whether he regretted choosing wrestling over a popular sport like cricket, Sushil said, "There's little reason to regret since I chose a sport which I thoroughly enjoyed. With my two back-to-back medals I think I've proved that with hard work and diligence nothing is unattainable."

The more reticent of the two, Yogeshwar, recounted his journey to London which was fraught with challenges. "It has been a very hard ride to an Olympic medal. My family made a lot of sacrifices for me to get here. Now when I look back, I can smile at myself and say that all the blood, sweat and tears have finally paid off."