

Chennai Super Kings continues with its winning ways

After Imran Tahir has the Knight Riders' batsmen in a bind, Suresh Raina guides the defending champion home



S. DINAKAR
KOLKATA

Chennai Super Kings consistently wins the big moments, finds the right men for the occasion, possesses several match-winners.

Not for nothing is CSK a serial winner in the IPL. In this edition, the rollicking side already has one foot in the play-offs after its seventh win.

The five-wicket away victory, chasing 162, with two deliveries remaining over Kolkata Knight Riders in an engrossing duel at the packed and electrifying Eden Gardens here on Sunday was well earned by CSK.

In the first half of the match, Imran Tahir bowled with heart and craft to scalp four. There was flight, dip, deception and two-way turn in his bowling.

Superb catch

CSK's catching in the outfield was outstanding. The vibrant du Plessis held four; a sprinting, diving forward catch at long-off to dismiss Robin Uthappa being sensational.

Then Suresh Raina held centre-stage during the chase even as the KKR bowlers made inroads. When Piyush Chawla pitched short, he cut. When the leg-spinner gave more air, he stepped down to loft the ball straight for a six.

The southpaw pulled, flicked, ran hard and built partnerships during his



Roar of the lion: Tahir celebrated in his imitable style four times on Sunday as he rattled the Knight Riders with a spell that pegged the host back. ■K.R. DEEPAK

match-winner unbeaten 58.

The unbroken 41-run sixth-wicket association in 24 deliveries between the two left-handers, Raina and a rampant Ravindra Jadeja [the latter scored 31 of those], took CSK past the line with two deliveries remaining.

The final onslaught was perfectly timed after Chawla, mixing his googlies with leg-spin and top-spinners, had prised out Ambati Rayudu and Kedar Jadhav and M.S. Dhoni played around a delivery turning into him from the parsimonious Sunil Narine.

In the first half of the match, Man-of-the-Match Ta-

hir dared the batsmen with his flight and revolutions after CSK elected to field.

Nailing Russell

The duel between Tahir and the big-hitting Andre Russell was exhilarating. Getting the powerful West Indies to mistime a delivery spinning away from him represented CSK's best chance of dismissing Russell early.

(Dhoni) tells me what I need to do, where I need to bowl, and in which area the batsman is looking to hit

TAHIR

Russell loves to hit the ball between long-on and mid-wicket but to accomplish this against Tahir's leg-spin, he had to hit against the turn.

The West Indian backed himself to strike the ball over long on for the maximum, hitting against turn.

The wily Tahir had laid a

trap. The next ball was quicker and a wee bit shorter and had a little more bounce even as it spun away from Russell. The West Indian went for the on-side blow again, the ball struck the top portion of the bat and substitute Dhruv Shorey flung himself forward to hold a terrific catch at long-on.

Shardul Thakur caught the eye with his skiddy pace, control and yorkers.

The heavy hitting Lynn (82) impressed with his incredible bat-speed. He employs his willow like a sledgehammer, bludgeons the ball. Lynn's straight hitting and back-foot play – whether

SCOREBOARD

KOLKATA KNIGHT RIDERS

Chris Lynn c Thakur b Tahir 82 (51b, 7x4, 6x6), Sunil Narine c du Plessis b Santner 2 (7b), Nitish Rana c du Plessis b Tahir 21 (24b, 3x4), Robin Uthappa c du Plessis b Tahir 0 (1b), Dinesh Karthik c du Plessis b Thakur 18 (14b, 2x4), Andre Russell c sub b Tahir 10 (4b, 1x4, 1x6), Shubman Gill c Jadeja b Thakur 15 (20b), Piyush Chawla (not out) 4 (5b), Kuldeep Yadav run out 0 (0b); Extras (b-1, w-8): 9; Total (for eight wkts. in 20 overs): 161.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-38 (Narine, 4.5 overs), 2-79 (Rana, 10.2), 3-80 (Uthappa, 10.4), 4-122 (Lynn, 14.1), 5-132 (Russell, 14.5), 6-150 (Karthik, 17.2), 7-161 (Gill, 19.5), 8-161 (Kuldeep, 19.6).

SUPER KINGS BOWLING
Chahar 4-0-36-0, Thakur 4-0-18-2, Santner 4-0-30-1, Jadeja 4-0-49-0, Tahir 4-0-27-4.

CHENNAI SUPER KINGS
Shane Watson lbw b Gurney 6 (7b, 1x4), Faf du Plessis b Narine 24 (16b, 5x4), Suresh Raina (not out) 58 (42b, 7x4, 1x6), Ambati Rayudu c Uthappa b Chawla 5 (11b), Kedar Jadhav lbw Chawla 20 (12b, 3x4, 1x6), M.S. Dhoni lbw Narine 16 (13b, 1x6), Ravindra Jadeja (not out) 31 (17b, 5x4); Extras (w-2): 2; Total (for five wkts. in 19.4 overs): 162.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-29 (Watson, 3.1), 2-44 (du Plessis, 5.3), 3-61 (Rayudu, 9.1), 4-81 (Jadhav, 11.1), 5-121 (Dhoni, 15.4).

KNIGHT RIDERS BOWLING
Prasidh Krishna 4-0-30-0, Gurney 4-0-37-1, Russell 1-0-16-0, Narine 4-1-19-2, Kuldeep 3-0-28-0, Chawla 3-4-0-32-2.

Toss: Chennai Super Kings
Man-of-the-match: Imran Tahir
CSK won by five wkts. with two balls remaining.

hooking or creating room for inside-out strokes – was exhilarating.
But CSK had the final say.

Raina finds his touch

1 Suresh Raina has become the first player to score a minimum of 800 runs against two different teams (818 vs KKR and 803 vs MI). Kohli has 802 runs against DC.

3 All of CSK's last three chases against KKR have gone into the final over, and Jadeja has seen the team home in each of them.

4 Tahir is the fourth player above 40 to claim a four-for in the IPL, after Warne, Thame and Hogg.

50 Dhoni's strike rate against Narine in T20s – 38 runs from 76 balls with two dismissals (Avg: 19).



Innings scan

KKR	CSK
47	Dots 43
13	Fours 21
7	Sixes 3
49/1	PP 44/2
8.05	RR 8.23

Next assignment

KKR: April 19: vs RCB
Kolkata, 8 p.m.
CSK: April 17: vs SRH
Hyderabad, 8 p.m.

Rabada, Paul and Morris do the job for Capitals

After a good start, the Sunrisers lose the plot as the middle order fails again

V.V. SUBRAHMANYAM
HYDERABAD

Delhi Capitals bowlers showed greater discipline under pressure, despite shoddy catching, to help the team post a 39-run win and mar the script in Sunrisers Hyderabad's 100th match at the Rajiv Gandhi Stadium here on Sunday.

The middle-order failed again and there was not much to rave about the Sunrisers batting, except the perfect start by David Warner and Jonny Bairstow (72 off 59 balls).

Then it all began. Bairstow, after playing some extravagant strokes, including a straight six off Chris Morris, lofted Keemo Paul straight to long-off.

In his next over, Paul saw captain Kane Williamson's attempted loft taken brilliantly by a diving Kagiso Rabada at mid-off that put the brakes on Sunrisers' chase.

Paul completed a three-wicket haul without conceding a single boundary.

Soon, Rabada struck a double blow in the 17th over, removing Warner and Vijay Shankar. In the 18th, Morris struck thrice and later, Rabada finished with a four-wicket haul to ensure there were no more twists and turns as Capitals pulled off a remarkable win.



Fine spell: Keemo Paul completed a three-wicket haul without conceding a single boundary. ■K.V.S. GIRI

Earlier, Delhi Capitals, put in, was rattled by left-arm pacer Khaleel Ahmed, who justified his inclusion with a splendid first spell.

His diagonal line forced opener Prithvi Shaw to slash into wicketkeeper Bairstow's gloves. Shikhar Dhawan then pulled a bouncer from the left-armed only to be caught in the deep in the fourth over.

At the other end, Colin Munro was confidence personified as he first essayed a classy cover-drive to the fence and then pulled the next ball for a six.

Munro's cameo soon came to an end as he played a cut away from his body off

Innings scan	
46	Dots 47
14	Fours 8
4	Sixes 2
51/2	PP 40/0
7.75	RR 6.15

18-year-old left-arm spinner Abhishek Sharma, and edged to the wicketkeeper in the eighth over. Both Khaleel and Abhishek were playing their first match of IPL-12.

Captain Shreyas Iyer and southpaw Rishabh Pant then added 56 off 47 balls for the

SCOREBOARD SUNRISERS HYDERABAD VS DELHI CAPITALS

DELHI CAPITALS
Prithvi Shaw c Bairstow b Khaleel 4 (5b), Shikhar Dhawan c Bhuvneshwar b Khaleel 7 (8b, 1x4), Colin Munro c Bairstow b Abhishek 40 (24, 4x4, 3x6), Shreyas Iyer c Bairstow b Bhuvneshwar 45 (40b, 5x4), Rishabh Pant c Hooda b Khaleel 23 (18b, 3x4), Chris Morris b Rashid 4 (8b), Axar Patel (not out) 14 (11b, 1x4), Keemo Paul lbw Bhuvneshwar 7 (4b, 1x6), Kagiso Rabada (not out) 2 (2b); Extras: (lb-5, nb-1, w-3): 9; Total (for seven wkts. in 20 overs): 155.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-11 (Shaw, 1.5 overs), 2-20 (Dhawan, 3.2), 3-69 (Munro, 7.6), 4-125 (Shreyas, 15.5), 5-127 (Pant, 16.2), 6-133 (Morris, 18), 7-152 (Paul, 19.3).

SUNRISERS BOWLING
Bhuvneshwar 4-0-33-2, Khaleel 4-0-30-3, Sandeep 4-0-30-0, Hooda 1-0-8-0, Abhishek 1-0-10-1, Vijay Shankar 2-0-17-0, Rashid 4-0-22-1.

SUNRISERS HYDERABAD
David Warner c Shreyas b Ra-

bada 51 (47b, 3x4, 1x6), David Bairstow c Rabada b Paul 41 (31b, 5x4, 1x6), Kane Williamson c Rabada b Paul 3 (8b), Ricky Bhui c Axar b Paul 7 (12b), Vijay Shankar c Pant b Rabada 1 (2b), Deepak Hooda b Morris 3 (4b), Abhishek Sharma c Paul b Morris 2 (3b), Rashid Khan c Paul b Morris 0 (1b), Bhuvneshwar Kumar c & b Rabada 2 (4b), Sandeep Sharma (not out) 1 (1b), Khaleel Ahmed b Rabada 0 (1b); Extras (nb-1, w-4): 5; Total (in 18.5 overs): 116.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-72 (Bairstow, 9.5), 2-78 (Williamson, 11.4), 3-101 (Bhui, 15.2), 4-106 (Warner, 16.2), 5-106 (Vijay Shankar, 16.3), 6-110 (Hooda, 17.2), 7-110 (Rashid, 17.3), 8-112 (Abhishek, 17.6), 9-116 (Bhuvneshwar, 18.4 ov).

DELHI CAPITALS BOWLING
Ishant 3-0-19-0, Rabada 3.5-0-22-4, Morris 3-0-22-3, Axar 2-0-23-0, Paul 4-0-17-3, Mishra 3-0-13-0.

Toss: Sunrisers Hyderabad.
Man-of-the-match: Paul.
Capitals won by 39 runs.

Capitals ended with a far less challenging score even as Bhuvneshwar claimed his 100th wicket for Sunrisers.

Next assignment
SRH: April 17: vs CSK
Hyderabad, 8 p.m.
DC: April 18: vs MI
New Delhi, 8 p.m.

G. VISWANATH
MUMBAI

A little over two months ago, when the team for the five-match home ODI series against Australia was decided, the choice of Rishabh Pant at the expense of Dinesh Karthik set off a debate.

The rationale behind Pant's selection was that he had proved his worth in the Test series in England and Australia and that his natural big-hitting capabilities could result in strengthening the lower middle-order.

The time has arrived for the selectors – Jatin Paranjape and Gagan Khoda returned to the three-man committee comprising M.S.K. Prasad, Devang Gandhi and Sarandeep Singh after a Supreme Court order last August – to once again decide between Pant and Karthik.

The team for the World Cup will be named here on Monday.

Apart from solving the Pant-Karthik puzzle, the committee, along with captain Virat Kohli and coach Ravi Shastri, will also have to decide on Ambati Rayudu's fate, which seems to be hanging by a slender thread.

The 33-year-old, who failed the YoYo test and was not considered for the series in England last year, has been India's primary No. 4 batsman, scoring 464 runs

WC squad to be named today

World Cup competition. Sachin Tendulkar who has scored 1,767 as opener, is also the highest at No. 4 with 400.



Rishabh Pant. ■FILE PHOTO

at 42.18 and an overall aggregate of 639 runs at 42.60 in 20 innings after the last Champions Trophy.

Historically India has never had a successful No. 4 in

Having made a conscientious effort to pick the best for ODIs, starting with the tour of South Africa in early 2018, it should not be tall ask for the selectors to name the 15 for the World Cup.

Ravindra Jadeja as third spinner-all-rounder, Vijay Shankar as all-rounder and K.L. Rahul look certain.

The BCCI has decided to announce the team eight days ahead of the deadline. It can also make modifications to the team till May 23.

Report card

The probables who have played 10 or more ODIs since the ICC Champions Trophy (2017)

Virat Kohli (43 matches/43 innings/ 2830 runs)	Bhuvneshwar Kumar (41/17/315/50 wkts)
Rohit Sharma (48/48/2575) (11/9/179)	Manish Pandey (17/9/179)
Shikhar Dhawan (47/47/1927) (50/38/1158)	Ravindra Jadeja (17/9/132/19 wkts)
Mahendra Singh Dhoni (16/8/22/26 wkts)	Kuldeep Yadav (44/18/100/87 wkts)
Ajinkya Rahane (17/16/725)	Yuzvendra Chahal (38/7/34/66 wkts)
Kedar Jadhav (39/27/672/18 wkts)	Mohammed Shami (16/8/22/26 wkts)
Ambati Rayudu (21/20/639)	Jasprit Bumrah (33/717/59 wkts)
Hardik Pandya (33/21/466/31 wkts)	Umesh Yadav (10/3/2/15 wkts)
Dinesh Karthik (20/17/425)	

OTHERS IN CONTENTION | Vijay Shankar (9/5/165/2 wkts) | K.L. Rahul (8/7/123) | Rishabh Pant (5/4/93)



Looking for support: Bumrah needs another bowler who can strangle the opposition at the death. ■VIVEK BENDRE

Jolted Mumbai will be wary of Royal Challengers

AMOL KARHADKAR
MUMBAI

When Mumbai Indians travelled to Bengaluru in the first week of IPL-12, the clash between outfits led by Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma lived up to its billing. However, the thrilling finish was overshadowed by the no-ball controversy.

The fans in Mumbai will hope that quality – and not controversy – trickles down to the Wankhede Stadium on Monday. With the IPL entering its second half, there are plenty of reasons for the home team to be wary of Kohli's team.

MI will be more jittery going into the clash, given the

fact that bottom-placed Royal Challengers Bangalore finally managed to register its maiden win on Saturday with valuable contributions from Kohli and A.B. de Villiers.

Both Kohli and de Villiers have played quite a few scintillating knocks at the Wankhede in the past and MI would know that the two cannot be allowed to get their eye in.

Death bowling

In this respect, MI will desperately be looking for meaningful support to Jasprit Bumrah in the pace department, especially at the death.

Alzarri Joseph's dream IPL start with a six-for has been

followed with the young West Indian being taken to the cleaners in the last two games. It won't be surprising if MI brings in the experienced Lasith Malinga in his place for the key clash.

Today's match

MUMBAI INDIANS vs ROYAL CHALLENGERS BANGALORE

MUMBAI, 8 P.M.

HEAD-TO-HEAD

Played: 24

MI 15 | RCB 9

Live on Star Sports 1, 2 & Select 1 (SD & HD), 8 p.m.

If Krunal Pandya and Rahul Chahar, MI's two specialist spinners, can match the wicket-taking abilities of RCB's leggie Yuzvendra Chahal in the middle overs, the home team will heave a big sigh of relief.

Despite the loss against Royals, MI was heartened to see captain Rohit and Quinton de Kock fire at the top. They will both have to deliver if MI has to start the fortnight-long away stretch well.

For RCB, despite notching up a win, Kohli's cavaliers are far from being in contention for a spot in the PlayOffs. The lack of pressure may well continue to work for the visitors.

It will be interesting to see if RCB gives another opportunity to all-rounder Shivam Dube at his home ground.

Top of the charts

ORANGE CAP

David Warner (SRH)

Matches: 7 | Runs: 400

HS: 100* | S/R: 140.35

PURPLE CAP

Kagiso Rabada (DC)

Matches: 8 | Wickets: 17

BB: 4/21 | Econ: 7.70

*after the SRH-DC match on April 14

Kohli fined

PROS TRUST OF INDIA
MOHALI
Royal Challengers Bangalore captain Virat Kohli has been fined ₹12 lakh for slow over-rate during the IPL match against Kings XI Punjab here. "As it was his team's first offence of the season, under the IPL's Code of Conduct relating to minimum over-rate offences, Kohli was fined ₹12 lakh," read a statement.