

IPL cap on players' salaries to go

Australian cricketers are expecting to attract astronomical salaries in the next Indian Premier League (IPL) season with reports filtering in that the cap on salary for each IPL franchise would be scrapped.

Several of Australia's leading players have been told that the \$5 million salary cap for each IPL franchise will be abolished and players could get contracts of up to \$15 million, according to a report in The Daily Telegraph.

Top Australian players said their franchises were prepared to splurge many more millions.

Test opener Matthew Hayden confirmed he had heard the IPL salary cap would be wiped out in the future and said there seemed little doubt that payments would go through the roof. 'From what I have heard, some of the stuff (payments) this year could be just the tip of the iceberg,' Hayden said.

The recent developments are indications that IPL franchises will be shelling out more than what Mahendra Singh Dhoni and Andrew Symonds got this year,

Dhoni told one senior Australian player last week that he had come to know that IPL's biggest names could expect contracts of up to \$14-15 million after the salary cap is abolished.

IPL chairman Lalit Modi does not disguise the fact that the salary cap could soon be a thing of the past.

Modi said he only set the salary cap for the first season of the IPL because he did not want only a select few rich teams who could win the title.

'If we had not done that, I can tell you that our players would already be the highest-paid across any sport in the world,' Modi said. 'It will happen - if not today, then tomorrow. Because once the franchises have established themselves, it will be a free-for-all.'

The news might not go down well with Cricket Australia (CA) officials. Australian players could be forced to choose between country and dollars next year with the 2009 IPL set to clash with Australia's Test tour of South Africa and a one-day series in Pakistan.

If the IPL salary cap is quashed, as expected, leading international players could earn more for seven weeks of IPL than they could in a whole career toiling for their country.

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