

Kings XI inflict nine-wicket drubbing to Royal Challengers

[Bangalore](#) Royal Challengers slumped to a humiliating nine-wicket loss against Kings XI Punjab in the Indian Premier League (IPL) Twenty20 match here Monday.

Riding on an unbeaten 74 from Shaun Marsh, Kings XI achieved the target of 144 in just 15.4 overs by losing the wicket of James Hopes (27). Luke Pomersbach was not out on 34 to compliment the brilliant efforts of his team's bowlers who wrapped up the Royal Challengers for 143 for the loss of eight in 20 overs. Shaun was also elected as the Man of the Match.

With the loss, troubles don't seem to end for the Royal Challengers, who are plagued by off-field controversies, and now it seems that the bottom-placed side is all but out of the semi-finals. The Mohali team after their sixth win from nine matches are placed second.

The pressure was clearly on the Royal Challengers as they were desperately looking for a win. Their batting crumbled and Kings XI pacers made the best of the little assistance they got from the pitch.

Sreesanth and Irfan Pathan swung the ball both ways and were too hot to be handled by the Bangalore batsmen. Sreesanth did most of the damage, picking up three for 29 from his four overs and also accounted for the important wicket of Pakistani Misbah-ul-Haq (21).

Sreesanth also gave the home team the first breakthrough by picking up Arun Kumar in the first ball of the second over and Mahela Jayawardene completing a straightforward catch at first slip.

Misbah, who replaced Shivnarine Chanderpaul, showed some flashes of brilliance and with Virat Kohli (21) looked to give the beleaguered Royal Challengers a good start after the opening set-back.

The Pakistani launched into Sreesanth, but the bowler had the last laugh after Misbah trodded onto his stumps while pushing a delivery to the off side, and departed for an entertaining eight-ball innings 21.

Yuvraj Singh played a gamble by bring on leg-spinner Piyush Chawla in the last over. Chawla initially proved costly after Kohli hit him for two fours. But a straighter delivery from Chawla kept a bit low and rattled Kohli's stumps.

Cameron White (10) and Dravid (29) struggled to keep up with the pace and surrendered without a fight-back. Chawla picked up his second wicket when White attempted to heave the leg-spinner over mid-wicket but a top-edge saw Chawla taking a splendid catch. Dravid also perished and failed to improvise himself in the crunch situation, which has now given his critics much fodder.

A few big hits by wicketkeeper Mark Boucher (39) helped the Bangalore team put 143 runs on board.

Kings XI never looked at unease while chasing the modest target of 144. Shaun played some beautiful shots and helped them romp home safely. His innings lasted 51 balls and he hit nine boundaries and a couple of sixes.

Shaun and James Hopes (27) gave the Mohali team a brilliant start by adding 42 runs for the first

wicket in 6.2 overs. The opening partnership proved crucial in swinging the fate in Kings XI favour. Pomersbach then played a small cameo of 34 runs from 24 balls to complete the formalities.

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