

Mishra's hat-trick puts back Daredevils in race

Leg-spinner Amit Mishra took a hat-trick as Delhi Daredevils ended their losing streak with a 12-run victory over Deccan Chargers in a thrilling Twenty20 match of the Indian Premier League (IPL) here Thursday.

Put into bat, Daredevils scored 194 for six with half centuries from Gautam Gambhir (79) and Shikhar Dhawan (68 not out). In reply, Mishra ran through the Deccan Chargers batting line-up and in the last over took the second hat-trick of the IPL, after [Chennai](#) Super Kings' Laxmipathy Balaji, to restrict the visitors at 182 for nine in 20 overs.

Mishra who took five wickets for 17 was adjudged the Man of the Match.

The much-needed win brought back Daredevils into the race for the semi-final berth while Chargers are already out of it and are fighting only to salvage some pride.

Chasing 195 was always going to be a tough task, and Chargers' ploy of sending the explosive Shahid Afridi (33) to open the innings for the first time in the league paid off.

The Pakistani increased the tempo of the game with his big hitting and gave the visitors a brilliant start along with captain Adam Gilchrist (14).

McGrath took on some pounding from the batsmen but was lucky to get the wicket of his former Australia team-mate Gilchrist, who perished to a brilliant diving catch taken by Tillakaratne Dilshan at mid-off.

Gilchrist's dismissal brought big-hitter Herschelle Gibbs (22), who along with Afridi tore the bowling apart. Even McGrath was not spared as Gibbs hit the veteran for two sixes, one over extra cover and the other over point. They brought 50 in just 4.1 overs.

It was Mishra who broke the deadly partnership and brought Daredevils back into the match with his twin strikes. With his first delivery he got rid of Afridi, whose mis-hit was pouched safely by substitute AB de Villiers. Gibbs's stumps were rattled by a googly from Mishra.

Rohit Sharma (35) sizzled for some overs, taking 19 runs off Rajat Bhatia's one over but was clean bowled while trying a paddle sweep off Farveez Mahroof.

Venugopal Rao (34) then hit some big strokes to bring the match alive once again. He hit Mahroof for two sixes and one four in the 18th over and brought the equation to 25 runs required from last two overs.

McGrath came back to take the crucial wicket of Rao, who skied the ball to substitute Shoaib Malik.

With 15 runs needed in the last over, Sehwag showed faith in the best bowler of the day - Mishra, who kept his nerves and took a hat-trick: Teja, Pragyan Ojha and Rudra Pratap Singh were his victims in the first three balls.

Earlier, Daredevils who were looking for an explosive start to the innings were rocked by the loss of

skipper Sehwag in the first over. Sehwag got out in his typical fashion, trying to slash the sixth delivery from Vijaykumar over third man only to find fielder Rudra Pratap Singh.

Gambhir with his 79 off 48 then rose to the occasion to help Daredevils post a challenging total. Gambhir and Dhawan's solid second wicket stand of 133 runs in 14 overs made things difficult for the Chargers.

The duo batted sensibly and picked the bad deliveries to score the boundaries. It was not until the 13th over when Gambhir and Dhawan, realising the urgency to lift the scoring rate, decided to go after the bowling.

And Afridi was the hapless bowler at the other end. Gambhir charged down the pitch for a straight six before Dhawan blasted two boundaries.

Gambhir got a life when Rohit dropped a difficult chance while running backwards in the mid-wicket.

Gilchrist perhaps made the mistake of bringing young left arm spinner Ojha a shade too late.

Ojha first removed Gambhir with a clever piece of bowling. He read Gambhir's attacking mindset and foxed him with a wide down the leg side as he danced down the track in a rush of blood. The result was a simple stumping for Gilchrist.

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