

Pollock, Jayasuriya star in Mumbai Indians win

Two old war horses of [Mumbai](#) Indians, Shaun Pollock and Sanath Jayasuriya, joined forces to give a mesmerising performance that blew away [Kolkata](#) Knight Riders by eight wickets in an Indian Premier League contest here Friday night.

Pollock (3-12) produced one of the best spells of the tournament to plot the spectacular collapse of Knight Riders, who crashed to 67, the lowest score of the tournament. Sri Lankan veteran Jayasuriya (48 off 17 balls) then tore the bowling apart to gatecrash at the victory doorstep in just 5.3 overs.

Twenty20 cricket, which is dubbed as the youngsters game, Friday saw these two veterans proving the saying wrong.

Knight Riders, who had handed out the Royal Challengers a massive 142-run defeat in the first match, slumped to the second biggest defeat of the tournament. Their chances of reaching the semi-final are more thorny now.

Mumbai Indians are on a roll with five wins on the trot and have six more matches to go. With Sachin Tendulkar at the helm, they are a completely changed outfit from the side that lost four matches in a row.

Even Tendulkar, who elected to field, must not have believed what unfolded in front of his eyes as the Knight Riders' wickets fell like nine pins. The wicket was helpful for the fast bowlers and had disconcerting bounce and movement. Pollock was at ease on the surface. He pitched his deliveries on the driving length, got the ball to seam around, just nagging enough for the batsmen to force an edge.

None of the batsmen though showed any application to tackle the moving ball and kept on repeating the mistakes.

Pollock made the ball dance to his tune while Dwayne Bravo (2-13), Domnic Thornley (2-7) and Rohan Raje (2-16) also bowled with accuracy and reaped benefit.

Tendulkar too was precise with his field placings and his ploy of attacking the batsmen right from the word go paid dividends.

Tendulkar pouched four catches, three at slips, while as many as six catches went behind the wicket. The way the slip fielders came into play looked as if a Test match was unfolding in-front of a packed Wankhede stadium.

Salman Butt (15) smashed a boundary and a six off Pollock and Ashish Nehra in the first two overs before Pollock struck in the third over.

Butt, while playing a Pollock delivery to mid wicket, gave a thick outside edge which went straight to Tendulkar at first slip. A terrible mix-up between Sourav Ganguly (15) and Akash Chopra in the next ball saw the latter stranded in the middle and was run out.

Pollock bowled another beauty when he drew David Hussey forward and forced an edge behind the stumps. Mohammad Hafiz was stuck in the crease and went out in a similar fashion to Pollock. Only this time the catch flew to Robin Uthappa at second slip.

Dwayne Bravo got rid of Wriddhiman Saha, who again nicked to Tendulkar at first slip.

Raje then removed Laxmi Shukla with his first delivery, uprooting his off stump and Knight Riders were staring at disaster with six wickets gone for just 35 runs.

Ajit Agrarkar (15) hit Raje for two successive boundaries and then added 20 runs with Ganguly before the latter nicked one back to Thornely. Bravo got rid of Agrarkar and Knight Riders succumbed without any semblance of a fight.

Knight Riders' only hope now rested on Shoaib Akhtar, who had bowled a devastating spell in the last match against Delhi Daredevils.

Mumbai had Sanath Jayasuriya and Sachin Tendulkar taking the strike. Shoaib responded in style, generating pace and bounce and kept Tendulkar on his toes for four balls before getting the crucial breakthrough in the next.

Jayasuriya, who hit a breathless century against Super Kings, took the bull by the horns and whacked Akhtar for 20 runs in his next over. The two sixes and two fours off Akhtar dashed Knight Riders' chances of any comeback. Jayasuriya's hitting is all about power and grace and tonight he demonstrated it again. A flick of wrist here, a mid-arm jab there was enough for him to spank the deliveries out of ground. He hit six fours and three sixes and the match finished in a whisker.

(© IANS / India eNews)