

Royal Challengers stun Super Kings with 14-run victory

[Bangalore](#) Royal Challengers, placed at the bottom of the Indian Premier League (IPL) points tally, pulled off a stunning 14-run win against hot favourites [Chennai](#) Super Kings here Wednesday night.

Royal Challengers, who won the toss and decided to bat first, could score only a paltry 126 for eight in 20 overs. In reply, Super Kings wasted a good start and threw away their wickets to end up at 112 for eight.

It was the fifth defeat for Super Kings and could well dash their hopes of qualifying for the semi-finals as they need to win their remaining two matches, against Rajasthan Royals and the Deccan Chargers.

Super Kings started well but collapsed quite dramatically as Man of the Match Anil Kumble took three for 14 and fast bowler Dale Steyn came up with a superb second spell to provide Challengers their third win in 12 matches.

Parthiv Patel (24) and Stephen Fleming (45) batted sensibly to provide a solid foundation to the chase with a 60-run partnership off 54 balls and Super Kings looked well on the way to an easy victory.

Patel was fortunate to get away with a top-edged hook off Jacques Kallis with Anil Kumble and skipper Rahul Dravid going for the catch and dropping it. However, he did not survive for long, offering a return catch to Kumble.

By then, Super Kings were more than half-way to the target, but Challengers came up with a last-ditch effort that saw veteran Kumble coming into his own with a three-wicket haul, besides taking a catch in the deep to dismiss skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni. Soon, Super Kings's run rate fell to a crawl.

Later, Steyn, bowling his second spell after going for 25 in his opening two overs, removed Albie Morkel (1) and Vidyut Sivaramakrishnan (0) who was brilliantly caught by veteran Kallis, in the space of three deliveries to provide a fresh twist to the contest.

At 93 for six at the end of 16 overs, the Super Kings were skating on thin ice and they continued to hurtle towards disaster as Manpreet Gony (4) fell to Praveen Kumar attempting another big hit before Lakshmipathy Balaji was run out in the 19th over to reduce the hosts to 110 for eight with their hopes resting on Suresh Raina, who had come in at No.4.

Going into the final over, Super Kings needed 16 runs, a task that proved beyond their reach.

Earlier, Royal Challengers, out of contention for a semi-final berth, put forth yet another insipid performance with the bat as their innings progressed at the snail's pace with Super Kings bowlers giving little away.

Only late in the innings did the run-rate pick up as Dravid (47, 39b, 5x4) and Praveen (21, 11b, 1x6, 2x4) played some attacking shots to save the blushes.

Gony was pick of the Super Kings bowlers with a spell of 4-1-11-2 as he dismissed both openers, Kallis (5) and Sreevats Goswami (10) in his second and fourth overs.

The Challengers batting line-up never really recovered from the disastrous start and worse was to follow as Virat Kohli fell for 10, lofting Muttiah Muralitharan to deep mid-wicket where Morkel took a brilliant, tumbling catch.

In the process, the South African all-rounder injured himself and left the field. He returned soon after to pick up two important wickets, those of Mark Boucher and Dravid, followed by a double strike in the final over to remove Praveen and Vinay Kumar off consecutive deliveries for a haul of 4 for 32.

Overall, the Super Kings bowlers showed a lot of discipline, conceding just one wide and although Balaji and Morkel went for a few runs as Challengers sought to step up the pace, the hosts never lost control over the proceedings.

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