

Super Giants survive Knights scare in high-scoring thriller

Kolkata Knight Riders skipper Rahane's power-packed 61 off 35 balls nearly pulled off highest-ever run chase but Lucknow Super Giants' spin attack led by Bishnoi, Rathi applied brakes just in time to seal a thrilling win

PTI, KOLKATA: Lucknow Super Giants held their nerve in a high-octane, high-scoring contest to edge past Kolkata Knight Riders by four runs in a pulsating IPL encounter at Eden Gardens, here, on Tuesday.

On a night dominated by batting fireworks, KKR skipper Ajinkya Rahane rolled back the years with a reinvented, power-packed 61 off 35 balls, nearly pulling off KKR's highest-ever run chase.

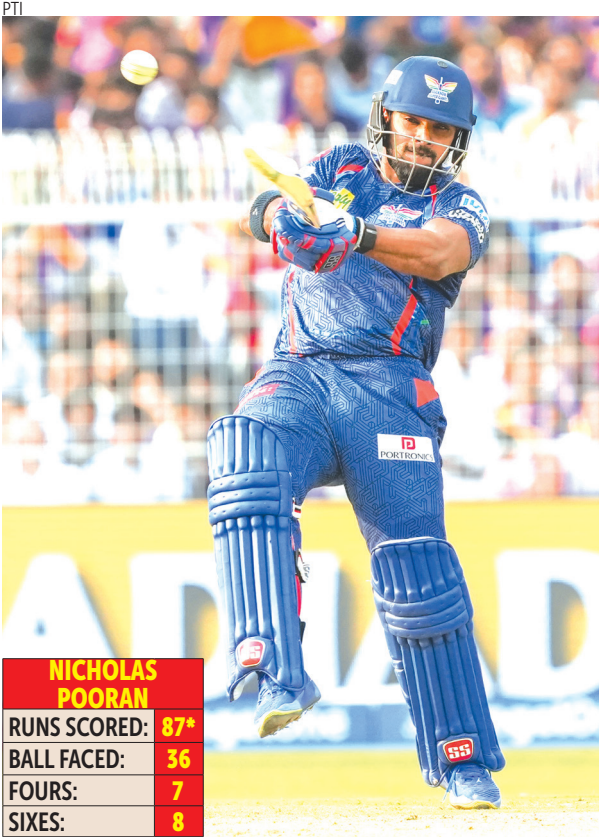
But LSG's spin attack, led by Ravi Bishnoi and Digvesh Rathi, applied the brakes just in time to seal a thrilling win limiting them to 234/7. LSG jumped to fourth spot with six points after their third win, while KKR remained on four points at sixth place.

Earlier, Mitchell Marsh (81 off 39) continued his sensational form with a fourth fifty of the season, while Nicholas Pooran launched a brutal assault with a 21-ball half-century, finishing unbeaten on 87 (not out), as LSG piled up their second-highest IPL total -- 238/3 -- after being put in to bat.

Rahane, usually known for his timing and elegance, stunned the LSG bowlers with audacious strokeplay.

In a transformed avatar, he tore into the Indian pace attack -- Akash Deep (43 in 3 overs), Shardul Thakur (30 in 2 overs), and Avesh Khan (17 in 1 over) -- setting up KKR's best-ever powerplay score since 2017, racing to 90/1.

Rahane's sparkling knock ended against the run of play, falling victim to Shardul Thakur's wide-ball play. After sending down five



NICHOLAS POORAN
RUNS SCORED: 87*
BALL FACED: 36
FOURS: 7
SIXES: 8

Lucknow Super Giants' batter Nicholas Pooran in action during the Indian Premier League match against Kolkata Knight Riders, at Eden Gardens, in Kolkata, West Bengal, on Tuesday

SCOREBOARD

Lucknow Super Giants: Aiden Markram b Rana 47, Mitchell Marsh c Singh b Russell 81, Nicholas Pooran not out 87, Abdul Samad b Rana 6, David Miller not out 4. **Extras:** 13. **Total:** 238-3. **Fall of wickets:** 99-1, 170-2, 221-3. **Bowling:** Vaibhav Arora 4-0-35-0, Spencer Johnson 3-0-46-0, Varun Chakaravarthy 4-0-31-0, Harshit Rana 4-0-51-2, Sunil Narine 3-0-38-0, Andre Russell 2-0-32-1.

Kolkata Knight Riders: Quinton de Kock lbw b Deep 15, Sunil Narine c Markram b Rathi 30, *Ajinkya Rahane c Pooran b Thakur 61, Venkatesh Iyer c Markram b Deep 45, Ramandeep Singh c Markram b Bishnoi 1, Angkrish Raghuvanshi c Pant b Khan 5, Andre Russell c Miller b Thakur 7, Rinku Singh not out 38, Harshit Rana not out 10. **Extras:** 22. **Total:** 234-7. **Fall of wickets:** 37-1, 91-2, 161-3, 165-4, 172-5, 176-6, 184-7. **Bowling:** Akash Deep 4-0-55-2, Shardul Thakur 4-0-52-2, Avesh Khan 4-0-45-1, Digvesh Rathi 4-0-33-1, Ravi Bishnoi 4-0-47-1.

Man-of-the match: Nicholas Pooran

wides in the over, a frustrated Rahane chased a wide delivery and gifted a simple catch to Nicholas Pooran at cover. Incidentally, LSG bowled 20 wides in a tactical strategy that seemed to have worked in the end.

His transformed innings had put KKR firmly in control. At 162/3 in 13 overs, KKR were cruising with a current run rate of 12.46, comfortably ahead of the required 11 per over, needing just 77 off 42 balls.

But Rahane's dismissal stalled the momentum and triggered a collapse as KKR lost four wickets for just 15 runs, slipping to 177/6 in 15.2 overs.

LSG struck four times in as many overs as the boundaries dried up -- KKR went 13 balls without a four or six. Ravi Bishnoi removed Ramandeep Singh in the next over a surprising promotion ahead of the inform Angkrish Raghuvanshi and Rinku Singh. The decision backfired.

Raghuvanshi too fell soon after, undone by a clever low yorker from Avesh Khan. Attempting a reverse ramp, he only managed to lob a simple catch to Rishabh Pant, leaving KKR suddenly wobbling.

Avesh Khan leaked 14 runs in the penultimate over but Ravi Bishnoi managed to hold his nerve and defend 24 runs in the last over despite Rinku Singh's presence at the crease.

Left-arm spinner Digvesh Rathi, a find of the season for LSG, impressed again with 1/33, including the prized wicket of Sunil Narine -- his idol -- off his very first ball.

Rookie Arya dazzles for Punjab Kings

Scores 103 off 42 balls to set up 18-run win over Chennai Super Kings

PTI, MULLANPUR: Rookie opener Priyansh Arya delivered on his high promise with a sensational hundred before the bowlers survived M S Dhoni's late onslaught to script an 18-run win for Punjab Kings over Chennai Super Kings in the IPL here on Tuesday.

Priyansh (103 off 42) powered Punjab Kings to 219 for six, the highest total at the venue, after the hosts lost half their side inside the first eight overs.

CSK batters have not been good enough thus far in the season but the likes of Devon Conway (69 off 49 retired out), Rachin Ravindra (36 off 23) and Shivam Dube (42 off 27) were able to take the game deep on this occasion. However, CSK fell short and ended at 201 for five.

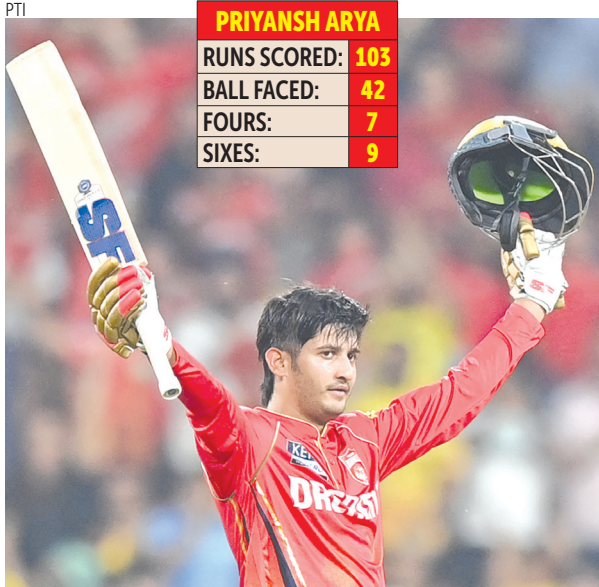
It was CSK's fourth loss in five games while Punjab Kings recorded their third win in four matches.

The equation for CSK came down to 75 runs off the last 30 balls. Much to the delight of fans present at the venue, Dhoni (27 off 12) came to bat at number five after Dube's fall in the 16th over.

With Dube going ballistic in the middle overs, Punjab Kings had to wait till the 17th over to get their main spinner Yuzvendra Chahal into operation.

It was Lockie Ferguson's turn to bowl the 18th over and that was when Dhoni provided a glimmer of hope for CSK with two sixes off as many balls. However, 43 off the last 12 balls ended up being too much for the away team.

Punjab Kings were poor in the field, dropping as many as four catches but were still able to get over



Punjab Kings' Priyansh Arya celebrates after scoring a century during the Indian Premier League match against Chennai Super Kings at the Maharaja Yadavindra Singh International Cricket Stadium, Chandigarh, on Tuesday

the line.

The night belonged to Priyansh, the 24-year-old from Delhi who rose to prominence with six sixes

in an over in a local league last year.

He flaunted his special six-hitting skills on the national stage to lift Punjab

SCOREBOARD

Punjab Kings: Priyansh Arya c Shankar b Ahmad 103, Prabhsimran Singh b Choudhary 0, *Shreyas Iyer b Ahmed 9, Marcus Stoinis c Conway b Ahmed 4, Nehal Wadhwa c Dhoni b Ashwin 9. Glenn Maxwell c and b Ashwin 1, Shashank Singh not out 52, Marco Jansen not out 34. **Extras:** 7. **Total:** 219-6.

Fall of wickets: 17-1, 32-2, 54-3, 81-4, 83-5, 154-6. **Bowling:** Khaleel Ahmed 4-0-45-2, Mukesh Choudhary 2-0-21-1, Ravichandran Ashwin 4-0-48-2, Ravindra Jadeja 3-0-18-0, Noor Ahmad 3-0-32-1, Matheesha Pathirana 4-0-52-0.

Chennai Super Kings: Rachin Ravindra c Singh b Maxwell 36, Devon Conway retired out 69, *Ruturaj Gaikwad c Singh b Ferguson 1, Shivam Dube b Ferguson 42, MS Dhoni c Chahal b Thakur 27, Ravindra Jadeja not out 9, Vijay Shankar not out 2. **Extras:** 15. **Total:** 201-4. **Fall of wickets:** 61-1, 62-2, 151-3, 192-4. **Bowling:** Arshdeep Singh 4-0-39-0, Yash Thakur 4-0-39-1, Glenn Maxwell 2-0-11-1, Marco Jansen 4-0-48-0, Lockie Ferguson 4-0-40-2, Marcus Stoinis 1-0-10-0, Yuzvendra Chahal 1-0-9-0.

Man-of-the-match: Priyansh Arya

TODAY'S IPL FIXTURE

Gujarat Titans vs Rajasthan Royals, at the Narendra Modi Stadium, Ahmedabad, at 7.30 pm

Kings to an above par total. His knock included seven boundaries and nine hits over the fence.

The commendable recovery was also made possible by Shashank Singh (52 not out off 36 balls) who made sure Punjab Kings cashed in on the platform laid by Arya. Number eight Marco Jansen (34 not out off 19) also played his part to perfection.

Head coach Ricky Ponting had spoken highly of Priyansh at the start of the season and on Tuesday, the left-hander repaid the immense faith which the Australian legend showed on him.

After two successive failures, Priyansh was under pressure but the way he started his innings, slaying pacer Khaleel Ahmed for six over point, set the tone for his memorable effort.

Priyansh loves smashing sixes down the ground but after picking Ponting's brains, he seems to have upped his game square of the wicket. With the ease he deposited Matheesha Pathirana's short balls in the 13th over was a testament to that.

After three straight sixes off the Sri Lanka pacer, the next one was a four towards third man off a mis-hit that took him to three figures.

What also stood out in Priyansh's stellar knock was the manner in which he played veteran spinner R Ashwin. He collected three sixes off Ashwin though one of them should have been a catch at the boundary.

CSK's leading wicket taker Noor Ahmed was introduced in the 11th over and Shahank welcomed him into the attack with a massive six over wide long-on.

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