

# It's right up there but still five notches below Test cricket: Kohli on IPL triumph

PTI, AHMEDABAD: It's right up there with the "best moments" of his storied career but Virat Kohli would still rank the IPL trophy, won after 18 years of toil, five notches below his Test achievements as he believes the longest format is the one that earns a player respect. The 36-year-old, who retired from Tests last month, won the IPL for the first time when his franchise Royal Challengers Bengaluru edged past Punjab Kings by six runs in the season finale on Tuesday night.

"You know, this moment is right up there with the best moments I've had in my career. But it still marks five levels under Test cricket," an emotionally overwhelmed Kohli told the tournament broadcaster. "That's how much I value Test cricket. And that's how much I love Test cricket," he added.

Considered the biggest promoter of the red-ball cricket in the past decade, Kohli urged youngsters to respect Test cricket and chase greatness in that format for a lasting legacy.

"So I would just urge the youngsters coming through, to treat that format with respect. Because if you perform in Test cricket, you walk around anywhere in the world, people look you in the eye and shake your hand and say, 'well done, you played the game really well'."

"So if you want to earn respect in world cricket all over, take up Test cricket, give your heart and soul to it," added Kohli, whose Test career yielded 9,230 runs in 123 appearances.

Kohli was seen hugging and celebrating with former teammates A B de Villiers and Chris Gayle, both of whom left the franchise without winning the coveted tro-

phy. He walked into the dressing room with de Villiers and joyously declared that the heartbreak corner no longer existed in it.

"Finally, that's the heartbreak corner no more. It is very difficult to explain man. I am just relieved," he said with his franchise captain Rajat Patidar looking on.

"(It's a) full bunch of match winners, people stepping up at different stages and putting their hand up to get the job done for

**“The auction is a huge first step that you've got to try and get as right as possible and (as a) part of (team director) Mo's (Mo Bobat) philosophy right up front, was to distribute the value a little more equitably rather than spending too much on big-name batsmen who are, of course, very fine players. The importance of a good bowling attack was acknowledged absolutely adamantly right at the start before the auction and we worked towards that**

– Andy Flower, coach Royal Challengers Bengaluru



**“Virat Kohli deserved it more than anyone else. It is really special for me, for Virat Kohli, and all the fans. Those who have supported for years, they all deserve it. It's a great opportunity for me and a great learning for me to captain Kohli, he deserves it more than anyone else**

– Rajat Patidar, skipper Royal Challengers Bengaluru



Virat Kohli displays trophy with Anushka Sharma

the team. I am just happy I could do it with RCB. "These guys are a differ-

ent mindset," he added. Kohli was not as composed when the moment of triumph hit him in the team dugout.

After Josh Hazlewood had bowled his second delivery of the 20th over, an emotionally choked Kohli kissed the Motera turf and later stated that he had given his "youth, prime and experience" to the team. "I've tried to win it every season, gave it everything I have," the modern great said, articulating his thoughts quite clearly despite the heavy emotions.

Commentator Matthew Hayden asked him where he would place his first IPL Trophy in the list of achievements that includes the ODI World Cup, the T20 World Cup and Champions Trophy recently.

"Well, it's right up there, if I have to be honest. As I said, I've given everything that I had for the last 18 years. I've stayed loyal to this team, no matter what. I've had moments where I thought otherwise, but I stuck to this team. I

stood behind them, they stood behind me. "And I always dreamt of winning it with them. And this is far more special than winning it with anyone else because my heart is with Bangalore, my soul is with Bangalore. And as I said, this is the team I'm going to play for till the last day that I play the IPL. So this one is absolutely right up there."

Kohli described IPL as a tournament of high value in world cricket that demands high-intensity performances. "...And I'm someone that wants to win the big tournaments, the big moments, and this one was missing," he said.

In the twilight of his career, Kohli is already done with Test and T20 Internationals. And the stylish player wants to ensure that when he walks away from the game for good, he does that with no regrets.

"Well, I have an opportunity to play this game for not many years. So, there is an end date to our career, as you know. And by the time that I hang up my boots, I want to sit at home and say I gave it everything I had.

"So I look for ways to improve," he said. He also made it clear that he is not open to the idea of being an impact player in the IPL.

"I can't play as an impact player, I want to feel 20 overs and make an impact in the field. That's the kind of player I have been. And God's blessed me with that perspective, with the talent," he said.

## RCB get Rs 20cr for winning IPL, runners-up PBKS receive Rs 12.5cr

PTI, AHMEDABAD: Newly-crowned IPL champions Royal Challengers Bengaluru have received Rs 20 crore for winning the 18th edition of the league while runners-up Punjab Kings got richer by Rs 12.5 crore.

RCB lifted their maiden title in the world's biggest T20 league by getting the better of PBKS by six runs in an exciting summit showdown here on Tuesday, ending a long wait of 18 years for the team as well as its talisman Virat Kohli.

Third-Place finishers Mumbai Indians earned Rs 7 crore for reaching Qualifier 2, while the fourth-placed Gujarat Titans were given Rs 6.5 crore for playing in the Eliminator.

Over the years, the IPL prize money has grown ex-

ponentially. In the inaugural 2008 edition, the winning side received Rs 4.8 crore, whereas the runner-up team was awarded Rs 2.4 crore.

The Delhi District Cricket Association (DDCA) has got the 'Best Pitch and Ground' award for the matches held at the Arun Jaitley Stadium. Besides the recognition, DDCA also got richer by Rs 50 lakh.

The stadium hosted seven matches this season, all of them being preliminary fixtures.

DDCA President Rohan Jaitley expressed his gratitude, stating, "This award is a testament to the tireless work of our curators, staff, and management. We are committed to maintaining the highest standards in cricket infrastructure."

### LIST OF WINNERS WITH PRIZE PURSE

- Winners RCB: Rs 20 crore
  - Runners-up PBKS: Rs 12.5 crore
  - Third-placed Mumbai Indians: Rs 7 crore
  - Fourth-placed Gujarat Titans: Rs 6.5 crore
  - Orange Cap winner (Sai Sudharsan): Rs 10 lakh
  - Purple Cap winner (Prasidh Krishna): Rs 10 lakh
  - Emerging Player winner (Sai Sudharsan): Rs 10 lakh
  - Most Valuable Player (Suryakumar Yadav): Rs 15 lakh
  - Super Striker of the season (Vaibhav Suryavanshi): Rs 10 lakh + Tata Curvv car
  - Fantasy King of the season (Sai Sudharsan): Rs 10 lakh
  - Best Catch winner (Kamindu Mendis): Rs 10 lakh
  - Most Dot Balls (Mohammed Siraj): Rs 10 lakh
  - Super Sixes (Nicholas Pooran): Rs 10 lakh
  - Fours of the season (Sai Sudharsan): Rs 10 lakh
  - Fairplay Award (Chennai Super Kings): Rs 10 lakh
  - Pitch and Ground (Delhi Capitals home ground New Delhi): Rs 50 lakh
- ### LIST OF AWARD WINNERS IN RCB VS PBKS FINAL
- Player of the Match (Krunal Pandya): Rs 5 lakh
  - Super Striker (Jitesh Sharma): Rs 1 lakh
  - Most Dot balls (Krunal Pandya): Rs 1 lakh
  - Most fours (Priyansh Arya): Rs 1 lakh
  - Fantasy King (Shashank Singh): Rs 1 lakh
  - Most Sixes (Shashank Singh): Rs 1 lakh

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