

Raina has been Chennai's best player

THE best part of the DLF IPL is the exposure that it gives to so many Indian players who play domestic cricket but hardly get noticed, and so are not really known to the cricket-loving public except in their hometowns.

The downside is that most, if not all, of these players feel their performance in the IPL is enough for them to be in the national side even if their showing in the first-class structure is not that good. The exposure on TV also makes some players believe that they have arrived and that they are stars when, quite clearly, they are just spare parts of a team.

On the other hand, players like Mithun Manhas, who have diligently served Indian cricket for years yet do not have the India cap to show for their efforts, have the IPL to thank for people noticing their talent.

That the top five six-hitters in the IPL so far have been Indians show that players have used their experience of home conditions to make the adjustments to their batting and play the big shots accordingly.



The spinners, too, have dominated the wicket-taking charts and again, it is the knowledge of the pitches that has helped them bowl in a manner that not only is getting them wickets but also stifling the opposition.

Most pacers have gone for plenty of runs but some like Bollinger have also bowled exceptionally well and have provided the early breakthroughs that have helped their teams. Dale Steyn has been tremendous too and his pace and swing have been frightening even from the safety of the commentary box. He really is charged up and is making batsmen duck for cover. Some of these bowlers have exposed the shortcomings of the Indian batsmen against the bouncer and have raised big question marks against their ability to counter them in the longer format of the game.

The Chennai Super Kings have a huge game ahead of them to qualify and with the maverick Kings XI Punjab as their opposition in their last game; they know their task is cut out. They will be relying on their in-form batsmen Murali Vijay and Suresh Raina to get them the big score that will ensure a win and give them a chance to qualify for the semifinals.

Having done so in both the previous events it will be a huge disappointment if they are unable to do so this time. Raina has been their top player so far, scoring runs briskly and taking the odd wicket and picking some outstanding catches and for that performance he is our 'CEAT Cricket Rating T20 Player of the Week'.