

## Vijay's dual role has helped Chennai

THE second half of the DLF IPL is under way now and those teams that have had a terrible first half will be looking to get on the points table more frequently than they have in the first phase of the league.

In that regard the weekend games for the Deccan Chargers and the Chennai Super Kings will be vital since they have not been as consistent as they would have liked and so are at the bottom half of the table as this is being written.

The Kolkata Knight Riders have won two successive games and so are back in the frame and, with skipper Sourav Ganguly playing a blazing captain's innings all loose talk of doing away with him is now hushed for the moment.

If they maintain the winning tempo then they can be a surprise package since they have in Chris Gayle one of the most destructive batsmen in this format of the game and he hasn't as yet set the Eden Gardens on fire.



The teams that have done well are those whose Indian players have contributed. Since only four overseas players can play in the eleven it's crucial that the Indian players raise their hand up to be counted. The Royal Challengers, Mumbai Indians are teams where the Indian players have had a big role to play with both bat and ball and that is why with the help of their overseas stars they are on top of the table.

The Kolkata Knight Riders are also on their way up but the combination they are looking for is eluding them, making them heavily dependent on 'dada' to click for the team to come good.

The Deccan Chargers too need Rohit Sharma to bat well and Pragyan Ojha and RP Singh to bowl economically and also give them breakthroughs. They too are struggling to find the right combination for their eleven like most other teams.

The Rajasthan Royals and Chennai Super Kings will be strengthened by the availability of the Australian players who have finished their season and are now there for the second half of the tournament. The Chennai Super Kings have started a turnaround and that again is due to the local players coming to the party.

If Jakati has bowled well and taken wickets then Murali Vijay has shown that he can blast the ball a long way and get runs at a fair clip. Vijay also has a great pair of hands and his fielding and catching in the outfield has been a big plus for the 2008 runners-up.

He has played a big part in the revival of Chennai Super Kings fortunes and he is the CEAT Cricket Rating T20 player of this week.