

RR set 183-run target as CSK fight back late

Guwahati (UNI) Rajasthan Royals set a competitive total of 182 for 9 in their allotted 20 overs against Chennai Super Kings in the 11th match of the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2025 at Barsapara Cricket Stadium here on Sunday.

Sent into bat first, Rajasthan got off to a shaky start as opener Yashasvi Jaiswal departed for 4 in the first over, caught by Ravichandran Ashwin off Khaleel Ahmed. However, he began with a stylish boundary, drilling an overpitched delivery through the covers.

Sanju Samson steadied the innings with a 20-run knock off 16 balls, including a sweetly timed four through mid-wicket off Khaleel, before falling to Noor Ahmad in the eighth over. Nitish Rana was the aggressor, blasting 81 off 36 balls with 10 boundaries and five sixes, including a glorious lofted shot over extra cover and a powerful slog sweep off Ashwin. His 50



came in style with a cradling-gesture celebration after slapping a short ball over backward point.

Riyan Parag played a crucial role as captain, scoring 37 off 28 balls. His innings included two fours and two sixes, including a reverse-hit boundary off Noor Ah-

mad. However, his stay was cut short by a pinpoint yorker from Matheesha Pathirana that crashed into the base of off-stump.

Dhruv Jurel struggled, managing just 3 runs before being caught brilliantly by Pathirana off Noor Ahmad. Wanindu Hasaranga con-

tributed 4 before falling to a stunning forward-diving catch by Vijay Shankar at deep mid-wicket off Ravindra Jadeja.

Shimron Hetmyer looked dangerous with a six over deep square leg and a boundary via an inside edge past the stumps before being dismissed for 19.

Jofra Archer departed for a duck, caught by Ruturaj Gaikwad at long-on after a juggling effort. Kumar Kartikeya was run out in a bizarre mix-up with Hetmyer, who hesitated after a stunning yorker from Khaleel. Maheesh Theekshana (2*) and Tushar Deshpande (1*) remained unbeaten at the end of the innings.

For Chennai, Khaleel was the pick of the bowlers, claiming 2/38 in his four overs, including the early breakthrough of Jaiswal. Pathirana also impressed with 2/28, while Ashwin (1/46), Noor Ahmad (2/28), and Ravindra Jadeja (1/10) provided crucial breakthroughs.

Jamshedpur FC go one step closer to National Championship with third straight win; Kickstart ease past Diamond Harbour



Mumbai: Jamshedpur FC registered their third win in a row in their Reliance Foundation Development League (RFDL) 2024-25 National Group Stage match to inch closer to National Championship qualification at the Reliance Corporate Park in Mumbai on Saturday. Meanwhile, Kickstart FC breezed past Diamond Harbour FC 3-0 to record their second win.

Jamshedpur FC continued with their solid momentum in the RFDL National Group Stage with a resounding 5-2 triumph over North-East United FC. The Red Miners looked dominant right from the get-go and took the lead in the 13th minute through Bivan Jyoti Laskar, who has been in outstanding form this season. The forward positioned himself in a dangerous area and made the most of an accurately delivered cross inside the box through the left flank from Ningthoujam Remson Singh. Jamshedpur FC went on to double their lead in the 29th minute when Lawmsangzuala earned a foul just outside the box and Pallujam Rohan Singh stepped up to score one of the goal of the season contenders with a magnificent direct free-kick.

The Highlanders showed signs of

a turnaround in the second half when Laishram Danny Meitei pulled one back for the team in the 53rd minute. The NorthEast United midfielder caught the goalkeeper off his line and delivered a spectacular finish with his left foot to make it 2-1. However, under the tutelage of head coach Kaizad Ambapardiwalla, the Red Miners have been a formidable team and refused to take their foot off the pedal. They went on to pile more misery on NorthEast United by scoring twice in the 70th and 79th minute through Lawmsangzuala and an own goal from Vumlenlal Hangshing.

Eventually Sairem Sital Singh's penalty in the 89th minute sealed the deal for Jamshedpur FC as Danny Meitei's stunning left-footed strike for NorthEast United FC came as a consolation.

In the second match of the day at the Reliance Corporate Park, Kickstart FC eased past Diamond Harbour FC 3-0 to bounce back to winning ways following a defeat against Jamshedpur FC in their previous match. The first half ended goalless between both the sides as they tussled to win the battle in the middle of the park.



"Plan was to give Starc...": DC skipper Axar after win over SRH

Visakhapatnam (Andhra Pradesh): Following Delhi Capitals' (DC) victory over Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH), captain Axar Patel expressed happiness over pacer Mitchell Starc's five-wicket haul and shared the franchise's plans for their upcoming matches at their primary home venue, Arun Jaitley Stadium.

Axar-led Delhi registered their second consecutive win as a brilliant five-wicket haul by Starc and a half-century by Faf du Plessis helped DC secure a seven-wicket victory over SRH. The loss pushed SRH to seventh place in the points table after their spectacular win against the Rajasthan Royals (RR), while DC moved to second place.

Following the match in the post-match presentation, Axar said, "I have told before that I am going to lead the side in the same manner. You need to be up with your game. You cannot take any game easily, there are 10 good teams playing. We need to focus on our plans and process.

Today we were successful in doing so. Plan was to give Starc two overs at the start and two overs at the end, but he was in good rhythm. Hence, I gave him the third over and he was able to pick an important wicket. We have experienced players in the team, they give me suggestions.

Sometimes I follow them. Enjoying playing with these players. We are playing at Kotla since many years, we will have similar plans. Need to assess the conditions after going there."

SRH won the toss and opted to bat first but soon regretted the decision as Starc's fiery spell reduced them to 37/4. A crucial 77-run partnership between Aniket Verma (74 off 41 balls, with five fours and six sixes) and Heinrich Klaasen (32 off 19 balls, with two fours and two sixes) helped SRH recover. However, Kuldeep Yadav (3/22) and Starc (5/35) dismantled the batting lineup, bundling SRH out for 163 in 18.4 overs.

FA Cup: Forest beat Brighton in quarter-final and reach to semi-final

Brighton, (UNI): Nottingham Forest won a third straight FA Cup penalty shootout to beat Brighton and reach the semi-finals for the first time in 34 years.

Goalkeeper Matz Sels was the hero for the visitors, saving Jack Hinshelwood and Diego Gomez's spot-kicks as Forest won the shootout 4-3 after the match had finished goalless, the BBC reported.

In a drab tie that lacked quality throughout, there was nothing to separate the two teams after 120 minutes at Amex Stadium. Brighton had looked the likelier side to snatch a winner late on - and Sels made a superb save to keep out a bullet header from Gomez in extra time.

Joao Pedro then thought he had won it at the death



for the hosts after bundling in Pervis Estupinan's delivery, but the goal was ruled out for offside and the match went to a shootout.

After two big saves from Sels, it was Forest captain Ryan Yates who stepped up to fire the club into their first FA Cup semi-final since 1991. Forest, who beat Ex-

eter City and Ipswich on penalties in the previous rounds, will discover their opponents when the draw takes place on Sunday.

Forest have made penalty shootouts a habit during this FA Cup run, and it has become the norm that Sels will see them through.

The Belgium keeper has

been integral to Forest's superb Premier League campaign, and he has kept their hopes of a first FA Cup win since 1959 alive.

Penalties had almost seemed inevitable from the first half on Saturday, with neither team able to fashion any meaningful chances.

Forest felt the effects of Chris Wood's absence, with the club's top scorer missing after picking up a hip injury while on international duty with New Zealand.

Nuno Espirito Santo's side had been awarded a spot-kick in the 64th minute, when Kaoru Mitoma was judged by referee Peter Banks to have brought down Elliot Anderson in the area. Nuno and the Forest bench were less impressed, furiously protesting the decision with the fourth official.

Morgan reveals his top picks for England's white-ball captain

London, (UNI): Former England skipper Eoin Morgan has voiced his opinion on who should step in for Jos Buttler as England's white-ball skipper. Morgan has named current Test captain and star all-rounder, Ben Stokes and batting sensation Harry Brook as his frontrunners for the role.

Speaking to Sky Sports News, Morgan said, "I think it's imperative that you will always have a target in mind."

"With the recent form the side, particularly in white-ball cricket, has had, you can't go out and all of a sudden try and win absolutely everything. You need to paint a picture moving forward as to what you're driving all of your energy towards," he said. While Test skipper Ben Stokes hasn't played an ODI since the 2023 Men's Cricket World Cup, Morgan believes the all-rounder can step in the role on a transition basis.

TT legend Sharath Kamal bids emotional adieu

Chennai, (UNI)

Indian Table Tennis legend Achanta Sharath Kamal brought the curtain down on his illustrious career in an emotional farewell at the WTT Star Contender Chennai 2025 presented by Indian Oil on Saturday.

Sharath's swansong came after a defeat to compatriot Snehit Suravajula, marking the end of a golden era in Indian table tennis.

In a poignant moment following the match, Sharath engaged in a spirited exhibition contest against Egypt's Omar Assar before addressing an emotional gathering.

He expressed his desire to continue contributing to the sport in various roles, whether as an administrator, coach, mentor, or senior advisor.

"Somewhere down the line, I felt it's enough, and I wanted to explore the pos-

sibility of giving back to the sport from the other side of the court. I have done my part as a player, and I feel I have contributed enough to the country in that capacity.

Now, I want to contribute in a different way," said Sharath, extending gratitude to his family, friends, fans, and key stakeholders, including Indian Oil, SDAT, Stupa Sports Analytics, Ultimate Table Tennis, TTFL, and ITTF.

Meanwhile, 24-year-old Manav Thakkar created history by becoming the first Indian male paddler to reach the semifinals of a WTT Star Contender event. Thakkar displayed remarkable grit, clinching consecutive five-game thrillers against Germany's Andre Bertram and South Korea's Olympic medalist Lim Jong-hoon.

However, Snehit's spirited run came to an end against France's Thibault Poret in the quarterfinals.

Real Madrid sneaks past Leganes as Atletico's title hopes slip away

Madrid, (UNI)

Real Madrid drew level on points with FC Barcelona at the top of La Liga after a narrow 3-2 win at home to Leganes on Saturday night with two goals from Kylian Mbappe.

Mbappe's first goal was a penalty that was hotly contested by Leganes after Arda Guler went down under a challenge, but Leganes leveled directly afterward when Diego Garcia reacted quickly to a loose ball in the Madrid area.

Dani Raba then finished off a swift break four minutes before halftime to put the visitors ahead after Brahim Diaz lost the ball in midfield.

Jude Bellingham made it



2-2 at the start of the second half and Mbappe scored what turned out to be the winning goal with 15 minutes left to play after Renato Tapia was penalized for a challenge on Rodrygo, despite winning

the ball. Atletico Madrid's fading title hopes took another big hit after being held to a 1-1 draw away by Espanyol.

Cesar Azpilicueta scored a brilliant volley from outside the penalty area to put

Atletico in front in the 38th minute, but Clement Lenglet gifted Espanyol the equalizer when he hauled down Leandro Cabrera 20 minutes from time, with Javi Puado scoring from the penalty spot.

Bengaluru FC crush Mumbai City FC to secure SF berth

Bengaluru, (UNI)

Bengaluru FC delivered a dominant performance to dismantle Mumbai City FC 5-0 in an Indian Super League (ISL) playoff tie at the Sree Kanterava Stadium here on Saturday, booking their place in the semifinals against FC Goa.

Goals from Suresh Wangjam (9'), Edgar Mendez (42'), Ryan Williams (62'), Sunil Chhetri (76'), and Jorge Pereyra Diaz (83') sealed a resounding victory for the hosts, setting up a two-legged semifinal clash against FC Goa, the first leg of which will be played at the same venue on April two. Bengaluru FC's Head Coach Gerard Zaragoza made four changes to his starting eleven, recalling Gurpreet Singh Sandhu, Chinglensana Singh, Pedro Capo, and Alberto Noguera in place of Sahil Poonia, Aleksandar Jovanovic, Lalremthuan-ga Fanai, and Sunil Chhetri. Pereyra Diaz returned from injury but started on the bench, as Vinith was deployed in a more attacking role.



Peter Kratky's Mumbai City FC made only one change, with Thaur Krouma replacing Tiri in the lineup from their previous meeting against the Blues 18 days ago.

The home side began the game on the front foot, pressing high up the pitch and utilising the pace of Williams on the wings. Their aggressive start paid off when Suresh Wangjam capitalised on a poor clearance from Williams' cross and

rifled a left-footed shot past Mumbai's goalkeeper Phurba Lachenpa to give Bengaluru an early lead.

Mumbai City FC struggled to maintain possession and found it difficult to break Bengaluru's defensive line, often being caught offside. The hosts continued to create chances, with Vinith setting up Williams on a counter-attack, only for Mehtab to intervene at the last moment.

Olympian Ankita wins women's 3000m steeplechase title

California, (UNI)

Olympian Ankita Dhyani clinched the women's 3000m steeplechase title at the Mangrum Invitational 2025 athletics meet held in California, USA, on Saturday.

Representing India at the event, Ankita clocked a personal best of 9:44.05s, comfortably surpassing the Athletics Federation of India's (AFI) qualifying mark of 9:48.48s for the upcoming Asian Athletics Championships 2025.

Ankita, who had participated in the women's 5000m at the Paris 2024 Olympics, has transitioned to the 3000m steeplechase event. The 26-year-old runner shaved nearly nine seconds off her previous best of 9:53.63s, recorded at the National Games 2025. However, her selection for the Indian team at this year's Asian Athletics Championships in Gumi, Republic of Korea, remains at the discretion of the AFI.

At the Mangrum Invitational, Sophie McManus secured the second position with a time of 10:50.93s, while Hannah Chau finished third in 10:58.98s.



This was Ankita's third competitive appearance in the 3000m steeplechase and her second of the year, following her gold medal performance at the National Games 2025. She had made her debut in the event at the Indian Open U23 Athletics Competition 2024 in Patna, where she emerged victorious.

Parul Chaudhary holds the national record in the women's 3000m steeplechase with a timing of 9:15.31s, set at the World Athletics Championships 2023 in Budapest.

Tamim Iqbal opens up on harrowing health scare

Dubai, (UNI):

Tamim Iqbal shared a message of gratitude on social media following a serious medical emergency. Former Bangladesh captain Tamim Iqbal expressed his gratitude on Facebook after being discharged from the hospital following a heart attack on Monday, according to an ICC media release.

Despite retiring from international cricket in January 2025, Tamim continues to play domestic cricket. He was leading Mohammedan Sporting Club in a Dhaka Premier Division Cricket League match against Shinepukur Cricket Club when he experienced discomfort immediately after the toss. He was taken to a local hospital for initial treatment but later collapsed and was rushed for an angioplasty surgery on Monday.

Tamim was discharged on Friday, four days after the incident, and thanked everyone who stood by him during the difficult time.

Chapman's heroics guide NZ to ODI series lead against Pak

Napier, (UNI)

The Black Caps carried their T20I series momentum with a 73-run victory in the opening ODI.

It was a Mark Chapman show in Napier as the Kiwi scored an unbeaten 132 (111), setting the base for New Zealand's victory by 73 runs in the first ODI against Pakistan, according to an ICC media release.

The century was the third of Chapman's ODI career and his highest score in the format so far.

Pakistan ODI skipper Mohammed Rizwan won the toss and elected to field first, which seemed like a success at first.

The Napier pitch was proving friendly to the bowlers as the New Zealand top-order fell apart to the pace of Naseem Shah and Akif Javed. Openers Will Young and Nick Kelly perished inside the Powerplay, as did Henry Nicholls soon after. At 50/3, it was Mark Chapman and Darryl Mitchell who came to New Zealand's rescue



with an incredible stand of 199 runs.

Mark Chapman was the aggressor as he smashed 13 fours and 6 sixes in his innings of 132 at a strike rate of 118.91, with Darryl Mitchell playing a solid second fiddle with a calm 76 off 84 balls with 4 fours and 4 sixes.

Debutant Muhammad Abbas finished with a flurry, with a quickfire 26-ball 52 to take New Zealand to 344/9 in their 50 overs.

In the second innings, the Pakistan openers made a good start with a stand of 83, when Nathan Smith dispatched the dangerous Usman Khan for 39.

Abdullah Shafique (36) followed his opening partner soon after when stand-in New Zealand skipper Michael Bracewell struck in his first over.

Former Pakistan captain Babar Azam (78) and T20I skipper Salman Agha (58) were in fine touch as they guided Pakistan to 249/4, while skipper Mohammed Rizwan (30) too chipped in with handy runs.

