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# Old formula, new failures: CSK's IPL 2025 campaign unravels at halfway mark

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Exactly at the half-way stage of the tournament, the mighty Chennai Super Kings (CSK) are languishing at the bottom of the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2025 points table. In the seven games they have played so far, they have lost five, and their regular captain Ruturaj Gaikwad. They have had two mid-season signings in Dewald Brevis and Ayush Mhatre but the reluctance to let go of old ways, which more often than not were winning ways in the past, has cost them dearly.

While most teams are firing on all cylinders in the first six overs, CSK are operating at a run-rate of under 8 - the worst amongst all teams. They have tried three opening pairs but the returns

continue to be meagre as together they have accumulated only 162 runs in seven innings at an average of 23.14. The misery doesn't stop here as the now MS Dhoni-led unit has the worst catching efficiency.

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So what has really gone wrong for the five-time winners? Mostly everything but it all started at the auction table last year when they assembled a squad which lacked firepower. The onus was on Shivam Dube to be the "Sixer Dube" of the previous edition but he is striking the ball at just 128.57 this season and is surrounded by batters who like to take their time before teeing off. The Yellow Brigade have managed just 33 maximums from seven games - which is just two more than what Nicholas Pooran has mustered all by himself.

When most franchises were looking to inject fearlessness of the youth into their setup, CSK went in the direction of tried-and-tested as they roped in Vijay Shankar, Deepak Hooda and Rahul Tripathi. The trio have been very ordinary in the season which has seen the little known players taking the cash-rich league by a storm. It's not a template which CSK have followed in the past as they have rarely blooded a little-known youngster into the Playing XI. Pick a player, keep him in the setup for a couple of years and then give them game time is the approach they have mostly followed, and it was evident in the case of Shaik Rasheed who has been part of the dugout since 2023 but got his first game in 2025. Same with Delhi bowler Simarjeet Singh who used to operate with a lot of pace in the nets but the management never looked in a rush to give him game time.

## Poll

What do you think is the main reason for CSK's poor performance this season?

Poor auction decisions

Injuries to key players

Lack of youth integration

Outdated strategies

A quick look elsewhere and you will see young guns making a mark. [Vaibhav Suryavanshi](#), the 14-year-old, was the latest to do that in the [Rajasthan Royals vs Lucknow Super Giants game](#) and there have been countless examples in the last few years. Sunrisers Hyderabad did that with Nitish Reddy, Mumbai Indians have been consistently doing that with their robust scouting system and a lot of franchises are heading in that direction. CSK, however, continue to operate with the mindset which worked for them in the past, but is backfiring as the teams have upped their game.

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Spin choke looked like their go-to template but except Noor Ahmed, there has been no serious threat from the experienced pairing of Ravindra Jadeja and R Ashwin. The offie was even dropped from the 15 for the game against LSG, a side which had plenty of left-handers and the game was played on a surface which offered a lot of purchase to the tweekers.

— toisports (@toisports)

Even the "knowledgeable" home crowd has given up. All that matters to them is that sight of MS Dhoni coming into bat and giving it a swing. Win or lose, Dhoni is all they want and a CSK wicket is cheered because it gets them closer to seeing their Thalla in the middle. The cheers and whistles are deafening when he walks out from the change room but only once, at home, have they got an opportunity to celebrate a result. It came against a depleted Mumbai Indians unit in their season opener, and since then it has been a forgettable season.

The five-time winners will be locking horns after that Chepauk meeting nearly a month back and it surely will not be as comfortable as it was on that humid evening. The Hardik Pandya-led unit have managed to find the template in the last couple of games and if CSK don't find a game plan, it's going to be a long and painful season for the Yellow Army.