



Bollywood plays on front foot this IPL season; 3 big hits and counting

With films such as Kesari, Kalank, Romeo Akbar Walter released during the IPL season, Bollywood is taking on IPL and earning big moolah despite IPL's huge viewership

Few years back, the Indian Premier League (IPL) used to be a dreaded word for Bollywood. Such was its fear that movies, and even TV shows, would postpone their release dates to avoid a direct clash with this cricketing extravaganza.

Come 2019, the undisputed clout of IPL has turned on its head. Filmmakers in Bollywood are unfazed and ready to take on IPL's viewership might. And they have been doing it by churning back to back hits.

Films that dared IPL 2019

Here is quick business fact check of films that clashed with IPL this year went on to become box office mega hits. It started with Akshay Kumar starrer 'Kesari' (Budget Rs 80 crore) which released just two days (March 21) before IPL 2019 kicked in (March 23).

The film earned Rs 40 crore on its opening weekend. And while IPL continues, the film has collected over Rs 200 crore in gross revenue so far.

'Kalank' (Budget Rs 80 crore) which released recently (April 17) is inching towards the Rs 100 crore club despite the busy IPL schedule alongside. Same is the case with 'Romeo Akbar Walter' (released April 5) which managed to earn Rs 20 crore on its opening weekend, something big for a film made on a budget of Rs 35 crore.

And this is not it. IPL's 51 day run will witness a collective box office gamble of Rs 450 crore which includes some of the upcoming mega releases like Karan Johar's 'Student of The Year 2' (Budget estimated Rs 50 crore) and Ajay Devgn Starrer 'De De Pyaar De' (Budget estimated Rs 75 crore) and some smaller releases.

No backseat for Bollywood

In 2012 when Bollywood superstar Shah Rukh Khan was asked about films clashing with IPL, his reply was, "I will think about it if I am a producer. I will think twice specially during the middle of the tournament or at the end."

That was in 2012 and 2019 is a far cry. Over the years Bollywood filmmakers have busted the myth of IPL's clout over their turf.

According to Siddharth Bhardwaj, Chief Marketing Officer - Head of Enterprise Sales, UFO Moviez, film release calendars are now spread around the year and this makes such a clash inevitable too.

"There are more movies getting released and filmmakers cannot just chase Eid, Diwali or Christmas for their releases. So they have to spread their movie calendar. Earlier they were averse to clash with cricket but now that the content pipeline has become so rich, they are more confident of such a clash and people don't mind stepping out and watching the films too."

“From 2009 to 2014 IPL became dreaded for the box office. Now, there is so much to choose from and IPL is just one of them. In my opinion it only affects films which are high on hype and not on content,” explains noted filmmaker Dharmesh Darshan.

Prior to 2019, films that have become big hits during IPL season include: Vicky Donor, Pyaar ka Punchnama, Tanu Weds Manu, Housefull 2, Ishqzaade, Piku, Heropanti, 2 States, Baaghi and Gabbar is Back. But there were big flops too like: Go Goa Gone, Fan, Tashan, Thank You to name a few. This year so far we have seen three big hits alongside IPL which will go on for another 19 days with two more big releases slated to clash and likely to become mega hits too.

Stating that good content can never take a backseat and cannot be threatened by any kind of competition, Atul Mohan, Trade Analyst and Editor of Complete Cinema says, “In the last few years the success of movies like ‘Avengers’, ‘Baahubali’ and ‘Raazi’ have proved that content can never take a backseat and it cannot be threatened by any kind of competition. Moreover there is enough space for everyone to exist in the entertainment space. Most importantly, nothing can replace cinema, it is the core of all the formats of entertainment we have.”