



IS IT RIGHT OR WRONG ABOUT SECOND TEST BETWEEN AUSTRALIA AND ENGLAND AT LORDS?

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ABSTRACT

The case is an explanation of the dilemma between ethics and team winning the game. The date was July Second, 2023, and the time was morning 10 am. The play was about to begin. Pat Cummins was thinking how to take the rest of six wickets and Ben Stokes, England Captain, was thinking about scoring 257 runs more to make the test series 1-1. Then an incident happened which changed the course of the match and series.

Keywords: Cricket, Ethics, Win

1. INTRODUCTION

The incident happened during second test of Ashes 2023 between Australia and England at Lords . The first day was 28th June. The incident happened on the 5th day. Ben Duckett, the opening batsman and Ben Stokes, the England Captain, were in the crease. Ben Duckett was deemed not out the previous day as Mitchell Starc, the Australian Pace bowler had touched the ground while in motion after taking the catch and according to the rulebook it was not out. Australian team was not very happy with the decision.

Josh Hazlewood, Australian pace bowler removed Ben Duckett after a very good knock of 83 . England wicketkeeper-batsman, Jonny Bairstow came to the wicket and started scoring right away. They still needed 178 more runs to win and when they were about to take attack to the opposition, an incident happened which is now threatening to take away the peaceful nature of the ashes series. Last ball of Cameron Green's(Australian all-rounder) over was a bouncer and Bairstow ducked under that, and Australian wicketkeeper Carey collected the ball and threw the stumps down. Wicketkeepers generally try to throw at the stumps, and he was no different. Australian players found out that Bairstow comes out of the crease regularly. Unfortunately for Bairstow he casually came out of the crease without checking whether it was the last ball of the over and since he was out of the crease Australians appealed for run out. The decision was referred to the third umpire and he gave out*. Bairstow did not like the decision and even Ben Stokes who was at the non-strikers' end was unhappy. The decision was correct as Bairstow was out of the crease but the argument from Stokes was that Cummins could have withdrawn the appeal as it was against spirit of the game. This was a turning point of the game as the only recognised batsman was Stokes though Broad was good with the bat.

The spectators were also not happy. Australian players were abused, and Khawaja and Warner were targeted specifically along with Alex Carey, the wicketkeeper. Broad then mimicked getting back to the crease after every ball. He told Carey that this incident will be the one for whom he will be remembered for in future. Broad also told Cummins that he will get boos from crowd for his decision not to call Bairstow back. Even Marylebone Cricket Club members based at Lord's Cricket Ground abused the players and were later some of them were suspended. Khawaja in his press conference openly spoke about the abuses. The whole country was angry and even the spokesperson of prime minister told the press that Mr Rishi Sunak himself was not happy with the lack of spirit of game shown by the Australians. In the post-match press conference Ben Stokes openly said that he would not have done that and maybe could have withdrawn the appeal. He said that England would not like to win a test match like this. It is important to note that the coach of England Brendon McCullum had done the same thing when he was a player in the year 2006 and ran out Muralitharan, SriLankan player but in this case, he was also not happy with the decision of Australia.

This decision provoked Ben Stokes to change gears and started the Australian bowlers. He and Stuart Broad, the English fast bowler started building a partnership. Stokes attacked all bowlers and English fans believed that he may bring an unlikely victory to the team like in Headingley in 2019 where he singlehandedly won the match for them against the same team. He hit 155 with nine fours and nine sixes and Australians were panicking. A change in strategy in bowling with no space offered in leg side forced Stokes to haul out to Carey with 70 runs to be scored still. This was one of the best innings seen in test cricket and though all stood in awe , this was not enough to save the test match as they were bowled out for 327 and lost the match by 43 runs.

This kind of controversy was not new. Ian bell was run out by Dhoni in similar manner in 2011, the only difference being Bell was recalled to the crease. McCullum had run out Muralitharan in 2006 in similar manner. But this is ashes and so the incident of Bairstow and his dismissal brought out a lot of debates in the world of cricket. English fans and news channels remarked this incident as cheating by Australians. The question they posed was whether Cummins could have asked Bairstow to come back. There were other comments which are given below.

DISCUSSION

Former England opener Mark Butcher is confused by the uproar over Jonny Bairstow's dismissal in the second Ashes Test, saying that "it's just as plain as day out" and the chatter in cricketing circles is "nonsense". Similarly, it seems that Carey was within the rules. Speaking about the crucial dismissal in the post-match presentation, Stokes was sceptical about the whole incident and clarified that he wouldn't have wanted to "win a game in that manner".

Pat Cummins, on the other hand, offered an entirely contrasting view to his England counterpart. "I think (Alex) Carey saw it happen a few balls previous," Cummins said in the post-match presentation. "There was no pause. Catch it, straight away, have a throw at the stumps. I thought it was totally fair play. That's how the rule is. I know some people might disagree. Just like the catch yesterday, the rule is there. That's how I saw it."

Former England captain Michael Vaughan was enraged at Jonny Bairstow's dismissal in the twentieth over. Vaughan, who was on air for BBC's Test Match Special at the moment, ultimately stated: 'I am sorry, that is dumb. That is pathetic!'

Former Australia international Brad Hogg has branded Jonny Bairstow's controversial stumping at Lord's a "cheap" move and insisted England were "hard done by".

India Today report on Ashes 2023: UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak backs Ben Stokes over Jonny Bairstow dismissal in Lord's Test

Ravichandran Ashwin, Indian off spinner, had a different take on this whole episode. He believed Carey and Australians must have seen a pattern of Bairstow and must have planned for this dismissal which is within the rules.



As per the MCC's dead ball law, law 20.1.1.1 states "The ball becomes dead when it is finally settled in the hands of the wicketkeeper or of the bowler." Law 20.1.2 also states that "The ball shall be considered to be dead when it is clear to the bowler's end umpire that the fielding side and both batters at the wicket have ceased to regard it as in play."

So, in this case the ball was not dead and so the decision of the umpires to run out Bairstow was valid. But the biggest question is that whether Australians should have appealed and even after the decision of out came whether they could have recalled Bairstow back. Recalling

batsman in similar case happened in 2011 when Mahendra Singh Dhoni, the then Indian Captain, recalled Ian Bell after he was declared out. This issue has now become so serious that it will have repercussions for the next 3 tests. England coach has warned that the friendly nature of the series is now gone, and this is seen in the way fans are reacting also. It remains to be seen how the series will pan out now and whether England can win the next 3 tests(as Stokes has warned) to win the urn back.

The case discusses the question of ethics and whether this is important or winning the match. The case takes us back to ashes 2023 and pertains to the incident of Johnny Bairstow and whether his run out was correct or not.

REFERENCE

India Today report on Ashes 2023: UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak backs Ben Stokes over Jonny Bairstow dismissal in Lord's Test
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