
Law 16

16-A Match abandoned some time after players leave field

Rain forces an interruption in play. After the players have been off the field for some time, the match is abandoned. When was the match actually concluded?

The match is concluded at the moment that the umpires decide that no further play is possible.

[Law reference: 16.9]

16-B Interpretation of Law 16.10

Law 16.10 instructs that “the over in progress at the close of play shall be completed unless. . . .” Two exceptions are then stated. In other words, “with two exceptions, an over is not to be left unfinished at the end of a match.”

There is no difficulty about the first exception, namely that play stops immediately a result is reached, in the form of a Win to one side, a Tie, Match Awarded or Match Conceded. At whatever point in the match it happens, that over will be the last over and it will not be completed, unless the result is reached on the last ball of the over.

The other exception is the players leaving the field. This may happen at any time and, when the players leave, there may be no indication that the over in progress is the last over.

There will, however, either be a limitation on time and overs in the final innings under the requirements in Law 16.6 *et seq* for the Last hour, or time or overs for the last innings will be limited by agreement under Law 12.1(b). During the interruption, time will elapse. Even if the interruption began before the Last hour, the time will come when these overs have to be taken into account and the number of overs required will decrease. The effect of Law 16.10(ii) is that play will not be resumed, even if conditions permit, if all that remains at that time is the completion of the unfinished over.

It is also possible that, before the relevant limits expire, the umpires may decide that no further play will be possible. At the moment they make that decision, the match is concluded and the over in progress when play was suspended will not be completed.

[Law reference: 16.10]
