
Law 21

21-A Batting side's entitlement to whole boundary allowance when more than needed to win

The scores are level and the striker hits the ball which goes over the boundary. Is it true that if the batsmen have already crossed before the ball crosses the boundary, then they will only score the one run, under Law 21.6?

No it is not true. Law 21.6(c) says

*If a boundary is scored before the batsmen have **completed** sufficient runs to win the match, then the whole of the boundary allowance shall be credited . . .*

The fact that the batsmen have crossed in running does not mean that they have **completed** a run, nor even that the part run will count. Except in the case of overthrows (see question 18-D), if the number of physically completed runs is fewer than the allowance, the boundary overrides the runs. Whether there is a run in progress or not has no relevance. It is not until the number of physically completed runs is equal to or more than the allowance that the run in progress will count as a completed run, if the batsmen have crossed.

The criterion for deciding whether the boundary allowance is to be awarded or not is (since they wanted only 1 to win) is 'had the batsmen **completed** that first run which gives them victory?' Having crossed on the winning run is not enough. In the situation described, the boundary allowance would be credited to the score.

[Law reference: 19.6, 34.4(b)]

21-B Resumption of play after mistake found in score

Two situations in which incidents are ignored because the winning run has been scored, but subsequently a mistake in scoring is found. In both cases, the batting side need 1 run to win. This run is scored; after they leave the field it is discovered that they had needed 2 or more to win.

1. The striker hits the ball and they run one. The ball then goes over the boundary. As one run had already been completed before the ball crossed the boundary, only that run is added to the score. When the mistake is discovered, play cannot resume since that delivery was the last available ball. What is the result of the match? Should the boundary now count?

No. As things stand, the result would have to be a Draw or whatever the Competition Rules prescribe for equal scores. You should not revise your interpretation of events on the last ball and say that the boundary would now count. In most cases it will not be possible to predict what might have happened had the match not been concluded. In this case, had they known that 2 (rather than 1) were needed to win, the fielders might have acted differently in fielding the ball - or they might not. There is no means of knowing.

2. The wicket-keeper stumps the striker, but Wide ball is called. The 1 run penalty wins the match, so the stumping does not count. When the mistake is discovered, the umpires order resumption of play. What is the situation when play resumes?

The umpire will have called Time for the conclusion of the match. The situation when he did so must be the situation when the match resumes. It will not be considered that the 'stumped' batsman is out.

Situations like these underline the paramount importance of Law 3.15 which insists that umpires are to satisfy themselves as to the correctness of the scores. Such situations can be avoided if the umpires maintain the contact with the scorers required by Law 3.14(b) and the vigilance over the correctness of the scores demanded by Law 3.15. At no time is this more important than towards the end of a match, when the scores are close. The umpires must be satisfied that what the scoreboard shows, and what the players believe, is in fact the case.

Although during play in general it would be inexcusable to hold up play in order to sort out a discrepancy, it certainly would have to be done if it was necessary to remove doubt at such a crucial point in the game. There should of course not be doubt to remove, if the umpires have been keeping watch on the correctness of the scores throughout, including ascertaining that signals have been received by the scorers.

[Law reference: 21.6, 3.14(b), 3.15, 21.9]

21-C Changing the scores affecting result

Law 27.9 indicates that an umpire may alter his decision providing he does so promptly. Law 21.10 indicates, however, that once the umpires have agreed the scores at the end of a match, they cannot be changed. What is the situation if, although the umpires and scorers agree the scores, it is later discovered that some mistake in the course of the match has led to an incorrect result?

It is the duty of the umpires to check the scores at various points in the game and in particular at the end of the match. This should be done immediately the players leave the field. If there is any discrepancy which cannot be resolved by discussion and consideration of the events of the game, the umpires are to decide what the correct score is. Law 21.9 requires the umpires to correct the scores accordingly. Once agreement has been reached, or a decision taken in lieu of agreement, and any necessary corrections made, the scores and hence the result cannot be changed.

If later, however, an error comes to light it will be for the appropriate controlling body, such as a League Committee, to determine if there has been a miscarriage of justice. In that case they may well decide that any ranking associated with the match shall be accorded so as to right the injustice. This is not changing either the scores or the result.

As Law 27.2 refers to ‘**an** umpire changing **his** decision’, it cannot apply to any action by the umpires jointly - including agreeing, or even deciding, the final scores for the match. It applies to an umpire changing his decision about a dismissal, or possibly revoking a call of No ball or of Wide ball.

[Law reference: 21.10]

21-D Team not turning up for fixture

I was to score for a club League match but the visiting team did not arrive. We were waiting for them to come, when they sent a message that they were deliberately boycotting the match. I asked the umpires if this meant that we should record the result as Match Awarded, or was there a case for Match Conceded? The umpires said they were not in a position to make any decision about the result. Surely that could not be right? Doesn't the Law state that if one side is refusing to play, the umpires are to award the match?

The umpires were quite correct.

Law 21.3 lays down a precise procedure for awarding a match.

“If an umpire considers that an action by any player or players might constitute a refusal by either side to play . . .”

Clearly such a suspicion was aroused by the non-appearance of the team. On the other hand, was there ‘a side’ in existence to do the refusing? No nomination of players had been made. Until this is done, the umpires do not know if any action, of any sort whatever, is by a nominated player or players of a side.

“ . . . the umpires together shall ascertain the cause of the action.”

they sent a message that they were deliberately boycotting the match. . . . could possibly be considered to cover this.

“If they decide together that this action does constitute a refusal to play . . .”

The umpires would need to make such a decision jointly.

“ . . . they shall so inform the captain of that side.”

How could the umpires do this? There was no legally constituted side to be ‘that side’. They could therefore not identify any one who was the ‘captain of that side’. Even though any person can act as captain before the toss, there is no side for that person to captain. Consequently this instruction of the Law could not be implemented. The sequence certainly breaks down here, if not earlier. The stage of

“If the captain persists”

could not be reached and so the final statement

“ . . . the umpires shall award the match . . . ”

cannot be brought into operation.

There is a further point. Was there a match to award? There was a fixture, but Law 1.1 states that

“A match is played between two sides, each of eleven players, one of whom shall be captain,”

The requirement for eleven players is modified in the next sentence of the Law. However it is clearly not the intention of the Law that “by agreement the match could be played between two sides one of which has no players at all”. There is therefore no match in the proper sense.

There is also a difficulty about conceding the match. Whilst Match Awarded arises from a decision of the *umpires* that one side is refusing to play, Match Conceded results from a *captain* conceding defeat (not conceding the match). Until the toss any person could act as captain. However, there cannot be a match until (among other things) the toss is made. Once it is made, only a nominated player can act as captain. Therefore there is no person with the authority of the captain to concede defeat

It is therefore clear that the circumstances prevent the umpires from implementing the provisions of the Law. Consequently they can take no action about the result. If the match is part of a competition, their only course of action is to report the situation to the organisers of the competition who will have the ultimate responsibility for dealing with it.

[Law reference: 21.3]
