
Law 31

31-A Umpires investigating non-appearance of next batsman (1)

If the umpires leave the field to investigate the non-appearance of a new batsman after the fall of a wicket, does this come under the heading of "leaving his normal position for consultation", requiring Dead ball to be called?

No. The ball will have become dead automatically when the previous batsman was dismissed or retired. The break in play caused by the investigation is an interruption, so Time must be called. It is important to call Time, to prevent the possibility of any incidents during the time the umpires are absent. It is also important that the umpires retain possession of the ball, which they will have taken at the fall of the wicket.

[Law reference: 31.1(b), 16.2, 23.3(b)(iii)]

31-B Umpires investigating non-appearance of batsman (2)

A wicket falls and no new batsman appears. After protracted delay the umpires investigate. The captain of the batting side does not concede the match. How is it decided which batsman is out? Do the umpires accept the captain's nomination, or should they refer to the team sheet to prevent sharp practice?

There are several points to make

1. The umpires' investigation is to discover the facts on which to decide whether or not the non-appearance of the batsman constitutes a refusal to play. They will come to the conclusion

either that it is a refusal to play

In this case, if warning the captain doesn't sort things out, they will **award** the match. Even if the captain *states* that he is prepared to concede victory, the Law lays down that if the umpires decide it is a refusal and the captain persists, then the match will be **Awarded**, not Conceded

or that it is not a refusal to play. Play will therefore be resumed.

2. The bowler's end umpire will have called Time before leaving the field. This means that there cannot be a *subsequent* appeal. There may or may not have been an appeal before he does so. The umpires have not left until there has been 'protracted delay', so that the call of Time will not have been made so soon as to deprive the fielding side of the opportunity to appeal. Even if there was an appeal, that appeal cannot have been answered, as there was no batsman there to give out.
3. The only question of giving out a batsman, when none appears after the fall of the wicket, is therefore if there **was** an appeal before Time was called.

What the umpires have to do, having investigated, is to inform the captain that there has been an appeal, and therefore a man is out. They will accept the captain's nomination for which man this is, so that the scorers can be informed. They may consider that there has **not** been a refusal to play. They will do so only if there is some serious and cogent reason for a batsman not having gone out to the wicket. They will then set a deadline for another batsman to get out to the wicket, calculate the time from the expiry of the three minutes after the fall of the wicket until this deadline (for the purpose of extending the time for close of play), return to the field, answer the appeal, call Play at the deadline time and continue the game. If, on the other hand they award the match, because they consider there is a refusal to play, they must still return to the field to answer the appeal, but will then call Time for the conclusion of the match.

[Law reference: 31.1(b), 16.2, 21.3, 27.3]
