



Distraction of batsmen

There has been speculation that actions by an international bowler, as he ran in to bowl, were intended to distract the striker.

The Laws of Cricket are designed to protect the batsmen against distraction, whether it be from on the field of play or from off the field. If the striker is distracted when he is preparing to receive, or is receiving the ball, either umpire can call and signal Dead ball. As the striker will not have had an opportunity to play the ball before the distraction, the ball will not count as one of the over and, if the distraction were accidental, play will continue just as though the distraction had never happened.

Deliberate distraction is, however, treated somewhat differently.

If either umpire believes that any action by any fielder, including bowler and wicket-keeper, is an **attempt** to distract the striker - whether or not it actually succeeds in distracting him is not important - he will call and signal Dead ball. The captain of the fielding side will then be warned about such unfair behaviour (the captain is responsible for the behaviour of his players), the ball will not count as one of the over and neither batsman can be dismissed from that delivery.

Should there be any further such **attempt** at distraction by any fielder during that innings, the same conditions will apply, the batting side will also be awarded 5 penalty runs and, after the match, the umpires will report the matter.

We may hold private views about the intent of the bowler in question, but only the umpires on the day, with all the facts before them, can make the decision that matters.