
In publishing these answers to questions it has received, the aim of MCC has been, in most cases, to go beyond a merely factual reply to explain how the Law applies to the situation.

All answers are given in accordance with the 2000 Code of Laws (2nd Edition - 2003). Readers should be aware that Local Regulations may affect these answers.

Each question is listed under the Law most appropriate for the answer. Within each Law questions are lettered in

Clothing and equipment									
Ball	5-A	5-B							
Bat	6-A	26-A	26-B	26-C	28-A	32-C	35-A		
Caps/helmets	38-A	41-A							
Pads	26-A	26-B	32-C	40-A	42-L	App-A			
Gloves	6-A	37-B	40-A						
Dead ball	23-A	31-A	42-K						
No ball	24-A	24-B	32-D	42-C					
Wide ball	35-B	42-C							
Dismissals	23-A								
Caught	6-A	32-A	32-B	32-C	37-A	42-L			
Handled the ball	33-A	33-B							
Hit wicket	35-A	35-B							
LBW	36-A								
Obstructing the field	33-A	37-A	37-B	42-L					
Run out	28-A	38-A	38-B	42-K	28-B				
Fair and unfair play	10-A	42-J	42-K	42-L					
Penalty runs	2-F	13-A	26-D	41-A	42-K				
Dangerous/unfair bowling	42-A	42-B	42-C	42-D	42-E				
Ground; weather; light	3-A	3-B	3-C						
Innings	12-A	13-A	14-A	16-B					
Toss for innings	1-A								
Intervals	4-A	15-A							
9 wickets down at tea	15-B	15-C							
Pitch	7-A	10-A	10-B	42-F	42-G	42-H			
Players - nomination	1-A								
Fielders absent	2-B	2-C							
Fielders returning	2-F								
Fielding illegally	41-A								
Injured batsmen	2-A	2-G	2-H	2-J	37-A				
Runners	2-D	18-A							
Substitutes	2-E								
Result	12-A	16-A	16-B	18-D	21-A	21-B	21-C	21-D	
Awarding, Conceding	2-K	21-D	31-A	31-B					
Runs (scoring)	18-A	18-B	18-C	18-D	19-D	21-A	21-B	21-C	32-D
	33-B	34-A	42-J						
Boundaries	18-D	19-A	19-B	19-C	19-D	21-A	32-D		

Law 1

1-A The right to make the toss

If a captain is not available at the appropriate time, another person has to ensure that the list of nominated players is given to an umpire. There are no restrictions on who this other person is. However, once the nomination is completed, must it be someone on the list who actually tosses?

No. Law 1.3 stipulates that *after the toss* only a nominated player can deputise for his captain. While the toss is actually being made is not 'after the toss'.

[Law reference: 1.3]

Law 2

2-A What constitutes injury during the match?

If, during the match, a player aggravates an injury sustained before the match, should the umpires regard this as 'injury during the current match', qualifying him for a runner and/or a substitute?

Since umpires have no special medical expertise, they must assume that **if a player is nominated he is fit to play**. Accordingly, if his condition worsens a substitute/runner can be allowed. If there is any evidence of sharp practice, at that time or later, this would be a matter for action under Law 42.

[Law reference: 2.1]

2-B Interruption during a fielder's absence

There is an interruption during a fielder's absence. How does this affect the time he has to wait before being allowed to bowl after his return?

It is important to recognise what is **playing time** and what is not. Any span of time which starts with a call of Play by the umpire and which ends with a call of Time by the umpire is **playing time**. An interruption or interval is the *reverse* of this, starting with a call of Time and ending with a call of Play. It is only **playing time** that counts towards length of time absent. If between the time a player leaves the field and the time he returns there is an interruption (or an interval), then his absence is the time he is off the field before the break, plus the time he is off the field after the break. The time of the break itself is not 'playing time absent'.

For example, in each of the following cases the player leaves at 11-55 a.m. and returns at 12-30 p.m. His absence is the time from 11-55 to the start of the break, added to the time from the end of the break until 12-30. In the second case he has been absent only 10 minutes of playing time and therefore need not wait at all.

absence	break	absence	total absence	wait
11-55 to 12 = 5 min	drinks 12 to 12-04 = 4 min	12-04 to 12-30 = 26 min	31 min	31 min
11-55 to 12 = 5 min	rain 12-00 to 12-25 = 25 min	12-25 to 12-30 = 5 min	10 min	nil
11-55 to 12-15 = 20 min	rain 12-15 to 12-30 = 15 min	nil	20 min	*

* In the third example, because his return coincides with the resumption of play, he can count the 15 minute break as part of his 20 minute waiting time and has only 5 more minutes to wait. This concession applies **only** if the break is an **unscheduled interruption**, not an arranged interval, **and** the absent fielder **returns at the end of the break**

[Law reference: 2.5]

2-C Interruption before fielder's 'penance time' completed

A player has been absent from the field for 35 minutes. He has been back on the field for 10 minutes when there is an interruption for rain. If he returns with the rest of the team at the end of the interruption, can he count the time taken for the interruption as part of his waiting time, or does Law 2.5(c)(iii) apply only to players who are off the field when the interruption begins?

To count the time of an interruption as time on the field of play – i.e. to be able to offset this time against waiting time – Law 2.5(c)(iii) lays down only two conditions.

The break in play must be an unscheduled interruption, not an arranged interval.

The player must return to the field on the resumption of play at the end of the interruption.

Whenever these two conditions are satisfied, this section of Law will apply. In the example quoted, the player still has 25 minutes to wait when the interruption starts. If it lasts for 15 minutes, he will have 10 more minutes to wait on resumption of play.

[Law reference: 2.5]

2-D Replacing a runner

The Law states that a runner should if possible have already batted. This is clearly not possible when one of the opening batsmen is injured and is permitted a runner. If the other opening batsman is dismissed before the injured one, should he immediately replace the runner?

There are two reasons why the Law lays down that a runner should have batted already (if possible). The first is that it is clearly undesirable that a batsman soon to come in himself should have either prior experience of the light and other conditions or sight of the bowling. The second is that it is also clearly undesirable for a runner to be changed, to bring in a fresh player instead of a tired one. Becoming tired is a factor of some significance in the development of a batsman's innings and one that a batsman who is not injured has to contend with. It is therefore good practice to insist that if a runner cannot have batted already, he should be one from quite low in the batting order. The likelihood is then that the need to change the runner will not arise. This is preferable to full but retrospective compliance with Law 2.7. If the other opener were to be dismissed very shortly after the injury, it might then be suitable for him to replace the first runner. The umpire must use his judgment. In general, however, the original runner should stay unless he himself is injured, the approach of his own innings requires that there should be at least some gap before he comes to the wicket or there is a significant break in play, when a change would be appropriate.

[Law reference: 2.7]

2-E Player comes on to field as substitute without permission

Where does the Law stand with regard to a substitute fielder entering the field of play without permission?

When a nominated player leaves the field of play, it is laid down that the umpire is to be informed. The two umpires then jointly decide whether or not the reason for absence justifies the granting of a substitute under either Law 2.1(a) or Law 2.1(b). If during play a player comes on as a substitute without such permission, the Law has been breached. When the presence of the unauthorised player first becomes apparent, as soon as the ball is dead the umpires will consider what further action to take. Such further action will include either refusing or granting permission for the substitute, and may possibly include reporting the incident as an act of unfair play. If, however, before this action is taken the player makes contact with the ball in play then, before applying the procedure prescribed above, the procedure laid down in Law 2.6(i) and (ii) should be followed. It is only in this latter case that the stricture that the delivery is not to count in the over will apply.

On the other hand, if the umpires have granted permission for a substitute to act for a nominated player, the substitute is then to be counted as a fielder. (See Appendix D - definition of 'fielder'.) Any Laws applying to a fielder apply to him. In granting permission for a substitute, clearly the umpires will arrange for his coming on to the field when the ball is dead. Although later he may, like any other fielder, be guilty of transgression, no question of contravention of Laws 2.5 and 2.6 can arise at *this* point.

[Law reference: 2.6, 2.1]

2-F Score when fielder returning without permission handles the ball

The ball is travelling towards the boundary. It has not quite reached it when it is picked up by a previously absent fielder coming back on to the field without permission. His feet are clearly grounded outside the boundary line as he does so. Obviously 5 penalty runs are to be awarded and will be additional to any other runs. Would 'any other runs' include a boundary 4 because the fielder was in contact with the ground outside the boundary when he fielded the ball?

It is true that, in general, if one and the same act contravenes two Laws, both penalties will apply. Here however, that situation does not arise. Law 19.3 makes it clear that for a boundary either the ball itself, or a fielder in contact with the ball, must be on or over the boundary. This cannot apply to the returning player. Since he has not had permission to return he is **not** a fielder. This is specifically stated in the definition of a fielder in Appendix D. The only Law that applies to him fielding the ball is 2.6. As he handled the ball while it was in play, 5 penalty runs will be awarded, but the fact that he was in contact with the boundary is irrelevant. Runs completed by the batsmen, plus the run in progress if they had crossed at the moment he came into contact with the ball, together with a 1 run penalty if No ball or Wide had been called, would be added to the 5 penalty runs as normal.

[Law reference: 2.6, 19.6, App D]

2-G Injured striker runs even though he has a runner

An injured striker has a runner. The runner remains within his ground at the striker's end, but the injured striker and the non-striker both run, and both make good the ground at the opposite end. Should this run be allowed?

No. Law 29.2(e) makes it clear that the injured striker's ground is always at the wicket-keeper's end. Even though he grounds his bat behind the crease at the bowler's end, he has not made good **his** ground. Law 18.1 requires that both batsmen make good **their** ground for a run to be scored. Therefore no run has been completed.

[Law reference: 2.8, 18.1, 29.2(e)]

2-H Stumped when the striker has a runner (1)

It is accepted that if the non-striker or a runner, if there is one, is out of his ground, then he is considered to be attempting a run. Does that mean that in order for the striker to be out Stumped, his runner must be within his ground?

It is true that, where relevant, when the runner is not in his ground he is to be considered to be running. However, Law 2.8 specifically states that the striker will be "*out in the circumstances or Law 38 (Run out) or Law 39 (Stumped) irrespective of the position of the non-striker or of the runner.*" This means that if the striker himself is out of his ground, the position of his runner is irrelevant.

[Law reference: 2.8, 39.1, 39.3]

2-J Stumped when the striker has a runner (2)

An injured striker for whom a runner has been allowed receives a ball which is not a No ball and plays it to square leg. The non-striker and runner complete one run. However, the wicket-keeper, without the intervention of another member of the fielding side, fields the ball and by a direct throw puts down the wicket at the striker's end. Finding the injured striker (who had not himself attempted to run) out of his ground, the wicket keeper appeals. Is the striker out Stumped?

The conditions for Stumped are that

- The striker must be receiving a delivery that is not a No ball.
- The striker (in this case with a runner) is out of his ground when the wicket is put down at his end.
- The wicket-keeper has put down the wicket without the intervention of another fielder.
- The striker is not attempting a run.

From the description of the incident, (b) and (c) are certainly satisfied. However, although the delivery is not a No ball, the striker is not 'receiving this delivery'. Hence he will not be out Stumped. Because he was out of his ground when the wicket was put down, the position of his runner is irrelevant as is also the fact that he himself had not attempted to run. He will himself be out Run out and the completed run will be disallowed. The non-striker will return to his original end.

[Law reference: 2.8, 39.1, 39.3]

2-K Both batsmen leaving the field of play

Both batsmen leave the field during an innings without stating that they are retiring. On investigation, the umpires decide that this action constitutes a refusal to play and, after due warning to the captain, award the match. How should the innings of the two batsmen be recorded? Would it have made any difference if the refusal to play, leading to the award of the match, had been during the tea interval?

The first answer is straightforwardly 'Retired - out'. The batsmen left the field while play was in progress and before the innings had ended. At that point no investigation had been made, the match had not yet been awarded, so the match had not reached a conclusion. They have therefore retired, which every batsman is entitled to do at any time during his innings. The Law instructs that if for *any* reason a retired batsman does not resume his innings, he will be recorded as 'Retired - . . .'. If, as in this case, the cause of his departure was not illness or injury, etc, it is to be 'Retired - out'.

The answer to the second question is the same. The sequence of events is:

Tea interval starts – both batsmen in mid-innings.

Umpires decide captain is refusing to play. This applies to the whole team, so both batsmen count as declining to continue their innings – which is exactly what retiring is. They have effectively retired.

Match awarded – so innings now concluded.

'Retired' batsmen have not returned. They are recorded as Retired – out.

It may be worth noting that the answer would have been different had the captain *conceded defeat* rather than refusing to play. Then the sequence would have been:

Tea interval starts – both batsmen in mid-innings.

Captain brings innings to conclusion by conceding defeat.

No question of retiring has arisen and so there is no question of not returning after retirement. The two batsmen are simply Not out.

[Law reference: 2.9, 21.3]

Law 3

3-A Umpires as final judges of fitness of ground, weather and light

The umpires pronounced the pitch unfit but, when the captains insisted, allowed play to take place under Law 3.9 (b). How can the umpires be the final judges of the fitness of the ground, weather and light for play as stated in Law 3.8, if Law 3.9 allows the captains nevertheless to decide whether play is to take place or not?

There are three levels of fitness of the condition of the ground (which includes the pitch), weather or light. The umpires have to recognise the three levels:

1. Suitable - perfectly acceptable. Play *has* to take place
2. Unsuitable - not ideal for play but not actually dangerous. Play may or may not take place depending on agreement by the captains
3. Unreasonable or dangerous - any reasonable person could foresee the likelihood of injury to those on the field of play. The umpires will in no circumstances allow play to take place

Notice that although the phrases 'fitness of ground, weather and light' and 'fitness of the pitch' are used in a general way, the Law no longer uses the words 'fit' or 'unfit' to describe *categories* of fitness. The wording of this Law in the 2000 Code was very carefully considered after taking legal advice on the repercussions should a player or umpire be injured in adverse conditions. There is now no such thing in Law as 'an unfit pitch'.

Law 3.9(b) covers **unsuitable** conditions. If the umpires consider that conditions are **unsuitable** the captains have the right to insist on play, but only if there is agreement by the two captains that **both** wish play to take place. This is not a decision by the captains that conditions are suitable. That is solely the umpires' decision. It is an agreement by the captains that, notwithstanding the unsuitable conditions, they wish to play.

Law 3.9(d) covers **unreasonable or dangerous** conditions. If the umpires consider that conditions are so bad that there is obvious and foreseeable risk to the safety of any player or umpire, so that it would be **unreasonable or dangerous for play to take place**, then they will not allow any play while they are of that opinion.

The captains have no say in the matter at all. They cannot agree to play in such conditions.

In summary The umpires **are** the final judges of the fitness of the ground weather and light for play. At no time do the captains have the power to decide on the suitability of the conditions for play. It is the **umpires** who decide in each case which of the three categories applies to the conditions. If they consider that conditions are at level 1 (suitable) the captains have no choice; they have to play. If the umpires decide that conditions are at level 3 (unreasonable or dangerous), the captains have no choice; they will not be allowed to play. It is only when the umpires decide that conditions are at level 2 (unsuitable), that the captains have any powers. The total extent of the captains' powers is to have the choice of whether to play or not in conditions classed as 'unsuitable', and then only if they agree that they both wish to play. It should be noted that in the case of unsuitable *light* conditions, agreement between the captains is not required. The captain of the batting side alone has the option of deciding independently whether play should take place, and again this option is available only when light conditions are classed as 'unsuitable'.

Although the question does not require it, it might be appropriate to add this further comment on the implementation of this Law.

In general, conditions do not change abruptly from one level to another. Nearly always they gradually get worse or gradually improve. Conditions are to be considered as remaining at their previous level until the umpires (only the umpires, on their own) **together** agree that the conditions have changed to a new level. They have to come to their verdict on the conditions without reference to the captains and without taking into account either the state of the match or the bearing that the result of the match may have on competition standings.

If the umpires have forbidden play because conditions are unreasonable or dangerous, then they will not give the captains the option of agreeing to play until they - the two umpires - agree between themselves that conditions have improved to level 2 (unsuitable but not dangerous)

If the umpires agree together that conditions are 'unsuitable', and the captains have **not** agreed that they both wish to play, then play will not take place until

- either the two captains do agree that they wish to play in those conditions,
- or the umpires decide together that conditions have become 'suitable'. At this point they - the two umpires - will order play to take place.

[Law reference: 3.8, 3.9]

3-B Fitness of conditions for play

If there has been an interruption of play because of rain, can play be resumed while it is still raining?
Could a match be started in rain?

The major consideration for the umpires will be the condition of the surface, especially for the bowlers' run ups and the batsmen's footholds, but also in the outfield. Whatever their judgment of that, it is unlikely that they would regard playing in the rain as suitable conditions. If, however, both umpires consider that the conditions of the ground, of the weather or of the light are neither unreasonable nor dangerous, there is no reason **in Law** to forbid play, even in light rain, if both captains agree that they wish play to resume or to commence.

[Law reference: 3.8, 3.9]

3-C Captain disapproves of batsmen accepting offer to go off in unsuitable light

The umpires offer the light to the batsmen who accept it and leave the field. The captain in the dressing room is agitated and wants play to resume immediately. Where does the Law stand on the captain's request to resume play?

Law 3.9(b)(ii) makes it clear, in the context of the surrounding text, that while conditions of light are unsuitable umpires will not allow play to recommence **unless** the captain of the batting side wishes it to recommence. The power of the actual batsmen to deputise for their captain in expressing wishes on such matters is **while they are at the wicket**. Once the players are off the field, it is the captain himself who must do so. If conditions became dangerous, then the umpires could - and should - forbid play. If, however, the captain of the batting side indicates that he wishes play to recommence, the umpires cannot forbid it unless they (the two umpires) agree that conditions are dangerous.

[Law reference: 3.9]

Law 4

4-A Drinks interval as part of a batsman's time at the wicket

Should the scorers include time for a drinks interval in calculating the length of a batsman's innings?

Although the Law is concerned that the details of play are correctly recorded, it does not concern itself about the personal statistics of individual players. Provisions on scoring in the Laws are limited to

- getting the runs, wickets and (where required) number of overs right
- indicating whether a delivery counts as a ball of the over or not
- stating when runs or part runs are valid, or not valid
- allocating runs and penalties as between striker and various forms of extras
- allocating runs and penalties as between bowler and fielding extras
- indicating whether the bowler can claim credit for a wicket

The duration of a particular batsman's innings is not one of the considerations. The only part of Law that has any relevance is that a drinks interval is not playing time. This is important in two matters

- reckoning a player's absence and hence his entitlement to bowl on return
- recording the duration of a side's innings in cases where this is to be limited to a period of time.

How the scorers deal with this for an individual batsman is (like a number of scoring practices) a matter of established convention. Such conventions may vary from one cricket community to another.

[Law reference: 4, 15.1]

Law 5

5-A Bringing 'lost' ball back into use when found

The match ball is lost and cannot be found immediately. The umpires let play continue with a replacement ball. The original ball is found later. Should it be returned to use

- (a) if it is only a few minutes since it was lost?
- (b) if it is not found until an hour later?
- (a) Yes. The replacement ball is virtually certain to have been in different condition from the original, because the chances of having a spare to match the original exactly at any particular point are very low. The condition of the ball can have considerable effect on play and it is fairer to return to the original.
- (b) This is a very different situation. The replacement ball was at the time as good a match as could be obtained, though not perfect. After another hour's use it will have deteriorated considerably. Meanwhile the original ball has not been subjected to that amount of wear and tear. To bring back into use a ball in what is effectively much better condition could have an impact on play. The difficulty is in laying down how long the original has to have been missing, before saying it would be better not to resume its use. Umpires must judge how much the replacement has deteriorated and take into account how close or otherwise it was to the original when the replacement was made.

[Law reference: 5.5]

5-B Ball splitting in two

What happens if a ball hit by the striker splits in two on impact, one part remaining within the field of play, the other carrying on over the boundary?

The Laws refer in all cases to 'the ball', not to part of it. It must be 'the ball' that fulfils the conditions for a boundary to be scored in Law 19. Therefore in this case no boundary has been scored. There are many other situations involving the ball which will not be valid if only part of the ball is involved. It must be 'the ball' that is held by a fielder for a catch, puts down the wicket for a run out or stumping and so on. Under Law 3.6(b), the umpires cannot allow play to proceed, since 'the ball' no longer conforms to the requirements of Law 5. As soon as either umpire becomes aware that the ball has broken in two, he should immediately call and signal Dead ball. The striker has played the ball, therefore it will count as one of the over.

[Law reference: 5.5, 3.6]

Law 6

6-A Conditions for Caught if the striker is not wearing gloves

If a batsman is not wearing gloves how does this affect the possibility of his being caught?

An essential requirement for the striker to be caught is that the ball has touched his bat. The definitions in Appendix D and Law 6.3(b) are entirely clear. The **hand** is part of the bat, or the **whole of a glove** on the hand holding the bat is part of the bat. Moreover, under 6.3(a) he has to be 'holding' the bat. Without a glove therefore, the ball touching his hand, but not his wrist or arm, will make him liable to being caught, providing his hand is in contact with the bat.

[Law reference: 6.3, 32]

Law 7

7-A Changing the pitch

The umpires decide that the condition of the pitch makes it dangerous for play to continue. Another pitch is available and the captains agree to play on that. In these circumstances is play resumed or does the match start again?

The wording in Law 7.4 'changed **during the match**' implies that the match will **continue** on the new pitch, just as any other resumption of play after an interruption. There is nothing in Law, however, to prevent the original match being abandoned, by agreement, and a new one started on the other pitch. It could not, however, be regarded in any way as the same match, unless Local Regulations provide otherwise.

[Law reference: 7.4]

Law 10

10-A Delay in captain exercising right to rolling

Law 10.1(e) specifies that the time required for completion of permitted rolling is to be taken out of playing time, if some circumstance prevents the completion before the time scheduled for the next session to start. If, however, the captain does not request the rolling until a good portion of the available time has expired, should the umpires take action – refuse the rolling perhaps?

The umpires (together) should seek the cause of such delay. Law 10.1(e) gives the batting captain the right to have the pitch rolled, even if this means losing playing time, if he is **prevented** from having it within the allotted time. This is not to be taken as extending to cases where the delay is not caused by the prevailing circumstances. If the delay was due to the groundsmen not being available, or the roller not starting, he would have been *prevented* from having the rolling within the correct time. The same is true if there is a late declaration or forfeiture during an interval. However, once a captain knows that he has the opportunity to request rolling, there should not be, without good reason, a significant delay before he makes the request. Merely to delay the request without some special justifying circumstance cannot be construed as ‘being prevented’. It looks like a ploy to shorten the time his opponents have to bowl at his side. However, it would be impossible to lay down in Law what should be considered ‘significant delay’. It has to be the judgment of the umpires together, having discovered as best they can whether there is any satisfactory reason for the delay.

As to the action to be taken, the umpires **have no authority to forbid such rolling**. The rolling would have to be allowed, since there is nothing in Law permitting them to withhold it. On the other hand, if the umpires felt - as indeed they might - that the delay in making the request amounted to sharp practice, if not downright cheating, then they should together tell the captain that they considered the action unfair and they would accordingly report the matter under Law 42.18

[Law reference: 10.1(a), 42.18]

10-B Sweeping and removal of débris

Law 10.2 prescribes sweeping if rolling is to take place. What is the position about sweeping if there is to be no rolling?

The umpires shall not allow sweeping in those areas where they consider it may be detrimental to the surface of the pitch.

It is laid down that the pitch is to be cleared of débris at intervals for meals, between innings and before *each* day’s play. The method of clearing débris is not specified and, if it will not be detrimental to the surface, could be sweeping but need not be.

Rolling is permitted only between innings and before each day’s play, except the first day. If rolling is to take place at one of these times, the pitch is to be swept first except in those areas where the umpires consider sweeping may be detrimental to the surface. Even in those areas, débris *shall* be removed, but not by sweeping. In addition, the pitch is to be cleared of débris when no rolling can take place, at intervals for meals and before the first innings, and also at times when rolling is not to take place, even though permitted.

Time limits are set to prevent the pitch being swept before it is mown. However, any débris that might cause damage to machinery may be picked up prior to mowing.

[Law reference: 10.2]

Law 12

12-A Completed innings at the conclusion of match

If at the end of a match all the overs required in the last hour have been bowled and time for close of play has been reached, has the side batting last completed its innings, so that if the scores of the two sides are equal the result is a Tie, even though the side batting last is not all out?

An agreement, as permitted under Law 12.1(b), to limit an **innings** to a number of overs or by a period of time is a Playing Condition or Regulation overriding Law. In the absence of such an agreement, hours of play are to be agreed for the **match**. This is different from agreeing limits on particular innings, such as a maximum of 3 hours or not more than 50 overs. If, however, such an agreement **is** in place, then time for Close of Play and the strictures of Law 16 about the last hour do not apply.

Under Law, for the outcome of a match to be a Tie when final scores are equal at the conclusion of the match, the side batting last must have completed its innings. Law 12.3 sets out the four conditions for **completion of an innings**. Three are self explanatory

1. the side is all out (or the equivalent if some batsmen are unable to bat),
2. the captain declares the innings closed,
3. the captain forfeits the innings

The fourth applies **only if it has been agreed to limit that innings to an agreed number of overs or by a specified length of time**. In this case, and this case only, the innings will be completed when the agreed limit, whether of time or of overs, has been reached. If it is the final innings then the match is concluded. The regulation limiting the final innings by time or overs should include guidance about the result, including the case when final scores are equal.

When, *without* such an agreement, **hours of play** for the match are settled as required by Law 3.3, this is **not** setting a time limit on the final innings. The fact that, for example, time for close of play on the final day is agreed as 6-30 p.m., is not limiting the final innings by a period of time. That side may have batted all day!

Law 16 further stipulates that there shall be a last hour based on the **agreed hours of play**, in which a minimum number of overs must be bowled. That is **not** limiting the final innings to a number of overs. There may have been any number of overs in the innings before the last hour begins.

Consequently, reaching time for Close of Play and bowling all the overs required for the last hour means that, under Law 16.9, the **match** is concluded but does not guarantee that the final **innings** is completed. For that, one of the first three criteria set out above must also be satisfied. The conclusion of the match can *coincide* with the conclusion of the final innings *if the last batsman is dismissed on the final ball*. Various forms of result are possible even if the final innings is not completed, or the outcome may be a Draw. It is not until that innings **is** complete, however, that a Tie is possible, with the further condition that the final scores are level.

In the situation of the question, none of the criteria for completing the innings is satisfied. The outcome is a Draw, not a Tie.

[Law reference: 12.3, 16.6, 21]

Law 13

13-A Subsequent award of penalty runs affecting right to enforce follow-on

What should happen if

- (a) the side batting first does not have sufficient lead to enforce the follow-on but subsequently penalty runs are added to its score bringing it up to the required total?
- (b) the side batting first enforces the follow-on and subsequently penalty runs are awarded to the other side, reducing the difference between the sides' scores to less than the level required for the follow-on?

Neither situation can arise. The follow-on is not an issue until *both* sides (A first, then B) have batted. Then, if it does not have the requisite lead, side A will have to bat again. Any penalty runs awarded to side A now will be added to its score in this, its second innings. If penalty runs are awarded to side B they will be added to their first innings total, increasing it beyond the number which was already too large for side A to make them bat again.

If side A does enforce the follow on, then side B bats next, after having just batted. Any penalty runs acquired now will be added to its current innings not to its first one. If side A is awarded penalty runs, they will be added to its first innings total. They already had sufficient lead for the follow-on, and the extra runs only increase that lead.

[Law reference: 13.1, 42.17(d)]

Law 14

14-A Declaration before the start of an innings

May a captain declare an innings closed before it has started?

No. For a captain to declare, Play must have been called (on the field), the ball must have come into play (the bowler must have started his run up, or bowling action if he has no run up) and the ball has then to become dead. Time should be called when a declaration is made.

[Law reference: 14.1]

except Law 15.8, the significant fact is the **time** at which a wicket falls. Either an interval will be brought forward, or timing the appearance of the incoming batsmen is to start. Such changes will be triggered by the retirement of a batsman just as much as by the fall of a wicket. There are two cases where the time is not significant, namely Law 2.9(c) [batsman resuming his innings] and 16.5(b) [conclusion of a match]. In these two cases the Law specifically includes retirement of a batsman to remove any doubt.

The particular circumstances in which a batsman's retirement will have the same effect as the fall of a wicket are:

- (i) if a previously retired batsman is allowed to resume his innings, he can do so only at the fall of a wicket or the retirement of another batsman. [Specific statement in 2.9(c)]
- (ii) the innings is completed if, when a batsman retires with further balls still to be bowled, there are no further batsmen to come in. [(12.3(b)]
- (iii) drinks will be taken if a batsman retires within 5 minutes of the agreed time [(15.9(b)(i)]
- (iv) an interval will be taken if a wicket falls or a batsman retires within 2 minutes of the agreed time [specific statement in 16.5(b)]
- (v) if it is still in play, the ball will automatically be considered dead when a batsman retires. [23.1(a)(iii)]
- (vi) if a batsman retires, the three minutes allowed for the next batsman (or his partner) to be ready will be timed from the retirement [31.1]

It must be emphasised that, although in the situations stated above the retirement of a batsman will have the same effect on the subsequent conduct of the game as the fall of a wicket, it is **not the same** as the fall of a wicket. For example, if drinks are taken early because a batsman retires, his innings is not terminated at that point. The Law specifically allows him to resume his innings, either by right or with the consent of the opposing captain. In particular, in (ii) above, if the batsman retires through illness or injury or other unavoidable cause, Law 2.9(a) directs that this batsman is to be recorded Retired – not out. The innings will be completed but the side is not all out.

[Law reference: 15.8]

Also applies in Laws 2.9(c), 12.3(b), 15.9(b)(ii), 16.5(b), 23.1(a)(iii), 31.1

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]

Law 18

18-A Short running and a runner

Could you please comment on the following episode? The striker had been allowed a runner by the umpires. After a quick single the umpire at the striker's end called and signalled Short run. After the match, he explained his action by pointing out that the runner had been outside his ground before the ball was delivered and therefore the run was short. Was this correct? If not, what should the umpire have done?

According to the definition in Law 18, a run is a short run when a batsman fails to make good his ground **in turning for a further run**. This is clearly not the case in the situation described, so calling Short run was not appropriate.

There is nothing in the Laws which *requires* any batsman - and that includes a runner, under Law 2.8(a) - to be within his ground at any particular time. Instead the Law provides that a batsman can be run out if he is not in his ground while the ball is in play. The bowler is specifically permitted to try to run out the non-striker before entering his delivery stride. He can also do so for the striker at the expense of a penalty for a No ball. Although in theory the same is true for a runner, it is a much less realistic option for the bowler; he may not even be aware that the runner was not in his ground. The striker's end umpire could therefore be justified in considering it unfair for the runner to be standing noticeably out of his ground before the bowler enters his delivery stride. He would then call Dead ball under Law 42.2 and follow the procedure of Law 42.18. For the runner to start to run before delivery would certainly be unfair. The umpire must use his judgment as to what amounts to an unfair advantage if the runner is merely standing with no part of bat or person grounded behind the popping crease.

[Law reference: 18.4]

18-B Difference between failure to complete run and short running

The batsmen run a single on the last ball of an over. The striker unintentionally just fails to make good his ground at the bowler's end, and starts to walk unhurriedly towards his partner for a chat. It is clear that both sides regard the ball as dead. Before calling Over, should the umpire call and signal Short run?

No. A run is short only when the batsman, having failed to make good his ground, **turns for a further run**. It is clear that all regard the ball as dead. Clearly the striker is not trying to take a further run when he goes to 'have a chat'. Therefore, there has not been any short run.

It is true that the run has not in fact been scored, under the definition in Law 18.1(a), but the umpire is empowered to call Short run **only** when there is short running. Law 42.2 states very firmly that umpires are **not** to interfere with the progress of play, unless

- either a player's action is considered unfair
- or they are required to do so by the Laws.

The call is **not** required by Law. The umpire cannot consider the player to be trying to gain an unfair advantage in the situation described. Therefore he cannot intervene.

On the other hand, the batsmen have clearly crossed, so under Law 18.11 (Runs scored when ball becomes dead) the run in progress when the ball becomes dead will be credited to the batting side

[Law reference: 18.4, 18.1, 18.11, 42.2]

18-C Batsmen abandoning attempt to complete run

The ball is struck hard into the outfield. The batsmen run and cross, but seeing that the ball is going to cross the boundary, turn and go back to their original ends. Doesn't Law 18.5 as written mean that this is deliberate short running?

No. Whether deliberate or unintentional, a run is short only if the batsman's failure to make good his ground is **in turning for a further run**. Provided that it is clear to the umpires that the intentions of the batsmen were merely to abandon the first run, rather than to attempt to take a second one, there has been no short running. The boundary would be allowed.

If in this situation it transpired that the ball failed to cross the boundary, no run would be scored.

[Law reference: 18.5]

18-D Run deliberately not completed and boundary overthrows as winning score

One run is wanted to win. The batsmen run but, just after they cross, a fielder attempts a run out. The ball misses the stumps and runs on towards the boundary. The striker stands outside his crease, deliberately not grounding his bat until the ball has crossed the boundary. How many runs are to be allowed?

There is nothing illegal about a batsman's deliberately refraining from completing a run. It is only if he does so when turning for a further run that he is deliberately running short. Therefore the boundary is not to be disallowed on this account. The run has, however, not been completed.

This is not a situation of running after a lawful second strike, so the boundary is a boundary overthrow. Law 19.6 states that if the boundary results from an overthrow, the runs scored shall be Penalties (none in this case) the allowance for the boundary (presumably 4), the runs completed by the batsmen (none) together with the run in progress, if they have crossed at the instant of the throw (which they had). However, this run does not achieve the status of a run added to the score **until** the ball crosses the boundary.

Therefore, the batting side had not made enough to win before the ball crossed the boundary. Under Law 21.6(c) they will be credited with 'the whole of the boundary allowance'.

5 runs will be allowed (i.e. boundary allowance plus 1).

[Law reference: 21.6, 18.4, 19.6]

Law 19

19-A Tree within the boundary

What is the situation if there is a tree 10 metres inside the boundary and the ball hits this tree?

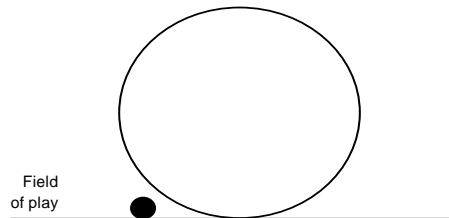
Law 19.1(a) requires the umpires and captains, before the toss, to agree the boundary of the field of play. Section (c) of the same Law indicates that it is the umpires' responsibility to decide, also before the toss, whether or not an obstacle within the boundary, such as the tree you describe, is to be regarded as a boundary. It may be worth mentioning that no such decision can be made about a sight-screen. It has to be outside the boundary.

If the umpires have decided that the tree is to be regarded as a boundary then all the provisions regarding boundaries will apply. As soon as the ball is in play, or a fielder in contact with the ball touches any part of the tree, a boundary will be scored and the ball will become dead. The allowance will depend on what was decided before the toss and whether the conditions for a boundary 6 apply or not. If the umpires have not decided that the tree is to be regarded as a boundary, then the ball touching it will remain in play.

[Law reference: 19.1]

19-B Large curved object as boundary marking

If a large object with a curved surface marks part of the boundary, the line joining its innermost points may be high enough for the ball to travel under this line, passing it before touching the object itself. This is not to be regarded as coming into contact with the ground beyond the boundary edge.



Take as example a roller. For a boundary to be scored, it will be necessary to touch the surface of the roller, or the ground on the far side of the roller, or an object grounded on the far side of the roller. In this diagram, the ball has not yet touched the roller. A boundary has not been scored

[Law reference: 19.2(c)(i)]

19-C Boundary fence collapsing while ball is in play

A boundary fence collapses into the field of play and comes to rest face down, flat on the ground partly within the field of play, straddling the original base line of the fence. The ball is hit by the striker and touches a part of the fence that is within the field of play. The ball remains inside the field and does not travel past the original base line.

Is the boundary the original base line? There is an inference that Law 19.2(e) will only apply when the fence has been removed from the field of play altogether.

It is correct to infer that the boundary becomes the original base line only after the collapsed fence has been removed. This removal is to be done as soon as the ball is dead. For the short period until the ball becomes dead it has to be considered that the fence still marks the boundary. As soon as the ball touches any part of the fence a boundary has been scored. In the case quoted, as the fence had not been removed, it must be assumed that the collapse occurred after the ball had come into play and that therefore the statements above apply. A boundary would be scored when the ball touched the fence, no matter which part of the fence it was.

[Law reference: 19.2(e)]

19-D Interpretation of '6 runs' in Law 19.4(c) – runs allowed for boundaries

The Law instructs that captains and umpires are to agree not only what constitutes the boundary of the field of play but also the allowances for boundaries. If there is such an agreement that the normal 4 and 6 are to be replaced with other values, e.g. 3 and 5, should the award of 6 runs in this Law be interpreted as the agreed value, that is 5 in example?

No. It is intended that this should be an award to the batting side for an action by the fielder, rather than a normal boundary. The award should be 6 runs whatever may have been agreed about allowances.

[Law reference: 19.4(c)]

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 (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 needs 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. 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]

Law 23

23-A Interpretation of 'ball becomes dead on the dismissal of a batsman'

The Laws now clearly distinguish between a batsman being out and his being dismissed. Does that mean that if, for instance, there is a run out, the ball remains in play between the breaking of the wicket and the umpire giving his decision?

No. It is true that the ball does not become dead merely because there is an appeal, nor even if a batsman is out but he is not dismissed. The ball automatically becomes dead when a batsman is dismissed. If, however, an appeal is upheld, then the ball is to be regarded as having been dead from the moment of the incident which caused his dismissal. In the example quoted, the ball would be regarded as dead from the breaking of the wicket. As another example:

The ball hits the striker on the pad and there is an appeal. The batsmen run.

If the umpire gives the striker **not out**, then the ball has remained in play throughout and if the run is completed it will count.

If the umpire gives the striker **out LBW**, then the ball is to be regarded as dead from the moment it struck the pad. The run is not valid and the not out batsman will return to his original end.

[Law reference: 23.1(a)(iii)]

Law 24

24-A Delivery rolling into outfield

What happens if the ball finishes up rolling towards the fielder at extra cover? Can the striker go after the ball and try to play it?

If the ball behaves so abnormally, the first consideration for the umpire is whether it has been ‘delivered’ or not. He would be justified in considering the ball not delivered if, for example, it travelled backwards out of the bowler’s hand or stuck in the bowler’s hand so that it hit the ground a yard in front of his feet. These two situations are merely examples to illustrate the principle. The umpire must judge. If he considers that the ball has not been ‘delivered’, in this sense, he shall call Dead ball.

If, however, he is satisfied that it has been delivered, the fact that the ball is rolling along the ground means that No ball is to be called in any case under Law 24.6. Beyond this, there are two issues.

Although, as enshrined in Law 40.5 (Restriction on action by the wicket-keeper), the striker has an absolute right to try to play the ball, without interference from the fielding side, this right should not be regarded as extending to any area of the field of play. The game will be brought into disrepute if strikers are allowed to run out to e.g. mid-wicket to hit the ball. It will be for **the umpire on the day to decide** what is acceptable in this situation.

Moreover, when the ball is near a fielder, as implied in this question, an attempt by the striker to hit the ball means risk of injury to the fielder. For both these reasons, the call of No ball should be followed by a call of Dead ball.

Either of the principles set out above could apply separately in appropriate circumstances.

[Law reference: 24.6, 40.5]

24-B Ball caught or deflected by fielder before delivery reaches wicket

The bowler delivers the ball fairly but wide of the wicket. What is the situation if, before reaching the line of the striker’s wicket, the ball is

- (a) caught by a fielder, who then throws the ball to put down either wicket, with the batsman out of his ground? Is the batsman run out?
- (b) deflected by a fielder on to either wicket with the batsman out of his ground? Is the batsman out?
- (c) deflected by a fielder but not on to a wicket? Could the batsmen run?

In each case, the answer is No. The fielder catching the ball before it reaches the striker is to be considered as a case of the ball coming to rest before reaching the line of the striker’s wicket. The umpire should call No ball and then immediately call Dead ball under Law 24.7. The logic behind Law 24.7 is that, on the one hand, while provision in Law must be made for such abnormal deliveries they must be kept firmly in the category of mishaps and not allowed to become a ploy by the bowler. The calling of No ball clearly labels the deliveries unfair and penalises the fielding side for them. On the other hand obviously it is unreasonable to consider that the striker has received a delivery and had the opportunity to play it. Hence the call of Dead ball. Although in cases (b) and (c) the ball has not actually ‘come to rest’, even in the sense used in (a), the same logic applies and the same action of calling No ball and then immediately calling Dead ball, should apply.

[Law reference: 38.1(a)(ii), 24.7]

Law 26

26-A Pad-bat strikes (1)

If the ball first hits the pad and then the bat, the striker can be out Caught. If the ball is not caught can he score runs?

If No ball is called, the penalty for it will stand in every case. Apart from this one penalty, when the first contact with the striker is on his person, no runs or penalties will be scored in any situation unless the umpire is satisfied that the striker either attempted to play the ball with his bat, or attempted to avoid being hit by the ball. What follows is based on the assumption that one or other of these conditions has been met.

Law 26.2 limits the scoring of Leg byes to cases where there is no contact with the striker's bat, after the initial contact with his person. If the ball does hit the bat subsequently and

the contact is **inadvertent**, then runs scored (or a boundary allowance) are credited to the striker.

the contact is **wilful** and not in defence of his wicket, then he is out Hit the ball twice.

the contact is **wilful but in defence of his wicket**, then runs can be scored but only if there is an overthrow.

If there is an overthrow, then the first strike determines the nature of any runs that may be scored. If the first strike was on the bat they are runs to the striker. If the first contact was on the person the requirement for an attempt to play the ball with the bat or to avoid being hit by the ball still stands. Law 34 lays down categorically, however, that in this case if runs are permitted they will be Leg byes.

[Law reference: 26.2, 32.3(d)]

26-B Pad-bat strikes (2)

If the ball first hits the pad, then the ground and then the bat, the striker cannot be out Caught. Can he score runs?

The fact that the ball has been grounded between the two strikes does not affect the scoring of runs. Law 26.2 will apply. The answer to question 26-A will apply.

To allow runs the umpire must be satisfied *both* that the second strike on the bat was inadvertent *and* that before the first strike on the pad the striker had either attempted to play the ball with his bat or tried to avoid being hit by the ball. Even if the striker had attempted to play the ball with his bat before being hit on the pad, if the strike on the bat was wilful then the right to score runs would depend on the conditions of Law 34 being satisfied.

[Law reference: 26.2, 32.3(d)]

26-C Ball hitting the bat after deflection by the person

A batsman makes no attempt to play the ball with his bat, nor does he try to avoid being hit by the ball. It is clear that, under Law 26, Leg byes will not be allowed. Can the striker be credited with runs, however, if the ball after hitting the pad then comes into contact with his bat?

No. Law 26 does not state that, unless the umpire is satisfied that the conditions have been met, no runs shall be scored from that deflection. It states unequivocally that no runs shall be credited to the batting side **from that delivery**. It also specifically excludes even the awarding of any penalties, except the 1 run penalty if No ball has been called. Both parts of this embargo are reinforced in Law 34.4 for a ball lawfully struck more than once and again in Law 41.4 for a ball striking a fielder's helmet not being worn.

It should be noted, however, that in the circumstances described the striker could be out Caught if the ball is not grounded between first hitting his pad and being held by a fielder.

[Law reference: 26.3, 34.4, 41.4.]

26-D Reporting even though penalty runs not awarded

If Leg byes are not allowed, penalty runs are not to be awarded either. This appears to mean the fielding side suffers no penalty where otherwise they would have caused 5 penalty runs to be awarded to the batting side. Surely this cannot be correct?

It is true that debarring the batting side from the award of **any** runs, except a 1 run penalty if No ball has been called, is the most stringent penalty in the Laws against the batting side. However, it should be remembered that

when penalties are to be awarded, giving away 5 runs is not the only retribution against the fielding side. In many cases the Law also prescribes that the matter be reported and in some cases that the delivery is not to count in the over. Both these requirements will apply. For example, when Leg byes are attempted, a previously absent player returns without permission and comes into contact with the ball as it nears the boundary. The striker may have failed to satisfy the conditions for runs to be valid, so that the boundary is to be disallowed, and the penalty runs withheld. Nevertheless, the delivery will not count in the over and, as laid down in Law 2.6, the fielder and his captain are to be reported to higher authority for the offence. That authority is required to take action. The severity of the action for any particular offence meriting the penalty runs will depend on the severity of that offence.

The same situation arises in two other Laws, if ball is deflected off the striker's person without his having tried either to hit the ball with his bat or avoid being hit by the ball. No runs are allowed (except 1 run if No ball has been called) and the 5 run penalty is withheld when the ball, although runs would otherwise have been permitted. These two situations are

Runs after a second strike in defence of his wicket, even after an overthrow. (Law 34.4)

Penalty for the ball in play hitting a fielder's helmet on the ground (Law 41.5)

[Law reference: 26.3, 34.4(d), 41.4]

Law 28

28-A Wicket put down by striker's bat when he has let go of it.

Law 28 states that the wicket is put down if a bail is removed (etc) by the striker's bat, whether he is holding it or has let go of it. Are there any restrictions on how this applies? For instance if in trying to field the ball a fielder accidentally kicks a dropped bat on to the wicket, thus removing the bails, has the wicket been put down, so that a batsman could be run out.

No. Law 28.1 (ii) is correctly quoted in the question. However, in order for a batsman to be run out, Law 38.1 requires the wicket to be '*fairly put down by the opposing side*'. That is, it insists that a *fielder* has to put down the wicket. Looking at Law 28.1 as a whole, it can be analysed as saying that the wicket is put down if a bail is completely . . . by

the ball; this implies the ball **on its own**. There is no restriction on how it is propelled on to the wicket. If the ball alone hits the wicket and dislodges a bail or stump, the wicket has been put down.

the striker *through the agency of his bat or person*, attached to him or detached from him. He could be out Hit wicket, if **he** or part of him, broke the wicket, rather than the **ball** breaking it.

a fielder *through the agency of the ball providing he is holding it or through the agency of a hand or arm providing the ball is in the appropriate hand*.

The last of these is the only way a *fielder* can put down the wicket. A fielder causing the striker's bat to remove the bails does not come within these definitions. It is only if the striker's bat hits the wicket in falling, or if his own movements move the bat on to the stumps that the wicket will have been put down under the terms of this Law.

[Law reference: 28.1, 38.1]

28-B When is wicket deemed to have become broken?

The wicket is put down if a bail is completely removed from the top of the stumps. At what point in the bail's movement can the umpire consider this to have happened?

The situation is analogous to that of Wide ball. A delivery is wide as soon as it is launched on its course on leaving the bowler's hand, but cannot be called Wide until it passes the striker's wicket without anything having occurred, such as touching the striker or movement by the striker, to stop it being a Wide.

Law 28 refers to 'disturbance of a bail'. Cases are well documented of a bail lifting out of the groove and either falling back into the groove or landing on the wicket, firmly balanced on top of one or more stumps. Hence the process of removal cannot be considered as complete until the bail has either fallen below the level of the top of the stumps or moved horizontally to a point no longer vertical above them.

The wicket is put down as soon as a bail leaves the grooves and the position of the batsman is to be judged at that point. However, if anything such as falling back into the groove terminates the removal process before it is complete, it will be considered never to have begun.

[Law reference: 28.1]

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 defeat, 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]

Law 32

32-A Catching the ball *vis-à-vis* completing the catch

There appears to be a contradiction in Law 32.4 (and in Law 19.4, where the same words are used). How is it possible for a fielder to catch the ball but **subsequently** touch the boundary etc. while carrying the ball but **before** completing the catch?

A fielder catches the ball when he takes it in the air from a stroke of the bat. He does not complete the catch until he has established both forms of complete control

- (i) over the ball
- and (ii) over his own movement

For a fielder liable to run over the boundary, control over his own movement does not imply that he has to stop running. He has to convince the umpire that he could stop running, or run in any direction that he chose.

For the catch to be valid, he has to establish both these controls within the field of play. Laws 19.4 and 32.4 refer to the fielder touching the boundary in the period between the first catching and the final control.

[Law reference: 32.4, 19.4]

32-B Ball hit by striker lodges between two stumps at the other end

A ball that is not a No ball is hit back to the non-striker's end. Without touching the ground it lodges between two stumps. A fielder takes it out and holds it. There is an appeal.

Lodging between the stumps is not one of the reasons listed in Law 23 for the ball becoming dead. In the list of Definitions in Appendix D, the stumps are listed as implements of the game, so cannot possibly be agreed as a boundary in the way that an obstacle could be. Hence the ball has not become dead. The fielder on taking and holding the ball has complete control over the ball and over his own movement. The ball was not grounded from the time it left the bat until the fielder handled it and obtained control over it. A fair catch is therefore possible.

The fielder would have to retrieve the ball, i.e. make and complete the catch, within a reasonable time before both sides and most importantly the umpire have ceased to regard the ball as in play.

Providing this was all satisfied, the umpire would be justified in giving the striker out Caught, in answer to the appeal

[Law reference: 32.1, 23]

32-C Catch from pad-ground-bat strike

If the ball first hits the pad, then the ground and then the bat, can the striker be out Caught?

Law 32.3(d) states that it is a fair catch "if a fielder catches the ball after it has been lawfully struck more than once, but only if the ball has not touched the ground since being first struck". An inadvertent second stroke is to be considered lawful. Because of the grounding, a catch is not possible even if the second strike is wilful. If it was wilful then, unless it was in defence of his wicket, the striker would be out Hit the ball twice. The question of preventing a catch by a wilful second strike cannot arise because the ground contact means no catch is possible.

[Law reference: 32.3]

32-D Allowance if fielder 'carries the ball over' after a call of No ball

A fielder takes a ball not grounded since contact with the striker's bat. Law 32.4 stipulates that if subsequently the fielder, still holding the ball but before completing the catch, comes into contact with the boundary (or is grounded beyond it) then 6 runs will be scored, even if an allowance of fewer than 6 has been agreed for that section of boundary. What is the situation if the delivery is a No ball, so that a catch could not be completed in any case?

If the fielder touches or is grounded beyond the boundary in the situation described, the ball will immediately become dead under Law 19.3(a)(ii), so that there can be no completion of a catch in any circumstances. It is therefore not relevant that a catch was not in fact possible. The 6 run award will apply even in the case of a No ball, which of course will mean that there is additionally a 1 run penalty for the No ball.

[Law reference: 32.4]

32-E Ball striking discarded bat

In receiving the ball, the striker lets go of his bat. If the ball touches the bat, and the delivery is not a No ball, could he be out Caught? If he is not out, could runs be scored and if so would they be credited to the striker?

In this situation, the umpire would have to judge whether the act of dropping the bat was accidental or deliberate.

Take first the accidental case. Law 6.3(a) stipulates that reference to the bat is to imply that the bat is held by the batsman. Law 28.1(a)(ii) sets this aside for the situation of the wicket being put down by the striker's bat. Apart from this single specifically stated exception, Law 6.3(a) is to apply throughout the Laws. In particular, it will apply in Law 32.1. Unless the striker's hand is in contact with the bat when it is touched by the ball, the contact will not count as the ball touching the bat. The first requirement for a catch will not be satisfied. The striker will not be out Caught.

No unfair act has been committed, so there is no reason in Law for runs not to be scored. However, as explained above, the ball has not officially touched the bat. Unless the ball touches the striker's person, such runs can only be Byes. If the ball does touch the striker's person, dropping his bat cannot be counted as an attempt by him to play the ball or to avoid being hit by the ball. Leg byes would not be allowed, so no runs would accrue.

If, however, in the opinion of either umpire, the striker let go of his bat deliberately, two points arise. Firstly, any deflection of the ball by the bat would have to be regarded as wilful, on exactly the same basis as the ball hitting a deliberately discarded helmet is deemed to be fielding the ball illegally. If there was an appeal, serious consideration would have to be given to dismissing the striker Obstructing the field. Secondly, the umpires would be justified in regarding this wilful act as an attempt to avoid being caught. This is unfair and against the Spirit of the Game. The umpire should call and signal Dead ball under Law 42.4 and both umpires take action under Law 42.18 of reporting the batsman and his captain. The call of Dead ball would of course prohibit the scoring of any runs.

[Law reference: 32.1, 6.3, 28.1, 42.4, 42.18]

Law 33

33-A Handled the ball versus Obstructing the field

In most cases when a batsman wilfully handles the ball, he will disadvantage the fielding side in some way. If he is given out on appeal, how does the umpire decide whether he is out Handled the ball or Obstructing the field?

It is true that the Law does not lay down clear boundaries between these two situations. The difference lies in the intent.

To be out Obstructing the field, either umpire (or if necessary the umpires together after consultation) must consider that the batsman has made a wilful attempt to obstruct or distract the opposing side by word or action. Such action could include handling the ball in some way, but the use of a hand not holding the bat would only be the *means* by which the attempt is made.

To be out Handled the ball, it is the wilful handling itself which contravenes the Law, with no particular intention of obstructing the fielding side.

The striker 'handling the ball' in receiving it from the bowler may do so to prevent the ball from hitting his wicket. He is out Handled the ball. If, however, the ball had already touched his bat and the wicket-keeper or a close fielder is making an attempt to catch it, then pushing it away with his hand will be preventing a catch and he will be out Obstructing the field.

Between these two clear cut extremes, there will be cases where it is difficult to be sure that the action was 'a wilful attempt to obstruct. . . .'

In one case where the batsman's purpose in handling the ball may or may not be evident, the Law removes the necessity for the umpires to consider intent. In Law 37.4, it could be well be a 'free' hand which, without consent, is used to return the ball in play to a fielder. This section of Law speaks only of 'bat or person'. The batsman is then out Obstructing the field, since a hand not holding the bat is part of his person.

Neither method of dismissal is credited to the bowler. Both allow runs completed before the offence to be scored, except in the case of a catch being obstructed. Then also it is always the striker who is out. If the wilful handling of the ball interferes with an attempted catch, however, it will usually be clear that it was the batsman's aim to do so. The umpire will not have difficulty in adjudging this to be Obstructing the field. In other situations, unless he is certain that it was a wilful attempt to obstruct, he will consider the batsman out Handled the ball. Intention can be difficult to judge; handling the ball is a fact.

It must be remembered that the wilfulness of the action is to be discounted, if the batsman handles the ball in play with the consent of the other side, or to avoid injury.

[Law reference: 33.1, 37.1]

33-B Scoring runs after handling the ball

Law 33.2(i) states that a batsman is not out if he handles the ball in order to avoid injury. If he does this, and runs are then taken, would they be allowed and if so, how should they be scored?

The umpire must be satisfied that the handling of the ball was strictly to prevent injury to the batsman, and not an attempt to propel it any distance into the field. If after the striker has fended off a delivery in this way, the batsmen start to run then, providing the umpire is satisfied that the batsman was genuinely defending himself from injury, those runs will be allowed. If there has been no contact with the bat before the incident, they should be scored as Leg byes.

If after the striker has received the ball, a batsman subsequently uses his hand to fend off the ball, providing the umpire is satisfied that this action is *strictly* to avoid injury, there is nothing in Law to prevent the batsmen from taking runs, or continuing runs in progress. Some batsmen might nevertheless consider it fairer to refrain from doing so. Note, however, that if the umpire is not satisfied as to the batsman's intention, he should consider whether the action could be construed as obstructing the field.

[Law reference: 33.2(i)]

Law 34

34-A Run started before overthrow after lawful second strike

The striker lawfully hits the ball twice. There is an overthrow, but not until after the batsmen have started running. They complete one run. If they had crossed before the overthrow, no runs will count. Should they be sent back to their original ends in this case?

No. The batsmen are to be sent back to their original ends only if runs are disallowed, a boundary is scored, or in certain cases of dismissal (Law 18.12). None of these applies here. The fact that the first part run does not count, **is not a disallowance of runs**. It is simply a run not added to the total. It has exactly the same status as the run in progress when a batsman is Run out.

[Law reference: 34.4, 18.12]

Law 35

35-A Wicket broken by piece breaking off bat

As the striker plays the ball, a sizeable chunk of his bat breaks off, flies back and dislodges a bail. Is he out?

No. Laws 28.1(a)(ii) (Wicket put down) and Law 35.1 (Out Hit wicket) both use the words 'by the striker's bat' in specifying how the wicket can be put down. Therefore part of his bat does not qualify.

[Law reference: 35.1, 28.1]

35-B Striker setting off for first run after Wide ball has been called

If a fairly delivered ball is called a Wide and therefore there is no opportunity for the batsman to play the ball, can he be out if he puts his wicket down in setting off for a run?

The striker does have the *opportunity* to play at a Wide so the question does not arise. He can always move towards it and prevent it from being wide. Even moving towards it could constitute 'playing at it'. This is what Law 25.2(a) is about. "If the striker by moving". If he chooses not to move towards it, that is his choice.

Balls which he has no opportunity to play are (for example)

The umpire calls Dead ball because the bowler does not release the ball

A fast delivery goes wide and, before it reaches the striker, hits silly mid off on the back of the head. He collapses and the umpire calls Dead ball for 'serious injury'

[Law reference: 35.1(iii), 25.2(a)]

Law 36

36-A General guidance on ‘whether the ball would have hit the wicket’

What follows is only **general guidance** on judging whether the ball would have gone on to hit the wicket, if it had not been intercepted. More detailed guidance can be found in the MCC Open Learning Manual in section d of the commentary on Law 36. This is on pages 36-2 and 36 -3

Law 36.1(e) requires an affirmative answer to the question “But for the interception, would the ball have hit the wicket?” in order to complete the requirements for the striker to be dismissed Leg before wicket. When assessing whether the ball would have gone on to hit the striker’s wicket, it has to be assumed under Law 36.2(b) that **the path of the ball before interception would have continued after interception**, irrespective of whether the ball might have pitched subsequently or not.

Obviously the height of the initial interception of the ball also has to be taken into account in assessing whether the onward path of the ball after interception would have taken it on to hit the striker’s wicket. Another important factor will be the distance from the striker’s wicket at which the interception occurred. This together with the height would give some indication whether or not the continued path of the ball would take it over the top of the wicket. The Law does not require any judgment as to what might have happened if the ball had pitched after any interception, so the vagaries of the pitch are eliminated from the equation.

The assessment of the continued path of the ball when it hits the striker’s person full pitch is much easier than when the ball pitches prior to interception. The umpire will know the angle of delivery in relation to the two wickets. He will be able to observe any lateral movement in the air, judge the height at interception and establish how far from the striker’s wicket the initial interception took place. He will have a longer period in the flight of the ball to make his assessment, with no movement off the pitch to contend with.

The case of the ball pitching before interception is more difficult. The umpire will still know the angle of delivery, will observe any lateral movement in the air, judge the height at interception and establish how far from the striker’s wicket the initial interception took place. This latter point is vital in both cases. The distance the ball would have had to travel will be an essential ingredient in judging whether or not the ball would have hit the striker’s wicket. He will also have to take into account both the lateral and vertical movement in the air prior to pitching. However, he has less time to decide the final onward path of the ball. His decision on that final path rests on the time between the ball pitching and the initial interception. This period of time can be extremely short. The longer the period is, the easier it will be for the umpire to make his judgment.

There will be occasions when the umpire will have difficulty in deciding whether the interception took place before or after the ball pitched. If he is not sure, it follows that he will not be able to determine the further path of the ball and, if he cannot be sure that the ball would have gone on to hit the wicket, he cannot support the appeal.

In both cases the crucial question is, “Would the ball have hit the wicket?”

[Law reference: 36.1(e), 36.2(b)]

Law 37

37-A Injured non-striker brings himself into game by balking a catch

There is a batsman with a runner. The runner is at the non-striker's end. The injured batsman is standing at square leg, out of the game. The striker hits a ball, which is not a No ball, in the air towards the square leg fielder. The injured striker wilfully prevents a catch being taken. How should an appeal be answered?

This is the same situation as, with both batsmen fit, the non-striker obstructing a catch. In that case, although it is the non-striker who has obstructed the field, under Law 37.3 (Obstructing a ball from being caught) it is the striker who is out. Here, although the injured man has brought himself into the game by an act of obstruction, the same principle applies. It is the uninjured striker who is out.

[Law reference: 37.3, 2.8(d)(i)]

37-B Batsman dropping a glove

What happens if the non-striker, holding his gloves, drops one of them and the ball in play touches it?

If the umpire decides that the dropping of the glove was a wilful act, then the batsman is out Obstructing the field and on appeal would be dismissed. If it was clear that dropping the glove was entirely accidental then the incident should be treated in the same way as if the ball had accidentally struck a batsman while he was running. The ball remains in play. Although, by allowing the possibility of runs, this may seem to give unfair advantage to the batting side it should be remembered that equally it may be a disadvantage since, for example, either of them could be out if striking the glove deflected the ball on to the wicket, when otherwise it would have missed the stumps.

[Law reference: 37.2]

Bowler releases ball BEFORE entering his delivery stride	
wicket is put down	No ball must be called
by ball directly	Run out no requirement for another fielder
by wicket-keeper alone	Not out* [Not Stumped - No ball] [Not Run out - Law 38.2(e)]
another fielder involved	Run out

[Law reference: 38.2(b), 24.4, 38.2(e)]

Law 40

40-A Playing without a wicket-keeper

Can a team play without a wicket-keeper?

The umpires are to recognise a player as a wicket-keeper by his actions and positioning. Therefore playing without a wicket-keeper implies that a side would have no one to gather deliveries missed by the striker and could have no one behind the stumps for catches coming off the bat but only slightly deflected. Any player in such a position as the ball was being delivered and received would be recognised as a wicket-keeper and subject to the restrictions placed on wicket-keepers. Moreover, with no player in a position to be recognised as a wicket-keeper, the side could not effect a stumping, would be strictly confined to having only two players behind the popping crease on the leg side at the instant of delivery and could have no player wearing gloves or external leg guards. There would also be no defined position where a fielder could place a helmet he did not wish to wear. Nevertheless, there is nothing in Law which requires a side to have a wicket-keeper, if a captain so chooses. The umpires would have to be vigilant, however, to ensure that the fielding side did not try to have the advantages of having a wicket-keeper as well as the advantages of having an 11th 'normal' fielder.

[Law reference: 40.1, 40.3, 39.1, 41.5]

Law 41

41-A The difference between a fielder's helmet and a fielder's cap.

Please explain the difference between a helmet and a cap in the various situations that can arise if the fielder is not wearing these items.

There is no breach of Law if a ball in play strikes a cap or a helmet worn on a fielder's head. Either is a legitimate part of his person. There are, however, certain ways in which the striker cannot be out if the ball rebounds from a helmet worn by a fielder. This applies only to a helmet and not to a cap or anything else he is wearing. If the ball in play hits a cap or helmet **not** being worn, the umpire has to decide whether the ball has 'wilfully been fielded other than with his person'.

'wilfully' is a key word in Law 41.2. Unfortunately it does not have a single simple interpretation. The umpire has to recognise different degrees of wilfulness, according to the situation. If a fielder's cap *falls* off and the ball touches it, the Law has not been broken and the ball remains in play. The same would be true of a pair of spectacles or any other item (difficult to imagine) capable of *falling* off, **except the fielder's helmet**. If, however, he had *pushed* his cap off, or had *taken* off a sweater, even though he may not deliberately manoeuvre the object to intercept the ball, because he had removed it deliberately he is to be considered as wilfully fielding the ball otherwise than with his person.

A helmet is to be considered differently. If the ball hits a helmet not being worn, whether it has fallen off or been taken off, it is to be considered that the ball has been fielded unfairly.

In applying penalties for the unfair fielding, items of 'clothing' are to be regarded as carrying a slightly lower degree of wilfulness than helmets.

If the ball *accidentally* touches
an item of clothing (not a helmet) which has *fallen* off
there has been no breach of Law. The ball remains in play.

If the ball *accidentally* touches
an item of clothing which has been *consciously* taken off
or a helmet, irrespective of how it has been removed
the ball has been unfairly fielded within the terms of Law 41.3. The ball becomes dead, a 5-run penalty is awarded but **no** report is to be made.

If the fielder *deliberately* tries to field the ball by manoeuvring
an item of clothing or a helmet, irrespective of how either has been removed
again the ball has been wilfully fielded unfairly. In this case, however, the actual *attempt to field* was wilful, and therefore it is to be considered within the terms of Law 41.2. The ball becomes dead, a 5-run penalty is awarded **and** a report is to be made.

[Law reference: 41.2, 41.3]

Law 42

42-A The bowling of high full pitched balls

How does an umpire decide whether a delivery is 'a slow delivery' if a slow bowler bowls a faster ball, or conversely, a fast bowler bowls a slower ball?

The pace of any delivery is to be judged against what is to be considered 'fast' or 'slow' within the context of the particular match. How it compares with other deliveries by that bowler is irrelevant.

[Law reference: 42.6(b)]

42-B Dangerous and unfair bowling

In the new 2003 version of Law 42.7(b) should the words 'at the same batsman' be inserted before 'by the same bowler in the same innings', or is it intended that a second warning is to be issued if a previously warned bowler delivers, for example, a fast short pitched ball over head height at any batsman?

No - to both questions. The wording is as intended and should not be changed. Neither, however, is the wording to be interpreted as suggested in the question.

Fast high full pitches are straightforward. Law 42.6(b)(i) states categorically that any such ball is to be deemed dangerous and unfair. Consequently, under Law 42.6(b)(ii), on any and every occasion when a bowler delivers a high full pitch, action is to be taken against him, irrespective of who the striker is. Unless the umpire considers it was delivered deliberately, (taken care of by Law 42.8), this action will be a first warning, a final warning or suspension, depending on whether there have been previous warnings. *It is quite irrelevant which particular form of dangerous and unfair bowling has caused any previous warning to be issued or which batsman was involved.*

For **fast short pitched bowling**, there are a number of considerations. It does not become dangerous and unfair until the umpire so decides, according to both sections of 42.6(a). That decision will be based on the ability of a particular batsman to handle such bowling, remembering that this ability will be eroded by repetition. This decision cannot apply to other batsmen. Once it is made, however, not only will a warning be issued, but any single repetition of the same type of bowling *to that batsman* will require further warning. On the other hand, for a different batsman warning will not be triggered until the umpire decides that such bowling has become dangerous and unfair for *that* batsman. If, however, the bowler concerned has already been warned, the warning now to be issued will be the second and final one, even though the previous warning related to a different batsman. Similarly, after two previous warnings, a new decision about a batsman will mean suspension for the bowler.

It should be clear in 42.7(a) that a first warning will result from either the umpire coming to such a decision, or the bowling of a single dangerous and unfair high full pitch. Once this first warning has been issued, further instance, or further repetition of dangerous and unfair bowling is therefore

- either the delivery of a dangerous and unfair high full pitch to *any* batsman
- or just one single delivery of the type that the umpire has *already* decided is dangerous and unfair for the batsman facing it
- or the umpire reaching *for the first time* a decision that the bowling of fast short pitched balls is dangerous and unfair for the batsman now facing.

[Law reference: 42.6, 42.7]

42-C Fast short-pitched balls bouncing over head height

There seems to be a contradiction in Law 42.6. The first paragraph explains that the umpire must consider whether fast short pitched balls are likely to cause injury. He is not to take action until he decides that there has been too much repetition of such balls. The second paragraph, however, says he is to take action at once for any ball which bounces over head height, so obviously can't cause injury. Can you please explain?

It should first be noted that although the heading of Law 42.6 is 'Bowling of fast short pitched balls', section (a)(ii) begins with the words (without the emboldening) **Any** delivery which after pitching. . . . There is no reference to the pace of the ball, nor to its being short pitched. This section therefore applies to **all** deliveries which pitch and then bounce over head height of the striker standing upright at the crease, whether fast or not.

The calling (and signalling) of No ball for deliveries bouncing over head height is entirely separate from considering them as contributing to the sequence leading to a decision that the bowling has become dangerous and unfair. Under Law 25.1(b) there is a case for considering these deliveries to be Wides. Wielding the bat above the head, almost as though it were a tennis racquet, is certainly not a 'normal cricket stroke'. Law 42.6(a)(ii) instructs that they shall instead be No balls for two reasons. On the one hand No balls give the striker more protection from dismissal; on the other hand, if the striker does hit a No ball, it is still a No ball and the 1 run penalty is still awarded. This is not true of Wides.

The umpire will be monitoring the bowling of all fast short pitched balls. A batsman needs to have very quick reactions and be very alert in order to deal successfully with them. Although a competent batsman might achieve this at first, his alertness and speed of reaction will wane with frustration and tiredness. Both of these aspects apply to a 'fast short pitched ball bouncing over head height'. In addition, the continual awareness that he is in danger if he gets it wrong, perhaps stimulating at first, will also take its toll. Since he very possibly may not know when the ball pitches that it will rise so high as to be harmless, this applies to the 'harmless bouncer' too. This is why the umpire is instructed to include **all** deliveries bouncing over head height as part of the repetition. It should be noted, however, that when the umpire calls No ball for such a delivery, it is a **stand alone penalty**. It is **not the start** of the action of warning, final warning and suspension. That process is triggered **only** by the umpire's decision that the bowling has *become* dangerous and unfair for a particular batsman.

[Law reference: 42.6, 25]

42-D The relative skill of a batsman (1)

The Law instructs that in judging dangerous and unfair bowling, the relative skill of the batsman should be taken into consideration. Should special consideration be given to a 'night-watchman', coming in when a wicket falls close to the end of a day's play?

The description 'night-watchman' is not used in the Laws. It is used informally of a batsman who comes in when a wicket falls near the end of a day's play, with the specific intention that, although he is not likely to score many runs, he can play the bowling safely, so that a more skilful batsman, who could be expected to score more freely the following day, is not exposed to the risk of losing his wicket before the close of play. The description, therefore, cannot apply except in games of more than one day's duration. Moreover, it can apply only to a player considered by his captain to be capable of facing the bowling.

When a new batsman comes in, at any stage in an innings, he is just that - a new batsman. The umpire is not expected to be clairvoyant nor should he presume anything from the batsman's position in the batting order. The umpire must assume initially that any new batsman is capable of dealing with the bowling. Whether or not there is anything to indicate to the umpire that he is a traditional 'night watchman' is irrelevant, especially remembering that the possibility of a night watchman can arise only in matches of more than one day's duration. Such games are not played in lower levels of cricket. A more exact assessment of each batsman's level of skill must be made from seeing him in action, that is by seeing how well he deals with the deliveries he receives.

[Law reference: 42.6]

42-E The relative skill of a batsman (2)

The answer given to an earlier question on dangerous and unfair bowling instructed that the umpire must judge the skill of a batsman by seeing him in action. Might this not mean that an inexperienced batsman could be in danger?

It has to be remembered that the Law uses the term 'relative skill'. A beginner is not in particular danger when all the other players are also beginners. It would scarcely be appropriate to rely on each captain's judgment to draw up some list of 'ratings' before the start of play. Even if it were, it would not deal with the description 'relative', since he would know only his own players. It is therefore impossible for the umpire to have foreknowledge of each batsman's skill in relation to the bowling he might have to face. It has to be assumed that the players are in general capable of taking part adequately in the match. Skills may vary, however, and the umpire has to assess each batsman's level of skill (in the context of the game) by seeing how well he deals with the deliveries he receives.

On the other hand both the umpires and the captains have a duty of care to the players. At some levels of cricket there might be good reason to consider a particular batsman specially vulnerable. When such a batsman comes to the wicket, the umpire should be satisfied that the bowler has been made aware of the situation through his captain. Such special cases should be picked up when the lists of players are given to one of the umpires before the toss.

[Law reference: 42.6]

42-F Bowler runs on the protected area in follow-through, not having released the ball

A bowler fails to release the ball in his delivery stride. The umpire calls Dead ball. The bowler continues running, however, and runs on to the protected area. Has he breached Law 42.12?

Yes, he has. Even though he has not released the ball, the continuation of his run is to be considered as part of the bowler's bowling action. If, during it, the bowler runs on the protected area the umpire will take appropriate action. The fact that Dead ball has been called does not affect this.

[Law reference: 42.12]

42-G Damage to pitch not restricted to the protected area

In talking of damage caused by fielders or batsmen, why is the word 'pitch' used, rather than 'protected area'?

Before the 2000 Code, the Law put the onus on the umpires to intervene and prevent players from causing damage to any part of the pitch which might have assisted the bowlers of either side. One of several difficulties with this was that umpires could not have foreknowledge of what would help bowlers they had not yet seen. Another difficulty was intervening to prevent action which had not yet happened! In the 2000 Code this has been simplified. It does not require preventative action by the umpires. They now have to award punishment for contravention. Contravention, however, is differently defined. It is causing avoidable damage to the pitch.

The description 'avoidable damage' was introduced in the 2000 Code. It takes account of two facts.

One is that **any** movement on the surface will wear away that surface to a greater or lesser extent. Even a mouse running up and down on more or less the same path will in time wear that path bare. It would take a very long time for the damage to become visible, but the wear will have started long before it did so. It is the same for players, except that the build up of wear would reach the stage when it became visible very much more quickly.

The other is that the normal conduct of the game will require players to be on the pitch, even on the protected area, at times. The striker taking guard and playing the ball will do so on the pitch. A fielder may have to go on to the pitch to field the ball. The bowler cannot help but have the first part of his follow through on the pitch. All such legitimate activities will cause wear, but this will be unavoidable. Avoidable damage is obviously caused by a player who leaves marks by digging his feet in unnecessarily hard, turning unnecessarily sharply and so on. It is also caused **whenever** a player moves about on the pitch when he has no need to be there.

Specifically in Law, the protected area relates to the bowler in the same way as under the 1980 Code. He has to move off the protected area within a specified distance, now 5 feet, in his follow through. A bowler is a fielder, however and in common with all fielders he too has a responsibility to avoid unnecessary damage to **any** part of the pitch. A batsman has the same responsibility and the striker is to run off the pitch as soon as possible after he has exercised his right either to play the ball or not.

[Law reference: 42.14, 42.15]

42-H Damage to pitch when bowler runs on the protected area

If the bowler runs on the protected area in his follow through he is subject to the penalties set out in Law 42.12. Does this mean that if he causes damage which the umpire considers was wilful, then he is not liable to the 5-run penalty, prescribed in 42.13?

The bowler is a fielder, albeit a specialised one. The definition of a fielder in Appendix D confirms this. Laws which apply to fielders apply to him. It is recognised that he will have to run on some part of the pitch in his follow through and therefore the wear and tear on that part of the pitch is not *avoidable* damage. If he runs on the protected area, he has breached the Law merely by doing so. Any damage that may result from the mere act of running on in his follow through is covered by the penalty of warnings and ultimate suspension for that offence. He is not to be *separately* penalised for that damage. This provision applies to his status as a bowler. If however, he goes beyond this and *deliberately* causes damage to any part of the pitch, whether in his follow through or later, then his being a bowler is irrelevant. As a fielder he will incur the penalty set out in Law 42.13. If the wilful damage is done when he is running on the protected area in his follow through, he will incur both penalties.

[Law reference: 42.12, 42.13]

42-J What constitutes a run in progress?

If a fielder wilfully obstructs a batsman in running, among other things the run in progress is to count whether the batsmen had crossed or not. What constitutes a run in progress?

The situation of the non-striker is that at any time when he is out of his ground while the ball is in play he is deemed to be running. If, after the striker has received the ball, either batsman is the subject of an attempted distraction or obstruction, and the non-striker is out of his ground at the instant of the call of Dead ball, then a run is in progress.

The position of the striker is different. He can be out of his ground and still not be classed as running. The striker's movement may only be part of his playing at the ball, or it may be an attempt to run. Only the umpire(s) seeing the action can decide. The same decision has to be made in the case of a stumping.

It takes both batsmen to complete a run, but it needs the action of only one of them to constitute a run being in progress.

Once, however, a run has been completed, the roles of 'striker' and 'non-striker' no longer apply. The umpire will have to judge whether either or both of the batsmen is attempting a run. Again, it needs only one batsman to be considered to be attempting a run for a run to be in progress.

[Law reference: 42.5]

42-K Attempting a dismissal when batsmen try to steal a run before delivery

In Law 42.16, if the bowler takes no action the umpire is to call Dead ball, award 5 penalty runs (to the fielding side) and report the offence. However, this is only if the bowler does not attempt to run out either batsman. If he attempts to run out the non-striker and fails, under Law 42.15 Dead ball is to be called. The fielding side gets no penalty runs, but at least has had the opportunity to take the non-striker's wicket. If he attempts to run out the striker and fails, not only is no penalty awarded but also under Law 24.4 No ball is to be called. The fielding side has been penalised but it is the batting side who is trying to cheat. This seems completely unfair.

It should be noted that this provision of Law has scarcely changed in the 2000 Code from what it was in the 1980 Code. In fact the fielding side has marginally less disadvantage now, in that at least the striker can be run out in spite of the throw being a No ball, whether he is attempting a run or not.

One consideration is that the umpire is not now expected to read the bowler's mind. It used to say 'throws the ball **at the striker's wicket, in an attempt to run him out**'. Now it merely says 'towards the striker's end'.

The bowler has a range of options - and they are the same as those he had before.

He can try to get the striker out in a variety of normal ways.

He can also try throwing the ball towards the striker's end (before entering his delivery stride). Here, if he fails he has not only given away a No ball penalty and another delivery in the over, which would happen in either case, he has given the batsmen a chance to score. If he succeeds, he has secured a dismissal.

He can attempt to run out the non-striker - less risk here. If he fails, Dead ball is called and so there is another delivery in the over.

He can stop and not deliver the ball - no risk at all here. The umpire will stop proceedings in any case and if he considers that the batsmen were trying to steal a run he will impose penalties on the batting side - but the bowler loses the possibility of a dismissal on that delivery.

If he chooses a high risk option (for whatever reason) then he has to accept that risk. It is not to be considered unfair that the Law offers him the choice.

[Law reference: 42.16, 24.4, 42.15]

42-L Striker 'padding ball away' drops bat

A delivery is not a No ball. The striker makes no attempt to play it with his bat, but pushes it away with his pad. In doing so he drops his bat. Could he be out Caught if the ball touches the bat? What would be the situation if the action of dropping his bat was deliberate?

The answer to the first question is No. Law 6.3(a) stipulates that reference to the bat is to imply that the bat is held by the batsman. Therefore the requirement for a catch, that the ball be touched by the striker's bat, will not be satisfied unless the striker's hand is in contact with the bat.

If the umpire judged that the manner in which the bat was dropped meant that the action was deliberate, he would be justified in considering it an attempt to avoid being caught and consequently unfair and against the Spirit of the Game. He would therefore have to warn the player's captain and report both the captain and player accordingly under Law 42.18.

Moreover, it could very well be that the action would hinder the fielders in moving to field the ball, and if there was an appeal, the umpire would have to consider seriously giving the striker out under Law 37 (Obstructing the field). If the ball hit the striker's glove the striker could not be out Caught but, since he had deliberately discarded his bat the contact could be considered as wilfully handling the ball, on exactly the same basis as the ball hitting a deliberately discarded helmet or piece of clothing is considered to be wilfully fielding the ball illegally. Then, on appeal, there would be justification for dismissing the striker, Handled the ball (Law 33)

[Law reference: 42.18, 33, 37]

Appendix D

App-A The status of thigh pads [External protective equipment]

The Law lists leg guards among permitted external protective equipment for a batsman. Does this include thigh pads?

No. In listing what is permitted for batsmen, Appendix D uses the word 'leg guards'; this is then qualified by the description 'batting pads'. Thigh pads are not batting pads and therefore are not permitted external protective equipment. There is nothing to prevent batsmen wearing thigh pads under other clothing. There may be instances of players, for example young boys or girls, not wearing long trousers. In this case, a small length of the thigh pad protruding beneath the shorts should not be taken as breaching this injunction, as long as the pad is being worn under the outer clothing. The last point applies **only** in the case of pads which can reasonably be described as thigh pads worn under short trousers or a skirt.

[Law reference: Appendix D]
