

Cricket umpiring techniques

Most of us watch televised matches and adopt some of the umpiring techniques we observe in an endeavour to hone our own skills. However here are some techniques rarely seen or found in cricket umpiring manuals.

As the bowler's end umpire, consider doing the following ...

The bowler's end umpire, having handed the ball & market to the bowler, normally faces the striker to give Guard and when all is ready, he calls PLAY.

Instead of facing the striker, stand in line with the pitch. If the bowler is to bowl to the left of the wicket, bodily face left; face right if he is to bowl to the right of the wicket. In this way, you can give guard while looking over your shoulder. When play is about to start and you call PLAY then can observe the bowler as he starts his run-up (the ball has come into play), then turn to face the striker. This triggers your **Switch-up**.

After the ball has been bowled and has become dead, and while it is returned to the bowler, bodily turn to face that way, again keeping your shoulders in line with the pitch. Adopting this technique, you can give guard again if required, and unobtrusively observe the safe progress of the ball being returned to the bowler. Then as the bowler starts his run-up, you can again face the striker and **Switch-up**.

It is not always necessary to move in line with your Popping crease to observe a potential Run-out etc; in these cases adopt the practice of bodily turning to face where the ball has been hit and follow its progress as it is returned to the bowler.

As the striker's end umpire, consider doing the following ...

The striker's end umpire should face the striker while watching for any fielding infringements, the position of the wicket-keeper. Over his shoulder he should also watch the bowler as he starts his run-up until he completes the delivery of the ball.

Should the ball be hit to your side of the pitch, bodily turn the face the quadrant where it was hit. In this way you can observe that the ball was fielded appropriately, and over your shoulder watch as the running batsmen complete his run.

No technique is perfect in all situations; it is only with practice that one becomes completely at ease in your role.

A few captains and players may notice your subtle movements and will respond positively to them, becoming aware of how diligently you take your role.