

Has the response to Australian test cricketers' ball-tampering been an over-reaction?

What they said...

'Our cricketers are role models and cricket is synonymous with fair play. How can our team be engaged in cheating like this? It beggars belief'

Australian Prime Minister, Malcolm Turnbull

'The jump to hysteria is something that has elevated the offence beyond what they actually did...'

Former Australian test cricket fast bowler, Shane Warne

The issue at a glance

On Saturday, March 24, 2018, Australian opener, Cameron Bancroft, was caught by South African cameramen tampering with the ball during the third day of the third test between South Africa and Australia.

Later that day, team captain, Steven Smith, and Bancroft gave interviews stating that attempts had been made to alter the ball using tape.

On March 25, the Australian prime minister, Malcolm Turnbull, condemned the Australian cricketers' actions.

March 26: Cricket Australia (CA) officials travelled to South Africa to investigate.

March 27: Smith, Bancroft and vice-captain, David Warner, were sent home from the tour. CA stated they were the only individuals who knew of the plan to alter the condition of the ball.

March 28: CA handed Smith and Warner one-year bans from international and domestic cricket. Bancroft was suspended for nine months, while Warner will not be considered for any leadership roles in future. James Sutherland, CEO of CA, stated that the team coach, Darren Lehmann, knew nothing of the plan. It was confirmed Bancroft used sandpaper and not tape, as they had initially claimed, on the ball.

March 29: Lehmann confirmed he will resign from his post after the fourth Test.

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/cricket/the-australia-ball-tampering-scandal-a-timeline/story-Fbm7UAZucbaR1JYsSn6g3K.html>

The ball-tampering scandal, popular reactions to it within Australia and the penalties imposed on the players concerned have attracted attention world-wide. There are those who maintain that the public's response and the penalties are appropriate given the seriousness of what occurred. Others have argued that what has transpired since the ball-tampering has been a significant over-reaction.

Background

The information below on ball-tampering was written by Leeza Mangaldas and published in Forbes Magazine on March 29, 2018.

The full text can be accessed at

The information on the 2018 Australian ball-tampering scandal has been taken from a Wikipedia entry titled '2018 Australian ball-tampering scandal'

The full text can be accessed at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2018_Australian_ball-tampering_scandal

What is ball-tampering?

In cricket, ball-tampering refers to the illegal manipulation of the ball to alter its condition. Doing so typically results in a bowler being able to utilise 'reverse swing', where the ball veers sideways as it moves through the air at high speed towards the batsman, because one side of the ball is rougher than the other. This can be done by either roughing up or polishing one side of the ball relative to the other, and makes a delivery more difficult for the batsman to receive.

Under the laws of the game, players are not allowed to apply artificial substances to the ball. There are four levels of offences under the International Cricket Council's code of conduct, with four being the highest in terms of severity. Ball-tampering is regarded as a level two offence, which is serious.

2018 Australian ball-tampering scandal

In March 2018, the Australian cricket team was involved in a ball-tampering scandal during and after the Third Test match against South Africa in Cape Town. The attempt at ball tampering was carried out by Cameron Bancroft, but the captain, Steve Smith, and vice-captain, David Warner, were found to be involved and all three received unprecedented lengthy bans from international and domestic cricket. Although he was found not have been involved, Australia's coach, Darren Lehmann, also announced he would step down from his role following the scandal.

The offence

On 24 March 2018, after lunch on the third day of the third Test match between Australia and South Africa, Australia's Cameron Bancroft was shown on the television coverage and on screens at the ground appearing to rub the ball with a small yellow object. When Bancroft realised that he had been seen, he was again shown on the television coverage and on screens at the ground hiding the object in the front of his trousers while the umpires were looking away. He was then approached by the umpires, and he showed them a dark microfibre sunglass pouch from his pocket. The umpires inspected the ball, and chose not to offer the ball to the South African team to replace it if they wished, and/or award them five penalty runs, the options available to the umpires under Law 41.3 of the Laws of Cricket. This indicated that the ball had not been altered in any noticeable way.

First press conference

At the press conference at the end of the day's play, Bancroft admitted that he was shown attempting to alter the condition of the ball using a short length of yellow adhesive tape to which dirt and grit had adhered, forming an abrasive surface. Five days later he admitted it

was sandpaper, which cricketers use to maintain their bats. Also at the press conference was Australian captain Steve Smith, who admitted that he knew of the plan in advance. Smith said that the plan was made during the lunch break by the "leadership group", which he did not name. Smith said it was a "big mistake" and when questioned by the media, said that he would not be standing down.

Charges and International Cricket Council penalties

Andy Pycroft, the match referee, charged Bancroft with a Level 2 offence of attempting to alter the condition of the ball. David Richardson, CEO of the International Cricket Council, charged Smith with 'conduct of a serious nature that is contrary to the spirit of the game'. Smith accepted the charge and the proposed sanction of two suspension points, which equated to a ban for the next test match and four demerit points added to his record, and fined him 100% of his match fee. Bancroft accepted the charge, was handed three demerit points and fined 75% of his match fee.

Cricket Australia penalties

After investigating what had occurred and discovering that sandpaper had been applied to the ball in a plan devised by vice-captain, David Warner, unchallenged and covered up by captain, Steven Smith, and implemented by Cameron Bancroft, Cricket Australia imposed penalties on all three. Smith and Warner were recalled from South Africa and banned from playing first class international or domestic cricket for a year. Bancroft was recalled and banned for nine months. Neither Smith nor Bancroft will be considered for a leadership position in Australian cricket for two years and Warner has been barred from ever occupying such a position.

Internet information

On April 1, 2018, the ABC published a comment by David Mark titled 'Ball-tampering scandal points to all that's ugly in Australian sport'. The opinion piece describes what Mark believes is a lack of values in Australian sport.

The full text can be accessed at <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-04-01/the-tampering-scandal-points-to-all-thats-ugly-in-aus-sport/9607276>

On March 31, 2018, Sportskeeda published an opinion piece published by Karan Sethi titled 'Steve Smith is not a criminal and shouldn't be treated like one' Sethi argues that the criticism Smith has received is excessive for confessing to a violation that many commit.

The full text of the piece can be accessed at <https://www.sportskeeda.com/cricket/steve-smith-not-criminal-shouldnt-be-treated-like-one>

On March 30, 2018, SBS published a report giving the views of former Australian fast bowler, Shane Warne, who has stated that he considers the punishments imposed on the offending Australian cricketers are too severe and that the response of Australian media and the Australian public has been excessive.

The full text of the article can be accessed at <https://www.sbs.com.au/news/ball-tampering-punishments-don-t-fit-the-crime-shane-warne>

On March 29, 2018, news.com.au published a report by Emma Reynolds titled "'Australia's rotten cricket culture': World lays into disgraced side'

Reynolds reports on the criticism received from the rest of the cricketing world by Australia's players and cricket administration in the aftermath of the ball tampering incident.

The full text can be accessed at <http://www.news.com.au/sport/cricket/australias-rotten-cricket-culture-world-lays-into-disgraced-side/news-story/c41a0aaa7865cf62abd5b1c8bcdfb8c6>

On March 29, 2018, The Guardian published a comment by Andy Bull titled ' Swift and severe punishment for Smith and co but questions remain'

Bull argues that Cricket Australia was more concerned to protect its reputation than to provide an appropriate penalty.

The full text of the comment can be accessed at

<https://www.theguardian.com/sport/blog/2018/mar/28/swift-severe-punishment-smith-warner-questions-remain>

On March 29, 2018, The Roar published a comment by Geoff Parkes titled ' Is it right for Australia to own Steve Smith?'

Parkes attempts to explain the reason for the popular distress at Smith's actions.

The full text can be accessed at <https://www.theroar.com.au/2018/03/29/right-australia-steve-smith/>

On March 29, 2018, The Sydney Morning Herald published a comment by Waleed Aly titled ' What the ball-tampering crisis says about us'

Aly attempts to explain the significance of sport and cricket, in particular, to Australia's sense of its national identity.

The full text can be accessed at <https://www.smh.com.au/sport/cricket/what-the-ball-tampering-crisis-says-about-us-20180328-p4z6qw.html>

On March 29, 2018, sports.ndtv.com published an article titled 'Ball-Tampering Row: Australian Cricketers' Association Criticises Bans On Steve Smith, David Warner' which outlines the Australian Cricketers' Association's objections to the manner in which the ball-tampering incident was being handled.

The full text of the article can be accessed at <https://sports.ndtv.com/cricket/ball-tampering-row-australian-cricketers-association-criticises-bans-on-steve-smith-david-warner-1830244>

On March 29, 2018, NDAIndia.com published a report titled 'Ball-tampering row: "Chief instigator" David Warner to address media on Saturday'

The report included a number of criticisms of David Warner's conduct.

The full text can be accessed at <http://www.dnaindia.com/cricket/report-ball-tampering-row-chief-instigator-david-warner-to-address-media-on-saturday-2599291>

On March 29, 2018, the ABC published an opinion piece by Geoff Lemon titled 'For dishonesty more than cheating, a year's ban is what Smith and Warner deserve'
The piece details the complete violation of trust which follows the cricketers' attempt to cover up their cheating.

The full text can be accessed at <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-03-29/a-year-ban-is-what-smith-and-warner-deserve-lemon/9599928>

On March 28, 2018, The Australian published a comment by Peter Hoysted titled ' Australia lost their minds and judgment over ball tampering incident'

Hoysted argues that the opprobrium with which the ball-tampering incident has been met within Australia is extreme and inappropriate.

The full text of the opinion piece can be accessed at

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/opinion/blogs/australia-lost-their-minds-and-judgment-over-ball-tampering-incident/news-story/91bf9aec6a235fee2c0cc0f0dac84833>

On March 28, 2018, Reuters published the full findings of Cricket Australia's investigation into the ball-tampering incident.

These can be accessed at <https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-cricket-test-zaf-aus-tampering-statem/findings-of-cricket-australia-ball-tampering-investigation-idUKKBN1H41OA>

On March 28, 2018, cricket.com.au published a report titled 'Sticky truth about sandpaper revelation'.

The report details the findings of Cricket Australia's investigation into the ball-tampering incident.

The full text can be accessed at <https://www.cricket.com.au/news/sandpaper-not-sticky-tape-revelation-australia-media-statement-ball-tampering-cameron-bancroft/2018-03-28>

On March 27, 2018, The Australian published a comment by its senior sports writer, Wayne Smith, titled ' Ball tampering: To us it's cheating, to the ICC it's a misdemeanour'. Smith suggests that the relatively minor punishments given by the International Cricket Council for ball tampering might explain why Steven Smith and others did not appreciate the significance of their offence.

The full text of this comment can be accessed at

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/sport/opinion/wayne-smith/ball-tampering-to-us-its-cheating-to-the-icc-its-a-misdemeanour/news-story/e02678c6749269807c0e37aa2f774ec7>

On March 27, 2018, the ABC published a comment by Daryl Adair titled 'Ball tampering is the moral equivalent of doping'

The opinion piece gives a justification for why ball-tampering should be seen as improper conduct in cricket.

The full text can be accessed at <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-03-27/cricket-ball-tampering-steve-smith-icc-doping-in-sport/9587716>

On March 26, 2018, cricket.com.au published a comment by Andrew Ramsey titled 'Old ball tampering is no new thing' giving an overview of the nature and extent of ball tampering and why teams persist in attempting it.

The full text can be accessed at <https://www.cricket.com.au/news/feature/history-of-ball-tampering-cricket-cameron-bancroft-afridi-tendulkar-du-plessis-philander-atherton/2018-03-26>

On March 26, 2018, The Conversation published an opinion piece by Keith Parry, Senior Lecturer in Sport Management, Western Sydney University; Emma Kavanagh, Senior Lecturer in Sports Psychology and Coaching Sciences, Bournemouth University and Steven Freeland, Dean, School of Law and Professor of International Law, Western Sydney University titled 'Just not cricket: why ball tampering is cheating'

The article explains why ball tampering is outside the regulations of cricket and is regarded as cheating.

The full text can be accessed at <https://theconversation.com/just-not-cricket-why-ball-tampering-is-cheating-93935>

On March 26, 2018, news.com.au published a report titled 'Chris Lynn says every cricketer has ball-tampered while Jason Gillespie says Steve Smith's reign is over'. The report gives divergent opinions on the ball-tampering incident.

The full text can be accessed at <http://www.news.com.au/sport/cricket/jason-gillespie-says-steve-smith-and-david-warners-reign-as-leaders-is-over/news-story/12ee9a7ad6ab0042820eb137edb3f394>

On March 26, 2018, news.com.au published a comment by Sam Clench titled 'Five words that exposed Steve Smith's deficient leadership'

The comment details the deficiencies of Steve Smith's conduct as captain.

The full text can be accessed at <http://www.news.com.au/sport/cricket/five-words-that-exposed-steve-smiths-deficient-leadership/news-story/56bd3d7ac433fb9a3e1ba296c8c3ce6a>

On March 25, 2018, The Sydney Morning Herald published a comment by Greg Baum titled 'The team that just doesn't get it' which gives a view on the distorted values of at least some of the players for the current Australian cricket team.

The full text can be accessed at <https://www.smh.com.au/sport/cricket/the-team-that-just-doesn-t-get-it-20180325-p4z663.html>

On March 25, 2018 cricket.com.au published a report titled 'PM: Ball tampering news "beggars belief"'. The report quotes the Prime Minister, Malcolm Turnbull's distress and disbelief at the violation of trust committed by those cricketers' involved in the ball-tampering.

The full text can be accessed at <https://www.cricket.com.au/news/steve-smith-cameron-bancroft-ball-tampering-quotes-adam-gilchrist-allan-border-prime-minister/2018-03-25>

On March 25, 2018, The Courier Mail published a comment by Robert Craddock titled 'Australia's grubby win-at-all-costs culture has been exposed'

The opinion piece outlines the lack of values that the author believes afflicts Australian cricket.

The full text can be accessed at <http://www.couriermail.com.au/sport/cricket/australias-grubby-winatallcosts-culture-has-been-exposed-writes-robert-craddock/news-story/a7c4897bd70c452cd8101c3bdf10e26b>

The International Cricket Council' Code of Conduct for Players can be accessed at <http://www.auscricket.com.au/media/639356/icc-code-of-conduct.pdf>

It gives full details of what types of ball manipulation are prohibited.

Arguments suggesting the response to Australia's ball-tampering has been an over-reaction

1. The International Cricket Council (ICC) treats ball-tampering as a relatively minor offence. A number of cricket commentators have observed that ball tampering is treated by the International Cricket Council (ICC) as a relatively minor infringement of cricket regulations. In an article published in The New Zealand Herald on March 25, 2018, it was stated, 'Ball tampering is actually quite a minor offence in the playing regulations. It only carries a maximum one Test ban...'

http://www.nzherald.co.nz/sport/news/article.cfm?c_id=4&objectid=12019658

In this particular incidence of ball tampering, the on-field umpires judged that the ball had not been significantly affected and no immediate penalty was applied.

Sports commentator for The Australian, 'Jack the Insider', Peter Hoysted, stated in an opinion piece published on March 23, 2018, 'On field, an offending fielding side faces the prospect of a five-run penalty, after which the umpires will swap the ball. The two umpires at Cape Town, Nigel Long and Richard Illingworth...examined the ball and determined the beleaguered cherry remained fit for purpose and no penalty was proscribed.'

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/opinion/blogs/australia-lost-their-minds-and-judgment-over-ball-tampering-incident/news-story/91bf9aec6a235fee2c0cc0f0dac84833>

Former Australian test cricket fast bowler, Shane Warne, has stated, 'The jump to hysteria is something that has elevated the offence beyond what they actually did...'

<https://www.sbs.com.au/news/ball-tampering-punishments-don-t-fit-the-crime-shane-warne>

In an opinion piece published in The Australian on March 27, 2018, Wayne Smith gave an overview of the manner in which the International Cricket Council (ICC) has historically treated ball-tampering.

'Ball tampering was never an offence to be treated seriously, either by the players or by the ICC. As the late former England batsman and Pakistan coach Bob Woolmer remarked, "Every single bowler I know ... was guilty, at least under the current law, of some sort of ball-changing"... Why would Smith resign from the captaincy for a crime that the ICC deems worthy of only a one-match ban?' <https://www.theaustralian.com.au/sport/opinion/wayne-smith/ball-tampering-to-us-its-cheating-to-the-icc-its-a-misdemeanour/news-story/e02678c6749269807c0e37aa2f774ec7>

Critics' of the treatment of the Australian players by Cricket Australia argue that the players had cause not to recognise the seriousness of the offence. Though ranked as a level two offence under the International Cricket Council's code of conduct, the penalties that accompany it are not commensurate with this supposed seriousness.

2. Players from other nations have been much less severely punished for ball-tampering. Those who consider that the Australian cricketers' ball-tampering has been excessively condemned and overly punished have referred to the more minor penalties imposed upon other cricketers who have committed a similar offence.

Andy Bull writing for The Guardian on March 28, 2018, stated, 'The punishment was swift and vicious...Outside of the treatment given to match fixers, there is no precedent in cricket for such heavy sentences. They are certainly not in line with those given to the other players who have been caught ball-tampering in recent years.'

<https://www.theguardian.com/sport/blog/2018/mar/28/swift-severe-punishment-smith-warner-questions-remain>

A similar comment was made by British journalist, Piers Morgan, who tweeted on March 29, 2018, 'No defence for what the offending Australian cricketers did, but their punishment seems disproportionate given how widespread ball-tampering is in the game.' Morgan went on to add, 'While the Aussies have crossed the line, all teams tamper with the ball and there's a big difference between taking performance-enhancing drugs or match-fixing, and ball-tampering.' <https://www.nine.com.au/2018/03/29/09/20/piers-morgan-defends-disgraced-australian-cricketer-david-warner>

The far less severe penalties given players from other countries who have admitted to ball-tampering was outlined by sports commentator for The Australian, 'Jack the Insider', Peter Hoysted. Hoysted's comment, published on March 28, 2018, noted, 'When a South African player, Faf du Plessis, gets nicked for ball tampering (twice) he is made captain. When Sachin Tendulkar does it he remains a demigod. England's Mike Atherton became a few thousand quid poorer. In Australia we assemble an ugly mob who buy for the blood of our cricketers and get to work with the four-by-two and a packet of roofing nails.'

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/opinion/blogs/australia-lost-their-minds-and-judgment-over-ball-tampering-incident/news-story/91bf9aec6a235fee2c0cc0f0dac84833>

On March 26, 2018, cricket.com.au published a comment by Andrew Ramsey in which he claimed ball-tampering was a long-standing and widespread practice. He gave instances of cases where players had received minimal penalties or avoided them altogether. Ramsey states, for example, 'When India's most beloved cricketer Sachin Tendulkar was found guilty of the crime based on evidence that English match referee Mike Denness gleaned via television footage during a Test in South Africa in 2001, an outraged India appealed and his one-match ban was overturned.

It was deemed that Tendulkar was extracting grass that had lodged within the ball's seam rather than damaging it, and India then mounted a vehement campaign to have Denness removed from his role for the subsequent Test.'

<https://www.cricket.com.au/news/feature/history-of-ball-tampering-cricket-ramsey-bancroft-afidi-tendulkar-du-plessis-philander-atherton/2018-03-26>

3. Many overseas commentators are prejudiced against Australian cricketers

Among those who claim that the acrimony directed at the Australian cricketers has been excessive are those who maintain that the criticism the Australian cricketers are facing is in part a consequence of the prejudice Australian cricket receives from many other cricketing nations.

Former Australian test cricket fast bowler, Shane Warne, has claimed that bias against the Australian team has led to an over-reaction to the ball-tampering incident. Warne has stated, 'The hysteria has gone worldwide, and everyone that dislikes the way the Australian cricket team has played, and over the past five or so years there have been rumblings about the way this team has gone about things, have been given the opportunity to lay the boots in.'

<https://www.cricknet.com.au/news/reactions-steve-smith-david-warner-cameron-bancroft-bans-ball-tampering/2018-03-29>

Warne further stated, 'He didn't kill anyone. He's a guy that's made a mistake. To see him being man-handled at airports, to see him attacked, it is like the dogs are all over him...'

I think it is a disgraceful behaviour from them.'

<http://www.givemesport.com/1284987-shane-warne-says-steve-smith-treatment-is-over-the-top>

A similar point was made by Karan Sethi in an opinion piece published on Sportskeeda on March 31, 2018. Sethi stated, 'One might believe this entire scenario is apparently a huge opportunity for everyone to get back at the Australians, who over the years have been perceived as being arrogant and bullish in the way they play the sport... There has been a ubiquitous dislike towards this very Australian cricketing culture in recent times.'

<https://www.sportskeeda.com/cricket/steve-smith-not-criminal-shouldnt-be-treated-like-one>

Paul Newman, in an article published in the British newspaper, The Daily Mail, on March 26, 2018, stated, 'They will have to ban Smith, his nasty little sidekick David Warner and the rest of the infamous leadership group for a year and they will have to sack coach Darren Lehmann. But, much more than that, they will have to disband a culture that has made Australia the most hated cricket team in the world and start again.'

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/sport/cricket/article-5542575/Australia-hated-team-world-cricket-disbanded.html#ixzz5BC03Z6CZ>

Defenders of the Australian team argue that comments such as Newman's reveal the extent of the prejudice the Australian team faces. They claim the current scandal is being used to denigrate a group of players many in the international cricket community already disliked.

Emma Reynolds, writing for news.com.au on March 29, 2018, summed up the attitude of the international sports media, stating, 'The world has turned on Australia following the ball-tampering saga, and commentators are not holding back as they tear into what they call the nation's "poisoned", "crass" and "rotten" culture.'

<http://www.news.com.au/sport/cricket/australias-rotten-cricket-culture-world-lays-into-disgraced-side/news-story/c41a0aaa7865cf62abd5b1c8bcdfb8c6>

4. Australian cricket fans attach an excessive importance to the game

It has been claimed by some commentators that the anger and disappointment of the Australian public at the actions of Smith, Warner and Bancroft are a result of the exaggerated

significance that Australians attach to cricket and the misplaced importance of sport to Australia's national identity.

It has been argued that many Australians form a naively personal connection with their sporting heroes, identifying with them intensely and so feel an acute sense of injury when these icons do not live up to the standards imposed upon them. In an opinion piece published in *The Roar* on March 29, 2018, Geoff Parkes stated, 'Rightly or wrongly, for many Australians this matter is personal, by extension it is their reputation that has been sullied and their contract with the Australian captain that has been so savagely torn apart.'

<https://www.theroar.com.au/2018/03/29/right-australia-steve-smith/>

Parkes further argues that many Australians find their national identity and their sense of their country's international standing in the prowess and the conduct of Australian sporting teams. Parkes writes, 'Smith's crime is not that he has slandered the reputation of Australia's manhood, but that he has implicitly destroyed Australia's reputation as a people who compete hard but fairly.'

The Australian psyche is that it is okay to be a little rough around the edges, in a Paul Hogan, shrimp on the barbie type of way, or to take a sickie from work for the hang of it. But while individuals may differently interpret what constitutes a "fair go", it is important for Australians to believe that the rest of the world respects them for knowing right from wrong.'

<https://www.theroar.com.au/2018/03/29/right-australia-steve-smith/>

In an opinion piece published in *The Sydney Morning Herald* on March 29, 2018, Waleed Aly attempted to explain the unique place occupied by sport in the Australian national identity. Aly writes, 'It's the role of sport in our mythology that's unique. No nation packages its culture in sport quite like we do. Other countries might anchor their identities in some political idea, a foundational revolution or military conquest, a rigid ethnic grouping, or a clearly signposted age-old culture.'

We're too young as a nation, too derivative of Britain initially, and more recently too uncomfortable with how we were founded, to do that. So, we've reached for something we could access more authentically.'

We had a national cricket team, Olympic athletes and an indigenous football code before we even existed as a country...We've been using sport as our way of presenting ourselves and proving our worth to the world ever since.' <https://www.smh.com.au/sport/cricket/what-the-ball-tampering-crisis-says-about-us-20180328-p4z6qw.html>

Aly concludes that the exaggerated sense of outrage many Australians feel at the misconduct of some members of the Australian Cricket team derives from their belief that these men have damaged the country's international standing in a fundamental and significant way. They have not merely broken the rules in a game of sport, they have besmirched their country's reputation.

Aly writes, 'Australian cricket team's gravest sin is to have cheated on the international stage as the team that most fully represents the nation... We're raging because our indignation is the only way we can put back together the mythology of who we are.'

<https://www.smh.com.au/sport/cricket/what-the-ball-tampering-crisis-says-about-us-20180328-p4z6qw.html>

5. Cricket Australia's extreme response is an attempt to preserve sponsors and popular support

Some critics of the punishments received by Smith, Warner and Bancroft from Cricket Australia argue that the governing body in Australia reacted excessively in an attempt to appease the Australian public and preserve sponsorships and valuable broadcasting rights. In an opinion piece published in The Guardian on March 28, 2018, Andy Bull criticised the severity of the punishments and suggested 'Those charges suggest CA was more worried about addressing the outcry than the offence. And even then, it is not clear whether it wanted to appease its public, who are split about whether or not the bans are appropriate, or its sponsors and broadcast partners. It was only last week that CA knocked back a joint bid from the Nine and Ten networks for its TV rights because it was too low. Seven days later, CA's negotiating position does not look quite so strong.'

<https://www.theguardian.com/sport/blog/2018/mar/28/swift-severe-punishment-smith-warner-questions-remain>

The Australian Cricketers Association (ACA) has challenged the severity of the sanctions on former Australia captain Steve Smith and vice-captain David Warner for their involvement in the ball-tampering incident. Condemning the extended ban periods for the cricketers, the ACA stated that there are a number of glaring and clear anomalies in the process that has caused the Association to look into the severity and proportionality of the proposed sanctions. <https://sports.ndtv.com/cricket/ball-tampering-row-australian-cricketers-association-criticises-bans-on-steve-smith-david-warner-1830244>

The ACA suggests that Cricket Australia is more concerned about image and public relations than it is treating the players appropriately. The Association was particularly critical of Cricket Australia using the players as media scapegoats without giving them any support, criticising 'The rush to place players before the world's media...without the benefit of considered and coherent advice.' <https://sports.ndtv.com/cricket/ball-tampering-row-australian-cricketers-association-criticises-bans-on-steve-smith-david-warner-1830244>

Arguments suggesting the response to Australia's ball-tampering has been appropriate

1. Ball-tampering is an attempt to gain unfair advantage and is cheating
Cricket emphasises 'fair play'. It is not only controlled by a set of rules but, according to the sport's laws, should also be played 'within the spirit of cricket'. This 'spirit' encourages respect for players and officials while advocating self-discipline. On field, the over-riding responsibility for ensuring fair play rests with the captains. Referring specifically to ball-tampering, law 41.3 identifies changing the condition of the match ball as 'unfair play', stating, 'It is an offence for any player to take any action which changes the condition of the ball.' <http://theconversation.com/just-not-cricket-why-ball-tampering-is-cheating-93935>
In a comment published in The Conversation on March 26, 2018, Keith Parry, Senior Lecturer in Sport Management, Western Sydney University; Emma Kavanagh, Senior Lecturer in Sports Psychology and Coaching Sciences, Bournemouth University and Steven Freeland, Dean, School of Law and Professor of International Law, Western Sydney University demonstrate why ball-tampering is cheating. The three explain roughening the

ball's surface on one side can alter its flight through the air and lift off the pitch, making it harder for the batsman to hit. This altered movement is referred to as 'reverse swing'. Such strategic, deliberate ball tampering is illegal. <https://theconversation.com/just-not-cricket-why-ball-tampering-is-cheating-93935>

As outlined in cricket's code of conduct, 'any action(s) likely to alter the condition of the ball... may be regarded as "unfair". The following actions shall not be permitted... deliberately throwing the ball into the ground for the purpose of roughening it up; applying any artificial substance to the ball; and applying any non-artificial substance for any purpose other than to polish the ball; lifting or otherwise interfering with any of the seams of the ball; scratching the surface of the ball with finger or thumb nails or any implement.'

<http://www.auscricket.com.au/media/639356/icc-code-of-conduct.pdf>

The authors of the March 26, 2018 comment in The Conversation concluded, 'The plot to tamper with the ball was a clear attempt to cheat and has brought the spirit of cricket into question.'

<https://theconversation.com/just-not-cricket-why-ball-tampering-is-cheating-93935>
In an opinion piece published on the ABC site on March 26, Daryl Adair stated, 'There are two elements to fair play: competing within the rules and doing so within the spirit of the game...Steve Smith's actions in South Africa take the win-at-all-costs mentality into another realm. Not only is ball tampering contrary to the spirit of the game, it is decidedly against the rules...' <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-03-27/cricket-ball-tampering-steve-smith-icc-doping-in-sport/9587716>

2. The offence was deliberate and premeditated

Those who believe the condemnation and punishment the players received were appropriate stress the offence instigated by Warner; committed by Bancroft and supported by Smith was deliberate and premeditated.

The Cricket Australia investigation discovered the plan to use sandpaper to roughen the ball's surface was devised by vice-captain David Warner. It was further discovered Warner enlisted a junior player, Cameron Bancroft, to undertake this ball altering and showed the younger player how to do so. <https://www.cricket.com.au/news/sandpaper-not-sticky-tape-revelation-australia-media-statement-ball-tampering-cameron-bancroft/2018-03-28> Steve Smith was found to have had knowledge of the plan, to have failed to act against it and to have attempted to cover it up.

Among charges Cricket Australia has brought against David Warner are: 'development of a plan to attempt to artificially alter the condition of the ball; instruction to a junior player to carry out a plan to take steps to attempt to artificially alter the condition of the ball using sandpaper; provision of advice to a junior player regarding how a ball could be artificially altered including demonstrating how it could be done and failure to take steps to seek to prevent the development and/or implementation of the plan.'

Among other offences, Steve Smith was charged by Cricket Australia with: 'knowledge of a potential plan to attempt to artificially alter the condition of the ball; failure to take steps to seek to prevent the development and implementation of that plan and directing that evidence of attempted tampering be concealed on the field of play'. <https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-cricket-test-zaf-aus-tampering-statem/findings-of-cricket-australia-ball-tampering-investigation-idUKKBN1H41OA>

The players' critics particularly condemned Warner. Former England captain, Michael Vaughan, stated of Warner, 'The revelations from Cricket Australia on Wednesday that he was the mastermind of the plot and had told Bancroft to cheat were damning... The fact that he had also shown Bancroft how to do so by using sandpaper to scuff one side of the ball suggests...that this was not the first time he had done it.'

<http://www.dnaindia.com/cricket/report-ball-tampering-row-chief-instigator-david-warner-to-address-media-on-saturday-2599291>

Former Australian coach and fast bowler, Jason Gillespie, stated Warner and Smith are unfit for future leadership. Gillespie declared, 'New leaders will rise up and take the side forward. But it will not be Smith and it will not be Warner.'

<http://www.news.com.au/sport/cricket/jason-gillespie-says-steve-smith-and-david-warners-reign-as-leaders-is-over/news-story/12ee9a7ad6ab0042820eb137edb3f394> Warner and Smith have also been condemned for embroiling a junior team member into this illegal act. On March 26, 2018, Sam Clench, writing for news.com.au stated, 'Having decided to cheat...Smith...threw the most junior member of his team under the bus.'

<http://www.news.com.au/sport/cricket/five-words-that-exposed-steve-smiths-deficient-leadership/news-story/56bd3d7ac433fb9a3e1ba296c8c3ce6a>

Though Bancroft has been seen as less culpable, supporters of his punishment argue this is only because of his inexperience. Greg Baum, writing in The Sydney Morning Herald, on March 25, 2018, stated, 'He is both perpetrator and victim here, the junior in the team, the mule, the bag carrier. But that does not make him an innocent, and he knows it. He is a professional sportsman.' <https://www.smh.com.au/sport/cricket/the-team-that-just-doesn-t-get-it-20180325-p4z663.html> Critics of his behaviour further note his principal compunction was fear of being detected. He stated, 'I'll be honest with you, I was obviously nervous about it because with hundreds of cameras around that's always the risk, isn't it?'

<https://www.crickets.com.au/news/sandpaper-not-sticky-tape-revelation-australia-media-statement-ball-tampering-cameron-bancroft/2018-03-28>

3. The players involved initially lied about what they had done

Not only did the players concerned cheat in a premeditated, calculated manner, they lied when questioned about their actions. Critics have argued this calls their supposed contrition into doubt and further justifies the punishments issued.

Smith and Bancroft, in their first interview after being detected ball-tampering, claimed that tape to which turf had been stuck was used to roughen the ball. Sandpaper was the actual abrasive. This lie has been seen as an attempt to reduce the seriousness of their actions.

In an comment published by the ABC on March 29, 2018, Geoff Lemon states, 'On the third night of that match, after television had picked up Cameron Bancroft's less-than-subtle renovation work...he came to a press conference with his captain, Smith.

They sat and faced us looking grave and anxious and strained. They shifted in their chairs and averted their eyes. They said how sorry they were...how determined to overcome this error and better themselves. And they were lying. Even in that moment of commitment to a more honourable future, they were following a calculated plan to whittle down the consequences. Bancroft and Smith lied about using sticky tape and dirt on the ball, in an attempt to make their effort look hasty and impulsive. They cited a "leadership group" to avoid implicating

Warner, and they dated the idea to that day's lunch break to avert the impression of longer-term premeditation.' <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-03-29/a-year-ban-is-what-smith-and-warner-deserve-lemon/9599928>

David Warner has been criticised for refusing to be explicit when publicly interviewed about his role in the ball-tampering. Warner said he took responsibility for his actions but did not say if he was the chief architect or if other teammates were involved.

Veteran sports commentator Caroline Wilson states, 'I was just so sorry that he chose to take questions but refused to answer any afterwards. It took away the credibility because it suddenly sounded scripted.' <https://www.theaustralian.com.au/sport/cricket/former-australian-cricket-vicecaptain-david-warner/news-story/d09277a25711c85f12f28f96b55924aa>

ABC sports commentator Geoff Lemon concluded by emphasising the cricketers' repeated lying. Lemon writes, 'The issue isn't just that Australian cricketers hatched a plan to cheat. It's that they returned to the dressing room, chastened at being caught, then hashed out another plan to cheat the consequences. Now we can't trust the national team, regard everyone's statements with suspicion and have no idea if the worst interpretations are true.

If there was sympathy before, it has evaporated. A year's ban doesn't get much fairer than this.' <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-03-29/a-year-ban-is-what-smith-and-warner-deserve-lemon/9599928>

4. Australia expects its cricket champions to act as role models

Supporters of the bans imposed on Smith, Warner and Bancroft and of the public condemnation they have received argue the trio have violated their obligations to Cricket Australia, international cricket, Australian cricket fans and the world cricket community. Cricket Australia charged all three with bringing the game into 'disrepute'. Their critics argue that the positions they held as national sporting representatives required them to act as role models.

Australia's Prime Minister, Malcolm Turnbull, stated, 'We all work up this morning shocked and bitterly disappointed by the news from South Africa. It seemed completely beyond belief that the Australian cricket team had been involved in cheating.

After all, our cricketers are role models and cricket is synonymous with fair play. How can our team be engaged in cheating like this? It beggars belief.'

<https://www.cricket.com.au/news/steve-smith-cameron-bancroft-ball-tampering-quotes-adam-gilchrist-allan-border-prime-minister/2018-03-25>

The Prime Minister was expressing the shattered trust the players' actions had caused. They had behaved in a manner completely contrary to that their contracts and national and international expectations require.

The Australian Sports Commission(ASC) elaborated on the obligations of international sporting competitors and the punishments they should expect. The Commission stated, 'The ASC condemns cheating of any form in sport. The ASC expects and requires that Australian teams and athletes demonstrate unimpeachable integrity in representing our country.

The Australian cricket team are iconic representatives of our country. The example they set matters a great deal to Australia and to the thousands of young Australians playing or enjoying the sport of cricket and who look up to the national team as role models.

Given the admission by Australian captain Steve Smith, the ASC calls for him to be stood down immediately by Cricket Australia, along with any other members of the team leadership group or coaching staff who had prior awareness of, or involvement in, the plan to tamper with the ball.' <https://www.cricket.com.au/news/steve-smith-cameron-bancroft-ball-tampering-quotes-adam-gilchrist-allan-border-prime-minister/2018-03-25>

Former England captain, Alistair Cook, stated, 'It's sad for cricket. The guys who are in the limelight have a responsibility to play cricket in the right way...

We have to play by the rules. As captain, you are responsible for the other 10 guys and are the public figure for that.' <https://www.cricket.com.au/news/steve-smith-cameron-bancroft-ball-tampering-quotes-adam-gilchrist-allan-border-prime-minister/2018-03-25>

5. The ball-tampering is part of a larger pattern of unsportsmanlike behaviour

Critics of the Australian cricketers argue their misconduct is merely the most extreme instance of an established pattern of unsportsmanlike behaviour. They argue strong action must be taken now to change this culture.

Some defenders of the Australian cricketers have claimed that general criticism of the way Australia plays cricket comes from disgruntled competitors. However, many of these complaints come from within Australia.

On April 1, 2018, the ABC's national sports editor, David Mark, stated, 'The cheating and lying that was central to the ball-tampering episode — and by extension the desperate need to win at all costs — points to something that has been severely lacking in Australian sport in recent years and possibly decades: Civility...

At the heart of the sporting contest is the idea of fairness and civility. We embrace the even contest, where one competitor can beat another by virtue of their greater skill. We shake the hand of the winner, congratulate them and celebrate the effort that everyone has made.'

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-04-01/the-tampering-scandal-points-to-all-thats-ugly-in-aus-sport/9607276>

Mark further argues Australian cricket and Australian sport in general are characterised by unsportsmanlike behaviour.

'We Australians like to kid ourselves that we're tough but fair, that we don't cross the mythical line. It's the others who are the cheaters, the drug-takers, the thugs. But we all know that's rubbish. Australian sport has long been full of ugly examples of a win-at-all-costs attitude. Cheating, violence, the use of performance-enhancing drugs, sledging, racism and other forms of vilification: You'll find it in any sport at any level.'

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-04-01/the-tampering-scandal-points-to-all-thats-ugly-in-aus-sport/9607276>

Similarly, Robert Craddock, in a comment published in the Courier Mail on March 25, 2018, stated, 'The ball tampering affair was not a moment of madness. It was the culmination of a grubby win-at-all-costs culture deliberately crossing the thin line between self-righteous rule bending into a world of shameless, bald-faced cheating.

Having teased and taunted and demeaned opposition sides for years Australia developed such a shallow respect for the spirit of the game that it decided a little bit of cheating would not go astray.' <http://www.couriermail.com.au/sport/cricket/australias-grubby-winatallcosts-culture-has-been-exposed-writes-robert-craddock/news-story/a7c4897bd70c452cd8101c3bdf10e26b>

Further implications

There is a major disjunction or gap between the mythology that surrounds cricket and the way it is now played internationally and within individual countries.

Cricket Australia has stated, 'Cricket is based on values of respect, goodwill, friendship and teamwork'.

https://www.humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/content/racial_discrimination/whats_the_s_core/pdf/cricket.pdf On December 26, 2016, The New York Times published a comment critical of Australian cricket in which it was claimed, 'Organized sports operate according to a set of commonly agreed rules and values. At their highest level, they represent an ideal version of society: a pure and fair contest between the best athletes a nation can produce.'

<https://www.nytimes.com/2016/12/26/opinion/the-dark-side-of-australias-national-sport.html> Creating that 'pure and fair contest' and ensuring adherence to those values from Australian players and spectators has proved difficult. The behaviour of players and crowds from other nations similarly suggests that the values cricket advocates as central to its public image are frequently not displayed on the field or within the stadium..

Following the Australian ball-tampering incident there have been a number of analyses posted suggesting that altering the ball is a common occurrence in cricket. In an overview published in The Age on March 25, 2018, it was stated that the Bancroft incident 'is the latest in numerous such episodes in the history of the sport.' The article then enumerated five instances of ball tampering in international cricket between 2001 and 2016.

<https://www.theage.com.au/national/victoria/ball-tampering-incidents-through-time-20180325-h0xx85.html> Former players have indicated that the practice is more widespread than is generally acknowledged as it often goes undetected. Former Australian test captain Allan Border has stated, 'Australia isn't the first country to be drawn into ball-tampering over the years. and you definitely cannot say every era has been squeaky clean. Look back over the years and players will recall putting (Bryl) cream, lip balm, mints and lollies on the ball to shine up one side and get it to swing more.' <https://www.cricket.com.au/news/feature/history-of-ball-tampering-cricket-america-bancroft-afridi-tendulkar-du-plessis-philander-atherton/2018-03-26> Comments such as these suggest that this form of cheating is longstanding and may only now be more often detected because of the quality of television coverage.

Match-fixing is also believed to be a regular risk to the integrity of the sport. An analysis published in The Sydney Morning Herald on December 14, 2017, stated, 'Match-fixing claims have dogged cricket throughout the years, with perhaps the most famous surrounding Hansie Cronje and South African cricket. In 2000, Cronje was charged by Delhi police with fixing one-day matches against India for money.

Cronje denied the charges, which also implicated some of his teammates. But he was sacked just days after his denial, after confessing his dishonesty to the South African board. He acknowledged receiving money for "providing information and forecast but not match-fixing".' <https://www.smh.com.au/sport/cricket/famous-matchfixing-scandals-in-cricket-20171214-h04e2j.html>

Testimony by current and former players to South Africa's King's Commission later that year revealed that the allegations went back to the mid '90s and encompassed Test cricket as well as one-day matches.

In 1994-95, Australian cricketers Shane Warne and Mark Waugh were given money by a bookmaker in return for pitch and weather information on Australia's tour of Sri Lanka. More recently, scandal hit Pakistan cricket in 2010 when three cricketers were accused of spot-fixing in a Test match at Lord's.

The Pakistan players were banned by the ICC for periods ranging from ten to five years. They were also found guilty by an English court of conspiracy to cheat at gambling and conspiracy to accept corrupt payments. <https://www.smh.com.au/sport/cricket/famous-matchfixing-scandals-in-cricket-20171214-h04e2j.html>

Former New Zealand cricketer Lou Vincent was handed 11 life bans from cricket by the England and Wales Cricket Board after admitting to taking part in match-fixing, while in 2016, former South African opener Alviro Petersen was banned for two years by Cricket South Africa over breaches of the anti-corruption code, in relation to match-fixing during the 2015-16 season of a domestic Twenty20 competition.

<https://www.smh.com.au/sport/cricket/famous-matchfixing-scandals-in-cricket-20171214-h04e2j.html>

Controversies surrounding sledging (the practice of seeking to gain an advantage by insulting or verbally intimidating the opposing player) are too numerous to do more than allude to here. Interestingly the most recent Australian coach, Darren Lehmann, was banned in 2003 for five one-day games, while still a player, for shouting racist obscenities from the dressing room after being bowled out by Sri Lanka.

http://www.abcofcricket.com/Article_Library/art56/art56.htm Lehmann was appointed Australian coach in 2013, in part, to lift the culture of Australian cricket.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-03-30/darren-lehman-quits-as-australia-coach/9590934> His previous behaviour apparently raised no doubts about his suitability for the role.

Also to be noted is the entrenched bad behaviour of cricket fans. The so-called 'barmy army', vocal British supporters, who follow their team around the world, is notorious for its aggressive, often offensive chants.

<https://www.theguardian.com/sport/2006/dec/01/ashes2006.cricket7> In the 2018 test series between South Africa and Australia David Warner's wife has been openly abused by fans. The barmy army has had a chant referring to the sexual history of David Warner's wife since the first Ashes test in Brisbane in November 2017. The harassment continued into the current test series with fans wearing masks carrying the features of Candice Warner's partner from a sexual encounter which occurred years before she met and married Warner. David Warner's own history of on- and off-field verbal abuse has been said to have contributed to the abuse he and his family have received. <https://www.hindustantimes.com/cricket/the-ashes-david-warner-wife-candice-targeted-in-new-barmy-army-chant/story-dWmhJsM7gQHpFKi8YL675H.html>

Behaviour ranging from criminal game-fixing, through cheating to sexist and racist abuse on- and off-field by players and supporters leaves cricket with a very tarnished image. Australia's fans' outrage regarding the ball-tampering incident appears almost naive in this context. The

elevated ideals that they appear to associate with the game seem almost wilfully misplaced given the depths to which the game has already fallen.

Cricket Australia has clearly indicated that cheating will not be tolerated. In what appears a consequence of the sordid verbal abuse that has also surrounded the South African-Australian test series Cricket Australia is also considering banning sledging.

<https://sports.ndtv.com/cricket/ball-tampering-scandal-cricket-australia-may-ban-sledging-verbal-taunts-says-mark-taylor-1831292>

It is far too early to see how successful this attempt to clean up the culture of the game within Australia will be.