

Cricket game's gadget and umpires

[Technology](#), [Information Technology](#)



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Gadgets vs umpires

SHOULD we or shouldn't we? Should the newly discovered scientific gadgets, if we may call them so, be used in umpiring in cricket or should we continue with the trusted way of believing in the “ neutrality” of the men in white?

This issue is not only being hotly debated in the International Cricket Council but also among all followers of the game, most of whom strongly believe that umpires are only human and are bound to make mistakes, specially under pressure in a close game. They are of the view that gadgets should be used as much as possible in cricket since the margin of error is much, much less, than the human eye. But the traditionalists say that use of gadgets would take away much of the charm of the game which once upon a time, to use an old cliché, was called a “ gentleman's game”. And given the strong feeling among both groups it is doubtful whether the debate would end soon!

The two instruments which some people want to be used on the cricket field by the umpires is the snick-o-meter and the hawk-eye. The former registers the finest of snick on any cricket bat while the second instrument (which helps in adjudicating leg before wicket decisions) judges in quick time whether a delivery which hits the pads of the batsman would have gone ahead and claimed the wicket. Both these instruments are being used for quite sometime by television, and successfully too, and there is no reason for the International Cricket Council not to permit their use in actual play with the third umpire sitting in his room and seeing the replays while coming to a final decision. The results of the instruments have often been in variance with what was actually decided by the umpires in the middle. To start with

the instruments can be used on an experimental basis before being permitted to be used generally, say by the next World Cup, to be held in the West Indies in 2007.

In fact the concept of using a third umpire in cricket came into existence quite recently. In the good old days when cricket was still a “gentleman’s game” the umpire used to ask a fielder whether he had taken a catch cleanly or whether the ball had sailed over the ropes for a six before giving the appropriate signal. Now no more. With so much at stake (both money and honour) it is third umpire who decides not only whether the fielder has taken the catch cleanly or not or whether the ball has sailed over the ropes for a six but also things like stumping and run outs which earlier were left to the umpires in the middle. If the game can accept the limited role of the third umpire why not bring in the other gadgets into operation which have proved their worth in international match conditions.

Modern cricket has a lot at stake. Not only is the national pride of the player at stake but also the money (which nowadays is quite substantial) but also the reputation of the player. For example every time a player like Sachin Tendulkar is given out caught behind or leg before, questions are asked whether the decision was correct? But with the use of such devices the “neutrality” of the umpires could be upheld.

Cricket is not the only game which is changing. In tennis the line judges have been replaced by the electronic eye and after an initial opposition both by the players as well as by the tennis officials their use is common with simply no complains. Then why not in cricket.