

5

The numbers

Scorecards

The batting card

Scorecards can be very confusing for the beginner, but they're vital if you want to improve your understanding of the game. There's a lot of information in a very small space, but if you know what you're looking at, you'll find that you can glean all the key events of a match with just a glance. Overleaf is one from a made-up Twenty20 match between the made-up villages of Steeple Burpington and Rumpstead-on-Rye.

So, what can we tell from that? Well, you only need to look at the bottom of the scorecard to find out the result. Steeple Burpington won by 95 runs. Their first two batsmen, Grady and Ryan, got them off to a good start by scoring 30 and 63 respectively. Then Rollett came in and scored 42 without being dismissed. The same can't be said for Ratcliffe, who left after hitting 36, to be replaced by McClaren who ended with 7 not out. There were 8 extras, something we'll look at in the next section. Steeple Burpington used all of their 20 overs and with all of their scores added together they ended up with 186 runs after losing just three wickets (Grady, Ryan and Ratcliffe).

Steeple Burpington vs Rumpstead-on-Rye (Steeple Burpington won the toss and elected to bat first)

Steeple Burpington Innings

M Grady	c Fuhrman	b Warren	30
S Ryan		b Gallagher	63
T Rollett*	not out		42
A Ratcliffe	st Rance	b Pearson	36
R McClaren	not out		7
Extras (w 1, nb 1, lb 2, b 4)			8
Total (20 overs)			186-3

Did Not Bat – J Freedman, J Davie+, D Jamieson, R Davies, R Lloyd, R Trumpton

Rumpstead-on-Rye Innings

S Nickless		b Lloyd	23
D Bourke*		lbw Lloyd	4
T Fuhrman	c Davie	b Jamieson	8
J Findlay		lbw Trumpton	0
A Birley	c Davie	b Lloyd	4
D Adams	run out		12
P Rance+		b Davies	7
M Gallagher	c Freedman	b Jamieson	12
T Warren		b Lloyd	4
A Pearson	not out		7
I Macintosh		b Lloyd	0
Extras (w 2, lb 4, b 4)			10
Total (12.1 overs)			91 all out

Steeple Burpington won by 95 runs

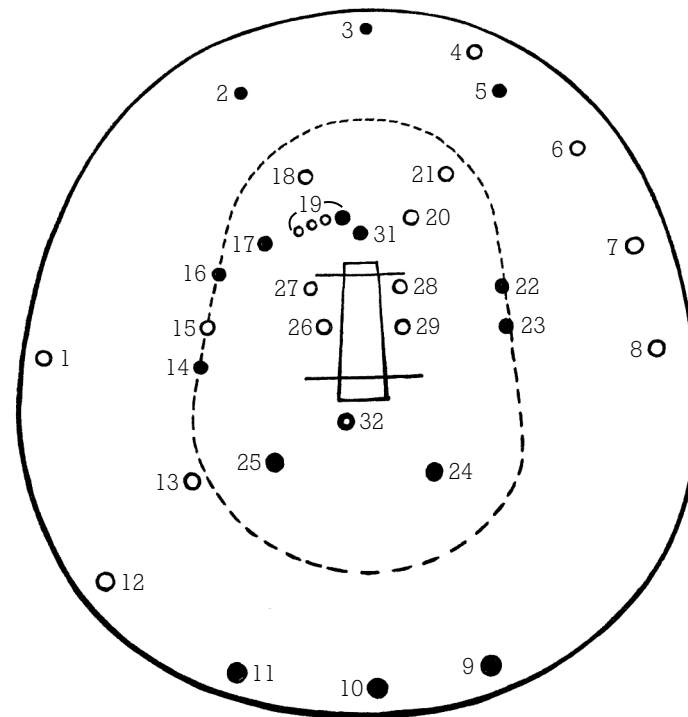


As you can see from the diagram, cricket is played on a large, roundish field with that small strip of pitch roughly in the middle of it. Sizes differ from one ground to the next, but generally you'll find that all fields are roughly 450–500 feet (135–150m) in diameter.

Much of the confusion in cricket is generated by the strange-sounding names given to the fielders. In cricket, the captain of the fielding team can tell his men to stand anywhere he likes. As long as he has one man bowling and one man as wicket-keeper, the other nine can be deployed wherever he thinks the ball is most likely to be hit. Tell a beginner that England are playing three slips, a gully, a man at covers, a mid-on, a long-off, a short leg, a fine leg and you'll be met with the blankest of blank looks. The names, as odd as they are, denote where the fielders have been placed and, although it will take you a while to learn all of them, some are actually quite simple.

The simplest of all is the wicket-keeper, who I'm sure you'll be able to recognise instantly. Padded up and possessing the biggest pair of gloves you'll ever see, he has to stand behind the stumps and try to catch the little edged balls that come off the bat, or more often than not, just to stop the balls that the batsman misses. Next to him, you can sometimes find a number of other fielders, like spare wicket-keepers, but without all the padding. These chaps are called 'slips'. The one nearest to the 'keeper is the first slip, the next one is the second slip and so on. Usually, there will only be one of these, but sometimes you can see four or five of them lined up.

Have a closer look at figure 1. Imagine the batsman is standing at the stumps. He's right-handed, as the majority of batsmen are. If you split him down the middle, metaphorically at least, everything on the bat side is known as 'the off side', as



- Traditional positions
 - Variable positions
 - Bowler
- | | | | |
|------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 Deep cover point | Deep fielders | 9 Long-on | 21 Backward short leg |
| 2 Third man | | 10 Straight hit | 22 Square leg |
| 3 Long stop | | 11 Long-off | 23 Midwicket |
| 4 Deep fine leg | | 12 Deep extra cover | 24 Mid-on |
| 5 Fine leg | | | 25 Mid-off |
| 6 Deep backward square | | Short fielders | Silly |
| 7 Deep square leg | | 13 Extra cover | 26 Silly mid-off |
| 8 Deep midwicket | | 14 Cover | 27 Silly point |
| | | 15 Cover point | 28 Short leg |
| | | 16 Point | 29 Silly mid-on |
| | | 17 Gully | |
| | | 18 Fly slip | |
| | | 19 Slips | 31 Wicket-keeper |
| | | 20 Leg slip | 32 Bowler |

Fig. 2 A pitch showing the field for a right-handed batsman

Incidentally, one of the stranger aspects of cricket is that the umpire cannot give a man out for lbw unless someone on the fielding team appeals. The traditional way to appeal is to ask the umpire, 'How was that?' Over the centuries this has blurred into the English 'Howzat?', the Australian, 'Owwazaaaaat?' and the Sri Lankan 'AHHHHHWAZZAAAAAAAAAAT?' For some reason, the Sri Lankan team always seem to be under the impression that the umpire is outside the stadium and unable to hear them.

Anyway, back to the basics. If the ball was going to hit the stumps and it hits the batsman's body, usually his leg unless he's standing in a very strange position, he is out lbw. Unless...

- 1 ...the ball pitches down the leg side and then cuts in and hits the batsman. Then it's not out because you can't be given out with a leg-side ball.
- 2 ...the ball pitches down the off side and then cuts in and hits the batsman outside of the line of the stumps while he is attempting to play a shot. Only if you're standing there with a blank look on your face and the bat poised can you be given out in this way. Playing a shot gets you out of trouble.
- 3 ...the ball hits the bat or the glove and then hits the pads. This is colloquially known as 'bat-pad' and is not an offence.

The batsman should always be given out if...

- 1 ...the ball pitches on that strip you can see in p. 37, the one that runs from wicket to wicket, and hits the batsman while still on the same line. We call this a 'plumb' decision.

- 2 ...the ball pitches outside off stump and then hits the batsman in line with the strip.

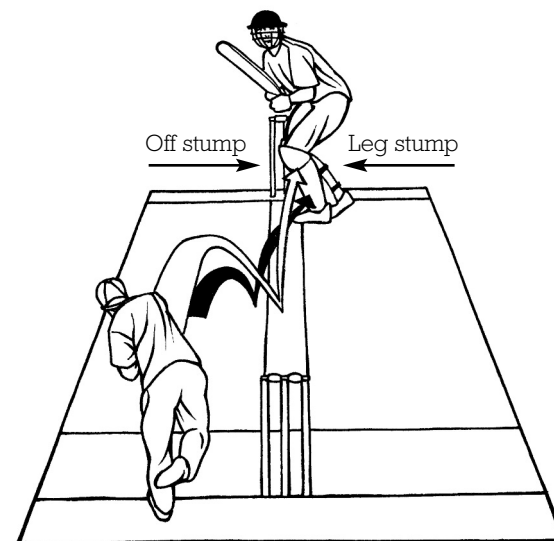


Fig. 4 Ways in which you can be bowled out leg before wicket

The umpire is unlikely to give an lbw if the batsman has come forwards out of his crease. It's very difficult to tell how a ball will react over a short distance and practically impossible over more than a few yards. Was it going to go over the stumps, was it going to gently veer away? If the umpire can't tell, he won't give it.

Lbw decisions should never be disputed by the player. Indeed, it is considered poor form to give any indication of your displeasure with the umpire. Standing your ground and glaring at him is definitely out. Even stomping off the pitch,