

Call on UDRS use should be made by ICC

By Sunil Gavaskar

THE South African skipper Graeme Smith has expressed the view that the application of the Umpire Decision Review System (UDRS) should be made by the ICC and not left to individual boards. What he says makes sense, since playing conditions should be the same for everybody and not be applied selectively.

After all, the second new ball is available to all teams only after 80 overs have been bowled and not after 75 overs for some series and 85 for some other series. Similarly, the ball is changed after 34 overs for all ODIs. India's reluctance to use the UDRS is understandable since they have not had a great experience with it and skipper Dhoni has said that unless it is 100% correct there is no need to use it.

In the just-concluded Test series with New Zealand there were some instances when the UDRS would have helped the umpires make the correct call if it had been in use. The Ashes series where it is being used has seen mixed results, with some getting it right and some losing their challenges for getting it wrong. Personally, I am not in favour of players challenging the umpires' decisions but feel that it would be better for the on-field umpires to check with their colleague sitting in front of the TV for any decision about which they have doubts in their mind. Similarly, if the TV umpire feels that he should come to the aid of his on-field colleagues then he should be able to do so.



This is infinitely better than player challenges and is not restricted to just three challenges but throughout the game. Anything that reduces the errors in the game will minimize tensions and animosity between teams and should be encouraged, so hopefully like Smith hopes it should be a call made by ICC and not left to individual boards to decide. As for the expenses part surely a body that sends a delegation of 23 persons to check out the suitability, logistics, preparedness, security, etc. of the venues for the World Cup in the subcontinent can afford to bear the costs of the UDRS too.

The UDRS may have helped Alastair Cook get his highest Test score as well as the highest at the Brisbane ground but there is no denying that by piling a mammoth score of 517 for just one wicket England have secured the psychological advantage over Australia in the series.

They had been dismissed for only 260 in the first innings and after the Australians took a 200-plus lead it looked as if England would struggle, but the fightback was remarkable with all three batsmen getting centuries and Cook making it a double.

Michael Hussey missed his double but he too did the rescue act for his team along with Brad Haddin. In the subcontinent, Gambhir got a brilliant unbeaten century to take his team to a win and Kohli continued his good form. Kumar Sangakkara held on to ensure that a rejuvenated West Indian team was not able to score a surprise win.

However, despite all these top performances it is Alastair Cook with his double century who is the CEAT International Cricketer of the Week. PMG