

overs, or something equally as silly. In the infamous semi-final World Cup match in 1992 between South Africa and England, South Africa needed 25 runs off 19 balls to win when the match was affected by rain. Under the system that was used at the time, when play resumed, South Africa required an impossible 22 runs off one ball, a ridiculous situation. Under, my method South Africa would have had to score 5 runs off the last ball to win. I did the Duckworth-Lewis calculations for this match, and my findings were published in 'The Cricketer' magazine, December 1998. Using the revised tables Duckworth and Lewis had at that time of writing (1998), the DL method would have required South Africa to make 25 runs off the last ball. I checked these calculations, as it was questioned by John Carr, ECB Director of Cricket Operations in the January 1999 issue of The Cricketer. I also replied in the same issue. It is interesting that neither Duckworth nor Lewis questioned my claim at the time. The Duckworth-Lewis method has of course been fiddled with since then to take care of this anomaly, and many others that have cropped up from time to time, and still do. I still do not understand why the DL method was chosen ahead of my much simpler and cost-free method. I guess you have to know the right people in the right places, or maybe someone is making a lot of money out of the DL method and the industry it has generated. The Australian Cricket Board, headed by Malcolm Speed at the time, were not interested in listening to any 'outsider' points of view, and never really gave my method any real consideration. Had they adopted it in Australia, we may well be using the wicket-averaging method right now.

The origins of 20/20 cricket:

Around this time, I must say, the implementation of the DL method completely ruined my desire (and I would suggest many others from the public) to watch 50-overs cricket, especially as we had wet season in Australia shortly after its implementation. I admit, there was also some jealousy and frustration on my part, but no-one knew what was going on with the DL method (not that they do now). Anyhow, following this botch-up of one-day cricket, I wanted to come up with a way that we did not have to use the DL method at all. This naturally lead me to the idea of a much shorter match that essentially could not be affected by rain. I was also motivated to make the game more accessible and appealing/exciting to spectators.

This is when I came up with the idea of a 20-over limited-over cricket match. I wrote to the ICC in May 1997 (with copies sent to the EWCB, SACB, and NSWCA, as they were the most receptive to my wicket-averaging method), suggesting that a shorter limited over match (namely of 20 overs) may be an interesting concept to consider because it would avoid any need for a rain rule, and would make for an interesting contest. I called it a 'smatch' at the time, standing for 'short match'. I specifically also noted that such a short match could be held in a time period of some 3 hours, making it consistent/comparable with a football match of any code, and this would enable more people to attend and watch such matches. I also suggested that this would lead to more exciting cricket, with the best batsmen batting and the best bowlers bowling. These matters were clearly raised in my letter. As you will have undoubtedly noticed, these are the key elements which have made 20/20 cricket such a success, have revitalised cricket in general, and may be the way to finally get cricket accepted into the Olympic Games. A (photo)copy of my letter to the ICC is enclosed, together with the response I received from the ICC and the EWCB at the time. I believe my letter of May 1997 is the origin of 20/20 cricket, and that I am hence the owner of this intellectual property. I would like your organisation to acknowledge this