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## Welcome



### Getting it Wrong!

It's only when you see someone else getting it wrong in outrageous fashion that you appreciate that we're not that bad after all.

It was those very thoughts which entered my head when I heard about the problems in Antigua with the Second Test between the West Indies and England. How it could have got to the stage where only ten balls could be bowled before deciding that it was too dangerous to continue is totally beyond me. It was the shortest Test Match in the history of the game but it will be remembered for more

than just that record. Indeed those ten balls included many aborted attempts to get to the end of their run ups by the opening bowlers.

In golf the European Tour carry out several pre-event visits by the Tournament Director and their own greenkeeping staff to establish if there are any long term problems or minor tweaks to be made to ensure that the course is ready for a top quality sporting event. These are dealt with in plenty of time to ensure when the players and officials arrive there are no horrible surprises.

In Antigua everyone and his dog seemed to know that the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium was a disaster borne out of poor construction when it was being built and that any attempts to play the match would be fraught with difficulty. But the players still got as far as starting the match, risking injury not to mention ridicule from the rest of the sporting world. It would suggest that the on-going monitoring that the European Tour carries out on a routine basis doesn't even occur in the most simplistic of fashions in Test cricket.

That's not to say that other sports are immune from problems. In golf we had the situation in Australia where the greens were so slick it was impossible to stop a ball on them and play had to be abandoned when the wind got up slightly. In football, floodlight failure causes the occasional abandonment while who can forget the ludicrous abandonment of the 1993 Grand National when the starter tried to call back the runners after a false start using only a rolled up flag. Each is daft in its own way and perfectly preventable, given a little forethought, planning and appropriate checking procedures, but they are still dwarfed by the magnitude of the Antiguan farce.

If I had been a fully paid up member of the Barmy Army and decided to nip over to the West Indies to cheer on the boys after they had gone one down in the Test Series I'd be more than a little disappointed, not to mention severely out of pocket. Sporting authorities need to be on the ball enough to prevent such debacles from taking place.

Cricket certainly doesn't have its troubles to seek. Having just heard the announcement that American billionaire Sir Alan Stanford, the major benefactor of West Indian cricket and more recently English cricket, is being investigated for fraud by the US authorities that funding may dry up.

It doesn't rain but it pours for the game of cricket but many of the problems are avoidable.

Scott MacCallum  
Editor