

Business Briefing: following the money in cricket

Written by The Conversation



Cricket Australia has been unable to broker a new pay deal with the Australian Cricketer's Association. EPA/DAVID JONES

Rather than just admiring a good hit or delivery, there's another way to analyse what's happening on a cricket pitch. Cricket players are actually business people, in the sense that they're weighing up how many resources they have, whether it's wickets in hand or overs remaining, says Steven Stern, a professor of data science at Bond University.

Stern is responsible for the [Duckworth-Lewis-Stern method](#), which is used to calculate the score, and even who wins, when rain interrupts play. He crunches the numbers on games that have been played since the 1990s, and uses the resources remaining to decide what the score should be.

It's all about risk and reward, says Stern, and the cost benefit analysis carried out by teams and players.

Technology is also changing the business of cricket. On the one hand it provides a useful tool for players to measure how well they are doing, but it can be a double edged sword, this same data can be used in performance indicators.

Sandra Peter and Kai Riemer from the University of Sydney point to the example of the International Cricket Council which is using sensors on cricket bats. These can help to develop the skills of players in training but it can also be used to gather data on player performance, to decide what they get paid.

Pay is the reason cricketers are currently in a stand-off with their governing body Cricket Australia. The cricketers argue that more needs to be spent at the lower levels of the sport.

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Judging by what has happened in other sports like rugby league, if money is not spent on the administration and supporting the lower levels, it starts to show as cracks in the national level of the sport, says Stephen Frawley from UTS.

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