



England Deaf Captain George Greenway (Getty Images)

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England Deaf side create history winning the Ashes for the first time

[Scorecard](#)

England powered to a historic first Deaf Ashes victory thanks to an outstanding display from all-rounder James Schofield. Schofield – in quarantine during the T20 rubber after contracting Covid – enjoyed a dream day out for George Greenway's side, who won by eight wickets in Brisbane to take an unbeatable 5-2 lead with one game left of a dramatic, keenly fought series.

Having rolled Australia for just 129 – Schofield’s 4-37 including the wickets of Matt Shenton and Nick Budden in his first three balls – England survived an early wobble themselves, losing Josh Price and Joel Harris inside the opening two overs.

But an unbeaten century stand between Schofield (63) and the evergreen Umesh Valjee (45) slowly closed the door on the hosts’ hopes. After restoring parity, rotating the strike with a nerveless measured and chanceless display, they eased through the gears. Their target was reached in just 22.1 overs. when Schofield clubbed Sean Walsh for six. It was a stylish, emphatic finale: the last 59 runs coming off just 37 balls.

Success, like so much of this side’s work, was a real team effort. Once more, England’s bowling unit excelled. James Dixon removed the dangerous Luke Trudgett, lbw for 14 in the fifth over, with the score at 23, and when England turned to spin, Australia were caught in their web.

A claustrophobically tight spell from the metronomic Henry Wainman (2-18) pinned the dangerous Dave Melling (19) leg before before Schofield came to the party – reducing Australia to 57-4 after 15 with his first over. Josh Price and Jake Oakes chipped in with a wicket apiece – the latter’s removal of Tyson Hay (21) at 119-8 in the 35th over taking with it any hope of a challenging score.

Though Australia struck early, Melling bowling with pace and hostility to remove Price for 6, before Hay had Harris lbw without scoring, Schofield – and Valjee, at 52 the veteran who has waited so long to taste success in this contest – were not to be denied.

“It was a pretty special day – it’s great to be involved after the stress of watching a lot of it on TV,” said Schofield, whose first Ashes tour was in 2011. “I’m just pleased I’ve been able to contribute in the last couple of games. It’s reward for a lot of hard work and dedication from everybody on and off the pitch – and people have taken responsibility on the day to see the job home. They’re a competitive side and have given us some tricky moments – it’s been a really good series and a great advert for deaf cricket.

“But if there’s one person I think we’re all really proud of, it’s Umesh, because he’s been involved for so long. I know he didn’t hit the winning runs today, but for him to be there at the end is a fitting tribute to him and all he’s done.”

Skipper Greenway was ecstatic. “I’m so proud of all the players and so thankful to all the support staff who’ve really looked after us, especially through Covid” he said. “It’s a huge team effort and a massive achievement for us. A few of us are quite emotional.

“There’s been a couple of mornings where I haven’t been able to eat because of nerves, but James and Umesh settled us down so well today. I’m so thrilled with the way we fought back from that disappointment losing the T20 super-over to come back and dominate.”

Having already won their series, England’s Learning Disability side closed out their campaign with an emphatic 45-run win to record a 7-1 success. A 20-over opening stand of 110 between run-machine Dan Bowser (75) and Jonny Gale (61) established a good platform, before skipper Chris Edwards hit 48 as England posted a daunting 251-8.

Led by Gavan Hicks – reaching 50 off 42 balls – Australia made a better fist of their reply, but wickets continued to fall around him. Alex Jervis (3-46) removed the engine room, dismissing Nat Young (8) and Joel Corbett (0) before removing Hicks, Australia’s last real hope, for 76 at 119-4 in the 23rd over. The hosts finished on 206-9, with skipper Edwards taking 3-25.

“This has got to be one of our finest achievements yet, given the difficulties with preparation and lead-up time,” he said. “Jack Perry’s T20 100 and Alex Jervis’ bowling have been real highlights, and Dan Bowser just scores runs.

“We’ve had people put their hands up when they’ve needed to – and I’ve loved the start Tayler Young and Kester Sainsbury have given us with the new ball.”

“It was quite difficult not to hear what was going on across on the other pitch and it’s fantastic to see the Deaf lads win the Ashes. It should be some plane journey home – everyone thoroughly deserves their celebrations.”

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