



England celebrate a wicket during the International Cricket Inclusion Series Learning Disability match between Australia and England at Northern Suburbs District Cricket Club (Getty Images)

Jun 12, 2022 15:07 BST

England Learning Disability side complete T20 series win Down Under

[Scorecard](#)

A dramatic day and night – and another hugely powerful advert for disability cricket – ended in mixed fortunes for England’s double Ashes assault down under.

While Jack Perry’s blistering century tightened the Learning Disability side’s

grip on the series, there was heartbreak for the Deaf XI. Chasing 106 to mirror the LD side's 4-1 commanding T20 performance, George Greenway's men were well-poised to record their second victory of the day having earlier eased to a six-wicket win in pursuit of Australia's 109-8 (Josh Price 2-13, George Greenway 2-19).

Now targeting 106-7 under the lights – these conditions a new experience for most of these players – they were seemingly coasting on 61-2 after 10 overs, only for the hosts to roar back. Australia's win, leaving the T20 series 3-2 in England's favour, tees up a fascinating three-game ODI contest to decide the destiny of the Commonwealth Bank Inclusion Series.

As the light and wickets fell at the National Cricket Campus in Brisbane, so the tension mounted. When the final over arrived, England were 102-9, with five still required. England's last pair of James Dixon and Moazzam Rashid scrambled four to ensure a tie and an additional over.

Two wickets in England's first dig brought a halt to the proceedings after four balls. Greenway hit the first for four, but was then dismissed by Dave Melling, with a celebration as boisterous as any to be found in a senior Ashes. Non-striker Price was then run out by the bowler, diving and breaking the stumps at full stretch as Price and Stephen George tried to take a single.

When the pugnacious Melling crashed Dixon's third ball to the rope, the series was back in the balance – and Australia's unbeaten history in this contest was still alive and kicking. Earlier, left-arm Price's wily spin once again caught the eye, taking 3-16 in Australia's innings, which like England's faltered after 33 came off the first five overs.

Few had expected Perry's brutally dismissive knock to be eclipsed as the day's highlight.

The England opener, whose place in the touring party was in jeopardy at the start of the year due to a blood clot, hit a coruscating 118 off just 63 balls. A one-man big bash, he reached his hundred (off 53 balls) with yet another six (nine all told, to go with 10 fours) as the LD side piled on 226-4. Skipper Chris Edwards enjoyed an impressive cameo with 28 off 12 and the ever-dependable Dan Bowser hitting 35 from 20.

Reduced to 35-3 after eight overs, thanks to another tigerish fielding display and parsimony with the ball through Alex Jervis (2-22) and left-arm spinner Kieron McKinney (2-26), Australia required 18 an over by the halfway point. They eventually finished on 130-5, still 96 short, and in truth looked deflated. Edwards' men require just one victory in the 40-over format to clinch the series outright.

Perry was naturally thrilled with his first international 100, which swiftly followed a maiden half-century in Friday's third T20 game. But he was particularly effusive about England's organisational smarts. "We came into this tournament really prepared, even given the demands around Covid," he said, "and it shows by how on the money we've been. It was a lot of fun out there – the ball came on nicely, and I was able to bat with a lot of freedom. I've had a couple of club and county hundreds, but this one feels pretty special – and it was nice to help us get the game over the line."

England LD are in action on Monday morning at 5.30am BST for the first of the 40-over ODIs, while the Deaf side play their inaugural game at 4am BST on Tuesday – all games are being streamed live.

Ends

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