

Broad revives England's victory bid

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Online Desk: England's Stuart Broad took two late wickets to pile pressure on Australia as the opening Ashes Test at Edgbaston headed for a dramatic finish. Australia were making steady progress at 78-1 in pursuit of a victory target of 281 when veteran paceman Broad removed both Marnus Labuschagne and Steve Smith — the world's two top-ranked Test batsmen — to leave the Ashes holders 89-3.

At stumps on Monday, the World Test champions were 107-3, still needing a further 174 runs to win on Tuesday's final day. Usman Khawaja, who ended his decade-long wait for an Ashes hundred in England with 141 in Australia's first-innings 386, was 34 not out. And that meant the left-handed opener was set to become only the second Australian, after Kim Hughes against England at Lord's in 1980, to bat on all five days of a Test.

Khawaja, however, should have been out to just the fifth ball of the innings when he edged James Anderson but neither wicketkeeper Jonny Bairstow or first slip Joe Root moved for the catch. Khawaja and fellow opener David Warner then settled in on a pitch previously labelled "soulless" by Broad. But the breakthrough England needed came when Warner fell for 36, with Ollie Robinson's superb seaming delivery taking the outside edge on its way to Bairstow.

Labuschagne, out for a golden duck in the first innings, reverse-swept fours off successive deliveries from off-spinner Moeen Ali. Broad, however, proved his undoing on 13 when he poked outside off stump and was caught behind. Smith fell in similar fashion for just six to the raucous delight of the crowd. Australia sent in Scott Boland rather than specialist batsman Travis Head and the nightwatchman survived 19 balls to reach 13 not out at stumps.

Cummins and Lyon strike

Earlier, Australia captain Pat Cummins and Nathan Lyon took four wickets each in England's second-innings 273. There were times when England looked as if they might build an impregnable lead.

But their desire to bat in the aggressive 'Bazball' style that has proved destructive to opponents in a run of 11 wins in 13 Tests cost them several wickets on this occasion. England were also up against an impressive attack, fast bowler Cummins leading the way with 4-63 and off-spinner Lyon taking 4-80. Lyon's haul included the key scalps of Root and Harry Brook, both out for 46, as he closed in on 500 Test wickets.

England had resumed on 28-2, with both Ollie Pope and Root, who made an unbeaten 118 in the hosts' first-innings 393-8 declared, yet to get off the mark. Root signalled his intentions from the very first delivery, when he failed to make contact with an audacious reverse scoop off Cummins, the ball just missing his off stump.

The former England skipper was undaunted and reverse-ramped seamer Boland for six in the next over. But Cummins hit back when he bowled Pope (14) with a thunderbolt yorker that left England 77-3.

Lyon made the breakthrough when the advancing Root slogged and missed, with wicketkeeper Alex Carey completing a neat legside dismissal as the star batsman was stumped for the first time in his Test career. Australia were then rewarded for keeping Brook tied down when he miscued a pull off Lyon to Labuschagne.

Stokes also fell in the 40s, lbw to Cummins for 43. Australia were now into England's tail but the last two wickets added 44 runs before Robinson holed out in the deep off Cummins.