

SMITH PUNISHED ENOUGH. NOW FOR MERCY

Andrew Bolt, Herald Sun, March 29, 2018 7:06am

I feel sorry for Steve Smith.

Yes, he made a big mistake, letting Dave Warner persuade him to cheat. But in these pile-on days, it seems we have trouble landing in a spot between defending someone and destroying them. Smith has lost the captaincy, his reputation, millions of dollars and his career during his one-year ban. [He is walked through airports with a mob jeering at him.](#) He is shattered and tearful.

Enough.

Robert Craddock: *For two days, Cricket Australia officials were furious at Steve Smith. Now they are worried about him. The concern is that Smith, who is believed to have been a tearful wreck since the ball tampering scandal broke last weekend, has the type of personality that could completely unravel in his new life in exile from the only life he has ever known. People who were furious with him 48 hours ago are now contemplating behind the scenes measures to ensure that he gets through the 12-month ban imposed on him and David Warner last night.*

UPDATE

[A thoughtful and fine piece by Shane Warne:](#) *To hear that the Australian cricket team had been involved in pre-mediated cheating is something that is embarrassing. There is no way you can condone it. We are all so hurt and angry and maybe we weren't so sure how to react. We'd just never seen it before. But the jump to hysteria is something that has elevated the offence beyond what they actually did, and maybe we're at a point where the punishment just might not fit the crime. The hysteria has gone world wide, and everyone that dislikes the way the Australian cricket team has played, and over the past five or so years there have been rumblings about the way this team has gone about things, have been given the opportunity to lay the boots in...*

But what are the players guilty of? Cheating via Ball tampering and bringing the game into disrepute.

Their opposing captain in this series, South Africa's Faf du Plessis, has been charged with the offence twice, and opening bowler Vernon Philander once. The list of players who have been charged with ball tampering is long and contains some of the biggest names in the game, like Sachin Tendulkar and Mike Atherton. Then there's the idea of pre-meditated cheating. But are there levels of ball tampering, or is it just ball tampering?... They have been charged with breaching the spirit of the game, something that is so important to us Australians, and something which was important to every team I played in. At times we made mistakes, and we pushed things too far.

But the win at all costs attitude in modern sport can make people do stupid things. I think Steve Smith was guilty of making a severe error of judgement. He was naïve and you can't condone what he did. He'd be devastated. Let's look at his recent history though, as a captain, and a person. He's been fantastic for the Australian team. But he has made a very silly mistake. I am still trying to wrestle with what I think the punishment should be. They have to be harsh, but if they are rubbed out

for a year, the punishment does not fit the crime. Let's take the emotion out of it. We are all feeling angry and embarrassed. But you need a level head and you shouldn't destroy someone unless they deserve to be destroyed..

My punishment would have been to miss the fourth Tests match, a huge fine, and be sacked as captain and vice-captain.