



Paul Collingwood (L) & Ian Bell © Gallo Images

## England hang on for tight draw

by Richard Asher 07 January 2010, 18:00

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Paul Collingwood and Ian Bell guided England to one of their trademark improbable draws in the third test against South Africa in Cape Town on Thursday.

### Full Scoring

England thus cannot be beaten in the series, as they lead 1-0 with only one test remaining.

But a flurry of wickets after tea turned the contest from a game that was drifting to an early finish into one of the most thrilling tests in history. England were nine down at the end of the match, with their final pair having to see off a tense 17 balls to survive.

This is the third time in less than a year that England have been nine down on the last day and escaped with a draw. One of those occasions was the first test of this series, and South Africa will be gutted to have come so close twice with nothing to show for it.

Man-of-the-match, Graeme Smith said, "It will take a day or two to sort out how we feel in the dressing-room," he said. "It's hugely disappointing that we dominated most of the time in two out of three tests, but weren't able to land that knockout blow."

Smith praised his bowlers, saying they had given it their all.

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"They asked a lot of questions," he said. "Losing Friedel (de Wet) was a big disappointment. Not having his services was tough for us."

When England emerged from tea at 231/5 with momentum on their side, things appeared rosy for the visitors. South African bowler Friedel de Wet was injured and the rest of the bowlers were looking non-threatening with the big exception of Dale Steyn.

When a full 20 overs went by without a wicket after the break, thoughts around the ground began to turn to how long it would be before the players shook hands and walked off.

Then Graeme Smith gave part-timer JP Duminy the ball just after the drinks break that commenced the final hour, and the local man got the wicket South Africa had been seeking for 238 minutes.

Duminy got Collingwood to edge it to Jacques Kallis at slip with just 13 overs remaining, and that huge moment was enough to get Newlands buzzing again. Partly because there was now a glimmer of hope for South Africa, but partly out of appreciation for Bell and Collingwood's 238-minute partnership of 112 runs. Their stand began half an hour before lunch and although it was


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