

Perth

A maiden Test century by Dawid Malan helped England fight back to 305 for four at stumps in the opening day of the vital third Ashes clash here yesterday.

After Joe Root won the toss and elected to bat, Malan's unbeaten 110 helped the tourists to breathe life back into their Ashes defence by countering hostile bowling on a bouncy WACA Ground wicket hosting an Ashes Test for the last time.

Already down 2-0 in the five-match series, the visitors were wavering at 131 for four against some fiery pace bowling, but Malan steadied the innings with an unbroken 174-run stand for the fifth wicket alongside Jonny Bairstow (75 not out), England's highest partnership of the series.

England overcame the controversial dismissal of opener Mark Stoneman for 56 on a third-umpire decision, and their cause was helped by some generosity from the Australian fielders, who dropped three catches and missed a run out.

Malan was one of the chief beneficiaries as the 30-year-old notched his first century in his eighth Test, and England's first hundred of the series.

He would have been run out for 32 if David Warner had managed a direct hit, and was dropped by Cameron Bancroft

BRIEF SCORE

England 4 for 305 (Malan 110*, Bairstow 75*, Stoneman 56) v **Australia**

in the slips on 92.

He steadied his nerves to notch up his century with a powerful pull shot off Josh Hazlewood, having faced 159 balls in 221 minutes at the crease, hitting 13 fours and one six.

Malan came to the crease with England under pressure against short-pitched bowling from Mitchell Starc, Josh Hazlewood and Pat Cummins, and survived early on by chancing his arm against the rising ball.

He lived dangerously at first, but having survived the onslaught showed plenty of resolve as he settled into his innings and teamed up with Bairstow to build a crucial partnership.

It was just what England needed after Australia's pace trio came out breathing fire after the lunch break.

They terrorised the English with aggressive bowling that was often more than 90 miles per hour, with Stoneman dropped twice on 52 and struck a fierce blow on the helmet while on the same score. (AFP)

Malan's maiden ton lifts England



England's Dawid Malan celebrates

Rohit has the right stuff for limited-overs game



Rohit Sharma (file pic)

Mumbai, India

Rohit Sharma has been unable to cement his place in India's test side but the right-handed batsman continues to show he has the right stuff for limited-overs formats.

After making his debut in

the shorter form of the game in 2007, Rohit was hailed as the biggest thing to come out of Mumbai since Sachin Tendulkar, with his elegant batting style and ability to hit big shots seemingly with ease.

The 30-year-old is an automatic choice in the limited-overs side and scored his third one-day international double hundred against Sri Lanka on Wednesday, leading the side in the absence of rested regular captain Virat Kohli.

Rohit completed his 16th hundred in the 50-over format in 115 deliveries and then laid waste to the Sri Lankan

bowling, remaining unbeaten on 208 off 153 deliveries.

That seems to be the template for the man who now has three out of the seven double hundreds in ODIs.

"That is my style of play," Rohit told reporters. "It was all about me not making a mistake and batting as long as possible. That's what I did."

"There is no secret or formula to it. You just have to bat and not make any mistake."

But while Rohit has excelled in the shorter formats, he has played in just 23 tests since making his debut four years ago. (Reuters)

Four-day test to have minimum of 98 overs per day: ICC

Port Elizabeth

Each day of the upcoming inaugural four-day Test between South Africa and Zimbabwe in Port Elizabeth will need to have a minimum of 98 overs per day, as per the ICC's playing conditions. That is, eight overs more must be bowled every day than what is required in five-day cricket. Also, a lead of 150 will be

enough to enforce the follow-on; in five-day cricket the mark stands at 200 runs.

To accommodate the extra overs, the ICC's playing conditions state that play will run for six and a half hours in all each day, instead of the usual six hours for five-day Tests.

The home board shall determine the hours of play

and duration of the sessions, with each session lasting a minimum of two hours and a maximum of two and a half hours. In Port Elizabeth, the normal hours of play are set to run from 1.30pm local time to 9pm, with the first and second sessions being two hours and 15 minutes each, and the final session running for two hours. (espnricinfo)



Ben Stokes plays a shot

Stokes finally hits form in New Zealand

Christchurch

Banned England cricketer Ben Stokes finally found some form while playing in New Zealand as he smashed 93 in Canterbury's domestic Twenty20 match against Otago in Christchurch yesterday.

Stokes has signed a short-term contract with Canterbury after being banned from the England team by the country's

cricket board pending the outcome of a police investigation into an incident outside a Bristol nightclub in September.

The 26-year-old smashed seven sixes and six fours in his 47-ball innings at Hagley Oval as the home team scored 217 for nine in their 20 overs.

The England all-rounder, who was born in Christchurch,

had struggled in his few appearances for Canterbury so far, scoring just 36 runs in his three one-day matches and taking one wicket.

Stokes also took a catch and finished with figures of 1-17 from two overs as Canterbury won the game by 134 runs with New Zealand leg-spinner Todd Astle taking 3-18 in 2.4 overs. (Reuters)