



GUEST REVIEW



James ANDERSON

Bowled over by a match in 3D

Live offered a test of a different sort to the England cricketer. What would he make of the first generation of 3D televisions?

Playing cricket for England means I spend a good chunk of the year on the road. We recently returned triumphant winners of the Twenty20 World Cup in the West Indies. Before that we toured Bangladesh, and over Christmas we were in South Africa. It's a hectic schedule, and in some of the more remote parts of the world there isn't a whole lot to do after a game, so many of us travel with the latest gadgets to keep ourselves amused.

I take an iPhone, my MacBook and a tiny Optoma portable projector for watching movies at a decent size. It's more sociable than everyone being glued to their own hotel-room TVs, and many of the guys will bring a hard drive full of films for us to work our way through.

Some people make better film choices than others. Let's just say skipper Andrew Strauss's decisions on the field are far better than his taste in movies off it...

You'll also never see me travelling without my Bose noise-cancelling headphones. They're big, but for

removing engine noise on long flights and blocking out the banter to give me some peace, they're perfect.

When I do get home I've got a fantastic set-up, with a drop-down projector and high-def kit all over the house. But due to my packed schedule, I hadn't seen anything in 3D until I tried this TV – not even *Avatar* in the cinema.

I put on the special glasses, sat back in the sofa and pressed play on the Blu-ray player's remote control. Most of what you'll watch in 3D is sport and children's movies – there aren't many discs on sale yet, but I had a



N°	: 100711	
Issue date	: 11 July 2010	
Circulation	: "	
Frequency	: "	
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test disc with a compilation of programmes to sample.
The 3D effect really draws you in and the sense of

depth to the picture is incredibly realistic. After a while I'd forget I was watching 3D, and then all of a sudden something would leap out of the screen – a ball or a boot (and one time a ballerina...). The effect is just astonishing. Football is going to look fantastic in 3D (I'm a massive Burnley fan), and so is cricket. If the ball flying off the bat or the bowlers running in look half as good as the rugby ball did in the promo, we're in for a treat. And I can't wait to see what the team look like in 3D.

The screen was a 47in LG LD950 (from £2,100, out later this month), and came with four pairs of 'passive' glasses (pictured). They were pretty comfortable to wear and the 3D effect was instantly impressive, but putting on specs to watch the TV will take some getting used to. The upside, of course, is that you get a totally different viewing experience – and I'd be more than happy to wear them for a few hours to watch a match or a film.

I think 3D TV will take off in the same way as high definition. It might not be suitable for everything, but for major sporting events I reckon it'll be massive. If they can film pay-per-view boxing fights or concerts in 3D, I think it'll turn them into even bigger spectacles.

To receive Sky 3D you'll need a Sky+HD box, one of the latest 3D-ready TVs and a pair of 3D glasses. I've recently been looking to buy a new TV, and was really impressed by the new 3D-ready sets from Sony, such as the HX803. The latest models are stunning full-HD sets with all sorts of other cutting-edge features besides 3D. It's the best of both worlds. I already have Sky HD, and a 3D channel is now available as part of that – the 3D just takes up a bit more room on the hard drive.

Unfortunately, I'll have to wait a few months for full-length 3D broadcasts, as the channel isn't launching fully until the autumn. At least that'll tie in nicely with the start of the football season – and while Burnley might not be facing the top flight week in, week out, at least with the Championship play-off and FA Cup final being broadcast in the new format, I've every hope of seeing them in glorious 3D soon. ■

James Anderson joined forces with Sky to mark the arrival of 3D cricket for England vs Bangladesh last week. For more information, visit sky.com/3d



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PASSIVE OR ACTIVE... WHICH TYPE OF 3D VIEWER ARE YOU?

There are two different types of new 3D TV. The first uses passive glasses, as with the LG LD950 tested by Anderson here. These glasses are cheap to buy and the same as the ones you wear in the cinema.

The alternative is active-shutter technology, such as LG's 47LX9900 (£2,500, currys.co.uk). It works by rapidly alternating left and right

images on the TV – viewers wear a pair of battery-powered glasses with shutters that can open and close very quickly. Each shutter is synchronized with the TV's refresh rate to transmit the wanted image and block out the unwanted one.

The result is that the left eye sees only the intended left view of the image, and the right eye sees

only the intended right view – it all happens so quickly that your brain blends it together into a single, stereoscopic 3D image.

The downside with this system is that the glasses are expensive – LG's active TVs come with two pairs to get you started, but additional pairs will set you back about £100 a pair.

ALAMY/PA



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