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Australia Stuns South Africa at Ellis Park

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Australia's rugby team delivered a stunning comeback against South Africa, overturning a 22-0 deficit to claim a 38-22 victory at Johannesburg's Ellis Park last weekend. The win marked the Wallabies' first success at the historic venue in 62 years and ended the Springboks' eight-match winning streak.

Despite the dramatic turnaround, former England coach Eddie Jones cautioned that the result may not reflect South Africa's overall strength. Speaking on the Rugby Unity podcast, Jones suggested that South Africa coach Rassie Erasmus may have prioritized the second Test in Cape Town, setting the lineup for the first match accordingly.

"Sometimes you announce it, and sometimes you don't," Jones said. "South Africa has been dominant, winning at around 80%. They carry a large squad, and I believe Erasmus made it clear to the players where his priorities were."

Jones noted that across a series of matches, South Africa typically reasserts its dominance, and a single result should not be overinterpreted. "They prioritized the Test at Cape Town and thought they could win the first Test with the squad they selected, which clearly did not work out," he said.

He also highlighted that Australia has historically performed well at sea level, particularly in Cape Town, suggesting the Springboks may have anticipated a tougher second encounter. “The history shows Australians have always played well in Cape Town. The new stadium will have quite a good atmosphere,” Jones said.

The Wallabies’ performance featured six unanswered tries following a difficult start, demonstrating composure, speed, and tactical execution under pressure. Joe Schmidt’s side capitalized on the Springboks’ errors and shifted momentum dramatically in their favor.

Looking ahead, the focus will be on South Africa’s response. Analysts expect the Springboks to regain control of physical exchanges, tighten set-piece play, and maintain discipline if they are to level the series in the next Test.

Meanwhile, Australia will aim to maintain the momentum that carried them to victory at Ellis Park. If the Wallabies can replicate their composure and adaptability, Schmidt’s squad may continue to grow in confidence and cohesion as the series progresses.

The Ellis Park win will be remembered as a significant milestone for Australian rugby, combining historical significance with tactical brilliance. It underscores the unpredictability of high-level rugby and highlights the importance of strategy, preparation, and adaptability in international competition.