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## Wallabies Denied Penalty in Controversial Finish Against Lions

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The British and Irish Lions clinched the three-Test series against Australia with a dramatic 29–26 win at the MCG, following a last-minute try by fullback Hugo Keenan. However, the result has been overshadowed by a controversial referee decision that has left Wallabies players and fans fuming.

With scores locked at 26–all, Lions flanker Jac Morgan cleared out Wallabies forward Carlo Tizzano at a ruck just meters from the try line. Tizzano was seen clutching his neck after the contact, sparking immediate calls for foul play. The incident was referred to the Television

Match Official, but after a 90-second review, Italian referee Andrea Piardi ruled there was no infringement. The try was awarded, handing the Lions the match and the series.

Wallabies coach Joe Schmidt strongly criticized the call, citing World Rugby Law 9.20, which prohibits contact above the shoulders during a ruck. “That was direct contact to the back of the neck,” Schmidt said. “You have a player on the ground, a clearout like that is dangerous.”

Former Wallabies captain Michael Hooper also expressed concern. “If there’s any contact to the head or neck, it’s meant to be automatic. That’s what we’re told every year,” he said.

Morgan Turinui, another former Wallaby, was more direct. “The referees got it completely wrong. That’s a penalty and the Lions don’t score. It’s a huge mistake.”

But not everyone agreed. Lions captain Owen Farrell defended the decision. “It looked clean to me in the replay. Jac wrapped his arms and entered legally,” he said. Former England captain Martin Johnson also supported the ruling, stating there was no clear evidence to overturn it.

The Wallabies had led 26–14 early in the second half before the Lions mounted their comeback. Keenan’s try sealed the win in front of 90,000 fans.

Despite the controversy, the result stands. The Lions now hold an unassailable 2–0 lead in the series. The third Test in Sydney next week is expected to be intense, as Australia seeks to restore pride after another heartbreaking loss.