

## Dalmiya not intimidated

ICC Cricket World Cup  
SOUTH AFRICA 2003

AFP, New Delhi

India's cricket chiefs on Sunday challenged the sport's world governing body to disqualify the country from next month's World Cup over a players' contracts row.

Indian cricketers, on a tour of New Zealand, signed the contracts conditionally last week without accepting the clauses which debar them from endorsing non-official sponsors before and after the tournament.

Jagmohan Dalmiya, president of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), said the players could not be banned from the World Cup just because they had raised objections on the ambush marketing clauses.

"I am not sure whether the qualified signatures on the players terms will be acceptable to the International Cricket Council (ICC)," Dalmiya said.

"We are extremely keen to participate. There is no clause to stop the players if they have signed

conditionally."

Dalmiya, a former ICC chief, took refuge in the rules that invite only points and monetary penalties for boycotting matches in Zimbabwe, an issue currently being debated in Australia and England.

"England and Australia will just be penalised and their points deducted if they don't play in Zimbabwe, which also amounts to refusing to accept the full set of clauses," Dalmiya said.

"If in spite of that England and Australia are allowed to field their best sides, what prevents our players from taking part in the World Cup?"

"If team A gets away with a fine, another can't be treated differently," Dalmiya added the BCCI would honour the ICC deadline of submitting the signed Player Terms to the ICC by January 14, though it was strongly opposed to two of the 22 clauses.

These relate to banning non-official endorsements for 30 days prior to the World Cup and five days after it, and allowing the players' images to be used by official sponsors for three months after the event.

The 30-day pre-tournament

moratorium is already a non-starter. Indian players are featuring prominently in non-official advertisements even though the tournament starts in South Africa on February 8.

Dalmiya admitted the matter was likely to be settled by the Court of Arbitration for Sports in Lausanne, Switzerland.

"As I've said, it's time to test the legality of the ICC clauses," he said.



JAGMOHAN DALMIYA

"Solicitors of the ICC and BCCI have started corresponding."

The London-based ICC has

refused to comment on India's latest move until it receives the contracts - fully signed or not.

All the other 13 teams taking part in the February 8-March 23 tournament have signed the players terms without qualification, the ICC has said.

Many Indian stars, including Sachin Tendulkar and Virender Sehwag, enjoy lucrative personal sponsorships, which they may have to forego if the current World Cup contracts are adhered to.

Indian captain Sourav Ganguly justified the players' stand, but was confident the matter will be resolved.

"There are certain restrictions on us. We have our existing contracts and it is illegal to break them," Ganguly said in New Zealand.

"We've told the ICC about our problems and know that at the end of the day something is going to happen because the game will go on and it has always gone ahead.

"Something will happen for us to participate in the World Cup. I've never thought about that danger (of not participating), but obviously some adjustments have to be made."

"If any team doesn't go to the World Cup they won't be looked upon kindly by fellow members of the ICC."

Gray said last week that England will forfeit two points and face a one million-pound (1.61 million dollars) fine if they do not play the fixture.

## JU cricket

OUR CORRESPONDENT

Geography and Environment moved into the final with a 55-run victory over Government and Politics in the inter-department cricket tournament of Jahangirnagar University at the Central playground yesterday.

Winning the toss, Geography and Environment batted first and collected 145 runs all out in 28.9 overs.

Babu scored 53 runs while Rana made 27.

Swapan claimed 2 wickets for 21 runs while Shanto claimed 2 for 25.

In reply, Government and Politics were all out for 90 runs in 25.5 overs.

Shajal scored highest 22 while Kabir contributed 18 runs.

Rana grabbed 3 wickets for 12 runs while Shajal and Babu claimed 2 wickets each for 23 and 14 runs respectively.

Archaeology take on Urban and Regional Planning (URP) in the second semifinal today.

## AIUB cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Bachelors of Business Administration (BBA) defeated Engineering by two-run in the final of the inter-department cricket tournament of American International University-Bangladesh (AIUB) at the Old DOHS ground yesterday.

Batting first, BBA scored 134 runs for two with Razib scoring highest 48 runs.

In reply, Engineering were all out for 132 runs. Russell made highest 52.

Razib of BBA won the man-of-the-match award.

Chairman of the university Dr Anwarul Abedin enjoyed the final and distributed the prizes.

## Thorpe joins

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Asian side including Wasim Akram, Waqar Younis and VVS Laxman.

Two games will be played, on January 25 and 26, with the winning team picking up 25,000 pounds for each.

Power Cricket made its Millennium Stadium debut last summer when a Rest of the World team beat England twice.

## Muralitharan

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Muralitharan has been labelled a "javelin thrower" by former India left-arm spinner Bishen Bedi.

Australian umpires Tony McQuillan and Emerson also called the off spinner for throwing during a one-day match against West Indies in Brisbane in 1995-96.

## Pakistan first

FROM PAGE 13

the simple task of heading the ball into an empty net. The goal was almost a replay of the winner against India in the opening match.

In the 79th minute Sri Lanka substitute Hameed headed a corner from the right against the crossbar with Pakistan custodian Jafar comprehensively beaten. That unlucky miss proved significant as seven minutes later Sarfaraz broke the hearts of the Lankans as his feeble shot from a rebounder somehow sneaked past goalkeeper Devinath and a defender into the right corner of the net.

Pakistan will take on Afghanistan in their final group A match on Tuesday.

**Yellow cards:** Quadeer Ahmed, Tanvir Ahmed, Zahid Niaz (Pakistan) and Imran Mohamed (Sri Lanka).

## TEAMS

**PAKISTAN:** Jafar Khan, Haroon Yousuf, Tanvir Ahmed, Amir Khan, Ashfaq Ahmed, Sharfaraz Rasool, Sazad Hussain (Khuda Bux), Ayaz Mahmood (Amir Shahzad), Quadeer Ahmed, Shahid and Zahid Newaz (Mohammed Sameen).

**SRI LANKA:** Devinath, Steinswall, Azmeer (Hameed), Fuard, Parabath, Weerasinghe, Imran Mohammed, Channa (Perera), Jayasuriya, Silva (P Perera) and Hamsa.

**Referee:** Ram Krishna Gosh (Bangladesh).

## World needs him?

ICC Cricket World Cup  
SOUTH AFRICA 2003

BBC ONLINE, undated

Question: Who is the world's most elegant batsman and arguably the biggest crowd pleaser? Answer: Brian Lara.

Well, not everyone would agree. But his unique, exaggerated backlift, exquisite timing and calm arrogance have held a legion of admirers in thrall for some time.

The 33-year-old Trinidadian left-hander has just started the first tentative steps towards full fitness in time for the World Cup by playing in a four-day domestic game.

With any luck for his fans, he will soon click into gear and be fresh and in-form when the West Indies play the first fixture of the tournament, against the hosts in Cape Town.

All of which makes it appear utterly extraordinary that some observers in the Caribbean actually felt compelled to insist Lara should have been left out of the Windies squad.

Tony Becca, the veteran Jamaica Gleaner columnist, said Lara had shown "little respect for the game, its administrators and the people of the West Indies".

He said the selectors finally had the chance to act by axing Lara from the World Cup squad, noting how previously they had lacked the nous

to do it.

"In times past, the selectors, despite grumbling about Lara's attitude, despite whispering about its effect on the team and on West Indies cricket, failed to act."

Granted, Lara may not be the most dedicated disciple when it comes to training and he may lack the model team ethic less gifted sportsmen often possess.

But all this has to be put to one side, because not only is he a crowd-pleaser, his figures stack up admirably too.



BRIAN LARA

Having played more than 200 one-day internationals, he boasts an average of nearly 43, a tremendous achievement.

He has accumulated 15 centuries, topped with a phenomenal 169 in just 129 balls in 1996 against the

Sri Lankan side that would win the World Cup a handful of months later.

In 1994 Lara broke Garfield Sobers' record Test score, and a few weeks later became the first batsman to pass 500 in a first-class innings.

But he then really struggled for a time, particularly in Test matches, before embarking on an extraordinary scoring spree in Sri Lanka towards the end of 2001.

In the interim, Lara had twice almost retired from the game. He fractured his elbow but quickly recovered and bounced back to form to have a solid 2002, until suffering hepatitis in September last year.

Only now is he completing his recovery from an illness that clearly unnerved him.

Recently, Lara said he would like to play on until the 2007 World Cup. He would be 37, two years younger than England's present wicket-keeper batsman Alec Stewart.

True, supposing Lara does play in Newlands on 9 February, the Windies will have to reshuffle the batting line-up that is looking strong at the moment.

Perhaps Daren Ganga would have to make way.

But surely the Cape Town spectators cannot be deprived the chance of seeing one of the game's finest craftsmen in action.

## Better whitewashed

Cricket

REUTERS, London

England captain Nasser Hussain believes it might have been better for his team to have suffered a 5-0 Ashes whitewash against Australia if greater consistency in performance is to be achieved in the future.

England won the fifth and final Test in Sydney last Monday by 225 runs to end the series on a high note after losing the previous four matches.

But in his column for the Sunday Telegraph newspaper, Hussain said he was worried that England's one-off victory did not accurately reflect the country's standing in the international game.

"What concerns me is that these consolation victories, until now, have been used to paper over our deficiencies," Hussain said.

"While the Sydney win was certainly worth celebrating, we must not lose sight of the fact that it was not the same old story of England being

outplayed by Australia when the series was at stake, and that we must look to change the nature of our cricket as a result.

"Otherwise it would have been better if we had lost 5-0 because that would have forced us all to take a closer look."

"The immediate future against Australia is not great unless we start turning things around," he said.

"For the most part, we have been outplayed by Australia and deep depression has prevailed - then suddenly we have won a game and the mood is utter joy."

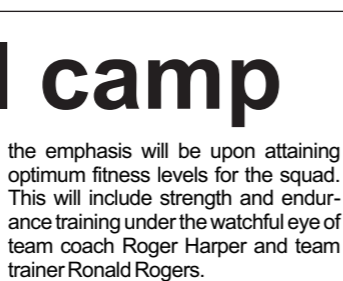
"Eight times in a row now we have lost a Test series against Australia but, in the last six of them, we have won a match, usually after the series has been decided."

"England's wins have usually been good, convincing wins too, like 225 runs, and not by scrappy margins."

"Do we want a week like last week on a regular basis when we play Australia? Or are we just happy with the occasional consolation victory?"

"Everyone concerned about the future of English cricket must take a very close look and decide."

won an Ashes series since 1986-87.



NASSER HUSSAIN

England has a recent history of winning "dead rubbers" in their Test rivalry with Australia but have not won an Ashes series since 1986-87.

## Hinds, WICB official's denial

AFP, St. John's

West Indies official Roger Brathwaite and opening batsman Wavell Hinds on Saturday denied making statements on the issue of England playing in Zimbabwe during next month's World Cup.

Acting West Indies Cricket Board Chief Executive Officer Brathwaite claims he was not the source of a direct quote featured on the BBC website on January 9, and said he is upset the error had been made by such a reputable organisation.

"I have not made or given a statement to the BBC, any journalist nor indeed anyone else on this matter," Brathwaite stated emphatically.

The BBC report quoted Brathwaite, Hinds and West Indies vice-captain Ridley Jacobs as supporting England's participation in a World Cup match in Zimbabwe.

When informed of the article, Hinds also denied making the statement in support of England's participation that was quoted on the BBC Sport web-page.

Jacobs, the other player quoted in the news item, could not be reached for comment.

## ICC's plan

REUTERS, London

The International Cricket Council (ICC) is setting up a standing committee to monitor events in Zimbabwe before next month's World Cup, the BBC reported on Saturday.

World cricket's ruling body could cancel the six World Cup matches scheduled to take place in Zimbabwe for security reasons.

The ICC decided that Zimbabwe was safe following a visit in November, but recent civil unrest in the capital Harare and Bulawayo has raised concerns over the safety of players and spectators during the World Cup.

The England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) meets on Tuesday to decide whether the team should play their match against Zimbabwe in Harare on February 13. England have been advised by the British government not to play the match.

"You cannot take the issue of security and relate it to the political question as to whether England goes or not," the BBC quoted ICC president Malcolm Gray as saying.

"I think the England cricket board has been doing a miraculous job and the management have taken a strong stance."

"If any team doesn't go to the World Cup they won't be looked upon kindly by fellow members of the ICC."

Gray said last week that England will forfeit two points and face a one million-pound (1.61 million dollars) fine if they do not play the fixture.

## Sehwag calls the shots

AFP, Hamilton

Hard-hitting opener Virender Sehwag, India's most successful batsman on the current New Zealand tour, sounded a warning to World Cup bowlers Sunday that he would continue playing shots.

"I fear no bowler," Sehwag said as his team prepared for the seventh and last one-day international against the hosts Tuesday.

India have already lost the seven-match series after trailing 4-2, but Sehwag kept his reputation intact as a hard and clean striker of the ball with two centuries.

"If you start thinking about bowlers' reputations, you can't bat. I just want to play my natural attacking game and concentrate on my shots," said Sehwag, the only batsman to make a century in the ongoing series.

Sehwag hammered two centuries, following his 108 in the second game at Napier with 112 in the sixth at Auckland to overshadow star batsmen Sachin Tendulkar and Sourav Ganguly on the tour.

He is the leading scorer of the one-day series, having made 295 in six matches. New Zealand's Mathew Sinclair is second-best with 143.

To put Sehwag's runs in proper perspective, no other batsman has reached the three-figure mark in Tests or one-dayers on seamer-friendly tracks.

Mark Richardson was New Zealand's top-scorer in a two-Test series with 89 and Sinclair in one-dayers with 78.

For India, Rahul Dravid and Tendulkar each scored a half-century in Tests and Yuvraj Singh one in one-dayers.

Sehwag said runs on difficult seaming pitches boosted his confidence ahead of the World Cup, starting in South Africa next month.

"I'm happy I'm going to the World Cup, but there's no excitement. For me, they are just normal matches. I'll try to perform well there as well," he said.

## Two wins

FROM PAGE 13

African Psychiatrist Clinton Greyward would join the team for five sessions in Namibia.

He revealed that coach and manager would form the team management during the World Cup while Khaled Mashud will join them for team meetings. He assured that there would be no interference from Board regarding selection issues this time.

Bangladesh will reach Namibia via Johannesburg on January 16. They will play their first friendly match at the Wanderers Cricket Club in Windhoek on January 18.

Two other fixtures will take place at the same venue on January 25 and 29 while the remaining games are at the United Cricket Club ground on January 22 and 26.

The camp in Namibia ends on January 30 and then the team flies to South Africa the next day.

In South Africa, Bangladesh will play warm-up matches in Ladysmith and Durban on February 3 and 5 before they face Canada in their opening World Cup match at the Kingsmead cricket ground in Durban on February 11.

## SQUAD

Khaled Mashud, Habibul Bashar, Al-Shahriar, Ehsanul Haque, Sanwar Hossain, Khaled Mahmud, Monjur Islam, Mohammad Rafique, Hannan Sarkar, Mohammad Ashraf, Tushar Imran, Tapash Kumar Baishya, Alok Kapali, Mashrafeen-Mortuza and Talha Jubair.

**Officials:** ASM Faruque (manager), Mohsin Kamal (coach), physio-John Gloster (physiotherapist) and Dean Woodford (trainer).

## Another 'Sister act'?

Australian Open

AFP, Melbourne

How to stop the 'Serena Slam' is the question the rest of field is asking as the Australian Open women's singles gets underway here Monday.

Invincible at the majors in 2002, with victories at Roland Garros, Wimbledon and the US Open, world number one Serena Williams is overwhelming favourite to complete her set of Grand Slam triumphs in Melbourne.

Victory would make the 21-year-old American the first player to hold all four major titles at the same time since Steffi Graf in 1994 - though Williams insists she is not getting distracted at the prospect of completing the feat.

"The real deal as far as Serena is concerned remains winning all four majors in a calendar year."

"It's a Serena Slam and I have to start over in Australia," said Williams, who opens her campaign in the first round against French world number 56 Emilie Loit on Tuesday.

A twisted ankle in the lead-up ruled Serena out of last year's Australian Open, but there has not been the merest hint of fitness problems this time around.

Ominously for her rivals Williams began the year by convincingly vanquishing Belgium's Kim Clijsters, the last player to beat her, 7-5, 6-3 in the United States' victorious Hopman Cup campaign in Perth.

Since the Hopman Cup Williams has been hard at work on the practice court, preferring to skip last week's warm-up events in favour of fine-tuning her game.

Though she has gone on record as saying that her goal is to go through the season undefeated, Serena has been more circumspect since arriving in Australia.

"I'm not going to say I'm going to win or I'm going to lose," Williams said. "I'm just really happy that I have a couple of matches under my belt because it really does make a difference sometimes."

While Serena's form in the Hopman Cup indicates that she is ready to pick up where she left off last term, the status of her second-seeded sister Venus in the other half of the draw is harder to gauge.

She has skipped all lead-up events ahead of Melbourne, and towards the tail-end of last season

sounded jaded.

The elder Williams faces Russian baseliner Svetlana Kuznetsova in the first round on Monday, a potentially awkward tie for the American.

Though her pedigree makes Venus favourite to set up a fourth straight grand slam final against her sister there are a number of obstacles in her tough-looking bottom half of the draw.

Among them is third seeded defending champion Jennifer Capriati, who is chasing a hat-trick

ment every year, so that's why I don't let it get me down too much," Capriati said. "It doesn't really set me back at all. "I just got a good match in and I just have more time to practice now and get used to the conditions over here. It starts for me in the grand slam, I raise my level automatically."

Capriati plays Germany's Marlene Weingartner in the Rod Laver Arena on Monday.

If she keeps winning, Capriati is likely to meet in-form American Lindsay Davenport or the hard-



SERENA WILLIAMS

of Australian Open titles following her epic victories in 2001 and 2002.

Capriati's form in the 12 months since her battling win in Melbourne over Martina Hingis last year has dipped sharply, and she went through last year without winning another title.

In Sydney last week she was dumped out of the first round by Russian Tatiana Panova 4-6, 6-4, 7-5. Capriati insisted she was unfazed by the loss however.

"I have trouble with this tourna-

hitting Belgian Justine Henin-Hardenne in the quarter-finals.

In Serena's side of the draw, the danger woman would appear to be fourth seeded Clijsters, even if she has already suffered one defeat to the American this year.

Clijsters victory over Williams in Los Angeles last year has given the Belgian hope. "Actually knowing that you can beat her counts for a lot, because you know that you can do it," said Clijsters, the girlfriend of men's world number one Lleyton Hewitt.

## Happy to oblige

Cricket

REUTERS, Hamilton

Chris Harris might have landed the job that no-one in New Zealand's one-day squad wants at the moment, batting at No 3, but he's turned it into a positive and chances are conditions could be on his side in Hamilton on Tuesday for the final National Bank Series match with India.

New Zealand can't be beaten in the series which they lead 4-2, but they would prefer the final margin to be 5-2 rather than 4-3.

Central to that happening is a better batting effort from the Black Caps in their last outing of the New Zealand summer.

Harris inherited the No 3 role when it was decided to send Craig McMillan back to domestic cricket to work on his batting and while being surprised initially, he has settled into the idea, although he admits to being desperate to get some runs.

In his first outing at Wellington, he was leg before wicket to Zaheer Khan to leave New Zealand three wickets for three runs, then in Auckland yesterday he was leg before wicket to Agit Agarkar for another duck which left New Zealand 28 for two.

"It would be nice to go out and prove I can do it. It's not where I would prefer to bat but it is a new challenge."

"All batsmen like to think they can bat anywhere in the order," he said.

"I'm keen as always to go out there and have fun and to try and do as well as I can really."

Harris said there was no point

putting too much pressure on himself because he had always done better when he was enjoying the game.

"I am enjoying it at the moment. Obviously I would enjoy it more if we were winning and I was getting a few more runs."

"We fought back pretty well last night; it looked like a foregone conclusion when they needed 20 runs with seven wickets in hand. But we fought back and it turned into quite a thrilling match. That was one

"The wickets in South Africa are a little bit similar to Australia and I thought I had a pretty good World Series [VB Series] in Australia with the bat and the ball so I'm hoping I can take that sort of form into the wickets in South Africa," he said.

Harris said the inner circle fielding of New Zealand at the moment was a weapon for the side with himself and younger players like Lou Vincent, Andre Adams and Mathew Sinclair throwing themselves around made them very useful.

And last night's result, albeit a loss, would have given many of the young players in the side some valuable experience.

"To all of a sudden think that if we had knocked [Javagal] Srinath over at the end, we'd have won the game. It was amazing to get to that point. Just the way the boys never-saidie, just kept fighting and almost pulled off an amazing victory."

"They're always very valuable those games to draw from experience," he said.

"Batting at No 3 is a new challenge and something I'm looking forward to and trying to pull off."

## Andre versus Australia

FROM PAGE 13

He has amassed almost 11 million US dollars in career prizemoney and led his country to famous Davis Cup victories, but his own national

commit to playing but not be 100 percent ready. The other side of that is not playing and wanting to. My choice is still to be out there and competing."

Agassi's uncanny ability to take the return of serve early makes him a feared opponent along with his shot-making and mental toughness.

Agassi turned up with victory in the Kooyong Classic on Saturday and gave the thumbs up in final public hit-up before his 50th Grand Slam appearance.

"I felt good this week. I got a lot better a lot sooner than I was hoping for. This will hopefully translate into playing some good tennis from next week."