# All at stake

Last ten one-day internationals played by Zimbabwe and Namibia ahead of

beat Kenya by 9 wickets

lost to Pakistan by 70 runs

lost to Pakistan by 48 runs

lost to Pakistan by 7 runs

lost to India by 14 runs

lost to England by 108 runs

NAMIBIA: No statistics available as Namibia are not Test-playing nation.

lost to Pakistan by 104 runs

lost to Pakistan by 8 wickets

beat Kenya by 47 runs

v Kenya NR

Zimbabwe host Namibia on Monday in a World Cup match of minimal sporting importance but of massive significance to the tournament.

Few matches will be watched more closely, by the game's administrators at least, following the longrunning controversy over whether strife-torn 7imbabwe should be

their World Cup Group A match here on Monday

ZIMBABWE (won 2 lost 7 NR 1)

allowed to hosts its six World Cup

England's players, who lost an

appeal to have their Harare game

switched to South Africa over secu-

rity concerns, will also be keen

observers of the Group A game

they are due to play in the

Bulawayo later in the tournament,

The Australians, who head for

Zimbabwean capital on Thursday.

Dec 15, 2002

Dec 11, 2002

Dec 8, 2002

Dec 1, 2002

Nov 30, 2002 Nov 27, 2002

Nov 24, 2002

Nov 23, 2002

Sept 18, 2002

Sept 14, 2002

matches.

will surely also boost the television audience

Heath Streak's home team seem certain to win the game handsomely against their World Cup debutant opponents, perhaps serving up the odd tournament record on the way.

Most of the attention, however, is likely to remain firmly focused on the effectiveness of the security opera-

his players show total commitment tion around the venue and on to get into a winning groove. HEAD TO HEAD

Bulawavo

Kwekwe

Harare

Harare

Harare

Harare

Bulawayo Bulawayo

Colombo

Colombo

whether the event could be marred

Namibia, however, will be deter-

mined to enjoy their big-stage

debut, earned by their shock runner-

up finish to the Netherlands in the

honour for the men from the desert

dunes on Africa's south western

coast whose success ensured that

It was a surprising but deserved

by anti-government protests.

2001 ICC Trophy in Canada.

Namibia

top batsmen and the mainstay of the Zimbabwe batting, is unlikely to miss the opportunity to cash in. The left-hander, set to play as a specialist batsman after handing

for the first time, four teams from the

continent would play in the sport's

Zimbabwe, however, are unlikely

After a poor season, winning just

two of their limited-overs matches

against India, England, Pakistan

and Kenya, Streak will demand that

Andy Flower, one of the sport's

showpiece event.

to show them any mercy.

over the wicketkeeping gloves to Tatenda Taibu, needs just 46 to reach 6,500 one-day runs. Opening batsman Dion Ebrahim

will also have reason to make a good start to the tournament, whatever the opposition. The 22-year-old, averaging just

over 21 in one-dayers, was a shock inclusion after Alistair Campbell was surprisingly axed from the squad. Campbell is not the only big

name missing. Zimbabwe have lost the hugely influential Neil Johnson and Murray Goodwin, who move abroad after helping the team to the Super Six stage of the 1999 tourna-There remains, however, plenty

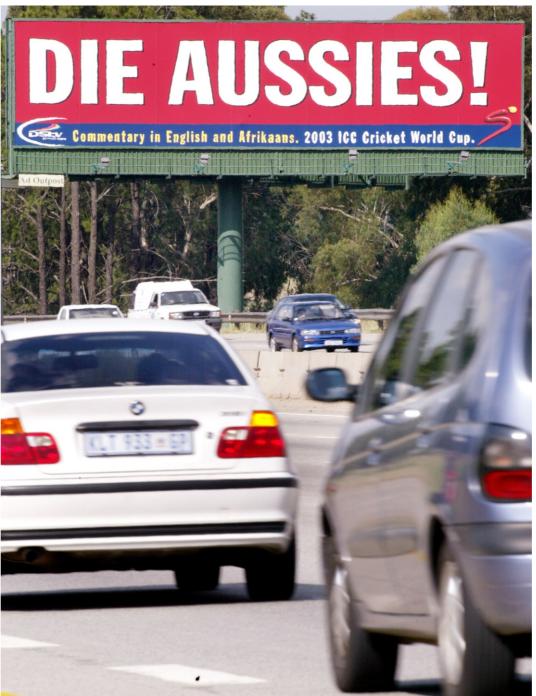
of know-how Andy Flower has already crossed 200 one-dayers even if Zimbabwe's younger players have yet to make their mark. Streak himself back from the

dislocated shoulder suffered in a traffic accident in September, will be playing his 150th one-day international, needing 17 wickets to reach Namibia who lost four matches

to Zimbabwe A by convincing margins in September and October will probably provide more talking points than genuine points on Monday. Opening bowler Rudi van

Vuuren a doctor is set to become the first man to play in both the rugby

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SPÖRT

DON'T WORRY MATES! A billboard, hoisted on the M1 motorway in Cape Town, shows 'Die Aussies' written on it on February 8. 'Die' is 'the' in local Afrikaan language.

### Flowers to bloom

Brothers Andy and Grant Flower aim to put their years of experience to good use by inspiring Zimbabwe to reach the later stages of the World Cup.

The Zimbabweans open their campaign at the Harare Sports Club on Monday against debutants Namibia with Andy hoping to cement his position

as a world class batsman. The 34-year-old left-hander is officially rated in the world's top 10 and has enjoyed that status for several years and, with younger brother Grant, has formed the hub of the team in recent years.

Andy is a former skipper of the national team and kept wicket before



**GRANT FLOWER** 

**ANDY FLOWER** 

being usurped by Heath Streak and Tatenda Taibu respectively and now he concentrates on his batting which is paying off.

His Test average is 53 and just under 35 in one-dayers but it is generally accepted that these figures would have been a lot more attractive had he not the wall

Andy, who played county cricket for Essex in 2002, has played in 205 internationals, a national record, and has made almost 6,500 runs with a highest score of 145 against India at the ICC Champions Trophy in Sri Lanka He can also boast four international centuries and 52 half-centuries.

Brother Grant, 32, bats right-handed and bowls left-arm spin. He has 5,800 runs, has a highest of 142 not out and averages 33.5. He can also claim six one-day centuries and 34 fifties.

## Band of brothers That's a hoax!

AFP, Johannesburg

It's going to be a family affair at the Harare Sports Club on Monday when first-timers Namibia begin their World Cup campaign against hosts Zimbabwe

Lining up will be the Flower brothers, the Kotze brothers and the Burger brothers, the first instance in World Cup history where three sets of brothers will be involved in one

Andy and Grant Flower have been part of Zimbabwe cricket for more then a decade with left-hander Andy widely regarded as one of the most prolific run-getters in the contemporary game.

the Kotze and Burger siblings from Namibia.

Deon Kotze, a powerful middleorder batsman, leads Namibia while younger brother, Bjorn opens the bowlina

Louis and Sarel Burger are both batsmen. There is another Burger in the team. Jan-Berry, but he is not related to Louis and Sarel.

And that's not all that is unique about the Namibian team.

When opening bowler Rudi van Vuuren sends down his first delivery on Monday, he will create history as the first man to play in both the rugby and cricket World Cups.

Van Vuuren was part of the Namibian rugby team at the last World Cup in England four years ago and is regarded a certainty for the next one in Australia in October. Away from the sporting fields

patients across his homeland. "It never gets any easier," he was quoted as saying recently. "If it

Van Vuuren is a doctor treating AIDS

wasn't for sport I would be a very agitated person.' player at this World Cup - 43-year-

old spinner Lennie Louw. For a nation that gained independence only in 1990, and boasts just 17 cricket clubs in and around the capital Windhoek. Namibia has

done well to make it so far

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AFP, London

English cricket supremo Tim Lamb confirmed Sunday that the England players had received what he described as a "hoax" threat of reprisals if they played their scheduled World Cup game in Zimbabwe.

Lamb, who was engaged in a last-ditch bid to persuade the English squad not to boycott the February 13 match because of security concerns, said the death threats had been contained in a letter he received last month.

"A letter was sent to me on 20th of January which did issue an overt threat to the players," Lamb told BBC Radio Five.

Lamb said he had passed the letter on to the International Cricket Council (ICC), the British High Commission in Harare and to British police, who had all concluded the threat did not come from a credible source.

"From all the assessment and scrutiny of the letter it is perfectly clear that it is a hoax letter and I think we have been able to persuade the players that that indeed is what it is.

The England players are reportedly angry that they only found out about the letter from a group calling themselves the 'Sons and Daughters of Zimbabwe' last week. But Lamb dismissed sugges-

tions of a cover-up. He said it would have been "unwise" to brief the players about the letter without having had it checked out. The chief executive of the

English and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) made it clear he was still attempting to persuade the players

to go to Zimbabwe, while giving no indication as to whether he was making any progress.

"As far as I'm concerned no final decision has been made. Clearly the players have a dilemma."

The ECB last week backed a request to have England's match moved to South Africa but the ICC ruled that there was no reasonable basis for such a decision.

# King Viv speaking

INTERNET, Cape Town

West Indian great Vivian Richards on Saturday said Ricky Ponting's World Cup side has the capacity to wilt under pressure when met by strong-minded opponents.'

While he rated the Australians as the best team since his feared West Indian squads of the 1970s and '80s, the Master Blaster delivered a veiled criticism of their on-field demeanour, saying they "were role models about how to play cricket, but not role models about everything.

"I believe this World Cup is pretty much wide open apart from your country, who are probably ahead of most other teams," Richards said.

"They deserve to be World Cup favourites

"Over the period we dominated international cricket, we set the ball rolling for what needed to be done to win. Other teams had to play catch up. This Australian team has done magnificently well in that regard. With what they have achieved so far, I believe the Australian team has set a new precedent the same as we did for all other teams to follow.

"But I've seen that having played in past West Indian teams, no matter how tenacious an Australian side can be, they can be as mild as can be if we had strong characters.

"When our guys were strong you did not handle that very well. You've learned a hell of a lot. Australia can now match strong-minded teams. But I still feel that when it is dished out to them, they don't handle it too well. Forget talent. This is all played upstairs.

Richards, now the West Indies

selection panel chairman, refused to compare his world champion sides with Australian squads of this era. Rather, Richards said only that Australia's three-pronged pace attack of Glenn McGrath, Brett Lee and Jason Gillespie provided much-

needed balance to Shane Warne's eg-spin in the attack. "A lot can be learned from the Australian and West Indies sides we are talking about," he said. "That streak we had in the '70s and '80s,

set the pattern for that era. "The Kerry Packer days really fired up teams' competitive natures

#### **VIV RICHARDS**

and you saw much better performances because of the professionalism. The rest of the teams were not as fit as we were, and they had to begin their own learning processes.

"As Australia went along they learned a hell of a lot and improved a little bit in each category. Then, the more you win the more you can play

## Waugh legacy

**INTERNET, Cape Town** 

Australian opener Matthew Hayden believes the one-day legacy left by the Waugh twins could propel the national side to World Cup victory.

opening ceremony, said Steve and Mark Waugh had left an indelible impression on the squad, though both are absent from this tournament. Last season. Mark Waugh

retired from international cricket, while Steve remains Test captain and still hopes for a recall to international limited-overs duties. His recent state form makes a compelling case

"When you have guys like that leave, obviously there is a different feel to the team," Hayden said. "But the legacy those guys left behind is still there. They had a great effect on a lot of the players. You don't just forget those.

"We're unbelievably lucky in Australia to have the depth that we

do. There's always been a good ethos in the Australian team, and I think people who don't have that are weeded out early. There is no room for bad attitudes in this team."

Australia open their World Cup campaign at the Wanderers Hayden, speaking before the Stadium in Johannesburg on Tuesday - the same ground where Hayden launched his Test career during the 1992-93 season.

In the decade that followed, the imposing Queensland opener's game has undergone a radical transformation. Whereas he once struggled at international level Hayden is now rated as one of the world's premier top-order batsmen. capable of dismantling an attack

and turning the course of a game.

His statistics indicate as much. Over 38 Tests. Hayden now averages in excess of 51. And in 54 oneday matches, his average stands at a brilliant 45.53.

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England captain Nasser Hussain autographs on the back of a South African boy after taking part in an official photo session aboard a South African Navy ship in Cape Town on February 8.

#### prediction **INTERNET**, undated

Former fast-bowling stalwart

Walsh's

West Indies' chances of winning the World Cup. "I have a good feeling that the West Indies will do quite well in this World Cup. The team is in good

Courtney Walsh is excited about the

cricket's top wicket-taker. "They had a bit of a damper with the Marlon Samuels situation as the team were not sure whether he would be allowed to play.

spirits and they badly want to play

some good cricket," said Test

#### **Presidential** praise

AFP, Lahore

President Pervez Musharraf said at the weekend he has high hopes Pakistan team would win the Cricket World Cup if the country's players put in a collective effort. "No doubt our team is one of the

best in the world and what it requires is to show collective efforts in the Cup," Musharraf told reporters here late Saturday.

"It is a very talented side and players are full of potential, but they are disorganised and they must overcome this factor in order to ge productive results.



SEEKING DIVINE BLESSINGS: Snehashis Ganguly (R), the elder brother of India captain Saurav, attends a prayer session to wish their national team well in the World Cup in Kolkata yesterday.

Enemy No.

AFP, Johannesburg

Australia's champion spinner Shane Warne wants South Africa to reach the World Cup final - so that it makes it easier for his team to retain

"I don't think it is psychological

warfare or anything like that," the

blond leggie told South Africa's Sunday Times newspaper. "But every time we play South Africa in a big game, we beat them...the close games we've played against them, they've never

"If we had to play South Africa in the final, that would be fantastic.' Warne, who says he is ieered by fans every time he takes the field in

South Africa, says he was delighted the World Cup was being played here. "I love it, the more they boo me,

the more they heckle me, the more I

want to nail them," he said. Warne, rated the greatest leg-

spinner of all time, appears to reserve his best for South Africa even more than against old foe England. He rates his best one-day deliv-

ery as the one that bowled Herschelle Gibbs with one that turned more than a foot from outside the leg-stump to hit the off during the 1999 World Cup semi-final.

It was similar to the 'ball of the

century' that bowled Mike Gatting in an earlier Ashes Test in 1993. Also, three of the five batsmen

he has dismissed most in one-day cricket are South Africans. Leading the pack is old bunny

Daryll Cullinan who has fallen to Warne eight times. The late Hansie Cronje was removed seven times and Jonty Rhodes six - the same number as Inzamamul Hag of **SEE PAGE 15** 

# Akram ambition

AFP, Cape Town

Pakistani all-rounder Wasim Akram said on Saturday he was fired up to take the field in Tuesday's key World Cup clash against defending champions Australia. The 36-year-old, playing his fifth

and last World Cup, believed a victory over Ricky Ponting's men at the Wanderers in Johannesburg would propel his side towards the

"I have always enjoyed taking on challenges," Wasim said.

"Australia have always been a very competitive team and I enjoy playing and performing against them.

"I just can't wait for Tuesday's game and although it would not be a grudge match, we would certainly like to start the tournament on a winning note," he said.

Pakistan, who crashed to a humiliating eight-wicket defeat to Australia in the 1999 World Cup fina at Lord's, have been drawn together with the reigning champions in Group A of the preliminary league. "Memories of that final are still

fresh in my memory," Wasim said.

"But I am determined to bury them once and for ever in this tournament. This will surely be my last World Cup and I am keen to end on a high note.

Wasim, regarded as one of the finest left-arm seamers of all-time, is one-day cricket's most successful bowler with 490 wickets. He is also the only bowler in

history to take more than 400 wickets in both forms of the game. Wasim was man-of-the-final when Pakistan won the World Cup

under Imran Khan's leadership in 1992 when he clobbered a rapid 33 runs and picked up three wickets. "I am desperate to be in the final

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