

Dhaka fill last slot in nat'l b'ball semis

Sports Reporter

Dhaka completed the quorum of the last four of the Pepsi 17th national basketball championship when they made a late rally in the second half to edge past Bangladeshi Air Force 88-67 in the last robin league encounter at the NSC wooden floor gymnasium yesterday.

The win left Dhaka as Group B runners-up and they will take on Group A champions Bangladesh Rifles in the second semifinal today.

Holders Bangladesh Navy will meet Bangladesh Army in the first semifinal earlier on the same day.

The Dhaka spikers displayed remarkable speed and accuracy in the second half scoring 53 points against Air Force's 32 to win one of the toughest game so far in this week-long meet.

After a evenly contested first half that saw both teams tied at 35-35, national player Dulal spearheaded the Dhaka attack with spree of basket, the lanky player, toast of Dhaka yesterday, eaged highest 39 points in the match followed by teammate Siddique who scored 21 points.

In the other two matches of the day, Barisal prevailed over Bangladesh Police by 114-99 points while Rajshahi beat Chandpur 64-58, their fourth successive loss.

Nat'l TT results

Sports Reporter

The all too familiar Linu and Zulekha pair clinched the women's doubles title while Shaon and Mona took the boy's double crown of the Meril 19th national table tennis championship at the Pabna district gymnasium yesterday.

Linu and Zulekha, the two national paddlers of Ansars thrashed the Shamma-Rimu pair 21-10, 21-11, 21-17 in the final for their second successive title.

Earlier, Linu and Zulekha played a pivotal role in Ansars' triumph in women's team event.

In the boy's doubles final the duo of Madaripur's Shaon and Ansars' Mona beat the Narail pair of Gautam and Pappu in straight sets.

Meanwhile, in the mixed doubles, the Linu-Rochi and the Nilu-Kisli Pair moved into the final of the six-day meet.

Besides, Rochi, Manash Hamlet, Happy, Sadi, Akhlaq, Kachi and Mostofa moved into the second round of the men's singles winning their respective group finals.

Tuhin finishes sixth in Dubai chess meet

Ziaul Quader Tuhin of Bangladesh was placed sixth in the international chess 'festival' held in Abu Dhabi securing seven points, reports UNB.

Twenty players from 11 countries participated in the ten-round competition.

Omar Katarajine of the Philippines emerged champions with nine and a half points while Khaled Mohammad of Egypt finished runners-up with nine points in the meet held from July 10-20, according to a delayed message received here yesterday.

Walsh wrecks Yorkshire

LONDON: July 26: Gloucestershire's West Indies pace bowler Courtney Walsh took four wickets in seven overs on Monday to send Yorkshire tumbling to an embarrassing 324-run county championship defeat at Cheltenham, reports Reuter.

It was their biggest defeat in run terms. The previous worst was the 305 runs they lost by to Cambridge University 88 years ago.

Walsh wasted little time in mopping up the innings after Yorkshire had resumed at 154 for five.

They were all out for 204. Walsh finishing with six for 85. He took 10 wickets in the match — the third time he has achieved the feat this season.

Kent fan's crusade

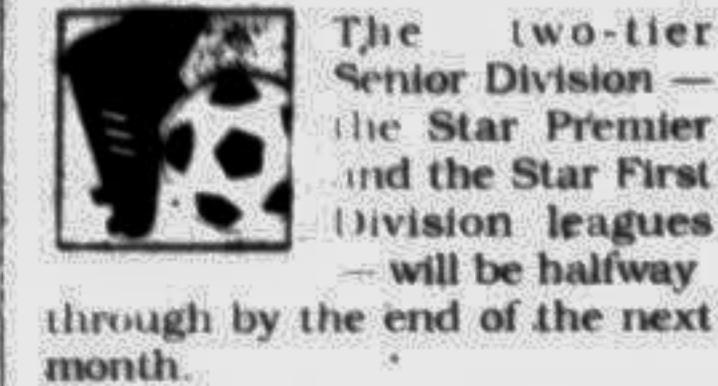
CANTERBURY, England, July 26: A Kent supporter plans to force a special general meeting of the county to propose a motion of no confidence against the Test and County Cricket Board, reports Reuter.

Roy Edey says Kent fans are still seething about the way they went out of the Benson and Hedges Cup on May 25, when their quarter-final tie against eventual winners Warwickshire was decided by a bowl-out.

Edey is angry the TCCB took no punitive action against Warwickshire but his initiative is prompted by the TCCB's weekend decision to dock Lancashire '25 points for an unfit pitch.

Star Senior Division league 1st phase to be over by Aug

Sports Reporter



The two-tier Senior Division — the Star Premier and the Star First Division leagues — will be halfway through by the end of the next month.

According to the fixtures released by the organisers Dhaka Metropolis Football Association (DMFA), three matches of the Star First Division football league will be held on August 30, the last day of the first phase engagements.

Reigning Premier champions Mohammendans, who have been sharing the monopoly of supremacy in local football along with Abahani, will take on their arch-rivals in the second match of the penultimate day i.e. August 29.

The new look Mukti Joddha Sangsad Krira Chakra, raring to go with their rich collection of national footballers take the field on August 3 against Public Works Department (PWD).

The freedom fighters, who are being considered as a serious bidder for this year's league title following their recent Federation Cup triumph, couldn't have asked for a better opener. The men in red blanketed PWD 9-0 in a group match of the Federation Cup.

Abahani Krira Chakra, the other most popular team besides Mohammendans, initiate their campaign on July 29 against promotees Fakirpool Youngmen's Club. Although the

sky blues are better off than their avowed foes in a sense they have collected one trophy (the DMFA Cup, not to count the Charms Cup in India) as against Mohammendans' none this season, they will be no less keen to regain the Premier title.

Brothers Union, the hitherto third force and still in search of their maiden league title will meet giant killers

FIXTURES (PARTIAL)

| | | | |
|---------|---|--------------|--------|
| July 28 | Rahmatganj MPS vs Muslim Institute | 6 pm | Mirpur |
| | Mohammedan SC vs Bangladesh Boys | 5 pm | Dhaka |
| | Agrani Bank vs Arambagh | 7 pm (DS) | |
| | East End Club vs Eskaton Sabuj Sangha | 6 pm (MS) | |
| | Victoria SC vs Shantinagar Club | 4:30 pm (DS) | |
| | Abahani KC vs Fakirpool Youngmen's | 6:30 pm (DS) | |
| | Fakirpool SC vs Dharmundi Club | 6:00 pm (MS) | |
| | Mukti Joddha Sangsad vs PWD SC | 4:30 pm (DS) | |
| | Brothers Union vs Wari Club | 6:30 pm (DS) | |
| | Sadharan Bima SC vs Dhaka Wanderers | 5:30 pm (DS) | |
| Aug 1 | Victoria SC vs Eskaton Sabuj Sangha | 6:00 pm (MS) | |
| | Rahmatganj MPS vs Shantinagar Club | 4:30 pm (DS) | |
| | Mohammedan Sporting Club vs Fakirpool | 6:30 pm (DS) | |
| | Eastern End vs Dharmundi Club | 6:00 pm (MS) | |
| | Agrani Bank vs PWD SC | 4:30 pm (DS) | |
| | Abahani KC vs Wari Club | 6:30 pm (DS) | |
| Aug 3 | Farashganj vs Wanderers Club | 6:00 pm (MS) | |
| | Mukti Joddha Sangsad vs Bangladesh Boys | 4:30 pm (DS) | |
| | Brothers Union vs Arambagh KS | 6:30 pm (DS) | |
| Aug 4 | Sadharan Bima vs Muslim Institute | 4:30 pm (DS) | |
| | Rahmatganj MPS vs Eskaton Sabuj Sangha | 6:30 pm (DS) | |
| Aug 5 | Victoria SC vs Dharmundi Club | 4:30 pm (DS) | |
| | Mohammedan SC vs Wari Club | 6:30 pm (DS) | |
| Aug 6 | East End Club vs Wanderers Club | 6:00 pm (MS) | |
| | Fakirpool vs Bangladesh Boys | 4:30 pm (DS) | |
| | Abahani KC vs Arambagh KS | 6:30 pm (DS) | |

Sport

Press blitz rages on

LONDON: July 26: The British press continued their attack on England cricket captain Mike Atherton on Tuesday, calling for him to quit over a ball-tampering scandal, reports Reuter.

"Michael Atherton should quit as England captain right now," said former England opener Geoff Boycott in the tabloid Sun newspaper.

Another former England player, Jonathan Agnew, joined the debate over the affair, which resulted in Atherton being fined 2,000 pounds sterling (3000 dollars) for having dirt in his pocket to dry his hands during the Test against South Africa and for misleading the match referee.

Under the headline "Why Atherton has got to go," Agnew wrote in the Daily Mail: "An example has to be made of Atherton."

"He can go quietly... or the authorities can be strong and give him a push. But sadly, he has to go," Agnew wrote.

The Daily Mirror conducted a readers' poll on the affair, which overshadowed South Africa's victory at Lord's at the weekend, and reported that 100 per cent of those who responded wanted Atherton to quit.

Television pictures captured Atherton on Saturday putting his hand into his trouser pocket, then taking it out and rubbing the ball before wiping his hand on his trousers.

An investigation that evening by match referee Peter Burge found that Atherton had done "nothing untoward."

But 24 hours later Atherton revealed that he had had dirt in his trouser pocket, an action which Burge then described as "foolish in the extreme."

The Times newspaper echoed Burge's words and added: "Atherton, was dishonest in his account of the affair to the official charged with its investigation."

"If the captain of England's cricket team fails to uphold the values of his society — or the values to which his society aspires — he is unworthy of that uncommon honour which the captaincy represents. He should be replaced."

Among all the solemnity, the Sun added a note of levity.

It offered readers a competition with 20 prizes of packets of "Mike's super soil" designed, the newspaper said. "To keep your hands dry in the sizzling heatwave."

But, tongue-in-cheek, the Sun warned prize winners: "Please remember this soil should not be brought into close contact with any cricket ball. The results can be very costly."

Leeds give up signing Skuhravy

LONDON: July 26: English Premier league club Leeds have almost given up hope of signing Genoa's Czech international striker Tomas Skuhravy, reports Reuter.

Leeds managing director Bill Fotherby on Monday extended the deadline for a deal until 1600 GMT today but admitted: "I will be surprised if the transfer goes ahead."

After eight hours of negotiations with the Italian club's president Aldo Spinelli, Fotherby revealed a last-minute hitch had left the three million pound sterling (4.5 million dollars) transfer in Jeopardy.

"We have agreed everything with Skuhravy and Genoa but there is a financial complication between the player and his club," he said. "If it is not resolved the transfer cannot go ahead."

Private Housing Inc gets the job

ATLANTA: July 26: A local property coalition on Monday was given the job of assembling a network of thousands of private homes and apartments for lease to visitors during the 1996 Olympic Games, reports Reuter.

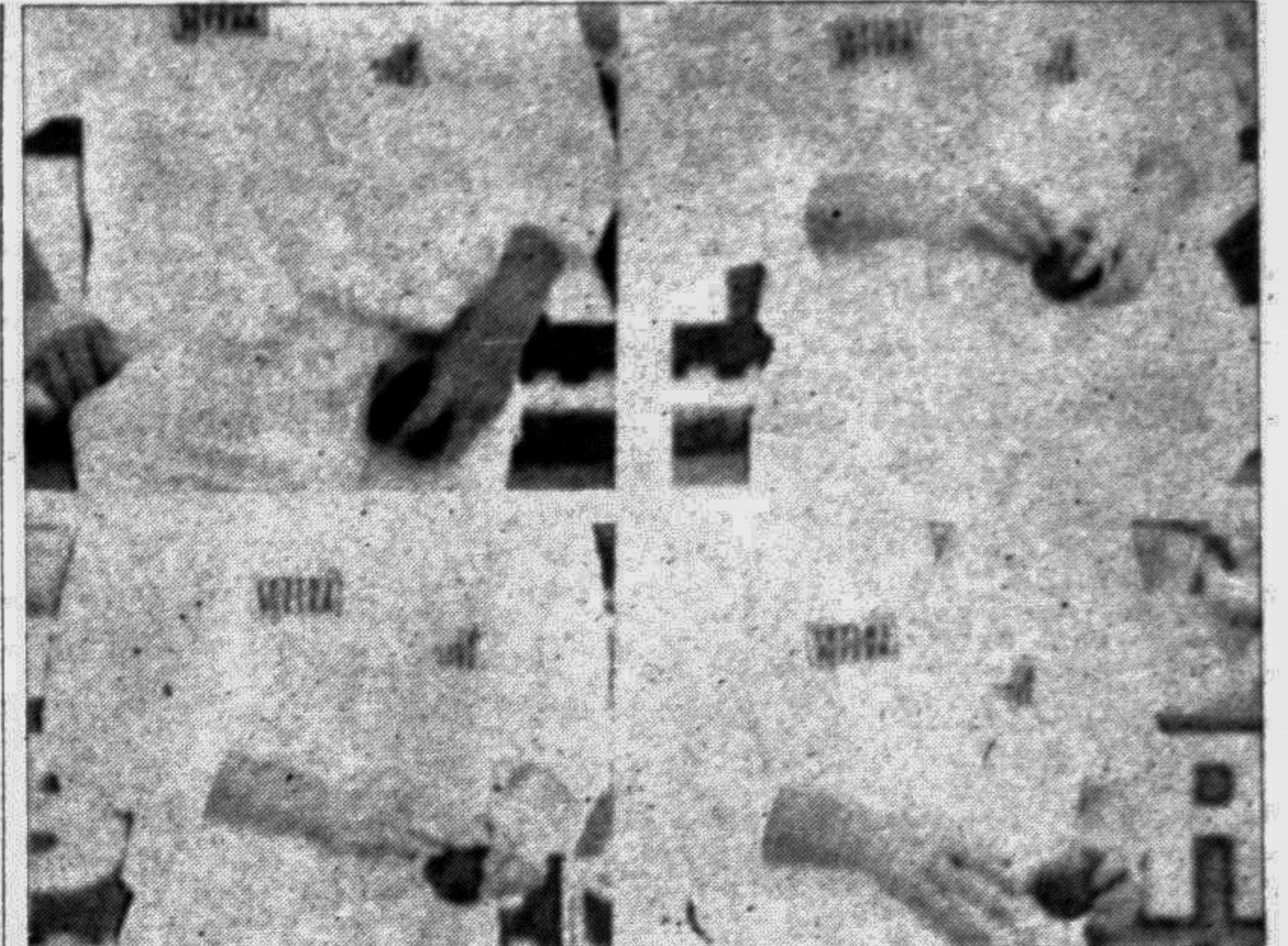
The Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games (ACOG), the private nonprofit group charged with organising the Olympics, named Private Housing 1996 Inc as the official private housing contractor.

Private Housing 1996, a corporation formed by leading Atlanta real estate brokers and property developers, will put together an initial housing inventory offering 6,000 beds to the so-called extended Olympic family, including journalists and business sponsors.

Meeting the needs of the Olympic family is our first priority. Beyond that, however, the door is wide open to assemble an even larger inventory of homes and apartments for lease to the general public when tickets go on sale next spring," Private Housing 1996 president Jerry Warshaw said.

Signs of trouble began to appear the day after the World Cup final when the Vang DC-10 carrying the 97-member delegation was delayed for four hours in Los Angeles because of excess weight.

After marathon parades in



An AFP file photo shows controversial TV footage of England captain Mike Atherton handling the ball during the first Test against South Africa at Lord's. The footage led to allegations that Atherton altered the condition of the ball.

ICC makes light of furore

Atherton gets reprieve



LONDON: July 26: The International Cricket Council said Monday it would not take any further action against England captain Mike Atherton over the ball tampering incident in South Africa's 356-run first Test win at Lord's.

Match referee Peter Burge said he considered the 2,000 pound (dfls 3,000) fine imposed on Atherton by the Test and County Cricket Board and "resultant publicity and public scrutiny" was "sufficient penalty," but called Atherton's actions "foolish in the extreme."

Atherton was captured by television cameras on Saturday reaching into his right pocket, pulling it out with what looked like a substance on his fingers then rubbing his fingers on the ball before polishing it on his trousers.

He initially told Burge on Saturday night he just put his hand in his pocket to dry it, as it was very sweaty in oppressive heat and humidity at Lord's. But at a news conference on Sunday, he told journalists he had dirt in his pocket to dry his fingers.

Atherton conceded the television images looked "suspicious" and that was why he wanted the issue out in the open and did not want accusations of cheating hanging over him.

The TCCB fined him 1,000 pounds (dfls 1,500) for not telling Burge the full truth and another 1,000 pounds for using the ball.

The media marvelled at Atherton's good fortune at retaining his place as England's captain, and gasped at the fall from grace of the captain with the previous pristine image and choir boy looks and charm.

The widely held belief was that the incident would not go away quickly and quietly and that if Atherton treads a fine line close to transgression again, his job would definitely be at risk for the tour to Australia later this year.

Burge, a former Australian Test batsman, issued a statement Monday.

"Saturday my attention was drawn to action taken by the England captain when handling the ball during the afternoon session," it said.

"At tea, I consulted the umpires, Dickie Bird and Steve Randell, and they assured me that the condition of the ball had not been altered in any way.

Nonetheless, after viewing television replays, I again in-

spected the ball after play and discussed the matter further with the umpires. Although no report was lodged, I held an investigation with Michael Atherton and the England manager, Keith Fletcher, with the umpires present.

At the investigation, Atherton did not state that he had dirt in his pocket to dry his fingers.

"On the basis of his remarks and that there was no evidence of the ball's condition being changed, no action could be taken by me.

"Prior to last night's media conference, copies of statements by Atherton and chairman of selectors, Ray Illingworth, were given to me by the TCCB.

"I have now carefully considered Atherton's statement. The action of having dirt in his pocket in order to dry his hands, was foolish in the extreme and cannot be condoned, particularly when done by a Test captain.

"The fact that Atherton has misled an ICC referee by not giving a full and frank disclosure when given the opportunity to do so, concerns me more than anything else because of the effect on the image of cricket.

"He has also apologised to me for withholding information and I have accepted that apology. I do not propose to take any further action."

That's why customs officials got suspicious when five 10-foot (30-metre) moving trucks rolled up to drive the team's luggage to the hotel.

The unloading took time. Among other things were 18 television sets, computers, refrigerators, fax machines, laser printers, microwave ovens, gymnastics equipment, a barbecue grill, dishwashers and even a leather horse saddle.

Customs officials estimated that defenders Jorginho and Branco brought back a combined total of 8,800 dollars in electronics and housewares. Coach Carlos Alberto Parreira had dfls 1,500 worth of computer and TV equipment.

All in all, about one million dollars in duties had to be paid.

Lopes' Filho ordered the baggage held and inspected. Ricardo Teixeira, the confederation president