

New Zealand on taxing tour

WELLINGTON, Oct 23: New Zealand left Sunday for one of their most gruelling cricket expeditions, a two-and-a-half-month tour of India and South Africa that includes three Tests and a possible 14 one-day internationals, reports AP.

The Indian leg includes four one-dayers in eight days dotted across the continent against the host country and the West Indies, and possibly a final.

The players are coming off a three-month winter break to face one of the world's best one-day sides and an Indian team that is difficult to beat at home.

New Zealand will have a one-day match upon arrival in South Africa — New Zealand's first tour there for 32 years followed by three, three-day matches before the first Test in Johannesburg.

Between the first and second Tests against South Africa, there is a six-game one-day programme against South Africa, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, followed by the last two Test matches.

Captain Ken Rutherford, who with vice-captain and star batsman Martin Crowe, has a critical role to play with the bat, believes it is a tour on which players have the chance to cement international places. "I guess I'm asking players

to stand up and say that's my spot," Rutherford said.



KEN RUTHERFORD

THE ITINERARY

Oct. 26: vs. West Indies, Goa. Oct. 28: vs. India, Baroda. Nov. 1: vs. West Indies, Guwahati. Nov. 3: vs. India, Delhi. Nov. 5: one-day final, Calcutta (if New Zealand qualifies). Nov. 9: vs. Select XI, Halfway House, near Johannesburg. Nov. 11-13: vs. Northern Transvaal, Pretoria. Nov. 15-17: vs. Combined Bowl 11, Kimberley. Nov. 19-22: vs. Orange Free State, Bloemfontein. Nov. 25-29: vs. SOUTH AFRICA, first Test, Johannesburg. Dec. 1: vs. President's XI, Soweto. Dec. 3: vs. Transvaal, Johannesburg. Dec. 6: vs. South Africa, Cape Town (day/night). Dec. 8: vs. Sri Lanka, Bloemfontein (d/n). Dec. 11: vs. South Africa, Pretoria. Dec. 13: vs. Pakistan, Port Elizabeth (d/n). Dec. 18: vs. Sri Lanka, East London. Dec. 19: vs. Pakistan, East London (d/n). Dec. 21-23: vs. Boland, Stellenbosch. Dec. 26-30: vs. SOUTH AFRICA, second Test, Durban. Jan. 2-6: vs. SOUTH AFRICA, third Test, Cape Town.

Of Kiwi bottle top bandits

AUCKLAND, Oct 23: The New Zealand cricket team resorted to ball tampering with a bottle top to counter a dominant Pakistan on the New Zealanders' 1990 tour, Test bowler Willie Watson said Sunday, reports AP.

The tactic was used after New Zealand were thrashed in the opening two Tests, with Wasim Akram and Waqar Younis "bowling at another level," Watson was quoted as saying in the Sunday Star Times newspaper.

Before the third Test, during practice, New Zealand captain Martin Crowe experimented with a ball he had scratched on one side, Watson said.

Mark Greatbatch voluntary

teered to take a bottle top on to the field for the third Test in Faisalabad and Chris Pringle responded with an 11-wicket haul in the match as New Zealand almost pulled off an unlikely victory, Watson said.

Crowe refused Sunday to



WILLIE WATSON

comment on the allegations, but another player involved in the match confirmed that the ball was damaged when the New Zealanders huddled together at the fall of Pakistan wickets, Greatbatch could not be contacted.

New Zealand Cricket chairman Peter McDermott said he did not condone the behaviour. "I think it's a case of the players reacting strongly and trying to play the same way they felt the opposition was doing."

Medium pacer Watson makes the revelations in "Willie's Tail — Bouncers, Bottle Tops and Bombs," a booklet released for his benefit season with England in 1991.

The row reached a peak in 1992 when England batsman Allan Lamb accused Wasim and Waqar of cheating during the one-day international between England and Pakistan at Lord's.

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Courier, Rosset race to final

LYON, France, Oct 23: Jim Courier of the US and Marc Rosset of Switzerland swept aside their opponents with ease on Saturday on their way to the final of the Lyon men's tennis indoor tournament, reports Reuter.

Courier, the fifth seed, caused the major upset with a crushing 6-2, 6-2 defeat of top seed Andrei Medvedev of Ukraine while fourth seed Courier dismissed unseeded Russian Andrei Chesnokov 6-3, 6-4.

Courier, the former world number one but now ranked 14th, will be seeking his first ATP Tour victory in 14 months today following a dismal season in which he has reached only one tournament final.

Rosset will be bidding for his second title of the year after winning in Marseille in February.

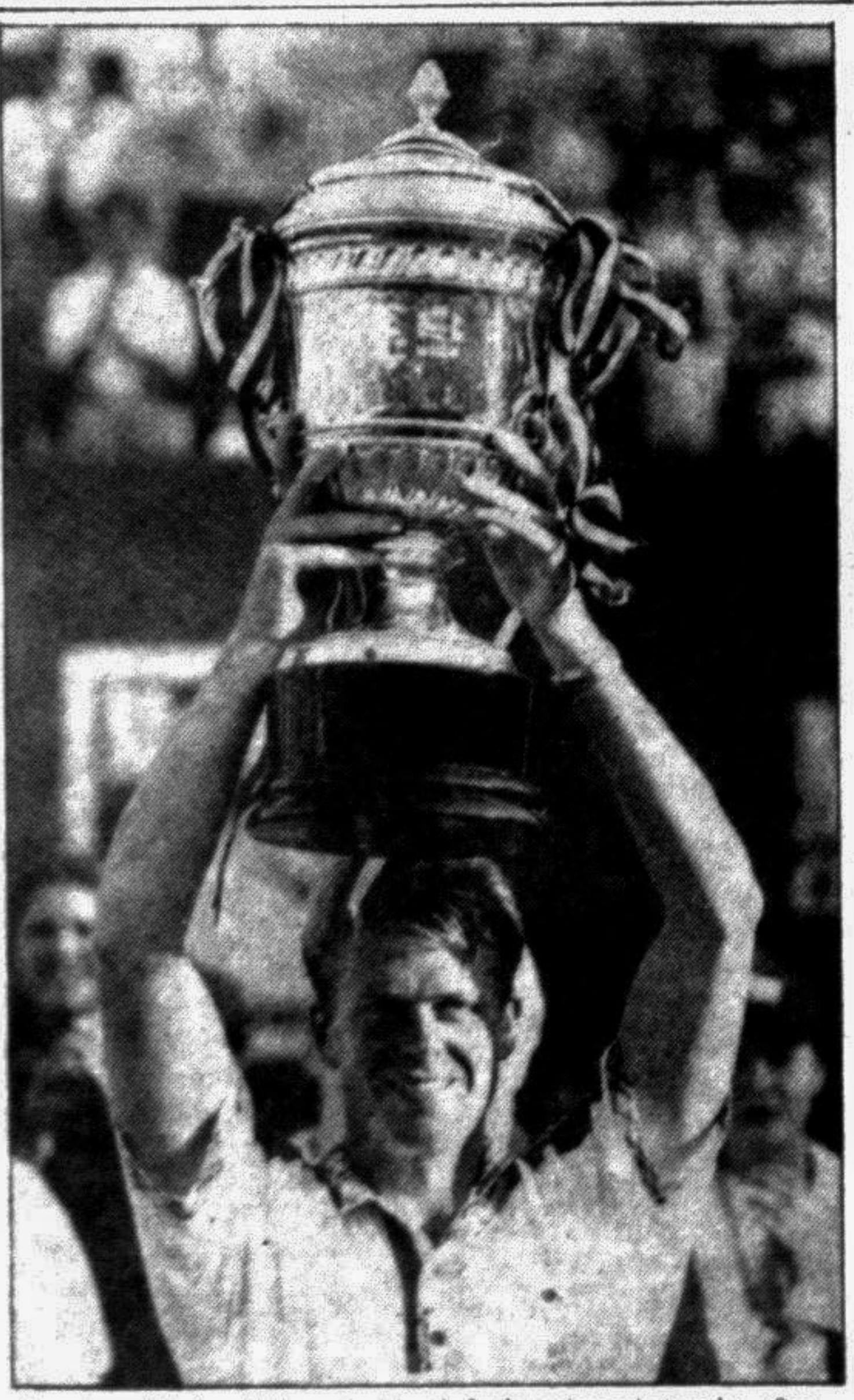
His semifinal against Medvedev was a one-sided performance, marred by some poor line-calls which seemed to distract the Ukrainian. But Rosset was always in command and Medvedev had little answer to his powerful serve.

Of today's final, Rosset, who won this tournament four years ago, said: "It'll be a clash between two players who hit the ball very hard. Jim has played terrific tennis this week and it was a pleasure to watch."

The pair have met six times before, with each winning three times.

Courier said he was gradually returning to his best form after a string of poor results.

"I feel much better, both physically and mentally and I hope to improve still more. I'm happy with my game and we'll see what happens tomorrow," he said after dispatching Chesnokov in one and a half hours



Sweden's Stefan Edberg holds aloft the winner's trophy after defeating Dutchman Richard Krajicek in the final of the Marlboro tennis championships in Hong Kong yesterday. Edberg won 6-3, 7-6 (7-4), 6-4.

Relentless Reefat

Sports Reporter

"Bowlers have to prove themselves, prove they can take 20 wickets to win a Test match, and we haven't done that for a long time."

The New Zealand team:

Ken Rutherford (captain), Martin Crowe, Bryan Young, Blair Hartland, Darrin Murray, Stephen Fleming, Shane Thomson, Chris Harris, Adam Parore, Lee Germon, Matthew Hart, Dion Nash, Chris Pringle, Murphy Su'a, Richard de Groot, Simon Doull.

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to stand up and say that's my spot," Rutherford said.

On completion of the fifth round matches of the 11th Gazi Motahar Hossain International Master's chess tournament yesterday, the top of the points table scenario remained somewhat similar to that of the day before with national champion IM Reesat bin Sattar singularly leading with full five points.

At the conference room of the National Sports Council, Reesat, playing with white pieces, penetrated Abdullah al-Rakib's Caroan Defence in only 30 moves.

Defending champion Pakistan's IM Mahmood Ahmed Khan Lodhi shared the second position with Indian V Sharavanan, both having four points. Lodhi, the all too familiar Pathan, had to manoeuvre for 43 moves before finally opening up Indian IM Lankha Ravi's Dutch Defence. Ravi's, compatriot Sharavanan, however, made most of the Alapine variation of the Sicilian Defence against Hasibul Hassan's white pieces and forced resignation in only 28 moves.

Ravi Hedge, another Indian IM, opened his encounter against Nahid Miyazid of Bangladesh with the queen's pawn and won in 51 moves. Hedge and Ravi are in the third place with three and a half points each.

The second Bangladeshi IM in the 14-man fray, Ziaur Rahman upped his collection to three points with a victory over compatriot Taiyebul Rahman in 51 moves. Zia declined to play in the line of queen's gambit against Rahman's white pieces and pushed his opponent in a virtual no-go position.

Kalimullah Khan remained glued to his paltry one point haul when he succumbed to yet another loss against IM Shekhar Chandra Sahu of India in 29 moves. Khan's Slav defence was simply inadequate to withstand Sahu's onslaught.

FIDE master Syed Tahmidur Rahman and Maruf Ahmed agreed to draw after only 21 moves in a game of queen's pawn opening.

New Zealand had suspected tampering by Pakistan in the first two internationals and felt these were substantiated when they saw the second Test ball Pakistan had used.

For some reason the Pakistanis changed the ball while some of us were outside the dressing room mucking around, so we went and had a poke at it — one side seemed to have appreciatively less leather than the other," Watson said.

His revelations — the first admission by a New Zealand player — are certain to re-ignite international controversy over ball tampering, which is believed to enhance "reverse swing."

Pakistan great Imran Khan resigned his position this year as an International Cricket Council delegate after admitting in his biography that he used a bottle top to scratch the ball while playing for Sussex on Sunday.

Medium pacer Watson makes the revelations in "Willie's Tail — Bouncers, Bottle Tops and Bombs," a booklet released for his benefit season with England in 1991.

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Sport



Indian IM Ravi Hegde moves his knight to force Miazid's queen to retreat during their fifth round match of the eleventh QM Hossain International Masters' chess tournament yesterday. Hegde won the match in the 51st move.

—Star photo

Johnson outpoints Segura



ATLANTIC CITY, N.J., Oct 23: Tom "Boom Boom" Johnson kept his IBF featherweight title on the national stage he wanted, reports AP.

Whether he got the kind of audience he wanted for the points victory over Patricio Segura on a Saturday when most of his American men were watching college football is another matter.

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"He fought like a champion, but he was fighting a champion," said Johnson, who said he wasn't surprised about the one-sided scoring.

"I'm disappointed in the scoring," said Segura, who weighed 125 1-2 pounds (56.8 kilogram). "I don't think it was that far apart. The last two rounds I won without a doubt."

All three judges gave Segura, from the United States, the 11th round, but they favoured Johnson in the 12th.

Johnson, 126 pounds (57 kilograms), controlled the fight from the outset, scoring well with left jabs, body shots and counter punches. But Segura, who was hurt by a right to the head in the second round, kept coming.

"Hopefully now, people know Tom Johnson," said Johnson, who before the fight had called himself "the most active world champion nobody knows."

Anyone who did tune to see Johnson's fifth defence of this share of the featherweight title saw a good action bout, which was much tougher for the champion than the scoring indicated.

Judges Al DeVito and Joe Pasquale of the United States scored it for Johnson 118-110. Judge Bernie Cormier of Canada favoured the champion 117-111.

Aouita's fall from grace

RABAT, Oct 23: World 2,000 metres record holder Said Aouita has been sacked as technical director of the Royal Moroccan Athletics Federation (FRMA), newspapers said today.

They said the FRMA had accused Aouita of criticising federation members training methods and of "wanting to impose an individual management."

The FRMA said Aouita, appointed technical director last December, "possessed no diploma and no qualifications giving him the right to assume the role of national trainer."

A leading Moroccan sports writer said on Sunday,