

## To be or not to be...

BRISBANE, Jan 7: West Indies skipper Richie Richardson hinted Sunday that record breaking Brian Lara might not be at next month's World Cup, reports AFP.

Richardson said he was unaware of how relations were between Lara and the West Indies cricket board after the 26-year-old batting supremo was named in a provisional World Cup squad.

Lara protested against a fine imposed on him after last year's tour of England by making himself unavailable for the Australian tour. He returned to first class cricket in the Caribbean this weekend.

"I know things were written in newspapers, but I don't know exactly what transpired back there regarding Brian Lara and the West Indies cricket board," Richardson said.

"I know that he is included in the 20 names which is not even a squad really, they just needed 20 names and his name was submitted."

Richardson said a player of Lara's quality would always be welcomed back into the team. But he stated that any player should abide by board rules and pay up if disciplined for any reason.

"It's a pity that such a great talent had to miss the game," he said.

The quicker the problem is sorted out and we get Brian Lara back the better. You can't afford to have that talent not playing the game but if he does something wrong he must pay the consequences."

Richardson said the Lara stand-off was not distracting him from his captaincy role on tour.

"I'm not even thinking about it at this point. My main interest is to get the guys to play well enough to get into the finals and to win the World Series," he said.

"After that I will start thinking about what might happen when Brian comes back."

The West Indies World Cup squad will be finalised later this month.

## Zimbabweans going great

WHANGAREI, New Zealand, Jan 7: Zimbabwe ended the second day of their three-day match against the New Zealand Academy Eleven with a 141-run lead and nine second innings wickets in hand, reports Reuter.

The tourists were 80 for one after the Academy declared at 213 for one, 61 runs behind.

The day belonged to promising Academy openers Robert Lawson and Matthew Bell who put together a partnership of 213.

The Academy Eleven declared when 18-year-old Bell was declared leg before wicket for 83 just before tea.

Lawson completed his maiden first-class hundred, finishing on 113 not out.

Neither batsman, among New Zealand's best batting prospects, gave a chance during their partnership, which lasted 285 minutes.

Lawson faced 226 balls and hit 15 boundaries in an impressive display, keeping up a steady run-rate throughout his innings.

Bell began as the more circumspect of the pair, managing just two singles in 48 balls after lunch. But he then struck five boundaries in the space of 17 deliveries.

Off-spinner Stephen Peal was the tightest of the Zimbabwe bowling attack on the lifeless pitch and was rewarded with the only wicket of the innings, taking one for 50 off 25.5 overs.

To complete the day for the New Zealand opening pair, when Lawson was given the ball he had Zimbabwe's Grant Flower caught by Bell after the batsman had hit a rapid 53.

## Atlanta marathon schedule may be shifted

ROME, Jan 7: The men's marathon start at the Atlanta Games will probably be switched from early evening to early morning because of the heat, International Amateur Athletic Federation president Primo Nebiolo said on Saturday, reports Reuter.

He also said organisers would try to ensure the timetable allowed US athletes Michael Johnson and Carl Lewis to compete in all their chosen disciplines.

Nebiolo told the Daily La Stampa newspaper the marathon start would probably be put back on medical advice. "It could start at the same time as the women's at 0730 instead of 1830."

He added, "We will try to meet the demands of the Johnsons, the Lewises, the champions who race in several events."

It is important to put on a great show for the American public, better if it's with their own heroes."

Johnson, who scored an historic first by winning both the 200 and 400 metre world titles in Gothenburg last year, has lobbied the IAAF and the International Olympic Committee to alter the Atlanta schedule so he can try to repeat the feat.

## Caribbeans seem composed



BRISBANE, Jan 7: West Indies captain Richie Richardson made a timely return to form today as the tourists confirmed their recent revival by 14 runs in a limited overs World Series game, reports Reuter.

West Indies ended Australia's unbeaten record by posting their third win in five days in a nail-biting finish at the Gabba.

Richardson, who has struggled for runs to far in the competition, scored an outstanding 81 in a vintage display of stroke play that helped lift his side to 231 all out from 49.3 overs.

In reply, Australia were dismissed for 217 in 47.4 overs after fast bowler and man-of-the-match Ottis Gibson claimed the wickets of wicketkeeper Ian Healy and fast bowler Craig McDermott with successive balls.

Gibson was engulfed by jubilant teammates after shattering the dismay of a capacity crowd of 21,632.

Gibson, who finished with figures of two for 38 from 5.4 erratic overs, made an even more telling contribution with the bat, hammering a vital 52 runs from 40 balls late in the West Indies innings.

Richardson earlier rediscovered his timing and confidence during a two-hour stay at the crease that featured a succession of well-timed hooks, cuts and drives.

Richardson eventually fell in the 40th over when he drove a low catch to Michael Bevan in the covers to give all-rounder Stuart Law his only wicket of the innings.

But the veteran right-hander's resurgence in scoring his first half-century in seven World Series innings failed to mask an otherwise indisciplined display by his fellow top order batsmen.

Gibson rescued the innings by smashing two sixes and four fours before being bowled by all-rounder Shane Lee.

Fittingly, Gibson reached his first half-century in nine

overs, limited by hooking a short pitched ball from fast bowler Glenn McGrath out of the ground for six.

Australia captain Mark Taylor sent West Indies in to bat on a wicket offering bounce and movement off the seam.

McGrath was the pick of the Australian bowlers, claiming three for 47 from 9.3 overs.

Australia middle order batsmen Ricky Ponting and Stuart Law scored 61 and 62 respectively to lift their side's hopes.



R RICHARDSON ... 81

The pair added 115 runs for the fourth wicket before Ponting fell to a rash pull shot, lofting a simple catch to Roger Harper at mid-on off fast bowler Ian Bishop.

When Law was brilliantly caught and bowled by Phil Simmons nine overs later, Australia's hopes of victory

plummeted.

## SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard in the World Series limited overs match between Australia and West Indies at the Gabba on Sunday.

## WEST INDIES

Williams c Healy b McGrath	0
Campbell b McGrath	5
Simmons c Lee b Waugh	42
Richardson c Bevan b Law	81
Hooper c Slater b Reiffel	18
Harper b Waugh	10
Browne run out	1
Gibson b Lee	52
Bishop run out	5
Ambrose not out	3
Walsh b McGrath	0
Extras: (lb-3, w-6, nb-5)	14
Total: (for 49.3 overs)	231
Fall of wickets: 1-2; 2-27; 3-103; 4-133; 5-167; 6-169; 7-173; 8-220; 9-230.	
Bowling: O M R W	
McGrath 9.3 1 47 3	
Reiffel 7 1 50 1	
McDermott 8 0 43 1	
Waugh 10 0 30 0	
Bevan 3 0 16 1	
Lee 8 1 30 1	
Law 4 1 12 1	

## AUSTRALIA

Slater c Campbell b Ambrose	0
Taylor c Browne b Bishop	14
Maugh c Browne b Walsh	5
Ponting c Harper b Bishop	61
Law c b Simmons	62
Bevan run out	17
Lee c Simmons b Walsh	6
Healy c Walsh b Gibson	14
Reiffel run out	14
McDermott b Gibson	1
McGrath not out	0
Extras: (lb-6, w-7, nb-9)	22
Total: (47.4 overs)	217
Fall of wickets: 1-1; 2-10; 3-37; 4-142; 5-179; 6-180; 7-187; 8-216; 9-217.	
Bowling: O M R W	
Ambrose 9 2 20 1	
Walsh 9 0 56 2	
Gibson 5 4 0 38 2	
Bishop 10 0 49 2	
Simmons 10 0 39 1	
Harper 4 1 9 1	
Results: West Indies won by 14 runs	

## STANDINGS

Standings in the World Series one-day cricket series after Sunday's match (tabulate under games played, won, lost, and points):

Teams	G	W	O	P
Australia	5	4	1	8
West Indies	7	3	4	6
Sri Lanka	4	1	3	2

Results: West Indies won by 14 runs

## Sino swimmer turns up heat

HONG KONG, Jan 7: Han Xue, a 14-year-old Chinese swimmer, set a world record of 31.11 seconds Sunday in the 50-metre women's breaststroke at the Epsom World Cup short-course competition, reports AP.

Han broke the previous short-course record of 31.19 set by Sweden's Louise Karlsson in November 1992.

Short-course records can be set only in 25-metre pools.

Britain's Jaime King placed second in 32.46 seconds, with Sweden's Hanna Jaltner third in 32.68.

Swimmers from 14 countries and Hong Kong competed in the two-day meet at the Kowloon Park swimming center. It is the first leg of the eight-meet 1996 World Cup.

## England get into quagmire

CAPE TOWN, Jan 7: England's tour of South Africa continued its downhill spiral on Saturday when they lost by three wickets to what was effectively a Western Province second team in a day-night 50-over match at Newlands, reports Reuter.

Playing all five of their one-day reinforcements, the tourists could only manage 196 all out after winning the toss.

An improved bowling and fielding display then reduced WP to 132 for seven, but the wheels fell off in the last eight overs as the eighth-wicket pair of Failek Davids (55) and Paul Kirsten (32) smashed 68 runs to win with an over to spare.

Yorkshire all-rounder Craig White conceded 18 runs in his last over, which also turned out to be the last of the match. Successive balls were hoisted for four and six by Davids to put the issue beyond doubt.

Unheralded all-rounder Davids hit his runs from just 39 balls with five fours and two massive sixes. Ironically he was only in the team because WP's five current Test players were rested and West Indian opener Desmond Haynes is away in Dubai.

Wicketkeeper Kirsten, younger brother of Test opener Gary, was the perfect foil to the big hitting Davids, putting pressure on the fielders with scampered ones and twos.

It had all started so well for England who looked easily capable of defending their score, particularly when the recalled Phillip DeFreitas was bowling a miserly opening spell of eight overs for 22 runs.

The support bowlers all did their bit and none of the WP batsmen seemed capable of breaking the stranglehold. It looked as though England would coast home, but an outbreak of nerves ended their hopes.

Earlier White had helped rescue England who had been reduced to 13 for three by paceman Meyrick Pringle's impressive opening spell.

White and Neil Fairbrother both made 46 and added 82 for the fourth wicket to right the ship. But only Dermot Reeve (23) and Jack Russell (29) contributed down the order and the door was left tantalisingly ajar for the home side.

According to the Australian newspaper ICC chief executive David Richards had conceded the debate would include a suggestion that an independent expert panel would be empowered to rule on illegitimate actions.

That is an external panel who could look at a videotape or look at information say well, we think there is a bowler who has got this particular problem and this is what really needs to be done," the paper quoted Richards saying from London.

Describing it as an ideal group of people to get their minds around all of this, Richards said, "The objective in all of this is to try and assist the players, where there is that element of doubt, to get the matter rectified before it gets to the situation of them being called in international cricket."

The investigation could clear Graf of suspicion that she was involved in tax fraud. Her father Peter has been in jail or remand since the summer suspected of concealing a part of his superstar daughter's earnings, while Steffi has herself faced questioning from police.

German criminal investigators have determined that several contracts and tax returns were signed by a special machine, but, while the Graf family are known to possess such a machine for signatures, officials now believe a second one exists.

Steffi Graf maintains she knows nothing of a second machine and expressed surprise that so many of her signatures had ostensibly been forged, Spiegel said in its latest edition out Monday.

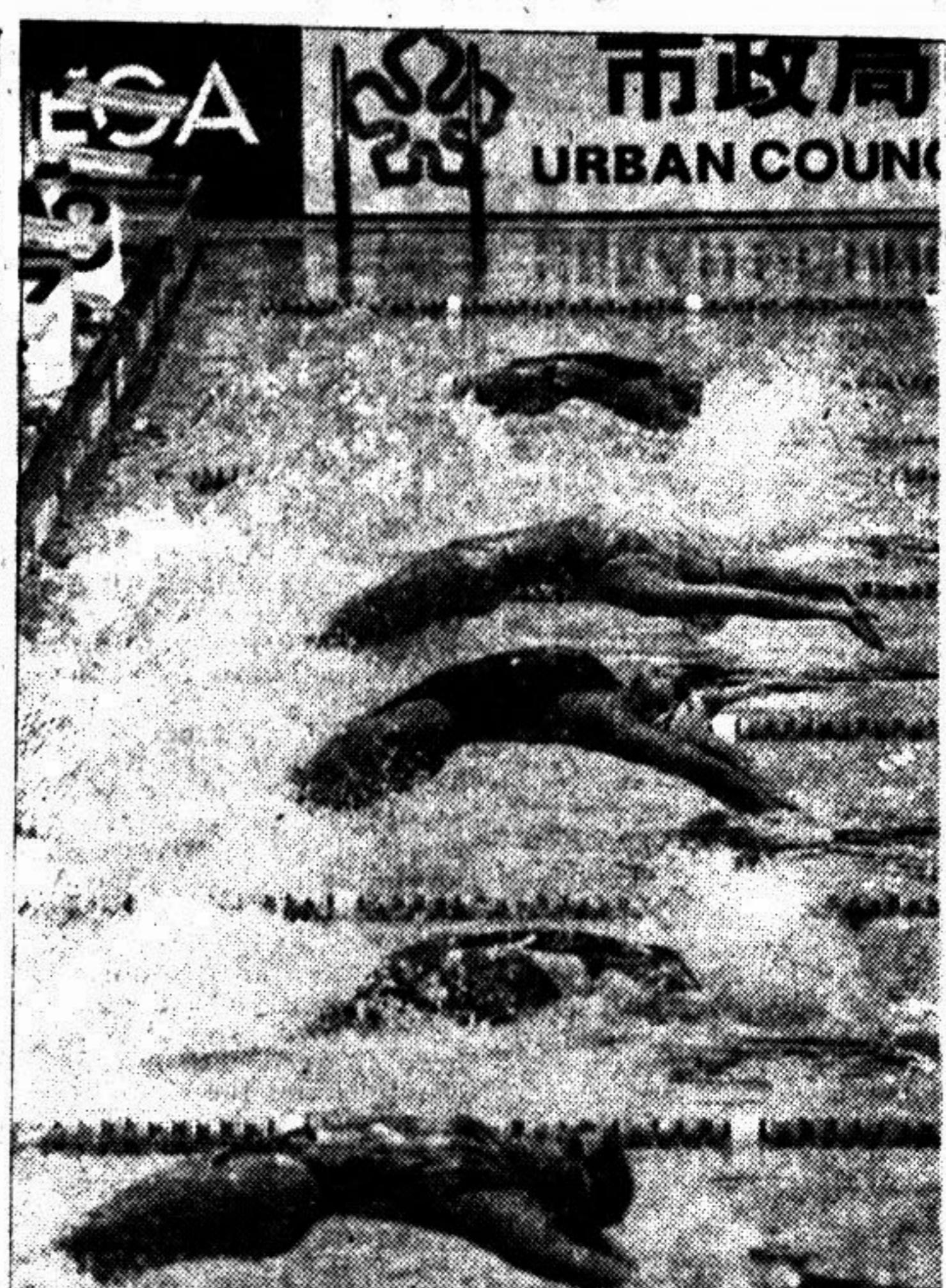
The magazine suggested the confusion could benefit Steffi in the final analysis in that a machine is known to have signed her tax return for 1993, which concealed 5 million marks (3.5 million dollars), implying she was unaware of the details of that.

Tax accountants are now preparing corrected 1993 declaration, according to Spiegel.

Graf is estimated to have earned some 180 marks (128 million dollars) since turning professional in 1982, while only paying around 25.5 million to the German treasury since 1984.

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Graf is estimated to have



Competitors start off the women's 50 metres backstroke final of the Hong Kong swimming World Cup on Jan 6.

— AFP/UNB photo

## Tyro torments mighty Muster