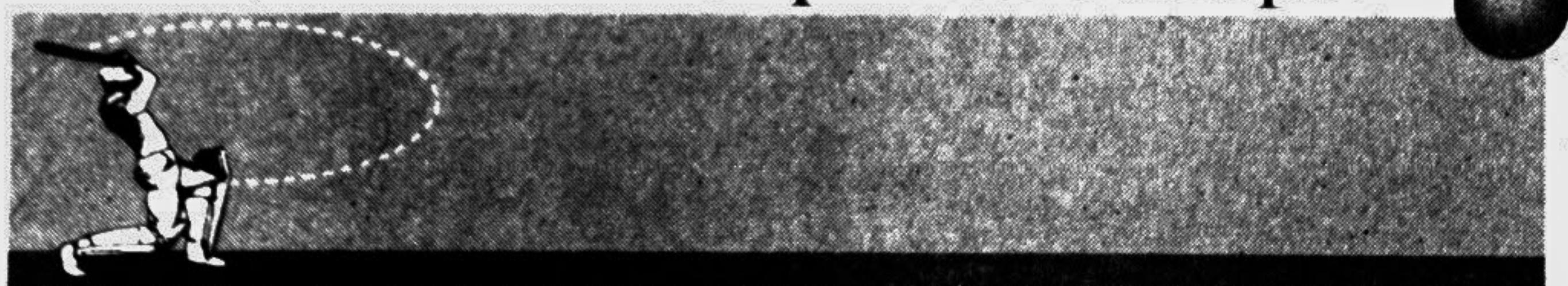


Sport

The World Cup with Philips



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No music at the Wankhede

BOMBAY, Feb 24: There would be no bugle-blowing or drum-beating at the Wankhede Stadium here on February 27 when India and Australia clash under the lights in their Wills World Cup Group A league fixture before a capacity crowd of 35,000, reports PTI.

The spectators would have to be content with exerting only their vocal chords or clapping their hands as the Bombay police have decided to ban musical instruments from being taken into the stadium for security reasons.

The bursting of firecrackers has also been banned along with carrying of glass and plastic bottles into the stadium as the police fear that these articles may be used as missiles against the players, according to a police spokesman.

The security, as has been the practice at various centres during the ongoing Cup, would be stringent with as many as 600 police personnel — including 400 constables — being deployed in and around the stadium.

Earlier this morning city police commissioner Ramdeo Tyagi visited the stadium and discussed internal security arrangements with the officials of the Mumbai Cricket Association (MCA) which is hosting the tie.

An antique trophy awaits the winners

JAIPUR, India, Feb 24: When the World Cup final ends in Lahore on March 17 the winning captain will hold aloft an antique, sterling silver trophy made 118 years ago by London crown jewellers Garrard, reports Reuter.

The four kilo trophy is 12 cm high and has etchings of a 1785 painting depicting a cricket match in progress. The painting itself adorns the wall of Lord's Cricket Museum.

When Pilcom, the Pakistan-India-Lanka Organising Committee, were planning a trophy for the tournament, Garrard and Jaipur's Arun Industries were shortlisted for their designs.

After the design submitted by the London company was approved by the cup organisers and sponsors Wills, Garrard modified the original trophy and presented it to Pilcom.

Arun Industries is making six replicas at its workshops which have become a focus of attention from local cricket fans who have come to look at the original design.

While the winning team will be handed the original trophy at the presentation ceremony after the final, they will be allowed to carry home only a replica. Replicas will also be given to the three host countries.

The original trophy will remain the prized possession of the sponsors.

Sampras-Chang semis showdown

MEMPHIS, Tennessee, Feb 24: Top seed and world number One Pete Sampras rallied past Australian Mark Woodforde 6-4, 7-6(9-7) Friday to set up a semifinal match with third seed Michael Chang in the Korgor St Jude tennis tournament, reports Reuter.

Chang beat sixth seed Mallika Washington of the United States 7-5, 3-6, 6-4 in their quarter-final.

Mark Philippoussis of Australia, seeded 10th, blasted 15th seed Jiri Novak of the Czech Republic 6-3, 6-1 to earn a semifinal spot against fifth-seeded American Todd Martin, who beat fourth-seeded Swede Thomas Enqvist 6-4, 6-4.

Capriati crashes

ESSEN, Germany, Feb 24: Jana Novotna beat Jennifer Capriati 7-6, 2-6, 6-3 in the quarter-finals of the WTA tournament on Friday, dashing the American's hopes of marking her comeback with a title, reports Reuter.

In the best match of the 450,000 US dollar tournament so far, Novotna and Capriati took a power-packed first set to a tie-break.

The Czech former Wimbledon finalist eventually took the set on her fourth set point, winning the tie-break 8-6.

Novotna's reward is a semi-final against second seed Anke Huber, who defeated fellow German Barbara Rittner 6-4, 7-5.

Rubin rallies

OKLAHOMA CITY, Feb 24: Top seed Chanda Rubin struggled early before rallying Friday to beat Katrina Adams and advance to the semifinals of the IGA Classic, reports AP.

Rubin, ranked No. 10 in the world, lost the first set 4-6 but then closed out Adams, of the United States, 6-2, 6-1. Rubin, also of the United States, will meet No. 3 seed Amanda Coetzer in Saturday's semifinals. Coetzer beat fellow South African Joannette Kruger 6-1, 6-4.

Bob's boys in fine tune



Australian coach Bob Simpson spoke to Tapan Majumder exclusively in Calcutta before the team flew to Bombay to play some warm-up matches.

Q How do you role your chances in this World Cup keeping in mind the conditions prevailing in this sub-continent?

S: We have got a lot of experienced players. They had been in the subcontinent before. So the conditions here would not be unusual for us.

Q What do you think about your batting?

S: I think we have got all-round strength. We have great depth. We have some of the best players in the world as far as the batting is concerned. And that has been shown over quite a few years. The batting will be very very solid as always it has been.

Q And what about the bowling?

S: Well, it's done us proud hasn't it? When you look behind the last few years, it's really the bowling that has clinched many victories for us. Our bowlers have performed very well against West Indies, Pakistan and recently against Sri Lanka.

Q You have some rookies in your squad. How are you shaping up as a team?

S: Most of our players in the squad played four or five years in first class cricket; so they are not rookies in that sense. They had also been here and played some form of cricket in the subcontinent. So you know that they have gathered much more experience playing first class cricket than youngsters in India who perhaps don't get as much exposure as we do.

Q Don't you think if you

field Ponting, Law and Shane Lee in a match, your middle order would be a set of inexperienced cricketers?

S: This is Ponting's second trip away. He played a lot of cricket. Ponting played four or five years of first class cricket in Australia. He has scored a thousand run every season. He has had a tremendous season.

We have got Stuart Law, who's the captain of Queensland and he is now twenty seven. So he has been playing for eight years. There is only one newcomer whom we are looking at — Shane Lee. At this stage Shane looks potentially good.

Q Have you undergone any special preparation for this World Cup?

S: We are just working very hard on the physical side at this stage. Obviously, we have dis-

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