

## Column One

## DID U' KNOW?

(The Professor does)

HAT the manner in which the television networks worldwide are getting into the act of providing excellent service to their viewers, their good work is becoming a direct threat to live attendance. The result is the dwindling size of crowds in even major sporting events. The ongoing Singer Cup with three of the best exponents of the game taking the field, the paltry crowd at the Padang should make the current position absolutely clear.

Television viewers in the comfort of their home, able to keep in touch with business and the more sporting man-about-town hooking on to a set in his own office, the feeling that you are actually working while enjoying a game, and such vital issues continue to discourage enthusiasts from queuing up at the ticket-counter, sweating in uncomfortable seats, making the embarrassing walk along the row of seats to reach decent cup of tea, etc. And, so Baba and the working Ammu are home when children are flying off to their schools. Not fair, uh?

The problem of thin crowds is more true for cricket than any other game because of its long duration. Moreover, there is no substitute for the ball-to-ball analysis, close-ups, instant and delayed replays, expert comments that are available on TV.

Although you might be lucky to get a seat beside the odd "expert" in the gallery, TV wins hands down on the other aspects. Moreover, you can switch off the TV (or shoot it if you are losing) at your convenience. You would not do that if you were sitting in the stands because you, not only paid for it, but almost lost an arm and a leg to get hold of it.

So, in another five years or so, an ageing Lara will be making delightful strokes in barren stadiums. But, don't worry! All of it including slo-mo will be on TV.

## SPORTS TALK



Zaeer Abbas

(Former Pakistani batting great)

The art of strokeplay is a way of communication between strokeplayers and cricket lovers. Perfect strokeplay touches the heart of a cricket fan as a lover's message touches the heart of the beloved.