

Wills creates a smoke!

AUCKLAND, Jan 10 (AP): New Zealand health officials are investigating whether the visiting Indian cricket team is breaching anti-smoking laws by wearing the Wills tobacco logo on its bats and uniforms, the Sunday Star-Times reports.

The Indian team and New Zealand Cricket could be prosecuted under the smokefree environments act 1990 — which prevents the advertising of tobacco products — if they are found in breach.

WD and HO Wills Ltd is a tobacco company in India. It is also the registered name of the New Zealand company trading as British American Tobacco New Zealand.

Health Ministry analyst Matthew Allen said it had written to NZ Cricket, "seeking its views on the use of the logo and to reiterate the requirements of the act."

Associate health minister and anti-smoking activist Tuariki Delamere said the team was almost certainly breaking the act, but he would wait for the investigation to finish.

NZ Cricket spokeswoman Michelle Lewis said NZC was writing to the ministry and would point out the logo worn by the team belonged to Wills sports and was distinct from the tobacco company logo.

The sports company produced gear, including the bats and clothing used by the Indian team, and was a subsidiary of the tobacco company.

Allen said the ministry was investigating the links between the two, but because of the holiday break it was difficult to get information.

The act is mainly concerned about whether advertising encourages New Zealanders to smoke.

Enqvist ends Hewitt's dream run

ADELAIDE, Australia, Jan 10: Thomas Enqvist of Sweden ended tennis whizkid Leyton Hewitt's unbeaten run on his home soil to claim the teenager's Adelaide hardcourt title on Sunday, reports AP.

Despite winning the first set, Hewitt turned in an uncharacteristically timid performance in the final two sets to fall to Enqvist's bomb-style serves and on-line winners.

Enqvist, the second seed, fought back to easily overrun the 17-year-old 4-6, 6-1, 6-2 in a dream start to the year after he was sidelined for three months last year following surgery on his right ankle.

Hewitt expects he will remain in the top 100 — he went into the tournament as No 100 — after beating Jason Stoltenberg, Czechs Slava Dosedel and Jiri Novak and seventh seed German Nicolas Kiefer to earn the chance to defend his Adelaide title.

Enqvist claimed his 14th title and his first since Munich last April in a victory expected to move him a place or two up from his current ranking as world No 22.

No love lost between ACB, PCB



CHRISTCHURCH, New Zealand, Jan 10 (AP): Top cricket officials from Australia and Pakistan buried the hatchet over bribery allegations in public Sunday while private meetings shaped a united stand on the vexed issue.

Australian Cricket Board Chairman Denis Rogers and Pakistan Cricket Board chairman Khalid Mahmood held a joint news conference during a break in the International Cricket Council meeting.

On Friday, Australian stars Mark Waugh and Shane Warne repeated allegations that former Pakistan captain Salim Malik offered them bribes to play badly in matches on Australia's 1994 tour. Malik has denied the allegations.

The ICC's top priority Sunday and Monday was getting a united approach from member countries on the match-fixing and bribery issue.

Spokeswoman Michelle Lewis said "positive and significant progress" was being made Sunday and the ICC was expected to have new rules ready to implement after Monday's session.

Neither Rogers nor Mahmood would comment on the substance of the ICC's closed door meeting Sunday, but wanted to make it clear that the two countries were not at war over the bribery issue.

The two men "are not bitter enemies," Rogers told reporters, but had cleared the air over "misunderstandings and misinformation" and "established a close friendship."

Because of that friendship, "neither had to apologise to each other."

Rogers said despite speculation about a deteriorating rela-

tionship between Pakistan and Australia, "it's not happening."

Mahmood endorsed the comments, adding there had been some "lack of communication over the regulation of Australian players," but this had been cleared up.

"I hope in the future there will be no misunderstandings and miscommunications."

He said the allegations of match-fixing against Pakistani players had caused substantial and extensive damage to both the players and the game. A Pakistani government inquiry, which had hearings in Melbourne Friday and Saturday, is crucial for the sport, he said.

The extent of the damage, might I say, has been unlimited to some extent and therefore we are very keen that this inquiry is brought to its logical conclusion and if any player is found guilty action is taken against him — otherwise we like to get on with the game," Mahmood said.

Mahmood hinted match-fixing may not be confined to his own country.

"Match-fixing, betting is an issue we are currently investigating and this can be more widespread than perceived to be," he said.

ICC chairman Sir Clyde Walcott said draft proposal on match-fixing was being prepared.

"Then we'll take some decision," added Walcott, standing in for India's Jagmohan Dalmiya, who was unable to attend because his mother had died.

Rogers said the rows had not been helpful "but on balance it's good that it's out and we're dealing with it."

Mahmood again denied a report he had called for life bans on Warne and Waugh.

"I did not call for a life ban on any Australian player," Mahmood said. "In fact, I was shocked to see this interview of mine appearing in the press. I did not speak to anybody or correspond and therefore the question of calling for a ban did not arise. That was a fabrication."

The ICC canceled a news conference on the match-fixing issue for Sunday evening.

Lewis said officials would spend the evening and Monday morning further discussing the issue and would consult with Dalmiya before making any public comment.

He has already warned the ICC should come down hard on anyone proven to be involved in match-fixing. Australian and New Zealand cricket chiefs have proposed the ICC takes control over the issues.

Australian Cricket Board Chief executive Malcolm Speed said a mechanism was needed to empower the ICC to deal with the problems. "We hope there is some direction from the ICC," he said last week.

The ICC's biggest problem in attempting to root out corruption is that it possesses little genuine power — its constitution only allows recommendations not substantial action.

"That's an issue we have to address," ICC chief executive David Richards said Saturday.

Richards said the international body must be empowered to make tough decisions, but it raised queries about the jurisdiction of the ICC to act in other countries.

"We have a vital role to play in these bribery issues, but what's up for debate is if the ICC has jurisdiction in sovereign countries if there is criminality involved," Richards said.

Windies taste the rare

CAPE TOWN, Jan 10 (Reuters/ Internet): Brian Lara failed with the bat again but the West Indies beat a Western Province XI by 33 runs in a one-day game on Saturday, their second win in 13 matches on their South Africa tour.

Lara made four but a 101-run partnership between Shivnarine Chanderpaul (81) and Darren Ganga (40) boosted his team to 231 for six.

Leg-spinner Rawl Lewis took five for 25 as the Western Province team, comprised of reserves and six emerging non-white youngsters, were restricted to 198.

The match was played in Langa in the Cape Town suburbs and several white companies took corporate facilities on a rare visit to township.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of the one-day match between a Western Province XI and West Indies on Saturday:

WEST INDIES

Wallace c Croeser b Simelala	11
Ganga c Ferreira b Henderson	40
Chanderpaul c Tsotekle b Simelala	81
Williams b Nkomo	31
Hooper c Simelala b Thomas	26
Lara b Thomas	4
Reifer not out	15
Jacobs not out	1
Extras: (lb-8, w-9, nb-5)	22
Total: For (6 wickets in 50 overs)	231
Fall of wkt: 1-30; 2-131; 3-151; 4-209; 5-209; 6-226	
Did not bat: R. Lewis, N. McLean, M. Dillon	

Bowler: O M R W

Nkomo	8	0	26
Simelala	10	0	66
Lara	7	0	42
Thomas	10	0	33
Henderson	10	0	42
Ganga	5	0	14

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W PROVINCE XI

Ferreira c Lara b Lewis	20		
Croeser c McLean b Reifer	39		
Pangarkar c Ganga b Lewis	9		
Commins c Hooper b Dillon	32		
Player c McLean b Reifer	15		
Lewis st Jacobs b Hooper	27		
Thomas b Hooper	12		
Tsotekle c Lara b Lewis	2		
Henderson not out	13		
Nkomo st Jacobs b Lewis	11		
Simelala c Lara b Lewis	0		
Extras: (lb-11, w-6, nb-1)	18		
Total: (All out in 48.4 overs)	198		
Fall wkt: 1-39; 2-51; 3-113; 4-115; 5-144; 6-171; 7-174; 8-174; 9-198			
Bowler: O M R W			
McLean	8	1	21
Dillon	10	2	30
Lewis	9.4	1	25
Hooper	10	0	48
Reifer	9	0	51
Ganga	2	0	12

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Hair under the microscope

CHRISTCHURCH, New Zealand, Jan 10: Australia's top umpire, Darrell Hair, was questioned by telephone by the International Cricket Council here today over allegations he brought the game into disrepute, reports AP.

World Cup champions Sri Lanka have asked for Hair to be disciplined for reopening the controversy surrounding their star spinner Muttiah Muralitharan.

"They talked to him in a phone link-up and will take a decision on Monday," said Michelle Lewis, the New Zealand Cricket press officer looking after media for the ICC.

ICC chief executive David Richards said Saturday Sri Lanka viewed Hair's autobiography, in which he described Muralitharan's action as "dabolical," as a breach of conduct.

"It hasn't happened with a current umpire before, so if it's found there was a breach of the code of conduct we will have to work through the processes," Richards said.

Players face suspensions of three Tests or six one-day matches if they bring the game into disrepute.

Hair still faces a possible jail sentence stemming from a traffic accident near Washington involving his wife. He pleaded no contest to assaulting two men and will be sentenced Friday. Indiana authorities could send him back to jail if they decide he violated parole from his 1992 rape conviction.

But, after more than a year and a half without doing the game he loves best, Tyson at least has his occupation back.

"The things that bother me aren't fighting, but my personal life," Tyson said. "Fighting is natural to me. It's the other things in life I have problems with. Every day, I'm always trying to walk that fine line."

The heavyweight title that seemed to come so easily at 20 is the ultimate goal for a fighter who a dozen years later finds time is not on his side.

"Everybody knows I want the championship back," Tyson said. "But I need to do it one fight at a time."

Martinez sails Zvereva fails

DOHA, Jan 10: Top-seeded Tim Henman reached the final of the 1 million dollars Qatar Open Saturday, defeating popular Karim Alami of Morocco 6-4, 6-2, reports AP.

Will face little-known German Rainer Schuttler, who defeated seventh seed Cedric Pioline of France 3-6, 6-2, 7-5 in the other semifinal.

Henman had to weather a noisy early storm as Alami, strongly supported by most of the local fans, broke serve at the outset and applied all sorts of pressure.

But the Briton broke right back and turned the match with two superb forehands which secured another break and enabled him to take the set.

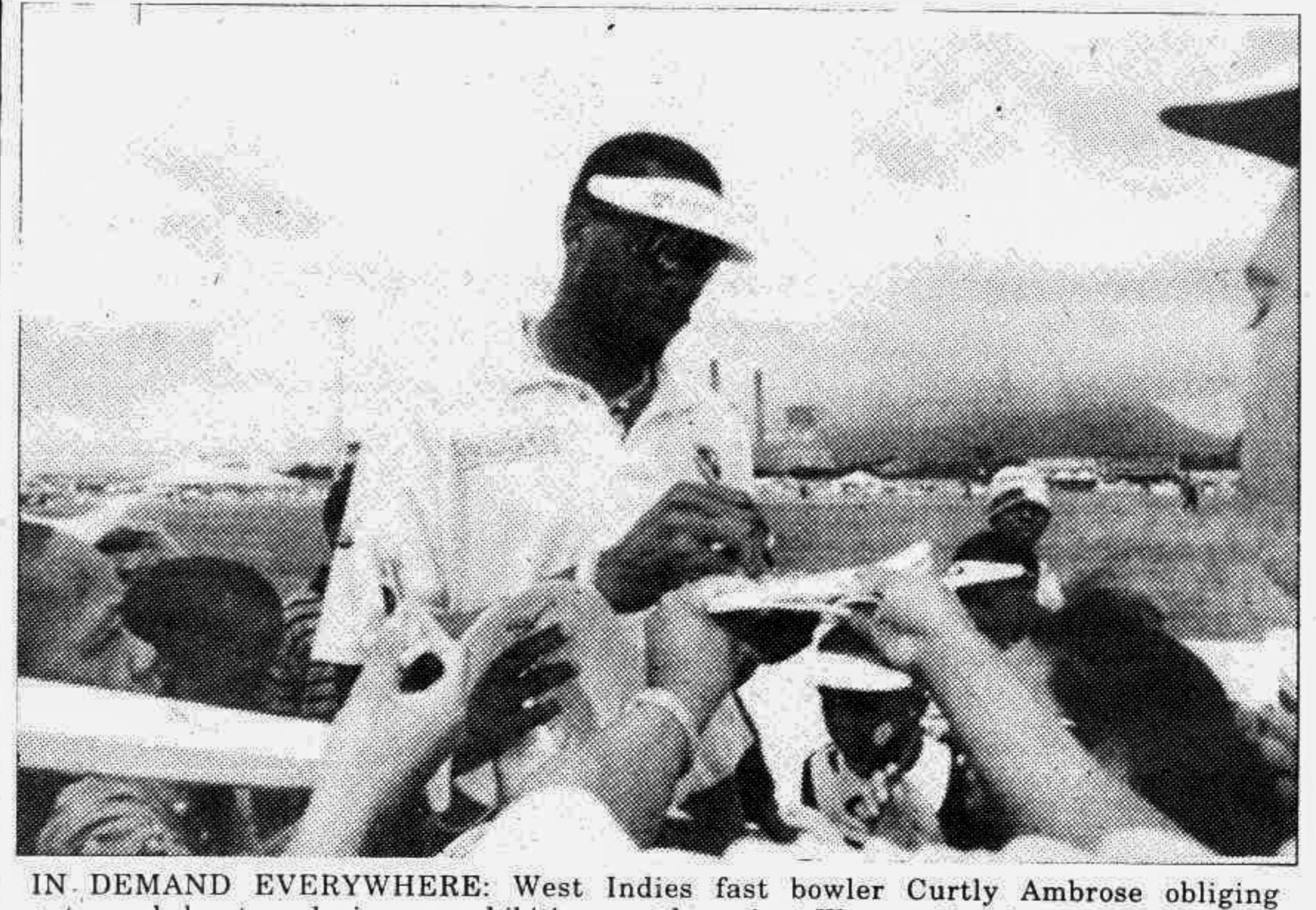
Henman broke again in Alami's second service game of the second set, thanks to two tremendous defensive lobs. Frustrated, Alami lashed the ball into the 18-metre (60-foot) high floodlight and received a code violation warning.

"How could I really be embarrassed going through that stuff?" he said. "I should be happy because I did. Imagine if I didn't go through it. Where would I be now? I wouldn't be fighting, that's for sure."

That Tyson is fighting again is remarkable enough considering the outcry after the Holyfield fight. He wasn't allowed to reapply for a licence for a year after it was revoked in 1997, and Tyson went through

BSJA iftar

Bangladesh Sports Journalists Association (BSJA) arranged an iftar yesterday at the National Sports Council conference room, reports UNB.



IN DEMAND EVERYWHERE: West Indies fast bowler Curtly Ambrose obliging autograph hunters during an exhibition match against Western Province Invitational XI at the Langa Cricket Club in Langa, Cape Town on January 9. — AP/UNB photo

Is the name of the game still cricket?

NEW DELHI, Jan 10 (Reuters/ Internet): "When I watch a cricket match these days, the question is whether it is for real or whether the outcome has already been decided," says Aditya Choudhary, a passionate Indian cricket fan.

Choudhary says the game is losing its enduring strength.

The game was rocked last month when Australians Shane Warne and Mark Waugh admitted accepting money from an Indian bookmaker in exchange for pitch and weather information during a tour of Pakistan and Sri Lanka in 1994.

The two players alleged that former Pakistan captain Salim Malik offered them bribes to fix matches during the same tour, accusations Malik denied.

"Match-fixing was done. How much, I've no idea. But there were some matches which were fixed..." Khan told the daily.

Pakistani cricket seems to be one of the worst affected, with inquiries being conducted against some of its brightest stars.

Cricket lovers say incidents of ball tampering, illegal betting, match-fixing — unheard of a decade ago — have today cast long shadows on the future of the game.

"Cricket spells money, and money spells cricket. So much so that the lure of lucre is the name of the game, which is increasingly influenced by the Byzantine bookies..." the Hindustan Times said in an editorial.

Asad, another former Indian cricketer, "There is no smoke without fire."

The Times of India newspaper quoted former Pakistani captain Imran Khan as saying that match-fixing does take place.

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"Come and see and you will find how mobile phones are put to use," said one Delhi and District Cricket Association official.

Experts say brakes need to be applied urgently or the game will continue its downward slide.

"Alas, gone are the days when cricket was played for the sheer joy of playing and time-honoured traditions of sportsmanship ensured that a batsman walked even without the umpire raising a finger, and a bowler went across to put the ball back on when he thought he had sent in a no-ball," the Hindustan Times wrote in its editorial.

If a cricketer feels that in