

Sport

Randell story exposed more

HOBART, Australia, Aug 4 (AFP): A woman told a court Wednesday she had not complained about international cricket umpire Steve Randell stroking her in her bedroom when she was 11 because he had power over her.

The woman, who was taught by Randell at a Tasmanian school in 1981, said she was anxious to get through the school year and he had the power to hold her back.

She was giving evidence on the third day of the Tasmanian Supreme Court trial in which Randell, 43, has pleaded not guilty to 18 charges of indecent assault against 10 young girls in 1981 and 1982.

The woman said that about once a fortnight Randell would call her to the front of the class to read a story.

He would put his arm around her, sometimes pulling out her shirt, rub her back and stomach and work his way up to her breasts, she claimed.

At other times, she told the court she could see his arm around other girls and movement under their clothes.

The woman said Randell frequently and unexpectedly visited her home and on five or six occasions came into her bedroom and sat on her bed, talking to her and rubbing her body.

She said the rubbing was "all very gradual and slow", moving under the bedclothes to her pyjama top and then on to her skin.

Once her mother came in when he was lounging on the bed and touching her, the court heard.

He removed his hand, stood up and left.

The woman said that after a time she "wised up" and when Randell visited, she would hurry to bed, turn the light out and pretend to be asleep.

On one occasion in 1981 when Randell was at their home, he said he was going to the toilet but when he had not returned after about 15 minutes, the woman's mother said that she went looking for him and found him in her daughter's bedroom.

He was lying on the top of the bed with his head on the pillow, she told the court.

"I was horrified," the mother said. "I said 'Look Stephen, you had better come out and have a cup of coffee'."

He got up and followed her to the kitchen where he told her he had craved affection since his mother died.

Another woman said there had been rumours around the school about Randell, such as him putting his hand up girls' jumpers while looking at their work.

There were also stories that he did not have a home and sometimes slept on a mattress in his classroom and would get dressed in front of girls, she told the court.

Randell is Australia's most experienced international cricket umpire with a record 36 Tests to his name. The trial continues Thursday.

Inconsistency NZ's worst enemy

LONDON, Aug 4 (Internet report): John Bracewell believes New Zealand's greatest enemy is not England - but their own inability to sustain a winning run.

Former Kiwi off-spinner Bracewell, now coach of Gloucestershire, is backing his countrymen to win the current series ahead of Thursday's third Test at Old Trafford.

But he is well aware of their tendency in recent times to produce a superb performance - such as the one they delivered at Lord's - and then fail to follow it up.

Bracewell, who won 41 caps from 1980 to 1990, said: "If New Zealand have had one problem in the past, it's been continuing the roll. It's like teams who think they've won the final by getting to the final."

"Winning at Lord's is not the end of the story and now it's time for Stephen Fleming and the coaching staff to keep them on track for the following two Tests."

"They haven't been used to winning at Test cricket, especially back-to-back Tests; they've been used to winning one Test in a series and winning well. They now have to put together two in a row to nail it down."

England were routed by nine wickets in the second Test, having triumphed in the first game of the series inside two-and-a-half days at Edgbaston.

It is the hosts who have all the problems going into tomorrow's game and 41-year-old Bracewell said: "I rate the win at Lord's as probably New Zealand's best-ever Test win. They went out there and did the business without letting the pressure off at all."

Goetsch sent packing

EINDHOVEN, Netherlands, Aug 4: Qianhong Goetsch, one of many players of Chinese origin who play for a European country, looked uneasy throughout the four games of the first round match.

The world number five had never played for Germany at world, Olympic or European championship level and her coaches said she had been extremely nervous beforehand.

Her defensive style and attacking shots as well as a victory in this year's European Top 12 competition made her a serious contender in Eindhoven.

Wasim remains hopeful

Karachi, Aug 4 (Internet report): Pakistan's ousted skipper Wasim Akram Wednesday stated that he had not given up hope of playing for Pakistan again despite being suspended and an inquiry against him.

ad-hoc committee on Monday, but the contents of the report are being kept confidential.

WASIM AKRAM

Copies have also gone to the president of Pakistan and the Justice Malik Qayyum Judicial Commission.

However Akram has high hopes the report would go in his favour. "The meetings turned out to be very good. Everything was discussed: my assets and cricket affairs in general."

He made it clear that he had returned to Pakistan midway through a busy schedule in England because he wanted to cooperate with the EB. "My only objective is to ensure that the investigation come to an end once and for all. If the issue was not settled, it would do irreparable harm to Pakistan cricket and the players."

It was said to read Saqlain Mushtaq's statement in the papers today. It just conveys the sort of pressure the players are under."

On Sunday, Saqlain said he was ready to face hanging if

proved guilty of match-fixing and bribery. "If I'm found guilty, punish me. I am even ready for public execution. But if it proves wrong then the accusers should be punished," said the star off-spinner to AFP before his departure for England where he plays for Surrey.

Akram meanwhile dismissed reports that the EB officials had grilled him and Ijaz during marathon sessions of interrogation.

The impression created by the newspapers is that we were questioned and treated like ordinary criminals. This is not true. The factual position is that the EB officials were cooperative and well behaved. They asked a number of questions and we answered them honestly. They did not mistreat us at any stage."

Under immense pressure in the last one week after being summoned by the EB officials to Islamabad and then being informed of his suspension by the Pakistan cricket board ad-hoc committee, Akram said he was trying to remain positive about the ban placed on him.

If the officials are convinced we've not done anything wrong, the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) should also reconsider the ban on me."

He said after his meetings with EB officials he had not got a chance to discuss the suspension with ad-hoc committee chairman Mujeeb Rehman.

However what the new chief selector of Pakistan cricket had said on the future of Pakistan cricket would not have come across as good news to Akram.

Former Test wicket-keeper Naushad Ali, who along with Ramiz Raja and Abdul Raquib constitutes the new selection committee, said he planned to build a new team for the future.

USA finish third

GUADALAJARA, Mexico, Aug 4: The United States defeated Saudi Arabia 2-0 Tuesday to take third place in FIFA Confederations Cup, in a match marked by little strategy but fine US passing and shooting near the goal, reports AP.

The victory capped a strong performance in the tournament by the US squad, who defeated Germany 2-0 and came close to tying Brazil — the cup favourites against Mexico in Wednesday's final — in a 1-0 match.

Saudi Arabia's Abdullah Bin Shehah knocked a pass into the US goal with his arm at the 23-minute mark, and officials quickly disallowed the goal. Though the Saudis had several shots on goal during the rest of the match, most lacked force.

The United States opened the scoring at 26 minutes on a break by forward Paul Bravo, who outwitted defenders and Saudi goalkeeper Mohammed Al Deayea to slice a clean shot into the goal.

The United States played much of the second period short of one player, after Matt McKenon was red carded at the 64-minute mark.

Brian McBride headed a pass into the Saudi goal in the 79-minute to seal the US victory.

The US squad allowed the Saudi's relatively little time with ball and put up a solid defense that kept the quicker Saudi forwards from penetrating near the goal.

"I think the team that makes fewer mistakes will win," he said. "It will be a pretty final and Brazil will come out a winner."

Mexico has to do: "Have a very good defence and a better attack."

Ronaldinho said the expected 100,000 fans at Azteca Stadium will put a lot of pressure on Brazil.

"Egypt, who ended the game with eight players, lost to Saudi Arabia 5-1 in a first-round match."

"I understand that the entire executive committee of the Egyptian Federation has resigned as a result of this," Blatter said.

"Egypt, with eight players, lost to Saudi Arabia 5-1 in a first-round match."

AT A GLANCE

FIRST ROUND

Group A

Team GP W D L GF GA Pts

Mexico 3 2 1 0 8 3 7

Saudi Arabia 3 1 1 1 6 6 4

Bolivia 3 0 2 1 2 3 2

Egypt 3 0 2 1 5 9 2

Group B

Brazil 3 3 0 0 7 0 9

United States 3 2 0 1 4 2 6

Germany 3 1 0 2 2 6 3

New Zealand 3 0 3 1 6 1 0

* = qualified for semifinals.

July 24: At Guadalajara, Brazil 4, Germany 0.

United States 2, New Zealand 1

July 25: At Mexico City, Bolivia 2, Egypt 2

Mexico 5, Saudi Arabia 1

July 27: At Mexico City, Saudi Arabia 0, Bolivia 0

Mexico 2, Egypt 2

July 28: At Guadalajara, Germany 2, New Zealand 0

Brazil 1, United States 0

Saudi Arabia 5, Egypt 1

Mexico 1, Bolivia 0

July 30: At Guadalajara, United States 2, Germany 0

Brazil 2, New Zealand 0

SEMI-FINALS

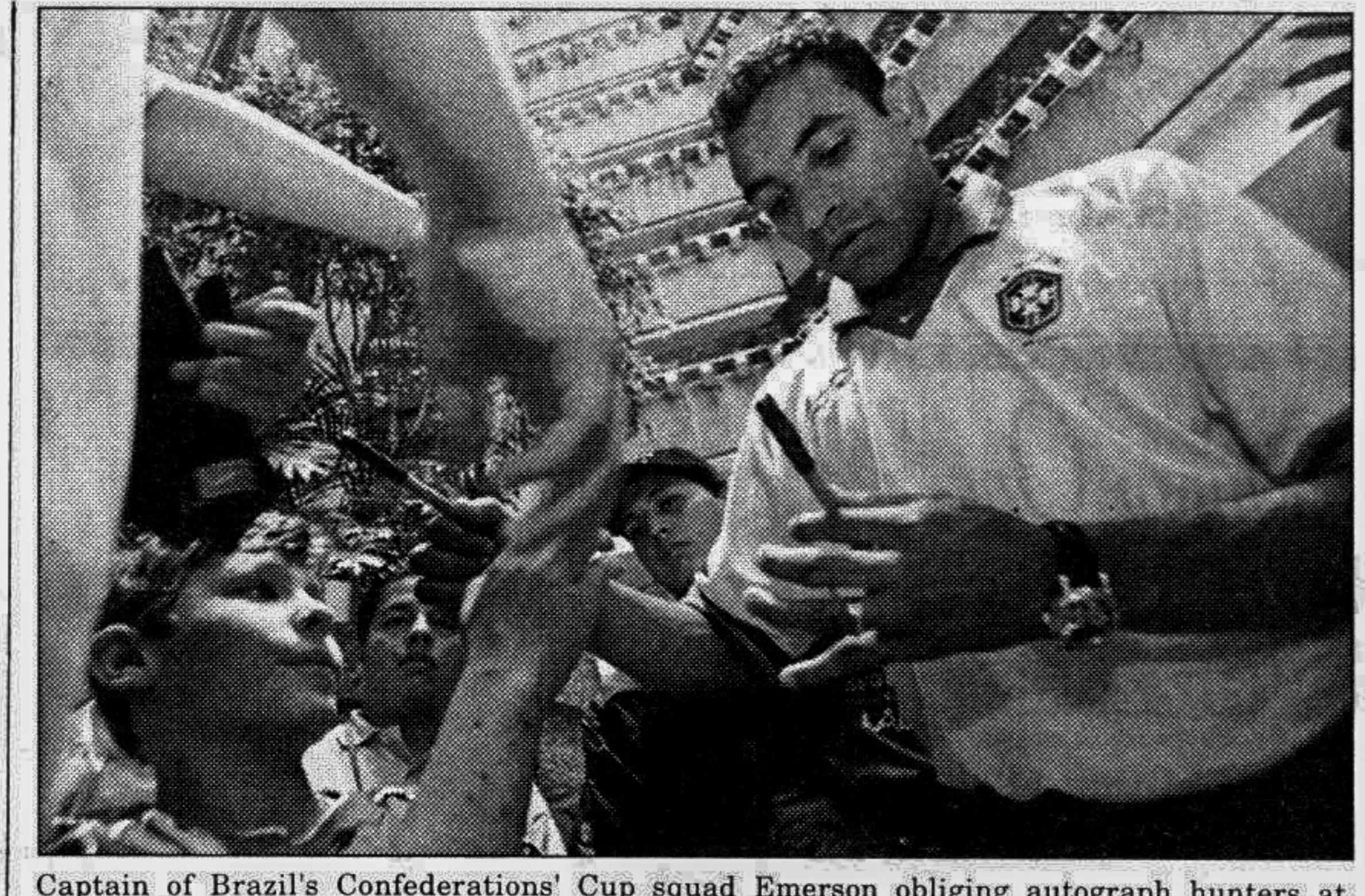
Aug 1: At Mexico City, Mexico 1, United States 0

At Guadalajara, Mexico, Brazil 8, Saudi Arabia 2

FINAL

Third Place

Aug 3: At Guadalajara, Mexico, United States 2, Saudi Arabia 0.



Captain of Brazil's Confederations' Cup squad Emerson obliging autograph hunters at Mexico City on August 3.

Hosts face the ultimate test

MEXICO 1999

MEXICO CITY, Aug 4: Mexico didn't need to be at their best to advance to the Confederations' Cup final. They won't have that luxury Wednesday night against powerhouse Brazil, reports AP.

Brazil, as FIFA president Sepp Blatter said Tuesday, has enough quality players to field three equally strong national teams.

Brazil totally dominated their group in Guadalajara, defeating Germany (4-0), the United States (1-0) and New Zealand (2-0) and then rolling over Saudi Arabia (8-2) in the semifinals.

Lapuente said he will keep the lineup secret "until the last minute."

Blatter will be replaced by Jose Manuel Abundis. Another youngster who will see action is Rafael Marquez, who was sold to Monaco of the French League on Tuesday for an estimated 6 million dollars.

Lapuente said he will keep the lineup secret "until the last minute."

Mexico advanced with less experienced striker and top scorer Luis Hernandez, who has yet to recover from a muscle pull and has seen only 25 minutes of action in the competition.

Blatter said Mexico will miss experienced striker and top scorer Luis Hernandez, who has yet to recover from a muscle pull and has seen only 25 minutes of action in the competition.

"We have the experience and the expertise to ensure that the visitors return safely after enjoying their stay here," said senior superintendent of police Sarah Jayasuriya.

Jayasuriya heads the island nation's top anti-terrorist set up, which comprises highly-trained commandos.

"We are taking extraordinary measures to ensure total safety," said Rienzie Wijetilleke, the chairman of the Sri Lankan cricket board.

Some Australian officials recently visited Sri Lanka and discussed steps to be taken during the Australian team's tour.

The visitors will play a three-Test series and then participate in the three-nation limited-over competition that will also include India.

The former Test player said that in all probability South African Richard Pybus would be retained as trainer to look after the physical training of the boys, as he reportedly did a good job during the World Cup.

Naushad also maintained that around 25 to 30 boys would be invited to the training camp and there was no ban on players like Rashid Latif or Aamir Sohail being in the camp. "The criteria for inviting players is form and fitness and, naturally, past performances. No attention would be paid to other issues," Incidentally, Latif spoke to the ad hoc committee chairman Mujeeb Rehman on Tuesday and he has asked him to make himself available for the camp. Asked if Wasim Akram, Salim Malik and Ijaz Ahmed would be invited for the camp, the chief selector stated this depended on the Board first clearing them to play for Pakistan.

Last week, a suspected Tamil rebel suicide bomber jumped on to the car of a moderate Tamil leader and killed him in the Sri Lankan capital.

"We are going with the best we have, with our most experienced players," Mexican coach Manuel Lapuente said. "We are going to go with everything from the very beginning."

Then he summed up what

Blatter hopeful

MEXICO CITY, Aug 4: FIFA president Sepp Blatter and Peter Velappan, head of the Asia Football Confederation, said yesterday they were optimistic that an Asian boycott of the 2002 World Cup would be avoided, reports Reuters.

The AFC has threatened to boycott the World Cup qualifying tournament if FIFA does not meet its demand for an extra berth in the championship jointly hosted by Japan and South Korea.

Blatter, in Mexico for FIFA's Confederations' Cup, said "More news" on the dispute would be issued before the end of August.

Blatter said he was "very confident that the family of FIFA will be united" before the draw for the qualifying tournament in Tokyo on December 7.

He gave no details but confirmed that he and AFC secretary general Velappan had met in Mexico to discuss the issue.

Asia's entire delegation stormed out of a July FIFA congress in Los Angeles over the issue.

With Japan and South Korea automatically qualifying for the finals as host nations, the 43 remaining AFC members will have to battle for the two spots left under the current Cup layout. The region had four spots in last year's finals in France.

Smarting from their Benson & Hedges Cup final defeat by Gloucestershire at the weekend, Yorkshire started in menacing mode and Hutchinson claimed six for 35 off 12 overs.

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