

WIMBLEDON  
NOTEBOOK

LONDON, June 26 (AFP): Wimbledon diary on Monday:

## HEADS OR TAILS

Two disadvantaged youngsters will make Wimbledon history this year when they are allowed to toss the coin to decide who serves first at the men's and women's singles finals.

Until now, the task has always fallen to the umpire but this time, 12-year-old Raju Tital, from Calcutta in India, and 17-year-old Anthony Mills from Egham in England will perform the pre-match ritual.

Both have been nominated by charities chosen by British number one Tim Henman, who picked a children's cancer care organisation, and the Duchess of Kent, who plumped for a Calcutta-based charity.

Tital, who now lives just yards from where doubles and mixed doubles champion Leander Paes was born, is an orphan, while Mills is receiving treatment for leukaemia.

## GOURMET TIME

Come rain or shine - and the weather was forecast to be cloudy but warm and dry on the opening day - Wimbledon always attracts the gourmets and this year is set to be no different.

As ever, strawberries are the in thing, with 27,000 kilos set to be scooped during the fortnight.

Punters will also get through around 200,000 sandwiches, 12,000 kilos of salmon and 140,000 ice creams.

Although the price of tickets has risen from 37 pence (60 cents) to watch the whole tournament a century ago to a top Centre Court day price of some 60 pounds (100 dollars) the strawberry price index has been kept firmly in check.

In the past seven years a carton has gone up just 10 pence or six per cent.

## TAKE YOUR SEATS

Despite the rain clouds and opposition from Euro 2000, this year's Wimbledon is set to prove as popular as ever as fans looking for late tickets had already pitched their tents outside the All-England Club long before Monday's start of play to ensure a place near the front of the queue.

Ticket touts were also moving into position with Centre Court tickets going for up to 20 times their face value.

## Johnson shines

## for Zimbabwe

TAUNTON, England, June 26: Zimbabwe were indebted to a Neil Johnson hundred as they overcame Somerset by 21 runs in a 50-over friendly at Taunton, reports AFP.

In the first of five warm-up matches for next month's triangular series with England and West Indies, Zimbabwe posted a challenging 248 for four after acting captain Heath Streak had chosen to bat first.

Half-centuries from Piran Holloway and Mike Burns kept a depleted Somerset set in with a chance, but the tourists took the last four wickets for seven runs to seal the win with eight balls remaining.

Medium-pace Gary Brent claimed four for 36, while Streak returned three for 27.

Unusually for one-day cricket, Johnson played more freely for his first 50 than for his second.

Ten fours hurried him to a half-century from 61 deliveries, but there were only three more boundaries as he moved to his hundred from a further 73 balls.

The former Leicestershire left-hander finally departed for 101 in the 47th over when he holed out to Mark Lathwell at long-off from Peter Trego's bowling.

## World champs

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But he made up for it just four minutes later when Zidane, who in January 1999 picked up the FIFA World Player of the Year award, smacked a free-kick into Santiago Caizares' top right hand corner.

Spain came back with an equaliser when Pedro Munitis, who had been causing Lillian Thuram trouble all match with his dribbling runs down the left flank, was tripped in the area by the France defender and Mendieta converted.

But Patrick Vieira set up a magnificent strike for Djorka-ff in the 44th minute to put the world champions back in front. The Arsenal midfielder ran straight at the Spanish defence on the break and elegantly rode a tackle on the edge of the area before feeding the ball wide on the right for his overlapping teammate.

With Agustin Arranzabal arriving late Djorka-ff had time to loose off a plevier into Canizares' top left-hand corner, with the goalkeeper beaten at his near post.

Spain recovered from the blow and kept pushing forward in the second half.

Guardiola steered in a series of free-kicks to no avail, while Spanish defender Peco was lucky to pick only up a yellow card in the 70th minute when he grabbed the shirt and shoulders of Henry as the French striker sprinted towards goal.

Guardiola was meanwhile unlucky to see a deflection take care of his shot, which had been neatly teed up by Alfonso after a snaking run by Munitis, although Vieira had no better luck after his 75th minute volley cannoned off a Spanish defender.

Barthez rash challenge made for a thrilling finale while substitute Israel Zuercher could also have levelled in injury-time when he met Alfonso's cross from the left with a point-blank range header which flew over the bar.

## Cronje seeks pardon



CAPE TOWN, June 26: Hansie Cronje, the disgraced South African cricket captain, on Monday begged for forgiveness for his involvement in illicit gambling deals, reports AP.

"It is not my intention to seek to excuse myself for what I have done," he said in a statement released to the Cape Times newspaper. "There is no excuse and I have let the (United Cricket Board), the team, the fans and the game down."

"I am bitterly sorry for what I have done and the pain I have caused," he said.

Cronje said he drew some consolation from the fact that he had never fixed a match and had always played to the best of his ability.

The government appointed a commission of inquiry into corruption in South African cricket after Cronje confessed in April to having received a single payment from a gambler - an admission that sparked the country's biggest sporting scandal.

In testimony before the commission, Cronje admitted he had accepted five separate illicit payments totalling about 100,000 dollars from gamblers and said a sixth 20,000 dollars deposit into his bank account could have been in exchange for match information as well.

Cronje, 30, spent three days under cross-questioning from the commission last week, and broke down in tears as he left the witness stand on Friday.

The commission resumed public hearings Monday. It heard testimony from Johannesburg businessman Hamid Cassim, who Cronje said acted as an intermediary between himself and London bookmaker Saujya Chawla.

Cronje admitted to taking between 10,000 and 15,000 dollars from Chawla in exchange for match information.

Meanwhile, the commission is still trying to gain access to tapes made by the Indian police of telephone conversations between Cronje, Chawla and Cassim during a tour to the subcontinent earlier this year. The Indian police made the first accusations against Cronje.

Chawla has been implicated by the Indian police, and Cassim said this was the same man

he had introduced to Cronje as Saujya Chawla.

The commission, headed by retired judge Edwin King, must submit interim findings to South African President Thabo Mbeki by Friday.

Cronje will be given amnesty from criminal prosecution if the commission decides he has made a full disclosure of his involvement in the illicit deals.

## FATHER'S PLEA

Meanwhile, Reuters adds, the father of Cronje has appealed to the nation to give his son a chance to make a new life for himself.

Ewie Cronje's comments appeared in the Cape Times today following his son Hansie's marathon 10-hour testimony to

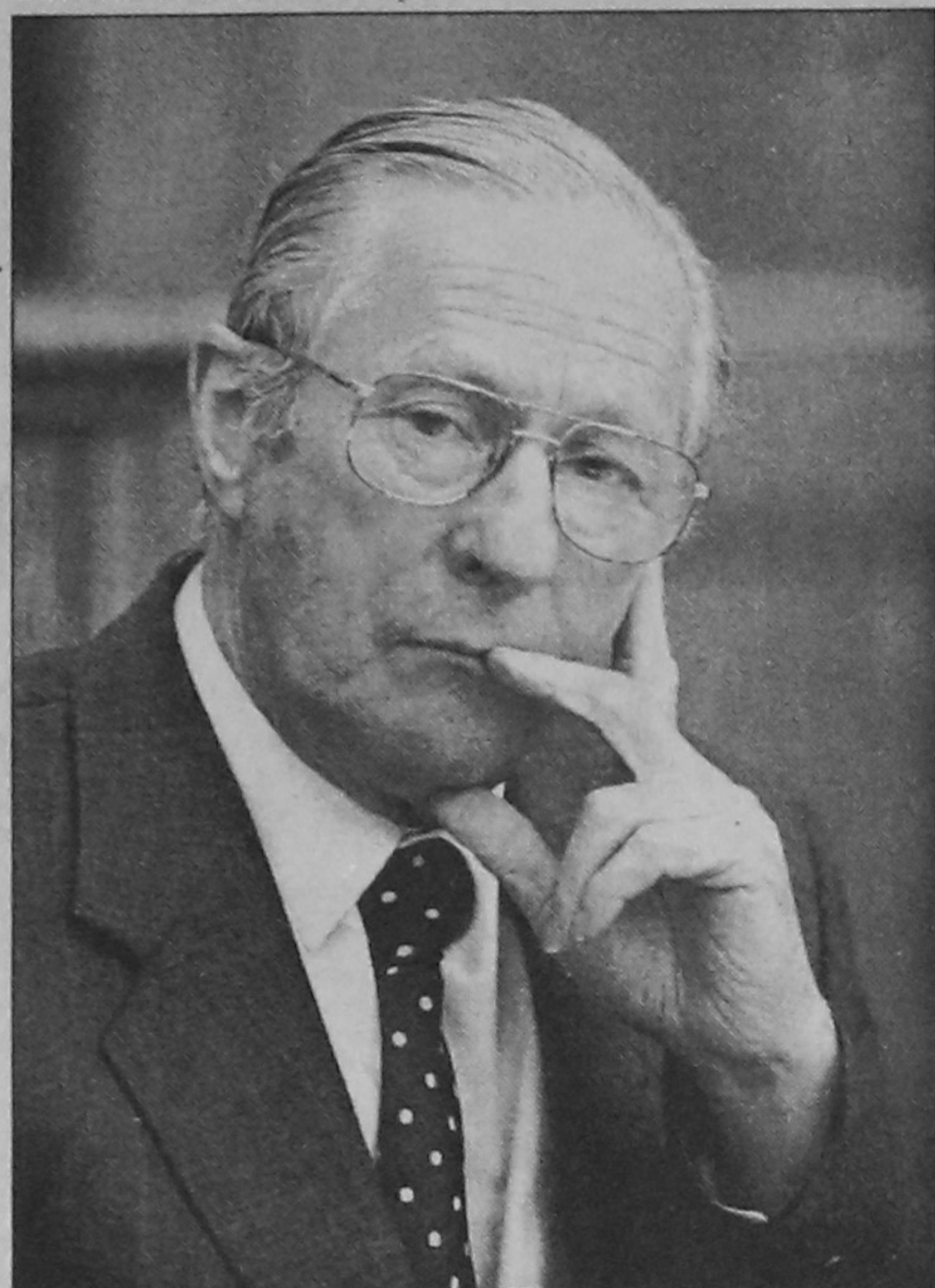
the King Commission.

Cronje senior was quoted as saying: "The past 12 weeks have been a very tough time for the entire Cronje family and hopefully we will emerge from it stronger people."

"Both myself and Frans (Hansie's older brother) have been present throughout Hansie's evidence. We have seen Hansie admit that he has done wrong and that he must be punished for it."

"He has also made an apology without reservation to everybody and I hope that the country and the game will accept it."

Cronje has not yet publicly commented on what he plans to do with the money he received as a result of his co-operation with bookmakers.



Judge Edwin King listens to Hamid Cassim's testimony in Cape Town yesterday. — AFP photo

## Lord's Centenary Test



LONDON, June 26 (AFP): England go into Thursday's 100th Test at Lord's, the second of their five-match series against the West Indies, in the same way they've approached so many of their matches at cricket's most famous ground - one-nil down and with big question marks against their batting.

If those were not serious enough problems in themselves, they will try to square the series without their captain Nasser Hussain. The Essex batsman fractured a thumb playing for his county and this is expected to keep him out for at least three weeks.

A rest might just be what Hussain the batsman, rather than Hussain the captain, needs right now. In 10 first-class innings this season he has scored a mere 118 runs at 11.80, a dreadful run for a man of his talent.

But if England will not miss his current batting, they might well miss his positive leadership. Former captain Alec Stewart, temporarily back in charge, is an admirable senior pro but does not seem to have the same 'nous' as Hussain.

Still, even as brilliant a tactician as Mike Brearley would struggle to do much in the field after batting as poor as England in the first Test at Edgbaston.

England were bowled out for 179 and 125 on their way to an innings and 93 run defeat but all of the batsmen have surprisingly escaped the axe. York-

shire's Michael Vaughan coming in for the injured Hussain.

David Graveney, the chairman of selectors, said now was no time for 'panic measures'.

Well consistency from the England selectors is about as common as sportsmanship from Mike Tyson. But the question remains: can England bat successfully against Curtly Ambrose and Courtney Walsh?

In fairness, the pitch at Lord's should be truer than the one at Edgbaston. Facing the tourists' senior bowlers on a good pitch is difficult, on one that offers them assistance it is fiendish.

Even so Surrey's Graham Thorpe can consider himself unlucky not to have been recalled. The left-hander averages nearly 40 in Test cricket and England are not so blessed with talent that they can afford to keep a man of his quality on the sidelines for long.

Yorkshire paceman Matthew Hoggard is called up into the squad for the first time and Derbyshire captain Dominic Cork is recalled. Hoggard is a lively customer who can swing the ball at pace. He has taken 20 first-class wickets at 24.60 so far this season.

To pick the 23-year-old Hoggard for the final XI would be a bold and enterprising move. For that reason alone it is unlikely England have a peculiarly frustrating habit of picking young players in their squad "to gain experience," and then not playing them. But the only worthwhile experience comes by being on the field not carrying the drinks.

Cork, 28, made his Test debut against the West Indies at Lord's in 1995 and took seven for 43 with his right-arm seamers - a record innings return by an England cricketer in his first Test.

The breakdown of his marriage allied to a loss of form have seen Cork fade from the England scene. This summer he has scored just 97 first-class runs and taken 13 wickets.

England fans must hope Ian Botham's favourite saying is true of his fellow 'all-rounder': "class is permanent, form is temporary."

Craig White, the other bowler-batsman in the squad could play if Andrew Flintoff is not fully fit.

But all the bowlers will need to follow Walsh and Ambrose's example and bowl a more probing length. The West Indies top-order is still vulnerable but only if the ball is in the right areas.

The tourists warm-up games have seen reserve batsmen and bowlers both doing well. The only concern was an injury scare involving opening bat Chris Gayle, who has a history of heart trouble.

Captain Jimmy Adams and Shivnarine Chanderpaul showed plenty of their famed resilience at Edgbaston. Fellow left-hander Brian Lara revealed some of his class with a beautiful fifty. Together the three formed a strong core in the middle of the order which England must penetrate if they are to win.

But first England's batsmen need to show there's more to their innings than Mike Atherton.

## 'SuperPippo' in focus



BRUSSELS, June 26 (AFP): Love him or loathe him, Filippo Inzaghi is the key figure in an Italian attack which has taken Dino Zoff's men all the way to a place in the semi-finals at Euro 2000.

The tournament has probably seen the best and the worst of Juventus' lanky centre-forward, who was widely accused of diving when he earned - and then converted - the penalty winner against Turkey.

Inzaghi has a reputation in the Serie A as being tumble-prone and even he admitted after the Turkey match: "It was the kind of penalty that a referee could have given - but might not have done."

However, Inzaghi's other speciality is the predator's sense of being in the right place at the right time, and it is no coincidence that he is a self-confessed admirer of Gary Lineker.

The man from Piacenza, dubbed 'SuperPippo' by his fans, has poached an average of 25 goals in each of his three seasons for Juventus between

league and Cup duty, and was the Serie A's top scorer in 1996-97 for lowly Atalanta.

Curiously, for one of the most prolific strikers in the world's toughest league, Inzaghi can't shoot the ball from any distance, he can't dribble and his heading ability could be generously described as limited.

However, he can do two things better than anyone else in Italian football - the blind side run to the edge of the six-yard box, where he scores most of his goals, and jumping the off-side trap by one centimetre.

Inzaghi offered a rare insight into his game as he prepared for Juventus' Champions League semi-final first leg against Manchester United in 1999.

Asked about his fondness for living on the water-thin line between on- and off-side, he said, "It's true, my presence keeps the linesmen extremely busy for the whole 90 minutes. But that's the way I play."

"I'm always at the very edge of the off-side line waiting for a defender to make a mistake, to lose me for a split-second or to stay one step behind his teammates and keep me on-side."

"For me, the important thing is not to get demoralised," he said. "I might be caught off-side 10 times in a match. But in the end, something almost always goes my way. The thing is to wait for it and believe it will

happen."

That belief is also shared here by Zoff, who has stuck by his number 9 despite a mixed time at Euro 2000.

Inzaghi could easily have scored a hat-trick in open play against Turkey but fluffed every chance that came his way.

It was little different in the 2-0 over Belgium with the 26-year-old missing two clear chances - offset though by working the one-two which enabled Stefano Fiore to hammer Italy's second past Filip De Wilde.

Zoff stuck by his man and although the Italy coach never discusses team tactics, he has evidently told Inzaghi to keep just on-side and instructed the midfielders to keep trying the long ball forward for him.

AC Milan's Demetrio Albertini managed it three times against Romania, with an encouraging result - one goal, one shot deflected onto the post by the goalkeeper and one shot rifled narrowly wide.

Inzaghi's public image certainly needed a lift.

Just four months earlier, he was castigated in the national press for having selfishly converted scoring chances that he could have passed onto struggling teammate Alessandro Del Piero, who hadn't scored in open play since October 1998.

## Hamid denies helping Sanjay

CAPE TOWN, June 26: Hamid "Banjo" Cassim, the sweet shop owner who introduced Hansie Cronje to London-based bookmaker Sanjay "Saujya" Chawla, denied Monday he had helped Chawla to bribe the disgraced captain, reports AFP.

Cassim told the King Commission of inquiry Monday that "no alarm bells" were set off when he saw Chawla hand Cronje an envelope containing money when he first put the two men together in a hotel room in Durban in February.

He also said he had given Chawla no further help - but admitted he had received numerous calls from Chawla, who wanted to make contact with Cronje during South Africa's tour of India in February and March.

Sometimes Chawla would call Cassim in South Africa despite staying in the same hotel as Cronje in India.

According to a document handed in by state prosecutor Shamila Batohi, Cassim's mobile telephone statement reveals 180 calls to Cronje, 146 during the triangular series between South Africa, England and Zimbabwe in January and February.

He also made 33 calls to South African batsman Daryll Cullinan, 30 to spin bowler Paul Adams, 28 to all-rounder Lance Klusener and several to various other players.

Many of the calls were not returned, although Cronje phoned Cassim 11 times. Chawla phoned Cassim 29 times.

Cassim became known as the "billion man" because of his habit of handing players gifts of the dried meat delicacy in return for tickets.

He also revealed he had provided electronic goods to players at near cost price and had negotiated appearances of various South African cricketers in benefit games in India.

Cassim said he met Chawla after receiving a phone call from him saying he was about to visit South Africa. Chawla had heard that Cassim had extensive contacts with South African and Indian players.

When he introduced Cronje to Chawla in the latter's hotel room in Durban in February, he saw Chawla hand Cronje an envelope which he took from his room safe.

Cronje earlier admitted he had received a mobile phone box full of American dollars at the meeting.

Cassim said he was "very surprised" when he saw Cronje accept the envelope which followed a conversation about "scores, match forecasting and team selection."

The Johannesburg-based shop owner said his relationship with cricketers started when he befriended former Indian captain Kapil Dev during India's 1992/93 tour of South Africa.

Cassim told of introducing Indian film star Rino Desai to Cronje and other players.

The lunch adjournment was taken few minutes early when proceedings were interrupted by chanting from the street outside. A group of university rugby players from Johannesburg were chanting they wanted the "naked truth" and pulled down their shorts in front of television cameras.

RESULTS AT A GLANCE

LONDON, June 26 (AFP): Results of the first day of Wimbledon here Monday (x denotes seeding).

## WOMEN'S SINGLES

First round

Martina Hingis (Swi x1) bt Angeles Montolio (Spa) 6-1, 6-2

Tina Piskis (Slo) bt Hanna Collin (Gbr) 6-1, 7-5

Cristina Torrens-Valero (Spa) bt Seda Noorlander (Ned) 0-6, 6-4, 8-6

Magdalena Grzybowska (Pol) bt Amanda Hopmans (Ned) 7-6 (10/8), 6-2

Katalin Marosi-Aracama (Hun) bt Alina Jidkova (Rus) 3-6, 6-1, 6-2

Anna Smashnova (Ukr) bt Petra Mandula (Hun) 6-2, 7-6 (7/4)

Tamarine Tanasugarn (Tha) bt Rossana De Los Rios (Par) 7-5, 6-2

Anke Huber (Ger x11) bt Jo Ward (Gbr) 7-5, 6-2

Serena Williams (USA x8) bt Asa Carlsson (Swe) 6-3, 6-2

Yvette Basting (Ned) bt Adriana Gersl (Cze) 6-1, 6-4

Ai Sugiyama (Jpn) bt Yuka Yoshida (Jpn) 6-1, 6-3

## MEN'S SINGLES

First round

Vladimir Volchekov (Blr) bt Juan Ignacio Chela (Arg) 6-7, 6-3, 6-3, 6-0

Daniel Nestor (Can) bt Miles MacLagan (Gbr) 4-6, 7-6, 6-2, 6-4

Richard Krajicek (Ned x11) bt Michael Kohlmann (Ger) 3-6, 6-1, 6-4, 7-6 (7/3)

Cedric Pioline (Fra x6) bt Christian Rudel (Nor) 7-6 (7/4), 6-1, 4-6, 6-3

Gianluca Pozzi (Ita) bt Jiri Novak (Cze) 6-3, 6-4, 3-6, 6-1

Andrej Pavel (Rom) bt Alberto Berasategui (Spa) 6-0, 6-4, 6-2

## B'baria cricket

From Our Correspondent

BRAHMANBARIA, June 26: Provti Cricket Club defeated Ekota Cricket Club by 30 runs in the Shaheed Freedom Fighter Rangu Mia Cricket Cup at Shaheed Rangu Junior High School playground today.

Winning the toss, Provti batted first and collected 160 runs for 8 wickets in the stipulated 40 overs.

Ripon was the top scorer with 60 runs.

## Martina, Serena sail



LONDON, June 26: Top seed Martina Hingis of Switzerland and US eighth seed Serena Williams both breezed into the second round of the women's singles at Wimbledon on Monday with routine opening wins, reports AFP.

Hingis, looking to land her second singles crown here at the All England Club after 1997, raced past 42nd-ranked Angeles Montolio of Spain to ensure there was no repeat of last year's nightmare when she crashed out at the first hurdle to Aussie teen Jelena Dokic.

Montolio, outclassed for most of the 53min encounter, rallied strongly at the death as the 24-year-old saved seven match points but could only

All England Club having missed last year's event with injury.

But she was much too powerful for Carlsson, brilliant use of topspin bamboozling her opponent, the 18-year-old American finishing off her win with an ace to gain a standing ovation.

Williams took her head to head record against Carlsson to 3-0.

"I love the place - my game is suited to the grass and I'm really ready," said Williams afterwards.

Williams took time out to say she could not understand the blithering in women's tennis which has seen Russian golden girl Anna Kournikova come under fire from some fellow players for capturing a disproportionate number of headlines when she has yet to win a single

Britain's Julie Pullin while German 11th seed Anke Huber ended the hopes of another home hope, Jo Ward, winning 7-5, 6-2.

Tina Piskis of Slovenia made it a miserable day for British women by beating Hannah Collin 6-1, 7-5.

Zvereva, who reached the last four two years ago and who is playing here for the 14th straight year, looked sluggish early on and the 29-year-old was 4-2 down in the opening set before coming to terms with the dull, slightly breezy conditions on court five.

At Sugiyama won an all-Japanese tussle against qualifier Yuka Yoshida 6-1, 6-3.

"It was kind of a difficult match for me. We've known each other for 18 years," said Sugiyama. "I just tried to focus on my tennis on my side of the net. I'm very happy with the way I played. I had a good balance between offence and defence."

## Pete starts in style

LONDON, June 26: Defending champion and six-time winner Pete Sampras of the United States raced into the second round of the men's singles at Wimbledon here Monday, hammering Jiri Vanek of the Czech Republic 6-4, 6-4, 6-2 in 1hr 23min, reports AFP.

Other early winners in the women's event were Thailand's Tamarine Tanasugarn, who ousted Paraguay's Rossana De Los Rios 7-5, 6-2, while qualifier Yvette Basting of the Netherlands saw off Adriana Gersl of the Czech Republic 6-1, 6-4.

Anna Smashnova of Israel defeated Hungarian Petra Mandula 6-2, 7-6, while another Hungarian, Katlin Marosi-Aracama, recovered to beat Russian Alina Jidkova 3-6, 6-1, 6-2.

Cristina Torrens-Valero of Spain saw off Dutch opponent Seda Noorlander 0-6, 6-4, 8-6.

In early men's action, 1996 winner and 11th seed Richard Krajicek of the Netherlands ousted Spaniard Albert Costa of Spain 3-6, 6-1, 6-4, 7-6 while Romania's Andrei Pavel thrashed Alberto Berasategui of Spain 6-0, 6-4, 6-2.

Gianluca Pozzi of Italy, buoyed coming into the event with a semi-final at Queen's, beat Jiri Novak of the Czech Republic 6-3, 6-4, 3-6, 6-1 while Canada's Daniel Nestor bundled out Miles MacLagan of Britain 4-6, 7-6, 6-2, 6-4.

Germany's Anke Huber makes a backhand return against Jo Ward of England in the first round of Wimbledon yesterday. — AFP photo

delay the inevitable as the Swiss miss finally advanced 6-1, 6-2.

Williams had earlier beaten Sweden's Asa Carlsson 6-3, 6-2.

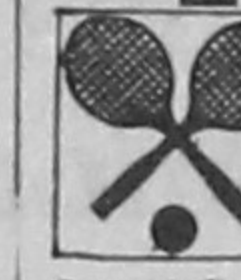
Williams, US Open champion last year, is making only her second appearance at the

tournament.

"I don't see any problem with what she's doing - she's just being herself," said Williams.

Former semi-finalist Natasha Zvereva of Belarus also moved into the second round after a 6-4, 6-3 win over

## Spanish boycott regretted



LONDON, June 26: Wimbledon organisers on Monday regretted the withdrawal of Spanish pair Alex Corretja and Albert Costa, who pulled out of the men's singles late Sunday after they were not named as seeds, reports AFP.

Corretja and Costa had earlier called a press conference with ATP Tour Chief Executive Officer Mark Miles and Chairman of the All England Club Tim Phillips where they said they were likely to pull out and later carried out that threat.

Another Spaniard, French Open semifinalist Juan Carlos Ferrero, had pulled out of the tournament Saturday after citing a back injury but he also had already threatened to withdraw over the seeding row.

The Spanish trio wrote to the ATP Tour complaining at not being seeded, despite all being ranked in the world's top 16.

The All England Club, however, defended the only seedings system that does not follow the ATP Entry System, insisting players' grass tournament records should be taken into consideration.

From the point of view of tennis fans and the Championships are naturally disappointed that, despite the joint endeavours of ourselves and the ATP Tour, Alex Corretja and Albert Costa have chosen not to play in this year's event," said Tim Phillips, chairman of the

All England Club.

"We were unwilling to revise the seedings and the draw as requested but both organisations (the All England Club and the ATP Tour) have agreed to work together over the next 12 months to determine a seeding system that addresses player prowess on different types of surface," Phillips added.

Both players receive zero points for not playing the event, one of 13 compulsory events on the Tour. However, they were not fined.

Their places in the draw are taken by lucky losers Werner Eschauer of Austria, who replaces Costa, and Germany's Michael Kohlmann, who comes in for Costa.

Corretja, like Costa currently in the top 16 players in the world, had spoken Sunday of his sadness at the controversy but stated: "We believe if the ATP is forcing us to play those tournaments they should respect the rankings."

He argued that if the rankings are not taken into consideration a top player on surfaces other than grass could find himself drawn in the early rounds against the top players whom they would only meet in the later stages of the tournament if seeded according to their ranking.

"I am not against Wimbledon - but we believe it's not fair to play tournaments where they don't respect the ranking," Corretja explained.