

Surrey atop county table

LONDON, July 11: A century from Australian star Darren Lehmann could not prevent Yorkshire from slipping off the top of Division One of the County Championship Monday as their game against Durham drifted to a draw at Headingley, reports AFP.

Yorkshire are now five points behind new leaders Surrey after their innings victory over Leicester at the weekend. But Yorkshire skipper David Byas at least found some comfort after centuries from Michael Vaughan and Lehmann.

Byas' men recovered their form with the bat after their dismal performance on the second day which had forced them to follow on.

They survived the last one and a half days with ease and closed on 386 for four. Vaughan hit a classy 118 made from 306 balls in nearly 400 minutes in which he hit 10 boundaries.

Lehmann reached his half-century off 58 balls despite a back injury which forced him to use Richard Blakey as a runner after lunch.

And the Australian cruised to his century, his first in the championship at Headingley in his third year with Yorkshire, off 120 balls, on his way to 136.

Elsewhere in Division One, no play was possible at Derby where Derbyshire (10pts) drew with third-placed Lancashire (7pts) or at Taunton where Somerset (11pts) drew with Hampshire (7pts).

In Division Two, Middlesex were denied a precious second County Championship victory as the rain poured down on their temporary Southgate home.

With the one-day triangular series occupying their usual Lord's venue, Middlesex captain, Australia Test batsman Justin Langer's side were clearly hoping that a change of venue would bring more luck.

Worcestershire were sitting second in Division Two and a win would have meant crucial points for the hosts as they would have closed that gap. Over the first three days it looked to be the case as they scored the second highest championship score of the season and then forced Worcestershire to follow on.

They began the final day in superb fashion, reducing the opposition to 66 for five by lunch, with the spin trio of Phil Tufnell, Keith Duteh and Paul Weekes looking dangerous.

But the heavens darkened and, although they managed a brief six-over spell afterwards, a torrential downpour ensued. And at 3.30pm, skipper Langer took three steps onto the outfield before declaring the game a draw, with Middlesex walking away with 10 points and Worcestershire seven.

No play was possible in the day's other Second Division games, Nottinghamshire (6pts) drawing with Essex (10pts) at Trent Bridge and Warwickshire (9pts) sharing the points with Sussex (7pts) at Edgbaston.

Hamlet Cup expands

COMMACK, July 11: The Hamlet Cup, the final ATP stop before the US Open, announced that it will increase its field from 32 to 48 beginning with this year's event, reports AP. The 20th Hamlet Cup, to be held from Aug 19-27, was expanded after the ATP announced that the Boston event would not be held this year.

Iraqis qualify

From page 13 Chowdhury rose to the occasion, thwarting number of Iraqi attempts with great aplomb. It was a free-kick in the 70th minute from which Iraq finally levelled the score. Substitute Ahmad Abbas headed an Emad Ridha free-kick into the far corner of the net.

After conceding the goal, Bangladesh went all out and earned two good chances. But it was Iraqi custodian Jaber who kept Bangladesh at bay.

Yellow cards: Tanveer, Asad, Bulbul (Bangladesh), Ahmed Alwan, Sameeh Amir (Iraq).

TEAMS

Bangladesh: Titumeer, Aminur Rahman, Rezaul Karim Biplab, Mahmudul Hasan, Tito, Monwar, Tanveer, Asad (Nurul Islam), Rahel, Bulbul (Anwar Faisal) and Kanchan.

Iraq: Jabar, Ridha (Shawnoun), Sameeh Amir, Basim Kati, Ahmad Adwan (Ahmed Alwan), Abdul Jahra, Jassim Kalim, Khudair, Ibrahim and Mohamed Shiltag. Referee: Ekachai T (Thailand).

Man-of-the-match: Titumeer Chowdhury (Bangladesh)

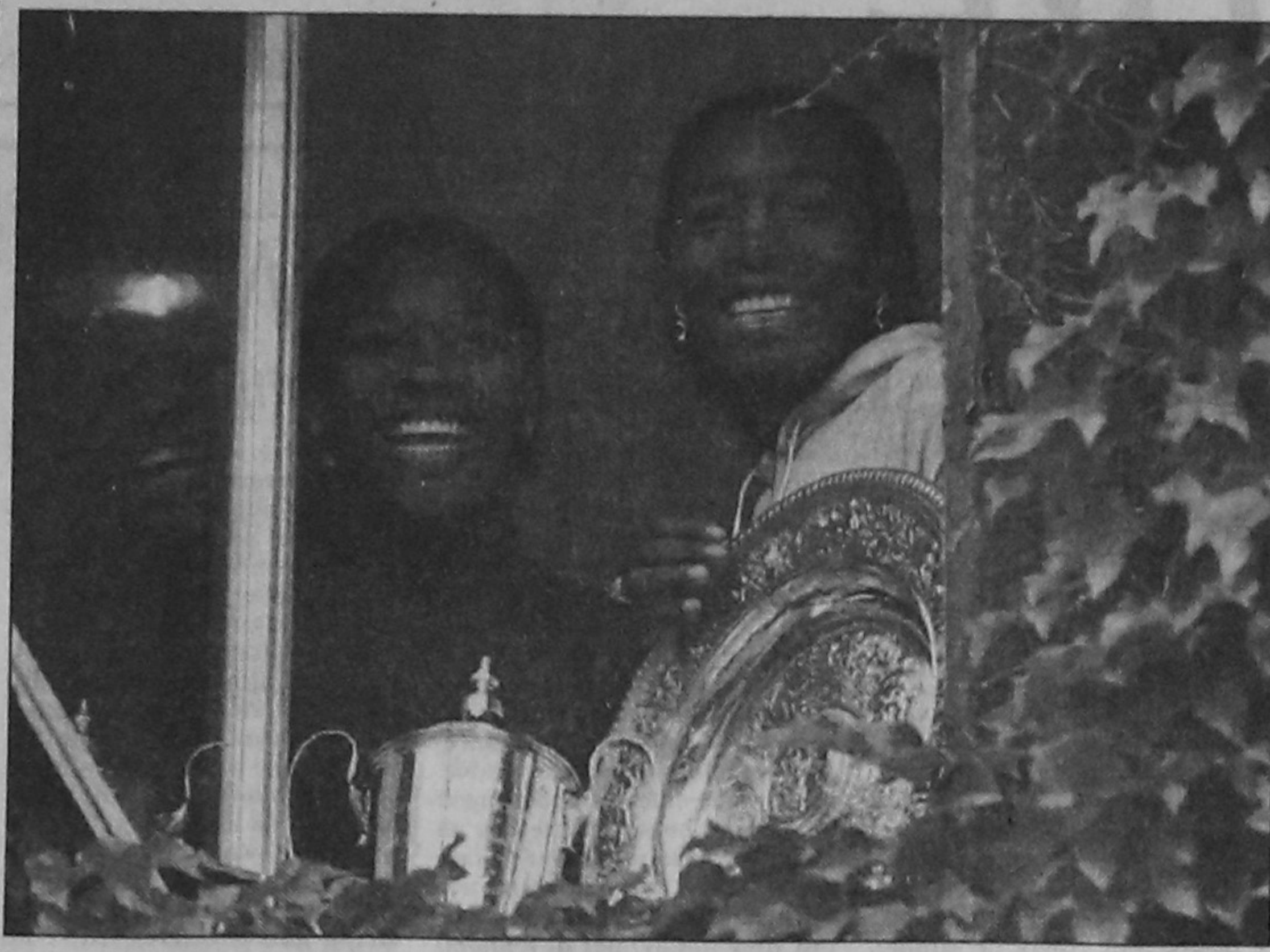
Zimbabwe pile

From page 13 Campbell not out 77
G. Flower c Campbell b Rose 6
A. Flower not out 7
Extras: (b-2, lb-7, w-7) 16
Total: (For 4 wks in 50 overs) 256
Fall of wickets: 1-89, 2-118, 3-214, 4-229

Did not bat: Stuart Carlisle, Dirk Viljoen, Heath Street, Paul Strang, Bryan Strang

Bowler O M R W
McLean 8 0 46 0
Collymore 7 0 40 0
Dillon 10 1 44 0
Rose 10 0 47 2
Gayle 10 0 42 1
Adams 5 0 28 0

WEST INDIES: Sherwin Campbell, Chris Gayle, Wavell Hinds, Brian Lara, Ricardo Powell, Jimmy Adams, Ridley Jacobs, Franklin Rose, Nixon McLean, Mervyn Dillon, Corey Collymore.



SMILING SISTERS: Venus Williams (R), the newly-crowned Wimbledon queen, and younger sister Serena, with whom the former won the doubles' title, look through a window at the All England Club with their trophies on July 10. —AFP photo

Her name is Venus

LONDON, July 11 (AFP): It was powerful rather than quintessentially feminine, but it was thoroughly deserved -- and it was also historic.

Venus Williams wrote her name large into the history of women's tennis by capturing the Wimbledon singles crown and, for all her occasional lack of orthodoxy, nobody can deny the magnitude of her feat.

Beating outgoing champion and fellow six-footer Lindsay Davenport allowed the 20-year-old to join the ranks of the greats and also completed a long and mazy road from the Compton ghetto of Los Angeles to the winner's parade on the carefully-manicured lawns of the All-England Club.

Watching Venus jump for joy and then bound into the relatives' box was one of the defining moments of the event's 114-year history as Venus became only the second black woman to lift the famous plate, Althea Gibson having won in 1957 and 1958.

Venus then pulled off a superb win in the doubles on Monday alongside 18-year-old sister Serena, who could have worn the singles crown herself had her sibling not beaten her in an historic semifinal.

"I love winning Wimbledon, I love playing tennis, I love winning titles," gushed Venus afterwards as she captured her first Grand Slam and 10th singles crown in all.

"I always expected to win Grand Slams. This was meant to be. I worked real hard all my life. I had a lot of sacrifices."

Until that second Thursday many observers believed it was the younger sister whose name was 'on the trophy' as Serena trampled her first five opponents for the loss of just 13 games.

But fate would take a hand as

Venus stood foursquare in her way and won their duel in straight sets for the right to meet Davenport.

There were those who smelt a rat as Serena had already won the US Open last year and it seemed time for the older sister to take her turn in the winner's enclosure.

Both hammered the living daylight out of the ball, however, when they met up after Venus had first put paid to world number one Martina Hingis in the quarters.

If they were playacting -- and Serena was in tears at the end -- they both deserve an Oscar, never mind a Grand Slam.

The pair's father Richard, who could not bear to watch their semi, had prophesied when the pair turned professional -- Venus in 1994 and Serena three years later -- that they would gravitate right to the top.

He also said presciently before the final: "It's Venus' party and Lindsay isn't invited."

Mr Williams missed the second party for the 6-3, 6-2 doubles romp over Japan's Ai Sugiyama and Julie Halard-Decugis of France which drew a capacity crowd to Centre Court.

Had that been a birthday party both sisters' powerful strokes would have blown all the candles out on the cake.

Venus beat Hingis, Serena and the defending champion in quick succession in only her fourth tournament back after six months plagued by tendinitis in both wrists to take the aptly named Venus Rosewater dish and take on the mantle of stardom.

The 2000 women's singles certainly needed some new heroes, because it felt as if there was a hole in London SW19 where Steffi Graf used to be.

The German legend, who retired shortly after losing in last year's final, was around -- but only in a spectator capacity as

she watched boyfriend Andre Agassi exit to Pat Rafter in the men's semis.

Nine-time singles winner Martina Navratilova filled some of the gap as she played with gusto and "had a blast" on the way to the women's doubles quarterfinals before she and partner Mariaan de Swardt ran into two muscular black US teens glad to be on the same side of the net for once.

Venus, who as a child was taken to see Chris Evert's trophy replicas, had said she wanted to win Wimbledon "even if I have to beat Pete Sampras" along the way -- and even Pistol Pete doesn't hit the ball much harder.

It was Serena she didn't want to have to put to the sword. But having done so she announced: "It's great -- because now we have two singles Slams in our family."

Venus added she hoped she had managed to strike a blow against racism which remains in her view all too visible.

Asked about Gibson's success she said: "It had to be hard because people were unable to see past colour. How can you change centuries of being biased in 40 years? Not too much has changed," she asserted.

Davenport, suffering from back and thigh problems all the way through, was left to ponder her loss.

"I surprised myself getting to the final. I didn't play all that well and I never felt 100 per cent -- I needed to be at a much higher level to win."

Hingis, with five Slam titles in her curriculum at age 19, has not won one since January, 1998, at the Australian Open.

"I guess as number one, you're supposed to win a Grand Slam," she said after her three-set loss to Venus.

"It's changed a lot since the Williams sisters started playing better."

Bad news for WI

CANTERBURY, England, July 11: Batsman Shivnarine Chanderepaul and fast bowler Courtney Walsh are likely to take no further part in the rest of the NatWest triangular series due to injuries, reports AP.

Chanderepaul, troubled by a strained ligament in his right arm -- tennis elbow -- after the first Test at Edgbaston will not be risked while Walsh, with a bruised right instep, is awaiting a specialist's report.

According to tourists' sports therapist Ronald Rogers both players will miss games against England at Durham on July 15 and at Trent Bridge on July 20.

"We will give them as much time as possible to recover," Rogers said during the one-day game against Zimbabwe on Tuesday. "The Test matches are important and hopefully they'll be ready for it."

West Indies resume the Test series against England with the third Test at Old Trafford on August 3. The five-match series is tied at one game all after the games at Edgbaston and Lord's.

Chanderepaul is the West Indies' most influential batsman after Brian Lara and Walsh has been the spearhead of the pace attack with a world record 467 wickets in 119 Tests. In the first two Tests Walsh has taken 18 wickets at an average of 9.72.

Walsh, often troubled by flat-feet, faces the possibility of a MRI scan to determine the extent of the injury. He has been prescribed special insoles to correct this problem but, according to Rogers, has been neglecting it.

Both players have been absent from three West Indies games so far.

Also nursing injuries are fast bowler Reon King and batsman Richardson Powell.

King, who played in the tournament opener against Zimbabwe at Bristol last week, is troubled by back spasms while Powell was included to play against Zimbabwe despite developing a back and hip strain during training the day before.

Tour manager Ricky Skerritt refused to elaborate on the injuries but said: "We'll wait and see. There is no need to panic at this stage."

Howard doesn't believe it

NEW DELHI, July 11: Australian Prime Minister John Howard said Tuesday that he could not believe that Sydney pace bowler Brett Lee would be found guilty of chucking, reports AP.

"It's a fantastic bowler. I can't believe it," Howard said in response to a reporter's question during his two-day state visit to India.

"He looks like a beautiful bowler to me," Howard said at the end of a speech to Indian business leaders, which was filled with references to the passion the two Asian nations share over the game of cricket.

Lee has been reported to the International Cricket Council for having a suspect bowling action.

When Howard was asked separately about the international match-fixing scandal that has sullied the game of cricket, he replied, "It's very sad."

From one great to another

WIMBLEDON, July 11 (AP): Roy Emerson hailed Pete Sampras as the greatest player in history after his record-breaking 13th Grand Slam title at Wimbledon.

The Australian, who had held the record since 1967, said he couldn't think of anyone he would rather see succeed him as king of the slams.

"Sampras is the greatest of all time, and I have to give him a pat on the back for getting there, because the tournaments are a little deeper these days," Emerson said Monday.

Emerson, who said he planned to call Sampras to congratulate him, missed the final because he was traveling from Switzerland to London on Sunday. He listened to parts of it on radio.

"Pete deserves it, he's been a terrific champion," Emerson said. "I can't think of anyone I would rather see break the record."

But he couldn't help but feel some loss over the record. "You'd love a record to last forever," he said. "This one has lasted a long time."

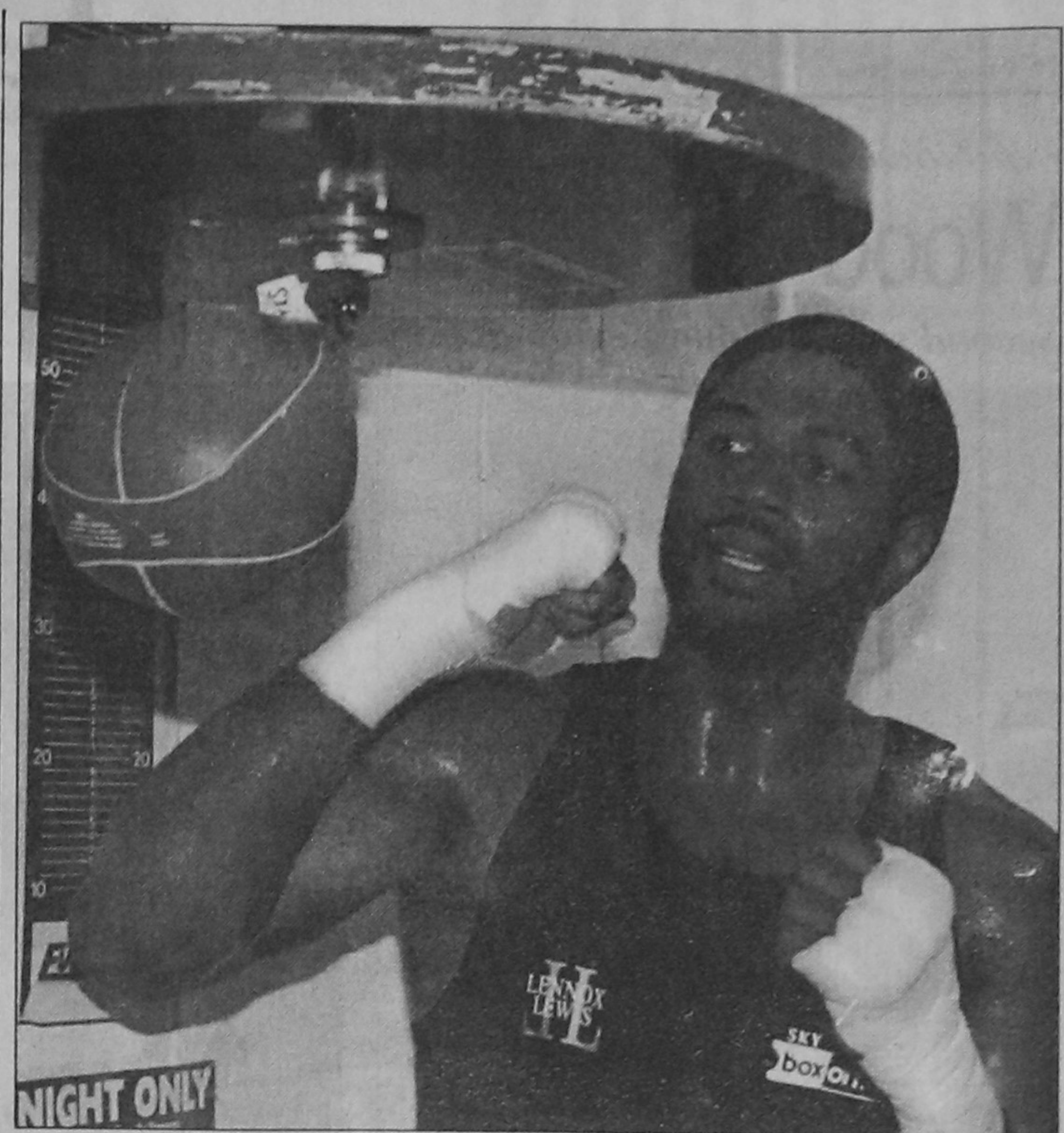
Emerson's 12 titles were earned through six Australian championships, and two each at Wimbledon, the French and the US national before the open era allowed professionals to play the majors. In those years, all the majors except the French were played on grass.

Sampras, who beat Australia's Patrick Rafter in four sets in Sunday's final, has won seven Wimbledon, four US Opens and two Australian Opens over much more competitive fields. The US and Australian titles these days are played on hardcourts.

If Sampras had played in Emerson's time, the Australian thinks the American would have been just as dominant.

"He would have been awfully difficult," Emerson said. "Particularly on grass, where the serve is so dominant."

"I don't think anyone will ever be as dominant as he has been over the past seven to eight years."



British heavyweight boxer Lennox Lewis trains at his base in London on July 10. —AFP photo

Lennox has one last wish

LONDON, July 11: World champion Lennox Lewis, preparing for a British farewell fight, turned his thoughts to retirement and Mike Tyson yesterday, reports Reuters.

The heavyweight, speaking at his own gym in east London, said he had thought about running some boxing schools when he found the time and acting as a consultant with pupils from across Britain and Europe.

"I can teach them a lot," said Lewis, who meets South African Frans Botha in a World Boxing Council (WBC) and International Boxing Federation (IBF) title defence at the London Arena on Saturday night.

The 34-year-old Lewis said the fight -- his first in the country -- his first in six years and billed as "the Homecoming" would probably be his last appearance in a British ring.

"I was just thinking of that in the dressing-room," he said after what was originally intended to be a sparring session turned into a light workout when no suitable heavyweight opponents could be persuaded to turn out. "I would say this is my last fight in England."

Promoter Panos Eliades, perhaps with his thoughts focused on ticket sales for the bout, was more certain.

"It is definitely Lennox's last fight in England. This one is the

last time people are going to see Lennox.

"He's going to be retiring soon. He's not going to be around much longer," Eliades said Lewis, who looked a little trimmer than usual in training, would probably have a maximum of four more fights before ending his career.

"He's not going to do a (Evander) Holyfield. He's not going to carry on forever," he said.

"We're running out of opponents. The problem is, there's not enough good opponents out there to keep him tested and he gets a bit complacent and a bit bored."

Before that final bout, whenever it happens, Lewis was determined to "throw down the gauntlet" to Tyson.

The snarling and controversial former champion who has fought twice in Britain this year already, would be a useful antidote to the boredom factor and Lewis made clear that he wanted to "get it together" with the American.

But, given Tyson's reputation for foul play, he was less sure whether -- if the fight could be staged given the contractual obstacles -- it would be a wise move.

He suggested they might need to employ two referees in the ring to keep an eye on Tyson.

"All people care about right now is Mike Tyson, that's what

they ask me about. Even in this fight with Frans Botha, I've had the most questions about Mike Tyson, Mike Tyson."

"After this fight I'm laying down the gauntlet... he's been talking all that crazy s---, let's get it together in the ring."

Lewis said Tyson was ready and had no excuses.

"He's had five fights since he came out of incarceration. He might as well fight me now," he declared.

The Briton added defiantly that Tyson, who recently declared that he was a far bigger television attraction than the Briton "who could not draw flies", could not "punch me out because I ain't no punk."

Despite being stripped of his World Boxing Association (WBA) title last April in a dispute over a mandatory challenge, Lewis insisted that he remained the people's true champion. "I am the undisputed heavyweight champion of the world, who's Tyson?"

Lewis also mocked Tyson's recent much-criticised 38-second appearance in Glasgow last month against American Lou Savarese, saying he would not have allowed the fight to happen.

"They should never have let Lou Savarese ever come out of retirement, after getting married, to fight Tyson," he said.

"It was Lou Savarese, that's who it was."

Learn from the seniors

LONDON, July 11: Flotting England star Andrew Flintoff has Monday been told to buck up his ideas and some of his senior teammates, reports AP.

Flintoff has been sidelined while England physiotherapist Dean Conway consults specialists on his recurring back problems following his late withdrawal from England's washed out NatWest triangular series match against West Indies at Lord's on Sunday.

But following an identical withdrawal from the Test side at the same venue just over a week ago it has fuelled concerns about Flintoff's lifestyle, his

weight and commitment to the England cause.

The Lancashire player has already been "reminded of his responsibilities" by coach Duncan Fletcher in the aftermath of Saturday's convincing five-wickets defeat by Zimbabwe at The Oval.

In that match he holed out to long off at a time when England desperately needed him to show discipline and guide them towards a competitive total.

And England chairman of selectors David Graveney has advised him to study the lifestyles and dedication of England's three most recent captains as an example of how to behave on and off the pitch.

"I'd suggest to any young player to look at Alec Stewart

as the consummate role model," said Graveney. The more time young players spend around him, Michael Atherton and Nasser Hussain, the more they will understand what it takes to be successful.

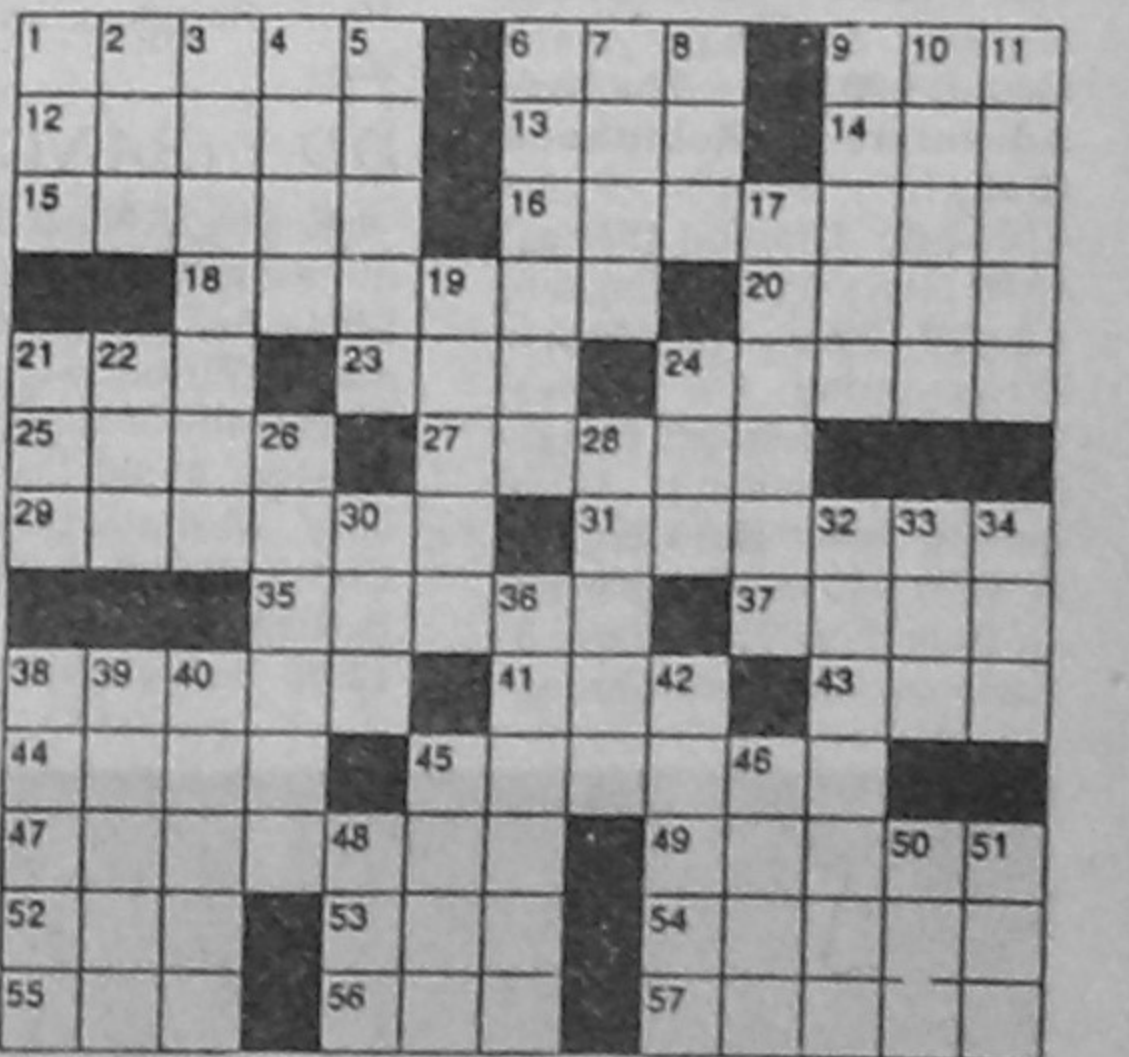
"It's one thing having ability and plenty of young players have that, it is another performing at this level and not being deflected away from what is necessary to stay on top."

"It's a general problem with England players. To stay at the top takes discipline and I don't see that in a lot of our young players."

England are not giving up on Flintoff as they try to help him fulfil his vast potential on the international stage.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

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CRYPTOQUIP

A W C A T D W C Y W B N B U A T V K J U Y J K Y I I B Y J W A Y I W N J N P D A T V P C Y A J U Yesterday's Cryptquip: AN INSURANCE AGENT'S LUNCH MIGHT OFTEN INCLUDE A BIG BOWL OF CLAIM CHOWDER. Today's Cryptquip Clue: U equals S