

ON the 7th of June 1494 Spain and Portugal signed the Treaty of Tordesillas, thereby agreeing to divide the "New World" between them. On the same day Israel occupied Jerusalem during the six-day war, Priscilla Presley opened Graceland to the public, Prince changed his name to a symbol and the Pope became ruler of a state again. That is not even the half of it, three Nobel Laureates, one Academy award winner, one future Basketball Hall of Famer and the most photographed woman in the world were all born on the 7th of June. Aside from that Jean Harlow, E.M. Forster and Henry Miller all died on the 7th. It is a day which may be remembered for a number of reasons, but I remember it simply as my birthday.

This year my birthday seemed destined to mirror last year. In the first few hours of the 7th, the West Indies tried their best to repeat their "stupendous" performance against Pakistan last year. Much to my horror and utter bewilderment they contrived to lose a game they should have won two days ago, but eventually the last two batsmen played out 19 balls to secure an embarrassing draw. My favourite team has disappointed me over and over again throughout the last decade but if they were to lose today it just would have been too much for me to take. Last year in front of all my friends both the West Indies and I were humbled on my birthday, much to the delight of my friends who all support Pakistan. I have come to the conclusion that the West Indies take great delight in building up the hopes of their fans, only to let them down when it really matters. Birthdays are a constant reminder that time and tide wait for none, and on these days what one really needs is a boost, a reminder that all is not lost. Eventually what I am usually left with is that dreadful feeling that I am a year older, and when I need it the most the West Indies feel it is their duty to compound my sense of grief by losing miserably. At least this year I was alone watching them fumble towards relief.

During this time of extreme sporting pain I have figured out something amazing, Brian Lara my hero and Demi-God has managed to score a duck on the same day one year apart. While this year's Test match against India ended in the early hours of the 7th of June Bangladesh time, it actually ended on the 6th. And precisely last year on the 6th of June Lara was caught down the leg side for a blob against Pakistan. This year he was plumb in front for a zero on the 6th of

7th June...

NADER RAHMAN



English midfielder David Beckham (L) is challenged by Paraguayan midfielder Cristian Riveros (R) during their first round Group B 2006 World Cup football match at Frankfurt's World Cup Stadium, 10 June 2006. England were leading 1-0 in the second half.

Our birthdays are feathers in the broad wing of time.

- Jean Paul Richter

June as well; it seems as if his dismissal for nought is only the starter to my birthday extravaganza. Pathetic performances, a hero in decline and calypso music that fades away reminding me that eventually I will as well, are all that I can look forward to on my special day.

Not all is lost though, even before I was born the 7th of