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Rugby Cold War hotting up

By SIMON WILLSON

THE rugby Cold War has begun and will flare into burning combat in a packed and emotion-charged Newlands stadium just seven days from now. The build-up to the 1979 Currie Cup final begins in earnest today as the selectors for the teams which will play for the trophy - Western Province and Northern Transvaal - pick the men who will wear the colours of the two provinces on the Newlands pitch next Saturday.

Simple Task

The WP selectors meet at 3 o'clock this afternoon for their comparatively simple task of choosing a full-strength Province line-up to be captained by Morne du Plessis. The WP team for the final is likely to show one change from the side which overcame Griqualand West after a hard struggle in the cup semifinal at Kimberley last Saturday. De Villiers Visser will return at lock having recovered from the rib injury which kept him out of the semifinal, and Cliff Etsebeth, who deputized at short notice for Visser in Kimberley will probably be a reserve.

Loosehead

Loosehead prop Henning van Aswegen, who received minor abrasions in a fall from a car on Thursday, is uninjured and will train with the team next week. The choice facing the Northern Transvaal selectors is not quite as straightforward. The reigning cup champions, who have won the trophy for the past two seasons have been through a hard week's practice in Pretoria in which several established players failed to perform to the expected standard.

Proven players

But the champions are likely to rely on their proven players, and are also expected to make only one change to the team which played in the semifinal against Eastern Province last Saturday. Springbok centre Christo Wagenaar will return to the side after a shoulder injury, and John Knox will make room for him by moving from centre to left wing in place of Andre Erwee. The province practices this week will all be held unannounced and in secret to minimize the exposure of potentially match-winning tactics to "spies" from the north mingling with curious spectators.

INDEX
 Weather, page 3
 Classified Index, page 12
 Look at Today, page 20
 TV programmes, page 2

Aircraft	20	Homelinder	17
Arts	6	Jackpot	23
Burger	4	Out & About	23
Business	10	Racing	21
Cinema	6	Radio	20
Comics	13	Religion	11
Court	Roll	Ships	11
20		Small	20
Crossword	8	Sport	20
Editorials	8	21, 22, 23	
Emergency	20	Women's	7
Fresh Air Fund	23	World Report	5



Simonstown Siege

Navy fires at mysterious aircraft, SADF refuses spy plane theory

Anthony Rider and Adrian van Heerden

SIMONSTOWN. - The South African Navy fired barrages into the sky and shut down the entire district around Simonstown last night in what could be described as one of the strangest incidents in the Navy's history of warfare. At around 3:15 in the morning an unidentified aircraft was spotted from the Simonstown Naval base moving from the sea in a north-westerly direction directly towards land. Attempts were made to contact the aircraft before the base and its guns went into high alert, according to a statement released by Commodore Dieter Gerhardt, commander of the base. At 3:20am the object had moved close enough and the anti-aircraft guns were brought into alignment and started to fire at the brightly-lit object. However, it continued undeterred on its course. The Navy ordered the roads in and out of Simonstown to be closed and sent alarm through the town for fear of an imminent enemy attack. Communications from the town were also shut down. The barrage lasted for twenty-five minutes until the target had moved entirely behind the mountains and visual contact was lost. No aircraft was hit during the extensive period of attack, nor was any indication of the nature of the object made. No civilians were harmed and one Navy gun-operator was mildly injured by flak shrapnel. In a press conference early this morning the South African Defense Force refused to comment on speculations that the aircraft was a Soviet spy plane or a reconnaissance mission for a military attack by that nation. When asked about the panicked reaction from the Navy regarding an apparently harmless and non-hostile aircraft they responded that the Navy had acted prudently according to regulations set forth in the Navy's operational mandate regarding unidentified and non-responsive aircraft. Further questions were asked as to the

Navy's efficacy in regards to detection as the craft was visually spotted and not picked up on radar. The SADF's response was that an investigation and detailed analysis would be made of all the data at hand, including documents and records from South Africa's radar listening post at Silvermine, and recommendations based on the findings would be passed on to President Voster. The SADF's spokesperson went on to speculate that it was most likely a weather balloon, whose highly reflective surfaces have known to interfere with radar detection in the past. Questions regarding the nature of a weather balloon that could sustain a thirty-minute barrage from anti-aircraft guns were ignored and the meeting adjourned. Locals were stunned and eye-witness accounts vary. However the general consensus seems to agree that there was one very brightly lit ovoid object which moved steadily and slowly across the sky.

"I couldn't sleep and was taking some fresh air on my back porch which overlooks the bay," said Andries Viljoen, owner of the local AP Jones clothing store. "It was a remarkably clear night and I caught sight of a bright object moving towards the land. Soon there was an enormous rumble and explosions surrounded the object, which was glowing even brighter in the spotlights. It continued to move impossibly slowly across the sky. I couldn't believe my eyes, but couldn't tear them away either. I was terrified." Another local eye-witness, Willie Coen who has been a resident of Simonstown for 67 years said, "I've never seen anything like it in all my years as a resident and enthusiastic observer of the Navy. It had an orange glow and was oval-shaped and must have been at least 30 foot across. It moved lazily across the sky and there was no sound until the anti-aircraft guns began to fire. It was too big for a weather balloon."

Mulder would testify he personally had instructed it be handled with the utmost secrecy. Mr Kriegler alleged that a key figure in this project was Mr Hurwitz, as well as Mr Abramson, both of whom he described as ideally suited for the role of collaborators for the project. It was alleged that payments had been made to Mr Hurwitz relating to this project as an anonymous collaborator. ● Testimony by Mr Fourie that R33 000 would not have been regarded as an abnormally high sum to be drawn from secret funds and that it was only when sums exceeded R100 000 at any one time that it would have been regarded as abnormally high. At the same time, he said there was no limit placed on the amounts which could be drawn from secret funds, although larger sums may require prior notice to the Secretary for Security Intelligence, who controlled the secret funds. Sandwiches were sent to the cells to Dr Rhodie for lunch who began to appear more relaxed as the day progressed, with his daughter Annemarie flashing smiles from behind him.

Rhodie: The trial begins

PRETORIA. - The trial of Dr Eschel Rhodie, who faces charges of fraud or theft relating to secret State funds, adjourned yesterday with smiles all round as the former Secretary for Information received handshakes and words of encouragement from well-wishers at Pretoria's Palace of Justice. Friends converged on Dr Rhodie voicing encouragements minutes after his senior counsel, Mr Johan Kriegler, SC, had sought adjournment on Monday morning to find what he called a "short-cut" in the trial. The adjournment came during Mr Kriegler's cross-examination of Mr Abraham "Braam" Fourie, auditor of the secret funds of the former department who conceded as possible or normal every admission sought from him by Mr Kriegler in regard to the defense of his client. Dr Rhodie is facing seven counts of fraud or theft relating to the expenditure of R83 250 of secret funds from the former Department of Information. He pleaded not guilty to all the main charges as well as alternative charges. Mr Kriegler had earlier alleged to Mr Fourie that instructions by

senior members of the department to destroy documents connected with the secret projects of the department originally came from the Prime Minister Mr B J Voster. Mr Fourie, the only State witness for the day, told the court under cross-examination that Dr Rhodie had a virtual carte blanche in dealing with the secret funds of the former department and that, in respect of payments to anonymous collaborators, it was at the discretion of the former secretary as to what proof of payment relating to sensitive projects and also as to how payments were disguised was required and kept. Mr Kriegler asked Mr Fourie about mention of a receipt that had been found in Dr Rhodie's safe after his departure. This was a receipt from Mr David Abramsom, chairman of Hortors, and his partner Mr Stuart Pegg for R30 000 which according to Mr Fourie, was not reflected in the records of payments from the secret funds. He conceded that the only conceivable alternative source was from Dr Rhodie personally. At this stage Mr Kriegler made

a suggestion that this admission dealt with charges 2, 3, 4 and 5 of the seven charges amid an objection from Mr J E Nothing, SC, the Attorney General leading the State legal team. "I will come back to that later," said Mr Kriegler, who then dealt with every point raised by Dr Rhodie in a statement made on his

were recoverable by Dr Rhodie as they had initially been paid from his own private resources. It was claimed in the statement on behalf of Dr Rhodie that he had raised and held in cash R90 670 from the sale of stamps and art works and a loan of R25 000 of Mr Abramsom. Among disclosures made in court

On page 4

- Defense: Vorster ordered info papers destroyed
- Info bribes paid without receipts
- Rhodie acted "in good faith"
- Rhodie: The indictment

behalf in terms of the provisions of the Criminal Procedures Act.

● Mention of a project named David aimed at Jews in South Africa, Israel and the United States which according to Mr Kriegler was so sensitive that the Former Minister of Information Dr Connie

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Details page 6

Bride of month

ON THE wedding page on Monday the 12 monthly winners in the Cape Times Bride of the Month contest. Readers will be asked to place the 12 brides in the order chosen by the judges. The sender of the nearest correct entry wins a cash prize of R150 and a case of sparkling wine.