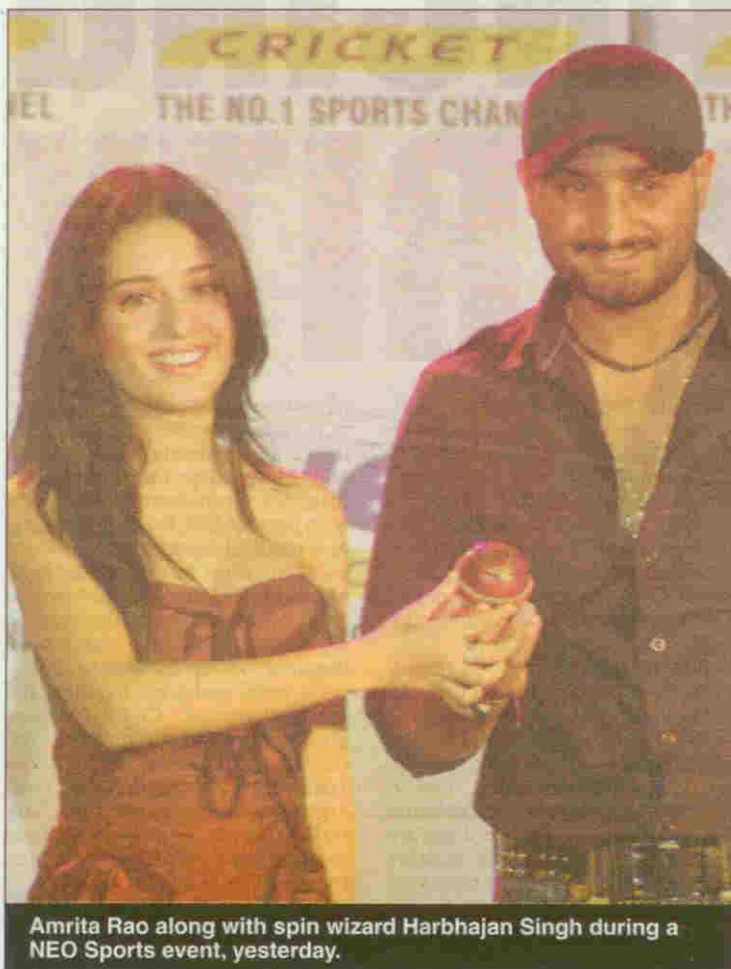


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BHAJJI wants to knock Australia off their perch



Amrita Rao along with spin wizard Harbhajan Singh during a NEO Sports event, yesterday.

BY RAHUL DIVAY

DISLIKE for another team makes sporting encounters all the more feisty and intense. As India get ready to battle the Aussies come October in seven One Day Internationals, off spinner Harbhajan Singh set the cat among the pigeons by declaring

his dislike for Ricky Ponting's men in an event yesterday to mark the beginning of the grueling six month schedule.

Harbhajan seemed quite frank about his previous wars with the men from down under, at a NEO Sports event held yesterday. "It is fun playing the Australians, I love to beat them. The competition

with them is always intense and the banter on the pitch adds that bit extra," exclaimed the 'Turbantor.'

He also stated that he enjoyed watching England beat Australia in The Ashes. He also took pride in the fact that it was the Indian team that beat the Aussies first, which led to their decline from first to the fourth spot. "The Ashes were great, England were fantastic. I am happy that England could beat the mighty Aussies; it will do wonders

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— HARBHAJAN SINGH,
OFF-SPINNER, INDIA

for their cricket. I must say that it was us who started this trend of dominating them."

According to Harbhajan, the retirement of leg spinner Shane Warne and quickie Glen McGrath was the reasons why the performance of the Australian team had declined. He stated that without the two stalwarts Australia seemed a very beatable outfit. "Since the time McGrath and Warne have hung up their boots, the Australians have been on a steady decline. Let's see now if they can get our batsmen out." Harbhajan will be seen representing the Air India outfit, in the soon to be launched BCCI Corporate Trophy. ■

SUSHIL KADAM