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Lamb sees Lillee, raises Swann

THE war of words between Australia and England is well and truly under way, with spin great **Shane Warne** buying into the debate over which country has the better bowling attack heading into the Ashes.

Dennis Lillee, who took 167 wickets in 29 Tests against England, sparked outrage by declaring Australia had the better bowling attack, and a pace attack led by **Mitchell Johnson**, **Ben Hilfenhaus** and **Doug Bollinger** was more likely to bowl out the opposition twice. "If I look at both attacks I think Australia — even without **Warne** and **[Glenn] McGrath** — have a better attack than England," Lillee said over the weekend.

"England's spinning attack — they may use spin twins **[Graeme Swann and Monty Panesar]** — may be better than ours because **Nathan Hauritz** is still evolving, but overall our attack is better and that's where games are won."

Former England captain **Allan Lamb** hit back, declaring that Lillee "must be drinking that Bundaberg rum or something" if he thought Australia had the better bowlers. "Swann will be a huge trump card," Lamb said. "He's got better figures than Warne at the same stage of their careers."

Asked about the respective strengths of the bowling attack Warne, recently returned from England, said he gave the points to Australia's bowlers.

"I think our bowlers' knowledge of home pitches have them ahead as an overall attack," Warne said. Warne did, however, say that Swann would have a major impact. "Swann is one of the best spinners playing international cricket at the moment," Warne said. "He is probably the most improved Test cricketer in the world over the past couple of years."

Warne is in Melbourne for a charity poker tournament at Crown this Sunday, held in conjunction with Australia's top-ranked player **Joe Hachem**.

The pair have called on their impressive contact books for the charity poker tournament. Confirmed players include Australian selector **Merv Hughes**, Gold Coast recruit **Gary Ablett** and Hawthorn captain **Luke Hodge**.

Other celebrity players include **Bill Brownless**, **Robert Harvey**, **Der-mott Brereton**, **Garry Lyon**, **Jason Akermanis** and **Aaron Hamill**.

The tournament will raise money for the Shane Warne Foundation. Warne says his poker game is getting better. "I am learning all the time and my game is improving," he said. "After making my first final table earlier this year, I learnt a lot and Joe keeps passing on tips that really help. I am looking forward to taking on the guys who make it through to our final table."

For entry details for the tournament, go to tswf.com.au