

Aussie quickies rock Indians

MELBOURNE, Dec 28: India appeared to be heading for defeat in the second Test against Australia after losing three wickets in a 10-ball spell during the final session of the third day on Saturday, reports Reuter.

Trailing by 86 runs on first innings, they slumped to 92 for five at the close of a day's play extended by an hour after rain interruptions.

India crumbled in the face of aggressive fast bowling by Bruce Reid, who followed his six-wicket first innings haul with three more wickets, and Craig McDermott, who picked up two scalps.

Only Sanjay Manjrekar, who made 30, showed any confidence before gloving a brutish McDermott delivery to Mark Taylor at slip.

Five balls later the same fielder caught captain Mohammad Azharuddin who set a reckless example by slashing at Reid after just four minutes at the crease.

India had competed well during the morning session after the Australians had resumed at 215 for five.

But wicketkeeper Ian Healy, who made 60, led some spirited tailend resistance which produced 87 runs for the last three wickets. Australia were eventually dismissed for 349—a lead of 86.

The responsibility of controlling the innings was thrust upon Healy by the early morning dismissal of Geoff Marsh for 86.

Marsh had added only seven to his overnight score when he fell to Kapil Dev, who went on to take five wickets in a test innings for the 22nd time.

Marsh apart, Australia's innings mirrored India's with the tail making up for and exposing the inadequate

performance of the early-order batting. Heisman Healy was well assisted by Merv Hughes whose attractive, if unorthodox, 36 included a big six over square leg and was ended only by a well-judged catch in the deep by Sachin Tendulkar.



KAPIL DEV...5 for 97

Healy scored 60 from 116 deliveries—his fourth Test half-century.

Fast bowler Merv Hughes took to the Indian bowling with relish and smashed 36, including one six from Jawagal Srinath into the uncompleted bottom cock of the new Great Southern Stand.

Kapil led the Indians with five for 97 while medium-pace Manoj Prabhakar toiled hard for figures of four for 84.

Kapil's five-wicket tally was his first in more than two and half years, since he picked up six for 64 against the West

Indies at Sabina Park in April 1989. Marsh held the Australian Innings together Friday with an unbeaten 79, but was quickly dismissed in the first session.

With the 10th delivery of the second new ball, Kapil found the outside edge and Marsh was caught by Dilip Vengsarkar at first slip for 86, having batted for almost six hours.

He hit just five boundaries from the 267 deliveries he faced but his innings rescued the team from a perilous 155 for three.

Healy was particularly busy and slashed both Kapil and Prabhakar over the slips to the third man boundary.

He used the cut shot to great effect and his half-century took just 83 deliveries.

He shared a 64-run partnership in even time for the eighth wicket with Hughes.

Australia's lead, initially useful, became more daunting as India's top order problems continued.

In the sixth over Ravi Shastri was dropped on one by Healy, the keeper diving across first slip.

The respite was brief. Soon after the unlucky bowler, Reid, was more fortunate as Krish Srikanth was harshly judged leg before to the last ball before tea.

Shastri was then caught behind for 22 but India had progressed to within 11 runs of clearing their arrears when Manjrekar, Azharuddin and Venkatapathy Raju were swept away in 10 deliveries, leaving the Australians within sight of repeating their four-day first test win.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at stumps Saturday, third day of the second cricket Test between India and Australia at the

Melbourne Cricket Ground: INDIA: 1st Innings, 263

AUSTRALIA: 1st Innings

Marsh c Vengsarkar	86
b Kapil Dev	
Taylor c Tendulkar	13
b Prabhakar	
Boon c Srikanth	11
b Kapil Dev	
Border b Kapil Dev	0
Jones c More	59
b Prabhakar	
Waugh c More b Shastri	34
Healy lbw Kapil Dev	60
Taylor c More b Prabhakar	11
Hughes c Tendulkar	36
b Kapil Dev	
McDermott not out	16
Reid c Kapil Dev	3
b Prabhakar	
Extras: (9 lb 11nb)	20
Total:	349
Fall of wickets: 24; 55; 55; 163; 211; 229; 262; 326; 337; 349.	

Bowling: O M R W
Kapil Dev 35 9 97 5
Prabhakar 34 7 84 4
Srinath 25 3 71 0
Raju 17 3 52 0
Tendulkar 4 1 16 0
Shastri 7 1 20 1
Batting time: 502 mins.
Overs: 122.

INDIA: 2nd Innings

Shastri c Healy b Reid	22
Srikanth c M Taylor	30
b McDermott	
Vengsarkar not out	14
Azharuddin c M Taylor	2
b Reid	
Raju c and b McDermott	1
Tendulkar not out	8
Extras: (5 lb 4 nb)	9
Total: 92 for five wickets	
Fall of wickets: 13; 48; 75; 78; 79.	

Bowling: O M R W
McDermott 18 5 42 2
Reid 17 1 6 34 3
Hughes 9 4 11 0
Batting time: 195 mins.
Overs: 44.1
Bad light stopped play.

Botham suspects being set up

LONDON, Dec 28: England cricketer Ian Botham hinted on Friday that he thought he could have been set up after police said they found a suspicious substance, believed to be cannabis, at his rented seaside villa, reports Reuter.

Police found the substance in a part of the house at Poole in Southern England which was not being used by Botham when they investigated what looked like a burglary there on Christmas Day.

Botham was away spending Christmas in the Channel Islands when a neighbour saw a broken window and called the police.

Reporters asked Botham on Friday if he thought the drugs had been planted and he replied that, although there had been a break-in, none of his possessions was missing.

"You can draw your own conclusions from that, but you don't have to be Einstein to work this one out, do you?" he said.

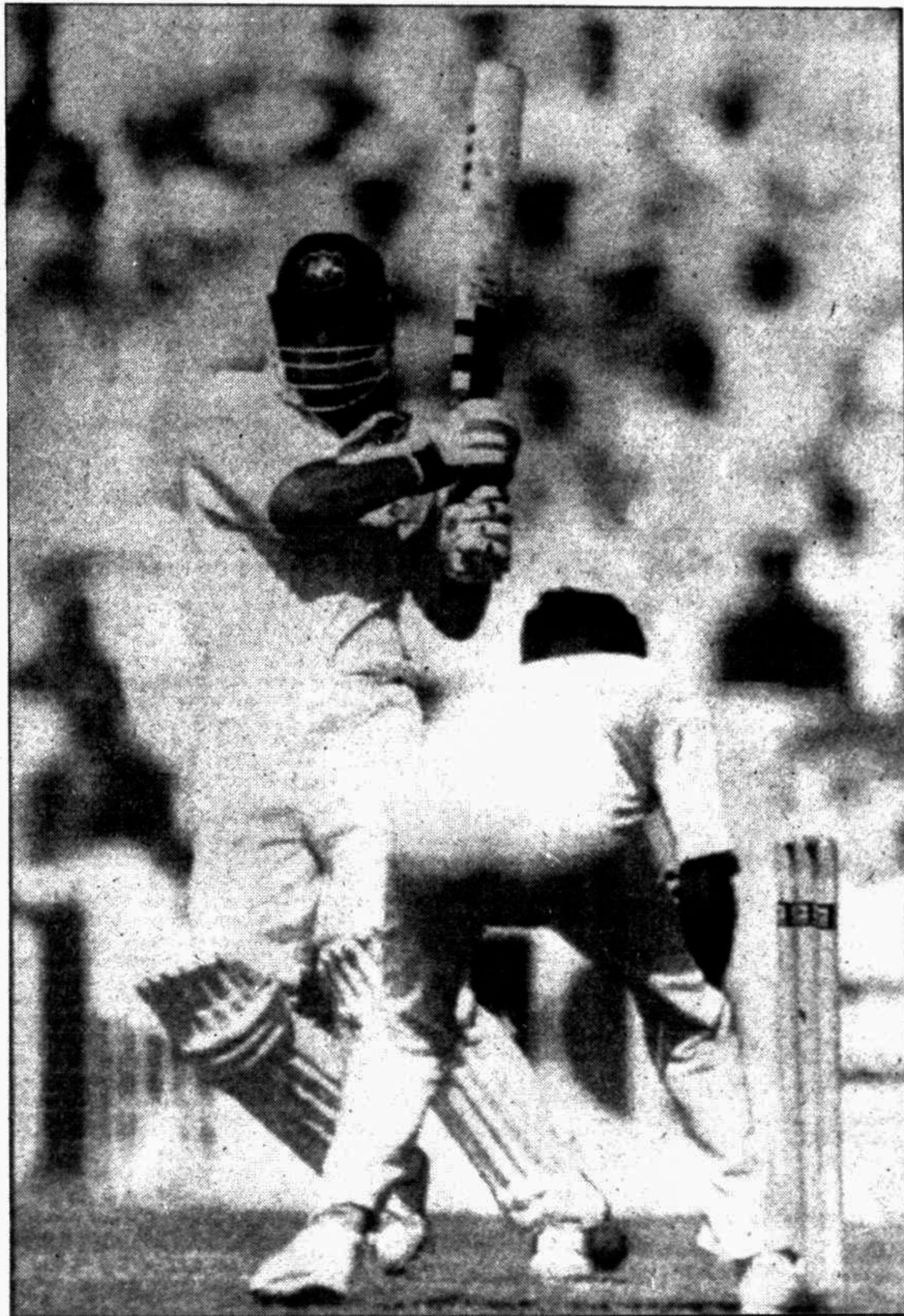
Police detective inspector Chris Dennis said: "We are keeping an open mind about the circumstances of this case."

Botham had been very cooperative and police were happy with what he had told them, he added.

The cricketer is appearing in 'Jack and the Beanstalk', a Christmas pantomime in Bournemouth, a seaside resort near Poole, until Monday when he is due to join the England cricket squad which is touring New Zealand.

He was booted on his first night on stage earlier this month after a newspaper report said he found Bournemouth "boring".

Botham was banned from first class cricket for eight weeks in 1986 after saying that he had once smoked cannabis.



Australian opener Geoff Marsh slams a ball between the legs of the Indian square-leg fielder in the final session of play on the second day of the 2nd Test at Melbourne Dec 27. Marsh top scored with 86 in the Australian first innings. —AFP photo

Advertisers shy away from Magic Johnson

LOS ANGELES, Dec 28: Major US advertisers who said they would continue to use Magic Johnson are starting to back away from the former basketball superstar, reports AFP.

Since Johnson announced last month that he had contracted the AIDS virus, companies have put plans to feature him in television commercials on hold, advertising industry sources said.

Pepsi is not expected to renew its contract with Johnson when it expires next summer and Nestle Chocolate is hedging on a new television ad that was to air in February.

"You can't afford to take the chance that a fairly large population might look upon Magic Johnson's conduct as not exemplary," said Marty Blackman, whose New York firm advises companies on the use of celebrities in advertising.

Most of the corporations with which Johnson had contracts voiced their support for the Los Angeles Lakers guard after he retired on November 7. Most still say they will contribute to his AIDS research and education foundation.

"Companies will fully support his public commitment to AIDS — and refrain from using him in active advertising," Blackman said. "But you won't find any new companies coming on board."

One notable exception is Converse, the shoe manufacturer which has been involved with Johnson since he joined the National Basketball Association in 1979.

Converse is going ahead with plans to feature Johnson in television ads to be aired during the Barcelona Olympics next year.

W Indies hopeful of finding form

BUNDABERG, Australia, Dec 28: The West Indies cricket team will continue to search for the form that has eluded it Down Under when it faces a Queensland state team in a one-day match on Sunday, reports AP.

The West Indies is using a series of one-day matches against state teams in a bid to regain form before the triangular World Series Cup competition resumes in mid-January.

The West Indies is winless in four matches in the World



RITCHIE RICHARDSON Series Cup and trails Australia and India.

Team manager Deryck Murray said Saturday that there was "plenty of time" for the Caribbean cricketers to play themselves back into form.

"We know what the potential of the team is, so it is a matter of turning that potential into performance," Murray said.

"We have got to make every one of these games count." Murray said the West Indies was relying on captain Richie Richardson to lead the recovery.

"He is a match-winner and has proved himself one of the best batsmen in the world, so we expect it to be just a matter of time," Murray said.

"He hasn't got runs in the past few innings — but that doesn't necessarily mean he is out of form."

The West Indies holds a 1-0 lead over the Queensland XI in a three-match series.

The teams meet again at Carrara on the Gold Coast on Jan 1.

Greek club told to pay its debt to Dynamo Kiev

PIRAEUS, Dec 28: A Piraeus court on Friday ordered to Greek soccer club Olympiakos to settle a 7.5 million-dollar debt with Dynamo Kiev for the transfer of Ukrainians Oleg Protasov and Gennady Litovchenko, reports Reuter.

The court ruled in favour of Dynamo, who had requested the confiscation of Olympiakos property and future earnings up to a value of 7.5 million dollars.

Olympiakos, who signed the Soviet international last year, claim they owe Dynamo 6.5 million dollars and are in arrears by only one 1.5 million-dollar instalment.

The club's financial troubles came to light last week when the two Ukrainians and Olympiakos' Russian coach Yuri Savichev sued club president Argyris Saliaris over a cash dispute.

All the Olympiakos players claim they are owed back pay and have boycotted club practice sessions since Thursday, saying they would train on their own until they were paid.

Indians don't want umpire King again

MELBOURNE, Dec 28: India asked the Australian Cricket Board (ACB) on Saturday to bar umpire Len King from further cricket Test matches this summer after an incident in the second test on Friday, reports Reuter.

King upset the touring side by rejecting their appeal against Dean Jones.

Advancing down the wicket to spinner Venkatapathy Raju, Jones trapped the ball between his hands and his thigh. As he turned to regain his crease, wicketkeeper Kiran More came towards him to try to take a catch. Jones then brushed the ball to the ground with his hand.

More appealed to the umpires, King at the bowler's end and Terry Prue at square leg, on the grounds that Jones appeared to have infringed Law 33 (handled the ball) and Law 37 (obstructing the field). King turned down the appeal.

Jones said: "I was going to let the ball drop but More was trying to get his hands under it and I realised I could have been caught."

"More said 'you can't do that' and I said 'I just have'." More told reporters: "I was going for the catch, Kapil Dev. (Manoj) Prabhakar and I all appealed. The umpires were so confused they did not say anything."

King, officiating in his fifth Test, said: "Obstructing the field did not even come into my mind. I did not think it was a 'handled the ball' decision and that was it."

He added that he did not believe the ball was 'dead'. Indian manager Ranbir Singh said he was not satisfied. "I have written a letter to the ACB. We have objected to Len King standing again."

Singh said relations between the sides were cordial and he hoped they would remain so.

Jones, who had scored 57 when the appeal was dismissed, was out without adding to his score.

NZ coach rates Englishmen high

WELLINGTON, Dec 28: New Zealand cricket coach Warren Lees expects England to be well prepared and keen to play when the touring team arrives Sunday, reports AFP.

"They won't be tired and demoralised as they were when they stopped over for the three one-day internationals last summer," he said Saturday in an interview with the New Zealand Press Association (NZPA).

"They will be much harder and better prepared. It will be the start of the tour and they will have something to prove."

New Zealand won the one-day series last season when England came here after a dismal tour of Australia.

Lees said that even with Mike Atherton and Angus Fraser ruled out through injury, England would still be a formidable side.

"A couple of injuries won't mean a great deal when you look at the side that is coming out. It is still a very strong team," he said.

Lees considers his own 23-man squad is well-prepared for the three Test matches and the three one-day games against England.

strong side. Both Graham Gooch and Robin Smith are in particularly good form and I expect Graeme Hick to get a few runs down here. I see him as a big danger."

England play their first match, a one-day game, against Auckland on January 2.

The squad is: Graham Gooch (capt), Alec Stewart, Graeme Hick, Allan Lamb, Robin Smith, Neil Fairbrother, Mark Ramprakash, Ian Botham, Derek Pringle, Chris Lewis, Jack Russell, Phillip DeFreitas, Phil Tufnell, David Lawrence, Dermot Reeve.

England upbeat about NZ tour

LONDON, Dec 28: England's cricketers set out for New Zealand on Friday intent on using their three-Test series as

springboard for a successful World Cup campaign, reports Reuter.

Graham Gooch and his players privately admit the World Cup is their main goal but, with the final 14-man squad still to be finalised, there are considerable incentives for every member of the tour party.

England will also be aiming to crack New Zealand's enviable unbeatable home Test series record which stretches back 12 years. They were last beaten 1-0 by Pakistan in 1979.

Under the command of team manager Micky Stewart, England have undergone a rigorous pre-tour fitness cam-

paign for the three-month trip and chairman of selectors Ted Dexter believes the signs are encouraging.

"Our planned preparation has been as good as we can make it, given that we have been in the middle of winter", Dexter said.

The message is: "So far, so good." The New Zealand itinerary has been the subject of long, hard negotiation and I believe it is a sound preparation for the World Cup. We go with high expectations."

England have three first-class warm-up matches before the first Test in Christchurch starting on January 18, but have opted to travel with only one specialist opener.

New vice-captain Alec Stewart and youngster Mark Ramprakash are expected to vie for the vacant opening berth alongside Gooch, with all-rounder Ian Botham coming

into consideration for the World Cup programme starting on February 22.

Botham will finally swap his pantomime tights for cricket gear next month when he joins the tour party after first Test.

He can expect to find himself pitched into a heated battle for all-rounder's places, also involving Phillip DeFreitas, Chris Lewis, Derek Pringle and the uncapped Dermot Reeve.

Gooch, who like Stewart is probably making his final overseas tour with England, stressed that form in New Zealand would play an important part in selection of the World Cup squad.

"I want to win all three Tests because winning is important; doing well in the Test series is the best preparation we could have for the World Cup", he said.

The slow pitches to be found in New Zealand could,

however, blunt England's ambitions. Five of their last six matches in New Zealand have ended in draws, including all three Tests on their lack-lustre tour in 1988.

Dexter at least knows how it should be done, having skippered England to a 3-0 series win in 1962-63.

His final act before England left on Friday was to announce four stand-by players for the World Cup.

Batsman Martyn Moxon and Nasser Hussain, fast bowler Martin Bickell and wicket-keeper Steve Rhodes were added to England's provisional 20-man squad for the tournament.

Dexter confirmed that although it was likely the final World Cup squad of 14 would be chosen from the 16 players in New Zealand, injuries or loss of form could alter the picture.

Jumman hattrick saves Abahani

Wonderful performances by the players took Abahani Krira Chakra to the final of the 1991 Victory Day

Shah Sports hockey tournament.

Abahani, the reigning champions of the First Division league, outplayed Ajax Sports Club 3-2 in the first semi-final at the Dhaka Hockey Stadium yesterday.

As expected, the twice-postponed match between these two giants of the country's hockey arena was an absorbing one.

Abahani, down by two goals, regrouped their forces for a terrific rally that saw them not only erasing the deficit but also going on to win, a result which

had appeared a remote possibility at one stage.

Ajax, on the other hand, could not maintain their tempo and pace and in the end had to sadly accept the defeat.

The first ten minutes of the match were indeed a totally Ajax affair. During these early moments Abahani looked very unsure against their formidable opponents.

Khawaja Irteza Kader Guddu, who has been in tremendous form this year, put Ajax ahead in the very fourth minute by beautifully converting a penalty corner (1-0).

To the disappointment of the largely Abahani crowd, Guddu once again converted a penalty corner in the 10th minute. Some of them, losing both patience and heart, began to leave.

Yet, undaunted by these early setbacks, Abahani, in the fashion of true champions, pulled up their socks and went on to score three goals in a row.

Jumman Lusal, who put Abahani ahead in the Group-A final from a penalty corner, once again emerged as Abahani's saviour yesterday.

The tribal star converted a penalty corner in the 20th minute to make it 1-2.

Jumman then put Abahani at par in the 20th minute, also from a penalty corner (2-2).

A specialist in converting penalty corners, Jumman scored the winning goal, thereby completing his well-deserved hat-trick in the 61st minute. Once again, thanks to Jumman's skills, Abahani profited from yet another penalty corner (3-2).

Ajax, having run out of both steam and ideas, tried hard to get the equaliser, but in vain.

Title-aspirants Abahani refused to relax and maintained their grip on the proceedings by launching repeated raids inside Ajax territory.

Besides Jumman, Harun, Alamgir and Mamun played excellently for the winners while Mohammad Sadeque fought gallantly for the losers.

Abdullah Piru and Akhtar Hossain of Abahani and Sadeque and Khwaja Wais of Ajax were shown the green card.

Mohammedana Sporting Club and Bangladesh Army clash in the second semi-final of the meet this afternoon.

Mohammedana had beaten Usha Krira Chakra while Army outplayed Martiner Youngs Club in the finals of Group B and D respectively.

Like yesterday's match, today's semi-final also promises to be a thrilling one.

TODAY'S MATCH Mohammedana SC vs Army — (semi-final) : 3 P.M.



Action from yesterday's thrilling Victory Day tournament semi-final between Abahani Krira Chakra and Ajax Sports Club at the Hockey Stadium. Abahani rallied to win 3-2. —Star photo