

Aussies coast with day to spare

MELBOURNE, Australia, Dec 29: Australia confirmed their overwhelming superiority over India with a second Test victory in under four days here today, reports AFP.

Having routed India by 10 wickets in the opener at Brisbane earlier this month, the home side won by eight wickets off the final delivery of the fourth day's play.

Australian skipper Allan Border scrambled through for the winning run to prevent the match spilling over to the fifth day at the Melbourne Cricket Ground.

Needing 128 to win after bowling India out for 213 in their second innings, Australia coasted through comfortably to emerge clear favourites in the five-Test series.

Mark Taylor led the way with a polished 60 while David Boon remained unbeaten on 44.

The pair added 106 for the second wicket after Geoff Marsh was sent back at the score of 16.

Marsh, who top-scored with 86 in the first innings, was leg before to Manoj, Prabhakar for 10.

Taylor was stumped off Venkatapathy Raju when six runs remained for victory but the Australians had no trouble getting them.

With the result a mere formality, the only point of interest for the 10,957 spectators was whether Australia would win on the fourth day.

Kapil Dev began the last over to Border with Australia needing five more runs.

Border missed a swipe off the first delivery and was lucky to survive a run out when he darted for three runs from the second ball.

Television replays showed Border clearly out of his crease on his third run when Sachin Tendulkar's throw from mid-off hit the non-striker's wicket.

Umpire Len King, whom the Indians protested against on the second day, turned down a loud shout by the field-

ers stationed nearby to take the throw. Boon took a single off the fifth delivery, leaving Border to score a single off the last ball.

Backed by the experience of a record 127 Tests, the Australian captain Cooly chopped the ball to the vacant gully area and ran to the other end with his bat raised overhead in celebration.

The third Test begins at the Sydney Cricket Ground on January 2.

Tendulkar hit off-spinner Peter Taylor high in the air towards mid-on where Border ran back 15 yards and dived full-length to take the catch. The 18-year-old Indian batsman made 40 with five fours in a 64-runs stand with Vengsarkar.

Kapil Dev drove Taylor for two sixes, his only scoring strokes, before he was seventh out at the score of 155.

Wicket-keeper Ian Healy took Kapil's edge off Bruce Reid giving him a tally of 100 Test victims.

Prabhakar also took two fours off Taylor who ended the morning session with figures of one for 24 in five overs.

India went to lunch at 166 for seven, but lost Prabhakar for the addition of only seven runs.

Prabhakar, who scored six of those runs, hung his bat out to Reid and was snapped up easily by Healy. He made 17.

Kiran More, batting with a runner due to a groin strain, helped Vengsarkar add 40 for the ninth wicket to take the lead beyond the 100-run mark.

The dapper Indian wicket-keeper, who top scored with 67 in the first innings made 12 before becoming Reid's sixth victim.

Vengsarkar, who hit first boundary after batting for 263 minutes, ran out of patience once last man Javagal Srinath arrived at the crease.

He attempted to hook McDermott but succeeded in only top-edging to mid-wicket where substitute fielder Mike Whitney made a diving catch to McDermott had three for

end India's innings. It was Vengsarkar's 34th half-century and will help him retain his place for the Sydney Test.

But his resolute effort went in vain as India suffered two quick blows at the other end to be 166 for seven at lunch.

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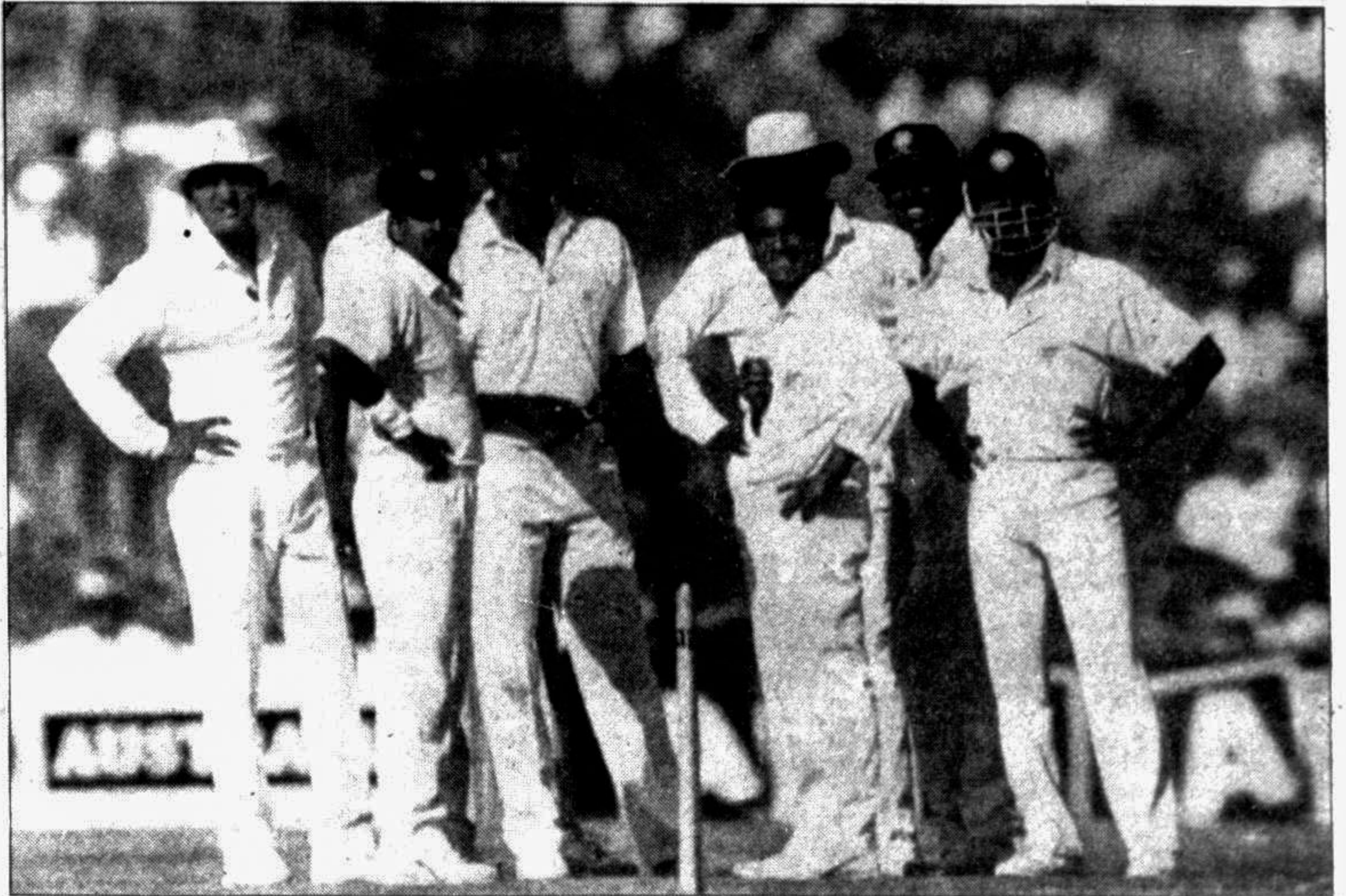
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Indian players look at a video replay screen to see the dismissal of Australian Mark Waugh during the second day's play in the second Test at the Melbourne Cricket Ground on Dec 27.

Salim Jaffar restricts Lankans in Lahore

LAHORE, Dec 29: Pakistan Test pace bowler Salim Jaffar cut short Sri Lanka's ambitions of a first innings lead in their three-day cricket match against a Punjab province governor's XI on Saturday, reports Reuter.

Left-arm paceman Jaffar captured four for 71, three of them in the final session, as Sri Lanka crumbled from 182 for four to 216 for nine on the second day.

The touring team declared shortly afterwards at 219 for nine in replay to the Governor's XI 251 for nine declared. Bad Light prevented the remaining 14 overs of the day's quota of 82 from being bowled.

Fine innings from opener Roshan Mahanama (44), Athula Samarasekera (45) and Arjuna Ranatunga (50) lifted Sri Lanka after they resumed at the overnight five for no wicket.

But Jaffar, supported by fellow pacemen Naveed Anjum and Wasim Ilyer, caused a slump in which five wickets tumbled for 34.

Botham spared charges LONDON, Dec 29: England cricketer Ian Botham will not be prosecuted over cannabis found at his rented seaside villa, police said on Saturday, reports Reuter.

Botham himself has said he thinks someone may have been trying to frame him. Police found cannabis in the house at Polle in southern England when they investigated what looked like a burglary on Wednesday.

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

Asked by reporters if he thought he had been set up, Botham replied that, although there had been a break-in, none of his personal possessions were 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.

Anand again beats Garry Kasparov

REGGIO EMILIA, Italy, Dec 29: India's Viswanathan Anand beat world chess champion Garry Kasparov on Saturday in the second round of the highest-ranked tournament in chess history, reports Reuter.

Anand's win came after he was pawn up and in a good position against Kasparov playing a French defence in the annual Reggio Emilia tournament.

"I don't know how he managed to lose," said Anand. "I beat him last October in the Netherlands but this time I was playing black and did not expect to win."

Kasparov plays his old rival Anatoly Karpov today in the next round, the 160th time the two have met. The tournament, at international category 18, is the highest level ever played.

In contrast to previous years, the contestants did not play with flags at their tables, reflecting the break-up of the former Soviet Union, birth-place of nine of the 10 players.

Second round results (draw 1/2): C. Kasparov 0, B. Gelfand 1, A. Beljavski 1/2

Standings after two rounds: Anand 2 points, Karpov 1-1/2, Gelfand 1-1/2, Kasparov 1, Ivanchuk 1, Halifman 1, Salov 1/2, Gurevich 1/2, Polugajevski 1/2, Beljavski 1/2

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Becker is ready

PERTH, Australia, Dec 29: Boris Becker realized one of his major ambitions when he won this year's Australian Open tennis title, reports AP.

The German hopes next month's open to be played Jan 13-26, will see him revitalize his career.

Becker dropped from No 1 in the world to No 3 last year after being plagued by knee and back injuries.

Fully recovered from a recent bout of influenza, Becker is competing this week in the Hopman Cup exhibition tournament, where he is partner to compatriot Steffi Graf on the German team.

"I had a dread come true here last year when I became No 1 for the first time by winning my first Australian Open," Becker said Sunday. "But for the rest of the year, I had many weeks off because of knee and back injuries."

"Now I hope to keep healthy for a longer period of time and play five tournaments in a row to have a good chance to return to being No 1."

Becker said a short break from tennis had helped lift his morale.

"I'm enjoying my tennis and I'm in good form now—which is something I'd like to keep as long as possible," he said.

Becker and Graf will face the French team of Henri Leconte and Julie Halard in the quarterfinals of the Hopman Cup on Monday.

Big guns take different routes to Australian Open

Yugoslavia has decided against playing any warm-up tournaments.

Most of the big guns of men's tennis will play in the Rio Challenge exhibition in Adelaide Jan. 8-11.

The entry for the Rio Challenge includes Swede Edberg and Americans Jim Courier, Pete Sampras, Michael Chang and John McEnroe, along with Goran Ivanisevic of Yugoslavia.

Ivan Lendl and Leconte will be among those playing the New South Wales Open after having not been invited to play in the Rio Challenge.

Becker plans to practice in Melbourne for the 10 days before the Australian Open.

Czechoslovak player Jana Novotna and American Pam Shriver are among the few big-name women competing in the Queensland Open.

Graf will play only the Hopman Cup before going to Melbourne to practice, while World No. 1 Monica Seles of

Yugoslavia has decided against playing any warm-up tournaments.

Agassi and Jimmy Connors among the leading men have decided against playing the open this year. American Martina Navratilova is the only notable absentee from the women's entries.

Baig slams umpiring

MELBOURNE, Dec 29: Indian cricket team manager Abbas Ali Baig denounced the standard of Australian umpiring Sunday after his team suffered an eight-wicket defeat in the second Test against Australia at the Melbourne Cricket Ground, reports AP.

There were a number of controversies during the match and most close decisions went in favor of the Australian team, which now leads the five-test series 2-0.

"The umpiring was very poor," said Baig. "I'm not saying it was biased, but it was very poor, especially Len King."

King was the subject of an official complaint by the Indian team Friday when he ruled Australian batsman Dean Jones not out after Jones clearly had handled the ball.

Baig said the Indian team's batting also was a long way short of expectations.

"Our batting still needs a lot of application," he said.

"Another 150 runs and it would have been a close thing but the return to form of Dilip Vengsarkar was a bonus."

Aussies pick Warne for 3rd Test at Sydney

Haynes sparks Windies win

BUNDBERG Australia, Dec 29: Opener Desmond Haynes scored a sizzling 94 Sunday to spark the West Indies to an 11-run victory in a limited-overs cricket match against a Queensland XI, reports AP.

Haynes' innings helped lift the West Indies to 225 for nine in its scheduled 50 overs and the tourists then restricted the state team to 214 for eight in reply.

Haynes is optimistic Gooch is optimistic AUCKLAND, New Zealand, Dec 29: England cricket captain Graham Gooch has pledged his team will play attacking cricket in its upcoming three test series against New Zealand, reports AP.

"We will be hell-bent on victory," Gooch said Sunday after the England team arrived in Auckland.

"I play my cricket to win, so we will go out and try and win everygame. I don't go out to draw. I am not interested in drawing."

Gooch said the inexperienced England squad had the right attitude to the New Zealand tour, which also includes three one-day internationals.

"We have had some valuable off-season training and I am very pleased at the attitude of my players. This could be a big tour for a lot of them," he said.

"We have one or two new faces, and they have the chance to make a name for themselves."

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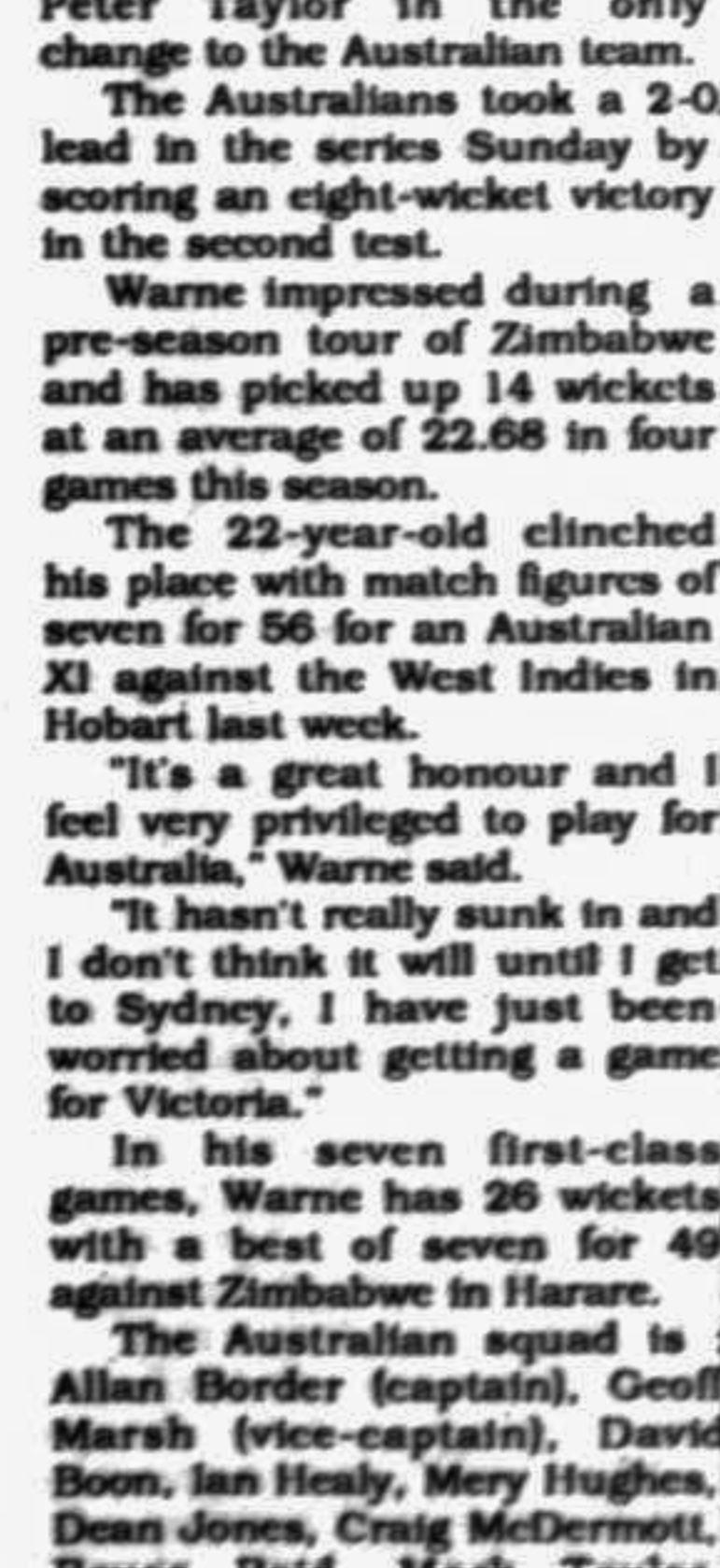
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You can draw your own conclusions from that but you don't have to be Einstein to work this one out, do you?" he said.

A police spokesman said: "There will be no charges in relation to possession of cannabis with regard to Ian Botham or any other persons at the time using that house."

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

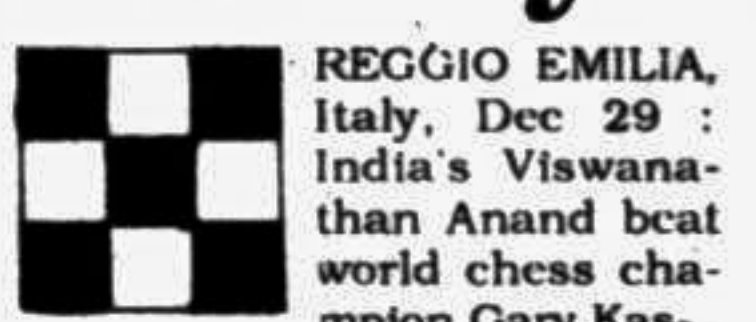
Haynes sparks Windies win The win gave the West Indies a winning 2-0 lead in the three-match series between the two teams.



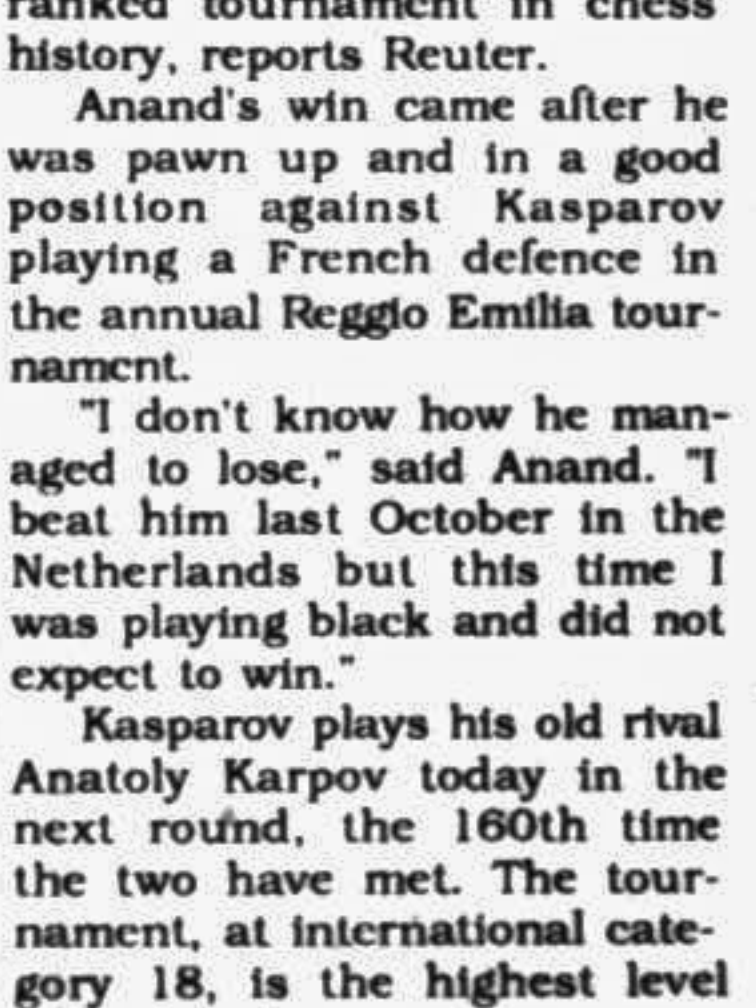
Action yesterday's Federation Cup handball match between Bangladesh Air Force and Bangladesh Police at the Outer Stadium



DESMOND HAYNES



VISWANATHAN ANAND



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