

## Sher-e-Bangla Cup final today

Sports Reporter

The final of the 18th Sher-e-Bangla Cup national football championship will be held at the Khulna Stadium today.

Hosts Khulna, last year's runners-up, will play Feni in the final.

Khulna is playing in the final for the third time. Previously, they became champion in 1982 while runners-up in 1992.

It is Feni's second appearance in the final. They last played in 1984, when they won the title.

Khulna reached the final beating Narayanganj 2-1 in the semifinal while Feni eliminated last year's champions Dhaka University 3-2 in the other semifinal.

Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali is expected to witness the final match and distribute prizes among the winners.

### TEAMS

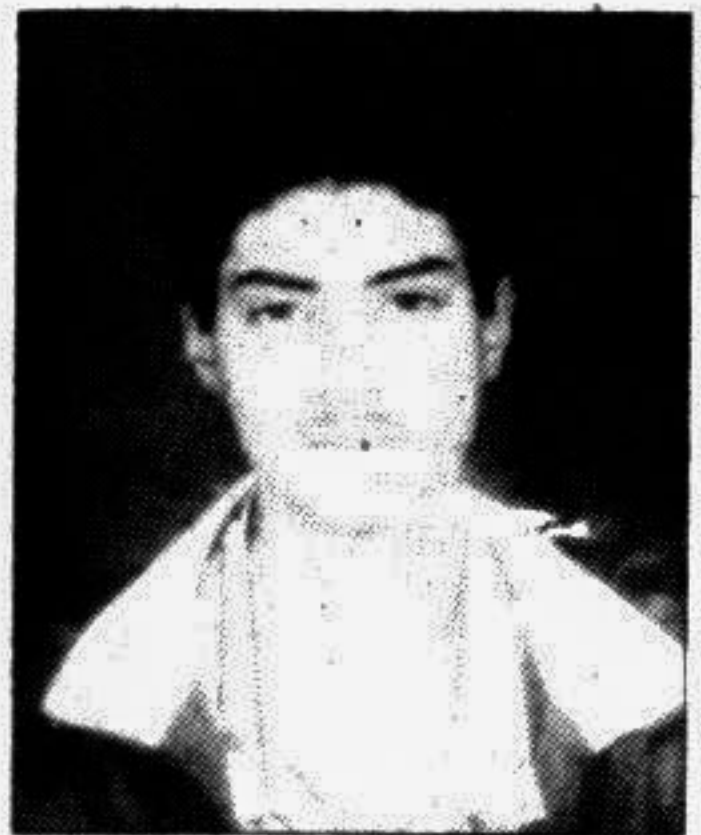
**KHULNA:** Totam, Partha, Sanil, Chanchal, Raj, Asad, Badal, Aslam, Rumi, Jahangir Sr and Jahangir Jr.

**FENI:** Selim, Shipar, Mizan, Sr. Shahzade, Bachchu, Ata, Shimu, Manik, Ratan, Mizan Jr and Jilani.

## Shaon shines for Dhanmondi Govt High School

Sports Reporter

A superb bowling performance by Shaon enabled Dhanmondi Govt High School easily move into the semifinal of the 12th Nirman School cricket championship at the Dhanmondi Club Ground yesterday.



SHAON... 7 for 14

Shaon with his devastating spell of seven for 14 wrapped up Pallabi M1 Model School for a meagre 87 runs in 26.5 overs.

Dhanmondi aided by an unbeaten 36 from Dipu won in 25 overs losing only six wickets.

In the other match of the day Armanitola High School earned a 45-run victory over Rajdhani High School to pave the way to the quarter-final.

The game was played on the eastern strip of Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium.

Batting first, Armanitola compiled a handsome 167 runs in the allotted 35 overs losing nine wickets with Fayaz making an excellent 78 runs.

Arif was the other notable contributor to the Armanitola to bat with an unbeaten 25.

Mamun captured four wickets for 30 runs while Nakib took two for 24 for Rajdhani High School.

Chasing 167 runs for victory, Rajdhani were bundled out for 122 runs in 32.5 overs.

Mamun who shone with the ball also scored an unbeaten 48 for the losers.

Mamun and Fazal claimed three wickets for Armanitola while Fayaz bagged two for 24.

### Div II cricket

Sports Reporter

Gopibagh Friends Association, Gandaria Cricketers and Dhanmondi Pragati Sangha recorded wins in their respective matches of the Second Division cricket super league at different city venues yesterday.

Gopibagh trounced Mirpur Nabin Krra Chakra by eight wickets at the Dhaka Stadium.

Batting first Mirpur Nabin scored 116 for nine in the allotted 40 overs.

Babu and Faruk contributed 39 and 20 not out for Nabin. Liton claimed three for 19 for Gopibagh.

Gopibagh reached their target scoring 118 for two in 19.2 overs.

Labu made hit 39 for the winners.

At the City Club ground Gandaria Cricketers earned an eight wicket win over Young Pegasus A.

Young Pegasus were all out for 60 in 21.4 overs.

Rashed captured three for 19 for Gandaria.

Chasing a paltry target of 61 to win, Gandaria posted 63 for two in only 14.4 overs.

Mozaffar top scored with 26 for Gandaria.

At Jagannath Hall ground, Dhanmondi earned a 52 run victory against Kathalbagan Green Crescent Club.

Dhanmondi piled up 197 for eight in the stipulated 40 overs.

Pikloo and Rofiq contributed 55 and 30 respectively.

Kathalbagan were all out for 148 in 33.3 overs.

Hussain top scored with 50.

# So near yet so far

Sports Reporter



Bangladesh touched the nadir and acme of form in a day but lost an existential tie narrowly and with it all hopes of further advancement in the fifth ICC Trophy when they, according to Radio Bangladesh broadcast monitored here in Dhaka, went down fighting to hosts Kenya in a high-scoring entertaining quarterfinal tie of the championship in Nairobi, Kenya yesterday.

Left with the only option of winning the tie in order to stay alive for semifinal contention of the 20-team fray of ICC's associate members, Bangladesh fell short of the winning target by 13 runs as their heroic and rather belated batting prowess could reap 282 runs for eight wickets when overs ran out.

The seemingly impossible victory target of 296 runs looked tangible and attainable at one stage of the match as openers Aminul Islam Bulbul and Jahangir Alam laid the foundation for a hectic chase with some splendid batting. Later Minhazul Abedin Nannu carried the good work gamely but pressure told on as the asking run-rate kept on creeping up and with some vital wickets falling in a heap at a critical juncture of the game left tournament's second seeds with broken images dream and expectations. Statistically it was just another loss or another victory in a not so important cricket tournament of international circuit but for a South East Asian nation, it meant the going of a dream by the window.

The whole of Bangladesh was over the moon recently in anticipation of its cricket team's expected showing in the 20-associate members of the ICC. The bottom line of this hyped up imagination and expectation was a place among the top three finishers of the meet. It was the barest of the demands of the cricket lovers because prior to the meet Bangladesh were tipped as the second seeds just after Holland. So, Bangladesh should have been in the hunt for the title at least theoretically, let alone a place among the three top finishers.

The darkness at the noon which has engulfed our cricket had its last shade yesterday from the fielders and bowlers of the Bangladesh team for the batsmen raised their game beyond expectation and the final score of 282 was more than any staunch patriot could think of.

Bangladesh bowling was put to sword after captain Faruque Ahmed won the toss in the morning and opted to field first. However on a placid wicket Bangladesh attack sans the experienced seamer Golam Nawshar Prince did not do all that badly initially. But Kenya who progressed quite cautiously for the first half of the innings with a conscious plan

of ensuring minimum loss of wickets took the Bangladeshi attack by the scruff its neck only after 40 overs.

One of their openers scored a superb century, 119 to pre-



cise with his hundred coming from just 71 balls epitomised the onslaught by taking 22 runs in over from Minhazul Abedin.

Given a new lease of life by Bangladeshi wicketkeeper Jahangir when in his 70s the powerful hitter with a typically African surname (we regret our impropriety in being unalusive as the BCCB officials failed to provide the faxed copy of the scorecard last night for reasons best known to them) hit a couple of sixes of successive deliveries and then a boundary to jump to 100 from 84 in that fateful over by Nannu.

Young left-arm spinner Sharfuddowla Ibne Shaheed



BULBUL... 74

Saikat was not far behind in conceding runs when in the very next over he gave away 16 runs. All this blitzkrieg took place in the last ten overs of the Kenyan innings as consistently faulty fielding by the Bangladesh players filled the tourists' cup of woe full to the brim. Almost everybody on the field was heard to have fumbled at even the simplest of fielding challenges posed by the marauding Kenyan batsmen who too must have been under lot of pressure regarding the result of the match. Kenya, of course, were in a partially better frame of mind having beaten Hong Kong in their first quarter-final tie. For Bangladesh it meant a do or die because after that 46-run loss to Holland in the

first quarter-final they had to win to be in with some chance for making it to the semifinals. Bangladesh play their last tie of the quarter-final stage against Hong Kong on Sunday but they have reached a stage of being affected neither by a win nor by a defeat. Two top teams from two groups will form the last four and Kenya and Holland appear the likely candidates from Group E.

Although it meant a thorough harassment for all the Bangladeshi fielders and bowlers Athar Ali and Enamul Huq Moni trooped back to pavilion at the lunch-break with some consolation. Enamul Huq took four catches besides two scalps at the cost of 66 runs from ten overs while Athar gave away only 24 runs from his quota of ten overs in a veritable display of prodigality by his peers.

Bangladesh were given an excellent start in their quest for 296 runs for a win by Jahangir Alam and a promoted Aminul Islam Bulbul who put on 139 runs for the first wicket from 27.3 overs. They were going almost *pari passu* with an asking run-rate of 5.92 but Jahangir's unfortunate dismissal, an unnecessary run out with two batsmen petrified at one end, heralded the natural and expected doom.

Jahangir was out for a superb 58 made from lofted drives and daring cuts but Aminul Islam Bulbul, who was even more spectacular hoisting a sixer over extra cover, fell at the outset of the next over and the props of resurgence gave in much to the dismay of country's cricket-buffs.

Bulbul, whose lack of form had been one of the factors of Bangladesh's debacle in the previous losses, came good with a sparkling innings of 74, albeit a day after the fair.

Solid Akram Khan never got going despite depositing some runs and although Minhazul Abedin contributed the third half-century of the innings with 68 before becoming the last dismissal.

Bangladesh were too handicapped to overcome the loss of Enamul Huq's wicket at a very crucial juncture. The left-hander, known for his tremendous hitting prowess was bowled second ball while playing across the line.

Athar, relegated down the order did smack a sixer but things were out of control by then and Bangladesh's hand as regards the tournament was well and truly played at the Simba Sports Club ground.

A comparative study of the run-rate

Kenya	Overs	Bangladesh
13/0	5 overs	14/0
28/0	10	34/0
46/0	15	65/0
64/1	20	92/0
74/1	25	133/0
105/1	30	154/2
155/1	35	182/2
186/2	40	210/2
244/3	45	242/5
295/6	50	282/8

## Seven more in zonal semis

Sports Reporter



Khulna recorded a massive 199 run win over Bagerhat in a Jhenidah zone encounter to reach the semi-final of the Pepsi Cup 20th national cricket championship yesterday.

Winning the toss, Khulna piled up 251 runs for six in a curtailed match of 44 overs.

Nasir top scored with 83. Ansar with 59 and Tuhin with 40 were other notable scorers for Khulna.

Khulna dismissed Bagerhat out for 52 in 20.1 overs. Pintu captured four for 17 for the winners.

In day's other matches, Madaripur moved into the zonal semifinals with a huge 172 run win over Gopalganj at the Chandpur Stadium.

Madaripur batted first and made 255 in 42.3 overs.

Biplob top scored with 79 while Tuhin with 60 and Mukul with 17 were the other major scorers for Madaripur.

Maruf dismissed three Madaripur batsmen while Shamir and Juberi took two wickets each.

Gopalganj were bundled out for 83 in 37.3 overs.

Nihar with 21 and Mahbub with 10 were the only batsmen reached double figures.

Robin captured three for twelve while Mukul and Sujit took two each for the winners.

At Sylhet, Sherpur beat Jamalpur by two wickets, to reach the semifinals.

Jamalpur were all out for 148 in 40.1 overs.

Tipu, Pasha, Faruk and

### No change

NEW YORK, Feb 25: The number of teams competing in the 1998 World Cup finals in France will remain at 24 — despite the increasing number of new nations in eastern Europe, reports AFP.

## Short pitched bowls under fire again

LONDON, Feb 25: World cricket chiefs are taking a "fresh look" at intimidatory fast bowling, the controversial issue that has resurfaced during the current Test series in the Caribbean, reports Reuters.

International Cricket Council (ICC) chief executive David Richards said on Thursday the council was having "a positive and fresh look at a difficult issue."

A hostile spell of short-pitched fast bowling by West Indian Courtney Walsh against England's last man Devon Malcolm during the first Test that ended in Kingston, Jamaica, on Thursday has re-kindled controversy.

Malcolm was treated three times in two overs by England physio Dave Roberts after being struck on the body by four lifting deliveries.

Richards said: "There's not much I can say about the Jamaica Test, not being there and especially with the series still going on. But the responsibility lies with the umpires."

A three-year experimental rule limiting bowlers to one bounce per batsman per over is in its final year and is to be reviewed when ICC again confront the long-standing question of short-pitched bowling at their traditional July meeting at Lord's.

### Partex b'ball

Sports Reporter

Dhaka Winners recorded an easy 86-61 win over the minnows Hornets Sporting Club in the Partex First Division basketball league at the Outer Stadium wooden floor gymnasium yesterday.

The winners led the first half 39-31.

Maruf and Michael top scored with 18 each for the winners while Julian and Quader caged 17 and 14 respectively for the losers.

Dhaka Wanderers take on Kurmitola Apollo today.

## Triumphant Thais

Sports Reporter

Thailand's Sukramaran who is on course for a double crown clinched the girls' doubles title pairing with compatriot Tovitsichai in the eighth Bangladesh International junior tennis championship at the Ramna Tennis Complex yesterday.

On the fourth day of the five-day long international junior ranking meet the Thai boy and girls proved their superiority making it through to all the finals.

Sukramaran who moved into the girls' singles final winning 6-0, 6-2 against teammate Tovitsichai also clinched the doubles title pairing with her losing singles competitor.

Sukramaran and Tovitsichai beat India's Swati Rao and Indonesia's Vina Rampen in a hard fought final 6-2, 4-6, 6-4.

Sukramaran will take on Vina Rampen in the girls' singles final today.

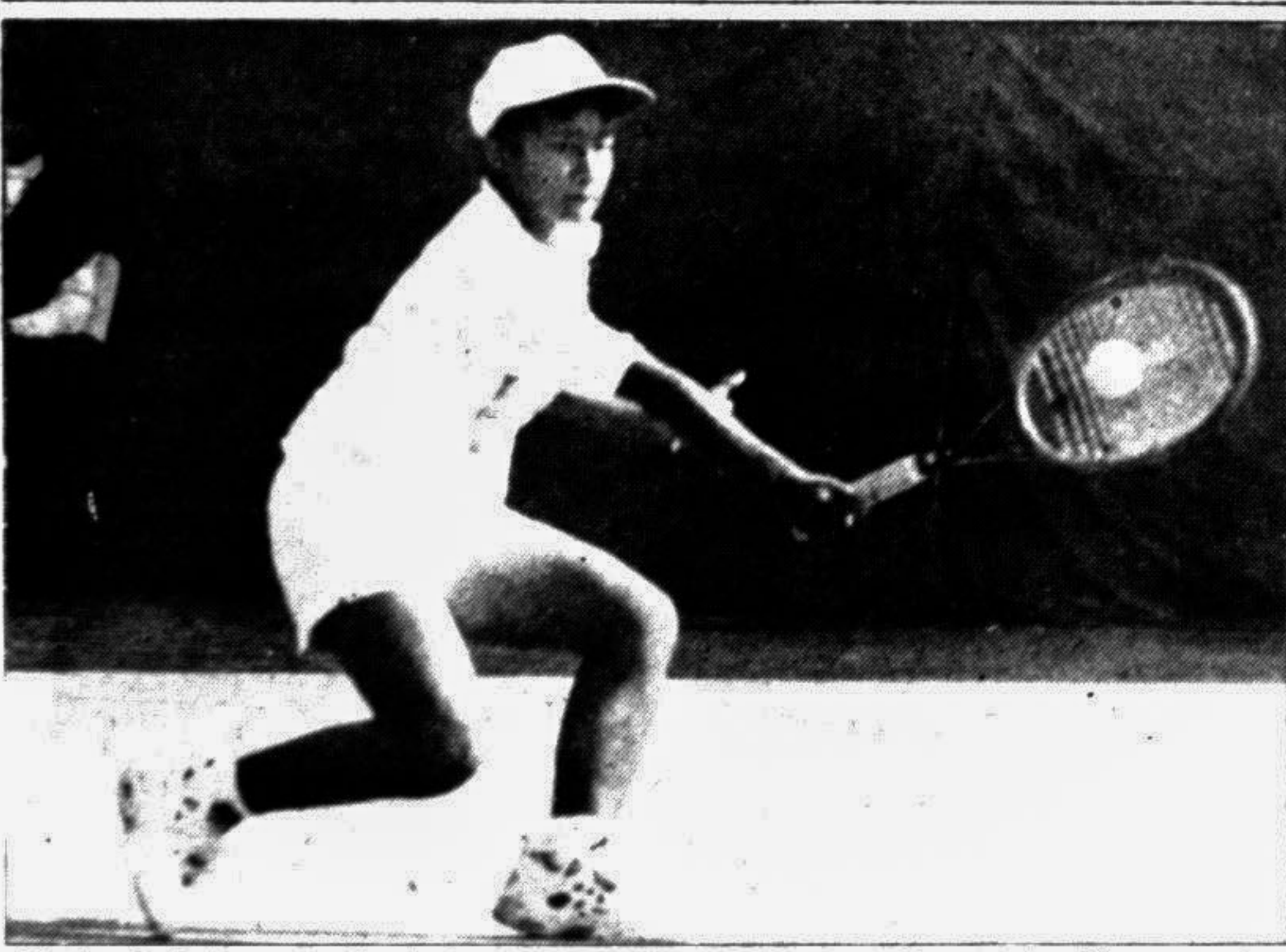
Vina Rampen who trounced her Thai rival Anuchar Mantika 6-1, 6-1 predicts she will be a tough opponent for Sukramaran.

Meanwhile, top seed Roymani Putipong of Thailand and Indian Jideep Shetty moved into the final of the boys' singles.

In the semi-finals Roymani beat another Indian Laxminarayana 6-2, 2-6, 7-5 while Shetty earned a 6-3, 6-3 win over compatriot Sayed Saifuddin.

In the boys doubles Putipong and Wintoonpanich Bhee of Thailand and Laxminarayana and Amardeep Singh of India moved in the final.

All the remaining finals will be played on the concluding day today.



Thailand's Sukramaran Phorathai in action against compatriot Tovitsichai Phornsarin in the girls' singles semifinal of eighth Bangladesh International tennis championship at the Ramna Tennis Complex yesterday. Sukramaran won 6-0, 6-2.

— Star photo

# Waqar turns the screw on NZ



CHRISTCHURCH, New Zealand, Feb 25: Pakistan's pace pair of Waqar Younis and Wasim Akram ripped through New Zealand's first innings on the second day of the third cricket Test today to put the tourists in command, reports Reuters.

The bowlers' performance, becoming depressingly familiar for New Zealanders, set Pakistan up for a 3-0 series win.

But New Zealand gave themselves a glimmer of hope by dismissing both Pakistan openers in their second innings to put the tourists at eight for two wickets. This gave Pakistan an overall lead of 152 after New Zealand were dismissed for 200.

Although the wicket was good for batting, a total of 15 wickets fell in the day.

In the morning, New Zealand ended Pakistan's first innings for 344, collecting the last three wickets for 10 runs.

Basit Ali, however, was able first to take his score from 98 to 103 to pick up his first Test century.

While Akram was the main destroyer in the first two Tests, it was Younis with six for 78 who broke New Zealand today in an impressive display of hostile speed and swing bowling.

Only Andrew Jones, playing in his last Test, stood up to the Pakistan pacemen. He scored a stylish 81 until he was run out.

The New Zealand innings began as it had in the previous four innings in the series with the loss of an early wicket — this time Blair Hatfield caught at point off Younis for three.

But Jones and Bryan Young added a brisk 97 for the second wicket and appeared to be getting on top on the placid pitch.

As they have often in the past, the Pakistan bowlers were able to get the older ball to swing and third seamer Aamir Nazir began the collapse when he trapped young leg before for 38.

Pakistani players complained several times that the ball was out of shape and comments by New Zealand captain Ken Rutherford appeared to goad Waqar and Akram into more hostile

bowling. Waqar bowled a fiery over where Rutherford missed the first four balls and was caught at second-slip by Inzamam-ul-Haq off the fifth.

Akram quickly disposed of Mark Greatbatch leg before for one. Younis had Shane Thomson caught behind by



WAQAR... 6 for 78

wicket-keeper Rashid Latif and two balls later trapped Tony Blair leg before for nought.

After tea Akram bowled Matthew Hart with an inswinging yorker and Jones was run out by a direct hit from Salim Malik.

The run out was adjudicated by the third umpire. Ironically, in the morning the third umpire was not called on when television replays showed Akram Raza well short of his ground.

When Pakistan resumed, Danny Morrison induced Saeed Anwar to give Blair a catch with the third ball. Then Simon Doull, in his first over, got Aamir Sohail to edge a catch to second slip.

New Zealand coach Geoff Howarth said after the day's play he was surprised at how much swing the Pakistan bowlers were able to exact with the old ball.

"No one has come up with a satisfactory explanation of how they do it," he said.

He said he asked the um-

pires to check the ball at tea as he has done throughout the tour but added: "As far as I am concerned there is nothing to report."

### SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard on the second day of the third and final Test between New Zealand and Pakistan today.

**PAKISTAN:** First Innings (overnight 334-7)

Saeed Anwar c Young b Doull	69
Aamir Sohail c Hatfield b Doull	60
Atif Rauf c Greatbatch b Morrison	18
Salim Malik b Hart	16
Basit Ali c Hatfield b Pringle	103
Inzamam-ul-Haq c Greatbatch b Doull	5
Rashid Latif c Hatfield b Thomson	27
Wasim Akram c Greatbatch b Morrison	5
Akram Raza not out	29
Waqar Younis c Doull b Morrison	2
Aamir Nazir b Morrison	10
Extras: (lb-6, w-1, nb-3)	0
Total:	344

Fall of wickets: 1-25; 2-47; 3-159; 4-195; 5-206; 6-254; 7-261; 8-339; 9-344.

Bowling:	O	M	R	W
Morrison	24	3	105	4
Doull	25	3	93	3
Pringle	33	6	83	1
Hart	9	2	37	1
Thomson	6	0	20	1

**NEW ZEALAND:** First Innings

Hartland c Basit Ali b Younis	3
Young lbw b Nazir	38
Jones run out	81
Rutherford c Inzamam b Younis	7
Greatbatch lbw b Akram	1
Thomson c Latif b Younis	3
Blair lbw b Younis	0
Hart b Akram	6
Doull lbw b Younis	17
Morrison not out	6
Pringle b Younis	0
Extras: (lb-9; b-5; nb-24)	38
Total:	200

Fall of wickets: 1-12; 2-109; 3-134; 4-139; 5-147; 6-147; 7-171; 8-186; 9-198.

Bowling:	O	M	R	W
Wasim Akram	22	5	54	2
Waqar Younis	19	1	78	6
Aamir Nazir	15	2	54	1

**Pakistan:** Second Innings

Saeed Anwar c Blair b Morrison	0
Aamir Sohail c Young b Doull	3
Atif Rauf not out	3
Akram Raza not out	2
Extras:	0
Total: (for two wickets)	8

To bat: Salim Malik, Basit Ali, Inzamam-ul-Haq, Rashid Latif, Wasim Akram, Waqar Younis, Aamir Nazir.

Fall of wickets: 1-0; 2-3

Bowling:	O	M	R	W
Morrison	4	3	2	1
Pringle	2	0	4	0
Doull	2	0	2	1

## WI-Eng 2nd one-dayer today



KINGSTON, Jamaica, Feb 25: Michael Atherton vowed not to press the panic button after England's crushing defeat to the West Indies in the first Test at Sabina Park here on Thursday, reports AFP.

Meanwhile, home skipper Richie Richardson promised the tourists a diet of more hostile bowling as the series warmed up.