



Mahbub Rahman of the Rajshahi Education Board making a victory sign after winning the 1500-metre free-style of the 18-20 years age group on the second day of the four-day 14th national age group championship yesterday.

Rutherford's birthday plans turn sour as Rain rescues West Indies

GOA, India, Oct 26: New Zealand captain Ken Rutherford's birthday celebrations turned sour on Wednesday as rain deprived his underdog team of almost certain victory over the West Indies in a one-day match here, reports AFP.

The jovial 30-year-old was in high spirits when his left-arm spinner Matthew Hart took a career-best five for 22 to send the West Indians packing for 123 on a low wicket.

Chasing a moderate target of 2.4 runs an over, the Kiwis had reached 25 for one in nine overs by lunch when a heavy, unseasonal downpour in this popular beach resort ruined the game.

The match, New Zealand's first in the triangular series also involving hosts India, was abandoned as a draw since a minimum of 25 overs a side had to be bowled to achieve a result.

While Rutherford, who scored a duck against Australia on his last birthday, rued his luck, the West Indians were fortunate to have escaped after the loss in Sunday's opening match against India.

Another defeat here would have left the West Indians needing to win both their return matches against New Zealand and India to entertain hopes of playing the final on November 5.

They now have three days to recoup before next Sunday's crucial game against India in Kanpur. The luckless Kiwis fly to the western city of Baroda to take on the home team in their second match on Friday.

The New Zealanders, who landed in India just 48 hours earlier, appeared to have adjusted well to the unfamiliar hot and humid climate here when they took the field after the West Indies had won the toss and elected to bat.

The 22-year-old Hart, playing only his seventh one-day international, bowled a tidy line from the start to fox the spin-wary West Indian batsmen.

Hart's dream spell saw West Indies lose seven wickets for 31 runs after Brian Lara's strokeful 32 off 42 balls had taken them to a comfortable 71 for one in the 14th over.

The record-breaking Lara slammed five boundaries before he became Hart's first victim, stumped by wicket-keeper Adam Parore, who also assisted in four other dismissals.

Hart then removed Carl Hooper (22), Phil Simmons (0), Jummy Adams (5) and captain Courtney Walsh (0) to improve upon his previous best three for 43 against Australia in Sharjah earlier this year.

Off-spinner Shane Thomson, slammed for two sixes by Hooper in his first over, conceded just seven runs in his remaining nine overs to provide valuable support to Hart.

China to do it a la ASDA

CANBERRA, Oct 26: China will move to dampen concerns that its sports stars use performance-enhancing drugs and set up an independent drug testing agency that can check on athletes randomly, Australia's sports minister said today, reports Reuters.

Chinese authorities indicated they would create the body along the lines of Australia's own drug testing agency, which tests athletes randomly and often outside of competitions, Sports Minister John Faulkner said.

He was announcing an agreement between Australia and China on drug testing in sport.

"Using the ASDA (Australian Sports Drugs Agency) model, they've said that their agency should be focused heavily on out-of-competition testing," Faulkner told Reuters in an interview.

"There's been a lack of out-of-competition testing... it's a very significant step forward in that regard," Faulkner said.

A spate of world record-breaking performances by Chinese swimmers and track athletes has fuelled speculation by some western coaches that Chinese athletes use performance enhancing drugs.

Until now Chinese sports authorities have not been able to carry out widespread random testing of athletes and have had to rely on tests by international bodies.

In September, the International Amateur Athletics Federation surprised the "Ma family army" of women distance runners with spot doping tests in Beijing. The federation reported two weeks ago that "Ma's army" tested negative.

Coach Ma Junren feeds turtle blood to his runners and is feared to be using it.

Have no fear, Hemdale is here

HONG KONG, Oct 26: Ticket holders for "High Noon in Hong Kong" were promised Wednesday they would get all their money back for the boxing spectacular that never was, reports AFP.

In a statement, organiser Hemdale Hong Kong Ltd. said it would fully refund tickets sold before the World Boxing Organisations heavyweight title fight was suddenly called off Saturday.



Minnesota Timberwolves forward Christian Laettner (L) has his shot blocked by Chicago Bulls guard B.J. Armstrong during their pre-season game at the United Centre in Chicago on October 25.

Crowd stampede, rain ruin Aussie-Pak tie

GUJRANWALA, Pakistan, Oct 26: A crowd stampede left some 20 people injured and marred a one-day match Wednesday between Pakistan and Australia that was reduced from an international to an exhibition due to heavy overnight rains, reports AFP.

Pakistan, with 124 for six in 15 overs, topped Australia, 123 in 14.3 overs, in the exhibition at Municipal Stadium in Gujranwala, an industrial city about 70 kilometres (43 miles) north of Lahore.

The crowd stampede took place an hour before the match when the stands were packed with 20,000 fans, but an almost equal number still remained outside the gates.

As the fans outside the stadium grew restless, police fired tear gas and baton charged the crowd, which then stormed through one of the entrances. Several thousand made it onto the ground, but many were trampled and pinned against a fence outside.

Six men were left unconscious, one man broke a leg and the others had mostly cuts and bruises.

"Some of them squashed and were screaming in agony," said Errol Alcott, the Australian team physiotherapist, who helped police move and treat the injured. "They were dazed and didn't have their bearings."

Order was restored before play began on the wet ground. Heavy overnight rain seeped under the tarpaulin and left the bowlers' run up soggy.

Pakistan take on winless South Africa in Faisalabad on Oct 28 in the final game match of the triangular series. Pakistan and Australia will meet for the title Oct 30 in Lahore.

Aussies, SA unhappy over crowd behaviour

LAHORE, Oct 26: The Australian and South African cricket teams arrived here Tuesday, unhappy with the crowd behaviour during their match at Peshawar in the Wills triangular series, reports AFP.

"The crowd behaviour was unacceptable," said Krish Mackender, president of United Cricket Board of South Africa.

Mushtaf Khan, manager of the South African team, said it was "traumatic" and at one stage, "We were thinking of pulling out of the team."

Regretting the incident, Australian team manager Colin Eager said: "We have now forgotten all about it."

Cricket commentators said there was no particular reason for the crowd to behave the way it did, attributing the incident, said to be the first in Peshawar during an international cricket match, to mismanagement.

Bindra shocked

CHANDIGARH, Oct 26: I.S. Bindra, president of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), has expressed his shock at the tragic death of his Sri Lankan counterpart, Gamini Dissanayake, in a bomb blast in Colombo late Sunday night, reports PTI.

Dissanayake, who was a United National Party's candidate for the presidential polls, was elected president of the Sri Lankan Cricket Board about four months ago.

Bindra in a condolence message sent to the Sri Lankan Board said that Dissanayake whose association with the ICC dates back to 1980, made tremendous contribution to the game of cricket.

"We were looking forward to his guidance and advice in the conduct of the next World Cup in the sub-continent," Bindra said.

The noble nine

ATLANTA, Oct 26: Nine Nobel prize laureates in literature, including eight of the last 10 winners, will meet for a symposium next spring in Atlanta, officials of the Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games said on Tuesday, reports Reuters.

The Nobel laureates have agreed to meet as part of the cultural festival leading up to the 1996 Olympic Games. The Nobel meeting will be held in April in the Georgia state capital and hosted by former US President Jimmy Carter.

The gathering of nine of the 16 living laureates will represent the largest gathering of Nobel prize winners in literature in the 94-year history of the award, Atlanta Olympic officials said.

Among those, who are scheduled to attend are this year's winner, Japanese novelist Kenzaburo Oe, and last year's winner, American novelist Toni Morrison.

Other winners attending will be: Trinidadian poet Derek Walcott (1992), Mexican poet Octavio Paz (1990), Spanish novelist Camilo Jose Cela (1989), Russian American poet Joseph Brodsky (1987), Nigerian playwright Wole Soyinka (1986), French novelist Claude Simon (1985) and Czeslaw Milosz, the Polish-American poet (1980).

England face WA today in a new-look one-dayer Fletcher not impressed

PERTH, Oct 26: Outspoken England cricket coach Keith Fletcher has poured cold water on a new one-day match concept to be used for the first time in the world at top level here Thursday, reports AFP.

"I don't think it will work," Fletcher declared here today as England limbered up for the opening major game of their Ashes tour.

They will clash with Western Australia in a WACA ground day-night shoot-out divided into four quarters, rather than the usual two halves.

Under the new system, the team batting first will remain at the wicket for only 25 overs before the opposition goes to the crease for the same number of overs.

Then the process is repeated until the end of the match.

The new approach was the idea of Western Australian Cricket Association, which has the support of the Australian Cricket Board and the Test and County Cricket Board in England.

The formula is designed to allow both teams to play in similar conditions and to promote a close, more exciting contest.

But Fletcher said: "I believe the public will expect the team batting first to have the usual 50 overs."

"If it rained during the match, there could be huge complications."

However, it is just an experiment, and I am quite happy to have a look at it. I might be proved wrong."

Tactically, England would approach the game exactly the same as if it were a conventional one-day game, he said.

"If you have, say, 100 runs after the first 25 overs, you will be going for six an over in the last 25 to get a total about 250."

The new format would not be easy for batsmen, Fletcher said.

Players who have built up a head of steam and then compelled to leave the wicket after the opening 25 overs will have to re-establish themselves at the crease later in the match.



KEITH FLETCHER

Keith Fletcher said he was happy with Gooch's form and the opportunity would be used for Mike Gatting to get among the runs.

Gooch is quite happy to have the rest, Fletcher emphasised, adding the team's elder statesman would be playing in the more important four-day clash with Western Australia, also at the WACA ground, starting Saturday.



KEITH FLETCHER

"I suppose it might be slightly easier for the bowlers because they will have a sit-down at the half-way mark"

Becker blows Reneberg away

STOCKHOLM, Oct 26: Boris Becker and Andrei Chernenko defeated Bernd Karbacher of Germany 7-6 (8-6), 6-3, Patrick Rafter beat Jason Stoltenberg 7-6 (7-3), 6-4 in an all-Australian affair, and David Berasategui of Spain and Magnus Gustafsson of Sweden. The Swede withdrew because of injury.

The field includes winners of four tournaments Sunday - Andre Agassi (Vienna, Austria), Michael Chang (Beijing), Stefan Edberg (Hong Kong) and Marc Rosset (Lyon, France) - but none will play until Wednesday.

The Globe Arena's medium-fast surface is likely to suit Agassi, a strong baseline player. However, serve-and-volley specialists have dominated this event for several years.

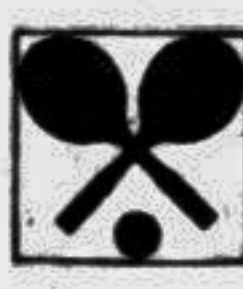
The 24-year-old American has not played in Stockholm since 1990, when he lost his opening match to Nicklas Kulti of Sweden, who will be his first opponent this year.

Kulti showed strong form when beating France's Cedric Pioline 6-2, 2-6, 7-5 in his opening match.

Goran Ivanisevic, who lost last year's final, is the No. 2 seed behind Pete Sampras, the world's number one player. Stich, the defending champion, is No. 3 followed by French Open champion Sergi Bruguera and Stefan Edberg.

Edberg, who won back-to-back Stockholm Open titles in 1986-87, avenged last year's loss to Richard Krajicek here by winning Sunday's final in Hong Kong.

Edberg is making his 13th start in Stockholm.



BORIS BECKER

Wheaton of the United States overcame Jonas Svensson of Sweden 7-6 (10-8), 6-2.

Three Swedes made it to the second round. Christian Bergstrom straight-setted Todd Woodbridge of Australia 7-6 (7-2), 6-1, Magnus Larsson overcame Richard Fromberg, also of Australia, 6-1, 7-6 (9-7), and Jan Apell beat Henrik Holm in an all-Swedish encounter 6-2, 6-4.

This year's Open musters its strongest field ever with all Top 20 players except Alberto

All seeded players in the 48-man draw received first-round byes.

Kafelnikov, seeded 11th, beat Frenchman Guy Forget, a finalist in the tournament in 1992, 7-6 (7-4), 6-4.

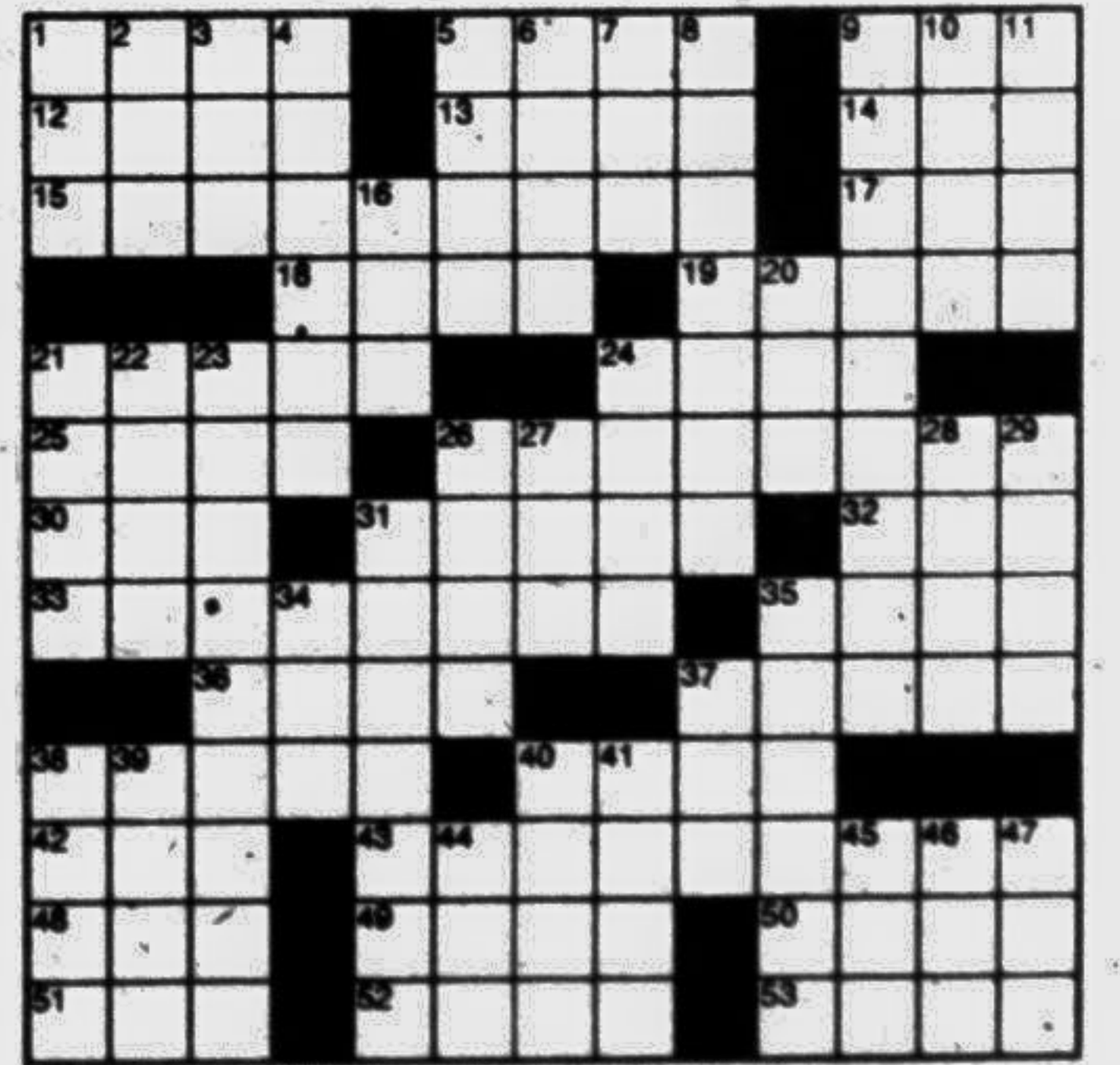
Two other seeded players, who also saw action Tuesday, were eliminated. Frenchman Arnaud Boetsch, a two-time quarterfinalist at the Stockholm Open in 1992 and 1993, beat 14th-seeded Thomas Muster of Austria 7-6 (7-4), 6-1 while talented Italian Andrea Gaudenzi defeated 16th-seeded Richard Krajicek of the

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS	36 "Sad to tell..."	DOWN	21 Kyoto sashes
1 The O'Hara estate	37 Tom Sawyer's girlfriend	1 Child	22 Shout prior to a shot
5 Make a shambles of	38 Photo-copier	2 Parisian's pal	23 Ballerinas' fortes
9 10th anniversary gift	40 Do mail-room work	3 Fun 'n' games, briefly	24 Destiny
12 Bad sign	42 Letterhead abbr.	4 Short sock	26 Writer Kingsley
13 Choreographer White	43 "Hollywood Squares" basis	5 Sunday paper sect.	27 Ms. Ullmann
14 Top-notch	48 Born	6 Condo	28 Bottle feature
15 Meter-maid's task	49 Needle case	7 B&B	29 Convince
17 He played Mr. Peepers	50 Person in charge	8 Like Xanthippe	31 Track official
18 Robber's satchelful	51 Ninny	9 Balsam poplar	34 Heady quaff
19 Farber book	52 California gridders	10 Computer symbol	35 Like forage plants
21 Almost always	53 Just shy of a meter	11 Barber-shop call	37 Lingerie purchase
24 Hollywood industry		16 Many, many years	38 Turner or Sinatra
25 Italy's silhouette		20 Type	39 Individuals
26 "Northern Exposure" folks			40 It rises to the top
30 Wrath			41 Elevator name
31 Whom Pocahontas rescued			44 Call — day
32 Chop down			45 Crumpets' mate
33 Tranquilizer			46 Scull need
35 Mate of a toro			47 Teaching dog.

Solution time: 24 mins.

Yesterday's answer 2-8



CRYPTOQUIP

ORL USL TOLA ORIO
VUUZ-OU-VUUZ DIFLDALS
VUS O DLEFF: VUUZD
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: I'M HOPING FOR A BICYCLE FOR MY BIRTHDAY, BUT I'M SOFT-PEDALING IT.
Today's Cryptoquip clue: S equals N
The Cryptoquip is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.