

Second Test against India begins today

Windies' status at stake

NAGPUR, Nov 30: The suffering West Indies cricket team go into Thursday's second Test against India in the unusual role of underdogs, needing a win to square the three-match series, reports Reuters.

A tight schedule, late flights, missing baggage, some poor wickets and violent demonstrations that forced the cancellation of two days of their last three-day game have hit a touring side missing some top players.

The three-day match at Calicut in the southern state of Kerala must have been near an all-time low for a West Indian touring side.

A wet ground had made practice impossible. Then a strike led by communist students meant the first day, when the tourists were bowled out by national champions Bombay for only 176, was sparsely attended.

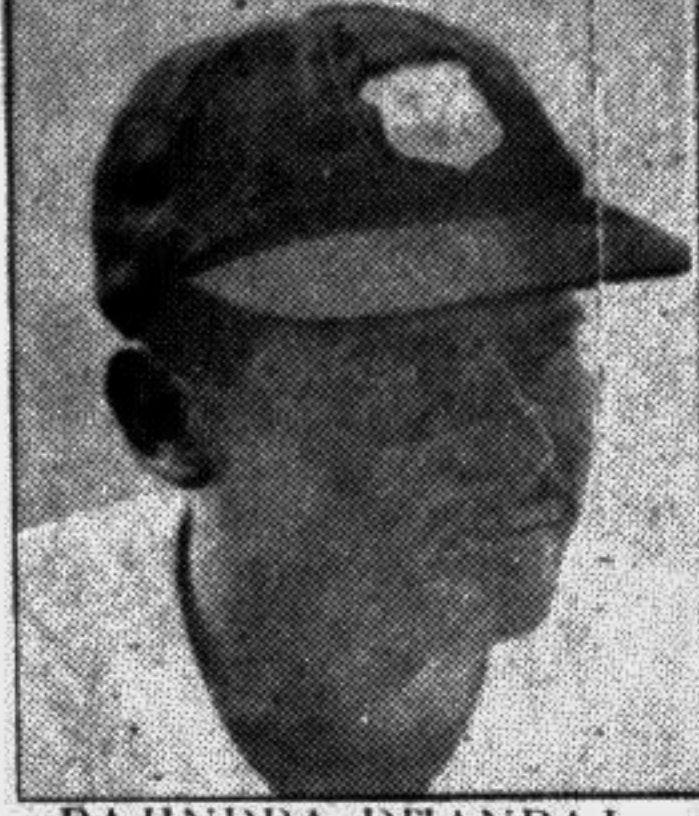
The second day's play was called off because the strike had turned violent and the West Indies decided to scrap the game.

This is the worst tour I have had in my five years of association with the West Indies team," tour manager David Holford said at the time.

Now they have to play in Nagpur, where some 130 demonstrators were trampled

to death in a stampede that followed a police baton charge last week.

To add to the general unsettling atmosphere the West Indies, normally the world's toughest Test side to beat, will have to play on a wicket generally seen as likely to take spin.



RAJINDRA DHANRAJ That will, of course, suit a home side featuring three spinners, including left-armers Venkatapathy Raju who did much of the damage in India's 96-run win in the first Test at Bombay.

Team sources say the West Indies, who will not name their side until just before the start of play, are considering bringing in leg-spinner Rajendra Dhanraj, possibly at the expense of all-rounder Shivnarine Chanderpaul.

Paceman Anderson Cummins, back from illness that

struck in Bombay, will probably replace Cameron Cuffy. But the pace attack, with the exception of captain Courtney Walsh, has looked anything but the usual devastating Caribbean machine.

The West Indians had a serious practice session on Tuesday, their first since the Bombay Test ended more than a week ago, and another intensive session today.

That has cheered them up. "The boys have got their confidence back," Holford said today. "I think it should turn out to be a good match."

TEAMS

INDIA (from): Mohammad Azharuddin (Capt), Manoj Prabhakar, Navjot Singh Sidhu, Vinod Kambli, Sachin Tendulkar, Sanjay Manjrekar, Nayan Mongia, Anil Kumble, Javagal Srinath, Rajesh Chauhan, Venkatapathy Raju, Ajay Jadeja, Venkatesh Prasad, Prashant Vaidya.

WEST INDIES (from): Courtney Walsh (Capt), Phil Simmons, Sherwin Campbell, Stuart Williams, Brian Lara, Carl Hooper, Keith Arthurton, Roland Holder, Jimmy Adams, Junior Murray, Anderson Cummins, Kenneth Benjamin, Rajendra Dhanraj, Shivnarine Chanderpaul, Cameron Cuffy, Barrington Browne.

Umpires: Nigel Plews (England), V K Ramaswamy (India).

Local hopes fizzle out

Sports Reporter

Bangladeshi national number one Hira Lal and compatriot Shaiful stumbled at the starting block as the local challenge in the main draw of the ITF Gold Leaf Thailand-Bangladesh Satellite Circuit tennis championships fizzled out on the inaugural day at the Rajshahi Tennis Complex on Tuesday.

Hira Lal, however, can claim he went down fighting to a theoretically immensely superior opponent Owen Casey of Ireland, ranked third in the circuit. The Irishman gave his Bangladeshi counterpart little space to manoeuvre on his way to a 6-1, 6-0 rout.

Shaiful fared no better than Hira Lal as he went down 0-6, 1-6 to Malaysian Veerasingham in his first round outing.

In the doubles draw their luck didn't change and the lone local pair won only one game each in both sets against the Thai duo of Navawongse and Srichapan also in the first round.

Sixteen singles and eight doubles matches were held on the inaugural day.

Earlier, State Minister for Planning Dr Moin Khan declared the meet open as chief guest. Rajshahi City Corporation mayor Mizanur Rahman was also present as a special guest.

The four-leg circuit goes full circle with the Masters' leg beginning at the Ramna National Tennis Complex from December 5.



State Minister for Planning, Dr Moin Khan (second from R) inaugurating the third of the four-leg Thailand-Bangladesh ITF Men's Satellite Circuit tennis tournament at the Rajshahi Tennis Complex on Tuesday. — Star photo

Khulna, Tangail in Incontrad v'ball final

Sports Reporter

Khulna and Tangail advanced to the men's final in the Incontrad inter-district volleyball championship winning their respective semifinals at the volleyball court adjacent to the Dhaka Stadium yesterday.

In an exciting second semifinal, Tangail prevailed over Dhaka 3-2. The winners lost the second and third set after winning the first two before finally squeezing out the fifth and final set 15-13.

On the other hand, Khulna found an extremely easy passage to the final when they blanked Rangpur 15-9, 15-11, 15-11.

The final between Khulna and Tangail will be held at the Mirpur indoor stadium today while the third position deciding match will be played at the Dhaka Stadium court.

First Division badminton from today

The National Bank First Division men's and women's badminton league begin today at the NSC wooden floor gymnasium, reports UNB.

The leagues, to be played on single league basis, will have eight teams in the women's group and seven teams in the men's section.

The teams are Mohammedan SC, Bangladesh Biman, Surjo Tarun Club, Sheelch Club, Dhaka Badminton Club, Dilkusha SC, Sputnik International and Renaissance Club. All the teams, except Renaissance Club, will also participate in the men's league.

Labour and Manpower Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan will inaugurate the two-week league at 5 pm.

President of Bangladesh Badminton Federation and State Minister for Finance M. Mojibar Rahman will preside.

2nd SAARC badminton next year

The second SAARC badminton tournament will be held in Dhaka next year during September-October, reports UNB.

The Bangladesh Badminton Federation has already received necessary permission from the South Asian Badminton Federation to host the second version of the tournament.

Most of the member countries, including defending champions India, have expressed their willingness to participate in the prestigious meet, being organised after nearly six years.

India hosted the first SAARC badminton meet in 1988 in Hyderabad.

Quantum leap

STANFORD, Calif. Nov 30: Stanford men's swimming coach Skip Kenney and women's coach Richard Quick will direct the 1996 US Olympic teams, reports AP.

Kenney, an assistant coach in the 1984 and 1988 Olympics led US teams in the 1994 World Championships, the 1993 Pan-Pacific Championships and the 1987 Pan American Games. He has led the Cardinal to six National Collegiate Athletic Association titles in 15 years.

G — Eleven comes to light

TOKYO, Nov 30: A leading Japanese newspaper today published what it said was the names of 11 Chinese athletes who tested positive for drugs at last month's Asian Games, reports Reuters.

The Asahi Shimbun also said China stood to lose a total of 22 medals it won at the Games to Hiroshima if an Olympic Council of Asia (OCA) board meeting next month decides to disqualify the eleven.

The athletes were identified by the newspaper as four men and three women swim-

mers, a woman hurdler, two men canoeists and a woman cyclist. They won 15 golds, six silvers and a bronze.

The Asahi Shimbun gave the following list of names:

SWIMMING

Men Hu Bin — a gold in 50 metres freestyle.

Xiong Guoming — four golds in 200 metres freestyle, 200 metres individual medley, 400 metres individual medley, 2x400 metres relay and a silver in 4x100 metres relay.

Xue Wei — a gold in 200 metres butterfly.

Fu Yong — a bronze in 400 metres individual medley.

Women

Lu Bin — four golds in 50 metres freestyle, 200 metres freestyle, 200 metres individual medley, 4x100 metres relay and two silvers in 100 metres freestyle, 100 metres backstroke.

Zhou Guanbin — a gold in 400-metre freestyle and a silver in 800-metre freestyle.

Yang Aihua — a silver in 400-metre freestyle.

ATHLETICS

Han Qing — a gold in women's 400 metres hurdle.

CANOING

Zhang Lei — two golds in men's 500 and 1,000 metre Canada singles.

Qui Suoren — a silver in men's 1,000 metres Canadian Paris cycling.

Wang Yan — a gold in women's sprint.

The Chinese sports daily said today China's Olympic Committee has launched an official inquiry after being formally notified that 11 of its top athletes have failed drugs tests.

Wednesday's edition of the

state-run newspaper, in a brief report at the bottom of its front page, gave the Chinese public its first formal notification of the drugs scandal.

The revelations threaten to cast a dark shadow over China's growing international sports prowess, a source of great national pride.

The newspaper, quoting sources at the Chinese Olympic Committee, said an official of China's Asian Games delegation had returned to Tokyo to review analyses of urine samples of the 11 Chinese athletes.

"The Chinese Olympic Committee was shocked and felt sorry and has instructed the associations concerned to investigate the matter immediately," the newspaper said.

Chinese officials said they would pursue all appeals to ensure China's athletes were accorded due process but that China would accept the council's findings.

Meanwhile AFP adds: The chairman of the Olympic Council of Asia's medical commission said Tuesday he would convene a special committee next month to judge on the case of 11 Chinese athletes suspected of using banned substances in the Asian Games in Hiroshima last month.

Yoshio Kuroda, however, refused to confirm news reports identifying the 11 competitors, including 17-year-old swimmer Lu Bin, winner of four golds in the games.

"I'm planning to set up a sports medical committee on December 15 or 16 to submit to the OCA our final results of the cases from the medical point of view," Kuroda told AFP.

Biman Open squash begins Dec 12

The second Biman Open squash tournament, organised by the Bangladesh Squash Rackets Federation, will begin on December 12 at the Gulshan Club squash court, reports UNB.

Men's singles, veteran singles and team events are included in the competition sponsored by Biman Bangladesh Airlines.

Interested players and teams are requested to send their entries by December 6 to the respective clubs.

Good day for RU natants

Abdul Qadir of Rajshahi University became the fastest swimmer of the universities winning the 50-metre freestyle in the inter-university swimming and water polo competition which concluded at the Dhaka University pool yesterday, reports UNB.

Abu Zafar of the same university finished second while Ahsanul Mazid of the Dhaka University became third.

Three other events were decided on the closing day of the meet with Rajshahi University swimmers claiming all the golds on offer.

In the 200-metre breaststroke, Amjad Hossain (RU) became first while Ahsanul Mazid and Hafizul Islam of DU finished second and third respectively.

Abdul Qadir (RU) won the 400-metre freestyle while Mahfuzur Rahman, also of RU, became second and Nawsher Ali (DU) finished third.

The Rajshahi University quartet (Abu Zafar, Amjad, Mahfuzur Rahman and Qadir) won the 4x100 metres medley relay. Dhaka University became second and Agricultural University finished third.

In water polo, Dhaka University beat Rajshahi University by 4-3 goals.

German runner suspended

LEVERKUSEN, Germany, Nov 30: The German Athletics Federation (DLV) has suspended long distance runner, Martin Bremer, for using the performance-enhancing hormone testosterone, reports AP.

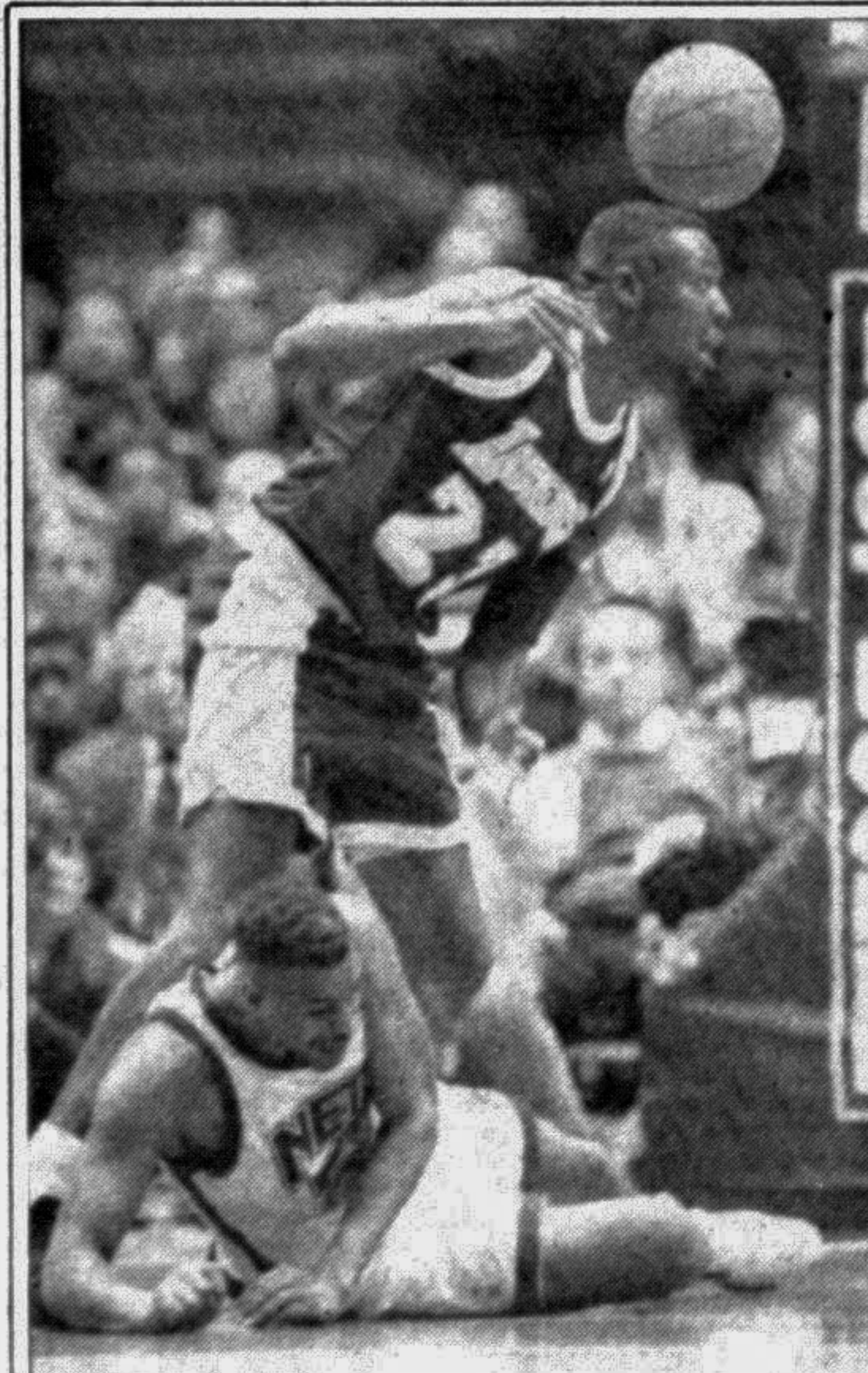
According to a DLV statement Wednesday, Bremer admitted he had been given testosterone by his doctor because his normal hormone level had been depleted by illness.

Bremer, 24, surprised the track world in September when he replaced his Leverkusen club teammate and Olympic gold medalist, Dieter Baumann, to take third place in the 5,000 metres in a personal best of 13:33.57 minutes.

However, DLV Secretary-General, Jan Kern, said that Bremer's performance in London was not affected by the doping.

Bremer was tested at Fribourg, Switzerland, where he took part in a half-marathon on Oct 2. The results of the test showed a testosterone level far above normal.

With the suspension by the national federation, Bremer also faces a possible four-year suspension by the International Track and Field Federation.



Los Angeles Lakers Cedric Caballos (top) loses control of the ball as he steps over New Jersey Nets Jayson Williams at the Byrre Arena in Rutherford, New Jersey on Nov 29. The Lakers defeated the Nets 129-120. — AFP photo

Aftermath of Sino scandal

HONG KONG, Nov 30: Growing suspicions about the reasons behind China's sports superpower status compelled several international federations to step up testing procedures, reports AFP.

On Monday, when it was reported that 11 Chinese competitors failed tests for banned performance-enhancing substances at last month's Asian Games, the International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF) decided to toughen regulations further.

Drug-cheat athletes will now be banned on the basis of the first positive test instead of two, the IAAF council decided. Athletes can still insist on a second sample being tested. But the move was a clear sign of the growing embarrassment at the continuing drug scandals casting a shadow over the movement.

"Pressure has been building for several months for stricter tests because the drug problem seems to be cropping up again. The Chinese are an important factor, though not the only one," said an Olympic Council of Asia executive member about the latest scandal.

Reports of the newest blow to China's reputation — confirmed by the tests on a second batch of urine samples — have emphasised that none of Ma Junren's army of world-beating runners were among the positive tests.

But, according to Japanese press reports, a Chinese runner was among those caught at

the Hiroshima Games from October 2 to 16. And the Chinese authorities admitted that Qu Qiaoping, China's Asian record holder discus thrower, failed a test just before the Games.

The International Swimming Federation (FINA) also stepped up out-of-competition test just before Hiroshima. A swoop on last-minute training for the Asian Games caught world 400-metre freestyle champion Yang Aihua who was banned for two years last week. Until recently, FINA had rarely carried out such tests in training.

Reports of the in-competition failures at Hiroshima said seven or eight of the 11 Chinese who tested positive were swimmers.

Coaches from rival nations have made repeated complaints about the Chinese swimmers who won 12 of the 16 gold medals at the World Championships in Rome in September.

The influential US publication World Swimming decided not to take into account the performances of any of China's world champions, simply because of drug suspicions.

Techniques to detect drug cheats are becoming more sophisticated. But sports officials say athletes are also taking advantage of latest research.

"Despite the shaming of the likes of Ben Johnson, though, naked ambition is still a powerful force," said one International Olympic Committee observer in Hiroshima.

Another problem is that different federations have differ-

ent test methods and rules for carrying out tests. The IOC had been trying for several years to introduce universal techniques.

Substances that increase production of the male hormone testosterone — made infamous by the disgraced sprinter Johnson at the 1988 Seoul Olympics — are currently the most popular at training camps.

Testosterone increases muscle bulk and thus strength. But amphetamines are also thought to be widely used. The Thai national soccer captain tested positive for an amphetamine in Hiroshima.

But the drugs cannot always be detected by current urine samples taken at random out of competition and on at least one medal winner from each event during competition. These are then sent to approved laboratories around the world.

There are also state-of-the-art masking drugs which can hide use of substances on the banned list.

The IOC hopes that blood testing, to be introduced at the Atlanta Olympics in 1996, will prove a revolution in the fight against sports cheats.

The pinprick sample is taken from earlobe or a finger and is said to be many times more effective than urine tests.

But — IOC president Juan Antonio Samaranch and other doping experts have pointed out — as soon as a surefire way of catching cheats is found, a new way is created to get around the test.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down words. Includes a solution for the previous day's puzzle.

Cryptoquip puzzle grid with a grid of numbers and letters for solving.

CRYPTOQUIP QGH EYU SEKO QPKIWI BESPAPXPGK GNPOYUW ENHBWXT? Yesterday's Cryptoquip: HITCHHIKER SUCCEEDED ON HIS TREK LAST MONTH BECAUSE HE IS ALL THUMBS. Today's Cryptoquip clue: X equals C 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.