

Crowe in WC squad

WELLINGTON, Dec 30: Star batsman Martin Crowe has been named in the New Zealand squad for next year's World Cup tournament...

Lankans stoop to Aussies



MELBOURNE, Dec 30: Australia bowlers Shane Warne and Glenn McGrath deepened the gloom surrounding Sri Lanka by sending the tourists crashing to a 10-wicket defeat in the second Test today...

inings to become the first bowler in Test history to take 50 wickets in a calendar year for three years in succession...

McGrath forced pace bowler Chaminda Vaas to fend a short-pitched delivery to David Boon at short leg...

Sri Lanka, who resumed on 284 for six, bolstered by a comprehensive win following an innings victory in the first Test in Perth earlier this month...



McGRATH... m-o-m

FA being discreet

LONDON, Dec 30: If next year's European Championships are a success England could bid to host the 2006 World Cup...

But a bid would depend on Euro '96, to be staged at eight venues around the country in June...

David Davies, the FA's director of public relations, is quoted as saying, "If Euro '96 is the success we all believe it can be, then I am sure the FA would look into the possibility of staging the next available World Cup in 2006..."

FIFA's policy in the past three decades has been to alternate the tournament between Europe and one of the other continents...

Lhwa Asian Club champs



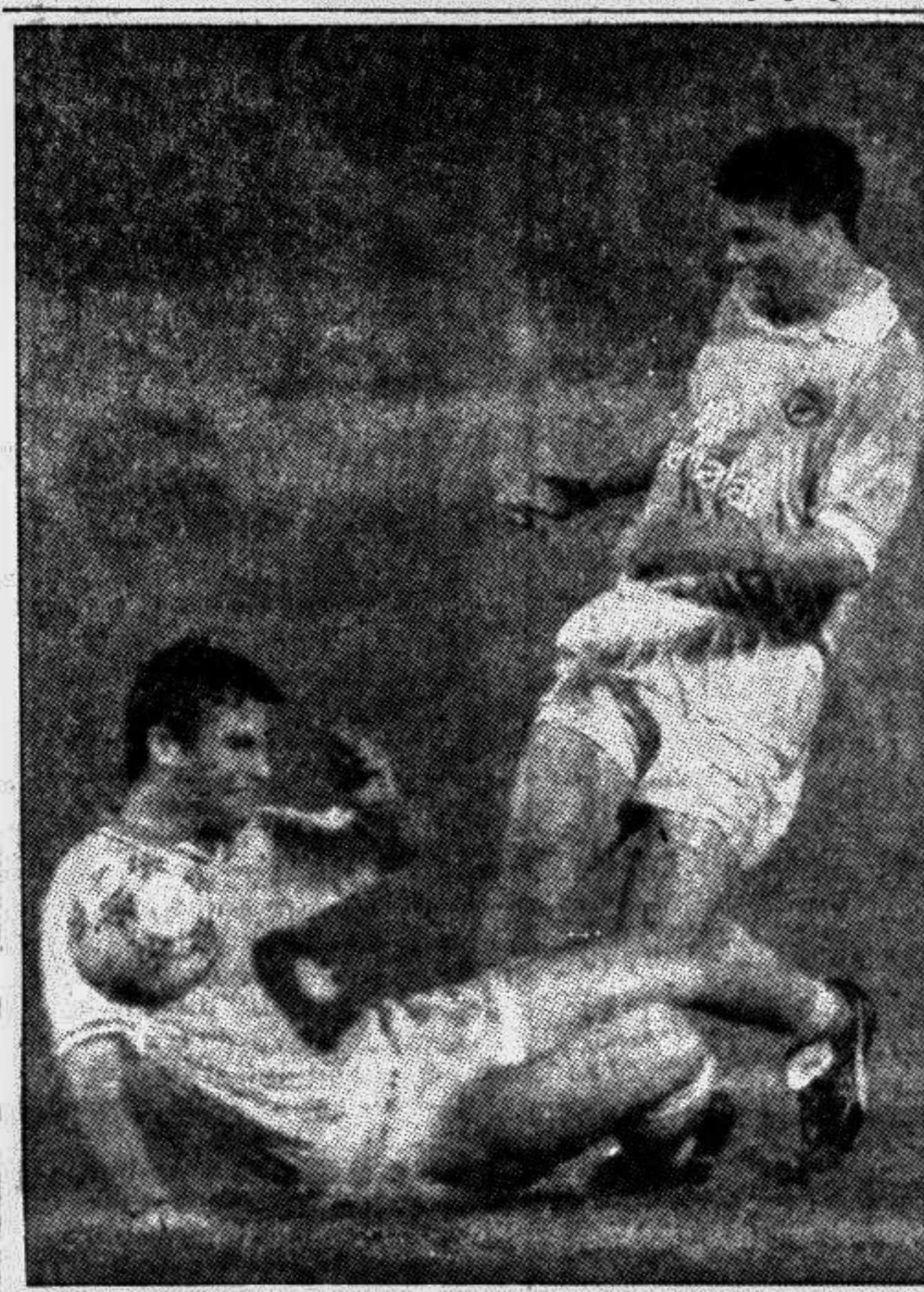
RIYADH, Dec 30: South Korean champions Lhwa Chunma needed sudden-death extra time to beat Saudi champions Al Nassar 1-0...

The defeat for host club Al Nassar may well turn out to be a sad farewell for Abdullah who will contemplate his playing future over the next few days...

However, Al Nassar and Majed Abdullah did have their chances to win the game and the Saudi Arabian champions were denied only by the brilliance of Lhwa defender Stepinkine Gennadi...

The Koreans rarely threatened the Al Nassar goal in a match overflowing with commitment and played at an astonishing pace...

Luck deserted the Iranian champions as they hit the crossbar through Sabih Saran before the Thais took the lead via Phanuwat's close-range header in the 42nd minute...



Benfica's young striker Edgar (R) tries to evade a sliding tackle by Uniao de Liria's defender Paulo Duarte during their Portuguese Premier league match in Lisbon on Dec 29...

SQUAD

Nathan Astle, Chris Cairns, Martin Crowe, Stephen Fleming, Lee Germon, Gavin Larsen, Greg Lovelidge, Craig McMillan, Danny Morrison, Dion Nash, Dipak Patel, Adam Parore, Blair Pocock, Craig Spearman, Roger Twose, Bryan Young, Justin Vaughan, Kerry Walmsley.

Father of British bodybuilding passes away

LONDON, Dec 30: A British bodybuilder Bob Wooller, who helped shape the career and muscles of Hollywood superstar Arnold Schwarzenegger, died this week at the age of 83...

Wooller who suffered a stroke in April, is credited as the founding father of British bodybuilding...

ACB turns back on SL



MELBOURNE, Dec 30: The Australian Cricket Board has turned down a request by Sri Lanka for a summit with controversial umpire Darrell Hair...

The formal request was made to the ICC by Anura Tennekoon, the secretary of the Board of Control for Cricket in Sri Lanka...

"According to the ACB they didn't the umpire to be questioned after he had made a decision. It was on that grounds that the meeting was turned down," Tennekoon said.

Sri Lanka captain Arjuna Ranatunga, who needed a pain-killing injection because of an injured hand, was 11 not out.

Australia paved the way for their crushing victory by scoring a massive 500 for six in their first innings...

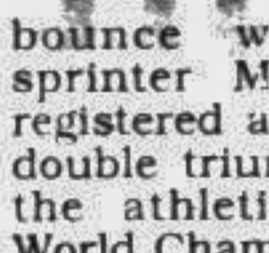
"We just have to accept it and wait. We can't do anything about it," Mendis said, adding that Sri Lanka officials had been cleared by the ICC to request a meeting with Hair.

Karate competition

The first Kashem Group Karate competition began at the Mirpur Indoor Stadium here yesterday, reports BSS. Nearly 650 competitors from 68 clubs are taking part in different weight categories in boys' and girls' group of the two-day meet...

Like Morcelli, Kiptanui also geared himself up hot too early and failed to choose the right time to show his talent. He stunned the world by setting the 5,000m world record on June 8 in Rome...

Tale of triumph, trivia & tears



BEIJING, Dec 30: Britain's triple jumper Jonathan Edwards unleashed an eye-popping bounce while American sprinter Michael Johnson registered an unprecedented double triumph to highlight the athletics year in the World Championship season...

Sergei Bubka, who had set 18 outdoor and 17 indoor world records in the past decade, also registered a world record of other sort by winning his fifth consecutive world title in the men's pole vault...

The year also saw 10 outdoor world records fall and some invincible legendary figures tarnish their names at the drug-clean fifth World Athletics Championships in August in Gothenburg, Sweden.

Murali firm to fight out



SYDNEY, Dec 30: Sri Lankan off-spinner Muttiah Muralitharan does not think he throws in his bowling action, according to published reports Saturday...

that Muralitharan's right elbow — his bowling arm — had a "fixed deformity" of 32 degrees while his left was bent at 26 degrees.

Muralitharan said he would fight to clear his name. The Australian newspaper reported today...

The report also is said to state that the angle in Muralitharan's elbow, at certain angles, could give the impression the arm straightened during delivery.

Under cricket rules, a bowler can be no-balled for throwing if the action starts with a bent elbow but the arm straightens when the ball is delivered.

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Mar 7 offers a fight night

EDMONTON, Alberta, Dec 30: Scott Olson of Canada will defend the International Boxing Organisation world flyweight title on March 7 against Colombia's Jesus Zuniga...

Muralitharan was not called again after swapping to the end controlled by New Zealander Steve Dunne, but Hair apparently warned Sri Lanka management at the tea break on day two he was about to no-ball the off-spinner from either end.

Muralitharan said his unusual bowling action was due to a family trait — he and his three brothers apparently had bent elbows at birth.

"Sometimes I am thinking better to give up the cricket and go back to my family and my father's business, not to play cricket again," he was quoted as saying.

He is Sri Lanka's leading Test wicket taker with 81 from 23 matches.

Muralitharan said in the report he was "very upset" after being called by Hair.

"It distracts me. And after that my thinking was not in the game," he said.

"But I know in my mind that I'm not chucking so I can fight for that... by calling of 31 balls I bowled before him, 24 were perfect and seven were not perfect."

"If you take those 31 balls and show it to the lawyer or the judge or whatever, I think they will see no difference, then why call me for chucking?"

The surgeon, former Ceylon batsman Barclay Reid, apparently said in a report...

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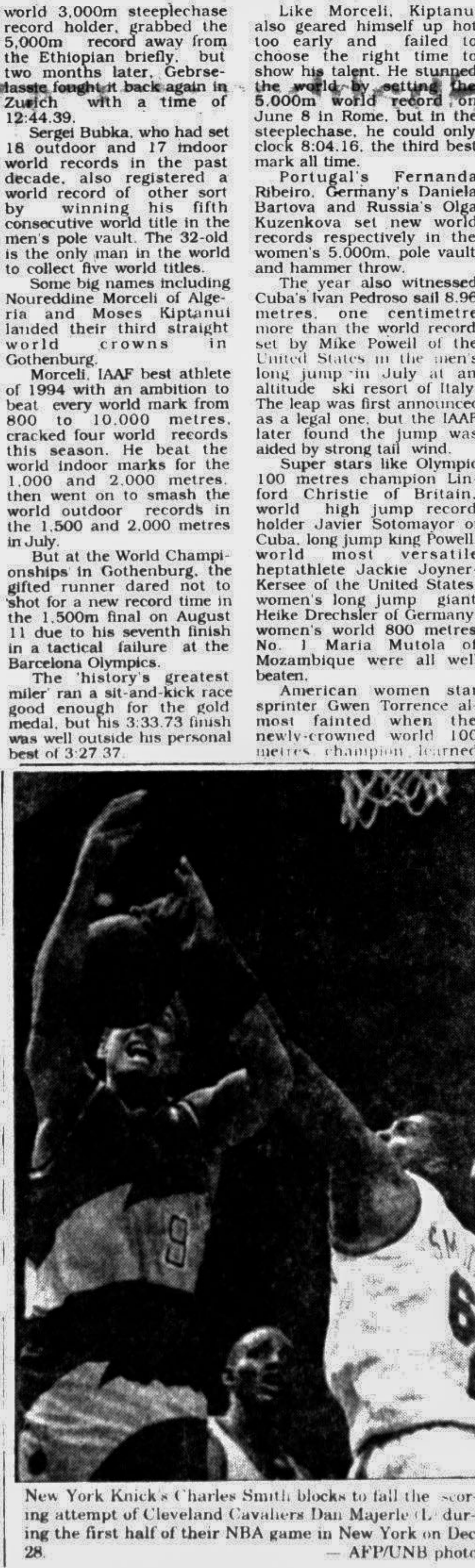
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New York Knick's Charles Smith blocks to foil the scoring attempt of Cleveland Cavaliers Dan Majerle (L) during the first half of their NBA game in New York on Dec 28...



Boon left in the cold

MELBOURNE, Dec 30: Veteran batsman David Boon failed to win back his place in Australia's limited overs side for the World Series competition despite a century in this week's second Test against Sri Lanka, reports Reuters.

Australia made only one change to the 12-man squad to face West Indies at the Sydney Cricket Ground on January 1, recalling seam bowler Paul Reiffel in favour of fast bowler Michael Kasprovic.

Kostadinova's third

SOFIA, Dec 30: World high jump record holder Stefka Kostadinova was voted Bulgarian athlete-of-the-year for the third time on Friday, reports Reuters.

Kostadinova won a gold medal at the world championships in Gothenburg in August, a few months after giving birth to a son.

All-rounder Steve Waugh, absent from the early World Series matches because of a groin injury, missed out again after suffering a hamstring strain in scoring an unbeaten 131 in his side's first innings at the MCG.

SQUAD

Mark Taylor (captain), Ian Healy, Michael Bevan, Stuart Law, Shane Lee, Craig McDermott, Glenn McGrath, Ricky Ponting, Paul Reiffel, Michael Slater, Shane Warne, Mark Waugh.

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