

Column One

DID U' KNOW?

(The Professor does)

HAT is the longest recorded duration for balancing on one foot in 34 hours by Shri N Rair in Sathyamangalam City, Tamil Nadu, India on 17-18 April, 1982.

The disengaged foot may not be rested on the standing foot nor may any object be used for support or balance.

My personal best is about eight hours and several minutes but I did rest myself on different objects. And, moreover, I used an extra foot.

These Guinness chaps have no mercy.

Sports

WHIZZ KID

COMPETITION FOR SCHOOLCHILDREN

Sports WHIZZ KID competition-22

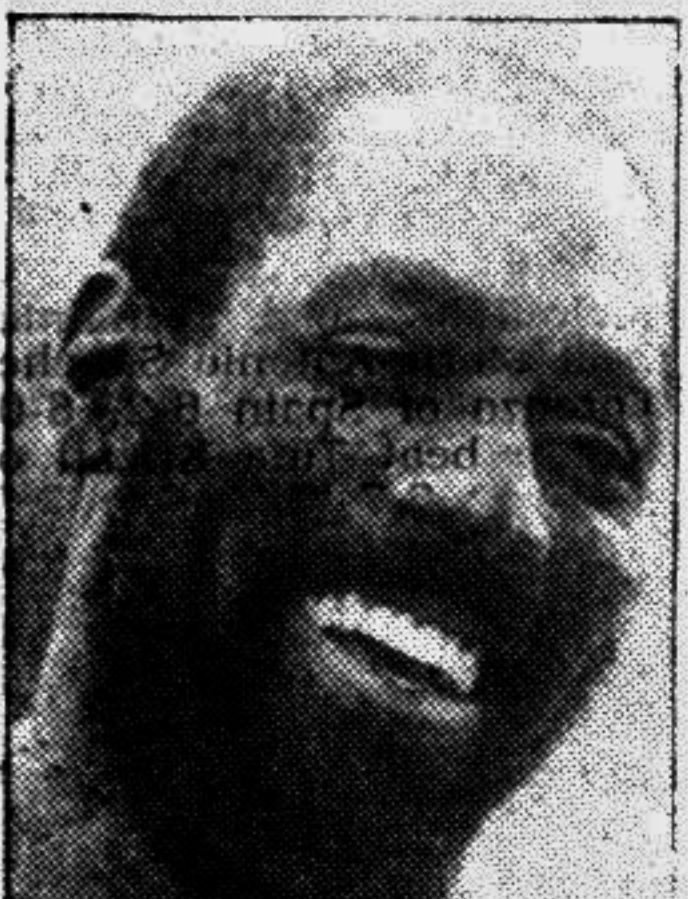
Tick the Correct Answer

(Competition closes: 8 p.m. Jan 19, 1996)

Table with 5 questions and multiple choice options. Question 1: The length of a badminton court is (in feet) 44, 45, 46. Question 2: How many judges in Olympic diving competition? Three, Five, Seven. Question 3: The legendary marathoner Abebe Bikila was from Tanzania, Ethiopia, Kenya. Question 4: How many events in Olympic decathlon? Five, Ten, Twelve. Question 5: The first Bangladeshi to win SAF 100 metres sprint was Bimal, Shah Alan, Amba.

Name: Roll No: School Address: Phone: (if any)

SPORTS TALK



Viv Richards

(Former West Indian cricket legend)

"Play it with a smile. Play it as nature intend, you to. Play it with the mind as well as the muscle. Play it positively."

On how to play cricket.

Scindia in a stew

NEW DELHI, Jan 17: India's Supreme Court has added to the uncertainty surrounding next month's World Cup by refusing to mediate in a contentious row over television rights that threatens to sink the tournament, reports AFP.

Worried organisers were dealt a double blow meanwhile with the expected filing of corruption charges against federal minister Madhavrao Scindia, who heads the India-Pakistan-Sri Lanka Organising Committee (PILCOM).

The supreme court on Tuesday turned down the government's plea to decide whether the tournament's organisers were justified in taking away TV rights from the state-run Doordarshan network in favour of the Pan-Asian Star network.

The court asked government lawyers to go back to a lower court which last month upheld the decision to grant satellite rights to Hong-Kong based Star TV since Doordarshan had not met its financial obligations.

The supreme court asked the government "not to jump the gun," saying a full bench of the Delhi high court was competent to rule on the order, made earlier by a single judge of the same court.

Officials, racing against time to finalise arrangements for the World Cup, which starts on February 11, said the Supreme Court order would further delay a decision on granting uplinking facilities to beam TV pictures of the mega-event.

Scindia, the ruling Congress (I) party politician whom cricket officials looked upon to solve the TV row, was among three ministers named by Indian investigating agencies in a multi-million-dollar bribery scandal on Tuesday.

Scindia denied the charges, but observers say the growing demands for his resignation may prevent him from playing an active role in the organisation of the World Cup.



FIFA Footballer of the Year, George Weah (R) of Liberia, dances his way past Francis Koumba (L) of Gabon during their African Nations Cup match in Durban, South Africa on January 16. Liberia won 2-1. - AFP/UNB photo

Tourney turns topsyturvy

JOHANNESBURG, Jan 17: The African Nations Cup proved a day of surprises here on Tuesday with Tunisia's chances of qualifying now slim, and George Weah's finals debut an uninspiring affair, reports AFP.

Tunisia only drew 1-1 with Mozambique, supposedly one of the worst teams in the tournament, earning their strikers a ticking-off from coach Henri Kasperczak for failing to convert opportunities.

Meanwhile Liberia had a successful day, beating Gabon 2-1 in their first ever African Nations Cup final match. But George Weah, though showing some nice touches, hardly showed his usual authority with AC Milan.

Even allowing for the fact he does not have the best players in the world around him, as he does in the Calcio, he did not impose himself in his midfield role.

In fact, Liberia could consider themselves a shade lucky to beat Gabon.

Kelvin Sebwe scored an early penalty and Massa Sarr added another for Liberia nine minutes after the break, before Buy-Roger Nzeng hit a spectacular free-kick goal for Gabon five minutes later.

Gabon had only three goals and the only one to blimp for not getting at least a share of the points in this Group C match as they threw extra men into attack all

through the second half. With Weah subdued, it was Liberian striker James Debah who showed the way to goal with his incisive runs.

Liberia got off to a dream start with the quickest goal and first penalty of the finals when Weah was bundled down in the area by midfielder Pierre-Francois Aubame-Eyang and Sebwe duly converted from the spot.

Liberia scored again in the 54th minute when a dummy gave him the space to set up Joe Nagbe on the right.

Nagbe crossed accurately to Sarr who easily side footed past Liberian goalkeeper Germain Mendome.

But Gabon threw extra men into attack and were rewarded within five minutes when defender Nzeng blasted a 25-yard free-kick past Tokpah to reduce the gap.

Tunisia's chances of qualifying for the quarter-finals hit a major obstacle when an inspirational Mozambique forced a 1-1 draw.

With Ghana and Ivory Coast, two of the strongest teams in the competition, also in group D, Tunisia might regret their failure to beat the former Portuguese colony.

Manuel Bucuane scored for Mozambique with an inspirational solo goal in the fifth minute, but Hedi Ben Rekhissa equalised 10 minutes before the break.

Before the match, Tunisia's coach Kasperczak admitted they had to beat Mozambique to have a chance

of making the last eight. Tunisia were ridiculed by fans and media on home soil two years ago after losing in the group when a Tunisia-Nigeria final was being touted by many.

And Tunisians may also be just as disappointed this time, as Tunisia only had themselves to blame squandering countless first half opportunities.

In the first telling move of the match, Bucuane bustled past a defender on the left, cut inside, sold a dummy to defender Ferid Chouchane, and beat keeper Chokri Ouair at the near post.

Bucuane also had the ball in the net on 11 minutes, but it was ruled off side. From then on, Tunisia upped the tempo and Abdelkader Ben Hassen, known as Romario for his uncanny likeness to the Brazilian maestro, had a shot saved at point blank range and volleyed over during the half.

But Tunisia were rewarded with constant pressure - they could have scored three or four by the break - in the 35th minute.

A Zoubier Beya free-kick from the left was floated into the box and Hedi Ebn Rekhissa nodded home.

The second half was a scrappy affair as Tunisian strikers failed to impose themselves. The North Africans began to show their frustration by feigning injury on several occasions.

The landing Afrikaans language newspaper Beeld has come up with a novel and light-hearted reason to change the nickname.

If it depends on nicknames, says the publication, "South Africa's bafana bafana" do not have the proverbial cat's chance of winning the Africa Nations Cup.

"Compare it (the nickname) with Algeria's desert warriors, Angola's black panthers, Burkina Faso's stallions and Cameroon's indomitable lions..."

MACKAYA'S LOVE Perhaps Gabonese player Brice Mackaya enjoys his football more than anyone else at the African Nations Cup.

During their 2-1 loss to Liberia on Tuesday, Mackaya saw his number 12 show, as his coach wanted to replace him with Aurelien Bekogozo in the 72nd minute.

But, instead of coming over to the touchline, Mackaya refused to come off as on-lookers watched in astonishment, he remained in the thick of the action, flagrantly ignoring signals from the dug-out.

However, Mackaya eventually did agree to come in for his early bath-about 10 minutes after first being asked.

FIFA-UEFA'S joint strategy ZURICH, Switzerland, Jan 16: World soccer's governing body FIFA and its European confederation UEFA agreed Monday on a common future strategy to deal with a European Union court ban on transfer fees and quotas on foreign soccer players, reports AP.

Details of the planned action will not be released until after UEFA informs its national associations Tuesday.

"The two organisations were in agreement concerning their future policy," said a brief statement issued after a seven-hour meeting of legal experts at FIFA's Zurich headquarters. It did not elaborate.

UEFA looked to FIFA for help following a European Court of Justice ruling in favour of Belgian player Jean-Marc Bosman, who successfully argued that UEFA's transfer system and limit of three foreigners per team violated EU rules on the free movement of people.

UEFA has argued that the court ruling will destroy the traditions of European soccer and drive many clubs, which depend on transfer fees, out of business.

The authority has said its European Cup competitions will continue under the old rules when they resume March 5. In theory this could open up UEFA to further court cases.

Venables' reign coming to an end

LONDON, Jan 17: England coach Terry Venables is to quit after the European Championship finals in June. Football Association (FA) spokesman David said on Wednesday, reports Reuter.

He told a news conference: "Terry Venables faces a number of time-consuming legal battles in the later part of 1996, which he believes could interfere with England's efforts to qualify for the final stages of the next World Cup. And he is absolutely determined to clear his name."

Venables told Sky television: "I felt in the circumstances that what I've got ahead could be problematical. We would have a World Cup qualifying game around October or November and I could be in court for several weeks."

Davies disclosed that Venables had made his decision last month. "He was urged to think again over the Christmas period and while he was abroad last week," Davies said.

"He told (FA chief executive) Graham Kelly today that his decision was unchanged," Davies added. "The FA is deeply disappointed by his decision but understands the thinking behind it."

Venables, who returned from holiday two days ago, had spent the day at FA headquarters after indicating he wanted to settle his future.

It is believed some members of the FA's 15-strong international committee were not convinced that Venables should be in charge for the 1998 World Cup.

The former Tottenham chief has been dogged by allegations about his business affairs since being appointed England coach.

The tailor-made Taylor

MELBOURNE, Jan 17: After the disappointment of watching from the pavilion as 12th man four years ago, Mark Taylor is lacing next month's World Cup in the key role of Australia's captain and opening batsman, reports Reuter.

In Test cricket, Taylor has led Australia to the very summit with a brand of leadership that has proved equally inspirational in the one-day game.

But he fully recognises the vital contribution he must make beyond mere tactics and motivation if Australia are to repeat their 1987 World Cup triumph on the subcontinent during the coming two months.

When Taylor assumed the captaincy from Allan Border in May 1994, he was automatically handed another guaranteed job as opening batsman for Australia's one-day side. It was a position he had previously struggled to hold down.

Before his appointment, there was no such playing guarantee for the sturdy New South Wales left-hander, a fact reflected in his involvement in the last World Cup.

In 1992, Taylor played only two games when Australia flopped as World Cup hosts, failing to reach the last four.

"My memories of 1992 weren't great really," Taylor said in an interview with Reuter. "I was 12th man for a number of games and, what's more, the team did not play well."

"I played two games but I did nothing that really sticks in the memory, I didn't make many runs, I know that much," added Taylor, whose path into the one-day side of

the day was blocked by Test colleagues Geoff Marsh and David Boon.

Despite being established as a Test batsman, Taylor had failed to adapt successfully to the rigours of cricket's shortened game before captaincy provided the security that, in turn, helped him flourish as a limited overs batsman.

"I think I have changed a lot as a one-day batsman. I'm

not looking over my shoulder any more which is very important," Taylor said.

"Confidence is a big factor. Back in those days, in the one-day games I did play, I was really trying a bit too hard."

"I didn't really feel comfortable about how I wanted to play the game, whether I was going to be a big hitter early in the innings or someone trying to bat through the innings. In the end, try as hard as I did, I ended up doing nothing."

Taylor made his Test debut in 1988-89 before breaking into the limited

overs team the following season.

Since then, despite the proliferation of limited overs cricket, Taylor has played almost as many Tests as one-day internationals.

In 71 Test matches prior to this month's third Test against Sri Lanka, Taylor scored 5,471 runs at an average of 46.36, including 14 hundreds and 33 half-centuries.

In 79 one-dayers before the current World Series competition involving West Indies and Sri Lanka, the New South Wales stalwart scored 2,411 runs at an average of 33.

"Nowadays, in the middle I don't try to bind myself to any one particular role—I just play the game as I see it," said Taylor, referring to his development as a one-day player.

"If they bowl well and the bloke at the other end is batting well, I don't mind playing the anchor role."

"But if I'm hitting the ball well and they're not bowling as well to me, then I'll try to be aggressive. I am much more comfortable these days."

Although Taylor may have changed with the captaincy, Australia's approach to one-day cricket has remained faithful to the principles that helped lift the 1987 World Cup in India and Pakistan.

"We still base our game around good, solid batting, working singles to push the fielding side around, bowling tight and backing that up with good fielding. That's our general philosophy and that's not changed since I took over," Taylor said.

"I think we are playing very good cricket at the moment. We have a definite chance to win the tournament."

Names that matter

JOHANNESBURG, Jan 17: Diary at the African Nations Cup on Wednesday, South Africa's derogatory nickname: There has been much debate over the name the fans have given to the South African side in the African Nations Cup, reports AFP.

Called "Bafana bafana" - literally, "the boys, the boys" - the name is seen as having derogatory connotations stemming from the apartheid era when all black males were dismissively labelled "boy."

But the name has stuck despite criticism. The landing Afrikaans language newspaper Beeld has come up with a novel and light-hearted reason to change the nickname.

If it depends on nicknames, says the publication, "South Africa's bafana bafana" do not have the proverbial cat's chance of winning the Africa Nations Cup.

"Compare it (the nickname) with Algeria's desert warriors, Angola's black panthers, Burkina Faso's stallions and Cameroon's indomitable lions..."

MACKAYA'S LOVE Perhaps Gabonese player Brice Mackaya enjoys his football more than anyone else at the African Nations Cup.

During their 2-1 loss to Liberia on Tuesday, Mackaya saw his number 12 show, as his coach wanted to replace him with Aurelien Bekogozo in the 72nd minute.

But, instead of coming over to the touchline, Mackaya refused to come off as on-lookers watched in astonishment, he remained in the thick of the action, flagrantly ignoring signals from the dug-out.

However, Mackaya eventually did agree to come in for his early bath-about 10 minutes after first being asked.

FIFA-UEFA'S joint strategy ZURICH, Switzerland, Jan 16: World soccer's governing body FIFA and its European confederation UEFA agreed Monday on a common future strategy to deal with a European Union court ban on transfer fees and quotas on foreign soccer players, reports AP.

Details of the planned action will not be released until after UEFA informs its national associations Tuesday.

"The two organisations were in agreement concerning their future policy," said a brief statement issued after a seven-hour meeting of legal experts at FIFA's Zurich headquarters. It did not elaborate.

UEFA looked to FIFA for help following a European Court of Justice ruling in favour of Belgian player Jean-Marc Bosman, who successfully argued that UEFA's transfer system and limit of three foreigners per team violated EU rules on the free movement of people.

UEFA has argued that the court ruling will destroy the traditions of European soccer and drive many clubs, which depend on transfer fees, out of business.

The authority has said its European Cup competitions will continue under the old rules when they resume March 5. In theory this could open up UEFA to further court cases.

All-rounder the arbiter

MELBOURNE, Jan 17: Australia, self-proclaimed world champions in the traditional form of Test cricket, will rely on youth in their pursuit of the game's ultimate limited overs prize, reports Reuter.

After confirming their prowess in the Test arena with four series wins in 1995, including victory over West Indies in the Caribbean, Australia, have built a younger, more flexible side for the abbreviated one-day game.

Australia's captain Mark Taylor, who anchors the batting for both the Test and limited overs side, was cautiously optimistic ahead of the tournament in India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

"If we can adapt to the different grounds and conditions, there's no reason why we can't win it," Taylor said after Australia won the second Test against Sri Lanka recently to secure the series.

"We've definitely got the personnel to do the job. We are playing good, positive, aggressive cricket at the moment and we are going into games believing we will win," Taylor said.

The reliable left-handed opener, who replaced Allan Border as captain in 1994,

Mohammedan awards 9 Nine sports personalities of the country were given awards by Monthly sports magazine Mohammedan for their contributions in different fields of sports at a function held at the National Sports Council auditorium yesterday, reports BSS.

Information Secretary Syed Amir-Ul-Mulk attended the function as chief guest and handed over crest.

The awardees are: M Alauddin Khan (football), late Mainuddin Mahmud - (cricket), M Siddiqur Rahman (sports organiser), Abdul Hamid (sports commentator), Bashir Ahmed (hockey), Brojen Das (swimming), Niaz Morshed (chess), late Shah Alam (athletics) and Ateequr Rahman (shooting).

said Australia had learnt from their disappointing performance in their defence of the World Cup on home soil four years ago.

"I think we'll be a lot better prepared for this World Cup (compared with 1992)," he said.

Australia, as hosts, are utilising the current World Series limited overs tournament involving West Indies and Sri Lanka to finalise their World Cup squad and tactics.

Consequently Australia will return to the sub-continent, where they won the fourth World Cup in 1987, with a side almost bereft of purely specialist batsmen.

Veteran David Boon, a fixture at number three for Test matches, has lost his place as the selectors opt for all-round talent.

Michael Bevan, Stuart Law and Shane Lee - three players capable of making a telling impact with both bat and ball - have established themselves as one-day regulars while remaining on the fringe of Test selection.

The proliferation of genuine and part-time all-rounders to complement the bowling ranks reflects a calculated approach by the selectors rather than a dearth of batting talent.

With the exception of wicketkeeper Ian Healy, only two players in Australia's one-day line-up this season - Taylor and fellow opener Michael Slater - are regarded solely as batsmen.

In addition to Bevan, Law and Lee, the other players charged primarily with the job of scoring runs - Ricky Ponting, Mark Waugh and Steve Waugh - are capable performers with both bat and ball.

"It is definitely an advantage to have that degree of flexibility when it comes to bowling," Australia's coach Bob Simpson told Reuters.

"Talented all-rounders are important provided they hold down a place in the team on merit as either a batsman or bowler. If they have a second string to their bow, it is a real bonus," Simpson said.

In the World Series competition, Australia adopted a policy of playing three spe-

cialist bowlers, leaving Taylor with several options to deliver the other 20 overs of the innings.

Taylor declared Australia unofficial world champions in Test cricket after series wins against England, West Indies, Pakistan and Sri Lanka in 1995.

The home series against Sri Lanka and Pakistan were both marked by controversy, prompting fears of a possible violent reaction by fans against Australian players at the World Cup.

"They're realistic fears. I think the Australian cricket board and the organisers of the competition have got to really step up the security," said off-spinner Tim May, a member of Australia's preliminary 18-man squad.

Eventually, with the help of fans, the Trinidadians were able to carpool to their hotel - where they discovered their rooms had been burglarised and some 50,000 dollars cash and all their valuables stolen.

Team manager Richard Abraham said some of the money had been locked in a safe in his room.

"We lost all our stipend - more than 20,000 dollars," Abraham told the Orange County Register newspaper Monday. The stipend was for the team to get back home to their Caribbean homeland.

Fullerton police said they were investigations the robbery.

Basil, off the apartheid

PRETORIA, Jan 17: Basil D'Oliveira's role in the cancellation of England's cricket tour of South Africa 27 years ago focused world attention on apartheid. President Nelson Mandela said on Tuesday, reports Reuter.

Former all-rounder D'Oliveira, born in South

Africa of mixed-race descent, was selected by England for the tour of the republic in 1968-69 but the trip was cancelled after Pretoria objected to his inclusion.

Asked whether the D'Oliveira incident was instrumental in isolating South Africa at sports level over the former government's apartheid policies, Mandela said, "Oh yes, it was almost decisive."

"The fact that the English cricket team (tour) was cancelled (meant) that the world was getting impatient with South Africa..." Mandela added.

Mandela was speaking at a lunch he hosted for D'Oliveira, who is visiting South Africa and following the current England tour.

D'Oliveira said: "It is the greatest day in my life, meeting him. He is a marvellous man... to come back to the new South Africa is absolutely marvellous. I wish I could stay longer."

D'Oliveira said the inclusion of coloured left-arm wrist-spinner Paul Adams in the South African side was a sign of the democratic changes in the country.

"As I said over the years, the most important thing about South Africa coming back (into world cricket) is not South Africa coming back so much into the fold but that everybody now have the chance of playing," he added.

Also at the lunch at Mandela's official residence in Pretoria was South African

cricket captain Hansie Cronje and United Cricket Board of South Africa president Krish Mackerdhuji.

They presented Mandela with a South African cricket blazer which the president immediately donned after stripping to his undershirt.

"I hope the journalists won't mind if I put it on. I am not sure whether my vest is clean," Mandela quipped.

TODAY'S FIXTURES Premier Division cricket league: Kalabagan KC vs Brothers Union (DS) Warj Club vs Eskaton SS (DCS) Yamaha First Division cricket league: Lalmatia Club vs Bangladesh Boys Club (CCG) Acme Second Division cricket league: Udayachal Club vs East End Club (MOS) Sonali Bank Second Division football league: (Venue: Mirpur Stadium) BRTC vs BG Press (2pm) Labagh SC vs Rayer Bazar AC (3:30pm) Basabo TS vs Mahakhali Ekadash (5pm) Progati Insurance Third Division football league: (Venue: Rajuk Ground) East End Boys Club vs Kadamtala Sangsad (2 pm) Maghbazar Kisholoy vs Motihheel T&T Club (3.30 pm).



Martine Aubry (C), first assistant to the mayor of the northern city of Lille, elaborating a model of the French Olympic site for the 2004 Games to the 22 presidents of the Summer Olympic Sports Federations January 17. - AFP/UNB photo

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer and CRYPTOQUIP. Includes crossword clues and a grid for a cryptogram puzzle.