

Sport

Column One

DID U KNOW? (The Professor does)

HAT one of the most "logical" explanations of failure was given by Ireland's Rugby Union player, Mike English. Asked how he had missed a tackle on England's Phil Horrocks-Taylor, which cost Ireland the match, Mike explained, "Well, I went in for the tackle. The Horrocks went one way and the Taylor went the other, and I was left holding the hyphen."

SPORTS TALK



Goran Ivanisevic (Ace Croat tennis star) "They can't slow the game down here. Wimbledon is all grass and that means it is always going to be fast. If they want to see slow tennis they should go to the French Open or watch women's tennis."

Sports

WHIZZ KID COMPETITION FOR SCHOOLCHILDREN

Sports WHIZZ KID competition-23 Tick the Correct Answer (Competition closes: 8 p.m. Jan 26, 1996)

Table with 5 questions about sports trivia, including Shaquille O'Neil, Chetan Sharma, and the first century in cricket.

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

Gabon, Ghana in Nations' Cup qtrs

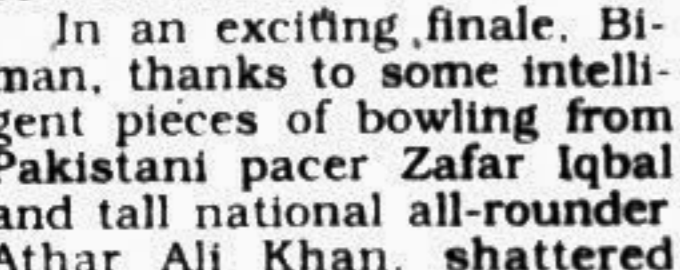
DURBAN, Jan 20: Gabon produced the first major upset of the African Nations Cup with a fine 2-0 win over one of the pre-tournament favourites Zaire on Friday to book a place in the quarter-finals, reports Reuter. After losing their opening game in the three-team Group C to Liberia on Tuesday, Gabon had to win to have any chance of reaching the last eight. They responded with a spirited and skilful performance which brought first half goals for Brice Mackaya and Aurelien Bikogo-Zolo. After a dreary opening passage, the game burst into life in the 20th minute when Gabon were awarded a penalty when the lively Guy Roger Nzamba was apparently brought down in the area by Zaire goalkeeper Pangli Merikani. Replays suggested that he may have dived but Mackaya made no mistake from the spot. Fourteen minutes later Gabon went further ahead with a goal of genuine quality. Nzamba jinked past several defenders into the penalty box and instead of going for the shot himself, he unselfishly passed inside to Bikogo Zolo who calmly slotted home from eight yards. Zaire must now beat Liberia by two goals in the remaining pool match next Thursday to avoid the embarrassment of falling at the first hurdle. Ghana were also assured of a place in the quarter-finals with an impressive 2-1 win over Tunisia in a Group D match in Port Elizabeth. Second-half from Italy-based striker Abedi Ayew Pele and Germany based Charles Akonnor subdued a spirited Tunisia who replied through substitute lined Ben Younes. Despite going two up, Gabon kept up the pressure and made a couple of chances to make it 3-0 before the interval. Zaire struggled to find any sort of cohesion in a physical game which brought three yellow cards in the first half.

Biman survive V-scare

Zafar Iqbal, in an object lesson for willing local bowlers like Dulu, smartly ran over the Victoria tail much to the relief of Biman. Despite the defeat, Victoria, facing a daunting task of scoring a little less than 6 runs per over, had fought gallantly with opener Sajid Hassan and Rajinder Singh playing sensibly. Among the two, Sajid, son of former national skipper Raquibul Hassan, scored a brilliant 81 off 117 balls to build the Victoria innings. The diminutive right-handed bat, who brought back memories of his illustrious father's flare with some delicate shots and pulls, struck four fours and a massive sixer in

BRIEF SCORES

BANGALDESH BIMAN: 287 for seven in 50 overs (Athar Ali 87, Rupom 65, Nasir Khan 37, Rafique 33, Timir 3/56) VICTORIA SC: 277 for eight in 50 overs (Sajid 81, Rajander Singh 42, Chetan Sharma 37, Nahid 33)



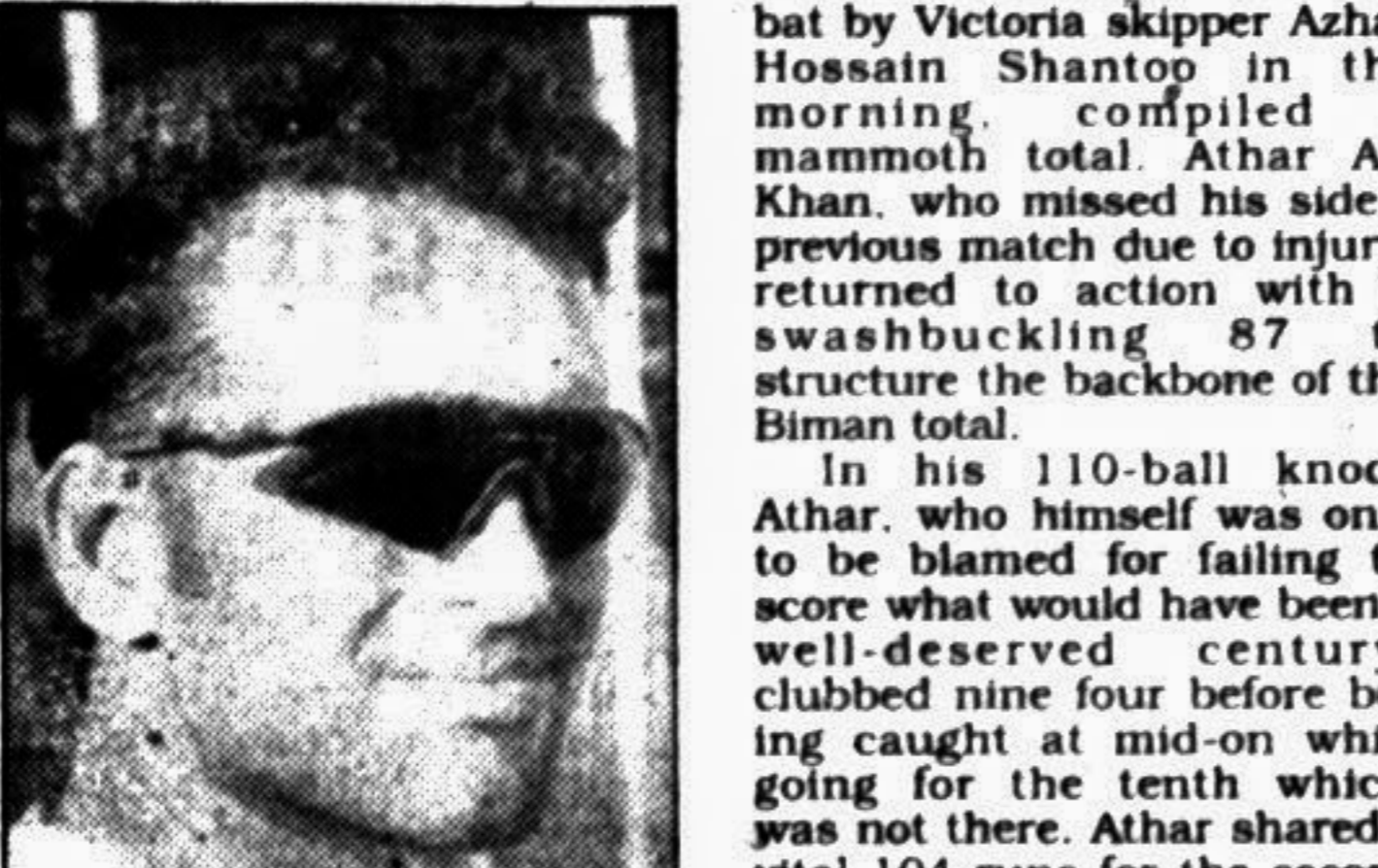
ATHAR... 87 his polished inning. Off those, two successive cover drives off Zafar Iqbal and a sweetly-timed pull over mid-wicket for a six off Athar was a treat to watch. Sajid, who hardly flashed with the willow since the infamous Kenya ICC tour of Bangladesh where he was a surprise non-playing mem-

TODAY'S FIXTURES

- Premier Division cricket: Wari Club vs Dhaka Wanderers (DCS) Yamaha First Division cricket league: Sadharan Bima KS vs Ajax SC (CCG) Acme Second Division cricket league: Young Pegasus 'A' vs East End Club (MOS) Orient SC vs PWD SC (DCS) Amor Joti Club vs Lalbagh Anwar SC (DCG) Sonali Bank Second Division football league: Dhaka Wanderers vs Avijatrik Malibagh (2 pm) Muslim Institute vs Basabo TS (3:30 pm) City Club vs Lalbagh SC (5 pm)

ber, showed signs of a comeback with this confident knock. On the other hand, Rajinder, the genial Sardari, who shared 76 runs for the fourth wicket with Sajid, hammered a quick-fire 42 off 47 balls before being caught at long-on by Athar off off-spinner Rupom. Among the other Victoria willow-wielders, Chetan chipped in with 37 and Nahid, who fought a lost battle, scored 33 off 25 balls before being run out in the last over of the innings. For Biman, Zafar Iqbal, skipper Rupom and Rashed finished with two wickets apiece. Earlier, Biman, sent into bat by Victoria skipper Azhar Hossain Shantop in the morning, compiled a mammoth total. Athar Ali Khan, who missed his side's previous match due to injury, returned to action with a swashbuckling 87 to structure the backbone of the Biman total. In his 110-ball knock Athar, who himself was only to be blamed for failing to score what would have been a well-deserved century, clubbed nine four before being caught at mid-on while going for the tenth which was not there. Athar shared a vital 104 runs for the second wicket with Rupom before he was dismissed by seamer Babu, leaving Biman at a commanding 186 for two in 35.3 overs. Rupom scored a dazzling 65 off 78 balls followed by an aggressive 33 off only 18 deliveries by unorthodox Mohammed Rafique. Rafique, the national left-arm spinner and a very useful long-handled bat, clouted two sixes and as many fours in his bionic inning. Among the two towering over-boundaries, both against new-ball bowler Tanveer Ahmed Timir, one unbelievably over the point region landed in the eastern gallery. Timir, who conceded 45 runs in his expensive second spell of four overs, however, returned most successful with three for 56 in his seven overs. It was Victoria's fourth defeat from eight league matches.

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ATHAR... 87

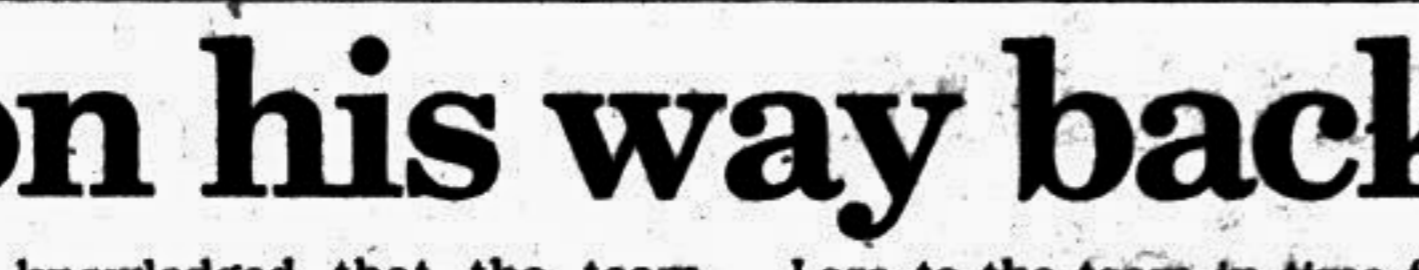
cricket-lovers this season, if not one of the most entertaining ever seen in Dhaka. In the 117-ball blitzkrieg inning, the experienced campaigner blasted an unbelievable number of sixteen, yes sixteen, boundaries and, believe it or not, six massive blows over the rope. After reaching his 50 at an unimaginable (I) rate, taking 42 balls to do so, Rais needed only 26 more deliveries to complete his century. The most remarkable part of his pyrotechnic inning was when he lofted three successive deliveries from fellow Pakistani Nasir Ali Khan over the boundary — enough to show how easily he toyed with the Bank attack (if you can call it so). Rais was ably supported at the other end by national opener Javed Omar Belim Golla, finding his touch at last after a long barren spell. Golla, determined not to miss out on the fun, hit twelve boundaries, although many of them after Rais' departure (incidentally, he was

GMCC freeze Bank account

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Brian on his way back

BRIDGETOWN, Barbados, Jan 20: Brian Lara, a pillar of the West Indies cricket team and one of the world's best players, abruptly left the West Indies team in November after the WICBC imposed a fine on him during this summer's tour of England. Lara, who said the fine wrongfully branded him as a troublemaker, left the squad for a three-team tournament in Australia. With Lara out of the roster, the West Indies was badly beaten by Australia and Sri Lanka — sparking a call from fans for Lara's return. Lara, holder of the world record in scoring, said he is ready to return to the squad, much to the delight of the WICBC selectors, who acknowledged that the team was in dire need of offense. Richie Richardson captain of the West Indies team and one of the WICBC selectors, said Lara is a key member of the squad. "We didn't bat as consistently as we are capable of doing and that's where we fell short," said Richardson, speaking after the trouncing the team received in Australia. "We have got to improve in all areas, especially our batting." The rest of the WICBC selectors — chairman David Holford of Barbados, Guyana's Easton Morris and Guyana's Joe Solomon — agreed and are ready to name



BRIAN LARA

Lara to the team in time for the Jan 31 training camp slated for Barbados. Ally Legend, president of the Trinidad and Tobago Cricket Board of Control said Lara is "hungry to return" to first-class cricket. "At that level, it may take Brian little time to get back into the stream. But his hunger and desire have returned, especially with the international exposure and stars around. He will be especially keen on maintaining his position as the world's number one batsman," Lequay said. During his two-month absence from the West Indies team, Lara remained active as captain of the Trinidad and Tobago team, which is preparing for the Red Stripe Cup, a regional tournament. In several domestic matches, he has looked like he's in top form. He lashed a century during the first trial match and last weekend in the annual Trintoc Classic — between North and South teams on the island, he hit 79 in the second inning, though his north team was badly beaten. Lara, who is reportedly still recuperating from a knee injury, is expected to make his first start in Friday's match against Barbados at Guayacana Park in Trinidad.

Yamaha Div I cricket

SURJO TARUN Club recorded their fourth win in the ongoing Yamaha First Division cricket league when they handed Bangladesh Railway a narrow 13-run defeat at the City Club ground yesterday. Put in to bat, Surjo Tarun piled up 209 for six in their stipulated 45 overs. One down Mahbul Alam Shaon scored highest 46 off 91 balls inclusive of 3 boundaries while former Indian Test all-rounder Sanjeev Sharma (33), Sanchoy (24) and Dear (24) were the other leading Surjo Tarun batsmen. Railway's new-ball bowler Mithu grabbed two wickets conceding 43 runs in 9 overs. In reply, Railway were restricted to 196 for eight in their allotted 45 overs with opener Iftekhar Hossain playing a brilliant but vain knock of 71 off 82 balls which included ten boundaries. Among others, Ahmed Arif scored 64 runs facing 109 balls. Sanjeev Sharma earned two wickets for Surjo Tarun giving away 34 runs in 9 overs.

BRIEF SCORE

BURJO TARUN: 209 for six in 45 overs (Shaon 46, Sanjeev Sharma 33) BANGALDESH RAILWAY: 196 for eight in 45 overs (Iftekhar 71, Arif 64)

Acme Div II cricket

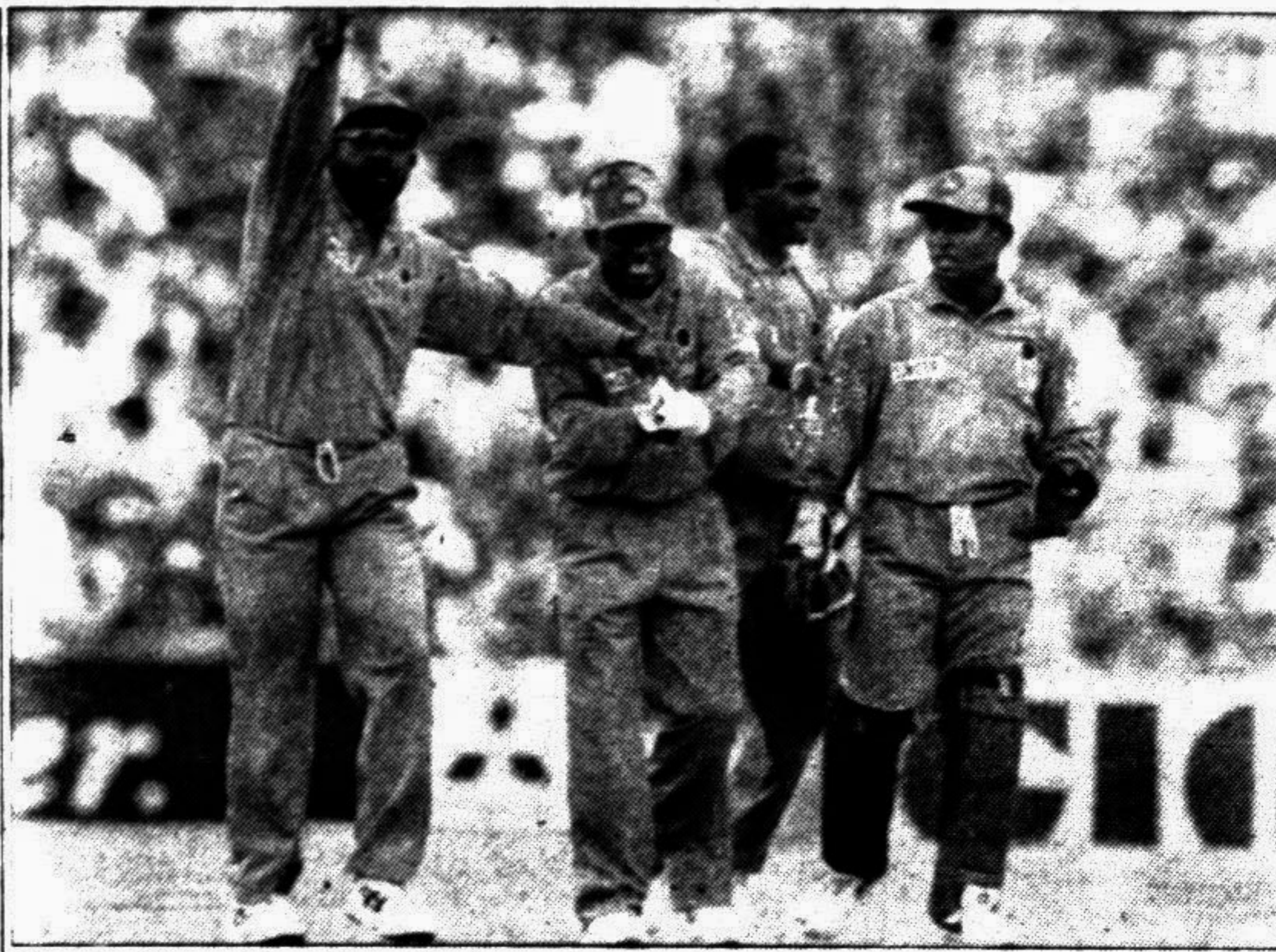
Uttara Sporting Club, Mariner Young Club and Nabin Sangha won their respective Acme Second Division cricket league matches on Saturday. Uttara, recorded a big eight-wicket victory over Gandaria Cricketers at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium while Mariner defeated Nirman Eleven by 7 wickets at the Mirpur Outer Stadium. In the day's other encounter at the Dhanmondi Club ground, Nabin Sangha handed Rainbow Club a 530-run defeat.

BRIEF SCORE

GANDARIA CRICKETERS: 101 for nine in 40 overs (Mozaffar 33 not out, Pappa 4/21) UTTARA SC: 103 for 2 in 18.3 overs (Mridul 58 not out, Nadeem Ahmed 39 not out) RESULT: Uttara SC won by eight wickets. NIRMAN ELEVEN: 84 in 26.1 overs (Rana 5/11, Lunik 3/16) MARINER YOUNG CLUB: 85 for three in 18 overs (Asad 34 not out, Lunik 14 not out) RESULT: Mariner won by 7 wickets. NABIN SANGHA: 225 for five in 40 overs (Habib 60, Shejan 57, Shaheer 3/53) RAINBOW SC: 172 in 37.2 overs (Lapon 32 not out, Zahid 24, Akhinoor 3/30) RESULT: Nabin Sangha won by 53 runs.

All behind Murali

COLOMBO, Jan 20: Sri Lankan cricket officials are trying to ensure that the country's star off-spinner Muthiah Muralitharan is not called for throwing the ball in future games, specially in the 12-nation Cricket World Cup beginning Feb 14, reports AP. Besides being a good off-spinner, 23-year-old Muralitharan is the only Tamil in the team and an important symbol of ethnic harmony in a country engulfed by civil war for 12 years. Muralitharan's career is in jeopardy after he was called for throwing with an illegal bowling action by two Australian umpires during Sri Lanka's ongoing tour of Australia. "I am concerned about the future of Muralitharan, who is a very popular and important player," said Sumana Weera Dissanayake, the sports minister. "Muralitharan is the only Tamil player in the national cricket team, and is a peace symbol. Under no circumstances can we lose his services," Dissanayake said in a letter to the Sri Lankan Cricket Board. Tamil rebels have been fighting for a homeland in the north and east for minority Tamils since 1983, alleging widespread discrimination by majority Sinhalese. More than 39,000 people have been killed in the fighting. Dissanayake said the cricket board will send an appeal to cricket organizations and the International Cricket Council, the sport's governing body, to give its opinion on Muralitharan's bowling action. Many umpires have defended his action. Muralitharan would be sent for bowling training in Britain or Australia, in case the appeals failed, said Dissanayake. Medical experts from Hong Kong University and the Sri Lankan Institute of Sports Medicine and Australian doctors would submit a detailed medical report on whether Muralitharan is handicapped and unable to straighten his arm, contrary to the umpires' rulings. Fearful of his being called for throwing again, Sri Lankan cricket officials have omitted Muralitharan from the team since he was last called on Jan 7.



Asanka Gurusinha (L) calls for assistance from the dressing room as vice-captain Aravinda de Silva (2nd L) grimaces after injuring his left hand attempting to cling on to a catch offered by Australian Michael Bevan during the second World Series finals between Australia and Sri Lanka at the SCG on January 20. Wicketkeeper Romesh Kaluwitharana (R) and Sanath Jayasuriya looks on. — AFP/UNB photo

Aussies win World Series Cup

Favouritism fazes SL?

SYDNEY, Jan 20: Australia clinched the World Series one-day cricket finals 2-0 in dramatic circumstances here Saturday after Sri Lanka failed by eight runs in a rain-shortened frantic chase at the Sydney Cricket Ground, reports AFP. Australia's 5-273 from 50 overs looked impenetrable but a thunderstorm during the dinner break left the visitors chasing a revised target of 168 from 25 overs at 6.72 per over. They had the luxury of only two men outside the fielding circle for 15 overs and made a flying start but lost wickets regularly to poor shots. At 5-135, Sri Lanka needed 33 off five overs but leg-spinner Shane Warne returned to get captain Arjuna Ranatunga for 41 and Kumara Dharmasena for seven, and Mark Waugh ran out Hashan Tillekarante for 25 to make it 8-146. With 22 needed off 11 balls and 17 off the last over, Sri Lanka ended on 8-159. Had rain intervened again, the match would have been rendered null and void and replayed Sunday. Warne finished with 3-20 from his five overs to claim a joint player-of-the-finals award after his 2-29 from 10 overs proved the turning point in Australia's 15-run win in Melbourne Thursday. Captain Mark Taylor shared the award with Warne. "Our guys have played tremendous cricket in the last 12 months and won a few trophies, and none finer than this," Taylor said afterwards. For Sri Lanka, opener Sanath Jayasuriya hammered 30 from 26 balls but lofted a long hop from Warne straight to Glenn McGrath at deep mid-wicket. Lanky paceman McGrath gave Australia the ideal start by trapping dasher Romesh Kaluwitharana, the player-of-the-series from the preliminary rounds, 1BW for a first-ball duck. Off-spinner Mark Waugh then had Aravinda de Silva second century stand of the competition in 87 minutes. Waugh was spectacularly caught and bowled by off-spinner Kalpage for 73 to take his tournament tally to 357 runs at 35.70. The middle order lost its way as Kalpage (2-47) and fellow off-spinner Dharmasena (2-45) applied the brakes and brought the run rate back below five per over. From a healthy 1-170 in the 32nd over Australia lost 4-40 to be 5-210 in the 43rd. Left hander Michael Bevan and wicketkeeper Ian Healy then smacked 63 runs in 34 minutes from 47 balls. Bevan finished with 32 not out to take his series total to 389 at the phenomenal average of 194.50 while Healy chipped in with an unbeaten 40 from 28 balls to follow his 50 not out at the MCG. Left-tarm paceman Chaminda Vaas was again the pick of the bowlers with 1-47 after opening spells of 0-12 from four and 0-20 from six. The two sides haven't seen the last of each other — the third test starts in Adelaide on Friday — and they meet again in their opening World Cup match in Colombo on February 14. SCOREBOARD Scored in the second match of the best-of-three limited overs World Series finals between Australia and Sri Lanka at the Sydney Cricket Ground Saturday. AUSTRALIA Taylor c Kaluwitharana b Kalpage 82 M Waugh c and b Kalpage 73 Ponting c Vaas b Dharmasena 17 S Waugh c Kalpage b Dharmasena 2 Law b Vaas 21 Bevan not out 32 Healy not out 40 Extras: (lb-5, w-1) 6 Total: (for five wickets, 50 overs) 273 Fall of wickets: 1-135: 2-170; 3-176; 4-184; 5-210. Bowling O M R W Vaas 10 1 47 1 Pushpakumara 8 1 39 0 Munasinghe 4 0 33 0 Dharmasena 10 0 45 2 Jayasuriya 8 0 57 0 Kalpage 10 0 47 2 SRI LANKA Jayasuriya c McGrath b Warne 30



Players-of-the-finals: M Taylor (L), S Warne

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