

Sport

Column One

DID U' KNOW?

(The Professor does)

HAT the Wills World Cup has a Title Sponsor, a privilege not attached with any World Cup in other sport.

The sponsors are also incurring enormous cost on promotional activities. According to a rough estimate, Wills is expected to spend around Rs. 15 cr for promotion on top of £ 8 million as sponsorship.

Add to this the expenses incurred by other sponsors. It is simply mind-boggling. Actually, a fantastic figure of about Rs. 300 cr will be spent on the World Cup before the first quarter of the year is over.

SPORTS TALK



Ram Babu Gupta

(Noted Indian cricket umpire)

These days, with so much money and glamour in cricket, the players like to pressurise the umpire. An umpire should not get influenced by the other players.

Sports

WHIZZ KID

Sports WHIZZ KID competition-26

Click the Correct Answer

(Competition closes: 8 p.m. Feb 16, 1996)

- 1. Munich Olympics were held in 1976, 1972, 1974
2. The name of the first three cricket World Cups were
3. 1978 soccer World Cup was won by
4. The current national cricket manager is
5. 2000 Summer Olympics will be held in

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

UEFA to stretch the rules

WINDSOR, England, Feb 13: Europe's leading soccer nations agreed on Monday to ask UEFA to allow them a transition period to implement the Bosman ruling on transfers, reports Reuter.

The countries also agreed to seek the help of their national governments in lobbying for soccer to be given exemption from some of the changes being brought in by the European Union (EU).

Nat'l Jr snooker Amin, Sajjad in final

Sports Reporter

Amin Chowdhury and Syed Sajjad set up a final clash in the Ashok Leyland Junior (U-19) snooker championship after eliminating their respective semifinal opponents at the Gulshan Club yesterday.



UNIQUE UNITY: Indian shipper Mohammed Azharuddin (L) walks into the history books in the annals of World Cup cricket by leading a combined India-Pakistan team against Sri Lanka in an exhibition match at Colombo yesterday.

Spinners steal the show



COLOMBO, Feb 1: Controversial spinner Muttiah Muralitharan got the biggest cheer of the day here on Tuesday as India and Pakistan teamed up to beat Sri Lanka in a 40-over friendly, reports AFP.

But another spinner, Anil Kumble, won a few psychological points on the eve of the World Cup with a fine display that set up the four-wicket win.



MURALITHARAN

Muralitharan, whose career was almost ended by a throwing row in Australia last year, returned to action by dismissing Sachin Tendulkar with the first ball.

That was the perfect answer to Australian umpires who had questioned the legality of his unorthodox off-spin action.

It was also the perfect place to do it, before 10,000 fans at a match staged as a show of solidarity between the World Cup co-hosts after

Australia and the West Indies boycotted their matches here.

Muralitharan ended the game with two wickets but saw his eight overs cost a hefty 46.

Man-of-the-match Kumble, however, came away from the Premadasa Stadium with four wickets for just 12 in eight overs as Sri Lanka were limited to 168 for nine.

The home side had the consolation of recovering from 16 for two, with Asanka Gurusingha and skipper Arjuna Ranatunga putting on 70 off 82 balls, before a full-scale collapse saw the next seven wickets fall for 71 runs.

The combined team then reached 171 for six in 34.3 overs, Tendulkar opening and top-scoring with 36.

Combined team captain Mohammed Azharuddin was presented with a special solidarity trophy at the end of the game by Sri Lankan Sports Minister S B Dissanayake.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of the 40-over friendly match between a combined India-Pakistan team and Sri Lanka at the Premadasa Stadium here Tuesday.

Table with columns for SRI LANKA, Extras, Fall of wickets, and BOWLING. Lists players like Jayasuriya, Kapur, and Muralitharan with their respective statistics.

Table with columns for BOWLING, O, M, R, W. Lists players like Tendulkar, Anwar, Kapur, Kumble, and Sohail with their statistics.

Table with columns for INDIA-PAKISTAN, Player, O, M, R, W. Lists players like Tendulkar, Anwar, Sohail, Muralitharan, and others.



KUMBLE... m-o-m

Extras: (lb-3, w-1, nb-1) 5

137 (mins)

Fall of wickets: 1-53; 2-65; 3-82; 4-113; 5-126; 6-164.

Did not bat: Wasim Akram, Anil Kumble, Kapur.

Table with columns for BOWLING, O, M, R, W. Lists players like Pushpakumara, Dharmasena, Muralitharan, Chandana, and Tillekeratne.

The uniqueness of unity



COLOMBO, Feb 13: Sniffer dogs, the bomb squad and police and army patrols were at the Premadasa Stadium today as a joint India-Pakistan team took on Sri Lanka in a World Cup warm-up to reinforce South Asian solidarity, reports Reuter.

India and Pakistan, who have fought three wars since independence from Britain in 1947, combined for the friendly after Sri Lanka lost two of its scheduled home cup matches when Australia and West Indies pulled out.

They decided to forfeit their games after suspected Tamil Tiger rebels blew up the Central Bank in Colombo two weeks ago, killing more than 80 people, injuring 1,200 and wrecking the heart of the city's financial district.

"Shame, absolute shame on Australia," one retired professional told Reuters as he arrived for the game. "They had planned this all along."

The route to the stadium was lined with hundreds of white-uniformed schoolgirls and flags and banners. "We salute your magnificent gesture of solidarity," read one.

"Sri Lanka welcomes the golden sons of India and Pakistan," said another. Kandy dancers heralded the arrival of the teams and the official cheerleader ran across the ground waving the Sri Lankan, Indian and Pakistan flags sewed together.

Sri Lankan Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar led dignitaries raising the three flags before the first ball was bowled.

Security was tight. Everyone was body searched and only labelled vehicles were allowed into the ground. The bomb squad and 10 sniffer dogs searched the terraces, the army patrolled the outer perimeter and police were on duty inside.

"We've been planning this for some time," said senior superintendent J J Jayawardene.

Indian captain Mohammad Azharuddin led the combined team which also included Pakistan skipper Wasim Akram.

"Here are three countries in the SAARC getting to-

gether for a game of cricket," Ana Panchinewa, president of the Board of Control for Cricket in Sri Lanka, told Reuters.

"It's something no one in the world has seen. It shows that our part of the world is going from strength to strength as far as cricket is concerned."

He said he was still hopeful West Indies would change their minds. "And the door is still open to Australia," he said.

Foreign Ministry Publicity Director Ravinatha Arayasinha, arriving at the game with his family, said the match would prove that Sri Lanka could provide adequate security for World Cup teams.

"It also shows that even in countries with tensions and conflicts, there is some underlying affinity which shows through in this game," he said.

Sri Lanka is joint Cup host with India and Pakistan. The tournament provided a chance to show off the island and its cricket to the world.

It was due to host four games, against Australia, West Indies — the world's top two teams in recent years — Kenya and Zimbabwe.

Andre can't get Thomas off his mind!

SAN JOSE, California, Feb 13: Andre Agassi ripped colleague Ryan Walters on the court at the Sybase Open Monday, then off the court ripped Thomas Muster's new number one ranking, reports Reuter.

Agassi taught Walters, an 18-year-old Stanford freshman who is the US Open collegiate player, a powerful lesson in top-level tennis, beating him 6-2, 6-2.

"I've never hit with anyone who hit that hard before," said Walters. "He proved to me that I'm not anywhere near that level yet."

Agassi made it clear he doesn't think Muster is at the top level, either. On the day when the Austrian supplanted him as the world number one according to the ATP computer, Agassi said that while he commends him for putting in the work to become an elite player, he doesn't believe that Muster, who won 11 of his 12 titles on clay in 1995, will hold the spot very long.

"I'll tell you what, if he's number one at the end of the year, I'll allow him to sit in the royal box at Wimbledon and bow to me," Agassi said. "I'd be shocked. It will be difficult to repeat the same run he had last year."

Agassi added that because Muster spends most of his year on clay and avoids surfaces such as grass, it doesn't look good for the sport.

"It's an elite group of guys," Agassi said. "You want to feel like the number one player has proved himself in a lot of different situations," Agassi said.

"It's disappointing to me that Muster can skip Wimbledon and still become number one. I don't want to see that happen."

Game's good gesture

COLOMBO, Feb 13: Arch-enemies India and Pakistan surprised a lot of people by playing together on a cricket field Tuesday, report agencies.

For the first time ever, the countries put players on the same team so they could challenge Sri Lanka in a one-day exhibition match.

"It is a great start" toward efforts to mend ties between the two countries, said Ana Panchinewa, president of the Sri Lanka cricketing board.

India and Pakistan played the friendly game at Premadasa Stadium to show the world that it is safe to play in Colombo, the Sri Lankan capital, despite a separatist war and terrorist attacks.

Sri Lanka, India and Pakistan are hosting the World Cup, the Olympics of the cricket world, which begins Wednesday. But Australia and the West Indies, scared off by a rebel suicide bomb attack that killed 83 people in Colombo two weeks ago, are refusing to play any matches in Sri Lanka.

Before Tuesday, India and Pakistan had not played against each other for seven years. They are in different pools in the World Cup.

India and Pakistan are among the world's greatest rivals on and off the sports field. They have fought three wars since 1947 when Pakistan was partitioned from British colonial India, two of them over the border region of Kashmir.

Indian and Pakistan players said they hoped the landmark game would lead to a thaw in relations between their countries.

"This will definitely help," Pakistan skipper Wasim Akram said.

Indian star player Sachin Tendulkar said he felt quite comfortable playing with Pakistan colleagues. "It was very satisfactory," he said.

Frankie world's fastest indoors

TAMPERE, Finland, Feb 13: Frankie Fredericks of Namibia sprinted to a men's 100 metres world indoor best of 10.05 seconds at an international athletics meeting on Monday, reports Reuter.

In his first indoor race over 100 metres in official competition, Fredericks, 28, shaved 0.08 seconds off Nigerian Olapade Adeniken's previous world best over the distance, which is seldom contested indoors.

Adeniken ran 10.13 seconds in January last year. Fredericks, world champion over 200 metres at Stuttgart in 1993, twice Olympic silver medalist at Barcelona in 1992 and 200 metres runner-up at the Gothenburg World Championships last year, has clocked 9.95 seconds over 100 metres outdoors.

In Tampere's Pirkka Arena Fredericks left Norwegian Geir Moen, the 200 metres world indoor champion in 1995 and European champion over 200 metres, world indoor champion in 1995 and European champion over 200 metres, in the dust.

Peter Rono, the Kenyan veteran who captured the 1,500 metres Olympic gold medal at Seoul almost eight years ago, confirmed his comeback when he easily outpaced the field to triumph over 1,000 metres in two minutes 21.05 seconds.

ROQUIBUL ON THE ROCKER

May the best team win



The Wills World Cup cricket 1996 — so far the biggest show of its kind and most expensive one — gets underway with OA England playing against New Zealand in the inaugural match at Ahmedabad (India) today.

The month-long cricketing crescendo involving twelve teams will decide as to who will rule the world instant cricket in the final to be held in Lahore (Pakistan) on March 17. However, the sixth version of the limited-overs cricket which is already caught in a series of controversies starting from the tussle between Doordarshan and World Tel over the TV

rights, Australia and West Indies forfeiting their matches against co-host Sri Lanka on security reasons, will offer a different flair in every aspect.

Meanwhile, India and Pakistan, in a noble gesture to uphold the true spirit of the game, travelled to Sri Lanka and played an exhibition match there yesterday. This certainly disproved Australia and West Indies' unnecessary fear and their arbitrary decision of withdrawal.

Dear reader, did you ever imagine that a team could move into the round two of the World Cup without playing a single ball? Yes, Sri Lanka, are almost through to the next round.

Like you, I cannot predict at the moment who will hold the Cup on March 17. Despite the unaccountable possibilities of this game, I am afraid Zimbabwe, Holland,

Kenya and the UAE may be the first teams to catch the plane back home.

Looking at the composition of the rest of the teams, their performance over the past one year, team preparations and, of course, the subcontinental conditions, it could well be said that along with the three hosts Australia and South Africa may emerge as the biggest forces to make it to the semi-finals.

My dear readers, I have been assigned to do the most precious yet an unenviable job of writing a regular column in your favourite daily.

Never ending discussions and talks taking place in every nook and corner of the country as to who will win the coveted title. But I must say, since cricket is a game of glorious uncertainties, let's relish every moment of the game and hope that the best team wins the Cup.

Turning cricket's phrase



ISLAMABAD, Feb 13 (AFP): Every four years, they play the World Cup. And every four years, WG Grace turns in his grave.

"It's not cricket," the Bristol doctor would surely have blustered through heavy whiskers.

And he's right. If Test cricket is the sport's original flare, the limited-over World Cup serves up an increasingly popular fast food alternative.

The cricket legend would not have made head or tail of the coloured pajamas, the rules nor even the new double-Dutch vocabulary.

When the Cup gets underway on Wednesday all talk will be of "pinch-hitters," "go-to" cricketers, the 30-year rule, reverse swing and reverse sweeps, with a bit of sledging thrown in.

Cricket, with its complex rules and arcane jargon, has never translated well to non-devotees.

WG, of course, knew all about lbs, chinamen, googlies and the finest of legs, but even he would struggle this month.

Here is a lexicon of key words and phrases for the non-initiated:

The 30-year rule: Fielding sides at the World Cup must keep nine fielders within a 30-yard perimeter from the wicket for the first 15 overs of each innings, tempting batsmen to hit the ball in the air early in the innings. For the rest of the innings, five fielders may be placed outside the inner zone.

The pinch-hitter: Big-hitting, fast-scoring batsmen promoted up the order to take advantage of the 30-year rule by hitting over the top.

South Africa used Richard Snell in the role against England, recently, while Sri Lankan wicketkeeper Romesh Kaluwatharana, normally a lower middle-order operator, gave Australia real problems in the World Series.

Some sides will probably retain their traditional openers and hope to score quick runs later on. India are likely to use Sachin Tendulkar as an opener. Unlike most pinch-hitters, he is already a top-order batsman but his scintillating stroke-play will tempt the selectors to use him for the start.

West Indies may be tempted to experiment with Brian Lara as an opener.

The "go-to" player: Some players have the reputation of producing regular match-winning performances under extreme pressure — the perfect man in a crisis, England rely heavily on swing bowler Dominic Cork, who took seven wickets on his Test debut last year. Lara is the West Indian talisman, while Allan Donald regularly acts as South Africa's lifesaver.

It can, however, be more a case of gritty character than talent. Springbok Jonny Rhodes is not regarded as a top batting talent but former Australian captain Allan Border said of him: "Just when you think you've got SA where you want them, that bloody Rhodes somehow and who bloody knows how, finds a way to score crucial runs."

Reverse swing: The technique first came to world-wide attention in 1992 when Wasim Akram and Waqar Younis used it with dramatic effect in England.

Conventional wisdom taught players to keep one side of the ball shiny, holding it on the right if they wanted a delivery to veer away from the right-hander and on the left if they wanted to swing it

When a ball gets old, however, it can behave in the opposite way. The leather surface gets torn and the ball's weight distribution gets lopsided. Spit and sweat applied to shine one side of the ball to make it heavier, causing it to reverse-swing.

Sledging: Trying to put batsmen off, with jokes or insults. Top-class players should be immune to the tactic, although South African Brian McMillan is famed for his unique ability to disturb opponents' concentration.

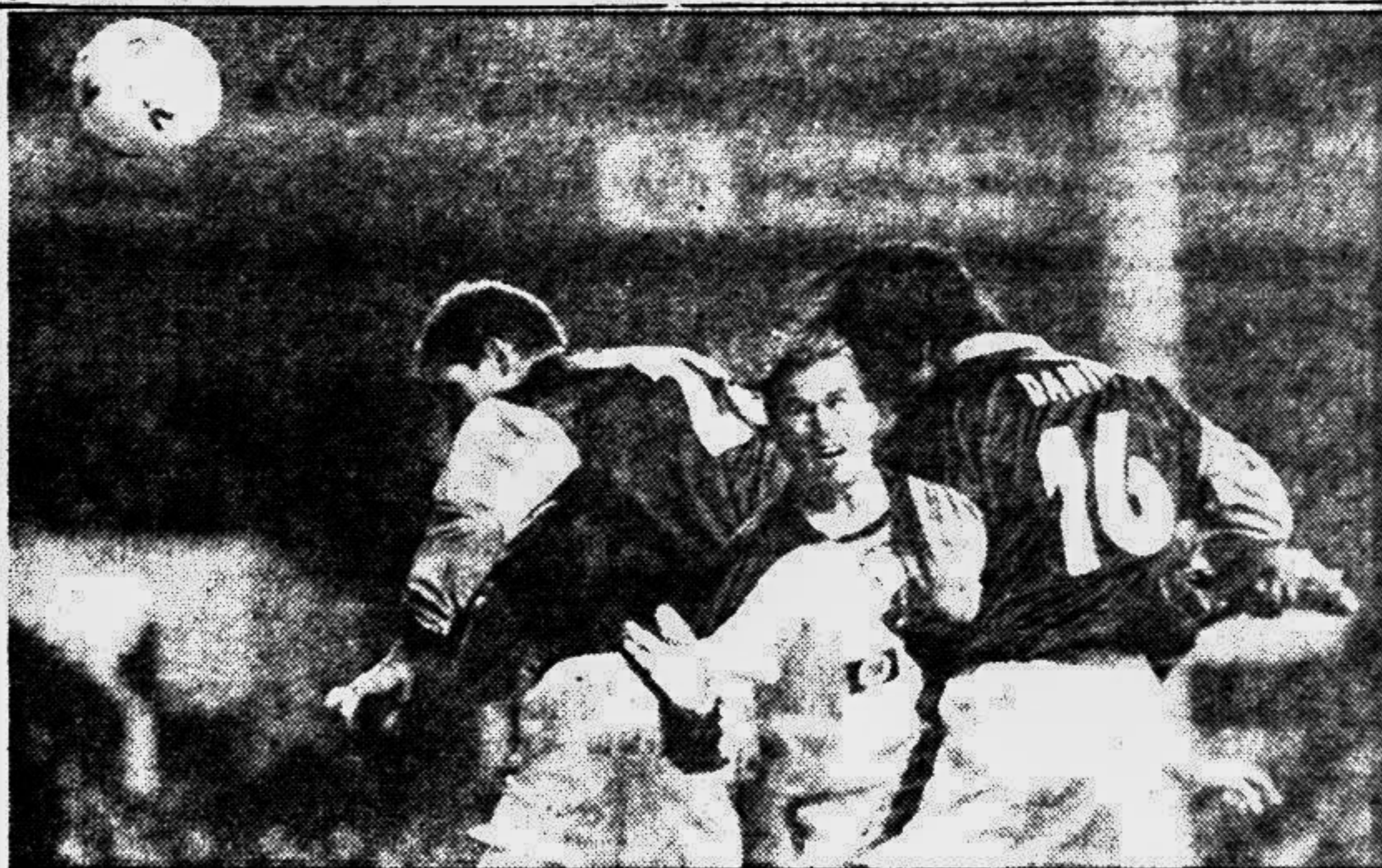
As England captain Mike Atherton explains: "He comes nearer to unsettling me than most because his verbals aren't really nasty, they make me want to laugh. Then I look up after he's given me this mouthful and he's winking at me."

Reverse sweep: A few years ago this was regarded as reckless innovation, but most top players now play this shot. By switching left hand with right as the bowler approaches, a right handed batsman can turn himself into a left-hander and sweep the ball away to the opposite side of the field, making a nonsense of the defensive fielding positions.

When Bob Woolmer took over as South African coach he taught it to all his players immediately.

WG Grace would probably not have approved, of course. The inventor of the modern game wore whites, played classical strokes and never needed to resort to such new fangled ideas as pinch-hitting or reverse sweeping.

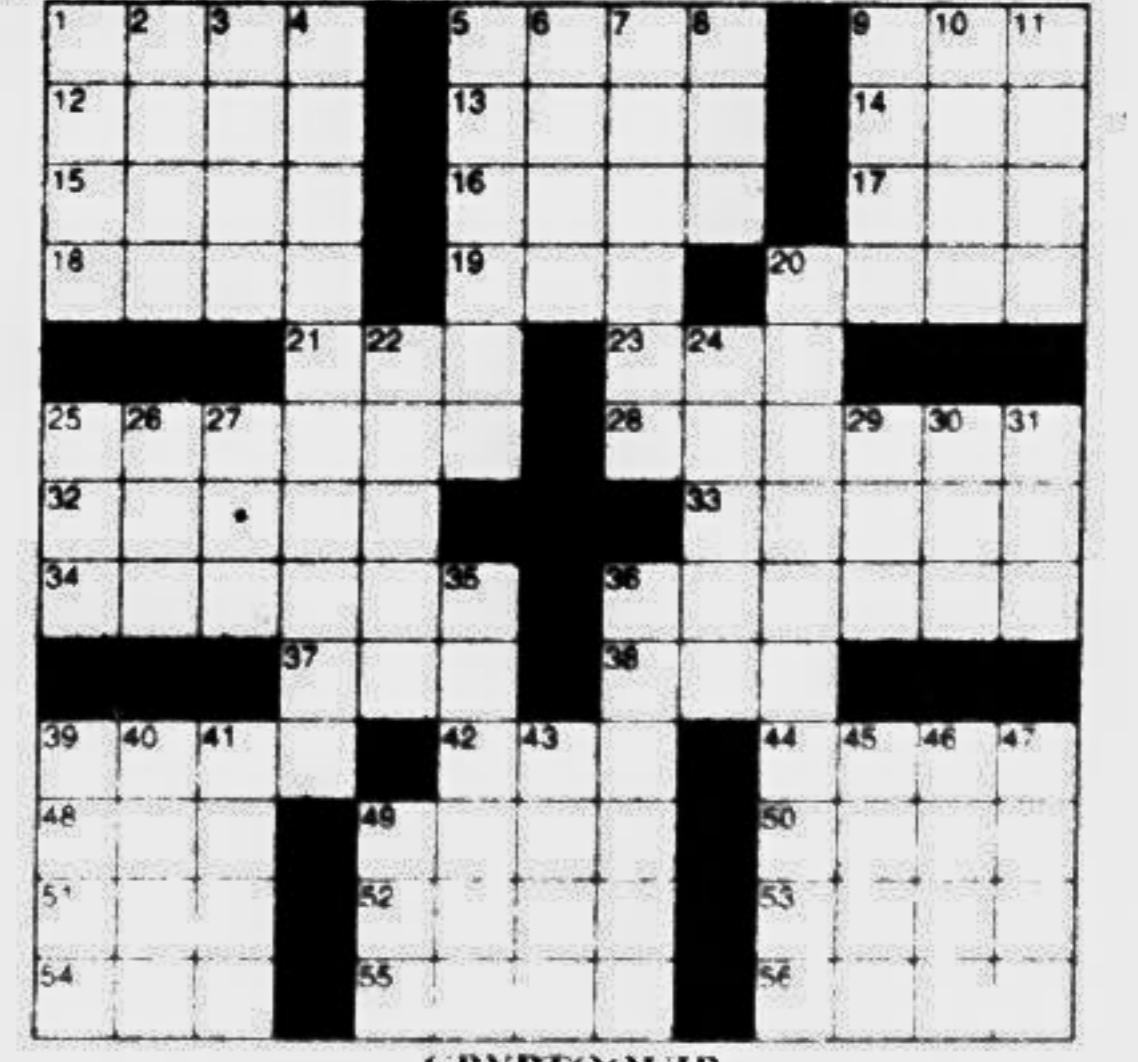
But he had equally unorthodox solutions. Once, after being dismissed cheaply, he replaced the balls, gestured to the packed crowd and told the astonished bowler: "Get on with it. They've come to see me bat, not you bowl."



An air-borne Portuguese soccer star Dani (R) heading home past Tottenham custodian Ian Walker for a lone goal win of West Ham in London on Feb 12.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS: 1 Not lem, 5 Super, 9 hero's garb, 9 Stick out, 12 Mormon territory, 13 Evangelist, 14 Excited, and then some, 15 One billion, 16 Worms' product, 17 Computer abbr, 18 Kenton or Getz, 19 Under the weather, 20 Small change, 21 Joke or choke, 23 Firewood?, 25 Bar, 28 Few and far between, 32 Light on one's feet, 33 Negatively charged atom, 34 On the way, 36 Madison Avenue melody, 37 Dissenter's remark, 38 inseparable, 39 Pizzazz, 42 Outcry, 43 From the gallery, 44 Roberts' shots, 48 Prior to, 49 Rhett's parting word, 50 Insider trader, 51 AAA job, 52 School near, 53 Windsor Castle, 53 Infamous lyre player, 54 "He had high hopes", 55 Inducing goose bumps, 56 Waxed, 57 Down, 1 Makes faces, 2 Persisting, 3 It's a long story, 4 Swapped, 5 babe, 6 Seed coat, 7 Athena's ark/a, 8 Waph, 9 Nephrite, 10 Fairy tale, 11 Student's worry, 20 Spiritualist's practice, 22 Where the action is, 24 Columbus sponsor, 25 Middle X?, 26 Gettysburg Address, 27 Energy, 29 Predator, 30 Impresario, 31 U-turn from WSW, 35 Spin, 36 Jay's predecessor, 39 Epsilon follower, 40 Unyielding, 41 Gingham or a salamander, 43 Cupid's forte, 45 Finished, 46 Unadorned, 47 TV reception, 48 Ruby or Sandra, 49 Ruby or Sandra



DLGY AOXBARII GPOYRDITL

WVM RA IXXLAYMOX

IOTTOVAROMI WVMYPAL

BVVVBOL

Yesterday's Cryptogram: FINISHING A DEGREE IN ENGLISH IS CALLED BEING BARDIC. (E)

Today's Cryptogram clue: X equals Q

The Cryptogram is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. It was thought that X equals Q, 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.



Namibia's Frank Fredericks in full ecstasy after setting a new 100m indoor world record during the international indoor track and field event in Tampere, Finland on Feb 12.