

Column One

DID U' KNOW?

(The Professor does)

WHAT the Imperial Cricket Conference (ICC) was formed in 1909 with England, Australia and South Africa as its three members. West Indies played their first Test in 1928. New Zealand two years later and India another two years later. Pakistan joined Test status, which is only full members of the ICC in 1952. Since then, Sri Lanka (1981) and Zimbabwe have been admitted into the elite club.

South Africa lost its membership in 1970 because of the country's apartheid policy. They were re-admitted in 1990 after racism was abolished in Nelson Mandela's republic.

In 1965 the word 'Imperial' was substituted with 'International' and countries outside the Commonwealth were permitted to become members. The system of associate and affiliate membership was also introduced.

WHIZZ KID

COMPETITION FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN

Sports WHIZZ KID competition-30

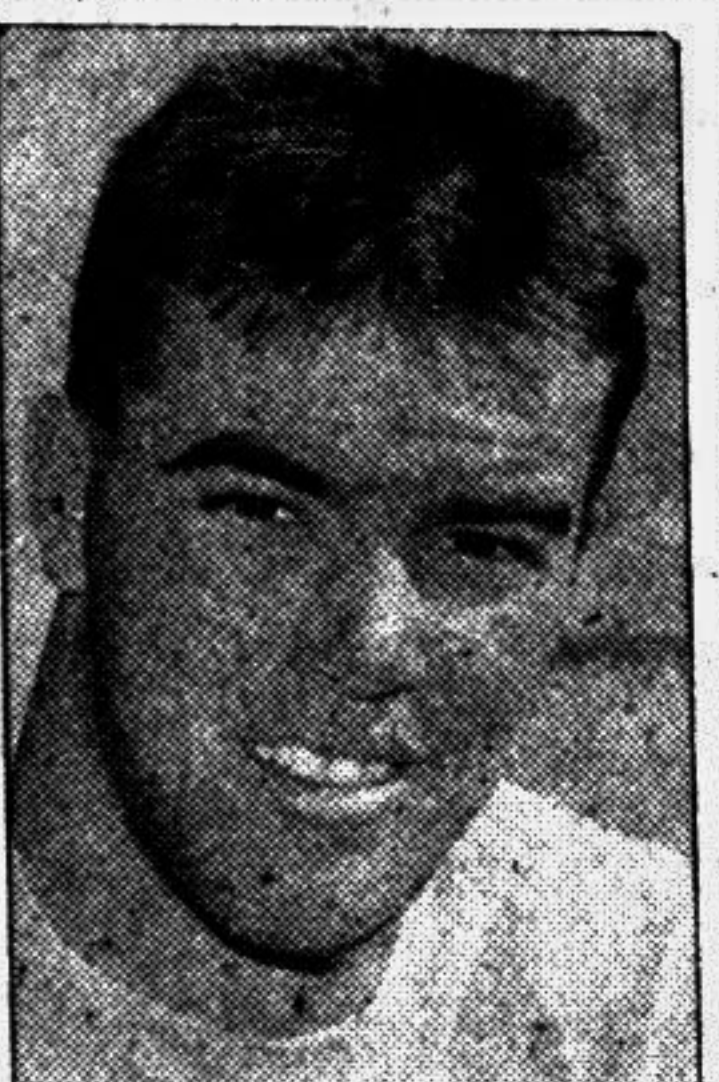
✓ Tick the Correct Answer

(Competition closes: 8 p.m. Mar 22, 1996)

1. How many wickets did West Indian fast bowler Curtly Ambrose take in the World Cup 1996?
a) 8 wickets b) 10 wickets c) 12 wickets
2. Where will the next cricket World Cup be held?
a) England b) S. Africa c) Australia
3. Who scored the first hundred in World Cup 1996?
a) Steve Waugh b) Sachin Tendulkar c) Virat Kohli
4. Who was the man of the match in the 1975 World Cup final?
a) Clive Lloyd b) Viv Richards c) Ian Botham
5. The present South African cricket captain is
a) Mark Boucher b) Jacques Kallis c) Graeme Smith

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

SPORTS TALK



Heath Streak

(Zimbabwe's bowling spearhead)
"One-day matches are faster and action packed. So they are enjoyable to play in. But then a victory in a Test match calls for more hard work and more consistency. So it has a lot of value and a Test victory gives you that much more satisfaction."

On the difference between playing Tests and one-dayers.

WHIZZ KID-29 winners

1. Shams Arefeen
Oxford International
Dhaka
2. Mahbuba Afroze Zinia
Almatiya Girls' High School
Dhaka
3. Afana Ahmad Moon
Sher-e-Bangla Nagar Girls' High School
Dhaka
4. Sarwat Anjum Shady
Motijheel Govt Girls' High School
Dhaka
5. Saqibul Haq
Sunbeams
Dhaka

WHIZZ KID-29 correct answers

1. In the first round of the World Cup 1996, Zimbabwean leg-spinner Paul Strang took
Ans: 12 wickets
2. The highest scored in an innings in one-day international is
Ans: 398
South African Jonty Rhodes also represents his country in
Ans: Hockey
3. Umpire David Shepherd is from
Ans: England
4. Gary Kirsten is the brother of
Ans: Kirsten

War of rage & rancour

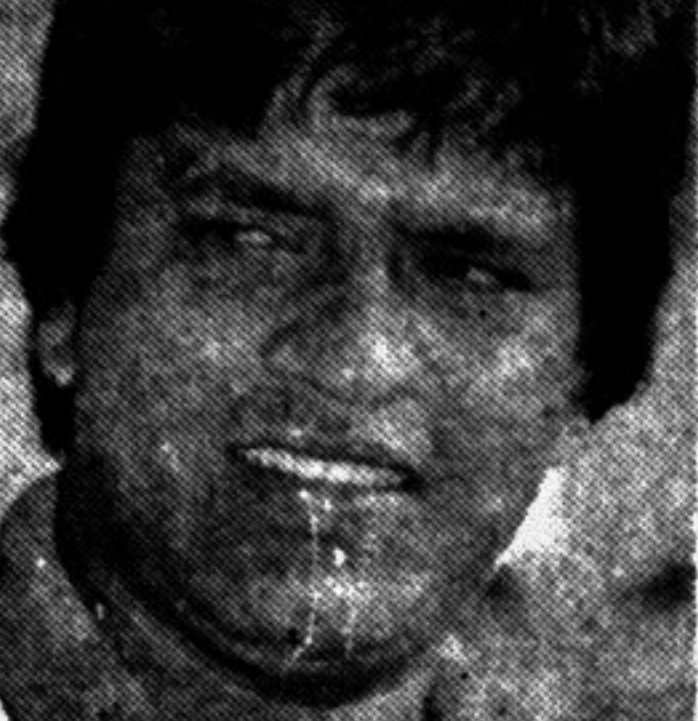


LAHORE, Mar 15: Australia and Sri Lanka will contest the 1996 World Cup final here on Sunday in a match packed with world-class talent, high-class drama and first-class bitterness, report agencies.

For Sri Lanka, in the first final of their history, the Lahore showpiece will be about revenge and retribution.

The Australians simply want the trophy.

They will have to see off the collective will of the entire Asian sub-continent to do it.



ARJUNA RANATUNGA

Mark Taylor's side, the pre-tournament favourites, are as respected for their talent as they are reviled for their refusal to play in Colombo at the start of the tournament following a terrorist bombing.

Arjuna Ranatunga, his team and an entire nation took that match forfeit as an unforgivable assault on their honour.

Ranatunga vowed, "We are waiting for Taylor's men. They escaped us in the league, but they won't miss us the next time. We'll be there, waiting for them."

The decision to stay away came on top of a bitter tour by

Sri Lanka to Australia late last year. The tourists were first accused of ball-tampering, a charge later withdrawn — then saw off-spinner Muttiah Muralitharan accused of throwing by two Aussie umpires — a charge that will hang over him the rest of his career.

Taylor was responsible for neither incident but the atmosphere between the teams dipped sharply.

Months of rancour will be packed into Sunday's 100 overs but Taylor argues, "I don't anticipate any problems. I think both sides will be going all out to win. I think and hope the problems have gone by."

"Nothing could be more satisfying for us than to win the Cup by beating Australia in the final," admitted Sri Lankan manager Duleep Mendis. "It's not only me, the whole team has been eyeing this game since before the semifinals."

Some of the banners at the friendly match between Sri Lanka and a joint India-Pakistan side on the eve of the tournament suggest Sri Lankan fans feel the same way. "Kangaroos have hearts of chicken" and "Aussie PM is Keating, Australians are cheating" were among the messages on display.

Pakistan, meanwhile — whose former captain Salim Malik was accused of trying to fix matches by three Australian players last year — will be fully behind Sri Lanka, especially after their win over India in the semifinals.

India, who had beaten arch-rivals Pakistan in the quarters, will make it an Asian coalition, in the process hoping to erase the disgrace that followed the Calcutta crowd riot which gave Ranatunga's side their place in the final.

While Ranatunga is a highly sophisticated and versatile performer, his central game plan will again be to upset the opposition with the most attacking batting philosophy ever seen in World Cup cricket.

Taylor, in contrast — fresh

from winning the tightest semi-final ever, the five-run margin over the West Indies, outdoing England's nine-run victory over New Zealand in 1979 — will try to play to the perfect pattern.

Sunday's sides both have a fine array of potential match-winners — Warne and Mark Waugh to the fore in the Australian camp, while Sri Lanka will lean on destructive batsmen Sanath Jayasuriya and Aravinda de Silva.

But the key to the 1996 trophy may come in the opening exchanges of the Sri Lankan innings.

If Ranatunga's pinch-hitters from hell — Jayasuriya and Romesh Kaluwitharana — can get the better of that head-to-



MARK TAYLOR

head, the Sri Lankans could wreak havoc as they did against England in the quarterfinals and, more impressively still, in that 398-run world record against Kenya.

If Australia's attack, however, headed by the rejuvenated Glenn McGrath, prevail it seems unlikely the Sri Lankans will be able to recover.

India, despite Jagavallu Srinath's two wickets in the first four balls of the semifinal in Calcutta, still allowed a Sri Lankan revival, it is unlikely that Australia, the hardest-nosed team of them all, will be so generous.

Dealing with daring deal



LAHORE, Mar 15 (Reuters): Some might say rival World Cup final captains Mark Taylor and Arjuna Ranatunga have only two points in common — both are left-handers and share a dislike of bathroom scales.

Relationships between Australia and Sri Lanka being what they are, the pair are unlikely to swap weight-watching tips even if they had any. But when they walk out on Sunday, they will represent a dying breed — the happy, successful international cricket captain.

Test captaincy these days is a job which should almost carry a government health warning, and the World Cup has underlined the trend.

West Indies' skipper Richie Richardson has had enough of the whole business, confirming his retirement at the age of 34 after his side's agonising five-run semifinal defeat to the Australians in Mohali, India.

Then there is England's Mike Atherton, who will not be 28 until later this month but looked increasingly exhausted

during his side's less-than-exhilarating displays over the past month.

India's Mohammad Azharuddin and Pakistan's Wasim Akram are equally under fire in their own countries, to the extent that their houses have had to be protected from angry fans, and even Hansie Cronje of South Africa and his Zimbabwean counterpart Andy Flower have struggled for runs in recent times.

That leaves just Lee Germon, whose stewardship of the New Zealand team is still in its infancy, of the nine Test-playing teams, a fact which may go some way to explaining the identity of the two finalists.

Ranatunga has not been without his critics during his tenure, but is now talking about extending a remarkable career which began as an 18-year-old when he played in Sri Lanka's inaugural Test.

He still recalls facing England's fast bowler Bob Willis for the first time, particularly the experience of being only halfway through his backlift when the ball hit the wicket-keeper's gloves.

Since then he has scored well over 3,000 Test runs at an average of 35, has captained his country in a century of one-day internationals and, with

Javed Miandad's retirement can claim to be international cricket's longest-serving current player.

Taylor was also a permanent fixture long before he became his country's 39th captain in May 1994. His old nickname of "tubby" has lost some of its relevance following a determined fitness campaign, and at 31 he appears ready to join the ranks of great Australian skippers.

His first tour as captain to Pakistan yielded a pair in his first Test in charge at Karachi but he has subsequently grown to the job to the extent that coach Bobbi Simpson has taken an increasing back seat in team matters.

If anyone needed proof of his leadership ability, studying the video of Thursday's semifinal should help. Panic played its part as West Indies lost eight wickets for 37 runs in 51 balls to squander their victory chances. But it was Taylor who ensured the pressure never eased.

"They were ahead for 95 per cent of the game and we won the last five per cent," he grinned afterwards. Australia will require a better ratio on Sunday, but those looking for weaknesses in the respective captains should look elsewhere.

A study in contrast



LAHORE, Mar 15: The World Cup final will be graced by an intriguing head-to-head between two spinners: One, the game's most famous player, the other its most controversial, reports AFP.

Shane Warne and Muttiah Muralitharan are both household names, the former known for his achievement, the latter due to a controversy that almost saw him thrown out of the sport.

The Australian and Sri Lankan are perfectly juxtaposed — a leg-break bowler delivering out of the back of his hand and an off-spinner out of the front.

Both will go into the Lahore showpiece with a handicap to bear.

Warne, despite 12 wickets and a match-winning four for 36 during the extraordinary semifinal success over the West Indies, is struggling with a painful hand injury.

Muralitharan, a world-class talent in his own right, is struggling with his past.

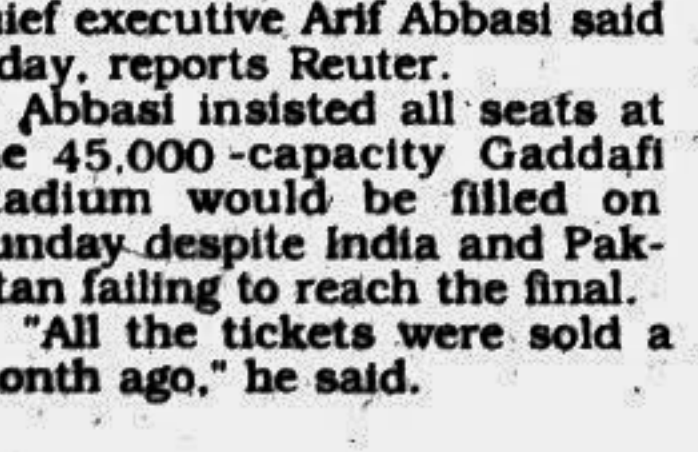
The 23-year-old from Kandy, called for throwing by two Australian umpires last year, has had his action laboratory — photographed from every conceivable angle to try and prove his innocence.

But the International Cricket Council, the sport's world governing body, is adamant that the legality of his action must be left up to individual umpires.



MURALITHARAN

Technically, Muralitharan, despite no hint of a problem during this tournament, could be called at Lahore on Sunday. But then, so could Warne.



SHANE WARNE

Muralitharan, says team coach Dave Whatmore, had to be nursed through the nightmare. "He was pretty much down, for sure. We had to encourage him.

We had to continue to convince him that his action was free of guilt."

The 26-year-old Australian's lingering problem, however, diagnosed as either a ligament problem or arthritis — is likely to be the greater burden on Sunday.

Warne, whose fingers remain painfully stiff during his opening overs, came close to admitting after the semifinal that his form has not been quite up to the standard he had been expecting. The Victorian won the man-of-the-match award but conceded: "I got lucky. For the first time in the tournament I got a few flippers on line."

Despite his reservations, Warne, a right-handed batsman, is the most economical bowler in the world, a vital asset in the one-day format. A man who can spin the ball over a foot is always intimidating, whether he's pitching it on the spot or not.

Warne's real worry on Thursday was fatigue rather than his hand. "All of us will be knackered, hopefully there will be no training on Friday," he said.

"One-day games are very physical and drain you mentally when you are bowling at the end. It was one of the best games I have ever played in."

Like Muralitharan, he has had to put up with constant media attention over recent times. Last year Warne was one of three Australian players to accuse former Pakistan captain Salim Malik of trying to bribe them to throw away a match.

Then he was vilified in Asia for his reluctance to play in Colombo following both personal death threats and a random terrorist suicide bombing that massacred 91 people in the Sri Lankan capital.

Both Warne and Muralitharan will be hoping for the right kind of media exposure here on Sunday before being taking a well-earned rest.

AUSSIE-SL MATCH-FILE

ISLAMABAD, Mar 15 (AFP): Match-file before Sunday's World Cup final at Lahore on March 17: Australia v Sri Lanka

Cup finals

Australia — 2nd in Group A (forfeited match to Sri Lanka, beat Kenya by 97 runs, beat India by 18 runs, beat Zimbabwe by 8 wks, lost to West Indies by 4 wks). Quarterfinal — beat New Zealand by 6 wks. Semifinal — beat the West Indies by five runs.

Sri Lanka — 1st in Group A (forfeited match by Australia, beat Zimbabwe by 6 wks, forfeited match by West Indies, beat India by 6 wks, beat Kenya by 144 runs).

Quarterfinal — beat England by 5 wks. Semifinal — beat India by default.

Team breakdown: Australia will still be wondering how they got to the final after two gruelling matches that saw them overhaul an impressive 289 for four by New Zealand, then beat West Indies when Richie Richardson's side needed a mere 48 off ten overs with eight wickets intact. The answer — particularly at the last hurdle — was supreme luck and organisation.

Mark Taylor proved the master tactician, constantly reshuffling his bowling pack. This is the one side that has really never lost a game until the very last ball. All-round quality also makes it massively difficult to beat, as it proved by coming back from 15 for four against West Indies.

Sri Lanka's batsmen may have torn up the rule book with their radical approach, but their bowlers — and a pitch that turned into a snakepit — got them to the final. There is no doubting that they are likely to rattle the Australian bowlers early on. Yet two major questions remain — would Taylor's side allow a team with two wickets down in four balls to escape like India did? And are Sri Lanka's spinners really world-class or were they just on the right pitch at the right time at Calcutta?

Cup head-to-head: Australia 2, Sri Lanka 0. Australia won the first encounter during the inaugural tournament and, four years ago, repeated the dose despite an Aravinda de Silva top score of 62. Both wins have been heavy, by 52 runs and seven wickets.

Cup pedigree: Australia won the trophy in 1987 and lost the first final to West Indies in 1975. Sri Lanka never got beyond the preliminary round before this event.

Healy mystified

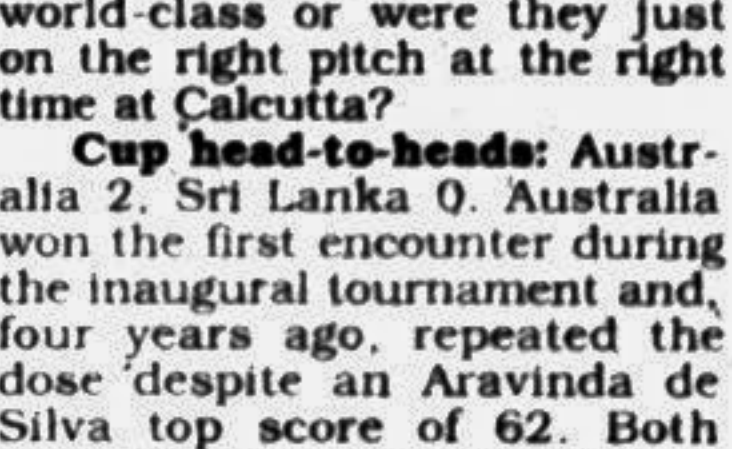
LAHORE, Mar 15: Australian World Cup wicket-keeper Ian Healy is the man immediately behind star leg-spinner Shane Warne's success, reports AFP.

Even, he, however, can be caught out and fail to pick the bowler's leg-break from his goosy or flippy.

Healy, with over 250 Test victims to his credit, says standing up to Warne has not made him into an expert player of spin bowling — even if it has helped consolidate this reputation as the world's best keeper.

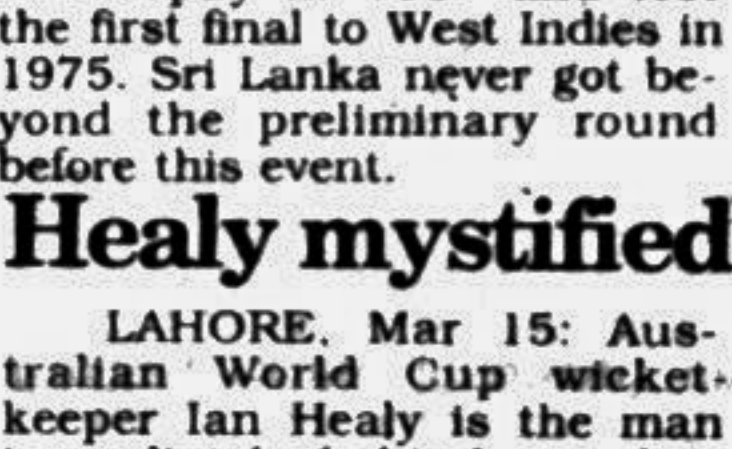
The extra practice may give us half a chance but Mustard still caused a lot of problems during our last tour to Pakistan," Healy said.

WHIZZ KID-28 winners



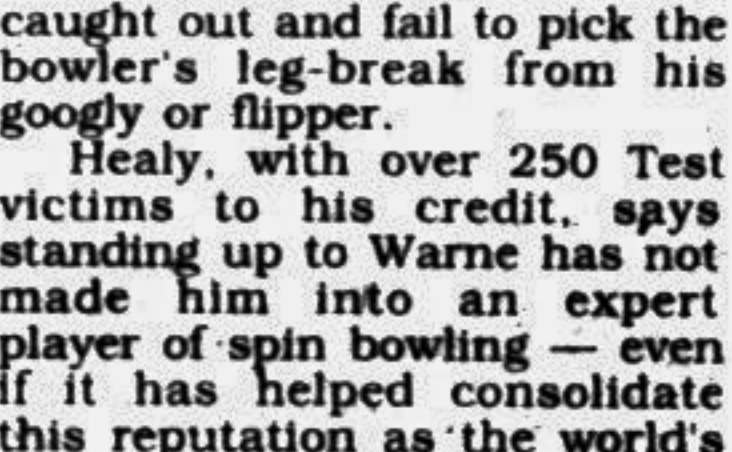
1. Samera Chowdhury

Sunbeams Dhaka



2. Subheeha Shahrin Ahmed

Scholastica Dhaka



3. Aurvik Rahman

Manarat Int'l School Dhaka



4. Muhtashin Iqbal

Dhaka



5. Saquib Mubin Chowdhury

Sunbeams Dhaka

(No. 3, 4 pictures are not available.)

Growing up of a giant



By Zayd Almer Khan

Would you have believed it a year ago? Surely not. Imagine a friend telling you early last year that he fancies Sri Lanka to reach the finals of the next World Cup. You would have probably said, "Yeah, sure, and the Martians are invading the Earth this summer!" Even the overly optimistic may have had the audacity to say, "Maybe in 1999, but not this time around."

For Sri Lanka were still considered to be going through the learning processes of top-flight cricket. They had no major success behind them — may be an odd victory here and there, but no consistency of speak of, they were short on experience — only a decade or two of international exposure of boast of, and, most importantly, they seemed to be lacking the self-confidence that is needed to succeed at this level. They were, along with Zimbabwe, the minnows of Test and one-day cricket.

Today, barely a year after you had brushed off your friend's comment as "another

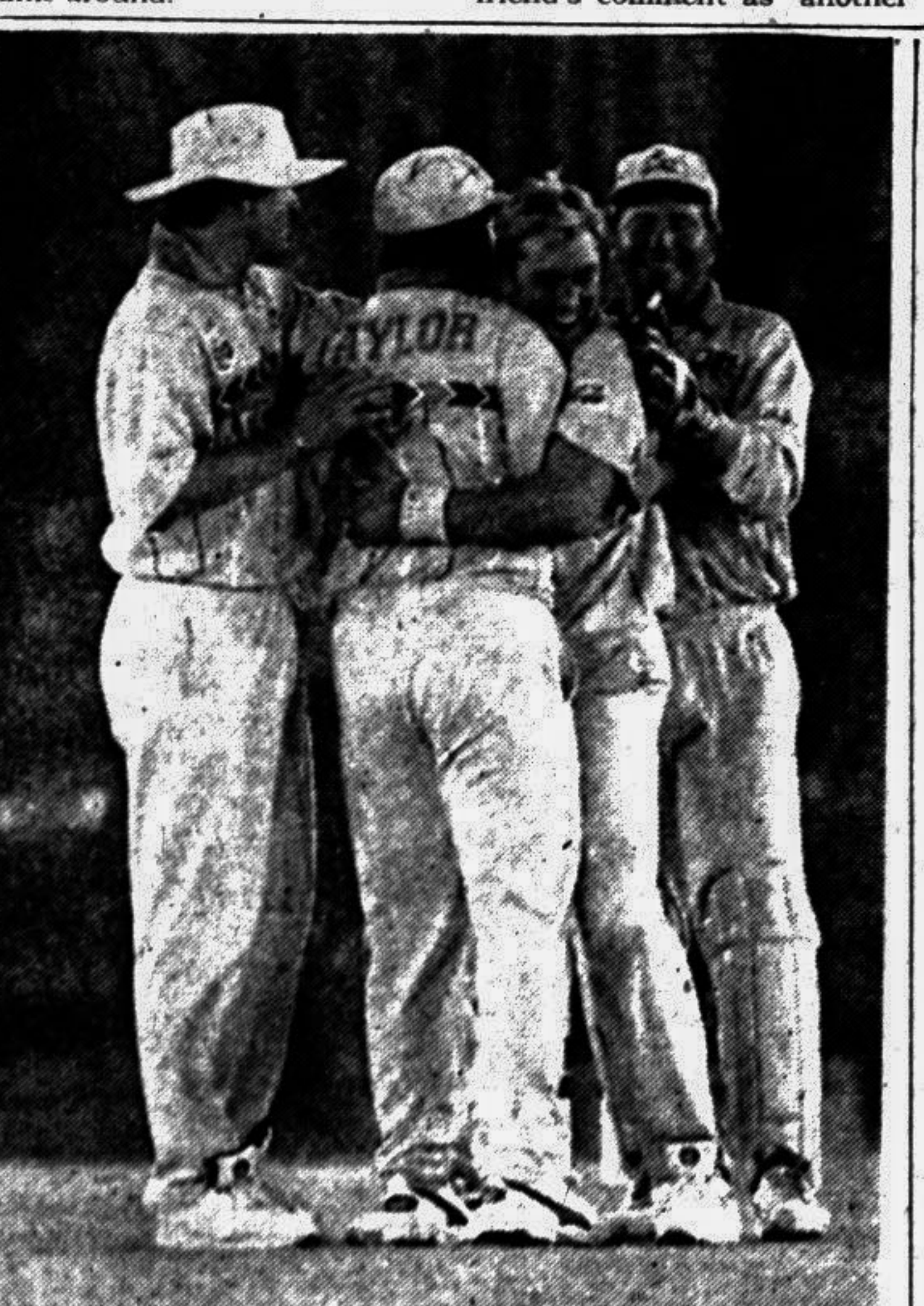
one of his crazy ideas," you are probably trying to figure out who was crazier, you or your friend. For the Lankans have come a long way from being the whipping boys of the rest of the cricketing world, the kind we all feel sorry for at the end of the day. In an eventful year, filled with more controversy than not, they took a giant step from being cricket adolescents to acquiring full-grown maturity.

At the end of it, what would you know? The Sri Lankans, no kidding, have reached the finals of the sixth World Cup! They have, in a dramatic change around, transformed from the helpless cubs lost in a vast jungle to indomitable lions, making the same wilderness their rightful kingdom.

And what a transformation it has been! From being youthful novices, eager to learn from the seniors, they are now the trend-setters of the shortened version of the game with other, more accomplished teams curious of their methods. Their openers — Kaluwitharana and Jayasuriya — are now a regular feature in their opponents' nightmare, thanks to the devastating (for the opponents) start they provide to every innings. Other teams have tried to imitate the blitzkrieg, but to no avail. Their middle order batsmen — including De Silva, Gurusinha and Ranatunga — are no slushes either, following in the openers' footsteps to entertain the spectators with their own brand of trail-blazing stroke play. And to top it off, they have probably the strongest lower order in the world today.

Their bowlers, although not as frightening as the batsmen, too have no lack of aggressiveness to speak of. Be it the accurate pace of Vaas or the magical spin of Muralitharan, they always look for wickets.

But what is most impressive about these Lankans is not their ability to perform but the youthful exuberance that they radiate. However, well they are doing, however great their triumphs, they are never short of enthusiasm. In their hearts, they are still the side they were — hungry for victory but equally intent on giving the crowd their money's worth.



Australian captain Mark Taylor (2nd L) congratulates leg-spinner Shane Warne (2nd R) while teammates Mark Waugh (L) and wicketkeeper Ian Healy (R) look on during their exciting World Cup semifinal against West Indies in Chandigarh, India on March 14. — AFP/UNB photo

The unsung Aussie heroes



CHANDIGARH, India, Mar 15: Stuart Law and Damien Fleming have barely got a mention during Australia's World Cup campaign, reports AFP.

Yet the side would not be in

semifinal against the West Indies. You need three figures to earn yourself a headline, or at least four wickets — as Shane Warne showed at Chandigarh — to earn yourself a man-of-the-match award.

Law's innings on Thursday, however, was worth ten such awards, after he arrived at the crease with the score on eight for three. A few balls and seven runs later and he was joined on the burning deck by Michael Bevan as Curtly Ambrose and Ian Bishop scythed through Australian ranks.

When Law left — through no fault of his own, run out by Bevan — the score had moved on to 153 for five and Australian had been thrown a lifeline.

Fleming, the 25-year-old, Victorian, was one of the players who helped catch it.

The statistics count against him as well, just two wickets — both lower-order batsmen — and a catch.

Yet that catch at mid-on removed Shivnarine Chanderpaul, the West Indies top-scorer, while both wickets came at the end of a tense thriller that Australia finally stole by five runs.

The fact that Mark Taylor called on Fleming to bowl at the end of a high-drama match is significant.

Fleming, who was not an automatic choice for the side at the start of the tournament, has blossomed as both attacking swing bowler and final-over miser.

The first ball of his last over had gone for four and the second for a leg-bye, leaving the West Indies five runs away from a place in the World Cup final when Fleming bowled

Walsh to end the game.

It was the second time Fleming had brought a match to a close. He ended India's hopes of a Group A win earlier in the tournament by bowling Anil Kumble, giving himself five wickets in the bargain.

Fleming injured a shoulder last year and had to fly home from the West Indies tour. Re-



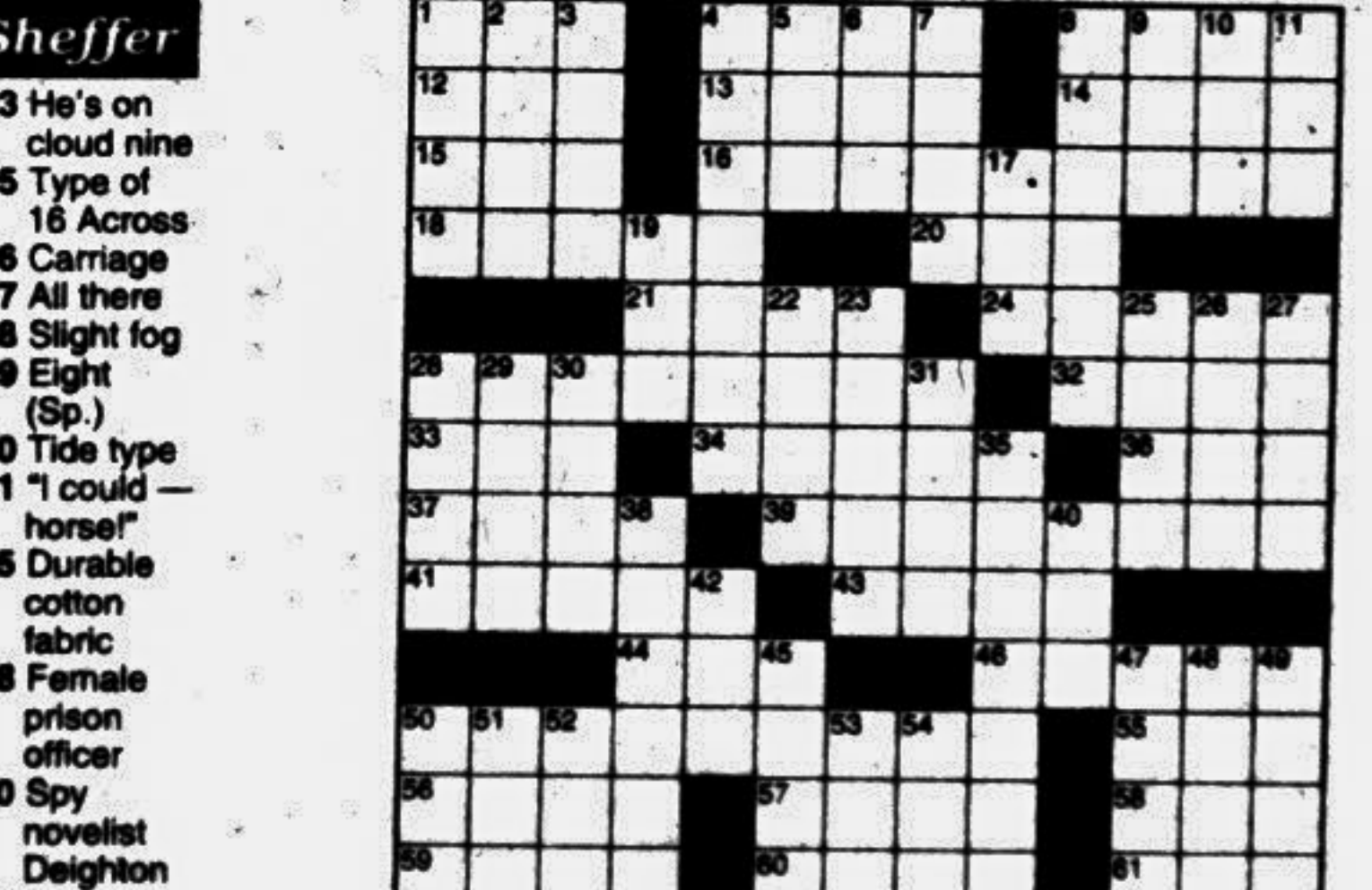
DAMIEN FLEMING

cuperating, he woke up every morning to be faced with his international blazer. It inspired him to beat the injury and sneak into the World Cup squad.

"It just happened to be hanging there," said Fleming. "It was the first thing I saw every morning." Odd, to think that a World Cup could be decided by the position of a wardrobe.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

- ACROSS
1. Lagniappe
 4. Indone- sian island
 6. Emanation
 12. Past
 13. On in years
 14. Cold- shoulder
 15. Diary
 16. Clifton's instrument
 20. Old card game
 21. Super- large, prefix
 24. Baby carriages
 28. Sameness of color
 32. Director
 33. Kerrigan's surface
 34. Carl or Françoise
 36. X rating?
 37. Phony
 39. Not to mention
 41. November birthstone
 43. Place to swing down
 44. Addition-
- DOWN
2. Composer
 3. Stravinsky
 5. Walt Kelly comic strip
 7. Court scores
 8. Khan title
 9. Dict
 10. Pedestal
 11. Actor occupying
 17. On the beach
 18. Opening words
 19. "Can I take 10" stocker
 22. Spiller
 23. He's on cloud nine
 25. Type of 16 Across
 26. Carriage
 27. All there
 28. Slight fog
 29. Eight (Sp.)
 30. Tide type
 31. 11 cou- horse
 35. Durable cotton fabric
 36. Female prison officer
 40. Spy novelist
 42. Deighton
 43. Menag-erie
 45. Drop
 47. Admitting
 48. Bamboo stem
 49. Kentucky fort
 50. Beta
 51. Yoda
 52. Epoch
 53. Barcelona bruin
 54. Fresh



CRYPTOQUIP

CW XJ WCQIJ GFH
VFB J I H Y U U V —
JQG XB V QUXV GFHQ
VCQUYJCFBI
Yesterday's Cryptogram: HAVE YOU HEARD? DI-ETS ARE DEFINITELY TRIUMPHS OF MINDS OVER PLATTERS.
Today's Cryptogram clue: Q equals R
The Cryptogram 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.