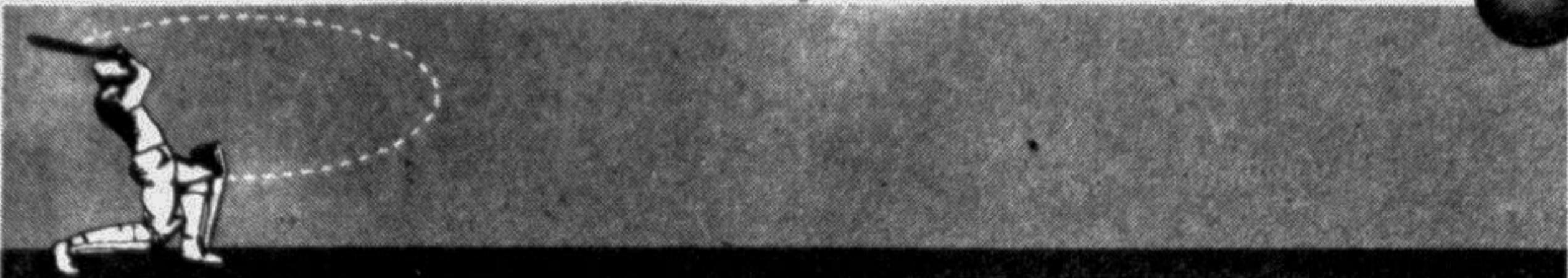


Sport

The World Cup with Philips



Not just live. Alive.

Good luck
Sri Lanka!

by Hasan Masood

One year ago Sri Lanka's newly-appointed cricket manager Duleep Mendis made a forecast regarding his team's future prior to their New Zealand tour.

In a nutshell what Mendis said was the team were going to emerge as one of the major forces in world cricket within a year or two.

In New Zealand, the Lankans recorded their first-ever Test series victory abroad. Then they beat Pakistan in Pakistan both in the Test and one-day series. Right after that tour, Ranatunga's men clinched the Champions Trophy is Sharjah beating West Indies and Pakistan.

They also enjoyed a good trip in Australia where they reached the Benson and Hedges World Series Cup final which they lost to the host.

We, the Bangladeshi cricket lovers, observed a new Sri Lankan side in Sharjah and Australia. Ranatunga, De Silva, Kaluwitharana, Jayasuriya and Tilakaratne all appeared to us like any other great cricket stars of the world.

Today is their D-day. After a month-long battle they are now in the sixth World Cup final and will take on Australia in the day-night match at Gaddafi Stadium in Lahore.

The whole of the sub-continent will be behind them this afternoon either watching the TV or seeing the match in Lahore.

Let the Lankans reach their goal. Let the World Cup remain in the sub-continent.

Brisk betting
in Pakistan

Sanath indebted to Sunil



LAHORE, Mar 16 (Reuters): Not even a sore throat and a touch of flu could dampen Sanath Jayasuriya's good humour today just 24 hours before the biggest game of his life.

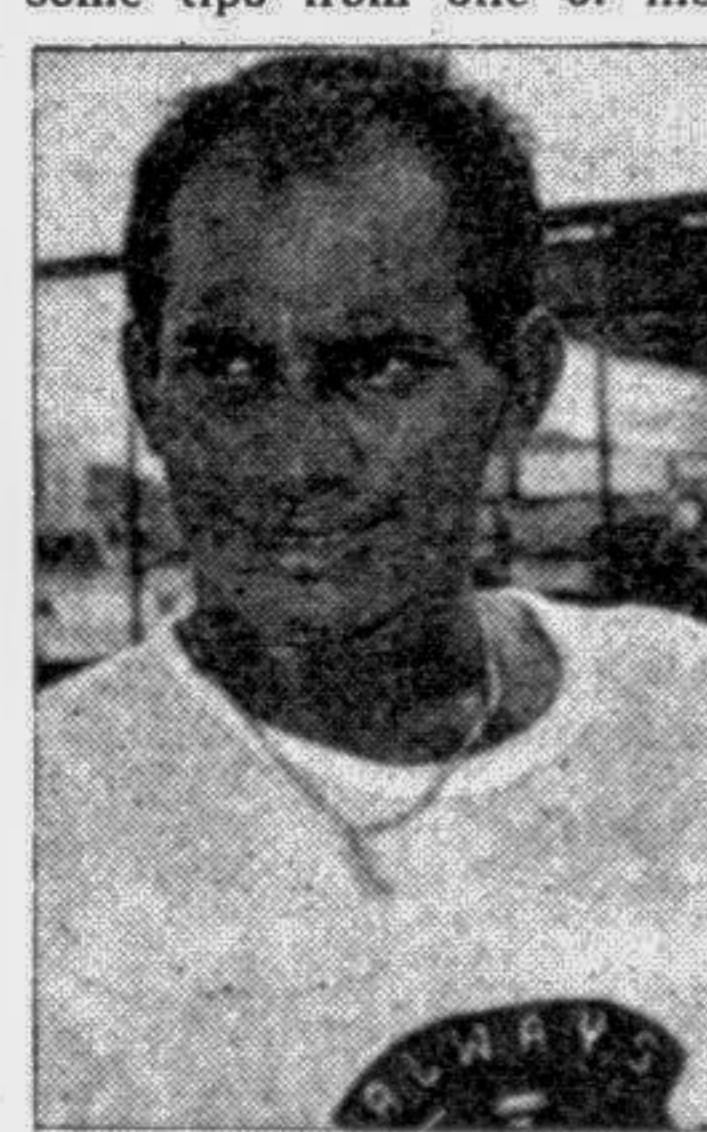
The Sri Lankan opener is certain to play against Australia in the World Cup final, having already secured one major prize this week in the shape of a luxury car as reward for being named the tournament's Most Valuable Player.

Mark Waugh, Sachin Tendulkar and Shane Warne all had strong claims but none could possibly have been more delighted than Jayasuriya and his teammates when the decision was announced.

The 26-year old from the southern provincial city of Matara has still to decide whether to keep his prize, but insists the award is a tribute to everyone connected with Sri Lankan cricket.

"It was great news, but I think it was only because of the boys' support that I got the car. I'm very happy because a Sri Lankan has never won this before and people at home are delighted, too.

"I haven't decided what to do with it yet, but I will talk to the management and the boys. If they have strong feelings about it, I will go with what ever they want."

SANATH JAYASURIYA
schoolboy heroes, Sunil Gavaskar.

Gavaskar was never noted for smashing the ball over the

top at any stage, let alone the first 15 overs of a World Cup final, but Jayasuriya credits the great former Indian opener with his current success.

"I like Sunil a lot. I have been talking to him and I've got a lot of tips from him. If I want something I can go and ask him. He's a very friendly person."

"Technically-wise you can ask him anything. Previously I was just doing my job, but I really enjoy opening. Suddenly I've started batting really well and I've got a lot more confidence."

Jayasuriya's favourite innings of the World Cup was his 44-ball knock of 82 against England in the quarterfinal, and although he lasted just three balls against India in the Calcutta semifinal, Australia's opening attack will be extremely wary.

His left-arm spin also claimed three wickets in Calcutta on a turning pitch, and there seems no reason why his Test career, which has spluttered occasionally since his debut in 1990-91 should not take off as well.

"I'm in the best form of my life, although you can never anticipate what's going to happen," he said. "The Australians might say a few things to me in the middle, but you have to ignore them and play the game. Our boys are doing well and the team are playing better. We can do something."

As for the car, if he keeps it, it will also have to compete for attention. Jayasuriya already has a flashy Japanese model.

Let's make
things better.

PHILIPS

It's Mannan
after India's
PC Sorker!

Sports reporter

After the fall of PC Sorker here comes MA Mannan with an audacity to announce a predictable winner of sixth World Cup final between Australia and Sri Lanka, to be held in Lahore, Pakistan, today.

"Unlike the previous five finals this will be a different one with Sri Lanka going on to lift the coveted trophy for the first time," said the unheralded soothsayer of Bangladesh.

Talking over telephone to

The Daily Star last night Mannan, who claimed a series of un-heard-of successful prognostication in the last World Cup cricket, also added that Australia is going to win the toss and will choose to bat first hoping to intact the World Cup jinx — no team batted second

has won in the last five finals.

"But this time Sri Lanka, enjoying the favour of the stars, will emerge as winners," claimed Mannan. The confident astrologer further added that Australia will score around 205-225 and the Lankans will reach the victory target for the loss of 7 or 8 wickets and with more than two overs to spare.

But whatever the outcome of the final may be, Mannan will certainly be awaiting with his fingers crossed to avoid an ignominy of his more illustrious Indian magician PC Sorker, who backed a wrong horse in India against the ultimate winners Sri Lanka.

Readers, here is Mannan's contact place for further clarification in this regard:

Sankat Mukti
6/1 Eastern Plaza, Hatirjheel
Sonargaon Road, Dhaka.

Shepherd's
surprise
selection

LAHORE, Mar 16: English umpire David Shepherd was a surprise selection here today to take charge of the World Cup final, reports AFP.

Shepherd, the 'dancing umpire', will officiate Sunday's match between Australia and Sri Lanka alongside West Indian Steve Bucknor. Clive Lloyd, also of the West Indies, will be the match referee.

Shepherd, widely regarded as the best match official in the world, looked to have missed out on the honour of umpiring the final when he was overlooked for the semis.

Ranatunga denies he is planning to do a Richie Richardson and retire from the game, although he does admit his captaincy days may



School girls welcome the Australian cricketers with flower petals on their arrival in Lahore on March 15. Australia meet Sri Lanka in the final here today.

—AFP/UNB photo

Preparing for a fiesta



COLOMBO, Mar 16: Sri

Lankans have been testing television sets and stocking up with food and drink for Sunday's World Cup final between the island team and Australia in Lahore, Pakistan, reports Reuter.

Television repairmen were in big demand today fixing and servicing sets to ensure screens would not go blank during the big match.

One man insisted I recheck his television set even though I had serviced it less than a month ago," said one repairman in Colombo.

Many of the capital's hotels have set up giant television screens to attract people.

Sri Lankans plan to forget the bloody separatist war in their country while the match is on and have bought fireworks in the hope that they will have plenty to celebrate late on Sunday night.

If their team do become the one day kings of the world, many islanders say they will

not be at work on Monday or for much of the week because they want to enjoy the triumph to the full.

"This is exciting and it's unlike anything we've experienced before," said Keerthi Weerawardhana. "May this be a bonus for us fans who have gone through the agony of losing in the past."

Film actor Lucky Dias said: "It's the moment we've all been waiting for and it's hard to believe that it's finally upon us. We pray and hope that the boys will do us proud."

Many Sri Lankans are

ishing the prospect of seeing their team beat Australia in the final because of the ill-feeling that has been brewing between the two countries in recent months.

"(Australia) has a grudge with us, so winning against them will certainly be sweeter," said Dias.

Australia refused to play their opening World Cup match in Colombo because of security fears after more than 80 people were killed in a bomb blast in the Sri Lankan capital on January 31. Before that there were controversies on and off the field during a Sri Lankan tour to Australia.

First these guys try to destroy us in cricket and now they are playing us in the final. I feel the force is with us and that we can't lose," said Sunny Rajapakse.

Schoolboy Ranjith Perera said Sri Lanka would have to play intelligently to win the World Cup.

"Australia can turn the game around like no other team can," he said. "So we have to play very intelligently if we want to win. We have to understand that only one side can win."

The Daily Star

PHILIPS

Cricket World Cup Quiz '96



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WILLS WO

ISLAMABAD, Mar 16 (AFP): World Cu

I'M

Sri Lankan opposition leader Ranil Sunil's game, "Despite government al Board."

The government blamed the opposition following a suicide truck bombing in Jan

PEPSI

Pepsi have put up huge hoardings in defeat to Sri Lanka. The hoardings pro play two triangular one-day tournament didn't Pepsi include the Singapore tour Cup. Why didn't Pepsi include the Sin only sponsoring the Sharjah event.

... AND COKE H

Coca Cola, the official World Cup together a special media flight for Sunday to Lahore sold out months ago. Coke unable to get a ticket.

LET'S HAVE A BIT

Pakistan Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto discipline and sportsmanship" to the perfect response after the first semifinal

WHY 'HOOT

Australian physiotherapist Errol Al "Hooter" because he was heard to com "When are they going to sound the he

So Australian followers were surprised one-man pitch invasion when Australia see the fruits of my work being successful

Sri Lankan skipper Arjuna Ranatunga already beaten, but this time the roles are reversed. Tyson was the undisputed heavyweight champion when he stopped Bruno in the fifth round of their Feb 25, 1989 fight.

Tyson fights a man he has overwhelmed him pretty much in that fight," Tyson said. "My intentions are to knock him out again."

Tyson will fight for the heavyweight title for the first time since he lost the undisputed crown Feb 11, 1990, against James "Buster" Douglas. It is the only loss in a career that seemed in danger of stalling even before Tyson was sent to prison for 3 and a half a year on a rape conviction.

Tyson fights a man he has already beaten, but this time the roles are reversed. Tyson was the undisputed heavyweight champion when he stopped Bruno in the fifth round of their Feb 25, 1989 fight.

"I just remember overwhelming him pretty much in that fight," Tyson said. "My intentions are to knock him out again."

Oddsmakers believe Tyson will do just that, despite not having fought four full rounds since being released from prison. He was a 10-1 favorite in Las Vegas sports books, with oddsmakers making it even money that the fight would not go past 4 and a half rounds.

SUCCES

Australian opener Mark Taylor said it vital, I see him as one of the elements bowler to win the tournament for us."

The leg-spinner is Australia's more e with 12.

JAYI

Sri Lankan star batsman Sanath Jay Sunday's tournament finale.

SUCCE

Australian opener Mark Taylor, who I success is all in the mind. "We have won

now that the fight is over."