

The World Cup with Philips



Not just live. Alive.

Let's make things better.

PHILIPS

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 in 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 Tillekaratne 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

LAHORE, Mar 16: Illegal bookmakers were doing brisk business in Pakistan on the eve of the World Cup final, with bets totalling an estimated 25 million rupees (720,000 dollars) already taken, Lahore Stock Exchange brokers said today, reports Reuter.

Australia are favourites for Sunday's match at Lahore's 30,000-capacity Gaddafi Stadium, but considerable money has also been wagered on Sri Lanka, although gambling is officially forbidden in Pakistan.

All tickets have been sold for the match starting at 2.30pm (0930 GMT), but many are still available on the black market. Agencies were selling the cheapest tickets at 1,500 rupees (dollar 43), twice their face value today.

A newspaper advertisement on Thursday gave a cellular telephone number in Lahore to obtain last-minute tickets.

Most Pakistanis are supporting Sri Lanka — not least because of the island nation's defeat of arch-rivals India in Wednesday's semifinal in Calcutta.

Tyson's trial of strength

LAS VEGAS, Mar 16: A year ago, Mike Tyson's most important number was 922335, assigned him courtesy of the Indiana state prison system. Now it's 30 million dollars boxing's richest purse ever and Tyson's prize for stepping into the ring Saturday night against WBC heavyweight champion Frank Bruno, reports AP.

Doing time did nothing but magnify Tyson's earning power, as evidenced by his purse for fighting Bruno. The payout is 10 times more than Tyson made for beating Bruno seven years ago, and brings his total take since leaving prison to some 60 million dollars.

Tyson's ability to make money is no longer in question. Questions remain, however, about whether Tyson is the same fighter who once terrorized the heavyweight ranks. "I'm fit and ferocious," Tyson said. "I beat him before and I'm going to beat him 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 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."

Odds-makers 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 odds-makers making it even money that the fight would not go past 4 and a half rounds.

Sanath indebted to Sunil



LAHORE, Mar 16 (Reuter): 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.

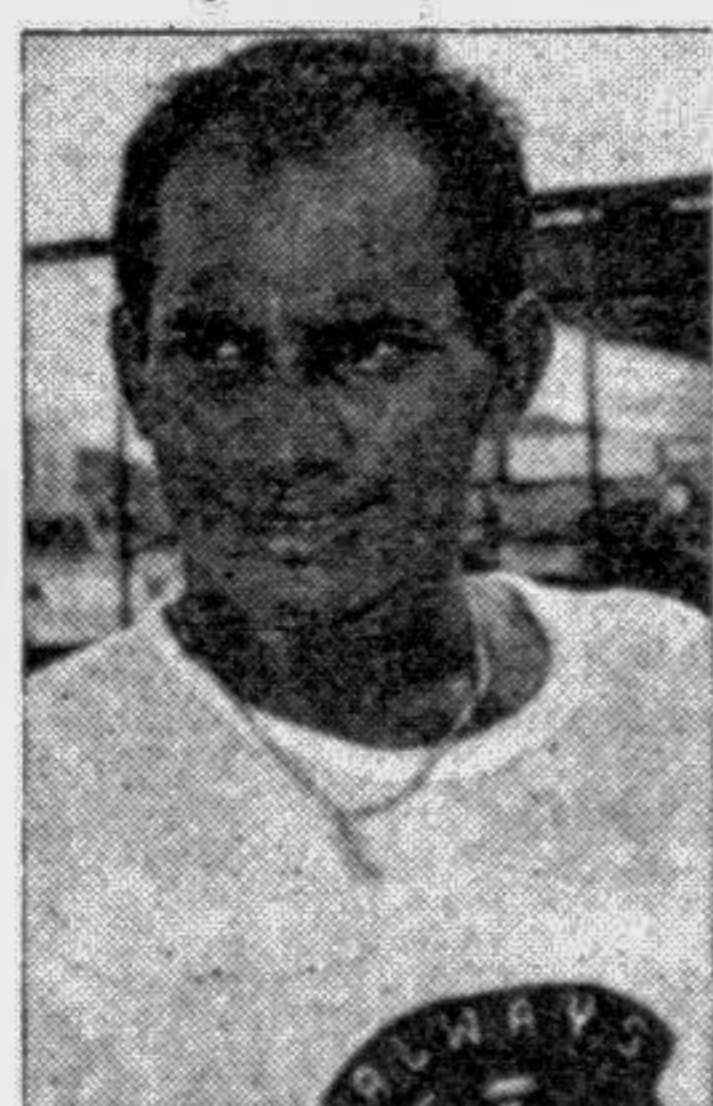
The 26-year old from the southern provincial city of Matara has still to decide whether to keep his prize, but insists the award is a tribute to everyone connected with Sri Lanka cricket.

"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 whatever they want."

The free-scoring Jayasuriya is rarely a careful driver on a cricket pitch, but in partnership with Romesh Kaluwitharana, named international cricketer-of-the-year in Australia after the World Series one-dayers, he has emerged as one of the revelations of the tournament.

Until last year both openers were to be found in the middle-order, since when Jayasuriya's career has been transformed with the help of some tips from one of his



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.

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 have 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, Hatirpul
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.

"I though West Indies played very badly, but the Australians did pretty well. They had a plan and stuck to it."

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

put any pressure on the players. I just want them to do the same things they have been doing."

Roshan Mahanama, forced to retire hurt with cramp and dehydration against India at Calcutta's Eden Gardens, will be fit to take his place in the Sri Lankan batting line-up.

"He had diarrhoea for two days and then cramp got him, but he's very much okay now," said Ranatunga.

The Sri Lankan skipper is openly critical of the way West Indies played in their semifinal against Australia.

"I though West Indies played very badly, but the Australians did pretty well. They had a plan and stuck to it."

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

Spirit SL's trump card



LAHORE, Mar 16: Sri Lankan skipper Arjuna Ranatunga is confident the team spirit in the island nation's dressing room will ensure a tough time for Australia in Sunday's World Cup final, reports Reuter.

The spectacular batting of Sanath Jayasuriya and Aravinda de Silva and accurate displays from spinners Muttiah Muralitharan and Kumar Dharmasena have all helped propel Sri Lanka to their first final, but Ranatunga insists it is the common purpose within his squad which has played a bigger role.

"It was summed up on Thursday night when it was announced Sanath had won the award for being the Most Valuable Player in the tournament," said Ranatunga.

"When I heard it on TV, I put a T-shirt on and went to Sanath's room but when I opened the door everyone was there already. They were all just very happy to see one of the players getting something exceptionally important."

"I think we are all enjoying our cricket, that's the most important thing. We enjoy practising, whether we're fielding, batting or bowling and the team plays as a team."

Jayasuriya has 'yet to decide' whether to keep the car he has won on the strength of his all-round performances in the tournament or share it with his teammates.

There have also been assorted cash offers from home in the days since the semifinal win over India, but Ranatunga says the squad have other things on their minds.

"We are not bothered about what we are being offered. We have never played for money and we just want to do the same thing for one more day."

Ranatunga said Sri Lanka wanted to consign to history the stormy relationship they have had with Australia on and off the field.

"It's a fortune we have won, but we have to be realistic and keep our heads down and keep working hard. We have changed the moment and we can win."

WILLS WORLD CUP

ISLAMABAD, Mar 16 (AFP): World Cup

Sri Lankan opposition leader Ranil Sunday'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 tou Cup. Why didn't Pepsi include the Sin only sponsoring the Sharjah event.

...AND COKE

Coca Cola, the official World Cup s together a special media flight for Sundi 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 w perfect response after the first semifinal

WHY 'HOOTE

Australian physiotherapist Errol Al "Hooter" because he was heard to comm "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 success

Sri Lankan skipper Arjuna Ranatunga a World Cup semifinal.

"That dream has been fulfilled and i for my close ones and for the whole of S cricket a huge boost in the country. I happened to Sri Lankan sport," he said.

WH

Australian skipper Mark Taylor said i 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 42.

JAY

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

SUCCESS

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



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 be this 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 rel-

Weather forecast

LAHORE, Mar 16: Australia and Sri Lanka may face overcast conditions when they meet in Sunday's World Cup final in the Pakistani city of Lahore, weathermen said, reports Reuter.

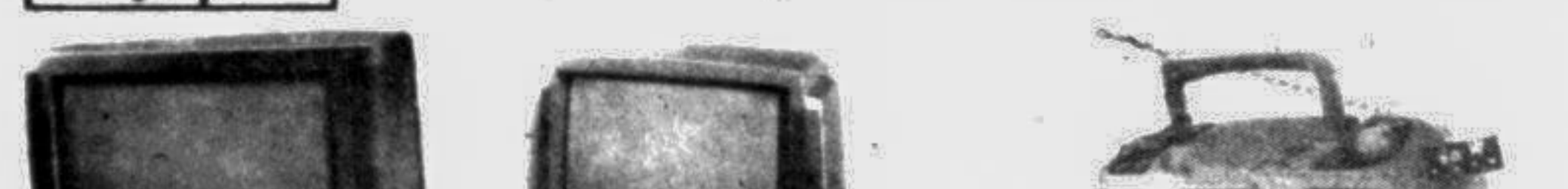
It rained in the Punjab provincial capital overnight and was partly cloudy today.

The rain will end tonight and it might be overcast in Lahore, but this should pose no problems for the match," said Qamar Zaman.



The Daily Star PHILIPS

Cricket World Cup Quiz '96



কাগজ খারাপ