

Sport

Column One

SPORTS TALK



Viv Richards

(Former West Indian batting great)

All through my career, I never thought that I have given a hell of a lot to the game...

Sports WHIZZ KID COMPETITION FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN

Sports WHIZZ KID competition-33

Tick the Correct Answer (Competition closes: 8 p.m. April 12, 1996)

Table with 5 questions about sports events and winners.

Name, Class, Roll No, School Address, Phone fields.

Div I cricket

Sports Reporter

BANGLADESH BOYS: 101 in 38.3 overs (Ahsan 3/18, Saad 3/22) GOPIBAGH FA: 102 for four in 18.5 overs (Azim 30 n.o., Shahidul 24)

Wanderers in wilderness

Sports Reporter

DHAKA WANDERERS: 265 for nine in 50 overs (Sagor 80, Nayan 69, Monirul 38) VICTORIA SC: 267 for seven in 50 overs (Opi 108, Lahu 45, Sagor 4/55)

Dhaka Wanderers Club confirmed their relegation from the Premier Division cricket league when they suffered a narrow 2-run defeat to Victoria Sporting Club...

Put into bat, Victoria piled up 267 for seven in the morning with opener Mehrab Hossain Opi scoring a brilliant century (108 off 123 balls).

With yesterday's defeat, Wanderers earned eight points from 15 matches which ensured their relegation to First Division league next year along with Eskaton Sabuj Sangha...

On the other hand, the win confirmed Victoria's berth in the Premier league with 12 points from 15 matches.

Lens edge Monaco

PARIS, Apr 9: Lens stayed in the French title chase on Monday when they came from a goal down at halftime to beat Monaco 2-1, reports Reuter.

Lens moved above Monaco and Metz to third place thanks to a purple patch at the start of the second period with two goals in seven minutes from Frederic Meyrieu and Eric Sikora.

Brothers baffle Bagan

Sports Reporter

BROTHERS UNION: 225 for five in 50 overs (Shipon 54, Iqbal 51 n.o., Halim Shah 30)

KALABAGAN KC: 212 all out in 41 overs (Nobel 49, Masum 48, Atiar 37, Sakat 32, Gem 4/30, Sajal 3/46)



A brilliant 99-run partnership between two former national openers Zahid Razzak, Masum and Nurul Islam...

In an intriguing finish Brothers Union, one of the three contenders in the title race along with Mohammedan Sporting Club and Bangladesh Biman...

But as far as the match is concerned the Gopibagh outfit who were defending a not-so-

impressive total, became flustered in the face of some terrific assault from the Kalabagan openers Masum and Nobel.

The two, who took the Brothers attack to the sword putting on 99 runs in just 14 overs, laid a solid foundation for an easy win.

On the other hand Masum, the tall right-handed bat who with a masterly display of strokeplay batting revived the memories of his hey days...

After the fall of the two openers, Kalabagan suffered a mini-collapse when Mahabur

Rahman Selim (1) and Wahidul Islam (0), irrespective of their reputation as orthodox bats, made the long way back to the dressing room virtually playing no shots.

And Kalabagan, who were at one stage going gallantly, reduced to 128 for four in 21.5 overs.

However, Atiar and national left-arm spinner Saikat tried to steady the rocking boat sharing 38 runs for the fifth wicket.

Earlier, Brothers innings was built around two half centuries by opener Sajjad Ahmed Monsur Shipon and lower-order Iqbal Hossain.

Shipon, who opened the Brothers innings in the absence of their Pakistani Abid Hanif, scored plicky 54 off 49 deliveries while Iqbal chanced his arms on a couple of occasions for an unbeaten 51 off only 46 balls featuring three fours and a sixer.

Delayed start for Pepsi cup likely

SHARJAH, Apr 9: The three-nation Pepsi Cup cricket tournament, scheduled to start on Thursday, is likely to be delayed a day following the death of a member of this Gulf Emirate's ruling family...

The limited-overs tournament, featuring arch-rivals India and Pakistan and South Africa is expected to open on Friday, the official said.

This follows the death of Sheikh Mohammad Bin Khalid al Gasimi, a member of the Sharjah ruling family and a close associate of the Cricketers, Benefit Fund Series (CBS) organisers of cricket internationals here.

Qasim, 28, chairman of Sharjah's department of culture and information, died in Scotland on Monday following a heart attack.

The tournament is expected to kick off with the India-Pakistan encounter on Friday, the official said.

Thursday's scheduled opener between Pakistan and South Africa may be played on Saturday, which was originally a rest day in the nine-day event.

The rescheduled programme will be announced on Wednesday morning, the official said.

The teams will play each other twice in the preliminary league, with the top two advancing to the final on April 19.

South Africa are making their first appearance in this popular desert venue, which will hold its 100th one-day international on Sunday.

The likely postponement means Hansie Cronje's men, who arrived here on Monday, will get an additional day to acclimatise to the hot weather here.

Both Pakistan and India will reach here later on Tuesday.

Betting racket busted in Bombay

NEW DELHI, Apr 9: Indian police arrested five people and busted an illegal betting racket linked to international cricket matches including the recently concluded World Cup, the press Trust of India (PTI) said on Monday, reports Reuter.

Police in Bombay, India's financial centre, raided a luxury apartment in the city on Sunday and caught those involved in the racket.

The news agency quoted a senior police official as saying they seized two million rupees (around 58,000 dollars) linked to the match which was on by Pakistan.

Betting on cricket is banned in India and Pakistan, but media reports during the World Cup held in the two countries and Sri Lanka spoke of millions of rupees exchanging hands.

Police seized a personal computer, a television set, ten telephones, sound amplifiers, tape recorders and calculators used by those arrested, PTI said.

Betting commitments were recorded in cassettes seized by police, it said.

Police tracked for days the racket carried out in coded conversations in which those involved were not identifying themselves openly, it said.

Good day for Kiwi batsmen

KINGSTOWN, St Vincent, Apr 9: Stephen Fleming, Nathan Astle and Adam Parore struck half-centuries as New Zealand gained some useful batting practice on the opening day of their three-day match against a West Indies Board XI on Monday, reports Reuter.

The tourists made 318 for nine declared, then Dion Nash bowled opener Nicholas DeGroot cheaply as the Board XI reached 43 for one by the close.

Fleming struck a polished 61 to pilot his team to 141 for three at lunch. Parore and Astle kept up the good work after the break, contributing 59 and 55 respectively.

Astle posted his 50 off 67 balls in 81 minutes with six fours before he was caught at first slip off schoolboy left-arm spinner Advithes Samaroo. He was the pick of the Board XI bowlers with three for 62.

Fast bowler Colin Stuart, who struck an early blow for the Board XI when he induced opener Roger Twose to edge a catch to second slip in the sixth over, took three for 43.

Serie A still wide open

ROME, Apr 9: AC Milan should calm their Serie A championship jitters over the next week, knowing that victories at Cagliari and Napoli would virtually clinch the title, reports Reuter.

Milan, who were held 0-0 at home by Lazio at the weekend, lead second-placed Juventus by six points with Fiorentina a further point adrift. All have six matches remaining.

With a full programme on Wednesday of the matches postponed as a result of the player's strike on March 17, the next seven days could prove decisive.

Opinion: Bangladesh cricket Arise now BCCB for success in ICC Trophy

Kamal Z Islam

WHAT is ailing Bangladesh cricket? Is it something in-built in our national character and temperament? Do we not have sufficient coolness and calmness in our dispositions? Do we buckle under pressure? Is there some inherent flaw in our physique that render us unfit for the big time? Should we therefore give up and wallow in the throes of despondency and surrender our aspirations of playing in the World Cup or attaining Test status? Not at all, I think we should gird our loins and move forward with grim determination.

Success of every enterprise lies in meticulous planning. I think we should start preparing for the next ICC Associate members tournament from today.

In fact, in sheer numbers, the amount of cricket that is played in Bangladesh far exceeds that of some of the Test

cricket? The Dhaka Stadium was built for cricket and despite expressions of intentions over the years it has never been handed over to BCCB. If cricket has round-the-year use of this stadium I feel the standard of our game is likely to improve dramatically.

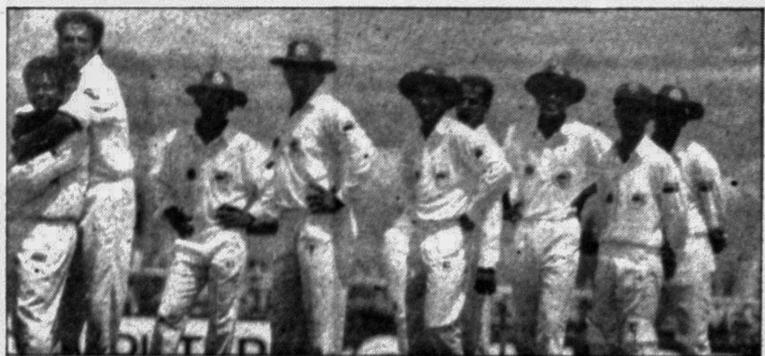
The preparations for the next ICC Trophy should start in earnest from now. The Government must entrust the task and the full responsibility to one person to prepare the National Cricket Team for the next World Cup.

In fact, in sheer numbers, the amount of cricket that is played in Bangladesh far exceeds that of some of the Test

impressed by his personality. But, since the proof of the pudding is in the eating, and since we failed in Kenya, a lot of blame was put on Mahinder. I did not have the benefit of seeing his report but I am sure BCCB are taking note of the suggestions made by him.

As part of our preparation for the next ICC Associate Members Trophy Matches, we should short-list at least 20 boys from now and all of them should be sent abroad for long stretches of time to play with teams of higher standard.

To finance this venture we must approach commercial organisations, banks, insurance companies, government corporations, to sponsor one player each.



The Bangladesh national cricket team.

playing nations. In Kenya I was told that there are more than one thousand cricketers as cricket has not made its impact in the schools. Yet the Kenyans have left their indelible mark on the sixth World Cup tournament.

I have always held that if there is any sport in which Bangladesh has an iota of a chance in making a mark internationally it is cricket — and one need not emphasise as to how sporting achievements transform a country's image.

How do we then make it to the next World Cup finals? Considering the immense benefit that will accrue to the country's image from an international success in a sporting event, our government must take the lead in creating an environment — the macro sporting fundamentals must be right.

For many years the authorities that be are pro-football and I would go so far as to say that the establishment is down-right anti-cricket. Why isn't there till today a stadium exclusively earmarked for

3. A player of international repute must be appointed to coach the national team. One aspect of our team not to have received sufficient attention is that of physical fitness.

When the Pakistan national team was playing the Bangladesh XI in the Asia Cup matches in Sri Lanka in 1985, having reached the venue a bit early (along with umpire Mahboob Shah and Omar Qureshi) I saw the Pakistan team having a vigorous workout in the field for at least an hour. They were not taking any chances with the Bangladesh team! Whereas, our boys took a leisurely run around the field for about ten minutes.

The appointment of a coach is an absolute necessity if we have any aspirations of playing international cricket. I got to know Mahinder Amarnath quite well specially in Nairobi when we would sit side by side for hours watching the ICC matches. Frankly, I was quite

To finance this venture we must approach commercial organisations, banks, insurance companies, government corporations, to sponsor one player each. I do not feel we are going to make the international grade unless our boys spend time playing abroad.

During the eighties we used to send 6 to 8 of our boys to England to spend the entire summer and here I recall the sterling service rendered by Bob Evans to Bangladesh cricket. Bob and his wife used to look after our boys in Birmingham like their own children. If nothing else, each one of them returned home a much healthier person. This brings me to the point of proper diet and nourishment for our top cricketers.

My conclusions are that our participation in the next ICC associate members tournament should be tackled on a war footing and the whole scheme should be meticulously planned. Arise BCCB!

The author is a businessman and a leading sports organiser.

Venus falls to earth

AMELIA ISLAND, Florida, Apr 9: Teenager Venus Williams, touted as a star in the making, retired with a hip injury in the first set in a first-round match at the 450,000 dollars Bausch and Lomb tennis championships on Monday, reports Reuter.

The 197th-ranked Williams, rarely seen on tour, suffered a right hip joint injury in the sixth game of her first-round match against Veronika Martinek of Germany. Williams retired at 3-5.

The top eight seeded players received first-round byes. Another drop-out from first

round action was 14th-seeded Silvia Farina of Italy, putting the 146th-ranked Natalia Medvedeva of Ukraine into the second round with a 2-6, 4-2 retire score. The 44th-ranked Farina won the first set, but sprained her right ankle and was forced to withdraw.

The 90th-ranked Martinek broke out to a momentary lead by breaking Williams in the third game.

But Williams, 15, broke back in the sixth game, the game in which she injured herself. Up 0-30, she sustained the hip injury, when going for an overhead.

"I began to hurt and I was taught not to play when hurt (by my parents)," Williams said.

There's a lot of examples on the tour of player going on to win a match and then not being able to play for months.

Although Williams didn't particularly look like she was hurt and did have one break point in the eighth game, Martinek won the final two games played. The trainer came on court after the seventh game to check Williams.

Williams, who turned professional in October, 1994, plays a very limited schedule of events. Her 1996 calendar includes five more tournaments.

She does not plan to play in any of the three Grand Slam events still remaining in 1996 — the French Open, Wimbledon and the US Open.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down.

Cryptogram puzzle with grid and solution key.

Where cricket calls tune

COLOMBO, Apr 9: (Reuter): If passion for a sport were one of the criteria for good performances then cricket-crazy Sri Lanka would have world long ago.

The island nation hitherto best known for its quality tea has captivated the hearts of fans worldwide with its exciting brand of cricket.

Enjoying one of their finest hours, the Sri Lankans rose from the ranks of minnows of cricket to world champions, winning the World Cup, one-day cricket's most prestigious prize.

The euphoria of that triumph last month is not over and daily newspapers are filled with congratulatory advertisements from grateful Sri Lankans.

In this part of the world cricket is a way of life — people eat, drink and talk cricket all the time. National cricketers are heroes and even women are ardent and knowledgeable fans.

The game has changed a lot but Sri Lankans have always played the game for the game's sake — that spirit has remained, says Gamini Goonesena, one of the country's veteran cricketers who played for Cambridge University and English county Nottinghamshire in the mid-fifties.

If their side is playing hardy any work gets done at home or the office and nobody seems to mind.

There was an eager anticipation across the country on March 17 when Sri Lanka

played Australia in the World Cup final.

One priest concluded his morning mass with the usual benediction and added, "May you all enjoy the cricket." A bridal couple hastily installed two giant TVs in their reception hall to ensure their guests would be updated with the scores.

Commentaries are usually relayed in the island's three languages — Sinhala, Tamil and English — another tribute to the enthusiasm the sport has created, injecting a unifying presence to a country wracked by ethnic strife.

This paradise island has been plagued by an ethnic war that has claimed more than 50,000 lives. The country's success at cricket has been a welcome respite for its weary people.

The frenetic activity whipped up over a cricket match is in sharp contrast to the leisurely pace of life in this island where the easy-going nature of people has endeared itself to most outsiders.

"Sri Lankans are extremely tolerant and although the passions run high they never turn ugly and cricketers are never under any threat, even if they perform badly," says Bandula Warnapura, Sri Lanka's first Test cricket captain.

On almost every street corner and on every village green young boys are playing cricket.

The cricketing gear varies greatly with the location — on the street a metal dustbin or

wooden plank serves as the wicket. The bowling crease is marked by a pair of rubber slippers from a member of the batting side.

They have kept peace with changes, though, with an extra pair of slippers used to mark the area of a wide ball.

The longest unbroken series of cricket matches is not in England — the home of the game — but in Sri Lanka, which learnt the game form the English.

Every year in March the school cricket season reaches its climax with the traditional 'big matches' between rival schools.

Royal College and St Thomas's College, two of the most elite schools in the country, this year played their 117th 'battle of the blues' in an unbroken series which began in 1879.

The Sri Lankan cricketers plan to maintain the momentum of their World Cup triumph and extend their prowess to the Test arena.

Last year they launched a special fund raising programme called 'cricket fund 2000' to generate cash to help make Sri Lanka the top cricketing nation by the year 2000.

At the time that idea seemed fanciful. But no since their World Cup triumph.

They may or may not achieve their goal but one thing is certain — the Sri Lankan team will enjoy themselves, win more hearts and have a cricket-crazy nation cheering them on.

Foschi comes out clean

NEW YORK, Apr 9: Jessica Foschi, the American teen-age swimmer who tested positive for steroids last summer in a case that brought international reaction, has been cleared of all charges by an arbitration panel, reports AP.

The American Arbitration Association decision means Foschi, 15, from Old Brookville, New York, can compete with clean slate and without undergoing periodic drug tests, imposed as part of a two-year suspension by US Swimming.

It was the latest turn in a bizarre, perhaps unprecedented case of an athlete accused of boosting performance through illicit means, but it probably was not the final legal manoeuvre.

A lawyer for Foschi, Mark Levenstein, said the family would review lawsuits it has filed against US Swimming and the US Olympic Committee but held out the possibility of seeking damages. The original lawsuits did not mentioned

monetary penalties. Bob Foschi, the swimmer's father, said the case had forced his family to "live a nightmare for the past eight months."

The association heard more than two days of testimony in February from Foschi, her parents, coaches and others involved in the case, and found that the swimmer had been improperly punished for a violation she never committed.

The overwhelming evidence produced in this proceeding inescapably leads us to the conclusion that... (Foschi) and all those connected with her are innocent and without fault," the AAA opinion said.

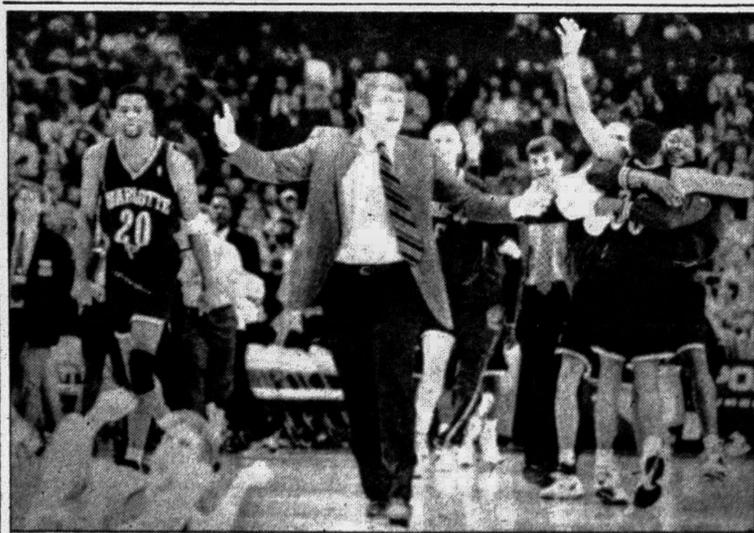
It also said Foschi, her coaches and family had "no fault as to how the drug entered" the swimmer's body, and said US Swimming had acted in an "arbitrary and capricious" manner.

Foschi went to the arbitrators at the end of a long and tortuous road that involved accusations from China and other nations of hypocrisy by US sports authorities and threat-

ened her efforts to try out for the Olympics. She failed to make the team for the Atlanta Games.

Foschi tested positive for strength-building steroids at the US national championships in Pasadena, California, last August. While the rules say a steroid finding automatically brings a two-year suspension from competition, a US Swimming review panel said Foschi may have been sabotaged and voted 2-1 to instead place her on two-years' probation, allowing her to swim while subject to strict drug monitoring.

The probation, however, stirred heated reaction around the world, especially in China, where swimmers and coaches were repeatedly accused of systematic doping after an unprecedented series of steroid positives in recent years. Chinese officials, and those of the world swimming federation FINA, accused US Swimming of a duel standard, and the American federation's top official agreed.



Allan Bristow (C) head coach of Charlotte Hornets is ecstatic after his team brought an end to Chicago Bulls' 44-match home winning streak in Chicago on April 8. Hornets won the game 98-97.