

**Bird bruised**

LONDON, July 10: Umpire Dickie Bird and England coach David Lloyd have not been allowed to comment on BBC radio for Saturday's Benson and Hedges Cup final between Lancashire and Northamptonshire, reports AFP.

The Test and County Cricket Board were not pleased that the pair would be making comments on players they would be coming into contract in future dealings.

Bird retired from umpiring amid huge emotion at Lord's little more than two weeks ago but continues as an official on the county circuit.

He said: "I should have realised I would not be able to do it. Maybe I will when I retire next year."

However, the decision was criticised as petty by BBC radio cricket commentator Jonathan Agnew, who said: "Dickie Bird has never said anything bad about anyone in his life and he's certainly not going to start now."

TCB spokesman Richard Little said of Bird: "It's unfair to put him in a position where he has to criticise one of the players he's umpiring. Dickie's not that bothered about it."

He added: "Lloyd is contracted to us and certainly we wouldn't want the England coach doing it -- a selector. He's in a difficult position."

**Malcolm excused**

LONDON, July 10: The Derbyshire fast bowler Devon Malcolm has been excused from today's NatWest Trophy second-round tie against Kent in order to meet with his hero Nelson Mandela, reports AFP.

Malcolm first met Mandela at the start of last winter's England tour of South Africa, before his international career went off the tracks following a fall-out with the England management.

South African President greeted Malcolm with the words "So you are the destroyer," a reference to his blistering nine for 57 spell against South Africa at the Oval in August 1994.

Derbyshire's officials, including the country's Australian captain Dean Jones, have given Malcolm their blessing to attend today's reception for Mandela at 10 Downing Street.

Reg Taylor, the Derbyshire secretary, said: "Devon goes with the blessing of our captain Dean Jones. It is a unique opportunity and we do not feel we can deny it to him."

**ATLANTA BRIEFS**

ORLANDO, Florida, July 10 (AP): The Olympic torch reached Orlando late Sunday after a brief stop in Cape Canaveral for a ceremony with astronauts fresh from a record-making mission aboard the shuttle Columbia.

Meanwhile, a controversy was resolved when three minority torch bearers were picked for the bearers' route from Orlando to Daytona Beach on Monday.

Officials of the Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games last week heeded protests by black leaders in Volusia and Flagler counties and authorised additional runners and an extension of the route to accommodate the changes.

Eight former Olympians were scheduled to participate in the Daytona Beach celebration, including platform diver Alice Lord-Landon, who at 94 is one of the oldest; Paul DeBruyn, 88, who ran the marathon for his native Germany in the 1936 Games in Berlin; and Fenando Lecuona, who was on the Cuban gymnastics team in the 1948, 1952 and 1956 Games.

The Olympic torch was welcomed by cheering fans at Orlando City Hall and along downtown streets Sunday night. Joni Richards, a NASA projects manager from Orlando, carried the torch down Orange Avenue as a band played.

Loren Shriver may give the final "go" for a space shuttle liftoff, but he needed special permission to carry the Olympic torch up to the launch pad.

For safety reasons, no flames are allowed at the pad, not even matches or lighters.

But the director of Kennedy Space Center, Jay Honeycutt, made an exception for Olympic organizers and signed a so-called burn permit allowing the celebrated flame to burn at the pad, where Atlantis awaits a July 31 liftoff.

Shriver, a shuttle manager and former astronaut, ran up the ramp to the pad Sunday, holding the torch high, and then passed the flame on to NASA engineer Joanne Maceo, who carried it down.

Just back from space, shuttle commander Terence "Tom" Henricks and his co-pilot, Kevin Kregel, took part in an Olympic ceremony honoring local torch bearers.

The astronauts gave Olympic organizers a torch that they flew aboard shuttle Columbia, which landed at the space center earlier in the day after a 7-million-mile (11.2 million-kilometer), 17-day journey for medical science.

"We will treasure this torch that has traveled so many millions of miles, to go with the other 10,000 that have traveled considerably shorter distance," said Robert Holder Jr., co-chairman of the Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games.

The 15,000-mile (24,000-kilometer) torch run -- the earliest version -- began in Los Angeles on April 27 and ends July 19 in Atlanta.

**Mukti free Mizan, Rakib, Mamun J Abahani back into the league**



Yesterday saw the resuscitation of Dhaka's football with all the Senior Division teams submitting names of seven players each signalling the welcome return of League Champions Abahani Krira Chakra into action. Earlier last Monday, Abahani's rep had left a meeting of the Dhaka Metropolitan Football Association (DMFA) in a huff declaring that they would boycott the league in protest against the binding of as many as seven players, the new DMFA president and the secretary. By submitting a list of the seven players they would like to retain, Abahani have come back with a bang.

According to a DMFA by-law instituted this year, each team can name up to seven players from their line-up of last season and they will not be taking part in the transfer this season. Transfer of non-listed players will take place on July 20-22.

According to informed sources, Abahani has struck the first chord to inaugurate what promises to be a heated league by roping in Mamun Joardar, Rakib and Mizan, three key national players mysteriously missing from the

**Sports Reporter**

Muktijoddha list. But, then, all is fair in love and war.

Only BRTC, promoted to the first division this season, did not submit any list. Police named only four and Badda Jagarani six that they would not like to swap.

The following is the full list:

**Premier Division:**  
**Abahani Krira Chakra:** Dulal Hossain Dhanu, Monem Munna, Hasan-al Mamun, Partha Protim Kundu, Jahangir, Ali Monsur and Swapan.  
**Muktijoddha Sangsad Krira Chakra:** Pannu, Masud Rana, Arif Hossain Moon, Titu, Zakir, Golam Gaus and Naquib.  
**Mohammedan Sporting Club:** Ponir, Jewel Rana, Monwar Hossain, Munna, Arman, Shahidul Islam Ranjan, Nurul Huq Manik and Alfaz.  
**Fakirpool Young Men's Club:** Bijon, Sohel-al Masum, Montu, Askar Babu, Maksudul Amin Rana, Yousuf and Tofazzel Hossain Apu.  
**Arambagh Krira Sangha:** Faisal, Roxy, Tushar, Tony, Yousuf, Shoaib and Jahangir.  
**Agri Bank:** Tutul, Sentu, Munna, Pons Sicism, Jahangir, Manu and Nayan.  
**Farashganj Sporting Club:** Bijoy, Nazrul, Frodip Kumar

Montu, Liakat, Munna, Sufian and Monir.  
**Brothers Union:** Milon, Mizan, Bishu, Bakhtiar, Pijush Nandi, Aamer Khan and Don.  
**East End Club:** Manik, Sawrav Raju, Tota, Muslim, Uz-zal, Imon and Haran.  
**Bangladesh Boys Club:** Selim (sr), Jahangir, Rubel, Selim (jr), Bapan, Tipu and Shuvro.  
**First Division:**  
**Rahmatganj Muslim Friends Society:** Azimuddin, Nazimuddin, Biplob Marma, Himu, Babul, Badal and Shahid.  
**Wari Club:** Shahed, Atique, Tuhin, Shankar, Rikta, Mong Bathui and Akku.  
**Badda Jagoroni:** Bishwajit, Mottaleb, Shahinor, Lipu, Mossaraf and Kismat.  
**Victoria Sporting Club:** Nizam, Selim, Faye, Nazrul, Taju, Angur and Sohel.  
**Sadharan Bima:** Ayub, Bip-lab, Kamal, Haider, Shakawat, Polash and Ershadul.  
**Dhanmondi Club:** Narayan, Tawhid, Liton, Kamruzzaman, Rashed, Yousuf and Nayan.  
**Police Athletic Club:** Riaz, Shanto, Tara Miath and Masud Rana.  
**Mirpur Chalanica:** Tayeb, Shahjadah, Badal, Al-Amin, Mehdi, Kakon and Baghanor.



Action from yesterday's sixth schools kabaddi tournament encounter between Shaheed Nabi School and Dolaipear High School at the court adjacent to Dhaka Stadium. — Star photo

**Pool's supremacy at stake**

ATLANTA, July 10: Australia, China and Russia are set to torpedo US swimmers' hopes of dominating the competition in front of home fans at the Centennial Olympic Games, reports AFP.

Australian head coach Don Talbot said the team produced by his country's trials was potentially "the most successful team we've had... going back 40, 45 years."

At least, Talbot says, Australia will improve on its medals haul in Barcelona of one gold, three silver and five bronze.

While the Chinese team that has dominated women's swimming since the 1992 Games has been wracked by doping scandals, their national championships showcased a new crop of youngsters ready to emerge on the world stage.

US women's coach Richard Quick has warned that the host nation could find itself without a single individual women's gold.

"That's primarily because of Chinese domination... but the Australians are also very, very good," Quick says.

But the very strength of the Chinese women's squad, especially when contrasted with the mediocrity of their men swimmers continues to raise red flags in the minds of many.

"I would love to think that they were going to be getting there clean, but I am cynical about it and I don't believe that we have a good handle on the drug testing right at the moment," Talbot said as recently as this May.

Chinese officials, who instigated a purge of swimmers and coaches in the wake of seven positive tests at the 1994 Asian Games, angrily deny the charges.

They point to US attempts to shield steroid-positive Jessica Foschi from harsh sanctions and to Australian Samantha Riley's escape with a winning for using a banned pain-killer as proof that China is being made a scapegoat.

Certainly Riley's case and that of Foschi underlined weaknesses in FINA's anti-doping measures. Even some of Foschi's fellow swimmers felt US Swimming's unsuccessful effort to help her was inappropriate.

Jeff Rouse, the 100m backstroke world record-holder, has been a leader in the call for random out-of-competition testing. He says he expects some positive tests at the Games and favours full and immediate disclosure of names, followed by swift punishment.

"I think it's better to get strict early than do it gradually," he says.

Rouse is one of America's best medal hopes, though he

can expect stiff competition from Russia's world champion backstroker Vladimir Selov.

Russia also brings 100m freestyle world record-holder Alexander Popov, and Denis Pankratov, world record-holder in both the 100m and 200m butterfly.

Tom Dolan, America's 400m individual medley world record holder, is also a contender in the 200m medley and 400m free, although the 200m in field is headed by Finnish world record holder Jami Sievinen.

In the 400m free, Dan Kowalski carries the hopes of Australia in the absence of world record-holder Kieren Perkins, who failed to qualify.

That opened up the field considerably, with New Zealander Danyon Loader also a threat.

Perkins, who struggled to qualify to defend his 1500m free Olympic title, is being treated for an iron deficiency that affected his performance at the Australian trials. Graeme Smith's 15:03.43 at the British trials was the fastest 1,500m in the world this year.

In women's events, American Janet Evans and Hungarian Kristina Egerszegi will both try to add to their total of four Olympic gold medals. Only East Germany's Kristin Otto has won more with six.

Evans, who won the 400m and 800m free and 400m medley in Seoul, then defended her 800m title in Barcelona, again races in the distance freestyle events, where she will be challenged by teammate Brooke Bennett, Australian Hayley Lewis, Franziska van Almsick and her German teammate Dagmar Hase the Olympic champion who owns the best 400m free time in the world this year.

Egerszegi, who at 14 became the youngest swimmer to win an Olympic gold with her victory in the 200m backstroke in 1988, won the 100m and 200m back and 400m medley in Barcelona. Now 21, she says she is "too old" to defend her 100m backstroke title and will concentrate on the 200m and the medley.

Lin Li, who won the 200m medley gold in Barcelona in a world record of 2:11.65 then retired after failing to make the World Championship team, returns to defend her title.

China's squad also boasts Le Jingyi, who claimed world titles and world records in the 50m and 100m freestyle in 1994 and Liu Limin, world champion in both the 100m and 200m butterfly.

Two of China's 1994 world champions, Lu Bin and Yang Aihua, were among the seven swimmers banned for positive drugs tests later that year.

Riley, the 100m and 200m breaststroke world champion, is the star of Australia's

women's squad, although it remains to be seen if she will recover her composure sufficiently in the wake of the painkiller affair.

South African Penny Henys grabbed Riley's 100m breaststroke world record this spring.

In the face of such international strength, some US swimmers are harbouring hopes of pulling off some major upsets.

"For the first time in his history, an American team is not heavily favoured at the Olympics," Dolan says. "In fact, we're the underdog. But as a team we've decided, let them give us that rap and we'll prove them wrong."

Dolan said the lacklustre times at the US trials were no pointer to possible Olympic performances.

"With the last two Olympic teams, the majority of the swimmers swam personal bests at trials and not at the Olympic Games," he said.

**Sicily to stage '97 World Student Games**

ROME, July 10: Sicily was awarded the 1997 World Student Games on Tuesday, and Italian officials seized on the success as another weapon in their battle to host the 2004 Olympics here, reports AFP.

Sicily got the vote of the International University Sports Federation (FISU), which is headed by Italian Primo Nebiolo, at a meeting in Brussels.

Nebiolo, speaking on his return here, said: "A well organised event would do Sicily a lot of good, and would also help Italy's hopes of hosting the 2004 Olympics in Rome."

"We were given all the necessary guarantees we needed, now all we hope is that everything goes ahead smoothly."

Sicily will host the student event from August 20-30 next year.

**Atlanta takes its tolls!**

ATLANTA, July 10: One construction worker was killed and another was seriously injured on Tuesday when copper wiring they were handling touched high-voltage power lines as they worked on a building being readied for the 1996 Summer Olympics, reports Reuters.

The workers, installing an air-conditioning system, were moving insulated copper cables that touched the power lines, said Atlanta fire department spokesman Tim Szymanski.

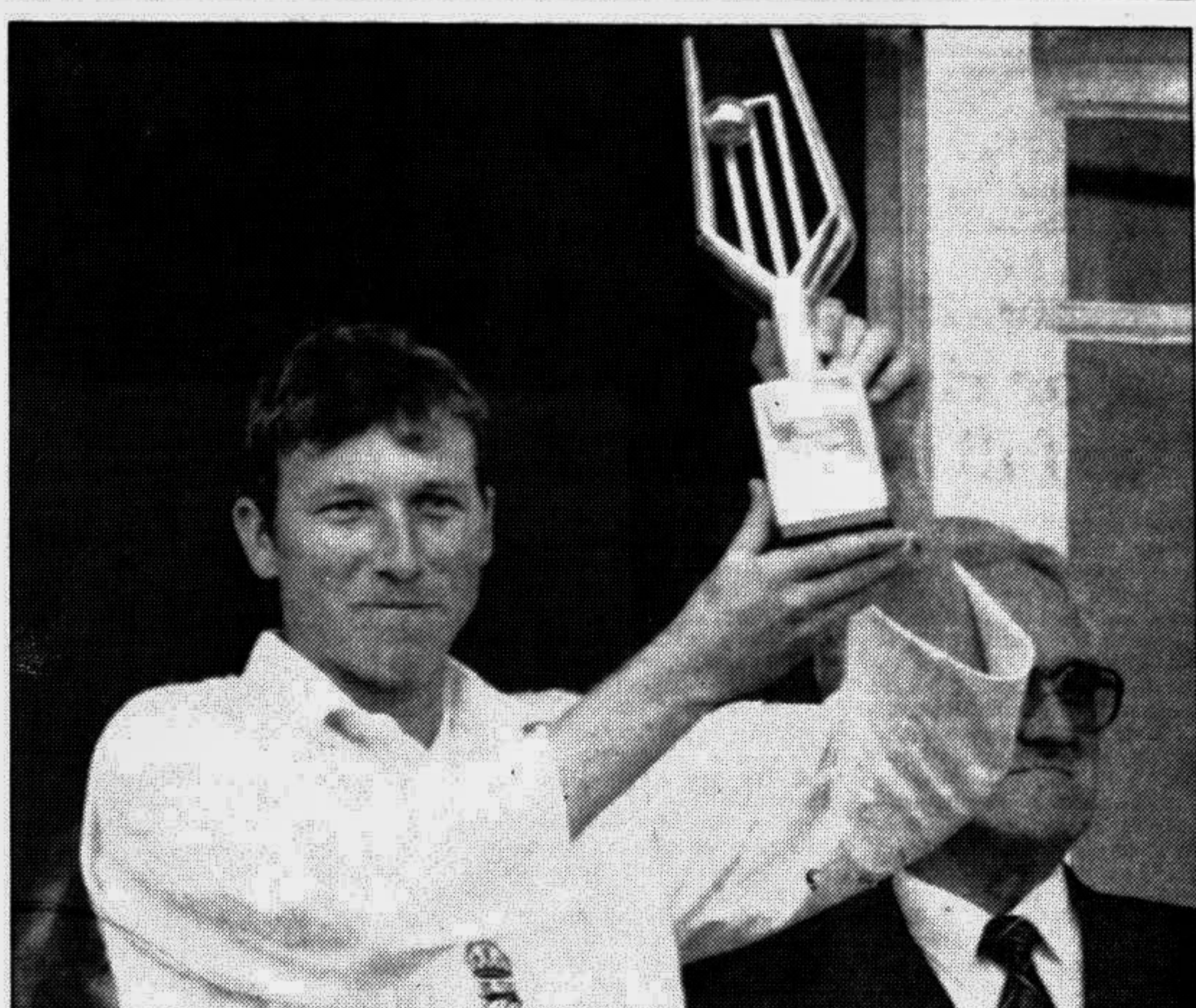
The vacant building is across the street from the centennial Olympic Park, a primary gathering place where as many as 200,000 visitors per day were expected.

Witnesses said they heard a loud noise like an explosion as the two men were shocked. "It sounded like a clap of thunder. It was very scary-sounding," worker Darrell Robinson told reporters.

One of the two injured men died at Grady Memorial Hospital. The other was listed in critical but stable condition. Their identities were not immediately released.

A sign on the vacant building where the men were working advertised it as being available for lease during the Olympic Games. While it has a clear view of the Olympic Park, the building is not an Olympic venue.

A construction worker was killed in March 1995 when a light tower collapsed at the 232 million dollars Olympic Stadium. There were no injuries in March 1996 when the roof collapsed at the 15,000-seat Georgia Tech aquatic centre, where Olympic swimming and diving competitions will take place.



England captain Michael Atherton poses with the Cornhill Trophy after the drawn Trent Bridge Test in Nottingham on July 9. England won the three-match rubber against India 1-0. — AFP/UNB photo

**Some solace for Indians**

LONDON, July 10 (AP): Even in losing the Test series to England, India may have found two young stars.

Saurav Ganguly and Venkatesh Prasad, uncapped in Tests before their English tour, are poised to become two of India's most important players.

"I enjoyed the batting of Saurav Ganguly and the bowling of Venkatesh Prasad — they are the players for us in the future," said Indian captain Mohammed Azharuddin after Tuesday's drawn third Test at Trent Bridge.

England, after their first-Test victory and the second Test draw, secured a 1-0 series victory with the Trent Bridge draw.

"I hope they carry on in the same way as they have in this series. I don't want them just to relax after this," Azharuddin added.

Look for India to rely heavily on this new talent in upcoming Tests at home against Australia and South Africa.

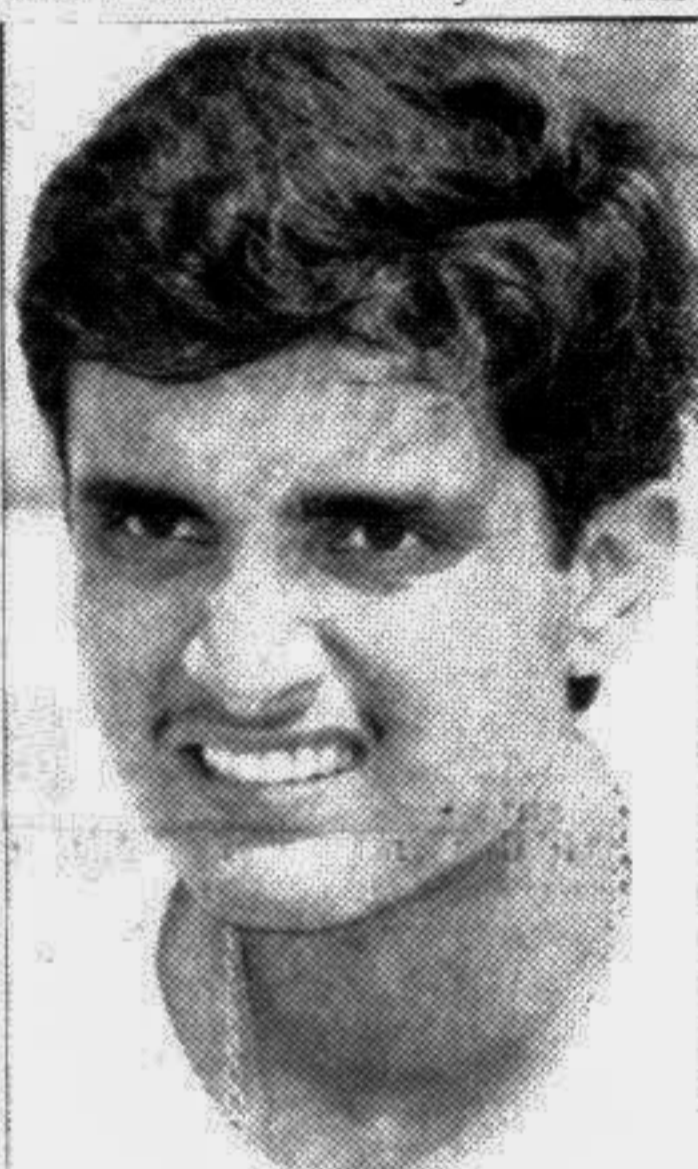
Ganguly, 23, got his chance when Sanjay Manjrekar was injured in the first Test at Edgbaston. The No 3 batsman responded with a near flawless century — the 6th player to score a century on debut, and the first Indian to score a debut hundred at Lord's, the

traditional home of cricket.

Ganguly followed his dream debut with an equally flawless 136 in his second Test innings and, with his third innings 48, came close to becoming the first player in cricket history to score a century in his first three innings.

"It's been a good start for me," said Ganguly, after being named man-of-the-match and man-of-the-series at the conclusion of the third Test. "Now I just want to carry on with it."

Ganguly also proved to be more than a handy medium



SAURAV GANGULY

Azharuddin, whose 71-Test career began with three centuries in three Tests at home in 1984, scored only 42 runs in his five innings.

Having lost the one-day and the Test series, and suffered heavy criticism after Navjot Sidhu's highly publicised walk-out, Azharuddin's future as captain is in doubt.

"His failure as both captain and batsman in this series may well mark the end of his captaincy, although he later gave an enigmatic response when asked he would return to England."

"I'm not sure. Probably not. Probably yes. Maybe I will be back for a county next year," he said.

Nursing a bruised leg, he spent much of his 37th Test as team leader in the pavilion, and he may return home to play under the leadership of Sachin Tendulkar, who gained valuable experience in charge when Azharuddin was off the field.

Tendulkar scored two glorious hundreds in the series, and a ferocious 74 in his final innings, showing why he is widely regarded as the best right-handed batsmen in the world.

**WC qualifier Cuba, Haiti split points**

CAP-HAITIEN, Haiti, July 10: The Cuban national soccer team drew with Haiti 1-1 Sunday to qualify for the Caribbean Zone semifinals of the 1998 World Cup tournament, reports AP.

Haiti, who lost to Cuba 6-1 on June 10, scored first in the 21st minute when Wilson Chevalier crossed the ball to Isaac Chauvet, who headed it into the net.

Cuba, who needed only to avoid a defeat by five goals to advance in World Cup qualifying, hung back on defence for most of the game.

Cuba's Cruz Almando tied the score in the 35th minute with a penalty kick.

Cuba joins Canada, El Salvador, and Panama in the Group B semifinals of the North and Central American and Caribbean region.

**Finidi George leaves Ajax**

AMSTERDAM, July 10: Ajax Amsterdam's Nigerian striker Finidi George has agreed a 13 million guilder (7.6 million dollars) transfer from Ajax Amsterdam to Spanish First Division side Real Betis, reports Reuters.

The Dutch agency ANP quoted Ajax director Maarten Oidhenof on Tuesday as saying that both clubs and George, who played in the 1994 World Cup finals, had finalised the deal.

The deal is for five years, with an option for a further three seasons.

Ajax have already signed George's fellow international Tijani Babangida from Roda JC Kerkrade as a replacement.

**INDIA-ENGLAND AVERAGES**

LONDON, July 10: Series averages for batting and bowling for the three-Test series between England and India:

ENGLAND BATTING (listed as: Matches, innings, not-outs, runs, high-score, average, 100's, 50's, catches, stumpings):										
Nasser Hussain	3	5	1	318	128	79.50	2	0	3	0
Michael Atherton	3	5	1	263	160	65.75	1	1	2	0
Mark Ealham	1	1	0	51	51	51.00	0	1	0	0
Graham Thorpe	3	5	1	193	89	48.25	0	2	3	0
Alec Stewart	2	3	0	136	66	45.33	0	1	5	0
Jack Russell	3	4	1	162	124	40.50	1	0	8	0
Chris Lewis	2	3	0	78	31	26.00	0	0	1	0
Ronnie Irani	2	3	0	76	41	25.33	0	0	0	0
Min Patel	2	2	0	45	27	22.50	0	0	2	0
Nick Knight	1	2	0	41	27	20.50	0	0	4	0
Alan Mullally	3	4	3	15	14no	15.00	0	0	0	0
Peter Martin	1	2	0	27	23	13.50	0	0	0	0
Dominic Cork	3	4	1	37	32no	12.35	0	0	2	0
Graeme Hick	3	4	0	35	20	8.75	0	0	2	0

ENGLAND BOWLING: (overs, maidens, runs, wickets, average, 5 wickets, 10 wickets, best bowling):									
Mark Ealham	43	14	111	6	18.50	0	0	4/21	
Chris Lewis	131.4	33	356	15	23.73	1	0	5/72	
Alan Mullally	129.4	40	298	12	24.83	0	0	3/60	
Dominic Cork	120.4	26	369	10	36.90	0	0	4/61	
Ronnie Irani	21	7	74	2	37.00	0	0	1/22	
Peter Martin	34	10	70	1	70.00	0	0	1/70	
Min Patel	46	8	180	1	180.00	0	0	1/10	
Graeme Hick	19	6	51	0		0	0	0/0	
Graham Thorpe	1	0	3	0		0	0	0/0	

INDIA BATTING:										
Saurav Ganguly	2	3	0	315	136	105.00	2	0	0	0
Sachin Tendulkar	3	5	0	428	177	85.60	2	1	2	0
Rahul Dravid	2	3	0	187	95	62.33	0	2	1	0
Paras Mhambrey	2	3	1	58	28	29.00	0	0	1	0
Sanjay Manjrekar	2	4	0	105	53	26.25	0	1	2	0
Nayan Mongia	3	5	0	107	45	21.40	0	0	8	0
Javagal Srinath	3	5	0	76	52	15.20	0	1	3	0
Sunil Joshi	1	2	0	46	22	23.00	0	0	0	0
Vikram Rathore	3	4	0	24	20	11.50	0	0	5	0
Venkatesh Prasad	3	5	3	17	13	8.50	0	0	0	0
Mohammed Azharuddin	3	5	0	42	16	8.40	0	0	1	0
Anil Kumble	3	5	0	36	15	7.20	0	0	0	0
Ajay Jadeja	2	3	0	16	10	5.35	0	0	1	0
Venkatapathy Raju	1	2	1	1	1 no	1.00	0	0	0	0

INDIA BOWLING:									
Saurav Ganguly	37.5	4	125	6	20.83	0	0	3/71	
Venkatesh Prasad	142.3	39	375	15	25.00	1	0	5/76	
Javagal Srinath	152.1	37	433	11	39.36	0	0	4/10	
Anil Kumble	147	36	334	5	66.80	0	0	3/90	
Paras Mhambrey	43	6	148	2	74.00	0	0	1/43	
Venkatapathy Raju	43	12	76	1	76.00	0	0	1/76	
Sachin Tendulkar	9	1	29	0		0	0	0/0	



Participants of 37th International Mathematical Olympiad buy the inaugural stamp in Bombay on July 9. Four hundred and twenty students from 75 countries will attempt to solve three mathematical problems in two days of competition: 35 gold, 70 silver and 110 bronze medals are up for grabs. — AFP/UNB photo