

## Column One

## SPORTS TALK



CHRISTCHURCH, New Zealand, Feb 18: Captain Mike Atherton's 11th Test century led England to a tense four-wicket victory over New Zealand in the third cricket Test on Tuesday, giving the visitors a 2-0 series win, reports AP.

John Crawley and Dominic Cork shared a 76-run unbroken stand as England reached 307-6, passing their 305 target with 12.2 overs to spare.

The Test series win was England's first overseas since they beat New Zealand, also 2-0, in 1992.

Only once in Test history had an English team scored more than 300 to win a Test — against Australia in Melbourne in 1929.

Atherton, on 65 overnight with England resuming on 118-2, eventually made 118 from 311 balls. Nasser Hussain contributed 33 to a four-wicket partnership of 80 with his captain.

Atherton raised his arms in delight, and relief, after reaching the milestone. He was stranded on 94 not out in the first innings.

His 397-minute marathon meant that Atherton had been on the field for the first 408 overs of the match — a total of 27 hours and 38 minutes of playing time.

But Atherton's dismissal sparked a collapse to 231-6, England losing three wickets for just five runs in 16 balls, before Crawley (40 not out) and Cork (39 not out) came together for the match-clinching partnership.

Cork clinched the win by turning Geoff Allott through mid-wicket for four.

New Zealand teenage left-arm spinner Daniel Vettori bowled 57 overs in the innings, taking 4-97.

New Zealand and England drew the first Test in Auckland, while the hosts lost the second in Wellington by an innings and 68 runs last week.

The first game of the five-match, limited-overs series starts at Lancaster Park on Thursday.

## SCOREBOARD

Scorecard on the fifth and final day of the third cricket Test between England and New Zealand Tuesday:

**NEW ZEALAND:** First innings 346 (S P Fleming 62,

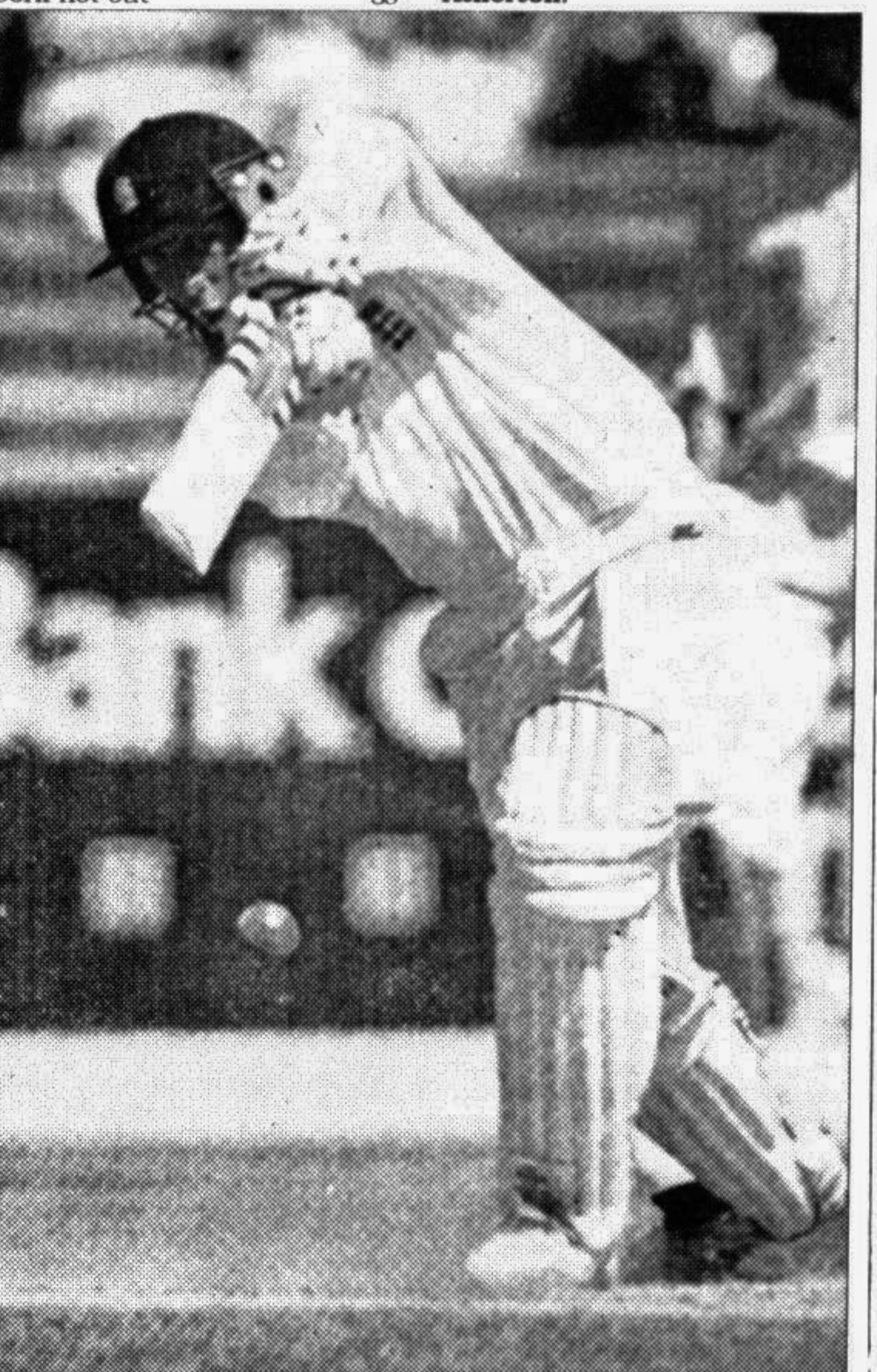
— Reuter UNB photo

## Atherton carries the day

Parore 59; Croft 5-95. **NEW ZEALAND:** Second innings 186 (C Cairns 52; D Gough 3-42). **ENGLAND:** First innings 228 (Atherton 94; G Allott 4-74). **ENGLAND:** Second innings (overnight 118/2)

Knight c Davis b Vettori 29 Atherton c Parore b Astle 118 Stewart c Pocock b Vettori 15 Caddick c Fleming b Doull 15 N Hussain c Fleming b Vettori 33 Thorpe c and b Vettori 2 Cork not out 40 Cork not out 39

Extras: (lb-8; nb-3; w-1; b-2) 14 Total (for 6 wkt, 146.4 overs) 307 Fall of wickets: 1-64; 2-116; 3-146; 4-226; 5-226; 6-231. **Bowling:** O M R W Allott 12.4 2 32 0 Davis 18 6 43 0 Doull 21 8 57 1 Vettori 57 18 97 4 Cairns 10 1 23 0 Astle 28 10 45 1 **Result:** England won by four wickets. **England win series 2-0.** **Man of the match:** Mike Atherton.



England captain Michael Atherton drives Daniel Vettori through the covers during the fifth day's play of the third and final Test against New Zealand at Lancaster Park in Christchurch yesterday. — Reuter UNB photo

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