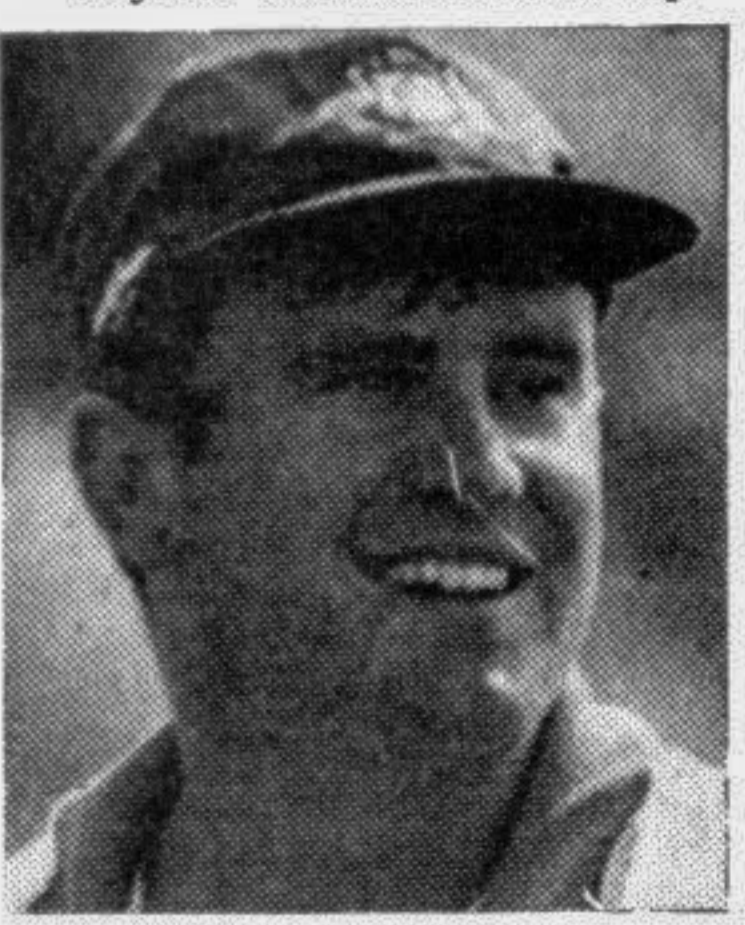


Taylor & co ready to tackle SA crowd

First Test begins today

JOHANNESBURG, Feb 27: Mark Taylor is convinced his Australian side is mentally prepared to overcome the first hurdle of the three-Test series against South Africa...

Australia and South Africa begin the series Friday at the Wanderers, also known as the 'bull ring' among some visitors.



MARK TAYLOR

captain, blamed intimidating crowd behaviour at Wanderers in March 1994 for the 197-run defeat Australia suffered under then captain Allan Border.

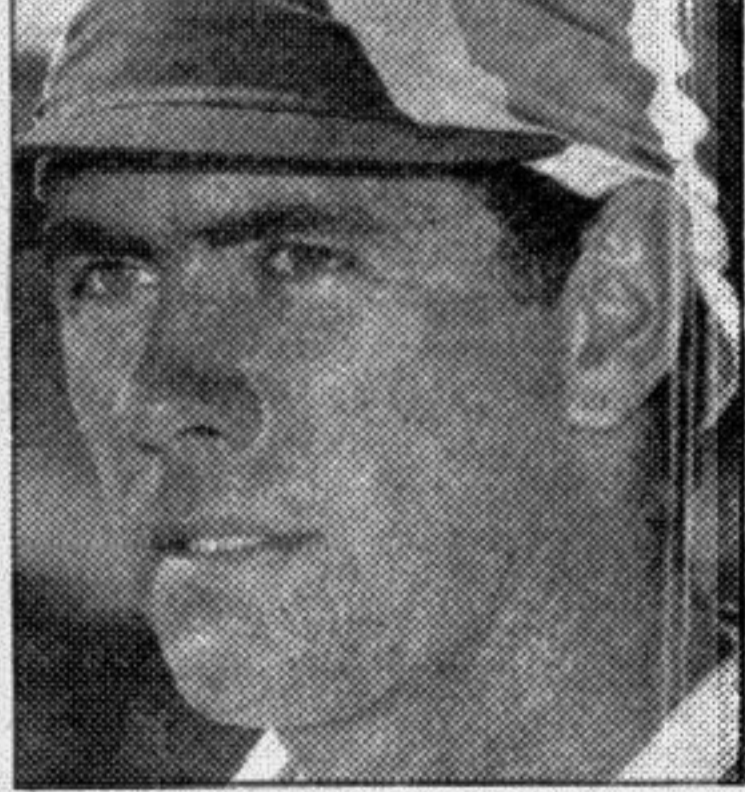
'They will say things on the boundary edge, about you, that will hit a little bit close to home,' Taylor lamented.

'We've got more tough cricket under our belt in our favour,' Taylor said with reference to Australia's back-to-back success over the West Indies.

'We've got more tough cricket under our belt in our favour,' Taylor said with reference to Australia's back-to-back success over the West Indies.

championship. 'I don't look at it as a world championship,' Taylor said. 'It is another series for us and we want to win it.'

'They are the best cricket team in the world and we are determined to do well against them,' Cronje said.



HANSIE CRONJE

Taylor (captain), Matthew Hayden, Matthew Elliott, Mark Waugh, Steve Waugh, Greg Blewett, Michael Bevan, Ian Healy, Shane Warne, Jason Gillespie, Glen McGrath, Justin Langer, Andrew Bichel and Paul Reiffel.

SOUTH AFRICA (from): Hansie Cronje (captain), Gary Kirsten (vice captain), Andrew Hudson, Adam Bacher, Jacques Kallis, Darryl Cullinan, Jonty Rhodes, Shaun Pollock, Lance Klusener, Dave Richardson, Allan Donald and Paul Adams.

BASIC sports

The annual sports competition of Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation (BASIC) will be held at the Notre Dame College ground today.

Nirman schools cricket scores

Loreto School recorded a convincing 170-run victory over Sher-e-Bangla High School in one of yesterday's five Nirman schools cricket tournament matches held on the western strip of Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium yesterday.

Put into bat Loreto mustered 262 for six in their stipulated 35 overs with one down Sajed Ali hammering an unbeaten 75 off only 44 balls.

On the adjacent eastern strip, Motiheel Government High School handed Pallabi Mazedul Islam High School a 65-run defeat.

Electing to bat, Motiheel boys scored 200 for six in 35 overs with Mridul collecting highest 75 off 92 balls.

In reply, Pallabi boys were all out for 135 in 29.2 overs.

Away in Uttara Friends' Club ground, Armanitola Boys High School defeated Uttar Kalshi Adarsha Bidyapathi by 90 runs.

On the other hand, Uttar Kalshi could collect only 82 runs before they were all out in 16 overs.

In the day's other matches, Shafuluddin Sarkar Academy beat Matrichaya Pre-Cadet School by 28 runs at the Residential Model School ground.

while Badda Altonnessa High School recorded a eight-wicket win over Kamalapur Sher-e-Bangla School at the Mirpur Outer Stadium.

Scifo set to return home

BRUSSELS, Feb 27: Belgium captain Enzo Scifo is set to return to Anderlecht from French side Monaco next season, reports AFP.

'I'm looking forward to coming back,' the 31-year-old midfielder told Belgian radio.

Scifo, in his fourth season with Monaco, has been kept out of the first-team at Monaco this term by Scotland international John Collins.

WI-SL fixtures reshuffled

ST JOHN'S, Antigua, Feb 27: Sri Lanka's inaugural tour of the Caribbean this year has been put back a week, the West Indies Cricket Board (WICB) announced, reports Reuter.

The short tour, including two Tests and a one-day international, has been changed to June 1-25 from May 25-June 18.

World Cup champions Sri Lanka's tour opener against Trinidad and Tobago on June 2 has been switched from Queen's Park Oval, Port of Spain, to Quarcara Park.

The limited-overs match against West Indies will be played two days later at Queen's Park Oval.

ITINERARY
June 1: Arrive, Trinidad
June 4: Trinidad and Tobago, Quarcara Park
June 6: One-day international, Port of Spain
June 8-10: Leeward Islands, St John's, Antigua
June 13-17: First Test, St John's, Antigua
June 20-24: Second Test, Kingstown, St Vincent

Vaas turns up heat

TAUPO, New Zealand, Feb 27: Left-arm seamer Chaminda Vaas took a hat-trick and claimed six for 22 today as Sri Lanka started their New Zealand tour with a warm-up match, reports Reuter.

The World Cup champions skittled Northern Districts for 116 despite good batting conditions on the first day of the two-day match. The tourists replied with 138 for two at stumps.

Vaas dismissed top-scorer Matthew Hart, who made 42, Dion Bennett and Mark Tesar with successive deliveries to wrap up the home team's innings midway through the afternoon session.

But historians will not recall his achievement because the contest is not a first-class fixture and performances are not officially recorded.

Northern were grateful to reach three figures after slumping to 12 for four within the opening 12 overs.

Sri Lanka's only disappointment was the failure of top-order batsmen Dulip Samaraweera and Marvan Atapattu. Both departed cheaply to seamer Alex Tait, who had them caught in close on the leg-side by bat-pad fieldsmen Matthew Bell.

Rohan Mahanama and Hashan Tillekeratne steered the tourists to safety with an unbroken third wicket stand of 94, with Mahanama on 73 and his partner on 39.

Sri Lanka face New Zealand in the first Test in Dunedin on March 7.

Benjamin may miss Test series

ST JOHN'S, Antigua, Feb 27: West Indies paceman Kenneth Benjamin is doubtful for the Test series against India in the Caribbean starting next week because of a stress fracture, reports Reuter.

Benjamin, who recently returned from New York where he saw sports-injury specialist Dr Ainsworth Allen, has been told by the Jamaica-born doctor that a rib stress fracture will keep him out of action for up to six weeks.

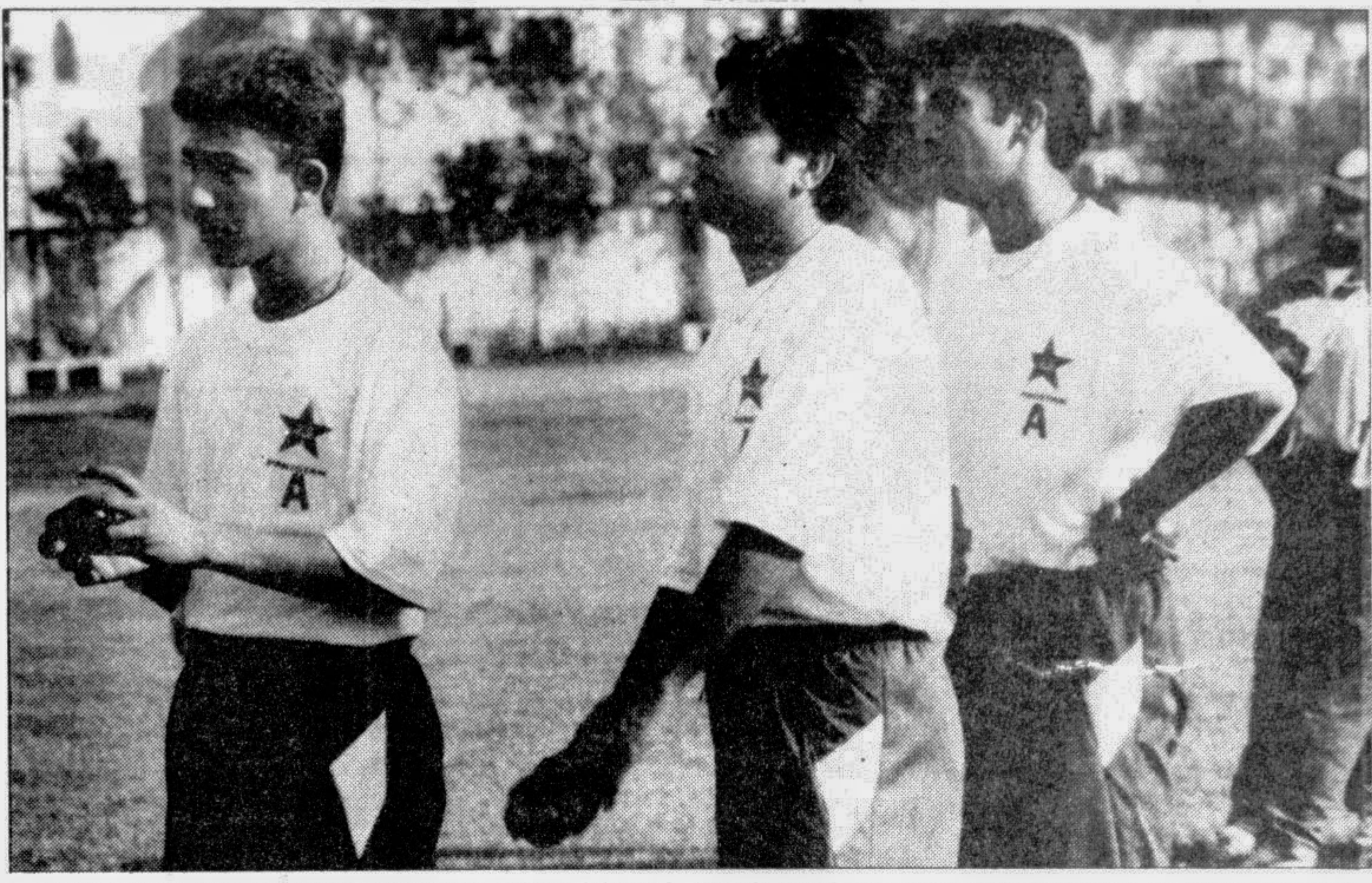
The Antiguan bowler, who came home early from West Indies recent tour of Australia nursing what was reported then as a side strain, aggravated the injury in a Red Stripe Cup match against Trinidad and Tobago.

Benjamin told the Caribbean News Agency (CANA) that while Dr Allen had noted the injury had started to heal, he also advised that he should limit his exercise programme to swimming and cycling for four to six weeks.

The first Test in the five-match series against India starts in Kingston, Jamaica, on March 6.

BUET v'ball

Ahsan Ullah Hall became champions in the inter-hall volleyball competition of the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology outplaying Titumir Hall 2-0 in the final at the university ground yesterday.



FAST GUNS: The Pakistan pace trio of Azhar Mahmood, Aaqib Javed and speedster Mohammed Zahid honing their deadly weapons for their final showdown against archrivals India during a practice session at the BUET ground yesterday.

Brazilians baffle Poland

GOIANIA, Brazil, Feb 27: Giovanni and Ronaldo scored two goals each as Brazil beat Poland 4-2 in their first soccer international of the year on Wednesday, reports Reuter.

Striker Romario, making his first national team appearance since the 1994 World Cup final, failed to get on the score-sheet and missed an open net. But his much vaunted partnership with Ronaldo in attack was responsible for two of the goals.

The first came in the 48th minute when the world champions won a free kick near the Poland penalty area. Romario quickly slipped the ball to Ronaldo. Who turned and scored with a left foot shot as a dozy Polish defence helplessly looked on.

In the 72nd minute Romario outwitted a defender and flicked the ball to Ronaldo, who blasted a right-foot shot into the net.

Giovanni, Ronaldo's teammate at Spanish club Barcelona, had set up the win with two first half goals.

Poland scored twice in the last four minutes on goals by substitute Cezar Kucharski and Marek Citko, who scored from a rebound after seeing his penalty saved by Carlos Germano.

Poland, like many other middle-ranking European sides, played some neat midfield but were ultimately short of creative ideas in attack until their late revival made the score respectable.

Brazil suffered an early fright when Poland striker Krzysztof Warzycha fired narrowly wide from inside the penalty area in the second minute.

But five minutes later Giovanni opened the scoring, calmly placing the ball under the body of goalkeeper Grazegorz Szamotulski.

Giovanni scored again on Brazil's next real chance 19 minutes later. This time, Romario split the defence, Leonardo latched onto the ball, rounded Szamotulski and laid on a pass for Giovanni to place into the empty net.

Poland had enjoyed plenty of possession until that point but in the second half they tired and the South Americans began to turn on the style the public had expected.

Romario missed his chance for glory with the score at 3-0 when, with the goal at his mercy, he stubbed the ball wide from six metres. However, he still produced a couple of moments of skill that sent the crowd into delirium.

Hodgson joins Blackburn?

LONDON, Feb 27: Roy Hodgson was named as Blackburn Rovers' new manager on Wednesday — although the announcement appeared to take his current club Inter Milan by surprise, reports Reuter.

Hodgson, who has been in Inter for 16 months, is expected to take over from caretaker boss Tony Parkes at Ewood Park in July, Rovers' chairman Robert Coar said.

The announcement came just three months after Hodgson extended his contract with Inter until June 1999.

In a statement issued on November 20, Inter said that Hodgson had turned down an approach from Blackburn and had extended his contract, originally due to end in June this year, for a further two years.

Napoli's day of delight

NAPLES, Italy, Feb 27: A penalty shoot-out took Napoli through to the Italian Cup final on Wednesday on a day of double disappointment for favourites Internazionale.

The victory, 5-3 on penalties after the two-legged tie ended 2-2 on aggregate, brought an explosion of fireworks from fans in the San Paolo stadium and revived memories of the glory days of Diego Maradona, the last man to lead the club to cup honours in 1987.

Their hero was yet again a Latin American in a number 10 shirt — Brazilian Beto who struck a goal in the 77th minute to level the second leg at 1-1 and put Napoli back on the path to a June final against Vicenza.

Inter, held 1-1 in the first leg in Milan, went into the match after learning their English coach Roy Hodgson would be leaving at the end of the season to manage Premier league club Blackburn Rovers.

They went ahead in the 11th minute through Argentine midfielder Javier Zanetti, who spotted a gap in a line of seven Napoli players and blasted a shot past keeper Giuseppe Tagliatela from outside the area.

Reduced to 10 men when striker Maurizio Ganz was sent off in the 34th minute for a foul on Francesco Colaninno, Inter had looked like resisting a Napoli onslaught diminished by poor finishing until Beto saw his chance.

He broke through and found himself alone in front of goal to nudge the ball just wide of Gianluca Pagliuca.

With the aggregate score at 2-2 after extra time and 210 minutes of soccer, the semifinal was decided when nerves got the better of Inter defender Massimo Paganin, who served up a weak penalty straight into Tagliatela's grateful hands.

Notice of RHD Inviting Tender

Table with 2 columns: Tender Notice No. and Name of work. Includes details for earthwork widening at road embankment.

Table with 6 columns: Gr. No., Name of work & location, Estimated amount, Earnest money, Time allowed, Ch. to. Includes details for earthwork widening at road embankment.

Md. Abdul Quddus-2 Executive Engineer, RHD, Barisal Road Division.

BRIDGE NOTES

By An Expert

Hands from Bermuda Bowl

Hand analysis table showing scores for Pakistan (95 1/2) and USA (109) with card distributions.

Open Room WEST: Solodar 24, EAST: All Pass, SOUTH: 1V

Closed Room Masood Meckstroth Zia Rodwell 1D INT Pass Pass 3NT 34 All Pass 3V Pass

This was a strange push. Munir bought the hand at 2♥ and made it while his teammates were in 3NT, vulnerable at the other table, failing by a trick.

The bidding was relatively quiet here. Fazli opened light with 1♥ in second seat and Solodar overcalled 1NT fairly comfortably. Munir had pretty good hand but had no convenient way to express his playing strength safely.

The exciting auction had tipped Meckstroth to the heart lead, and the potentially disastrous spade lead was avoided. (In the Venica Cup, 3NT was made after a spade lead and a small slip in the defense.)

The ♠Q was ducked and the continuation went to the jack, king and ace. Masood cashed the ♠A and ♠K with gratifying results. Rodwell following with the 7-10. Masood sold one of his heart equals to Rodwell's 10, unblocking the ♠J from dummy.

Rodwell won cashed a high club and returned another heart of Masood's winner. He cashed his diamonds and the ♠A but Rodwell's hand was high and Meckstroth retained a club to get there if Masood exited with a spade. The defenders claimed, one down. No swing.

Score: USA (N-S)+100 Net Score: PAKISTAN+10 (0 IMPs) Score Carried Forward: PAKISTAN 95 1/2 USA 109

Closed Room Rodwell, even within his limited system, was not tempted to open the South hand and Masood started with 1♣. Meckstroth's 1NT was either 15-18 HCP or 'comic' (only non-vul) and Zia employed one of his favorite treatments, the

Friday 28th February (All programmes are in local time. There may be changes in the programmes)

BBC 6:00am BBC World News 6:10 Newsnight 7:00 BBC Newsroom... CHANNEL V 6:30am Frame by Frame 7:00 Reviving VJ Sophiya 8:00 Frame by Frame 9:00 Jump Start VJ Alessandra 10:00 Frame by Frame 11:00 The Vibe VJ Like 12:00noon Revind VJ Sopi 1:00 By Demand VJ Try 2:00 Frame by Frame 2:30 First Day First Show 3:00 Videocore Flashback 3:30 Soul Curry 4:00 Frame by Frame 4:30 Big Bang VJ Alessandra 6:00pm Billboard Countdown 6:30 Billboard Continued levi Sponsor 8:00 The Vibe VJ Luke 9:00 The Indian Top 10 10:00 First Day First Show 10:30 The Ticket 11:00 V Spot 12:30 Big Bang VJ Alessandra 1:00 Vaysah 2:00 Over the Edge VJ Sopi 3:00 Big Bang VJ Alessandra 4:30 Top Of The Pops 5:30 The Ride STAR PLUS 06:30 Ninaad 07:30 STAR News 08:00 STAR Business News 09:00 STAR News 09:00 SKY News 09:30 Aerobics 05 Style 10:00 The Urban Peasant 10:30 Fashion Television 11:00

The Oprah Winfrey Show 12:00pm 39th Annual Grammy Awards (Repeat) 03: 00 Ghutan 03:30 Bivayaad 04:00 Tu Tu Main 04:30 Land Of The Giants 05:30 Black Beauty 06:00 Kate & Allie 06:30 The Urban Peasant 07:00 Show Reel 07:30 STAR News (Hindi) 08:00 Mari Pasand 08:30 Jeene Bhi Do Yaaro 09:00 Kaleidocopa 09:30 STAR News 10:00 To The Manor Bom 10:30 Picket Fences 11:30 The Bold & Beautiful 12:00 Santa Barbara 01:30 STAR News 01:30 To Play The King 02:30 Seefair 03:30 Fantasy Island 04:30 The Oprah Winfrey Show 05:30 Bamaby Jones STAR SPORTS 6:30am Women's World Squash Championships 7:30 Watersports World 8:30 Volvo World Cup Showjumping 9:67 9:30 Obero Race Day 10:00 ISF World Tour 10:30 World's Strongest Man 11:30 International Motorsports News 12:30 Football Sports 1:30 Indian Football Phil 1:30 JCT v East Bengal From Ludhiana 3:30 Spanish Fball League H/L 4:00 Live Dubai Desert Classic Day 2 7:00 Inside Surf 7:30 World Wrestling Federation Blast Off 8:30 The Asian Football Sports India 10:30 NBA-Inside Surf 11:00 Women's World Squash Championships 12:00 World Wrestling Federation Blast Off 2:00 Dubai Desert Classic Day 2 4:00 Cricket Week 4:30 International Motorsports News 5:30 Hilton Chinese National Basketball League 96-97 Shanghai v Beijing ZEE TV 06:00am The News 06:30 Jagran 07:00 ZED 08:30 Disney Hour 09:30 Gaane Anjane 10:00 Andaz 10:30 Aap Ki Adalat 11:00 Suno Suno Tring Tring/Hanste Khetle 11:30 Hasratin 12:00 Insight 12:30 TMM 02:30 Tara 03:00 Raahat 03:30 Khana Khazana 04:00 Lakme Khoobsurat 04:30 Low Calorie Show 05:00 ZED 05:30 Daak Ghar Apna Ghar 06:30 Disney Hour 07:30 Raahat 8:00 Gaane Anjane 08:30 Close Up Antakshri 09:30 Philips Top Ten 10:00 Jhalak 10:30 The News 11:00 Kodak Kick Kick 11:30 Mast Mast Hai Zindagi 12:00 Banegi Apne Baal 12:30 Hi Zindagi Bye Zindagi 01:00 Tara 01:30 Pampara 02:00 Dream Meets 2:30 TMM 4:00 Zee

On Force 18? 12:00 Friday Fury 12:00 Robocop III 18 (Hindi Subtitles) 2:00 After Dark Wild At Heart 18 (Arabic Subtitles) 4:00 Western: Django Strikes Again 18 (Arabic Subtitles) 5:30 Comedy: I Married A Centerfold 15 (Arabic Subtitles) EL TV 06:30 Tarana Aur Fasane 07:30 Party Time 08:00 Hindi Feature Film: 11:00 Hafta Hafta 11:30 Gambler 12:00 Abhinethi 12:30 Talash 01:00 Bangla Serial: 01:30 Bangla Serial: 02:00 Kishor Kumar Special 03:00 Karm (Serial) 03:30 Purush Kshetra 04:30 Chalo Cinema 05:00 Naam Gum Jayega 05:30 Guza Hua Zamana 06:30 Young Buzz 08:30 Monoranjan 09:00 Rubaru 09:30 Drdg Balwant Bhawan 10:00 Akanksha 10:30 Hindi Feature Film: 01:30 Special: Songs 02:30 Ched Chad PTV 08:00 TILAWAT AUR TARJUMA/ HAMD/NAAT 08:20 BOLTAY HAATH 08:35 Sada-E-Kashmir 09:10 DASTAR KHWAAN 09:35 Karb (serial) 11:00 KHABRAUN 11:15 English Film: 11:45 Sports Prog 02:02 BISMILLAH 02:15 FEHM-UL-

QURAN 02:40 NATAK RANG (SINDHI) 03:25 Ek Raat Ek Kahani (Drama) 04:40 Sahat Aur Sukoon (Drama) 05:25 Biology for 10th 05:55 Uffaq (Serial) 06:25 AIOU COURSE (Serial) 07:00 Full House (Comedy Film) 07:45 ENGLISH NEWS 08:10 Fun Time Popplet Show 08:45 Paal Do Paal (Serial) 09:00 Break for Headlines News 10:00 Khabarnama & Commercial News 10:35 Lollywood Top Ten Count-down Film Music 11:35 Spectrum 12:00 FRIDAY NIGHT CLASSIC CINEMA & KHAS KHAB-RAIN Ho Sakti (Serial) 01:30 Good Shot 02:00 Buddha (Serial) 02:30 Cine Matriee-Hindi Feature Film: 05:30 The 3 Stooges 06:30 Premier (Latest Film Songs) 07:00 Dennis The Menace (Hindi Dub English Film) 07:30 I Dream Of Jeannie (Hindi Dub English Film) 08:00 Surf-Wheel Of Fortune (Game Show) 08:30 Cine Prime-Hindi Feature Film: 11:30 Chamatkar (Serial) 12:00 The Great Ad Bazaar 12:30 O Maria (comedy serial) 01:00 Jane Kaha Mera Jigar Gaya Ji (Drama Serial Rakti Vejan) 01:30 Surf-Wheel Of Fortune (Game Show) 02:00 Premier 02:30 Closed/Courtesy: SATVIEW Cable Networks, Tel 837651, 404129) ZEE CINEMA 6:45 Songs 07:00 Insanait (Shashi K., Jaywant) 9:00 Movies Masti Magic 9:30 Amanat (Manoj, Sadhna) 12:15 Reruns 12:30 Ho Bewafa (Rajendra K., Yogita) 3:15 Hit The Hit Hai 3:45 Dhongee (Ranvir K., Nitu S.) 6:30 Or-dathu (Mail) 9:15 Cinema Cinema 9:30 Box Office 10:00 Jab Pyar Kisse Se Hota Hai (Dev A., Asha P.) 12:45 Bada Kabutar (Ashok K., Rehana S.) 3:30 Zandu Filmi Baatein 4:00 Hanste Khetle (Rahul R., Lisa R.) DD 7 10:30 Jannaddin (Birthday Greetings) 11:00 Rabindra Sang-eet 11:15 Light Instrumental-Folk Songs 11:30 Drama: 12:30 Serial: 01:00 JANNA-BHUMI (Serial: Sabbaysachi, Anuradha, Shankar) 01:30 Trishna (Serial) 02:00 (Serial) 02:30 Pallisamaj 03:00 Bhanga Aaina (Serial) 03:30 Bakul