

## Column One

## Boost sports WHIZZ KID

COMPETITION FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN

## Competition-84

✓ Tick the Correct Answers

Competition closes at 8 pm, on Dec 12, '97

1 Who lifted the Chase Championships title?

Hings Novotna Perez

2 Who became champions in the quadrangular cricket tourney?

Africa Pakistan S Lanka

3 How many stadii will be used during France '98?

8 9 10

4 Which team clinched the Delta Life handball title?

Shamsunnahar Labhata A Bawani

5 Who won the Div II handball league?

Banianagar W Jatrabari Mansoor

## AKC tail wags in time

Sports Reporter

Zakir Hossain and Sheikh Salahuddin wagged a long tail to dig holders Abahani Krira Chakra out of the rut to a not-to-be-thought-of four-wicket win over Wari Club in the lone Janakantha Premier cricket league match at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium yesterday.

Things turned even worse when their most dependable bat Pakistani Monirul Haq trudged off towards the dressing room after scoring a struggling 14 off 52 balls.

But Wasim, who was instrumental in Wari's sensational triumph over last year's runners-up Kalabagan in the previous

(1) with the scoreboard reading 10 only five runs. After that terrible start the lowly-rated Premier league outfit kept on losing their wickets at regular intervals. Only one down Anup Kumar, who scored a sedate 24 off 74 balls, and Sajib Das with 33 could offer some sort of resilience in a never-ending procession to the pavilion.

Zakir, who made an early in-roads, and his new-ball partner Cornel evenly shared four wicket among them while Salahuddin, the unofficial



## BRIEF SCORES

**WARI CLUB:** 150 for 9 wickets in 50 overs (S Hasan 33, Anup Kumar 24, Sajib Das 21, Salahuddin 2/19, Zakir 2/18, Cornel 2/22)

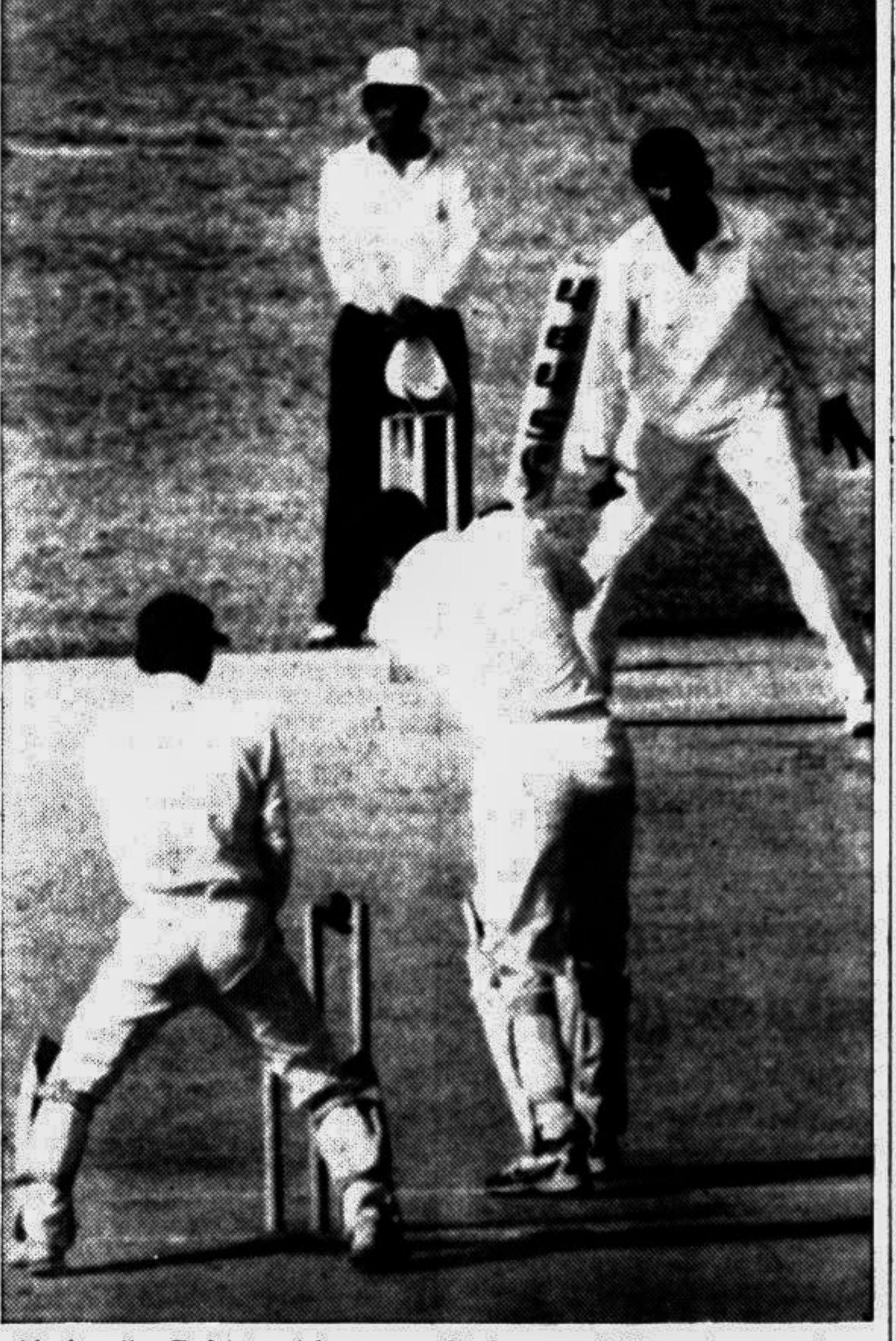
**ABAHANI KC:** 154 for 6 wickets in 47.2 overs (Zakir 42 not out, Salahuddin 36 not out; Anup Wasim 2/19)

**Result:** Abahani won by 4 wickets.

and dry with 16 balls to spare. Young right-arm seamer Zakir, coming in to bat at number eight after Abahani lost their sixth wicket at 95, hammered a quartet of fours in his run-a-ball 42 to save the day for the popular Dhanmondi outfit, which made the most of playing at the own backyard as a series of confident appeals against them was turned down by the umpires.

Although Zakir chanced his arms in his rapid-fire knock, it was discarded national off-spinner Sheikh Salahuddin, who in an object lesson to his more illustrious predecessors, played like a blended batsman in his undefeated knock of 36. The beefy right-hander was a host in himself after Abahani made heavy weather of fairly simple task of scoring three runs per over, losing their four top-order batsmen for only 42 runs on the board.

Opener Azam Iqbal made only five before being caught at gully off Wari's new-ball bowler Ariful. Abahani's makeshift Pakistani opener Mohammad Hossain scored 11 before being bowled by his compatriot Tariq Mahmood, but when standing skipper Naimur Rahman departed for 19 after offering no



Abahani's Pakistani batsman Mohammad Hussain gets his bails dislodged by countryman Tareque Mahmood during their Premier Division league clash against Wari at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium yesterday. —Star photo

ous match with a six-wicket haul, was frustrated by a resolute Salahuddin who played out the deceptive spell of the south-paw with a telling watchfulness.

Earlier, electing to bat after winning the toss in the morning, Wari's ploy to put up a challenging total back-fired as they lost both the openers Amir Wasim (1) and Shafayet Omar

man-of-the-match, also captured two wickets for 19 runs in his 10 nippy overs, which yielded a couple of maidens.

It was Abahani's sixth win from seven matches, which enabled them to share the top slot along with their arch-rivals Mohammedan SC, who, however, played one match less.

No matches will be held to-day.

## Coaches get down to work

**MARSEILLE, Dec 6:** The World Cup countdown began in earnest on Friday, reports Reuters.

The 32 team coaches were finally able to look at their preparation schedules, knowing the identities of first round rivals after Thursday's draw.

Argentina's Daniel Passarella, for example, was travelling to L'Etrat, a village north of St Etienne where he was due to visit his team's World Cup base, a modern complex called the Sports Formation Centre.

From there he planned visits to Italy and Spain to watch club matches and begin to draw up a schedule of warm-up games before the June 10 to July 12 finals.

"We're planning 10 matches in a possible three tours, in February, April and May," said Salvador D'Antonio, the Argentine Football Association's national team coordinator. The squad will stay in Europe after the May tour.

Argentina, who are in Group H with three first time finalists Croatia, Japan and Jamaica, have already verbally agreed on a friendly with world champions Brazil on April 29, but they have yet to decide on a venue.

Austria, drawn against Italy, Chile and Cameroon in Group C, could be one of Argentina's rivals.

The Austrians have three dates set aside for friendlies with games against Hungary in Vienna in March and against the United States, but the third is not settled.

Coach Alain Jacquet of hosts France could also be interested in measuring his side's potential against twice World Cup winners Argentina.

Passarella said: "I was beside Jacquet (at the draw) and he told me he was interested in a friendly against Argentina, it depends on whether our dates coincide."

Jacquet has his preparations mapped out, but could perhaps fit in another game.

"What's frustrating is that we don't know our value," said Jacquet, whose team did not have to qualify.

France need to test themselves, to measure themselves against big guns, to reinforce themselves in their potential and confidence, we have very precise things to do at a number of levels," he said.

France's first match of the year is against Spain at the inauguration of the new Stade de France in the Paris suburb of St

Denis — venue for the opening match and final — on January 28.

The French also meet Norway in Marseille in February, Russia in Moscow in March and Sweden away in April.

Then in late May, France play in the Hasan II tournament in Morocco, where they will face both the hosts and Belgium and a fourth team which could be Argentina.

They have a last warm-up against Finland in Helsinki on June 5, five days before the finals begin and seven days ahead of their first Group C match against South Africa in Marseilles.

Jacquet plans to watch the Confederations Cup in Saudi Arabia later this month in which the South Africans are taking part along with Brazil.

Spain's Javier Clemente will be glad of as many testing warm-ups as he can obtain after his team were drawn against Nigeria, Paraguay and Bulgaria in Group D.

"We have the match against France in January, but I'm sure my players are not losing any sleep over the draw," he said.

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