

Column One

Roost sports WHIZZ KID

COMPETITION FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN

Competition-85

TICK THE CORRECT ANSWERS
Competition closes at 8 pm on
Dec 26, 1997

1	In which group have Brazil been drawn for France '98?	A	B	C
2	How many centuries has Alkapathu hit in Test cricket to date?	1	2	3
3	Who is the national soccer coach of Saudi Arabia?	Madgion	Parrera	Jaquet
4	Who were Bangladesh's opponents in the World Youth Cup cricket qualifiers' final?	HK	Nepal	PNG
5	How many teams are taking part in the Premier Division cricket league?	10	12	14

NAME

CLASS ROLL NO.

SCHOOL ADDRESS

PHONE: (IF ANY)

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EN-VITS

ENERGY RELEASING VITAMINS

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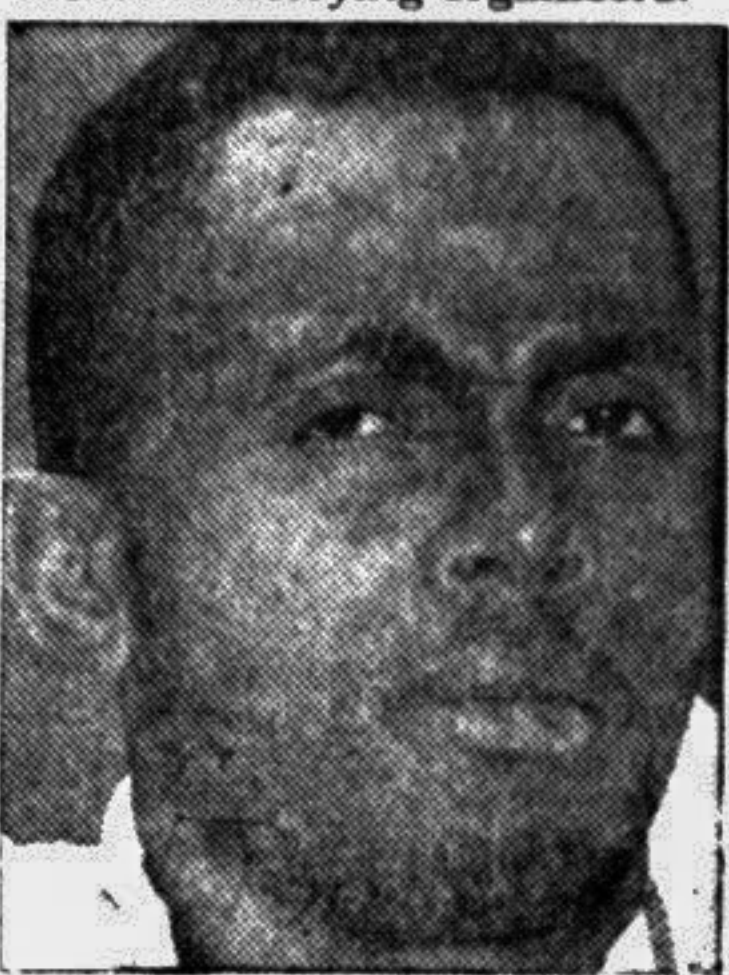
SPORTS TALK

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Desert duel sons euphoria

SHARJAH, United Arab Emirates, Dec 18: England and the West Indies, who upset the calculations of organisers by eliminating crowd-pullers India and Pakistan, will clash for the Champions Trophy here on Friday in a final no one wants, reports AFP.

This is only the second time in 22 tournaments at this popular desert venue that neither India or Pakistan figure in a final, and the unexpected turn of events is worrying organisers.



COURTNEY WALSH

"Most of the tickets for the final were picked up in advance because people thought India and Pakistan would be in it," an organiser said. "I am not sure now how many will actually turn up. The usual demand for tickets is just not there."

The large Asian expatriate population in the region, who pick up the bulk of tickets, have little time for a match not featuring either India or Pakistan. Barely 1,000 spectators turned up for the league match between England and the West Indies.

But few can deny that the two best teams in the tournament figure in the day-night fi-

nal worth 40,000 dollars to the winners.

Adam Hoolioake's new look England won all their three league matches while the seemingly down-and-out West Indies beat both India and Pakistan on way to the final.

West Indian manager Clive Lloyd said the title clash will provide a keen tussle between two evenly-matched sides.

"It will be a close match," predicted Lloyd, whose team lost to England by four wickets in the league.

We are determined to win the cup to compensate for a disappointing tour of Pakistan. It would be foolish to let slip the opportunity now that we have made it so far."

The West Indians appear rejuvenated after suffering their first clean sweep in 69 years during the 3-0 Test series in Pakistan preceding this tournament.

The batting shows signs of recovery with Brian Lara making 88 of 80 balls against Pakistan, Carl Hooper an unbeaten 100 against England and opener Stuart Williams 105 not out in the crunch league match against India.

The bowling has also been steady. In a team known for its fast bowlers, spinners Hooper, Shivnarine Chanderpaul and Raul Lewis picked up all the eight wickets to fall to the bowlers against India.

Hoolioake's unbeaten Englishmen are, however, favourites to emulate their predecessors, who beat India, Pakistan and Australia to the title in England's only other appearance here in 1987.

Hoolioake, 26, could not have hoped for a better start as England's new one-day captain, although he would have liked more runs from the batsmen.

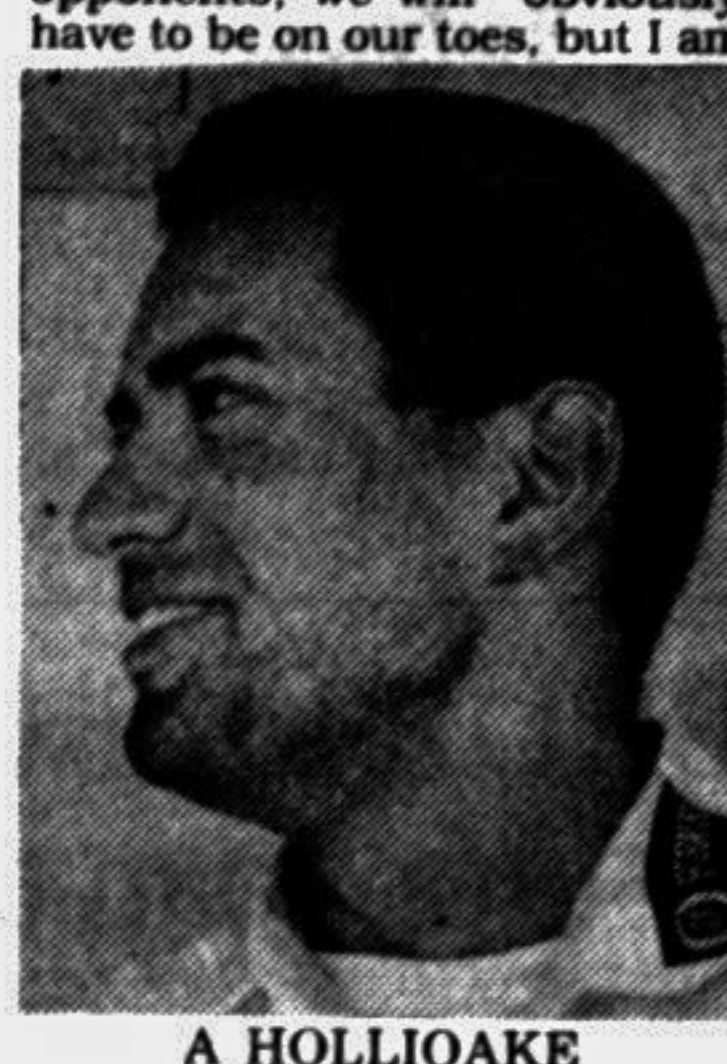
Barring Alec Stewart's 116 against India, the batting has looked vulnerable against both seam and spin. Graham Thorpe's 57 against the West Indies has been the only other sub-

stantial score.

The bowling, however, has been impressive. Dougie Brown has twice given England sensational starts, removing Philo Wallace and Brian Lara with his first three deliveries, and Pakistan's Shahid Afridi second ball.

"I am sick of close finishes," said Hoolioake, whose team beat India by seven runs, the West Indies by four wickets and Pakistan by eight runs.

"The West Indies are tough opponents, we will obviously have to be on our toes, but I am



A HOLIOAKE

confident it can be done," he said.

The toss may prove crucial because batting second can be hazardous against the spinners — as India found out on Tuesday when they folded for 188 chasing a modest West Indian score of 229-6.

TEAMS

ENGLAND (Likely): A Hoolioake (capt), A Stewart, A Brown, N Knight, G Thorpe, G Hick, M Ealham, M Fleming, D Brown, R Croft, D Headley.

WEST INDIES (from): C Walsh (capt), S Williams, S Campbell, P Wallace, B Lara, C Hooper, S Chanderpaul, P Simmons, F Rose, D Williams R Lewis, M Dillon.

Victory Day tennis Mashuq & Hye lift doubles title

By Staff Correspondent

Mashuq partnering Abdul Hye got better of their younger opponents Neaz Ahmed and Akhtar Imam in a keenly fought doubles final at the Dhaka Club Victory Day tennis championship. Mashuq and Hye won 7-5, 7-5.

In the singles final Mashuq put up a brave fight against his young opponent who finally won the championships 6-4, 7-5.

Woolmer smells a rat

BRISBANE, Australia, Dec 18: Accusations that Hansie Cronje tampered with a ball during a one-day match against Australia is a deliberate attempt to distract the touring South African side before their first Test, Proteas coach Bob Woolmer says, reports AP.

"I know exactly why it's happened. I've been to Australia before. It's obvious to me they are trying to rattle the South African team before the test match."

"Bringing a minor incident to the fore just before the Test match... is it new? It's something that I've been through before."

Without naming anyone, Woolmer, a former opener for England, claims to know details of a campaign he believes was conceived to upset South Africa with the first of a three-Test series scheduled to start Dec. 26.

The controversy started when Channel Nine broadcast tape of Cronje with his foot on the ball during crowd disruptions in a one-day match against Australia at the Sydney Cricket Ground on Dec. 4.

South African manager Alan Jordaan said the team already has investigated the incident and determined Cronje had done nothing wrong.

"We've examined Hansie about it," Jordaan said. "We made him give us his explanation which we have accepted so from us he has been exonerated."

On Tuesday, Cronje said in a prepared statement that he didn't particularly remember the moment.

"I can't recall any incident of my alleged damaging or standing on the ball," Cronje said.

Pete's athletic accolade

NEW YORK, Dec 18 (AP): Pete Sampras became the first tennis player to win the US Olympic Committee's sportsman of the year award on Wednesday. Now he wants to become the first man to win 13 Grand Slams.

"I've set my goals for next year: I want to break the majors record, win the French Open and be No 1 again," said Sampras, who won his ninth and 10th Grand Slam titles in 1997, the behind Roy Emerson's record.

Sampras received 400 points in voting by the media, the USOC Board of Directors and the organisation's Athlete Advisory Council. Track star Allen Johnson was second with

376 points and figure skater Todd Eldredge was third with 315.

"It's very flattering to be picked among all athletes that were in the running," Sampras said during a conference call from his home in Tampa, Florida. "Tennis doesn't have the history in the Olympics like swimming, track or gymnastics. There are so many big tournaments in tennis, but those guys work four years for one moment."

Sampras, who lost in the third round of the 1992

July and his fourth ATP Tour Championship in November. He has won 52 career titles and was voted the best men's player of the past 25 years by the US Tennis Association athlete-of-the-year, finished the season ranked No 1 on the ATP Tour for a fifth consecutive year, tying the record set by Jimmy Connors from 1974-78.

But his year ended on a sour note, when he injured his calf at the Davis Cup final against Sweden in November, drawing questions about whether he will play Davis Cup again.

"The Davis Cup will be a situation I will have to deal with for the rest of my career — when to play and if I will play," he said. "I wasn't a happy camper at the end of the year, especially when I knew I would have to spend my two to three weeks off getting therapy."

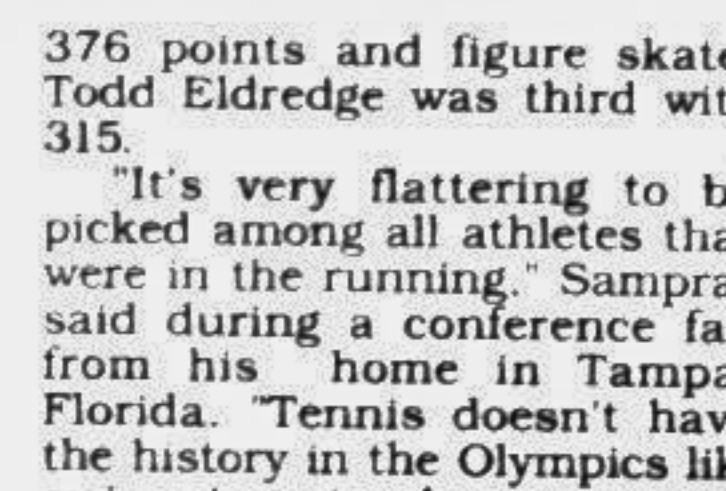
Sampras, who will go to Australia in three weeks to prepare for the Australian Open, had hoped to be practicing already. But the injury is taking longer to heal than he expected.

"I hope to hit this weekend," he said. "If not, I'll start to worry a bit. I still have a month to get ready for the Australian Open."

In 1990, the USOC sportsman honors have gone to wrestler John Smith (1990), track's Carl Lewis (1991), swimmer Pablo Morales (1992), track's Michael Johnson (1993, '95, '96) and speedskater Dan Jansen (1994).

Sampras and figure skater Tara Lipinski, selected the SportsWoman of the Year on Tuesday, will receive their awards April 4 in Portland, Oregon.

The USOC will announce the Team of the Year on Thursday.



PETE SAMPRAS

Olympics and withdrew from an injury in 1996, would like a different Olympic tennis format.

"I think it should be more of a team atmosphere, like the Davis Cup," he said. "Now it's a 128-player draw like the US Open. A team format would be more fun to play and people would be more into it."

Sampras won eight titles this year, including his second Australian Open in January, his fourth Wimbledon title in

1996, and his fourth ATP Tour Championship in November.

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SA-Aussie A four-dayer from today

A test of Test hopefuls

BRISBANE, Australia, Dec 18: Opener Adam Bacher will be seeking high scores against Australia A here as he bids to force his way into the South African team for next week's opening Test, reports AFP.

Bacher was named today in a top-heavy batting line-up against Australia A and will be attempting to put behind him a wretched batting double against Tasmania last week.

The 24-year-old Transvaal right-hander was out for a first-ball duck and it got no better in the second innings when he was dismissed for two.

This time Bacher is up against a higher-calibre bowling line-up with new one-day paceman Paul Wilson, local Adam Dale and New South Wales quick Brett Lee.

Captain Hansie Cronje was not too concerned by Bacher's current predicament.

"A lot of our batsmen have come up to scratch when the occasion has demanded it," Cronje said.

"It hasn't been a case of failing every game. We have got more than 400 runs in four of the last five first-class games."

South Africa will play a Test-strength batting line-up against Australia A at The Gabba in a four-day match starting tomorrow.

Bacher will open with Gary Kirsten, to be followed at No 3 by Jacques Kallis. Daryll Cullinan, Cronje, Brian McMillan and Jonty Rhodes.

The proteas will rely on a pace attack led by Shaun Pollock, Lance Klusener and McMillan and supplemented by 37-year-old off-spinner Pat Symcox and Kallis.

Opportunity is also knocking for players in the Australia A side.

Openers Matthew Hayden and Michael Slater awake to

news today that Matthew Elliott was in doubt for the Boxing Day Test with a knee injury but initial hopes of challenging for a vacant spot evaporated late in the day.

Elliott, with some heavy coaxing from Australian coach Geoff Marsh, changed his mind and decided to play the Sheffield Shield match for Victoria against Tasmania despite complaining of knee soreness.

But Hayden and Slater are not the only ones in the Australian A side with points to prove.

Leg-spinner Stuart Macgill, who credits tutoring from Shane Warne, will take on New South Wales teammate Michael Bevan for a possible second spin place in the Test team.

Big South Australian pacerman Paul Wilson is looking to cap his fairytale journey to the top.

Hayden and Slater have been in and out of Test teams with no apparent way back, that was until Elliott complained of his injury.

"It's amazing how these things can happen," said Slater, dropped after last year's tour of India but still the holder of a Test average of 47.41.

"This game is a great opportunity but now it presents even greater things."

Despite claiming he is not putting himself under any undue pressure, Hayden also realises the possible implications even though Elliott is now considered fit.

"There are Test spots up for grabs. Not just in the short term but down the track as well. That's the reality of it," Hayden said.

Hayden and Slater are also aware, and disappointed, that South Africa have rested their key pacerman Allan Donald.

TEAMS

AUSTRALIA A: Matthew Hayden, Michael Slater, Justin Langer, Stuart Law (captain),

Darren Lehmann, Michael Bevan, Adam Gilchrist, Brett Lee, Adam Dale, Stuart Macgill, Paul Wilson.

SOUTH AFRICA: Gary Kirsten, Adam Bacher, Jacques Kallis, Daryll Cullinan, Hansie Cronje (captain), Brian McMillan, Jonty Rhodes, Shaun