

## 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 Apathy hit in Test cricket to date?	1	2	3
3	Who is the national soccer coach of Saudi Arabia?	Hodgson	Parrera	Jacquet
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 .....

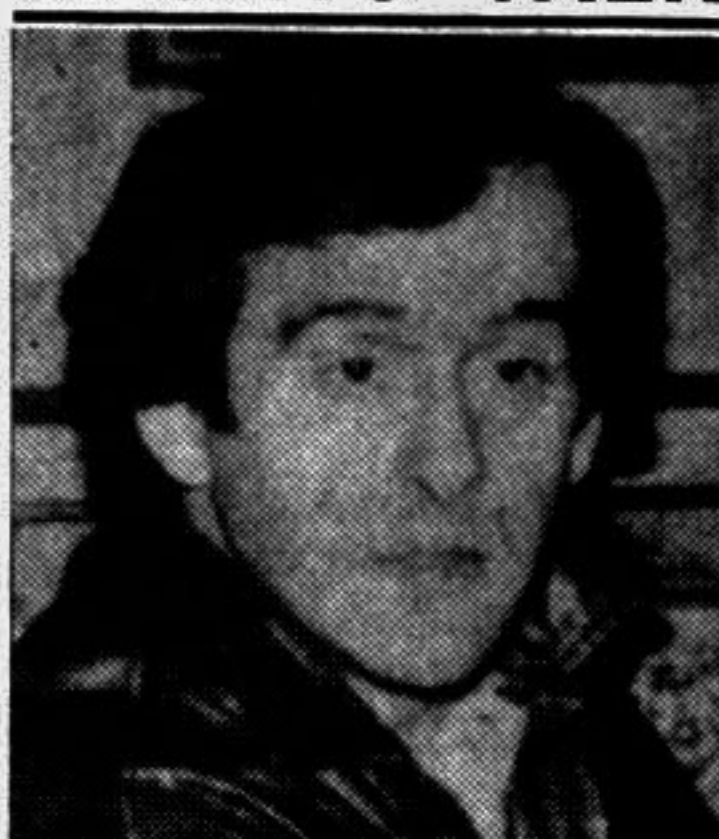
CLASS ..... ROLL NO. ....

SCHOOL ADDRESS .....

PHONE (IF ANY) .....

EN-VITS

## SPORTS TALK



Michel Platini

(President of the France '98 organising committee)  
"I believe that this World Cup will be even better than the 1994 tournament with more teams and more goals."

## Arabian nights and untold cricket riches in concrete theatre

Christopher Martin-Jenkins

CRICKET never ceases to produce unlikely facts, but it is not one of the oddest of all that a stadium created out of barren sand in the desert of the Arabian Gulf should have staged more one-day international matches than any other ground. To be sure, it is.

Televised coverage of the current series of matches in Sharjah may be restricted to Asia, but next year the spread is bound to be much wider. By decree of the International Cricket Council, the United Arab Emirates Cricket Board will be host to all the major countries of the cricket world in what ought to be called the Development Fund Cup. Unwisely for the good of the only one-day tournament which really stands apart, it has already been given the working title of the Mini World Cup.

The UAE are an Associate Member of the ICC, in common with such countries as Bangladesh, Bermuda, Kenya, Canada and Singapore. The choice of Sharjah as the best place to hold a full members' competition, by which the Haves of the cricket world will be hoping to raise big money for the Have Nots, certainly owes something to the realities of cricketing commerce and politics.

Jagomohan Dalmyia, the Bengali president of the ICC, knows the scene here well and must be confident that nine matches in 10 days next October, a brief window of opportunity in the ceaseless programme of international matches, will be profitable.

The original credit for the Sharjah stadium, and all that has flowed from it, belongs, however, to one Abdul Rahman Bukhatir, the son of a wealthy Sheikh who developed a passion for cricket at the Parsi School in Karachi in the Fifties. He combined his wealth, from oil and banking, his vision and his love for the game to bring professional cricketers to a place where the average annual rainfall is a mere 2.4 inches.

Once peopled only by seafaring Arab tribes, what is now the greatest trading entrepot of the Middle East used to be known as the Pirate Coast. I first came here on two short cricket tours of Dubai in the early Eighties. It was a major surprise to learn that more than 70 clubs formed by expatriates from England, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka already played league cricket on concrete pitches.

Even then we played a match under floodlights on astroturf. The prize, as I recall, was a gold

Wari opener Anup Kumar Biswas, who hit an unbeaten 95 to steer his side to an eight-wicket victory, drives Victoria Sporting Club's Lalit during their Janakantha Premier league clash at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium yesterday.

—Star photo

## Tarun, Wari move on

Sports Reporter

## BRIEF SCORES

**AGRANI BANK:** 93 all out in 39.4 overs (Nahid 25, Hannan 11, Shovan 11; Shamdul Huda 5/9, Khairuzzaman 2/30)  
**SURJO TARUN CLUB:** 96 for 3 wickets in 22.1 overs (Nadim Younus 49 not out, Masum 19, Javed 15)  
**Result:** Surjo Tarun won by seven wickets.

**VICTORIA SC:** 188 all out in 48.4 overs (Imran 46, Nasir Khan 29; Tarique Mehmud 2/27, Sajib Das 2/53)  
**WARI CLUB:** 190 for 2 wickets in 45.3 overs (Anup Kumar 95 not out, Saiduzzaman 50 not out)  
**Result:** Wari won by eight wickets.

Surjo Tarun Club brightened their prospect for a place in the six-team super league when the pushovers-turned-aspirants recorded their sixth win in the Janakantha Premier Division cricket at the expense of Agrani Bank at the BKSP ground in Savar yesterday.

But the new-town outfit is likely to face a tough challenge from Wari Club, who were equally impressive on the day with a thumping eight-wicket defeat of Victoria SC at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium. It was Wari's fifth win from nine matches.

Although Surjo Tarun

played one match less than they would be pitting against giants like Mohammedans and Brothers Union in two of their remaining three first leg matches. On the other hand, Wari will take on a lowly-rated Lalmitia on Tuesday before facing Surjo Tarun in the last match on December 25.



However, in the day's match away at the BKSP ground, left-arm spinner Shamsul Huda with a five-wicket haul bowled Surjo Tarun Club to a resounding seven-wicket win over Agrani Bank.

Huda claimed five wickets for only nine runs in his 6.4 overs to shoot Agrani Bank out for a meagre 93 in 39.4 overs. Surjo Tarun, in their chase for an easy target, rattled up 96 runs in only 22.1 overs with their Pakistani Nadim Younus playing a cavalier innings of an unbeaten 49.

The tall right-hander, one of the mainstays in the Surjo Tarun batting line-up, ham-

pered eleven firmly hits across the rope in his 46-ball vigil at the crease.

At the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium, opener Anup Kumar scored an unbeaten 95 to help Wari overhaul a fighting Victoria total of 188.

The young right-hander, who missed the unique feat of becoming the first local player to score a century in this year's league by five runs, carried his bat throughout the Wari innings, steering his side to 190 in 45.3 overs.

Anup, who clouted 11 fours in his 141-ball vigil, shared 123 runs for the undefeated third wicket with Saiduzzaman after he lost his opening partner Jamun (29) and Pakistani Tarique Mehmud (0) at the same score of 67.

Middle-order bat Saiduzzaman, who scored 50, clubbed only one four in his workmanlike 102-ball undefeated knock.

Earlier, the Victoria total was built around some useful contributions from their top-order batsman.

Opener Imran scored a patient 46 and his partner Pakistani Asgar Khan chipped in with 21. Asgar's compatriot Nasir Khan made 29.

For Wari, spinner Tarique Mehmud captured two wickets for only 27 runs in his nine economic overs. Sajib Das had also claimed two wickets. But the tweaker gave away 53 runs in his expensive 10 overs.

Emirates club, where the Desert Classic is now established on the PGA circuit, conjures half-remembered lines:

In Xanadu did Kubla Khan

A stately pleasure dome decreed.

The pristine skyscrapers of Dubai come in all shapes, sizes and materials. Hotels, mosques and office blocks have soared into existence in recent years in what must seem like a veritable playground for modern architects. Their creations of steel, glass and marble flaunt the area's prosperity alongside a creek filled with fine old Arab dhows which recall the days when fish and perfume were more important than petrol and cricket was strictly for the English.

It is multinational now, with a vengeance, as was the team which represented the Emirates at the last World Cup. The recent opening of an indoor cricket centre in Dubai should further enhance Arab participation, however, and there are dishdashas and gutras (white robes and headcloths) as well as saris in evidence in the crowds at Sharjah. The four teams in the present tournament are all staying in the same Dubai hotel, but half an hour in a coach or taxi (in the less than certain event of the driver knowing the way) takes them to a ground where all tickets were sold well before the start of yesterday's India v Pakistan match. Sharjah may be a stricter, soberer, less spectacular place than its neighbouring Emirate, but the cricket stadium has put it on the map and one gets the feeling that there is room for a fair bit of growth yet.

Courtesy: The Electronic Telegraph



**Celebrated English sports-ribe Christopher Martin-Jenkins wrote the article for The Electronic Telegraph during the just-concluded four-nation Akai Singer Champions' Trophy cricket tournament, in Sharjah. His country, tipped as the pre-tournament underdog, stunned all and Sunday by becoming the unbeaten champions, beating West Indies in the final Friday.**

something altogether more sophisticated. Grass seed was imported from Australia for the outfield and soil from the Punjab for the base of the square, which has proved remarkably durable. Local concrete sufficed for the circular stadium itself and by 1981 it was built.

The first tournament between India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka was played two years later and there have been 22 since, under various titles. Asif Iqbal, that beguiling batsman from Pakistan, who has co-ordinated the international cricketers' activities from the outset under the title of the Cricketers' Benefit Fund Series, says that over 4 million dollars (2.5 million pounds) has been raised in honour of a succession of former Test cricketers, mainly but not exclusively from the sub-continent. Those benefiting this time are Dilip Doshi, G S Ramchand, Ashok Mankad, Saleem Altaf, Asif Mujtaba and Richie Richardson.

Once Rupert Murdoch's Star television started operating by satellite from Hong Kong, using cricket as its main means of expansion for an audience from the sub-continent already be-

very modern tale of the Arabian Nights but it was hardly a surprise in a land full of wealth. Sports grounds with floodlights are two a penny, it seems; lush championship golf courses are maintained in the desert by thousands of gallons of desalinated sea water and the lavish domes of the club house at the



Suraiya Begum, a life member of Dhaka Deaf Association, distributing prizes among the winners of the Victory Day deaf sports competition. M Ali Hossain, president of the association, is to her left.

—Star photo

Div I cricket  
Bangladesh Boys  
beat Railway  
Sports Reporter

**BANGLADESH BOYS CLUB:** 228 for seven in 45 overs (Labbu 86 n.o., Rana 48, Extras 41; Shiplu 2/40, Sabur 2/41)  
**BANGLADESH RAILWAY:** 209 all out in 43.3 overs (Hossain 63, Sabur 34, Extras 32, Shiplu 21, Akbar 19 n.o., Nadeem 4/30)  
**Result:** Bangladesh Boys Club won by 19 runs.

Bangladesh Boys Club defeated Bangladesh Railway by 19 runs in the First Division cricket league at the City Club ground in Mirpur yesterday.

Middle-order Labbu hammered an unbeaten 86 as Bangladesh Boys, sent into bat, piled up 228 for seven in the stipulated 45 overs.

In his 90-ball knock, Labbu, who added 105 runs for the fifth wicket along with Rana, hit two sixes and seven boundaries.

Labbu apart, Rana contributed 48 runs which came from 74 deliveries.

In reply, Railway were all out for 209 in 43.3 overs in the face of some inspirational bowling by Pakistani Nadeem Nazam.

Nadeem, who ripped through the lower-order, finished with four for 30. Nadeem was ably helped by two new-ball bowlers Sayeed and Hasan who evenly shared four wickets.

For Railway, middle-order Hossain (63) and Sabur (34) were the notable run-getters.

National TT  
Day belongs  
to Biman  
Sports Reporter

Bangladesh Biman made a clean sweep in the team events of the UCBL 22nd national table tennis championships at the NSC wooden floor gymnasium yesterday.

On the third day of the six-day meet, the national airlines won all three men's, women's and boys' team finals to establish their supremacy.

After the women's team gave a perfect start winning the final 3-0 against Ansars, the boys' and men's teams completed the sweep winning against Dhaka and Ansars respectively with an identical 3-1 margin.

The doubles and mixed-doubles finals will be held today.

Top Five v'ball  
Sports Reporter

Holders Bangladesh Rifles made their way into the final of the Victory Day Top Five volleyball tournament, defeating Bangladesh Army by 3-2 sets in their last robin league clash at the court near Dhaka Stadium yesterday.

In the day's other match, Bangladesh Navy beat Titus Club by three sets to nil.

After yesterday's two matches, the robin league phase of the five team competition ended with Bangladesh Army, BDR and Navy finishing atop having posted three wins each.

But Navy failed to qualify for the final because of inferior set difference.

In today's final, BDR take on Army at 2:45 pm.

BRTC taste  
defeat  
Sports Reporter

BRTC Sports Club suffered their first defeat in the First Division football league when Badda Jagarani Sangsad handed them a 0-2 defeat in their return leg clash at the Mirpur Stadium yesterday.

George Put Badda Jagarani scored his 13th goal of the league to sealed the match in the 78th minute.

For Badda it was their seventh win which helped them to join East End Club at the top of the table having raised their tally to 24 points from 13 matches.

On the other hand, the defeat kept BRTC at the fourth spot with their previous collection of 22 points.

D'mondi Tutorial  
chess Sajib's  
Sports Reporter

Sajib of Aaga Khan School emerged unbeaten champion in the Dhanmondi Tutorial inter-schools chess tournament which concluded in the city on Friday.

In the final round of the five-round Swiss league, Sajib defeated Ejaz of Dhanmondi International School to finish his campaign with full five points.

In the another match Rashed of King Khaled Institute beat Fahim Chowdhury of Radiant International School.

Both Ejaz and Rashed collected four points each but Ejaz clinched the runners-up spot through tie-breaker.

The tournament was organised to mark the 25th anniversary of the school.

Clarson WTA's  
new boss

STAMFORD, Connecticut, Dec 20: The WTA Tour on Friday announced the appointment of Ric Clarson, a vice president of the PGA Tour, as the new Chief Executive Officer of the women's professional tennis circuit, reports Reuters.

The 40-year-old Clarson had been in charge of tournament business affairs for the PGA Tour after six years as a vice president of the senior PGA Tour serving as the primary player, tournament and sponsor liaison.

## Cronje cracks another ton



BRISBANE, Dec 20: South African captain Hansie Cronje put aside ball-tampering allegations to score his second consecutive century on the Australian tour here today, reports AFP.

Cronje has been targeted in the Australian media over allegations that he doctored the ball during a one-day international against Australia.

Television footage uncovered and aired by Channel Nine showed Cronje with his cricket boot spikes on the ball during crowd disruptions in a one-day match at the Sydney Cricket Ground 13 days ago.

But Cronje said he heeded advice given by United Cricket board boss Ali Bacher in a telephone call to get on with his job and forget the allegations.

And he scored an unbeaten 107 in South Africa's 458 for nine declared against Australia A. At the close of the second day in the four-day game, the home team was 192 for two.

"Dr Bacher said to me I must just get on there, get some runs and put it all behind me," Cronje said, "that's exactly what I wanted."

Cronje was obviously delighted with his second straight century and had no apparent worries about the worrying form of opener Adam Bacher with the opening Test against Australia starting at Melbourne Cricket Ground on Boxing Day.

Cronje followed up his 185 against Tasmania last week.

Cronje, working himself into tremendous form for the start of the three-Test series against Mark Taylor's Australians, combined with veteran David Richardson and Pat Symcox, who both made 55, to help the Proteas add 216 to their overnight score of 242 for seven.

The South African skipper achieved a feat rare at the Gabba ground when he hoicked leg-spinner Stuart Macgill onto and then over the Clem Jones stand at the southern end of the ground just as Ian Botham and Viv Richards have done in the past.

Macgill exacted his revenge soon after by bowling Richardson.

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son. Richardson (55) and Cronje added 107 in even time to be followed by an 86-run partnership with No. 11 Symcox, orchestrating an all too familiar South African rearguard action.

All three were particularly harsh on Macgill, who finished a nightmare innings with 2-150 from 39 overs.

Symcox (55 not out) faced only 44 balls in his whirlwind

the bowlers' curse. Just as fringe paceman Adam Dale made himself a half-chance for the Tests, he went down with a side strain to join Glenn McGrath and Paul Reiffel as doubtful starters for the series.

Matthew Hayden all but ended his hopes of a Test recall when he fell for eight, but Michael Slater and Justin Langer both took to the bowling.

Slater, however, was dropped twice on 24 and 41, the second and absolute sitter put down by first slip Daryl Cullinan. Langer, too, was dropped when on 59 by Adam Bacher.

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