

Column One

Boost sports WHIZZ KID COMPETITION FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN Competition-85

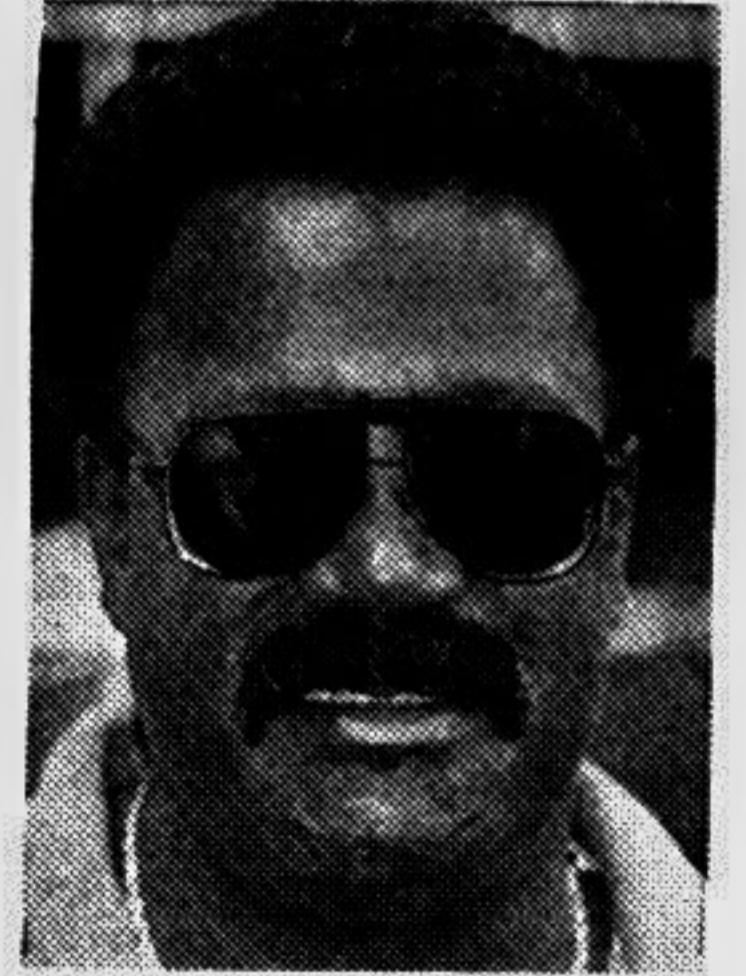
TICK THE CORRECT ANSWERS. Competition closes at 8 pm on Dec 26, 1997

Table with 3 columns (A, B, C) and 5 rows of questions about Brazil, centuries, Saudi Arabia, World Youth Cup, and Premier Division cricket.

NAME, CLASS, ROLL NO., SCHOOL ADDRESS, PHONE (IF ANY)

EN-VITS ENERGY RELEASING VITAMINS

SPORTS TALK



Clive Lloyd West Indies cricket manager. "If this continues, there will be wholesale changes."

Acme Div II cricket on Sports Reporter

Eskaton Sabuj Sangha, Gandaria Cricketers and Kalindi Krira Chakra got off to flying starts in the Acme Second Division cricket league...

Iran soccer boss sacked

TEHRAN, Dec 25: Iran have named a new head for the country's soccer federation, firing Dariush Mostafavi...

Zia Smriti cricket

From Our Correspondent RAJSHAHI, Dec 25: Fulkuri Sangha and Hatem Khan Sporting Club won their respective matches today in the Shaheed Zia Smriti cricket tournament...

TODAY'S MATCHES

- Janakantha Premier Division Cricket League: Victoria SC vs Azad SC (Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium) Agrani Bank vs Lalmitia Club (BKSP) First Division Cricket League: Gopibagh FA vs GMCC (City Club) Acme Second Division Cricket League: Dhanmondi Progati vs Jatrabari KC (T&T Ground) Kathalbagan KC vs Lalbagh USC (Utara Friend's Club) Nabin Sangha vs Amarjyoti Club (Dhanmondi Club) Teiganon CA vs Young Pegasus (Mirpur Outer Stadium).



Action from yesterday's Janakantha Premier Division league match between Wari and Surjo Tarun at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium. — Star photo

Surjo Tarun in Super league

SURJO TARUN CLUB: 224 for eight wickets in 50 overs (Nadim Yunus 81, Biplob 50, Nurul Abedin 21, Amir Wasim 2/48, Sajib Das 2/23) WARI CLUB: 209 all out in 47.4 overs (Tushar 47, Uzzal 30, Amir Wasim 29, Anisur Rahman 3/42, Shahid Saeed 3/46) Result: Surjo Tarun Club won by 15 runs

Surjo Tarun Club confirmed their berth in the six-team Super league of Janakantha Premier Division cricket with a 15-run victory over Wari Club at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium yesterday.

Opener Nadim Yunus scored a brilliant 81 as Surjo Tarun, electing to bat first after winning the toss, piled up a commanding total of 224 for eight in their share of 50 overs.

After the good work of the tall Pakistani right-hander, discarded national left-arm seamer Anisur Rahman and Shahid Saeed, with some fiery spell, ensured Surjo Tarun a crucial victory by shooting Wari out for 209 with 16 balls to spare.

The victory now left the new town outfit at par with table leaders Mohammedan Sporting Club with 14 points apiece. But Mohammedans, the only unbeaten team in the 12-team elite echelon with seven wins on a tort...

BRIEF SCORES

against Surjo Tarun's one in the first round. Meanwhile, the penultimate tie of Surjo Tarun was equally important for Wari, who were



desperately needing to win their final first phase match to pip Surjo Tarun at the post for a possible sixth slot up for grab. Before the match, the race was wide open for the two mediocre outfits as they were going even with six wins apiece.

But at the end of the day, Surjo Tarun had the last laugh in a match which turned into yet another battle of Pakistani players in both sides. Nadim Yunus, who scored the first ton in the league, built the backbone of a huge Surjo Tarun total with a dazzling 81. The right-handed stroke-maker clubbed ten fours in his 103-ball vigil at the crease.

Nadim was eventually out in the 34th over, leaving his side at 137 for three. But it was a breezy half-century from Biplob that propelled Surjo Tarun

cross the 200-mark. The lower-middle order bat, who was responsible for accelerating the pace of scoring wheel, hammered a quartet of fours in his 56-ball knock.

Wari, in their chase got off to horrible start losing their first three wickets for only 46 runs on the board. Although opener Uzzal scored a quickfire 36-ball 30, the traditional giant-slayerers suffered a severe blow when their Pakistani hope-bearer Tarique Mehmud departed cheaply.

Tarique, who scored a brilliant century in his side's previous match against Lalmitia on Tuesday, made only four before being adjudged caught behind off new-ball bowler Anisur Rahman.

Wari's hopes for a turnaround in the match was effectively evaporated when Tarique's compatriot Amir Wasim fell for a gritty 29. The southpaw became the first of three victims of his fellow countryman Shahid Saeed, who then went on to dismiss Ziaul Haq (24) in his next over, leaving Wari tottering at 98 for five in 26.1 overs.

Tushar with a fluent 47 off 59 balls embellished with four fours and a six fought a lone battle against the increasing asking run-rate. But once Anis had the menacingly poised lower-middle order bat in the 45th over, it was all over for Wari.

View from courtside

LONDON, Dec 25 (Reuters): Women's tennis witnessed a change of generations in 1997 with teenager Martina Hingis establishing a Graf-like grip on the game in Steffi's absence.

Among the men, it was once again a case of Pete Sampras and the rest even if the names of the American's rivals changed from old favourites such as Becker and Agassi to Rafter, Rusedski and Bjorkman.

Sampras and Hingis dominated with five of the eight Grand Slam singles titles and more than twice the prize money of their nearest rivals.

But the clay at the French Open proved too much for both players and threw up surprise winners in Croatian Iva Majoli and Gustavo Kuerten, a Brazilian who was amazed as everyone else when he received the trophy from Bjorn Borg at Roland Garros.

The interest aroused by Kuerten and the pony-tailed Australian Pat Rafter, winner of the US Open, was some compensation for the retirement of Boris Becker, just months after Stefan Edberg stood down from the Tour, and the travails of Andre Agassi.

Becker announced his retirement at Wimbledon, where he won three championships including one as a 17-year-old in 1985, he told Sampras the news seconds after being beaten in the quarterfinals on Centre Court.

Agassi, the world's most flamboyant player on his day, was reduced to number 122 in the rankings and playing challenger tournaments by the end of the year after a disastrous run.

"It is tough because I feel like a different player and that is not good," Agassi said after losing to Kuerten in August. "I don't have a good sense for a match."

Among the women, Anna Kournikova had much the same effect on male spectators as Agassi has on female fans. At Wimbledon, where the Russian reached the last four, she excited huge interest, particularly among the tabloid newspapers.

Her victory in Melbourne propelled her to the top of the rankings by the end of March when she ended Steffi Graf's reign, which began in mid-August 1995.

The Swiss was the youngest number one, man or woman, at 16 years, six months and one day since rankings started and, barring injury, it is difficult to see anyone but Graf deposing Hingis in the near future.

"She can kill you," said Lindsay Davenport, the world number three. "I think she is going to continue to be very dominant. As long as she enjoys it like she is, she's going to keep winning."

Before her injury, Graf had beaten her young rival five times in six meetings, but the German missed most of the year because of a knee injury.

She will return for the Australian Open in January, one of Graf's favourite tournaments which she has won four times. Despite winning 11 titles this year and being beaten only a handful of times, Hingis was dogged by suggestions that Graf's absence had given her an easy ride. A showdown in Melbourne between the two would probably be top of Hingis' Christmas wish list.

With the new breed, I'm still motivated but it's still very unique to walk out against Boris or Andre."

Hingis had won only two tournaments before January, but she broke almost every age record in the women's game on her way to winning the Australian Open, Wimbledon and the US Open.

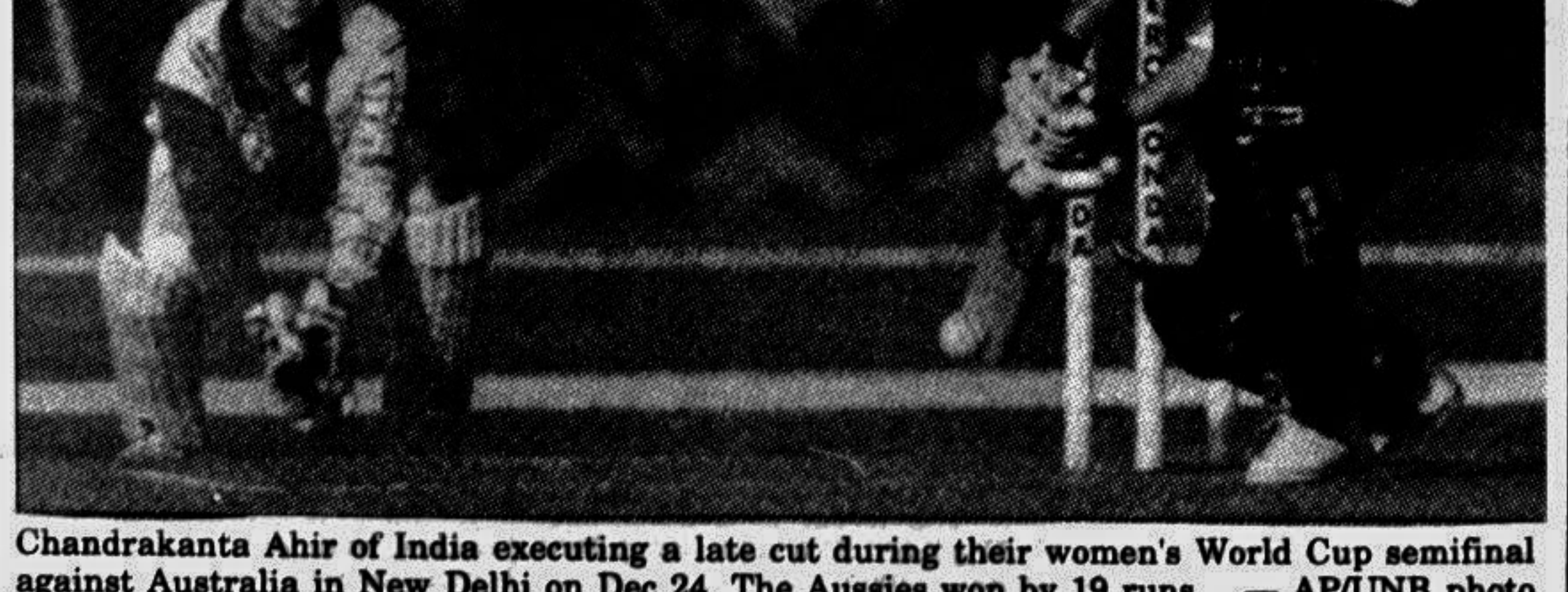
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Chandrakanta Ahir of India executing a late cut during their women's World Cup semifinal against Australia in New Delhi on Dec 24. The Aussies won by 19 runs. — AP/UNB photo

Div I cricket Sports Reporter

BRIEF SCORES

BANGLADESH RAILWAY: 166 for nine in 45 overs (Harun 38, Shiblu 24, Akbar 21, Safdar 21; Russell 4/36, Tapash 3/15) CITY CLUB: 169 for six in 42.1 overs (Majed 38, Munna 33, Robin 26 n.o., Santosh 23, Tiniu 23; Momin 3/26) Result: City Club won by four wickets.

City Club registered a four-wicket victory over Bangladesh Railway in the First Division cricket league at their home ground in Mirpur yesterday. Chasing a modest target of 167 in 45 overs, the winners reached 169 for six with more than two overs to spare.

One down Abdul Majed contributed highest 38 while middle-order Munna (33) and Robin (26 n.o.) were the other notable rungetters. Earlier, electing to bat, Railway could collect only 166 for nine in the stipulated overs in the face of some brilliant bowling by Russell and Tapash Das.

Russell ripped through the Railway tail finishing with four for 36 from his nine overs while Tapash claimed three wickets for only 15 runs from nine overs. Opener Harun top-scored with 38 off 59 balls including seven boundaries while Shiblu scored 24 runs.

Gazipur, N' ganj enter qtrs Sports Reporter

Gazipur and Narayanganj moved into the quarterfinals of the Acme 16th national youth hockey championship winning their respective matches at the National Hockey Stadium yesterday.

In the Round of 16, Gazipur eliminated Rangpur by a solitary goal. Azizur Rahman struck the all-important match-winner through a field goal in the 36th minute.

The winners will now face holders BKSP in the quarters tomorrow morning. In the day's other match, a 42nd minute strike by Rubel steered Narayanganj to their victory over Chittagong.

Narayanganj will take on the winners of today's match between last year's runners-up Faridpur and Comilla.

Age-group tennis Sports Reporter

Muammar Hossain Khan and Ashfaqur Rahman, Yasin and Taswar moved into the under-18 boys' doubles final of the Elite Paint national age-group tennis circuit winning their respective semifinals at the National Tennis Complex in the city yesterday.

Muammar and Ashfaqur ousted Nadeem Kamran Khan and Fahim Ahsan Khan in the first match 6-3, 6-4, while Yasin and Taswar won the other semifinal against Sirajul Selko and Shafiqur Rahman 6-3, 6-2.

In the boys' under-14 doubles semis, Babu Lal and his partner Mustafiz beat Sadir and Imam 6-1, 6-0 while Kabir and Alamgir defeated Khurshid and Amal Roy 6-2, 7-6 (7-2).

Besides, Shefat Nusrat Baishakhi and Dyuti Shanchaieeta secured their berth in the girls' under-18 doubles final with a comfortable 6-0, 6-0 win over Afrina and Shahnaz.

Mona Smriti cricket Sports Reporter

Volcano XI thrashed Rising Sporting Club by 74 runs in yesterday's match of the Mona Smriti cricket tournament played at the Bangladesh Math in Dhaka.

Batting first Volcano scored 113 for seven off the stipulated 20 overs and then dismissed their opponents for a meagre 39.

Shahid was the wrecker-in-chief for Volcano claiming five for 13.

RCC soccer From Our Correspondent

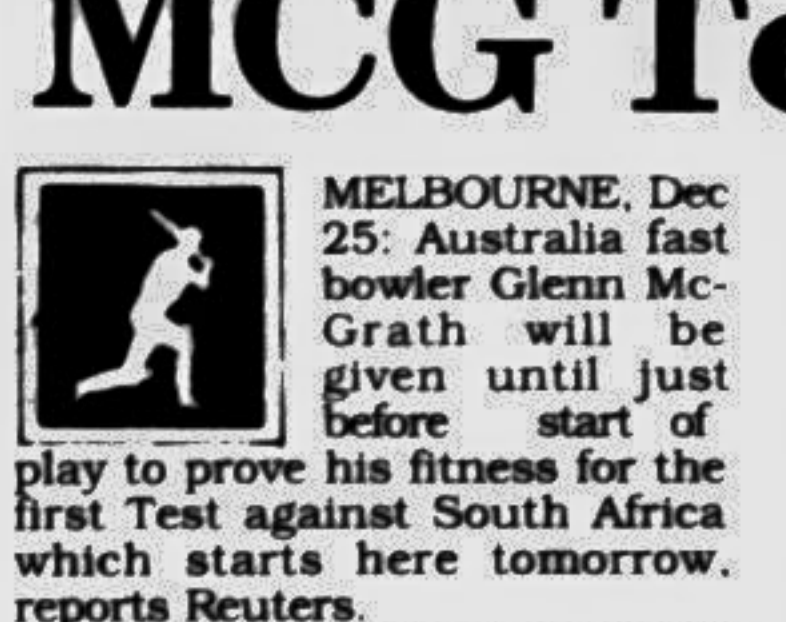
RAJSHAHI, Dec 25: Health Department defeated Transport Department 2-0 in the Rajshahi City Corporation inter-departmental football tournament held at Rajshahi Government College Hostel playground today.

In other matches, Preservation Department and Ward Secretaries played out a goalless out while Transport Department blanked the Supervisors 3-0.

Rajshahi sports awards From Our Correspondent

RAJSHAHI, Dec 25: Bangladesh Krira Lekhak Samity, Rajshahi unit on Wednesday announced the names of the best sports persons, organisers, referees and umpires for 1993-95.

McGrath still uncertain MCG Test starts today



MELBOURNE, Dec 25: Australia fast bowler Glenn McGrath will be given until just before start of play to prove his fitness for the first Test against South Africa which starts here tomorrow, reports Reuters.

McGrath, regarded as vital to Australia's hopes of beating the tourists, today underwent the latest in a series of fitness tests this week to assess his recovery from a stomach injury.

But Australia selectors are to delay a decision because of concern that McGrath may not last the full five days at the Melbourne Cricket Ground. "I am feeling all right at the moment and the last two days have gone as well as could be hoped," McGrath said today.

"Hopefully everything will be okay on Friday and I'll be able to play," said McGrath, who has been out of action since damaging a stomach muscle in a one-day match against New Zealand on December 7.

But Australia captain Mark Taylor said his side's bowling attack would still pose a threat to the South Africans even if McGrath is ruled out. "Whether McGrath plays or not we've still got some very good quicks in our 13-man squad in Mike Kasprovic, Simon Cook, Paul Reffel and Andy Bichel," Taylor said.

South Africa coach Bob Woolmer said his side face a huge task to win the three Test series. "We need to keep this level headed and we need to understand that the Australians are world champions. We are under no illusions as to the toughness of the task."

South Africa captain Hansie Cronje said he expected McGrath to take the field. "I think we'll probably find that McGrath will play. Guys over here tend to play even though they're half injured," Cronje said.

A crowd of about 80,000 is expected to pack the Melbourne Cricket Ground for the first day tomorrow. Taylor has returned to international duty to lead the side after being dropped as Australia's limited-overace captain this season in favor of Steve Laugh.

Australia won the Test series in South Africa earlier this year and the two sides drew the previous series on Australian soil in 1993-94.

In addition to McGrath, selectors named the same 12 players who represented Australia in the final two Tests against New Zealand in November and December. Australia will the series 2-0 even without McGrath, who missed the last two Tests because of a hernia injury.

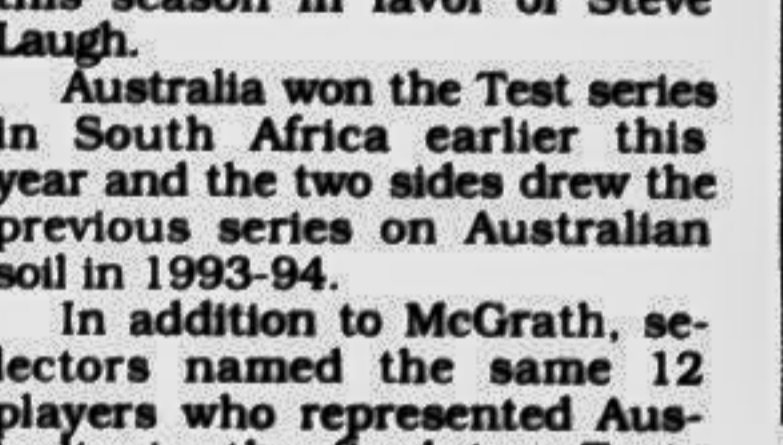
McGrath still uncertain MCG Test starts today

South Africa won a Test series in Pakistan before heading to Australia. Both teams have been playing well recently. South Africa like winning and hate losing, Taylor said.

"We beat them in South Africa 10 months ago and they would not have taken that lightly," the left-handed opener said.

TEAMS AUSTRALIA (from): Mark Taylor (captain), Matthew Leitch, Greg Blowout, Mark Laugh, Steve Waugh, Ricky Ponting, Ian Healy, Paul Reffel, Shane Warne, Michael Kasprovic, Simon Cook, Andrew Bichel, Glenn McGrath.

SOUTH AFRICA (likely): Gary Kirsten, Adam Bacher, Jacques Kallis, Daryll Cullinan, Hansie Cronje (captain).



HANSIE CRONJE Brian McMillan, Shaun Pollock, Lance Klusener, Dave Richardson, Pat Symcox, Allan Donald.

Kanika & Sumon mixed doubles champs Sports Reporter

Kanika and Sumon of Biman clinched the mixed doubles title of the Merit 20th national badminton championship played at the Pabna Stadium gymnasium yesterday, according to a faxed message received here.

Kanika and Sumon beat their teammates Elina and Shakil 15-6, 15-8. Following are the other results of the day: Men's doubles: Bhanu and Parvez (Chittagong) defeated Rajal and Tutul (Barisal) 15-0, 15-1; Pintu and Liton (Bhola) beat Shiblu and Sushil (Rajbari) 15-2, 15-1; Hamid and Sabir (Sylhet) beat Firoz and Milan (Dhaka) 15-6, 15-6; Sohail and Noor (Pabna) beat Koyel and Milton (Narail) 15-10, 15-9; Midladul and Liakat (BRTC) beat Ahmed and Jahangir (Rangpur) 15-4, 15-4; Rathindra and Masum (Khulna) beat Ritu and Shamim (Pabna) 15-4, 13-15, 18-15; Gopal and Zakaria (Bogra) beat Nazrul and Kamal (Jhenidah) 15-1, 15-8; Peter and Vulu (Pabna) beat Raju and Anis

Men's singles: Sumon (Biman) beat Tajul (Pabna) 15-2, 15-2; Morshed (Ansars) beat Enayet (Rajshahi Division) 15-2, 15-2 and Miladul (BRTC) beat Javed (Ansars) 15-12, 5-2.

Besides, 21 women's singles matches were also held at the same venue yesterday.



An AP file photo shows Italian Paola Pezzo displaying her Olympic mountain bike cross-country gold in Atlanta on July 30, 1996. Pezzo was tested positive for steroids following her World Cup triumph on Sept 6 at Anney, France.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down words.

CRYPTOQUIP

T U F N W C C Q Y E Q E P R K Z R V O T C Q F W R O W Q V I Q W E P Y W V T C Z V W G N Q Q D I P E D D W U E C G N E W V Yesterday's Cryptoquip: I'D BET THAT THE BOARD GAME COPS GENERALLY PLAY MOST IS MONOPOLIE. Today's Cryptoquip clue: P equals C. The Cryptoquip is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.