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# Star Sport

DHAKA WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 12, 1998

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## Akram totally focused

LANCASHIRE, Aug 11 (The Lancashire Evening Telegraph): Wasim Akram is in the mood for his biggest game yet as Lancashire captain.  
 The Pakistan all-rounder leads his beloved Red Rose county into the NatWest Trophy semi-final against Hampshire at Southampton tomorrow, one game away from leading them out at Lord's.  
 And he warmed up in style at sizzling Old Trafford yesterday, blasting an unbeaten 75 from just 42 balls to set up a crushing AXA League victory over Gloucestershire.  
 Wasim and Neil Fairbrother, who hit 75, were the key figures as Lancashire plundered 114 in the last 10 overs to post a formidable total of 222-6.  
 Fairbrother continued his consistent form either side of his recent ankle injury with his fourth consecutive one-day half century, while Wasim staged a near repeat of his amazing display against Notts in the Benson and Hedges Cup.

He hammered a career best 89 not out at Trent Bridge including five sixes and yesterday was a new Sunday League best for Wasim, and only his third half century in over 100 appearances, with three big sixes including one on to the trampoline at the Warwick Road End.  
 "I thought he would at least have a look before hitting out, but he played some amazing shots right from the start," said a stunned Fairbrother.  
 "Neil complemented each other perfectly," added coach Dav Whatmore. "Neil tried to give him as much of the strike as possible, and Wasim played some incredible shots."

Gloucestershire never threatened the Lancashire total after two early wickets for Ian Austin, and all the other Lancashire bowlers got in on the act later on - except Wasim, who had already done his bit.  
 There were also two wickets each for Glen Chapple and Peter Martin, a welcome one for Mike Watkinson on his return to the first team and three more for Gary Yates to complete a wonderful week.

The win was Lancashire's eighth out of nine in one-day cricket, keeping them joint top of the AXA League with Essex and firing a warning to Hampshire, who were crushed by Kent.  
 Essex have a better run rate, 10.89 compared to Lancashire's 9.71.  
 "We've got into a winning habit," said Whatmore, "and it's come at a good time."  
 "We are all looking forward to Hampshire's game since the World Cup final."

### Majid's priority Sahara Cup

MUMBAI, Aug 11: The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chief executive, Majid Khan, has repeated his commitment to send Pakistan's best side to Sahara Cup, following reports that the International Management Group (IMG), who is organising the Sahara Cup at Toronto, Majid has said, "We have never been in any doubt but that the best side to represent Pakistan will be playing against India in the Sahara Cup this year. The Sahara Cup gives both countries a chance to field its best players in a competition that has quickly established itself as one of the most important in our cricketing year."  
 Majid pointed out that the Sahara Cup is an event jointly owned by BCCI, PCB and IMG. He expressed confidence that the BCCI would act only in the best interests of the Sahara Cup, an IMG release here said.  
 The agreement amongst the three parties provides an absolute commitment from both India and Pakistan to send their "best available players to the Sahara Cup", Majid was quoted as saying.

### Waqar injured

LONDON, Aug 11 (The Electronic Telegraph/Internet): Pakistan pace bowler Waqar Younis will miss the remainder of the season for Glamorgan because of his troublesome elbow injury.  
 Waqar, who has not played since taking four for 46 in the county champions' NatWest Trophy first-round tie against Bedfordshire on June 24, was told after an initial scan that a short rest would cure the injury. But a further examination now indicates it will not heal in time for him to play again this season.  
 "We're told that rest is the only cure, and any attempt to play will simply set him back to square one," said Glamorgan secretary Mike Fatkin. "The longer-term prognosis isn't too bad, and we'll monitor his progress during the autumn."



THE BEST IN BUSINESS: Usha's brilliant marksman Sadeq outfoxes the Wari goalkeeper on his way to scoring the second of his three goals yesterday. — Star photo

## Hattrick in eleven-minute dazzle

# Sadeq slaps selectors

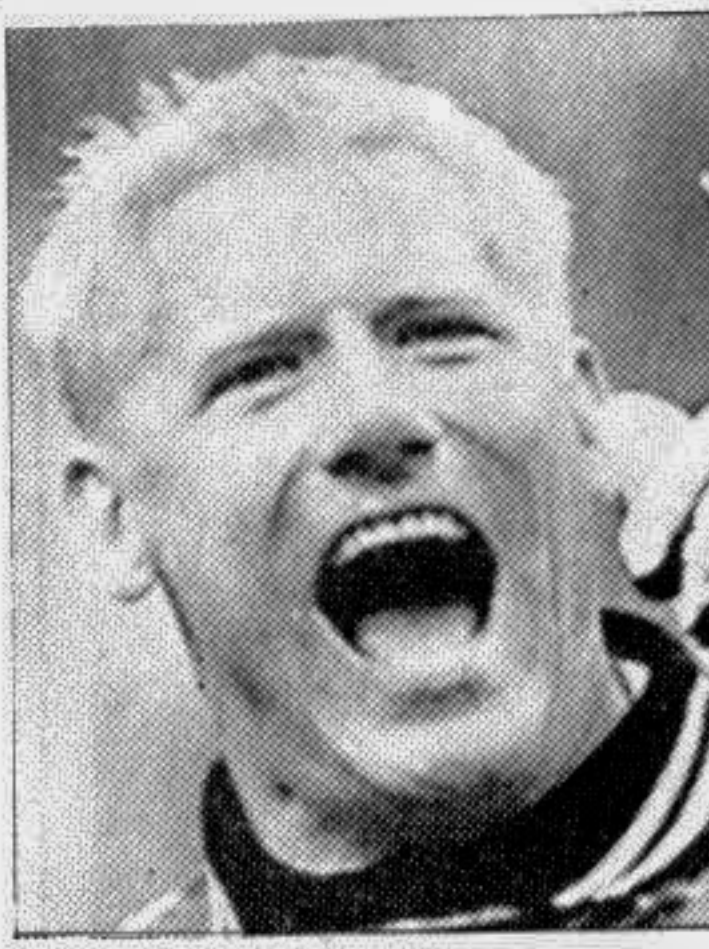
Sports Reporter  
 Discarded national forward Mohammad Sadeq whacked a contemptuous slap on the selectors' face with his second successive hattrick as favourites Usha Krira Chakra outplayed Wari Club by six goals to nothing in their second group B match of the Jiban Biman Club Cup played at the Moulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium yesterday.  
 In an one-sided affair, Sadeq, considered one of the best central forwards of the country but surprisingly dropped from the Commonwealth Games squad by the national selectors two days ago, struck thrice in the span of seven minutes while Tutul Kumar Nag, Isa Miah and skipper Rafiqul Islam Kamal added one each to the winners' credit who led the first half 5-0.  
 Sadeq, who also slammed a treble against Bachelors' Club in their first group match on August 6, put the old-timers ahead as early as in the fourth minute with an eye catching reverse hit from the goal mouth. As if he had a point to prove, he made it 2-0 five minutes later after being nicely fed by Musa.  
 Buoyed by his second goal, Sadeq completed his hattrick in the 11th minute, thanks to his attacking partner Kamal with whom he made a dream run from the midfield with Sadeq finishing with a push past an advancing Wari custodian Shaheen.  
 With yesterday's three goals, Sadeq, who was the top scorer in the Office League last month with ten goals, look s like repeating the feat in the Club Cup having scored six goals in two matches.  
 After scoring the hattrick, Sadeq was also instrumental in the remaining two first half goals. He fed Tutul for the fourth goal in the 17th minute and then pushed the penalty corner in the 31st minute which was brilliantly converted by Isa Miah.  
 After the lemon break, Usha seemed to have lost their appetite for goals. Although, they kept Wari restricted to their own half during the entire second session, it was only Kamal who could find the net in the 38th minute capitalising on a Pappu pass.  
 Usha, with yesterday's win, raised their tally to four points from two matches. They are now jointly leading group B along with Farashganj Sporting Club. However, the group past an advancing Wari custodian Shaheen.  
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**FIELD DAY FOR BIMA**  
 Earlier, in the day's first match, Sadharan Bima Krira Sangha posted a 2-0 win over Dhaka Ansars in a group C affair.  
 Hasan put the insurancemen ahead with a field goal in the ninth minute while Malek Chunnun sealed the Ansars' fate with yet another field goal in the 23rd minute.  
**TODAY'S MATCHES**  
 Ajax SC v Victoria SC (2:45 pm)  
 Abahani KC v Bangladesh Railway (4:30 pm)

## Euphoric English press

LONDON, Aug 11 (AFP): "Let joy be unconfined," England win.  
 The front-page headline by a picture of celebrating England players in the Independent summed up the mood of disbelief and delirium in the British press today as the country digested its first Test series victory for 12 years.  
 For the Independent the occasion was so immense it was moved to verse, with a poem to England's glories: "There's a breathless hush in the close tonight, and a silence from South Africans, as the smelling salts are handed out, to disbelieving cricket fans."  
 The rest of the press was scarcely less contained in its plethora of praise for England's cricketers, who clinched the series 2-1 by beating South Africa by 23 runs on the fifth day of the fifth Test.  
 "From zero to heroes," wrote the Guardian. "After 12 years, eight captains and countless collapses... England win," screamed the mass-selling Sun. The Times wrote of England escaping "12 years of purgatory."  
 The Mirror published an "England victory souvenir issue" advising readers to "keep this safe... it only happens every 12 years."  
 Many papers deemed the event worthy of editorial comment.  
 The Daily Telegraph wrote: "Victory comes sweet to those long denied it, and sweetest of all when it is as narrowly won as it was in the final Test at Headingley. So there is cause for rejoicing and on several counts..."  
 It went on to proclaim the return of heroes to inspire schoolboys to the English game.  
 The Guardian described how the game was "thrilling enough for people in homes and offices to suspend their normal business to follow the play... cricket still has a place in our soul."  
 The daily Mail related how crowds were flocking back to the game. "The interest of young people will be reawakened now the cycle of failure has been broken."  
 Even the Financial Times reported on cricket's improving fortunes, telling its readers how England's win "extends the sport's commercial boundaries" in terms of ticket sales and television contracts.  
 Most sports writers, no doubt overcome by such a rare glimpse of light in more than a decade of darkness, gave themselves over to wild optimism for the forthcoming Ashes test series against Australia this winter.  
 "Bring on the Aussies", demanded the Sun. "Now for the Ashes" said the Daily Star. "Now bring on the Aussies" thumped the Express.  
 The Guardian described the protracted death which cricket writers had long predicted for English cricket.  
 The Ashes date back to England's shock defeat by the "colonists" in 1882," wrote the paper. "It (cricket) has been a long time dying."

## Goalkeeper of the century

WIESBADEN, Germany, Aug 11 (Reuters/Internet): Denmark's Peter Schmeichel has been shortlisted for a European "goalkeeper of the century" award to be announced next January.  
 The Manchester United stalwart is the only keeper currently active among the seven nominated on Tuesday by the International Federation of Football History and Statistics (IFFHS).  
 England's Gordon Banks, Lev Yashin of the Soviet Union, Sepp Maier of Germany, Frantisek Planicka of Czechoslovakia, Ricardo Zamora of Spain and Italy's Dino Zoff were the six other names on the list.  
 The IFFHS produced a list of Europe's 50 top keepers after asking football specialists and historians from across Europe to vote. The winner of the European goalkeeper of the century award will be announced at the World Football Gala '99 next January.  
 Among those outside the final seven were England's Peter Shilton (eighth), Northern Ireland's Pat Jennings (11th), West Germany's Harald Schumacher (15th) and Edwin van der Sar of the Netherlands, at 27 the youngest player on the list, (joint 24th).  
 Current England goalkeeper David Seaman was joint 32nd, one point behind Italy's Angelo Peruzzi and Neville Southall of Wales, while France's second-choice goalkeeper Bernard Lama was 46th.  
 England's captain Alec Stewart, who has just one series win, against New Zealand, in over four years in charge, said he was delighted for Stewart.  
 "We are improving all the time now, the key is to carry on improving."  
 England, who have been regularly lambasted by the local media for humiliating losses over the past 10 years, had, until Monday, not won a five- or six-test series since the 1986-7 Ashes tour of Australia.  
 And at home, they had not tasted a five-test series win since their 1985 victory over Australia.  
 Stewart, who became the sixth player to lead England since Mike Gatting's side won in Australia, took over the reins from Mike Atherton after England's 3-1 loss in the West Indies earlier this year.



PETER SCHMEICHEL

## Summer badminton

# Elina emerges champion

Elina of Bangladesh Biman clinched the women's singles title of the Rupali Insurance Summer open badminton tournament beating her compatriot Noori 11-2, 11-6 in the final at the NSC wooden floor gymnasium yesterday, reports UNB.  
 Sumon will take on Mahboob in the men's singles final at 4 pm today.  
 Sumon (Biman) eliminated Khurshid (Biman) 15-9, 15-11 while Mahboob (Biman) beat Shakil (Biman) 15-9, 15-3 in the semifinals.  
 In the women's doubles, Konica and Momo of Biman moved into the final defeating Ruma and Dola of Shuttlers Club 15-4, 15-6 in the second semifinal.  
 The pair will meet Elina and Noori.  
 Sports Minister for Youth and Sports Obaidul Quader will be present at today's closing function and distribute prizes.

## Akhtar not up to the part

LONDON, Aug 11 (The Mirror/Internet): Bob Willis almost at his TV microphone in a mixture of elation and embarrassment. The only predictable part of a sensational, fluctuating series was the finger of fate that Javed Akhtar used to finish it off.  
 And once again the hopelessly out-of-depth Pakistan official got it horribly wrong. Darren Gough hit the pads of last-man Makhaya Ntini and up went Akhtar's trigger finger.  
 Willis said: "Cricket fans all around the world will study TV pictures of this shocking decision by Akhtar."  
 "How bad was this decision?" It was the latest in a number of questionable calls. They're fine men, these South Africans, and they've been badly treated by the umpiring decisions in this match.  
 "But England can now look forward to the Ashes tour with great heart, and then the World Cup after that."  
 South Africa's legendary fast bowler Mike Procter could hardly contain himself.  
 "The ball hit the outside of Ntini's pad," he said. "After a Test of so many bad decisions, this is a very sad end. I'd have preferred to see Ntini's stump knocked out of the ground than finish like this."  
 South Africa were so appalled by the standard of umpiring, particularly by Akhtar, that one official had told, "We will have something very strong to say if we win, and nothing if we lose. That's the way we are."  
 To avoid any chance of being fined for dissent, the South Africans opted for a policy of openly laughing at duff decisions.  
 At Trent Bridge, the crucial blunder was the decision of New Zealander Steve Dunne to give Mike Atherton not out to a clear catch behind when he had made 27 of his match-winning total of 98 not out.  
 But even that was overshadowed by Akhtar's performance at Leeds.  
 Of 10 lbs in the match, eight went against South Africa, and Akhtar's finger of doom went up nine times. TV replays showed that four of the decisions were shockers and three more were dubious.

## Siraj committee picks 14 for C'wealth cricket

# Athar, Minhaz dropped

Sports Reporter  
 Six players from the team which toured Ireland, England and Scotland last month have been dropped from the 14-man national squad for the 16th Commonwealth Games to be held in Malaysia next month, Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) made the announcement yesterday.  
 This was the first selection made by the three-member Siraj-led selection committee which was declared last Friday. The selectors, it appears, had no option but to rely on the "team lacking back-foot play" that had a 45-day long dismal tour in June and July. Eleven of the 17 cricketers have been retained but there was no place for opener Athar Ali, veteran all-rounder Minhazul Abedin and Enamul Haque, wicketkeeper Atiar Rahman, medium pacer Zakir Hasan and young leggie Tanveer Khan.  
 The list includes two rookies from the under-19 side in Mushfiqur Rahman and Sabbar Khan. Besides, opener Shahriar Hossain is also back in the pack after a six-month lay-off.  
 The selectors also kept wicketkeeper Mohammad Mor-tuza, medium pacer Zakir Hossain and middle-order batsman Sanwar Hossain as stand by.  
 BCB vice-president and former national cricketer Tanveer Haider will be the manager of the team whose coach will be former manager Gazi Ashraf Hossain. Dr Mahbubur Rahman has been appointed the team-physio.  
 Six of the 14 cricketers selected-Azam Iqbal, Shahriar Hossain, Naimur Rahman, Hasibul Hossain, Morshed Ali Khan and Shafuluddin Ahmed, are undergoing a month-long training at the Commonwealth Bank Cricket Academy in Adelaide, Australia while the other eight will be invited to join a camp at the BKSP.  
 The captain of the team will be named on August 20.  
 The squad: Azam Iqbal, Shahriar Hossain, Faruque Ahmed, Akram Khan, Amrul Islam, Khaled Masood, Khaled Mahmud, Naimur Rahman, Hasibul Hossain, Morshed Ali Khan, Shafuluddin Ahmed, Mohammad Rafique, Mushfiqur Rahman and Sabbar Khan.

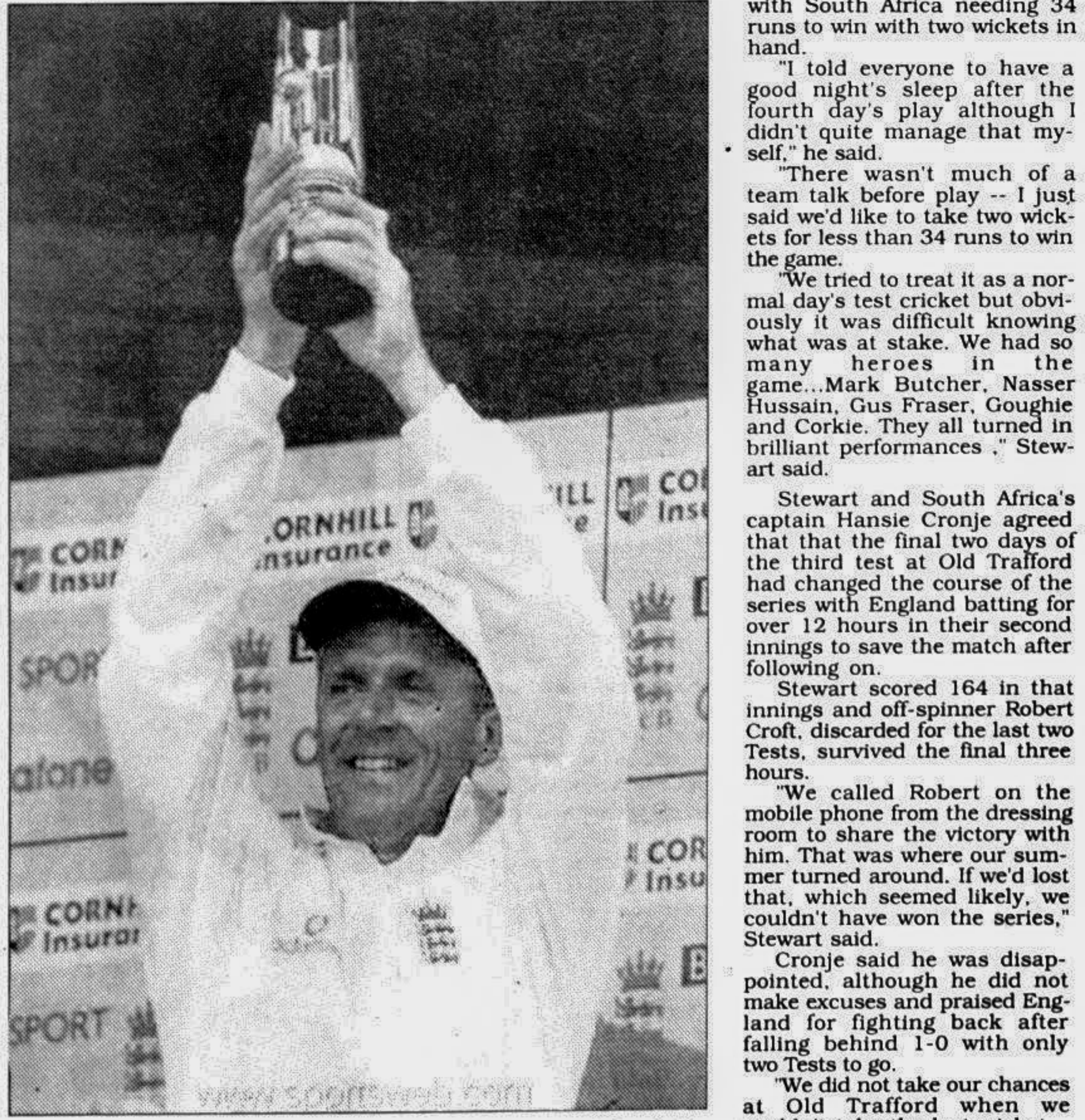
## ICC knockout tourney

# Preparations reviewed

Preparations for the forthcoming International Cricket Council (ICC) knockout tournament are in full swing. This was disclosed at an inter-ministerial meeting to review the arrangements for the tourney at the Bangladesh Secretariat yesterday with State Minister for Youth and Sports Obaidul Quader in the chair, reports BSS.  
 Deputy Minister for Shipping Sabir Hossain Chowdhury, who is also president of Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB), chairman of the National Board of Revenue Abdul Mueyed Chowdhury, Defence Secretary Syed Yousuf Hossain, Cultural Affairs Secretary Dr S Zaman Majumder and Senior officials of different ministries attended the meeting.  
 The knockout tournament will take place at Bangabandhu National Stadium in Dhaka from October 24 to November 4 and involve all the nine Test playing countries.  
 The countries are: Australia, England, India, New Zealand, Pakistan, South Africa, Sri Lanka, the West Indies and Zimbabwe.  
 Special measures would be taken for the security of the world famous cricketers and officials during their stay.  
 To enhance the image of Bangladesh, the Civil Aviation Ministry has been advised to prepare video on its historic establishments and cultural heritage, which would be provided to WorldTel.  
 The meeting also decided to set up a large media centre with most modern facilities for local and international print and electronic media persons at Bangabandhu Stadium.  
 The installation of a new flood-lighting system and modern electronic scoreboard is expected to be completed by the end of next month.  
 The draw for the tournament will be held in Calcutta on August 22 in presence of ICC president Jagmohan Dalmiya.

## Stewart keeps his head

LEEDS, England, Aug 10 (Reuters/Internet): England captain Alec Stewart cautioned against over-optimism after steering his side to their first major test series win in over a decade on Monday.  
 Stewart, in his first series in charge, guided England to a 2-3-run victory over South Africa in the fifth and final test at Headingley to give the home side a 2-1 series victory, ending years of national despair.  
 But he warned the players and fans not to get carried away, with a one-off test against Sri Lanka still ahead this summer and then the winter Ashes tour to Australia.  
 "We have produced good performances at various times for the last 10 years, but not consistently," said Stewart.  
 "We are improving all the time now, the key is to carry on improving."  
 England, who have been regularly lambasted by the local media for humiliating losses over the past 10 years, had, until Monday, not won a five- or six-test series since the 1986-7 Ashes tour of Australia.  
 And at home, they had not tasted a five-test series win since their 1985 victory over Australia.  
 Stewart, who became the sixth player to lead England since Mike Gatting's side won in Australia, took over the reins from Mike Atherton after England's 3-1 loss in the West Indies earlier this year.



A very proud England captain Alec Stewart holds aloft the Cornhill trophy after clinching the series 2-1 at Headingley on August 10. — Internet photo