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Star Sport

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Habib, Bazlu pass away

Two renowned footballers of yesteryears, Habibur Rahman Tuku and Bazluur Rahman, died of old-age complications on Wednesday and yesterday, reports UNB.

Famed footballer, coach, referee and organiser Bazluur Rahman died yesterday at 9 am at his residence at Khawje Dewan in Old Dhaka. He was 78. He left behind his wife, five daughters and a son to mourn his death.

Bazlu, a former left-winger of Dhaka Wanderers and Fire Service in the 40's and 50's and a former football coach of BKSP, was buried at Azimpur graveyard in the evening.

Habibur Rahman former captain of Police football team and joint secretary of Bangladesh Kabaddi Federation and member of Football Referees' Association, died on Wednesday.

State Minister for Youth and Sports Obaidul Quader has condoled the deaths of the two footballers.

In a message, he expressed his deep shock and prayed for the salvation of the departed souls.

President and general secretary of Bangladesh Football Federation Mayor Mohammad Hanif and Harun-ur Rashid, MP, also condoled the deaths.

Mike misses a mark

LONDON, Aug 27: Mike Atherton missed the chance to break the record for England's successive Test appearances by failing a fitness test on his suspect back at The Oval today, reports AFP.

The former England captain has not missed any of the last 63 Tests, despite suffering all most constant trouble with his back since undergoing an operation five years ago to cure the problem.

However, after suffering a recurrence of the problem earlier this week he was forced to withdraw from the one-off Test against Sri Lanka this morning.

It means Atherton misses the record of 65 successive Tests held jointly by Alan Knott and Ian Botham, and gives Glamorgan opener Steve James another chance to cement a place for this winter's Ashes tour.

James scored 10 and ought as a replacement for Mark Butcher in his Test debut at Lord's against South Africa earlier this summer.

Lara on song

LONDON, Aug 27: West Indian captain Brian Lara plundered a superb unbeaten 141 to put Warwickshire in a powerful position in their English county championship against local rivals Worcestershire on Wednesday, reports AFP.

Lara raced to his 100 in 151 minutes off 123 balls, hitting 13 fours and a six to help lift Warwickshire's total to a formidable 476 for five on the first day of the four-day match.

Earlier, Warwickshire were given a flying start by opener Mark Wagh who hit 119 as Warwickshire raced to 303 for three at the tea interval.

Elsewhere, Australian import Stuart Law produced a battling 47 on his return from injury to keep Essex afloat against Yorkshire at Scarborough.

Essex, currently bottom of the table, were eventually dismissed for just 200 as the home side reached 40 for one at the close.

It was a similar story at Hove where Australian Michael Bevan hit 58 to lend respectability to Sussex's first innings total of 187.

Bevan had struck seven fours off 122 balls when he fell lbw to Dimitri Mascarenhas.

Ben gets off on the wrong foot

LONDON, Aug 27: Recalled all-rounder Ben Hollis was fined 1,000 pounds (1,650 dollars) for arriving an hour late for England's practice session at The Oval on Wednesday, the eve of the one-off Test with Sri Lanka, reports AFP.

The 20-year-old, who will earn 3,150 pounds, failed to receive an alarm call at the team's hotel in West London.

"Ben arrived late today and as a result has been fined," explained chairman of selectors David Graveney.

He is very apologetic and has let himself and his teammates down but the matter is now closed and it does not affect his chances of selection.

Div 1 eves' h'ball from Sept 20

The Sheetal First Division women's handball league will begin on September 20 in the capital, reports UNB.

Organised by Bangladesh Handball Federation, the league is being sponsored by Sheetal Departmental Store.

Interested teams have been requested to enlist their name with an entry fee of Tk 200 by Sept 15.



IN COMPANY OF THE GREATEST: Sir Donald Bradman (C), who was celebrating his 90th birthday spares some moments with modern cricket greats leg-spinner Shane Warne (L) and master bat Sachin Tendulkar at his Adelaide residence yesterday. —AFP photo

World waits for his final hundred



SYDNEY, Aug 27 (Reuters/Internet): Cricket's greatest ever player, Sir Donald Bradman, celebrated his 90th birthday today amid the sort of fanfare usually reserved for royalty.

More than 1,300 guests were expected to attend a special dinner in his home town of Adelaide while other celebrations were taking place at his birthplace Cootamundra and the town where he grew up, Bowral.

Australian Prime Minister John Howard led the flood of tributes by lauding Bradman as the greatest living Australian.

"He is more than just a supreme cricketer, he was a beacon of hope for a generation living through the dark economic days of the great depression," Howard wrote in a column syndicated throughout Australia.

"He gave hope and encouragement and inspiration to a generation of Australians, particularly during the 1930s when the memories of the terrible slaughter of our young men in France and on the beaches of Gallipoli was still very much part of the Australian psyche."

The semi-reclusive Bradman was not expected to attend the celebrations but did agree to a private audience with Sachin Tendulkar, a player he once described as the most similar to himself.

But while Tendulkar is currently rated as the world's best batsman, his achievements at

the crease pale into significance compared to those of "The Don."

The 25-year-old Indian said the chance of meeting Bradman was one of the highlights of his career, and one he did not plan to waste.

"I hope I get some good tips from him about batting, that's what I'm looking forward to," Tendulkar said.

Bradman retired from first class cricket more than half a century ago, but his records remain the yardstick for sportsmen around the globe.

He played in 52 Tests for Australia between 1928-1948, scoring 6,996 runs at an average of 99.94. He scored 29 centuries with a top score of 334.

Part of Bradman's legend is that in his final Test innings, against England in London in 1948, he was bowled second ball for a duck when he needed just four runs for a career average of 100.

Despite the anti-climax, Bradman's key statistics remain a source of fascination and bewilderment for generations of cricketers.

Of the many great players that have followed him to the wicket, none have come close to matching his feats.

In fact, only three batsmen, South Africa's Graeme Pollock (60.97), West Indian George Headly (60.83) and England's Herbert Sutcliffe (60.73), have bettered 60 over their Test career.

With no-one to rival Bradman's achievements in cricket, two Australian academics have devised a formula to compare

his records with baseball's greatest legends.

Taking into account the performances of others in their sport both at the time they played and after they had retired, the researchers found that Bradman's achievements were vastly superior to some of baseball's greatest legends, Babe Ruth, Jo Dimaggio and Ted Williams.

Williams was the last player to achieve a season batting average better than 400 (he recorded .406 in 1941), but is still way behind the average of .452 calculated for Bradman.

In modern baseball terms, anyone with a batting average of .300 has a million-dollar contract. Batting 400 is mythical, batting .452 to match Bradman is unbelievable," one of the academics, Canadian Kerry Mummery, told the Australian.

In a rare television interview several years ago, Bradman was asked how he thought he might perform against modern bowling attacks.

Bradman replied that he would average 65, before adding with a grin: "You have to remember I am in my 80s."

One of Bradman's greatest strengths was his ability to accumulate big scores after he made a start.

Never once in his career did he fail to make a century after reaching the "nervous 90s."

As Sir Don celebrated his 90th birthday today, cricket followers around the world were united in their wish for him to hit one last hundred.

Romario jeered off again

RIO DE JANEIRO, Aug 27 (Reuters/Internet): Romario was jeered off the field for the second match running as fearless Flamengo were held to a 0-0 draw at home to bottom club Atletico Paranaense in the Brazilian championship.

Only 1,300 paying fans watched Brazil's most popular team at the 120,000 capacity Maracana and the few that turned up spent most of their time venting their wrath at Romario for another ineffectual performance.

On Sunday, Romario scored but then missed a penalty in a 3-1 home defeat by Juventude which led to the sacking of coach Joel Santana. He was replaced by youth team coach Toninho Barroso.

Romario has been plagued by pulled muscles since he was forced to drop out of Brazil's World Cup squad in June because of a nagging calf problem.

Atletico's point took them off the bottom and left 1996 champions Gremio at the foot of the table.

Veteran Bebeto, who took Romario's place in the World Cup team, scored twice as Botafogo drew 2-2 at Bragantino in another of Wednesday's games.

Sao Paulo, who had lost their last four matches, recovered to beat America-Natal 6-1 with striker Dodo scoring a hat-trick.

Internacional beat Goias by the same score with striker Christian grabbing a hat-trick.

Unhappy ground conditions in the city ICC's world trip from Dhaka

Sports Reporter



The International Cricket Council (ICC) will launch the world-wide cricket development programme during the Wills International Cup being held at Dhaka from October 24.

The ICC, who are organising the knock-out tournament to raise fund for the game's development programme, plans to propel the ambitious programme with star cricketers like Sachin Tendulkar and Australian skipper Steve Waugh adding the fireworks.

Nasim-ul Ghani, the ICC development officer of the Asian region, is now in Dhaka to work out the details of the launch. The former Pakistan Test cricketer, who had a busy day at the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) office yesterday, said that the ICC will launch its programme in a most grandiose manner to popularise cricket in Dhaka.

"I have come here to work out the details. We have planned to involve all the star players of the nine Test-playing nations in the official launching of the development programme," said Nasim-ul Ghani, adding that the celebrity cricketers will visit some coaching schools in the city and elsewhere. Mr. Ghani, who is scheduled

to leave the capital on Sunday, also visited seven cricket grounds in the city yesterday.

Sound Warnie-ing

Sports Reporter

Shane Warne will not be playing in Dhaka but he will still be spinning webs in the commentary box. The Aussie spin doctor has not been included in the Australian team for the Wills trophy in Dhaka. However, it was learnt yesterday that the injured leggie will



be keeping television viewers world-wide informed about the nine-nation mini world cup.

The panel of commentators will also include Geoffrey Boycott, Ian Chappell, Michael Holding, Ravi Shastri and Ramji Raja.

However, while talking to the reporters he expressed his dissatisfaction about the prevailing conditions and advocated a lot of improvement. The left-arm spinner of the yesteryears said that he will file a report to the ICC in mid-September regarding the details of the launching programme.

Mr. Ghani is also a member of the three-man ICC committee which will make recommendations regarding Bangladesh's plea for Test status. But the balding Nasim refrained from making any comment about the more demanding issue.

Come September

Sports Reporter

West Indies A team is likely to visit Bangladesh in September to play a series of exhibition matches. This was disclosed yesterday by the general secretary of the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) Syed Ashrafu Huq.

Although the tour itinerary of the second-string Caribbean side is yet to be confirmed, it was learnt that the visitors will play both one day and three-day matches during their stop-over visit ahead of their scheduled tour of India.

Chelsea face Real Chelsea



MONACO, Aug 27 (Reuters/Internet): European champions Real Madrid get the chance to test their fine pre-season form against Chelsea in the European Super Cup at Monaco's Louis II stadium on Friday.

The clash between last season's European Cup and Cup Winners' Cup champions comes much earlier than usual and, generally a two-legged affair, it is being played in a single match for the first time since 1991.

That may be a good omen for the English side since Manchester United beat Barcelona 1-0 in that 1991 match.

The Cup Winners' Cup holders also won the trophy last season when Barcelona beat Borussia Dortmund over two legs.

But Chelsea, omens or otherwise, must correct the errors that have spoilt their expensively assembled multi-national side's start to the Premier league season.

Poor in a 3-1 defeat at Coventry and disappointing in a 1-1 draw at home to Newcastle United last weekend, Chelsea face a Real Madrid side who have impressed in friendlies ahead of their Spanish season debut on Monday.

Real, however, have some

players doubtful with injuries including German goalkeeper Bodo Illgner and Argentine midfielder Fernando Redondo and are unlikely to take any risks for what is still little more than a glorified friendly.

New reserve goalkeeper Pedro Contreras looked solid in Sunday's 3-1 friendly victory over Borussia Moenchengladbach and stands by to make his competitive debut.

Missing from that game were Redondo and Croatian World Cup top scorer striker Davor Suker, who is definitely out after picking up a knee injury in training.

Redondo, also nursing a knee problem, should be fit to return, although new coach Guus Hiddink may decide to start with the more attacking Savio, the tricky Brazilian wide player. Also likely to get a run is newly-acquired Robert Jarni, the left-sided midfielder who had such a good World Cup for Croatia.

The win against the German side was the latest in a series of excellent pre-season performances by Real and the players are looking forward to a step up in intensity.

This first serious test of the season comes at a good time because we're going to play against a strong team which will allow us to measure ourselves before the start of the

Spanish league," said Pedrag Mijatovic, scorer of the only goal in May's European Cup final victory over Juventus.

Chelsea have struggled to fit France's Marcel Desailly into their defence since his transfer from AC Milan and despite the fact that he teamed up well at the back with Franck Leboeuf in the World Cup final.

Leboeuf has admitted the pair had problems but they could partially be put down to a lack of fitness after a late return to training following their post-World Cup holidays.

Desailly, a midfielder at Milan, was played in the middle against Newcastle but still looked short of match fitness.

Chelsea, so far deprived of injured Brian Laudrup since he joined them from Rangers, could give their Danish World Cup striker his debut.

Captain Dennis Wise plays despite a three-match suspension from the English F.A. for a red card in a friendly against Atletico Madrid but Romanian Dan Petrescu is banned following his sending-off in the Cup Winners' Cup final.

Probable teams: Real Madrid: Bodo Illgner; Christian Panucci; Fernando Hierro; Manuel Sanchis; Roberto Carlos; Christian Karembeu; Fernando Redondo; Clarence Seedorf; Fernando Morientes; Raul Gonzalez; Pedrag Mijatovic.

Chelsea: Ed de Goeij; Albert Ferrer; Franck Leboeuf; Marcel Desailly; Michael Duberry; Graeme Le Saux; Dennis Wise; Roberto Di Matteo; Celestine Babayaro; Gianfranco Zola; Pierluigi Casiraghi.

England 228/4

Sports Reporter

A brilliant unbeaten 107 by Graeme Hick took England to a comfortable position on the opening day of the one-off Test against Sri Lanka at The Oval yesterday. At close of play, England were 228 for four.

Hick's hundred, his fifth in Tests, came off 230 balls and included 13 fours. Mark Ramprakash with 53 was the other notable contributor for England. For the tourists, off-spinner Muttiah Muralitharan claimed two wickets.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard Thursday at tea on the first day of the one-off Test between England and Sri Lanka at The Oval.

ENGLAND: First innings

Butcher c Jayasuriya 10
b Wickramasinghe 36
James c and b Muralitharan 10
Hick not out 107
Stewart c Tillekeratne b Perera 2
Ramprakash not out 39
Extras: (lb-4, nb-2) 6
Total: (for three wickets) 160

Fall of wickets: 1-16; 2-78; 3-81.

To bat: John Crawley, Ben Hollis, Ian Salisbury, Darren Gough, Dominic Cork, Angus Fraser.

Bowler: O M R W
Wickramasinghe 13 1 36 1
Perera 17 5 32 1
Dharmasena 9 1 37 0
Muralitharan 20 4 41 1
Jayasuriya 4 0 10 0

Regret

We regret that on August 18, Colin Croft's article "Excellent job by West Indies selectors for Bangladesh" was used inadvertently without his consent. We regret and apologise to the CricInfo author. We also thank CricInfo and Colin Croft for retroactive permission to print this item. — Sports Editor.

Gullit in, Dalglish out



LONDON, Aug 27 (Reuters/Internet): Ruud Gullit replaced Kenny Dalglish as manager of Newcastle United on Thursday, bringing to an end a day of intense speculation at the English premier league club.

The decision was announced on the London stock market, which had seen the publicly listed club's shares climb over 10 per cent to 64p as rumours of Gullit's arrival strengthened.

Dalglish, who took over from Kevin Keegan in January 1997, offered his resignation nine days ago, prompting the club to approach Gullit, who was sacked by Chelsea in February and has been out of management since then.

The Dutchman's agent, Phil Smith, told BBC Radio that Gullit met Newcastle directors in Amsterdam on Monday when he agreed in principle to take over, pending the release of Dalglish.

Newcastle issued a statement on Thursday saying that Dalglish had offered to stand down on August 18, three days after the first game of the season - a 0-0 home draw with Charlton when the team was booed off the pitch.

Dalglish said he did not want to leave until a replacement was arranged.

Gullit's first match in charge will be Sunday's home game against Liverpool.

Hundreds of fans anxiously waited outside Newcastle's St James' Park for news on Thursday after the initial reports of Dalglish's departure - just as they had when Keegan resigned last year.

"In welcoming Ruud we believe we have the ideal person to succeed Kenny and continue the club's development," said chairman Freddy Shepherd.

Shepherd had been involved in a row with Dalglish over the leaking of a story about an injury to winger Keith Gillespie

before the start of the current season.

Gullit has been out of the game since he was surprisingly sacked by Chelsea in February, after leading them to their first major trophy for 26 years, the



RUUD GULLIT

1997 F.A. Cup. He was the first overseas coach to win one of English soccer's major trophies.

In contrast, Dalglish failed to satisfy the Magpies' fans who had loved his predecessor's high-scoring, high-risk strategy. He had also antagonised the press and fans with his approach.

The former Scottish international striker, who guided Liverpool to the double as player-manager and Blackburn to the league title, stiffened up Newcastle's leaky defence but in doing so sacrificed their attacking outlook.

His tactics initially provided success of sorts and the team finished as runners-up in his first season, qualifying for the Champions League.

Things started well last season with an exhilarating European victory over Barcelona but went downhill quickly. A gradual slide down the premier league table followed, ending with the club avoiding relegation with just two games to spare.

The bright spot was reaching the F.A. Cup final but at Wembley they were comprehensively outplayed by Arsenal, losing 2-0.

During Dalglish's reign the club sold crowd favourites Faustino Asprilla, David Ginola and Les Ferdinand and the new signings, totalling around 25 million pounds (\$40.9 million), failed to spark.

Babur Ali's last shot

JHENIDAH, Aug 27: An aged football player died in the playground at Naudapara village in Kotchandpur pourea area here on Monday, reports UNB.

The victim was identified as Babur Ali (58). Villagers said a friendly football match among the old men of the village was arranged for amusement.

Babur Ali, the goalkeeper, died on the spot when a powerful shot hit his chest. Spectators present were deeply shocked by his death. No case was filed in this regard.

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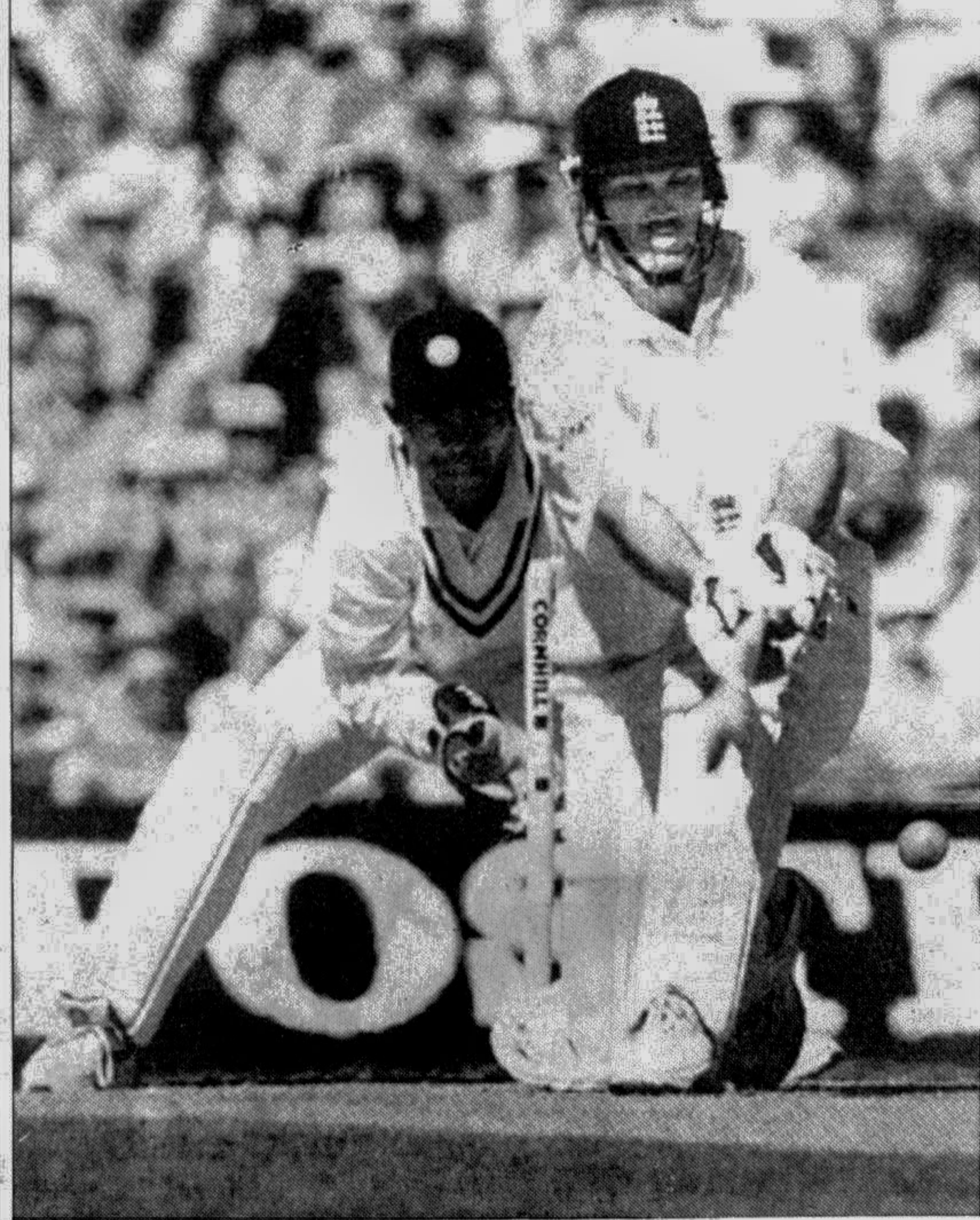
During Dalglish's reign the club sold crowd favourites Faustino Asprilla, David Ginola and Les Ferdinand and the new signings, totalling around 25 million pounds (\$40.9 million), failed to spark.

Frenchman Stephane Guivarc'h, signed from AJ Auxerre for 3.5 million pounds (\$5.73 million), has yet to play but after a poor World Cup the impatient fans had already written him off as another poor signing.

Schools chess begins today

The 13th Bata schools chess tournament begins today at 3 pm at the NSC chess room, reports UNB.

About 170 students from 90 schools from across the country will participate in the 9-round Swiss league basis competition. Bangladesh Chess Federation, the organisers of the meet, announced prize-money worth Tk 15,000 for the winners.



Graeme Hick of England sweeps during his innings on the first day of the one-off Test against Sri Lanka at The Oval yesterday. —AP/UNB photo