

Tendulkar ticked off

NEW DELHI, Sept 24: Indian batsman Sachin Tendulkar today angrily denied allegations his team put up a miserable showing at the recent Commonwealth Games because there was no prize money, reports AFP.

"I always give the very best for my country," Tendulkar told the Press Trust of India.

Tendulkar added that allegations he put in a much better performance at the Sahara Cup in Toronto, after the Commonwealth Games in Kuala Lumpur, due to a love for money, were "wild and baseless."

"When the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) was decided on the composition of the teams to be sent to each tournament, I was informed by BCCI that I may play in either tournament and possibly both and stated that I would be happy to serve my country at any venue," he said.

"It was BCCI's decision to send me to the Commonwealth Games in Kuala Lumpur and subsequently to Toronto to play the final game of the Sahara Cup," Tendulkar said.

"I therefore regret the baseless and wild suggestion that I was being influenced in any way to play in one venue over the other," he said.

"Such allegations can only be put about by those seeking to damage my reputation and that of the board to the detriment of Indian cricket generally."

On Wednesday, Suresh Kalmadi, the president of the Indian Olympic Association, criticised the Indian cricket team on his return from Kuala Lumpur and said they would not be sent for future Commonwealth Games.

Kalmadi said the team was only interested in "Commercial gains," that their "heart was towards Toronto" and that "the cricketers were simply not interested in medals."

The Indian team failed to make it to the semifinals in the Commonwealth Games. In the Sahara Cup one-day series in Toronto, they were trounced 4-1 by Pakistan.

Gaekwad's excuse

MUMBAI, Sept 24: The Indian cricket team coach, Anshuman Gaekwad, told reporters that Pakistan won the Sahara Cup at Toronto 4-1 recently as they were at full strength, reports PTI.

Gaekwad, who returned home on Tuesday along with the team, said "Our youngsters could not combine well and their lack of experience was quite evident while the Pakistanis showed there was no substitute for experience especially when you are playing your best team."

Repeating what Indian skipper Mohammed Azharuddin had said when the team arrived, Gaekwad said "Our fielding was not up to the mark and even our bowlers could not bowl to their potential. Our batting too let us down."

"The boundary line at Toronto was just 65 yards and the Pakistani batsmen took full advantage of it especially when our bowlers strayed a little bit," he added.

"I hope this is just a temporary phase and the boys should get over it soon," the former opening batsman said.

Speaking about the forthcoming tour of Zimbabwe, Gaekwad, said it should be an interesting series, especially for the youngsters as Zimbabwe will be in full strength.

"The youngsters like medium pacer Ajit Agarkar and off-spinner Harbhajan Singh are bound to benefit from the Zimbabwe tour as the conditions there would be totally different," he added.

Olympic soccer qualifiers Asian zone draws held

BEIJING, Sept 24: Thirty-four Asian teams will compete for three soccer berths for the 2000 Olympic Games, according to the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) which has made the draws for the Asian zone qualifiers, reports Xinhua.

The 34 teams will be divided into nine preliminary groups, with the winners advancing to the second round. The nine winners will later compete in the second round in three groups to vie for the sole ticket allocated to each group for the Olympics.

Zhang Jilong, vice president of the Chinese Football Association, said today that China is pitted in the Group G against Vietnam, Myanmar and North Korea.

The preliminaries will run from February 1 to June 30 with the final stage slated for September 1 to November 30 in 1999.

All the competitions will be run under the home-and-away basis, Zhang added.

GROUPINGS

- Group A: United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Yemen.
- Group B: Kuwait, Oman, Syria.
- Group C: Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Jordan.
- Group D: Iran, Lebanon, Bahrain.
- Group E: Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Kirghistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan.
- Group F: Japan, Malaysia, Hong Kong, China, Nepal.
- Group G: China, Vietnam, Myanmar, North Korea.
- Group H: South Korea, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Chinese Taipei.
- Group I: Thailand, Singapore, India, the Laos, Brunei.



Youssef Al Safri (R) of Morocco and UAE's Ali Hassan right for the ball during their Arab Cup encounter at Doha on September 23. — AFP photo

Brazil's lucky escape

defenders to use violence. Former international Rivellino, commenting for a television station, said: "The referee spoiled this game," referring to the fact that the match deteriorated dramatically after Grozdic's dismissal.

"Brazil had a bit of help thanks to an unnecessary sending-off," said Gerson, Rivellino's colleague in the 1970 World Cup team.

Newspaper columnist Mario Guedes said: "Sidrack Marinho was Brazil's best player. He failed to give Yugoslavia a clear penalty, he gave a foul which didn't exist for Brazil's goal and wrongly sent off Grozdic."

"Yugoslavia didn't win because of the referee," added Flavio Prado, another columnist.

The performance of Marinho and the 10 second-half substitutions effectively turned the match into a meaningless waste of time and allowed few conclusions to be drawn about the new-look Brazil, playing their first game under Vanderley Luxemburgo and their first since the World Cup final.

Only three members of Brazil's World Cup squad -- Denilson, Rivaldo and Cafu -- began the game although other players such as Ronaldo and Roberto Carlos were rested and are expected to return for next month's game with Colombia in New York.

Brazil looked lively in the first half but fell away badly in the second, when the central defensive pair of Antonio Carlos and Cleber looked vulnerable and resorted to violence to stop their opponents.

The most encouraging aspects were the performances of goalscorer Marcelinho Carioca in midfield and substitutes Alex and Jackson.

As in the World Cup, Rivaldo and Denilson promised more than they could deliver, letting themselves down with their final touch.

Spain curiously put in a very good defensive display despite being a man short and deservedly held on for victory.

Fulham, Bury knock biggies out

LONDON, Sept 24: Fulham and Bury caused shocks in the English League Cup on Wednesday after beating Premiership opposition to move into the third round, reports AFP.

Southampton crashed out after losing 1-0 at home, 2-1 on aggregate, to Second Division Fulham after Saints' Carlton Palmer was sent off in the first half.

And First Division Bury's 2-1 defeat was enough to knock out Crystal Palace 4-2 on aggregate.

In other games, Everton beat Huddersfield 2-1, 3-2 on aggregate over the two legs, reading beat Barnsley 4-1 on aggregate following a 1-1 draw, Tottenham beat Brentford 3-2 for a 6-4 aggregate win and Derby edged out Manchester City, beating them 1-0 for a 2-1 victory.

Peter Beardsley orchestrated Fulham's victory with a vintage display as Plamer's blunder handed Fulham their goal in the 10th minute.

Palmer's night to forget began when he clumsily trod on the ball and handed Beardsley the chance to run clear and set up German striker Dirk Lehmann, who made no mistake.

The former England midfielder Palmer playing in the centre of defence, was booked 30 seconds later following a tussle in the Fulham penalty area.

Referee Paul Durkin had no option but to dismiss him in the 36th minute when he was guilty of a horrendous late challenge on Lehmann in the centre circle.

Crystal Palace were always up against it following their 3-0 first leg defeat but they started brightly when Clinton Morrison put them ahead in just the eighth minute.

Laurent D'Jajou restored Bury's three-goal aggregate lead in the 25th minute before Palace's Chinese import Fan Zhiyi gave them a consolation second leg win.

Marco Materazzi scored the winner and was sent off as Everton survived a late Huddersfield onslaught to avoid another embarrassing early League Cup exit.

Italian Materazzi back-heeled his new club into a lead they never relinquished after 42 minutes but was sent off 20 minutes before the end of an explosive tie.

Materazzi was booked in the first-half for protesting after seeing his header controversially disallowed because Dunne's hand was in an offside position.

And he was then given his marching orders for a late tackle on Marcus Stewart with referee Jeff Winter only cautioning Materazzi two minutes after the incident took place.

Sam Collins tripped Don Hutchison 25 yards out and from the freekick, Frenchman Olivier Dacourt curled the ball beyond Nico Vaesen in the 29th minute.

That strike-like Materazzi's, his first in English football -- put his side back on level terms after Marcus Stewart had given Huddersfield the lead after 44 seconds.

George Graham will inherit a team still in the League Cup if, as expected, he takes charge of Tottenham before the week is out.

Spurs survived a tricky test and in the end went through with relative comfort thanks to goals from Allan Nielsen, Sol Campbell and Chris Armstrong.

But as in the first leg, they had to come from behind before disposing of their Third Division opponents.

A freak goal by Paulo Wanchope in the first half eased Derby into the third round at Manchester City's Maine Road ground.

Manchester City fans, who suffered a quick and painful fall from the top flight, were reminded what Premiership football is all about, and at times it was not pretty to watch.

A Darren Caskey final minute penalty to equalise at 1-1 against Barnsley saved a home defeat for Reading after Ashley Ward's opener on 85 minutes.



An anxious moment in front of the Sportfreunde Siegen goal during their German Cup match against SC Freiburg at Siegen on September 23. Siegen won 1-0. — AFP photo

Muktijoddha take on BSF today

Dhaka Premier League champions Muktijoddha Sangsad KC will take on Border Security Force (BSF) of India today in the final of the Independence Cup football tournament at the Naogaon Stadium in Assam, reports UNB.

Visiting Muktijoddha Sangsad are poised for their second Indian soccer crown this year after winning the McDowell Cup football title in Calcutta denying giants Mohun Bagan and East Bengal Club a few months back.

On way to the final, the freedom fighters' team outplayed Nagaland Police by 3-0 goals in the semis on Wednesday, and beat Assam Police 3-0 and Panjab Electricity Board 2-0 in the round robin league matches.

Camacho starts off with a win

GRENADA, Spain, Sept 24: New Spanish coach Jose Antonio Camacho enjoyed a 1-0 victory for Spain over Russia in his first match in charge here on Wednesday in a Euro 2000 qualifier, reports AFP.

Spanish defender Sergi was sent off halfway through the first half but spectacular goal from Bittor Alkiza and a good defensive display was enough to earn the win.

Camacho, who in a long and successful playing career at Real Madrid was renowned for his never-say-die attitude, wants to re-build Spain in his own image as they bid to secure qualification for the European Championship finals.

And both teams wanted to help forget their first matches in Euro 2000 qualifying with Spain losing 3-2 in Cyprus and Russia losing by the same score to Ukraine.

Sergi Kiriakov earned a yellow card for a high tackle on Sergi in the opening spell.

But drama was to follow, Sergi appeared to handle the ball twice in the area to concede the penalty and earn a red card.

However keeper Santiago Canizares, diving low to his left, saved the penalty from Aleksandr Mostovoi.

Even better fortune fell to Spain five minutes before the break. Defender Carlos Aguilera hit a good cross from the right for Alkiza, who scored with a superb curling left-foot shot which easily beat Russian keeper Sergei Ovchinnikov of Lokomotiv Moscow.

Spain curiously put in a very good defensive display despite being a man short and deservedly held on for victory.

Real race to re-sign Illgner

MADRID, Sept 24(Reuters): In ternet: Real Madrid are in- ventioned in a race against time to persuade goalkeeper Bodo Illgner to sign a new contract with the club.

The European champions have until December 31 to agree to a new deal with the former German international, whose contract expires at the end of the current season.

After that date, Illgner will be free to sign for a new club for the following season and speculation is mounting that the imposing keeper is set to do a deal with Borussia Dortmund.

"I'm staying calm. There is a lot of time to go before the end of the season," Illgner said.

Illgner kept Santiago Canizares out of the Real side last season and is regarded by new coach Guus Hiddink as an integral part of the team.

His departure would leave Real with a goalkeeping crisis as Pedro Contreras, the current reserve keeper, has yet to play a competitive game for the club.

Their target as a possible replacement for Illgner would be Carlos Roa, the Argentine keeper who has been highly impressive for Mallorca in the last two seasons.

German Cup soccer results

BONN, Sept 24: Holders Bayern Munich stumbled into the third round of the German Cup on Wednesday by beating Second Division Greuther Fuerth 4-3 on penalties following a goalless draw after extra time.

After a miss apiece by both teams in the penalty shoot-out, which had both teams level at 3-3, Bayern's Stefan Effenberg coolly slotted the ball home from a short run-up.

Fuerth's Czech defender Petr Skarabela, knowing that a miss would end the match in Bayern's favour, followed up by putting the ball in Oliver Kahn's safe hands.

Fuerth put up brave resistance during the game in Nuremberg's Franken Stadium and played above the sixth position they currently hold in the German Second Division.

Bundesliga side Freiburg were unexpected casualties, losing 1-0 to the amateurs of SF Seigen 1. Woldfaburg defeated fellow Bundesliga club Nuremberg 3-0 with all the goals coming in extra time.

An extra time goal in the 98th minute gave a dominant Borussia Dortmund a 1-0 win in their derby against Schalke. Dortmund's Togolese striker Bachirou Salou muscled his way through Schalke's defence and converted from close in.

Andreas Moller squandered a chance to extend his side's lead when he missed an extra-time penalty.

Urdingen won their battle with fellow Second Division club Sankt Pauli Hamburg with a 5-4 result on penalties after being tied 1-1 following extra time.



Action from the Scottish Premiership clash between Rangers and Aberdeen at Aberdeen on September 23. The match finished 1-1. — AP/UNB photo

Rangers remain unbeatable

GLASGOW, Sept 24: Rod Wallace scored his sixth goal of the season on Wednesday as Glasgow Rangers stretched their unbeaten run to 11 games to remain top of the Premier League, reports AFP.

The former Leeds striker grabbed the equaliser with 12 minutes to go in a thriller at Aberdeen, who took the lead after just three minutes but wilted under a wave of Rangers attacks.

Aberdeen took the lead after only three minutes and Robbie Winters had a hand in the goal.

Eoin Jess flicked the ball into the path of the new recruit and he won a freekick after being fouled by Craig Moore.

Jess stepped up 25 yards out and his fierce effort took a deflection off Rangers striker Gabriel Amato and went beyond keeper Lionel Charbonnier.

Rangers drew level with 12 minutes to go. Wallace got clear on John Inglis as Jorg Albertz played the ball through and sent his shot high into the net.

Winters, who had made less of an impact in the second half was replaced with six minutes to go as the teams settled for a point each.

A goal in the final minute from defender Kevin McGowne gave Kilomarnock the three points they deserved in a highly competitive match at Rugby Park. Kilomarnock are second to Rangers in the table on goal difference.

Dundee had taken a shock lead early on and it took a goal from Ally McCoist on the eve of his 36th birthday to get Killie back in the game.

Sandy Clark continued his impressive start as St Johnstone boss with a 1-0 win at Celtic.

Many of Clark's team were not born when the Perth side gained their last triumph over Celtic at Parkhead back in the early seventies.

St Johnstone struck early through Canadian Nick Dasovic and then had to hold firm for 75 minutes against a tide of Green and white attacks and a fiercely partisan crowd of 55,889.

There was some debate recently over Dasovic claiming a goal against Dunfermline which struck a defender on its way in, but there was no doubting the owner of this goal.

In other games, Dundee United drew 1-1 with Dunfermline and Hearts beat Motherwell 3-0.

Drugs, power, glory, death

LONDON, Sept 24 (Reuters): At 10 am on Tuesday, September 27, 1988, the sporting world tilted on its axis.

Before the official announcement of Ben Johnson's positive dope test, the Seoul Olympics had been faintly unreal.

Afterwards, they bordered on the surreal.

Seoul 10 years ago resembled a battlefield with thousands of troops on the street to combat potentially grave internal and external security threats.

Under official instructions to smile at all visitors, no martial arts generated any real excitement.

By contrast, capacity crowds in the Olympic Stadium watched the cream of the world's track and field athletes in sometimes eerie silence with some of the biggest cheers reserved for jumpers going under the bar during the pole vault warm up.

Even the Koreans, though, were moved by Johnson's drug-propelled 100 metres victory, at 9.79 seconds still the fastest ever recorded.

While Johnson celebrated on the Saturday night, his urine sample was separated into two parts, on Sunday the A sample was tested positive, on Monday the B sample also registered positive.

At 3.30 am on Tuesday the 27th, Canadian Chief de Mission Carol Anne Letheren visited Johnson in his room to retrieve his gold medal.

"We love you," she said. "But you're guilty."

At 10 am on what was the rest day in the athletics programme, the International Olympic Committee announced that Johnson had tested positive for the anabolic steroid stanozolol after the Olympic 100 final.

On Wednesday morning, while the world struggled to comprehend the enormity of the Johnson scandal, the field for the first heat of the decathlon 100 metres settled into their blocks.

Juergen Hingsen, former world record holder and 1984 silver medalist, false started.

The field reformed, again Hingsen false started, a third false start, once again to Hingsen and the German was disqualified from the initial race of the 10-discipline event.

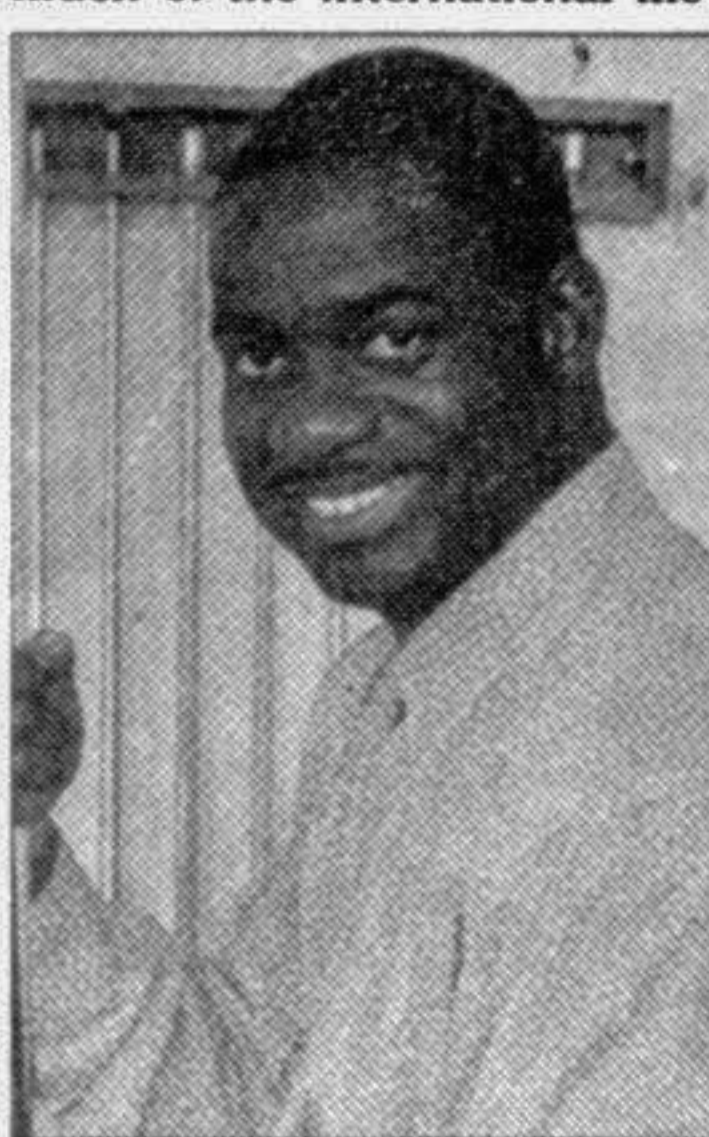
A brief discussion with officials and Hingsen walked out of the competition, he never appeared again in a major championship.

dia had muttered darkly about Johnson and his improbably physique during 1987 and 1988 but had been prepared to give him the benefit of the doubt.

Confirmation of their worst suspicions radically altered the mood in Seoul, perhaps unfairly for Griffith Joyner.



GRIFFITH-JOYNER



BEN JOHNSON

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51
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ACROSS

- 1 Fine, to
- 4 — Helens
- 8 Ward heeler,
- 12 Bat stat
- 13 Novelty greenery
- 14 Last writes?
- 15 Skull island
- 17 Muck denizen
- 18 Paraphernalia
- 19 Night vision
- 20 Casino resort name
- 22 Groovy, to a beatnik
- 24 "True —"
- 25 George Herriam strip
- 29 Seraglio section
- 30 Plumber's tool
- 31 Dander
- 32 5 —
- 34 Dangling locale
- 35 Warmon
- 36 Started drummer
- 40 Glingvae
- 41 Pig container
- 42 VPs
- 46 Soprano's solo
- 47 Racetrack writes?
- 48 Menagerie
- 49 Repair denizen
- 50 Rose or Rozelle
- 51 Recede DOWN
- 1 Love boat?
- 2 Kyoto cumberbund
- 3 Regan's father
- 4 Sports-caster Jim
- 5 Magic hammer welder
- 6 Sermon subject
- 7 Play-ground
- 8 Ill
- 9 Heinz's instrument
- 10 Judy's daughter
- 11 Goblet feature
- 16 Tooth-paste types
- 19 Catch 40 winks
- 20 United nations
- 21 Verdi opus
- 22 Bad-tempered sort
- 23 Erstwhile acorns
- 25 Recognize
- 26 Big
- 27 Vicinity
- 28 Adolescent
- 30 Join the eagles
- 33 Filament
- 34 Dole's running mate
- 36 Taps instrument
- 37 Product
- 38 Sped
- 39 Naturally allied
- 40 Peaky flyer
- 42 One of Bennett's force
- 43 — Got Sixpence?
- 44 Head
- 45 Wall

Solution time: 26 mins.

Yesterdays answer

CRYPTOQUIP

KNQZTVJ LNQ PQENPW
 JUW ZWHNSNPQ EBVHBMW
 HNNMP BTKBLP KBRJ
 JUWRS JQSVF?

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: A BANKER OFTEN LIKES TO BAIT CUSTOMER: "COME SEE ME IF YOU'RE LOANLY."

Today's Cryptoquip clue: E equals P

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.