

Kiwis include Doull for Dhaka tourney

WELLINGTON, Sept 25: New Zealand's cricket squad for the Wills International Cup in Dhaka next month has been left virtually unchanged from the side that won the bronze medal at the Commonwealth Games, New Zealand Cricket said today, reports Reuters.

The return of pace bowler Simon Doull to replace the injured Chris Drum, is the only change to the 14-strong squad.

Doull had recovered from a groin strain that had kept him out of the Kuala Lumpur Games side, New Zealand Cricket said.

However, he would face a fitness test prior to the team's departure for Bangladesh for the tournament.

The omission of fast-medium bowler Drum was a precautionary measure, convener of selectors Ross Dykes said.

Drum's injury, while minor, is the result of an incorrect element in his bowling action, he said.

Others not considered due to injury are allrounders Chris Cairns and Dion Nash, batsman Lorne Howell and bowler Gavin Larsen.

Nash is recovering from a back strain, Cairns a knee strain, Howell a shoulder injury and Larsen is still in rehabilitation for a stress fracture to his back.

The team will travel to Sydney on Oct 11 for leadup matches before heading to Dhaka where their first game is against Zimbabwe on Oct 24.

SQUAD
Stephen Fleming (captain), Geoff Allott, Nathan Astle, Mark Bailey, Matthew Bell, Simon Doull, Chris Harris, Matthew Horne, Craig McMillan, Shayne O'Connor, Adam Parore, Alex Tait, Daniel Vettori, Paul Wiseman.

Jahangir jockeying for position

KARACHI, Sept 25: Pakistani squash legend Jahangir Khan, among six candidates vying for the vice-presidency of World Squash Federation (WSF), said Thursday he was standing because the game needed his services, reports AFP.

"I am not after a post, but it's the love of the game and the needs that have motivated me," said Jahangir, who is vice-president of the Pakistan Squash Federation.

The WSF post fell vacant after the death of Hasan Musa of Pakistan, who was murdered here last December.

The election is to take place at the federation's 28th annual general meeting on November 8 in Stuttgart.

Up against the star Pakistani are Mike Corby of England, Vijay Gajjar of South Africa, Andre Naniche of the United States, Nigeria's Kayode Roberts, and Anne Smith of Canada.

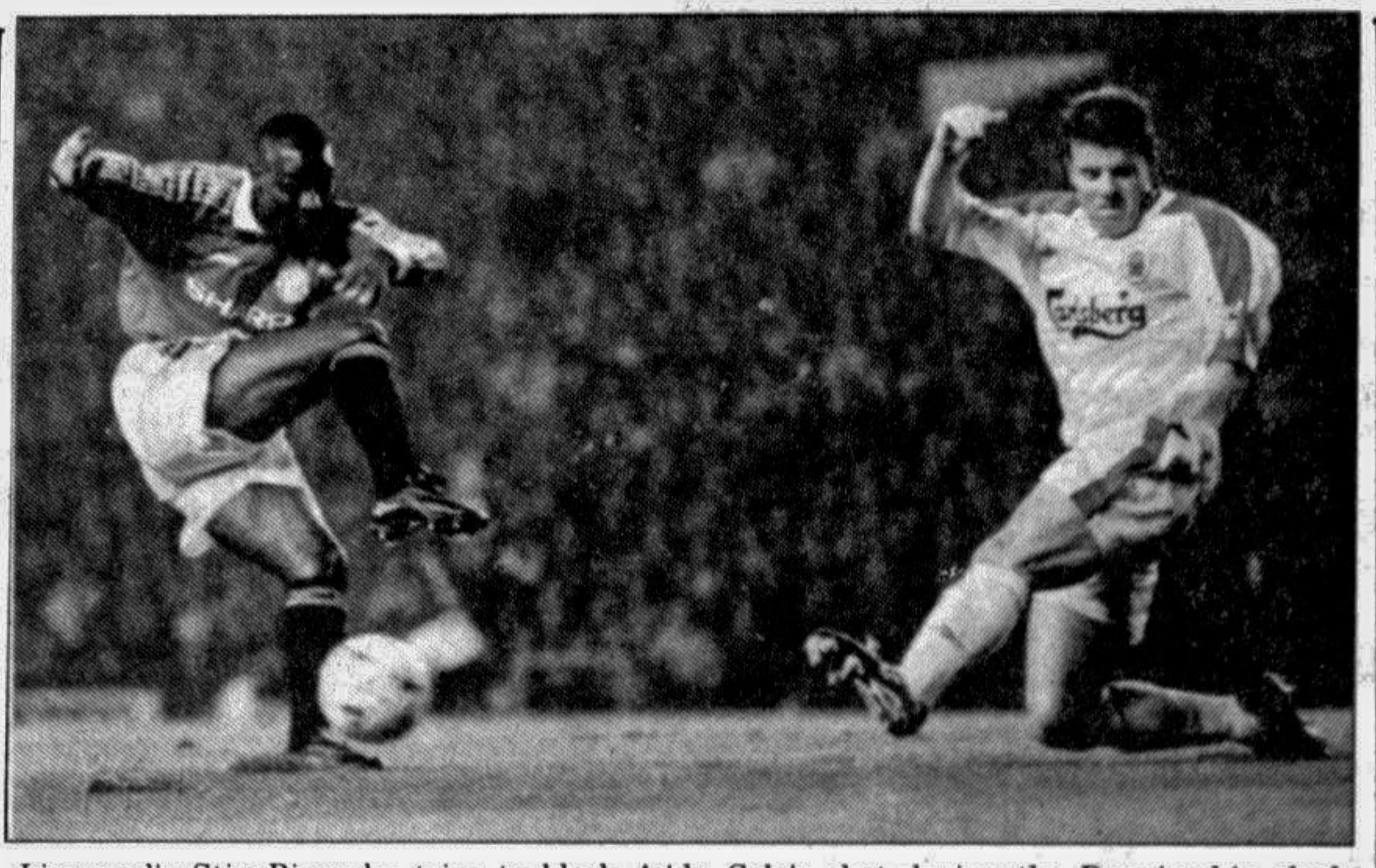
Susie Simcock of New Zealand was unopposed as president.

Winner of record 10 British and six World Open titles, the 34-year-old Jahangir believes the standard of the game needs to be raised.

Jahangir, unbeaten from 1981-86 and winning nearly 500 matches in a row, thinks squash also needs stars.

"The game needs stars, as sponsors are running away. I will do my best to revive the game's interest in future," Jahangir said.

Jahangir said inclusion of squash in the Olympics would promote the game worldwide.



Liverpool's Stig Bjorneby tries to block Addy Cole's shot during the Premiership clash against Manchester United at Old Trafford on Sept 24. United won 2-0. — AFP photo

Unsung heroes deliver

MANCHESTER, Sept 25(Reuters/Internet): Brilliance transcended bitterness last night at Old Trafford thanks to a pocket-sized England striker with clinical finishing skills. No, it wasn't Michael Owen.

After a night when eight players were booked and the crowd bayed for blood, Paul Scholes reminded everyone that football can be beautiful as well as brutal.

From the first minute to the last some Liverpool players seemed to mistake Scholes for the ball. Paul Ince started the trend. Jamie Carragher liked the idea and poor Scholes found Jamie Redknapp and others happy to join in. The number of bookings summed up the aggressive atmosphere but it was Scholes, not referee Steve Lodge, who applied natural justice.

United led 1-0 with not much more than 10 minutes left when yet another desperate Liverpool attack foundered on the reinvigorated Jaap Stam. Dwight Yorke took one wonderfully wild swipe at the ball, missing entirely, before remembering that he was supposed to be the cool Carib-bean customer amid the chaos. He took another slyer off his £12.6million

transfer fee with a searching pass to the left touchline which sent substitute Andy Cole sprinting off and which committed Phil Babb well outside the box. Cole zipped past the Irish defender and pushed over a firm cross. Everyone, particularly the defending Robbie Fowler, was wrong-footed except Scholes who steadied himself and then crashed a thrilling left-foot shot into the top corner.

It was the crowning moment of a turgid match but, most importantly, it was a pay-back time for Alex Ferguson. Ten days ago, Scholes started like a whirlwind but finished like a whisper against Barcelona. He was rested for the embarrassing defeat by Arsenal in which, by common consent, United were found wanting on almost every count.

Last night, Scholes rewarded Ferguson's shrewdness with a performance of fizz and buzz which Liverpool could never cope with. He was at the centre of the incident which led to the penalty from which Denis Irwin put United ahead and his own goal caused wild celebrations.

But as man-of-the-match Gary Neville later reflected, this United team will always make and take chances. It is the defensive platform that has been missing.

In his programme notes Ferguson candidly admitted that his team are missing recently departed personnel more than expected.

Gary Pallister was the unmentioned name and that was no deliberate slight on Stam by his manager. Stam simply hasn't justified his Johan Cruyff-inspired hype nor his outlandish transfer fee. So, against Liverpool, Ferguson bolstered Stam by playing the mobile, intelligent Gary Neville at his side and it worked, and his brother Phil each defended with textbook tackles on the young star and Stam eventually followed their example.

Despite having rid themselves of the defensive weakness they showed last Sunday, it should be noted that Liverpool are not in the same class as Arsenal at Highbury and that United played worryingly deep when protecting a single-goal lead.

The gloss on a much more polished performance would have been a third goal from Cole or Scholes which they could have added in the final minutes.

But that must not disguise the fact that Patrik Berger had a handful of shooting chances at 1-0, that Karlheinz Riedle had an equaliser disallowed for offside or that Liverpool could easily have poached a point they barely deserved.

Da Costa faces tough opposition

ZURICH, Sept 25: New marathon world record holder Ronaldo da Costa will take centre stage at the World Half Marathon Championships here on Sunday, reports AFP.

The Brazilian, who ran two hours, 36 minutes and five seconds to break the record in Berlin last week, is likely to face tough competition from the likes of Spaniard Martin Fiz, the 1995 world champion, and a posse of Kenyans that include Paul Koeh, Joseph Kimani and Shem Kororia, last year's winner.

The team competition sees the cumulative times of the best three in each squad count for the classification.

Spain and Italy are key challengers to the Kenyans, with Ethiopia, Portugal and Mexico also major threats.

Mexico will field two-time New York marathon winner German Silva.

The women's field for the 21.0975 km event, meanwhile will contain the formidable Tegla Loroupe of Kenya and an impressive Romanian team.

Loroupe, like her compatriot Kororia, won the individual title in Kocise, Slovakia, in 1997.

South Africa will be represented by Elana Meyer, the 1992 Olympic silver medalist over 10,000 metres.

Colour could be added by Patricia Morcelli, among the reserves for the Swiss team. She is the wife of Olympic champion

Illic pledges future to Yugoslavia

LONDON, Sept 25(Reuters/Internet): Charlton Athletic goalkeeper Sasa Illic, who will soon be eligible to play for any one of six countries, said on Thursday he has chosen to represent his parents' homeland of Yugoslavia.

"It would be a great honour to play for Yugoslavia as they've got fabulous individuals," Illic said at his club's training ground. "It's an opportunity to improve myself and I am 26 now, so that's the right age and they will be my first choice."

He said South Africa's organisers had pledged to support Australia's bid for 2010 if Australia backed their bid for 2006. But the South Africans could not guarantee that support if they failed in 2006.

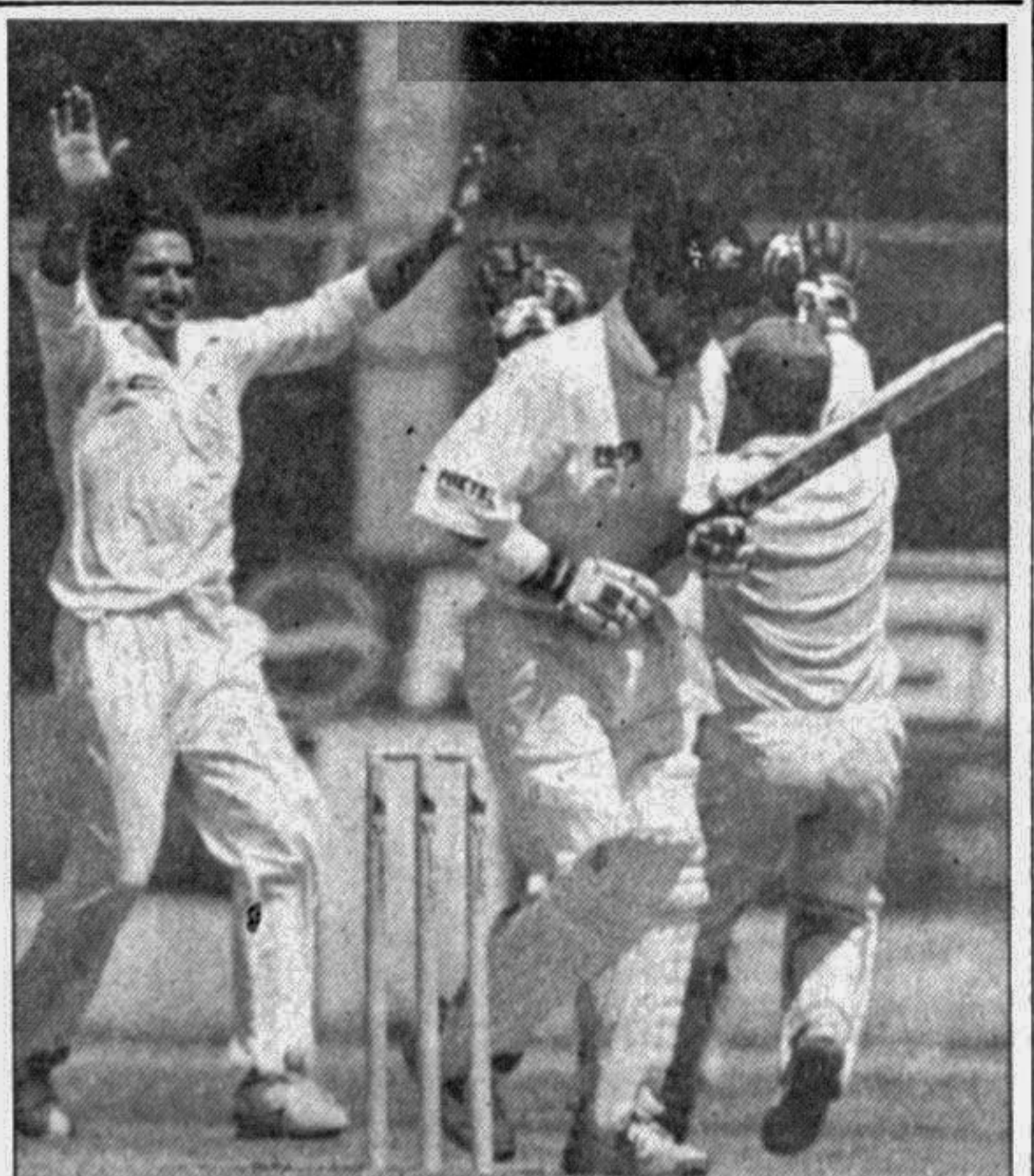
"There will be a World Cup in Australia. It's just a matter of when," Hill added.

Zagallo to face the court

RIO DE JANEIRO, Sept 25: Losing the World Cup was bad enough — now Mario Zagallo will have to tell a court why, reports AP.

A judge of Rio's 30th Civil Court has ordered Brazil's former coach to explain what happened to star striker Ronaldo in the World Cup final, when Brazil lost 3-0 to hosts France.

Ronaldo, the two-time player of the year, was mysteriously omitted from the lineup shortly before the July 12 final, then reinserted at the last minute. But he played poorly, and reports later said he had gone into convulsions hours before the game.



Leg-spinner Shahid Afridi congratulates his Karachi wicketkeeper after the dismissal of Justin Langer on the opening day of the four-day game against the touring Australians yesterday. — AFP photo

Terrific Thorpe!

PERTH, Sept 25: Teenage sensation Ian Thorpe on Friday broke the world record for the men's short-course 400-metre freestyle at the Australian Swimming Championships, his second world mark in two weeks, reports AP.

The 15-year-old, who narrowly missed the 200-metre freestyle world record at the Commonwealth Games in Kuala Lumpur, held off a determined Grant Hackett in a time of 3 minutes, 39.82 seconds, shaving 0.64 seconds off the old short-course record held by New Zealand's Danyon Loader.

It is the second world record of the meet after Matt Dunn swam the fastest short-course 400-metre individual medley on Thursday.

Like Dunn, Thorpe was a member of the 800-metre freestyle relay team which broke the world record last week at Kuala Lumpur.

Hackett could consider himself unlucky to have lost as he went stroke for stroke with Thorpe for the entire race and also broke the old record in finishing second.

Reigning Olympic 1500-metre champion Kieren Perkins was nine seconds further back in third place.

The record continued a remarkable year for Thorpe. He said after the swim that he and Hackett could have gone faster.

"For the first 200 metres, we were mucking around a little bit," Thorpe said. "We were waiting for each other to make a move. I think."

Thorpe said he knows his golden run must end some time. "Everyone is going to plateau out. I just hope that it won't be for quite some time," he said.

Coach goes crazy!

BUCHAREST, Sept 24 (Reuters/Internet): The coach of Romanian first division side Universitatea Craiova, banned for a year for attacking a referee, punched and kicked journalists filming his daughter's wedding on Thursday, a news agency reported.

The independent Mediafax media agency said the Craiova club had barred reporters trying to make their way into Craiova town hall to cover his daughter Lorena's wedding to Universitatea player Eugen Trica.

Mediafax said Balaci shouted abuse at one cameraman and kicked another in the back. It quoted eyewitnesses as saying that Balaci had screamed at journalists that no one without an invitation would be admitted to what was a family gathering.

The Romanian Professional Soccer League this month banned Balaci for a year and fined him for striking a referee in the face with a soccer stud after Craiova lost a match in the southern Romanian city.

Olympic key to Australia's WC prospects

SYDNEY, Sept 25: An Australian bid to hold the World Cup football finals could get a big boost from a successful Olympic soccer tournament, football officials here claimed today, reports AFP.

"You can guarantee FIFA will be looking at this tournament very carefully," Queensland Olympic Football chairman Ian Brusasco said.

"If it is successful it will be a great opportunity and the precursor for Australia's World Cup bid."

Sydney Organising Committee for the Olympic Games official Trevor Doherty added: "FIFA were disappointed with some aspects of Atlanta so they'll be watching us carefully to ensure it's successful."

The 2000 Olympic soccer tournament will be the only of 28 Olympic sports played outside Sydney, with venues in Brisbane, Melbourne, Canberra and Adelaide, but with the final being played in Sydney's 110,000 capacity Olympic Stadium.

Soccer Australia chairman David Hill said they were still very much in the running for major bids for either the 2006 or 2010 World Cup.

England, Germany and South Africa are only countries so far to have made official bids for the 2006 World Cup.

Hill said historically every second World Cup was held in Europe while in South Africa's favour was the fact the tournament had never been staged in Africa.

He said South Africa's organisers had pledged to support Australia's bid for 2010 if Australia backed their bid for 2006. But the South Africans could not guarantee that support if they failed in 2006.

"There will be a World Cup in Australia. It's just a matter of when," Hill added.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

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Kaiser to Germany's rescue

BONN, Sept 25 (Reuters/Internet): When something goes wrong in German soccer, the call goes out for Franz Beckenbauer. Again the time has come and again Der Kaiser has been summoned.

Beckenbauer, now 53, looks set to become a vice-president of the German Football Federation (DFB) and has promised to press for spectacular changes. "Something must be done for football in this country," the former Bayern libero said after DFB president Egidius Braun offered him the chance last week to join the executive committee of the troubled ruling body. "A fresh wind must blow. We need new structures, new people."

Braun said Beckenbauer would have to suggest reforms while promoting Germany's bid to host the 2006 World Cup finals. Beckenbauer, whose exact role will be defined at the DFB congress next month, hinted he would also deal with the Bundesliga and did not deny reports saying he would be appointed as vice-president.

"He comes to save our football," shouted a headline in the mass-circulation Bild, summing up the great expectations the biggest name in German soccer arouses.

One of two men with Brazilian Mario Zagallo to have won the World Cup both as player and as coach, Beckenbauer symbolises Germany's remarkable achievements over the past three decades.

"It is good and important that he takes on a role at a moment when everything seems to be very hot," commented new Germany coach Erich Ribbeck.

Traditionally one of the world's mightiest footballing powers, Germany is going through one of the worst crisis in its rich history.

After the Germans fell to Croatia in a World Cup quarter-final last July, several leading

members of the country's old guard, notably striker Juergen Klinsmann, hung up their boots. Their replacements are not obvious.

Berti Vogts then stepped down suddenly amid intense media pressure earlier this month, leaving Ribbeck, who has plenty of experience but not the pedigree of his predecessors, with the daunting task of rebuilding the team.

"Our wide basis is okay but we've got a problem when it comes to our elite," Beckenbauer said. "We simply lack outstanding footballers."

Beckenbauer said he would let Ribbeck work in peace but the coach's assistant, former German international Uli Stielike, predicted the 1974 World Cup hero would soon turn his attention to the national side. "I guess the team will be



FRANZ BECKENBAUER has his priority, Stielike said. "As long as everybody's responsibilities are clearly defined it can only be a good thing."

Even if he does not take care of the team, Beckenbauer will have plenty to do. Braun, 73, often criticised for being too conservative, said he hoped Beckenbauer would bring new ideas. He is unlikely to be dis-

Savio feeling the effects of success

MADRID, Sept 25 (Reuters/Internet): Real Madrid winger Savio Borinoli called for more protection from referees on Friday as he prepared for another potentially bruising Spanish league encounter with Athletic Bilbao.

The Brazilian forward has been the star performer so far in Real's surge to the top of the table. But his success has brought with it some rough treatment from opposition defences and he can expect more

of the same from a notoriously tough-tackling Bilbao team when Real travel to take on the fourth-placed side on Saturday.

The tricky winger, whose meandering runs left Inter Milan dumfounded in their recent Champions League clash, reflected on Friday: "I suppose I got fouled a lot because I play with the ball at my feet so much but I'm not going to change my style of play because it's one of my best features."

"The people who should change their thinking are the referees — they're the ones who

have to cut out the violence. Tackling is a part of football but if someone comes in from behind then the red card must be shown. I've suffered a lot with violent tackles so far this season and it's only luck that I haven't had a serious injury."

Savio has recovered from his latest knock, picked up in a fiercely contested 2-2 draw with Barcelona last weekend, and he should be fit to take his place against Bilbao. And he insists he has no special fear of the Basque side, despite their reputation as the toughest team in the division. "I don't think I'll have any special problems against the Lions. It's always the same. I always get tightly marked. But they're a team that always play well on home ground."

Savio's presence means Real will be at close to full strength for an intriguing clash. Roberto Carlos is back after suspension, Fernando Morientes should recover from a bout of flu and only long-term injury victim Davy Suiker is expected to miss the game.

Ali down under

SYDNEY, Sept 25: Muhammad Ali, the world's most famous sportsman — past or present — made a regal entry to Australia today, reports AFP.

The former three-time world heavyweight boxing champion was greeted by fans and media when he stepped off businessman Dick Pratt's private Gulfstream jet for his first visit down under for 19 years.

Ali, who wrestles with the debilitating Parkinson's Disease, could only utter one word to his fans — "Hello."

His wife Lonnie spoke for the man himself who was invited to watch with final of the Australian Rules Football Championship — one of the highlights of the Australian sporting calendar.

Lonnie said she and Ali were looking forward to the game because it is unlike anything they had seen before.

SIX NO TRUMPS

A K Sayeedul Huq

SOUTH'S DIAMOND SUPPORT WAS HELPFUL (Hand # 103)

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| West S Q87X H 9876 D KJ C J97 | North (D) S AX H A D A10886XX C AKX | East S 1096XX H KX D 7X C 10XXX |
| South S KJ H QJ10XXX D QX C Q86 | | |

Bidding: South West North East

| | | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|---|------------------------------|
| 1 Spade** 2 Hearts 3 Hearts 5 Diamonds Pass | Pass Pass Pass Pass Pass | 1 Club* 2 Diamonds 3 Diamonds 4 Diamonds 6 Diamonds | Pass Pass Pass Pass |
|---|--------------------------------------|---|------------------------------|

* Artificial, 19 or more HCP
** Artificial, showing 10-12 HCP.

THE PLAY
East led a small Spade which was taken with the King in dummy. The declarer could make the contract provided the Club losers were restricted to one. He therefore led a small Diamond from dummy with the intention of covering whatever was played by the West. When the Jack appeared, the declarer played the Ace and finally a trick was surrendered to the King of Diamonds.

With 19 HCP and a long Diamond suit North made an artificial opening of 1 Club and following the agreed bidding system partner showed 10-12 HCP. However, on Diamond rebid by North, South continued to bid Hearts which was not at all suitable for North. On 4 Diamonds, when South bid 5 Diamonds North reasonably expected to make a slam as with first-round controls in all suits, partner's suit could be developed for eventual disposal of Spade and Club losers. On the other hand South reasoned that since partner bid Diamonds three times, the two cards headed by Queen held by South would be a vital information for North to decide whether or not to bid a slam. North rightly abandoned the idea to bid Grand Slam due to partner's delayed support in his suit.