

Premier Div v'ball

Bangladesh Rifles registered their third successive victory in the National Bank Premier Division Volleyball League when they defeated Sonali Bank Club at the Outer Stadium volleyball court yesterday, reports UNB.

In the one-sided match, Rifles outplayed Sonali Bank 15-4, 15-3, 15-5. It was the third consecutive defeat for the Bank Club.

In the day's other match, Water Development Board defeated Bangladesh Bank Club 15-4, 15-6, 15-10.

In the Second Division league, Sicily Club Chand Textile won their respective matches by straight sets at the same venues on Sunday.

Sicily Club beat Patners Club and Chand Textile defeated Madartek Mitali Sangha.

Meanwhile, the National Bank First Division league begins today.

Nine teams will participate in the single league basis tournament. They are: East End Club, Dilkusha SC, Fire Service, East End Boys, Nabajagaran Sangha, Nabajatak Mojlis, Jiban Bima Corporation, Shantibagh Welfare Association and Brothers Union.

On the inaugural day, East End Club will take on Brothers Union at 2:30 pm while Dilkusha SC meet Shantibagh Welfare at 3:30 pm.

Tuesday's Premier Division matches: Titas Club vs Azad SC at 2:30 pm, Biddut Unnyon Board vs Wari Club at 4 pm.

Cronje being cautious



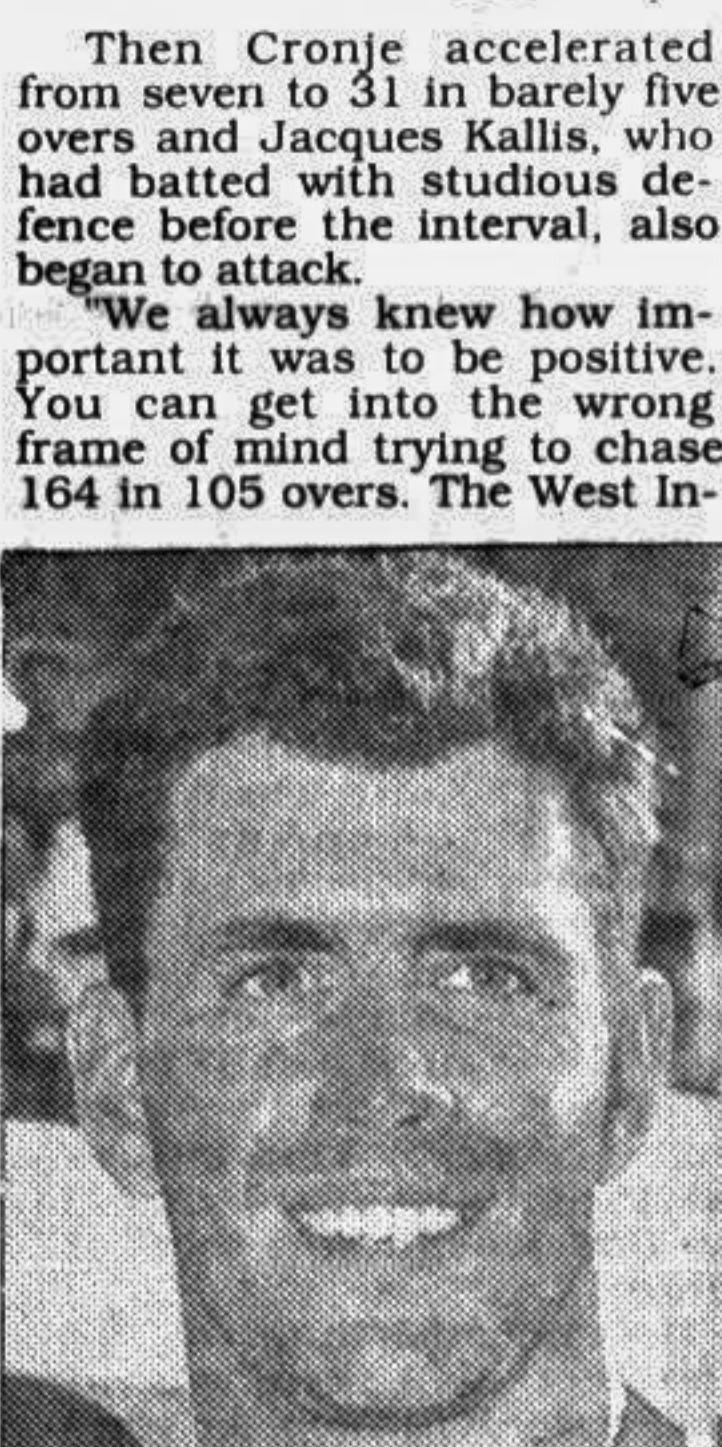
JOHANNESBURG, Nov 30 (Reuters/Internet): South Africa's captain Hansie Cronje expects West Indies to bounce back hard from their defeat by four wickets in the first Test at the Wanderers on Monday.

Cronje, as always, guarded against premature celebrations after South Africa had beaten West Indies in a Test for the first time.

"...there is still a very long way to go in this (five-Test) series. The West Indies are a great side and we must fully expect them to bounce back hard," Cronje said.

"We learned a lot from the way they bowled in our first innings, not only taking wickets but keeping the runs down and applying pressure in that way. We then bowled particularly well to restrict them to 170 in the second innings."

With South Africa 77 for three at lunch on Monday's fifth and final day, in their pursuit of a victory target of 164, the match may have seemed evenly poised.



HANSIE CRONJE dies never give you easy runs, so you have to take every chance

and make things happen for yourself," Cronje said.

West Indies captain Brian Lara did not offer excuses for his side's defeat.

"They played better cricket than us and deserved to win. Shaun Pollock had a very good Test match and performances like that can sometimes be the difference between two teams," Lara said.

"We only have one three-day game to prepare for the second Test but the bowlers are performing well so it's important that the batsmen get a good knock; then there's no reason we shouldn't have a good chance of bouncing back in Port Elizabeth," Lara said.

Asked whether the absence of Carl Hooper for much of the match had affected West Indies' performance, Lara acknowledged that his vice-captain's groin strain had disrupted the balance of the side.

"It was a shame it happened so early in the match. A fully fit Hooper can be a match-winner with the bat and he only bowled four overs - usually he would get through about 30 overs for us in a Test."

'Bring on the Australians'



PESHAWAR, Pakistan, Nov 30 (Reuters/Internet): Zimbabwe captain Alistair Campbell called for more Tests for his team after their shock seven-wicket win over Pakistan on Monday.

"We have been playing Test cricket for six years now but have never met Australia or West Indies. If we have to improve and flourish, we need to play more against them," Campbell said.

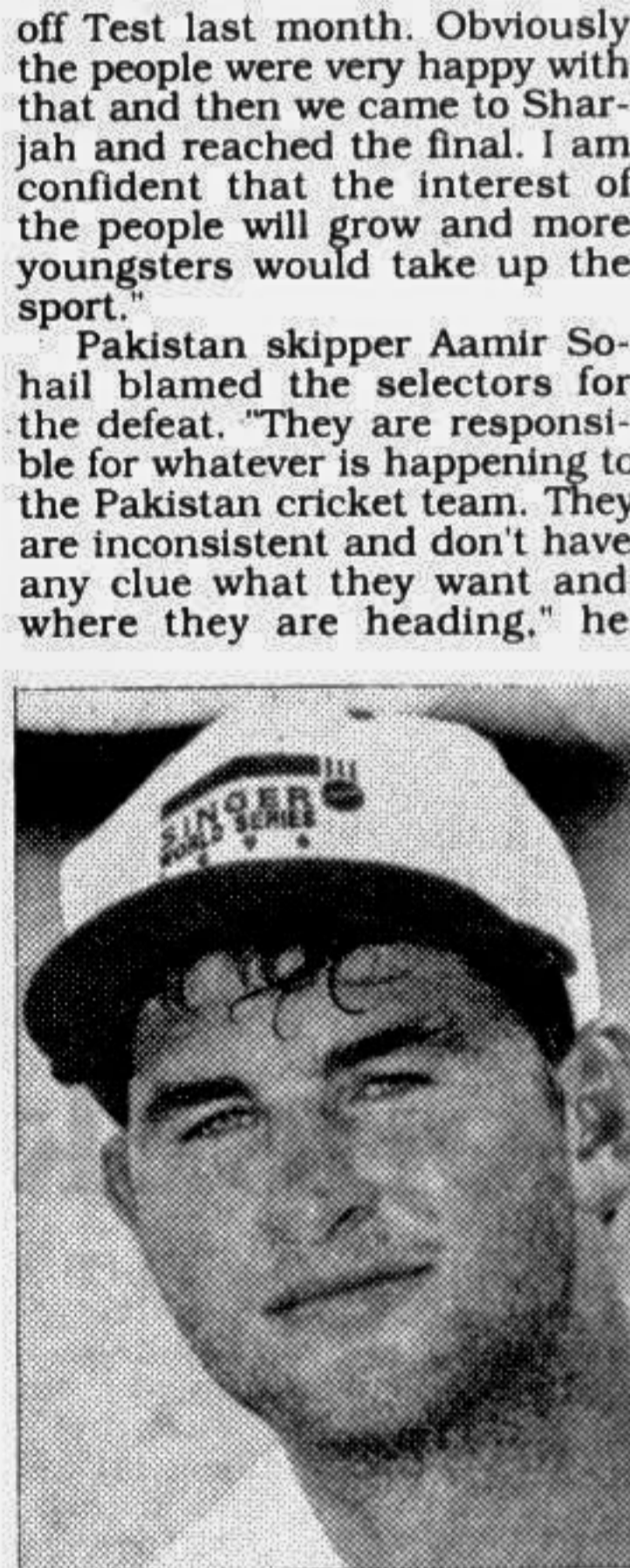
"We have played nearly half our games against Pakistan either at home or abroad and have also played a lot against Sri Lanka and India."

"Pakistan is not a side which you would like to play more often because of the two deadly bowlers Wasim (Akram) and Waqar Younis."

"It would be nice to play more against England, Australia or West Indies. It would add more variety but its up to the ICC. If we continue to win more Tests, they (ICC) might be pressurised to give us more Tests against Australia, South Africa, etc."

Campbell, who has played in all Zimbabwe's Tests, said he hoped that the win would boost the game in his country.

"I think the seeds were sown when we beat India in the one-



ALISTAIR CAMPBELL

off Test last month. Obviously the people were very happy with that and then we came to Sharjah and reached the final. I am confident that the interest of the people will grow and more youngsters would take up the sport."

Pakistan skipper Aamir Sohail blamed the selectors for the defeat. "They are responsible for whatever is happening to the Pakistan cricket team. They are inconsistent and don't have any clue what they want and where they are heading," he said.

"I am a helpless fellow because they don't give weight to my suggestions, don't give players of my choice, never visit the grounds and announce the team without my consultation."

Sohail vowed to sort out the problems. "Now I will make sure that they listen to me. Enough is enough. There's a limit to inconsistency in selection. They have been changing players after every game and that's precisely why we lost the Test series to Australia."

Sohail defended his team's pathetic batting in the second innings, saying: "I think we were outclassed by Zimbabwe, not only in the second innings but in the entire match. Their inexperienced bowlers had variety while the batsmen were more determined than ours."

"I have always had high respect for the Zimbabweans because of their fighting qualities and their ability to give their best within their limitations."

Sohail denied there was a rift in the Pakistan team, claiming that if any of the senior players were deliberately playing badly "their own careers would be on the line."

"I don't think any player is now an automatic selection after the four Tests and 12 one-dayers we have played this season."

Club Bruges extend lead

BRUSSELS, Nov 30: Champions Club Bruges opened a three-point lead at the top of the Belgian First Division on Sunday despite being held to a goalless draw, reports Reuters.

Bruges dominated the first half of their home match against fifth-placed Excelsior Mouscron. But failed to capitalise on several good chances.

Mouscron, with goalkeeper Franck Vandendriessche outstanding, gained in confidence in the second half, but in the end were happy to come away from the league leaders with a draw.

Bruges now have a three-point lead over closest rivals Genk who went down to a 3-2 defeat at Anderlecht on Saturday.

'Ashes not yet decided'

PERTH, Australia, Nov 30 (Reuters/Internet): England's cricketers have refused to concede defeat in their Ashes series against Australia despite an embarrassing seven-wicket loss in the second Test on Monday.

England captain Alec Stewart said his players were still hopeful of turning things around despite trailing 1-0 in the five-match series after the first Test was washed out on the last day.

"In the summer we were 1-0 down against South Africa and we came back to win and they're the type of positives we've got to keep thinking of," Stewart said.

Australia now need to win just one of the remaining three

Australian captain Mark Taylor said his team clearly held the advantage but were taking nothing for granted.

"We definitely have a psychological advantage there's no doubt about it, we have gained that over 10 years of cricket," Taylor said.

"We have got the momentum at the moment but that can change quickly so it's very important we don't let that happen."

"If we start thinking that England can't land the killer punch, that's when they will land it and that's when it might change around."

Stewart said he was pleased with the performance by England's bowlers but admitted he was worried about the batting.

He said England's top order batsmen failed to handle the bouncy WACA pitch and poked and prodded at balls they should have let go.

"That's one of the poorest performances in a first innings that I can remember from an England side," Stewart said.

"There was a bit of moisture in the wicket but there was nothing wrong with it."

"We're not used to playing on pitches like this and we just didn't trust the bounce. We kept playing at balls the Aussies were letting go."

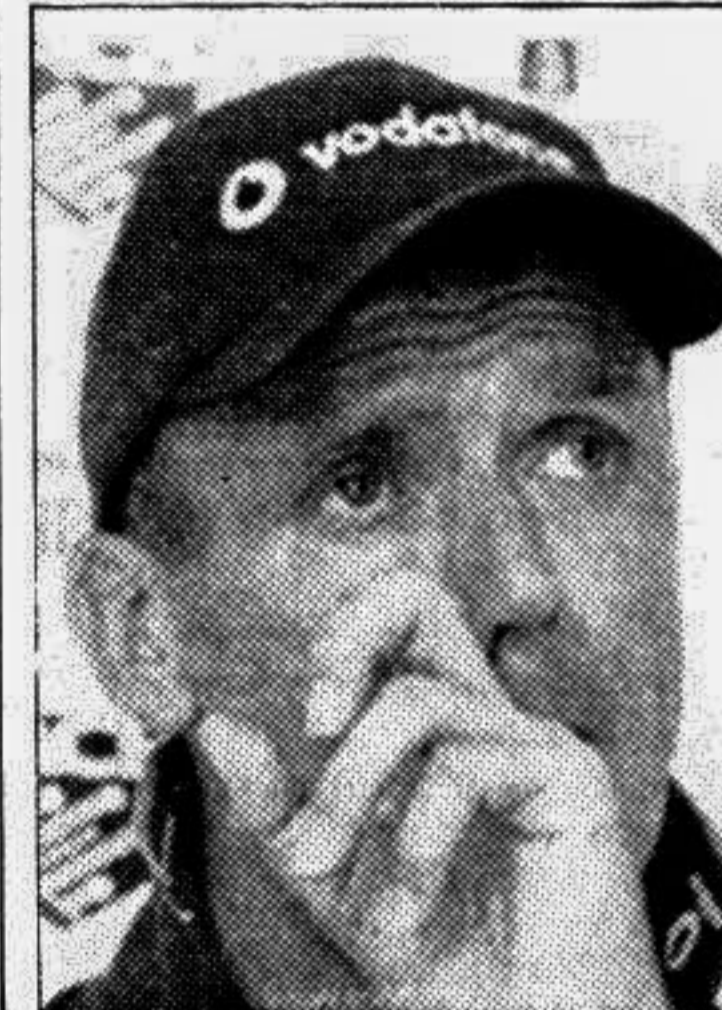
Taylor said he was reasonably pleased with Australia's performance but warned England that he expected them to play even better as the series progressed.

The second and third days were probably shared but we had such an advantage after the first day that they couldn't peg us back," Taylor said.

"I am delighted that we are 1-0 up because I thought that Brisbane and Perth were the two Test matches that would suit England's bowlers."

The third Test starts in Adelaide on December 11.

England's next match is against Victoria, starting in Melbourne on Saturday.



A dejected Alec Stewart during the post-match briefing.

Tests to retain the Ashes, which they have held since 1989.

England need at least two victories to take the series although history is firmly against them as the last time they came from behind to win in Australia was in 1954-55.

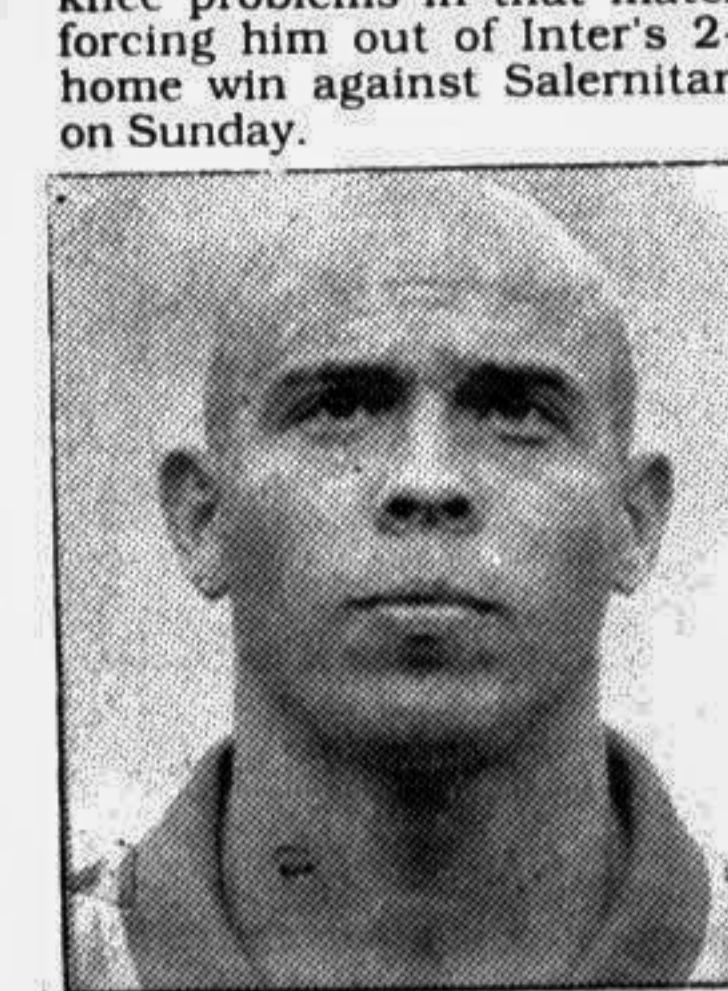
Bad knee bothers Ronaldo

ROME, Nov 30 (Reuters/Internet): Inter Milan's Brazilian striker Ronaldo says he is suffering from a chronic knee injury that could force him to limit the number of matches he plays.

Speaking to the Milan-based, local TV channel Telemilano on Sunday, Ronaldo said: "I have a chronic injury problem. The fans ought to know that I'm not the player of last year and that I cannot play in all our games."

Tendon problems in both knees plagued Ronaldo during the World Cup and have contributed to him missing 13 of Inter's 22 games so far this season.

Ronaldo came back into the side for last Wednesday's 3-1 Champions' League win against Real Madrid but aggravated his



Asked if he expected to recover in time for Thursday's Italian Cup quarter-final tie

Warne will have to wait

MELBOURNE, Nov 30 (Reuters/Internet): Shane Warne's return to Australia's Test team after shoulder surgery was "still a little way away," a Victorian state cricket official said on Monday.

Leg-spinner Warne has said he would like to return to the Australian side for the fourth Ashes Test against England in Melbourne from December 26-30.

Warne had a match haul of four for 185 off 37.4 overs when captaining Victoria in their Sheffield Shield game against South Australia at the weekend.

The wrist spinner, continuing his comeback from his shoulder operation last May, found the going tough against Darren Lehmann and Greg Blewett as South Australia posted a seven-wicket win on Sunday.

"It's hard to say (when he will reappear at test level) but he is still a little way away," Victorian cricket manager Shaun Graf said on Monday.

"Subconsciously, Shane has set himself for Boxing Day (the fourth Ashes Test) and the Australian selectors, even though they haven't said anything, probably have as well, but I think the next month will tell whether that's possible."

"We've got two Shield games plus a game against England before that and if you see Shane back taking wickets then you will know he is ready."

Graf said the biggest bonus for Warne over the weekend was the chance to again bowl in match conditions.

While Warne suffered at the hands of Lehmann, who scored 171 and 78 not out against Victoria, the South Australian captain praised Warne's performance.

"I thought he bowled well," Lehmann said. "He started giving it more of a rip and I don't think he is far off."

Earlier this month, Warne said he hoped to be back for the Boxing Day Test in Melbourne but acknowledged it would be preferable to delay his return until his shoulder was completely healed.

Victoria's next fixture is a four-day match against England at the Melbourne Cricket Ground starting on Saturday.

Boca become unbeaten champs

BUENOS AIRES, Nov 30: Boca Juniors, the country's most fanatically supported club won the Argentine championship on Sunday for the first time in six years, reports Reuters.

The celebrations began when Gimnasia-La Plata, which began the day as the only team with a chance of catching Boca but needed a win to keep their faint hopes alive, were held to a 1-1 draw at home by Rosario Central.

Minutes later, Boca finished their home game with Independiente a goalless draw.

The results kept Boca unbeaten in 17 games, nine points clear of the Gimnasia with two games each to play in the Apertura (opening) championship the first of two championships in the Argentine season which has no overall champion.

Boca's famous Chocolate Box stadium erupted when the Gimnasia result was announced and the last few seconds of their game was played in an atmosphere on total delirium.

Thousands of Boca fans, who have seen arch-rivals River Plate and Velez Sarsfield walk off with a succession of titles since their last success, poured onto the streets of central Buenos Aires to celebrate their team's triumph at the Obelisk landmark.

Former Dinamo chief released

BUCHAREST, Nov 30 (Reuters/Internet): Former Dinamo Bucharest president Vasile Ianul, on trial for fraud, was released from police custody by a military court of appeal on Monday.

The court admitted Ianul's appeal to be released on bail after denying it last week," said military judge Horatiu Filimon.

Ianul, initially charged with the embezzlement of more than \$2.3 million during his tenure as Dinamo president from 1991 to 1993, now faces more serious charges of financial fraud.

He was detained earlier this month after failing to attend court hearings over the past two years.

The court also postponed the hearings until January after two key witnesses failed to appear in court on Monday.

On Saturday, Inter club doctor Piero Volpi had suggested that Ronaldo's withdrawal from the Salernitana game was a "precautionary" measure, but agreed that the player's injury problem was chronic.

"We're dealing with a chronic injury case here, one unfortunately aggravated both by a heavy workload and by knocks and stress, it is a very difficult and subtle type of case history," he said.

As he keeps on playing, the problem remains. Therefore it has to be dealt with both in his training and his match schedules. There is no mystery about it and no alarm either."



Man United's Solskjaer (R) let loose a fierce left-footer to score his side's opening goal against Leeds United at Old Trafford on Sunday. Man United won the thriller 3-2.

Marseille's draw sends Bordeaux atop

MARSEILLE, France, Nov 30 (Reuters/Internet): Olympique Marseille brushed with mediocrity Sundsvenske midfielders and jussy in a 0-0 draw against Paris St Germain, a result that meant they would lose the leadership of the French First Division.

Marseille, playing in steady rain in front of a capacity crowd of 60,000 at Velodrome, could have won by several goals, as dominant as they have been this year while fielding four recognized deft two men up front.

But they were denied twice in the first half and had a goal-bound shot from Robert Pires cleared off the line in the dying minutes.

Said Marseille coach Roland Courbis: "We saw two teams with very different objectives. PSG's was very obviously not to lose. We also lacked that little bit of luck to force a result."

Marseille almost scored when, from their fourth freekick near the PSG goal in the 25th minute, midfielder Eric Roy found Laurent Blanc, whose header was deflected by PSG's

German defender Christian Werns back into the middle.

Blanc's center-back partner Cyril Domoraud hit a spectacular bicycle kick onto the bar with PSG goalkeeper Bernard Lama beaten and when the ball bounced out striker Florian Maurice could only touch it just wide of the post.

Ex-PSG striker Maurice then hit the post two minutes before the interval with a fine shot on the turn and from the rebound Christophe Dugarry had his shot blocked.

Seconds before halftime, PSG coach Artur Jorge almost caused a major stir when he left the bench to accuse the linesman of not giving an offside against Marseille's Guinean striker Titi Camara.

Marseille goalkeeper Stephane Porato's worst moment was a poor back pass by Blanc two minutes into the second half, which required him to dash out and block Brazilian striker Adailton.

Minutes later a volley from the left by PSG captain Marco Simone flew wide of the far post.

When Courbis sent on Fabrizio Ravanelli for right-back Patrick Blondeau in the 54th

minute, Marseille had four strikers on the field. But the change, with the Italian short of pace after an injury layoff, took some of the momentum out of Marseille.

Finally, Pires broke through the defense alone and looked set to score, putting the ball wide of Lama. But Werns ran back and turned the ball just past the post and the lurking Ravanelli.

Jorge was a relieved man afterward. "We're very pleased with this result against a team with a very expansive game," he said.

Girondins Bordeaux, who were overtaken by Marseille a month ago, reclaimed the lead they have held since the end of August with a 1-0 home win over champion RC Lens.

Bordeaux, who scored through midfielder Johan Micoud, are one point ahead of Marseille and 11 in front of third-placed Rennes.

Rennes lost their unbeaten home record with a 3-2 defeat by Nantes in their Brittany derby on Saturday.

PSG, unbeaten in four matches, climbed to sixth one point further back, ahead of Bastia and Nantes on goal difference.

10-man Roma stuns Lazio

ROME, Nov 30 (Reuters/Internet): Italy's internationalists Eusebio Di Francesco and Francesco Totti scored two goals in three minutes as 10-man AS Roma overcame a 3-1 deficit to draw 3-3 with Lazio in the Rome derby on Sunday.

Di Francesco hammered the ball home from close range on 79 minutes to bring Roma back into the match and two minutes later Totti struck home an equalizer from the edge of the box.

Roma had established an early lead through Marco Delvecchio but two stylish goals from Roberto Mancini turned the tie Lazio's way. The former Italy and Sampdoria forward scored with an instinctive first-time volley on the turn after 29 minutes. He then put Lazio up 2-1 after the break when he ran onto a free kick from Yugoslav Sinisa Mihajlovic and flicked the ball into the Roma net with the heel of his boot.

Roma had Fabio Petrucci sent off on 64 minutes for a foul on Marcelo Salas and when the Chilean striker won and scored a penalty two minutes later Lazio seemed to be heading for their fifth consecutive derby win.

But Roma rallied to salvage a point which gets them back to within three points of league leaders Fiorentina and level on points in second place with

Parma, who hammered AC Milan 4-0 earlier in the day.

Fiorentina were held 0-0 by Bari while defending champions Juventus crashed to a surprise 3-0 defeat at Bologna.

Juventus, who will decide on Monday whether to play their postponed Champions' League Group A match with Galatasaray in Istanbul, must wish they never set foot inside Bologna's Dall'Ara stadium.

First, Michele Parmatti was left unmarked in the third minute to head home Giuseppe Signori's free kick. Four minutes later, Croat Igor Tudor failed to clear Kenneth Anderson's header and the rejuvenated Signori pounced to claim his fifth goal of the season.

Juve's nightmare start was completed in the 28th minute by Davide Fontolan, who first robbed Ciro Ferrara on the halfway before exchanging passes with Anderson, dribbling round Mark Iuliano and beating Peruzzi with a neatly-placed shot.

After the break, Francesco Antonioli saved brilliantly from Filippo Inzaghi on two occasions as Bologna celebrated their first home success over Juve in 24 years.

Parma's Argentine Hernan Crespo was twice on target as Albino's Mallesio's side recorded their biggest win of the season to date to leapfrog over Milan and Juve.

The home team should have taken the lead in the fifth

minute, but Enrico Chiesa lost control of the ball with only Sebastiano Rossi to beat and Thomas Helveg recovered.

In the 25th minute Chiesa made amends by turning home the loose ball after Rossi failed to hold Dino Baggio's thunderbolt shot from outside the area.

Within 11 minutes, Milan was two down as the irrepressible Italy midfielder slipped the ball through for Crespo to gently touch the ball over the advancing Rossi.

It took desperate goal-line clearances from Luigi Sala and Helveg to deny Parma a third before halftime but the inevitable happened minutes after the break as Crespo's downward header punished some slack Milan defending.

German Oliver Bierhoff continued his slump - no goals since the beginning of October - by missing a cross from one meter out in the 69th minute, before Alain Boghossian completed Milan's humiliation in stoppage time.

Inter Milan climbed to seventh, level on points with Bologna and just five adrift of Fiorentina, after scoring twice in the last 15 minutes to defeat Salernitana 2-1.

David Di Michele had given the second-from-bottom visitors a deserved half-time lead before Argentine duo Diego Simeone and Javier Zanetti saved Inter with goals in the 76th and 90th minutes respectively.

SIX NO TRUMPS

A K Sayeedul Huq

SOUTH DID NOT HAVE DEFENSIVE VALUES, HENCE HE BID SIX!

(Hand # 140)

North			
♠ S: K932	♥ H: K8765	♦ D: A63	♣ C: 8
East			
♠ S: A7654	♥ H: 432	♦ D: KQ	♣ C: 3
South (D)			
♠ S: None	♥ H: A109	♦ D: 85	♣ C: KQJ109754

Bidding: Neither side was vulnerable

South	West	North	East
3 Clubs	Pass	3 No Trumps	4 Spades
5 Clubs	Pass	Pass	5 Spades
6 Clubs	Double	Pass	Pass

It was definitely a competitive bidding. When South opened three Clubs, partner with 10 HCP bid 3 No Trumps (which was ambitious) and when South bid 5 Clubs on East's 4 Spades, North passed. However, when East bid 5 Spades, South rightly thought that East-West were unlikely to give any Club trick and as far as he was concerned there was only one trick in Hearts. Therefore, he could not double 5 Spades, and hence he pushed on to 6 Clubs.

THE PLAY

West predicated led the Jack of Spades, dummy played low and the declarer ruffed in the closed hand. Then he played the King of Clubs. West took the Ace and led the Jack of Diamonds. Too late! The declarer won in the dummy and returned to his hand with the Ace of Hearts to clear the trumps. West dropped the Queen. To make his contract he needed West to have the Jack of Hearts also. As it was actually so, the contract was made. Ultimately, the Diamond loser was parked on the fourth good Heart in the dummy.

Notice that, if West initiated a Diamond lead instead of Spade, the contract could have been beaten. This would have been possible if West were more active in bidding. On 5 Clubs, he should have bid 5 Diamonds, and if it were doubled he could bid 5 Spades. And when South bid 6 Clubs, the double should have been given by East asking a Diamond lead. As the Ace of the Clubs was with North, he should have realised that South would not have bid 6 Clubs with another loser in Spades. Hence, the setting trick must be found in the unbid suits.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Brent
5 Alger's
9 Greet the villain
12 Malle-
13 He raised Cain
14 "Chicago" lyricist
15 Looking for a fight
17 Fib
18 Pact
19 Choreographer Alvin
21 Rocky's greeting
22 Flat-bottomed boat
24 Weavers' creations
27 Whammy
31 See 24
32 Brewery product
33 Guitar's cousin
34 Sea dog
36 Insuff-
37 Most

people's sole support? 55 Funnyman
38 Petrarch's love type
40 XXX times V
41 Rage amount?
43 Gives a leg up
47 Knock hat
48 Gripes
51 Candle count
52 Ontario neighbor
53 Animated character, for short
54 "— About

You" 11 Act the robot
16 "Who am — argue?"
20 "But — on forever!"
21 Tennyson
22 Ms. Abzug
23 Skating spin
24 Past tense of 31
25 Mound stat.
26 Roared
27 1960s musical
29 — out a living
30 Bottom line
35 Road go
37 Shows buoyancy
39 Brownish color
40 Quettish
41 Took to the pool
42 Forum garment
43 Ran, as color
44 Highlander
45 Grand
46 Fax
49 Prior to
50 Top

Solution time: 22 mins.

SHOW IDO RAFT
WORE TAR ELIA
ALANLADD GANG
PENCIL ELANDS
HIG ROTH
MOLN HOGGALIA
SHARP PAM EUR
NAIL ROB
CHANGE BAUBLE
OILS ALANBEAN
ORDO RIG BARD
SEAM NIE AUKS

Yesterday's answer

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11
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 52 53 54 55
56 57 58 59 60

CRYPTOQUIP
P PBLZPGY L AMPZORYGYF
SLXA BPZOR HYXX ZMJH
P GRJ L SJH - HLMF
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: AS THE MINER USUALLY COMMENTS TO HIS CHUMS, "I'LL COAL YOU LATER!"
Today's Cryptoquip clue: H equals W
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.