

Sport

AB Bank TT
Uttara, Engineers
in super league

Uttara Club finished their first phase engagements atop the table with full 10 points in the AB Bank Senior Division table tennis league while Engineers Club topped the First Division league table with full 12 points, reports UNB.

Three top finishers from both the Senior and First Division leagues will take part in the super league.

Swamibagh TTS (8 pts) and Angels Club (4) finished second and third respectively in the Senior Division while Dilkusha Club (10) and Wari Junior (8) finished second and third respectively in the First Division league.

In the day's senior league, Swamibagh Boys, Bangladesh Biman and Armanitola JS won their respective matches at the NSC wooden floor gymnasium.

Swamibagh Boys defeated Angels Club in straight sets as Anup beat Milu 21-11, 21-8, Babu outplayed Nawad 21-15, 21-13 and Jewel overpowered Shahin 21-16, 21-19.

Biman blanked Armanitola Junior 3-0 with Hemel defeating Abid 21-6, 21-14; Mahub beating Milton 21-10, 21-13 and Kachi outplaying Salfur 21-10, 21-6.

Armanitola JS overpowered Biman Junior 3-1 as Mustafa beat Pappu 26-21, 21-13, 21-10, Tuhin outplayed Edison 11-21, 23-21, 21-17, Goutam of Biman Junior got walkover, and Mustafa defeated Edison 21-14, 21-14.

In the First Division there were wins for Dilkusha SC, Engineers Club, Wari Junior and Araka Club.

Dilkusha SC outplayed Mansur SC in straight sets as Parag crushed Mosharraf 21-1, 21-3, Tirtha beat Mamun 21-2, 21-8 and Mehedi defeated Arif 21-2, 21-8.

Engineers Club dumped Mohammad Youth 3-0 with Munna defeating Kamrul 21-8, 21-11, Ritu beating Jewel 22-20, 19-21, 21-7, and Ali outplaying Kallol 21-10, 21-14.

Wari Junior overpowered Mohammadpur Boys 3-1. Munna lost to Kaji 21-10, 20-22, 21-7, Musabbir beat Rafiq 21-12, 21-19, Ashiq outplayed Parag 21-7, 21-17, and Musabbir defeated Kaji 21-17, 21-23, 21-12.

Araka edged past Angels Club 3-2. Ashiq lost to Shawkat Sabuj 21-10, 21-10; Mansur defeated Sabuj 21-13, 21-13; Nasir beat Bulbul 21-15, 25-23; Mansur lost to Shawkat 15-21, 21-10, 21-16, and Ashiq outplayed Sabuj 21-16, 21-14.

Athletics Canada
keeps Ben
in limbo

TORONTO, Canada, Dec 7: Canada's athletics federation has refused to reinstate disgraced sprinter Ben Johnson, disqualified for doping after winning the 100 metres at the Seoul Olympics, the Toronto Star reported Sunday, reports AFP.

The paper said Athletics Canada, which examined the athlete's request at its general assembly on Saturday at Ottawa, did not see a reason to welcome him back into the fold until all possible appeal avenues had been exhausted.

"We don't want to do anything above and beyond what we think is the best system in the world, one that's fair and equitable to all athletes," said Athletics Canada president Rolf Lund.

Johnson, 36, has not competed professionally since the IAAF handed him a life suspension in 1993 after he returned two positive tests — first when he was stripped of his 1998 gold medal and then five years later after a meeting in Montreal.

Last September, Ontario's appeal court rejected a bid for the lifting of his life ban.

Malik imposes himself



LAHORE, Pakistan, Dec 7 (Reuters/Internet): Zimbabwe lost to the Lahore City Cricket Association by one wicket in a thrilling finish to the four-day game on Monday, thanks to a magnificent 149 by skipper Salim Malik.

The former Pakistan captain, omitted from the squad of 18 for the second test starting on Thursday, gave a fine exhibition of his immense experience and skill as the local side accepted a challenging task of chasing 347 for victory in 75 overs.

The win was achieved with five balls to spare when Zaheer Khan, who made 24 not out, steered paceman Neil Johnson through third man in fading light.

Zimbabwe, who won the first test against Pakistan, batted for 20 minutes in the morning before declaring their second innings closed at 239 for six, adding 28 runs in six overs. They made 394 in their first knock.

LCCA conceded a lead of 107 by declaring their first innings at 287 for nine. Malik, under judicial investigations on allegations of match-fixing and betting, set about the target by opening the innings.

With Imran Farhat, who made 33, he scored 92 for the first wicket and then was joined by Babar Zaman (23) in a second-wicket partnership of 70.

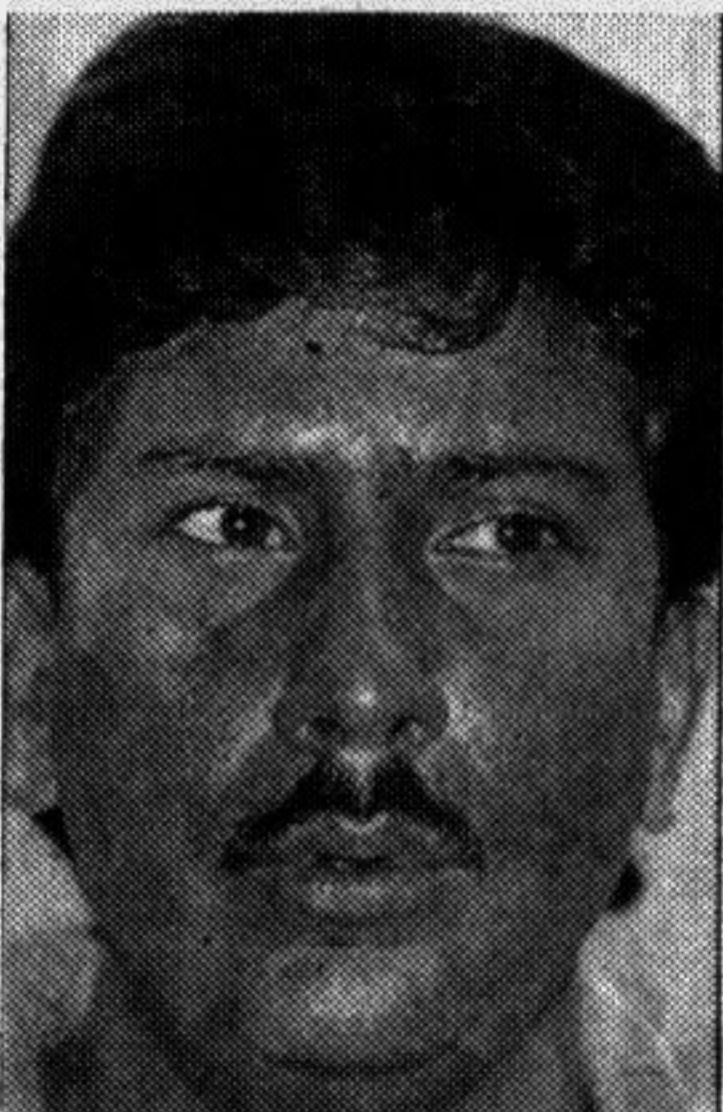
Batting with aplomb and displaying a variety of shots, Malik and Shahid Anwar (76) further boosted the chances with their third-wicket partnership of 95 in 101 balls.

Malik, who struck 20 fours

and a six in an innings spanning 166 balls and 212 minutes, was third out at 257 at the stroke of tea when he was clean-bowled by Murray Goodwin.

Anwar was seventh out at 325, falling to off-spinner Andy Whittall after hitting six fours and a six.

Whittall, who finished with three for 56, revived his side



SALIM MALIK ... 149
with successive wickets, but LCCA's last pair defied the Zimbabweans to earn an exciting victory.

SCOREBOARD
Scoreboard on the final day of the four-day match between the Lahore City Cricket Association (LCCA) and Zimbabwe on Monday:
ZIMBABWE: First innings 394 (M Goodwin 148; Salim Malik 5-77)
LCCA: First innings 289-9

dec (G Flower 7-31)

ZIMBABWE: Second innings (overnight 211-5)
G Flower c Abbasi b Zaman 118
G Rennie b Zaman 63
A Flower c Anwar b Zaman 10
C Wishart c sub b Zaman 1
N Johnson lbw b Kazim 1
M Goodwin c Tariq Kazim 0
A Campbell not out 38
A Whittall not out 2
Extras: (lb-2, nb-3, w-1) 6
Total: (For six declared in 59 overs) 239
Fall of wkts: 1-184; 2-188; 3-189; 4-190; 5-190; 6-216.

Bowler: O M R W
Kazim 13 3 40 2
Abbasi 6 0 18 0
Ahmad Khan 1.3 0 8 0
Farhat 9 0 53 0
Zaheer Khan 5.3 0 14 0
Malik 8 0 51 0
Zaman 14 3 47 4
Butt 2 0 6 0

LCCA: Second innings
Farhat c A Flower b G Flower 33
Malik b Goodwin 149
Zaman run out 23
Shahid Anwar b Whittall 75
Butt lbw b Goodwin 0
Tariq c A Flower b Johnson 19
H Farhat lbw b Johnson 0
Zaheer Khan not out 24
Abbasi b Whittall 12
Kazim c and b Whittall 0
Ahmad Khan not out 1
Extras: (b-4, lb-4, nb-3, w-3) 14
Total: (For nine wkts in 74.1 overs) 350
Fall of wkts: 1-92; 2-162; 3-257; 4-301; 5-301; 6-301; 7-325; 8-339; 9-339.

Bowler: O M R W
Matambanadzo 5 0 30 0
Johnson 9.1 0 64 2
Wishart 5 1 21 0
Whittall 19 4 56 3
G Flower 24 2 103 1
Huckle 8 0 45 0
Goodwin 4 0 23 2

Result: LCCA won by one wicket.

Bribery allegations

Judge to deliver
report shortly



KARACHI, Pakistan, Dec 7 (Reuters/Internet): The judge investigating charges of corruption in Pakistan cricket said on Monday he would submit his report next week, adding "the allegations levelled in the past are not baseless."

"I will require a week from Tuesday to complete my investigations and submit a detailed report to (the country's) President Mohammad Rafiq Tarar," Justice Malik Mohammad Qayyum told Reuters from Lahore.

"I wouldn't commit to who are the players... but I admit that something is wrong somewhere and the allegations levelled in the past are not baseless," said Qayyum, a Lahore High Court judge asked by the government to hold hearings into the charges.

He said the hearings would end on Tuesday, but that he would not release the report to the media when he submits it to the president.

"It will be entirely up to the president what action he takes. My assignment is to carry out the investigation and submit the report. But I believe action will be taken."

Under the Pakistan Cricket

Board constitution, the president of the country is the patron-in-chief of the board.

The submission of the report will come when Pakistan cricket is also under pressure on the playing ground, having lost a recent home series to Australia and now trailing 1-0 in a series against Zimbabwe.

Pakistan are also scheduled to go to India next month for their first test tour there in 13 years.

More than 40 witnesses have given evidence since the hearings began in

September, including the Australian duo of Mark Taylor and Mark Waugh, who testified in October that former national team captain Salim Malik offered them a bribe when they toured Pakistan in 1994-95.

Malik has denied the charges. Three-and-a-half years ago he was suspended for seven months while a retired judge looked at the same accusations in an internal investigation for the board.

He was cleared of all charges but was stripped of his captaincy when he was included in the team which toured Australia the next season.

The case was reopened this year because of media pressure, and four months ago a cricket board interim report recommended that Malik along with

Wasim Akram and Ijaz Ahmad should not be selected until a government-ordered investigation was finished.

But that recommendation was overruled by the board's executive council and all the three played against Australia, who won the three-test series 1-0 — their first success here in 39 years.

All three have denied any misconduct.

Malik has played in 99 matches in more than 15 years of international cricket, and is the second highest scorer for Pakistan after Javed Miandad.

No matter what action the government takes, cricket board chief executive Majid Khan said Pakistan would not be banned by the International Cricket Council (ICC) if corruption charges were proved.

"The ICC will support us. I don't think we would be put into isolation because two or three players are found guilty of bringing the sport into disrepute," Khan said from Lahore.

"The objective of the investigation was to restore the pride and glamour of the sport."

We will welcome whatever the judge's findings are irrespective of the fact if the players are found guilty or not," said Khan, a former Pakistan captain.

Horrendous
Indian start

NAPIER, New Zealand, Dec 7: India were bundled out for 103 on the first day of their four-day cricket match against a Central Districts Selection XI here today, reports AFP.

Central's batsmen then piled on the agony for the Indians in the first match of their New Zealand tour by reaching 121 for one at stumps, with captain Craig Spearman unbeaten on 65 and Mathew Sinclair not out 28.

India made a disastrous start to the match when they crumbled to 20 for five, including the loss of star batsman Sachin Tendulkar for five. Saurav Ganguly and wicket-keeper Nayan Mongia brought some respectability to the score with a sixth-wicket partnership of 46 but once they were dismissed the tourists folded quickly.

Ganguly top-scored with 37 in 138 minutes, with Mongia, who made 21, and Venkatesh Prasad, with 14, the only other players to make double figures.

Andrew Penn led Central's bowling effort with four for 43 off 16 overs.

SCOREBOARD
Scoreboard at stumps on the opening day of the four-day cricket match between India and the Central Districts Selection XI here Monday.

INDIA: First innings
Jadeja c Furlong b Penn 1
Siddhu lbw b Blake 2
Dravid lbw b Penn 0
Tendulkar c Spearman b Mason 5
Azharuddin c Spearman b Blake 2
Ganguly c Douglas b Penn 37
Mongia c Sigley b Oram 21
Haque lbw b Blake 0
Prasad c Englefield b Mason 10
Mohanty b Penn 5
R Singh not out 2
Extras: (w-2, nb-4, lb-3, b-5) 14
Total: (all out in 45.5 overs) 103
Fall of wkts: 1-4; 2-4; 3-12; 4-14; 5-20; 6-66; 7-67; 8-85; 9-101; 10-103

Bowler: O M R W
Penn 16 3 43 4
Blake 15 3 28 3
Mason 10.5 3 21 2
Oram 4 1 7 1

CENTRAL DISTRICTS SELECTION XI: First innings
Spearman not out 65
Milnes b Mohanty 20
Sinclair not out 28
Extras: (lb-1, nb-6) 8
Total: (For one in 42 overs) 121
Fall of wkt: 1-61

Bowler: O M R W
Prasad 13 3 46 0
Mohanty 10 6 16 1
R Singh 5 2 18 0
Ganguly 3 0 17 0
H Singh 10 4 22 0

Border force
a draw

EAST LONDON, South Africa, Dec 7 (Reuters/Internet): Border's Wayne Wilbin cracked his fourth first-class century on Sunday but it was not enough to beat the West Indies as their three-day tour match ended in a draw.

SCOREBOARD
Scoreboard on the final day of the three-day tour match between Border and West Indies at Buffalo Park on Sunday.

BORDER: First innings 282-9 dec (C Sugden 76, B White 56; M Dillon 4-56)
WEST INDIES: First innings 356 all out (S Chandrapaul 92, P Wallace 68; P Enslie 4-124)
BORDER: Second innings (overnight 211-0)
Sugden c Reifer Dillon 84
White c sub (Murray) b McLean 14
Boucher lbw b Lewis 84
Wilbin not out 100
Strydom c sub (Murray) b Chandrapaul 26
Botha c Lara b Lewis 5
Van der Merwe c Dillon b Lewis 8
Henderson b Chandrapaul 8
Enslie c Ganga b McLean 2
Ntini not out 9
Extras: (b-5, lb-3, nb-1) 0
Total: (For 8 wkts dec) 340
Fall of wkts: 1-25; 2-188; 3-188; 4-275; 5-297; 6-312; 7-325; 8-332

Bowler: O M R W
McLean 13 1 55 2
Dillon 18.2 6 66 1
Lambert 14 5 39 0
Lewis 26 3 106 3
Reifer 2 0 18 0
Chandrapaul 11 1 48 2

Result: Match drawn.

Celtic boss angry at Viduka
GLASGOW, Dec 7: Celtic chairman Fergus McCann threatened on Sunday to sue Marko Viduka after the Australian walked out of the Scottish champions without kicking a ball, reports Reuters.

The 23-year-old flew back to his native Melbourne on Sunday claiming he was "depressed" and leaving Celtic in no doubt that he was giving up football just days after he joined the Glasgow club for 3 million pounds (5 million dollars) from Croatia Zagreb.

Mike in more
hot water

INDIANAPOLIS, Dec 7: In a step that could result in Mike Tyson returning to prison, a probation officer plans to submit a report Monday to the judge who sentenced the former heavyweight champion on rape charges more than six years ago, reports AP.

Tyson pleaded 'no contest' to misdemeanor assault charges in Maryland last week, and that could be used as evidence of a possible parole violation.

The paperwork was expected to be filed with Judge Patricia Gifford in Superior Court by probation officer George Walker. County officials have said no action toward a possible revocation of probation will be taken until Tyson is sentenced in Maryland early next year.

The Montgomery County (Maryland) District Court said no exact sentencing date has been set.



Korea's Yoon Jong-hwan (L) and Japan's S Yamaguchi in pursuit of the ball in their Asian football preliminary.

Kuwait sets the early pace



BANGKOK, Dec 7 (Reuters/Internet): Kuwait established themselves as one of the hot favourites for the Asian Games soccer gold medal on Monday with an impressive 5-0 thrashing of Gulf rivals United Arab Emirates (UAE) in their opening second round group match.

South Korea beat World Cup 2002 co-hosts Japan 2-0 in a dull game in the other Group J match while defending champions Uzbekistan had no trouble in whipping North Korea 4-0 and Turkmenistan survived a late scare to edge India 3-2 in Group I.

Uzbekistan has not been seriously tested yet and should go through to the knockout quarter-final stage as one of the top two teams in Group I.

But unless the Uzbeks show something special when facing more serious opposition, they could well lose their title as Kuwait's performance put them alongside China, with four European-based players in their squad, as hot favourites for the gold medal.

A second-half hat-trick by big striker Jassem Al-Huwaidi set the seal on an impressive performance from the Gulf champions, a title Kuwait won last month.

But Czech coach Milan Macala refused to get carried away or write off anyone's chances of qualifying for the knock-out quarter-final stage

from the strongest second round line-up.

This is only the first match. In every game there is danger," he said. "Today was a very jolly good result, that's all."

He said with Kuwait and the UAE meeting often, the first goal in matches between them was of crucial psychological importance.

Hani Al-Sager obliged his coach in just the sixth minute, latching onto a fine chip over the UAE defence and firing past goalkeeper Jumaa Rashid.

In the 36th minute, Al-Sager turned provider, lobbing a short gentle centre onto the head of Farj Laheeb who made no mistake with a glancing header from five metres.

The UAE came out for the second half determined to get even and twice shaved the post from close range and had one header cleared off the line by a defender.

But Al-Huwaidi, a big man with speed, blasted any chance of a UAE come back in the 68th minute, seizing on a defensive mistake to race 25 metres before cracking the ball past Rashid.

In the 82nd minute, Al-Huwaidi was on hand to help the ball over the line after a goalmouth melee, and three minutes later he rounded off an excellent game with a goal of real class.

Controlling a pass on his chest, then sweeping imperiously past a defender with the ball having barely touched the ground, Al-Huwaidi clipped it

past Rashid with ease.

All four Group J teams have to play again on Wednesday, another thing Macala said made it too early to start calling Kuwait title favourites.

"We only have one day's rest. There's no time to relax. This is a tough tournament," he said.

South Korea's win was comfortable, but Japan, who have brought their under-21 side which is preparing for the 2000 Sydney Olympics, were hardly tough opposition. The Japanese rarely troubled the South Korean defence and looked short of class.

South Korean top scorer Choi Yong-soo opened his account for the penalty spot in the 31st minute after Japanese goalkeeper Yuta Minami was adjudged to have brought down Lee Dong-gook as the Korean striker tried to go round him.

Two minutes into the second half, Choi struck his sixth goal of the tournament with many in the crowd yelling for offside as he moved smoothly onto a header into the danger area and banged the ball into the net off the underside of the bar.

India, which only just failed to get a draw with Japan in the first round, almost shocked Turkmenistan in their first second round match.

Down to goals from Dmitriy Nejelev (39th minute) Muslim Agaev (48th) and Igor Kislov (66th), the Indians stormed back in the last 10 minutes as I.M. Vijayan and Tushar Rakesh both scored.

Asian rivals aim to loosen
Korean stranglehold



BANGKOK, Dec 7: Traditional hockey skills are set for a dramatic revival as former giants India and Pakistan attempt to dislodge South Korea from the Asian Games pinnacle, reports AFP.

The 10-nation men's tournament, which starts here on Tuesday, assumes added significance as the winner gains a direct entry into the 2000 Sydney Olympics and leaves the rest battling a treacherous qualifying route.

The supremely-fit Koreans rode on their aggressive European style to end the sub-continent's domination by winning two of the last three Asian Games titles.

South Korea's wins at home in Seoul in 1986 and in Hiroshima in 1994 forced India and Pakistan to modify their tactics, a decision that proved disastrous for both teams.

India, eight-time Olympic champions, finished eighth in the Atlanta Olympics and ninth at this year's World Cup in the Netherlands.

Pakistan, who won their seventh Asian Games title in 1990 and the World Cup in 1994,

failed to make the finals of both events next time around.

Worried officials in both countries reacted swiftly.

Pakistan sacked coach Isaluddin Siddiqui and stalwarts like versatile playmaker Shahbaz Ahmed and goalkeeper Mansoor Ahmed.

India, with little reserve strength to choose from, retained the players but brought in a new coach Maharaj Kishen Kaushik.

Pakistan's current coach Shahnaz Sheikh, a former international, said it was a mistake to ape the Europeans.

"We have overhauled the whole team, nearly 75 per cent of the team has been changed after the Commonwealth Games in September and the improvement is already showing."

Pakistan, which failed to reach the semifinals of the Commonwealth Games, finished runner-up to the Netherlands at last month's Champions' Trophy in Lahore.

Shahnaz, like his Indian counterpart Kaushik, knows the Koreans will be hard to beat, but he remains optimistic.

"I think we have found a clue

to match the aggressive Korean strategy. We are ready for them," he said, but warned the absence of injured captain Mohammad Usman could prove crucial for his team's chances.

The Koreans, however, have little to fear. They defeated India in both the Atlanta Olympics and the World Cup and overcame Pakistan 4-2 in the recent Champions' Trophy.

"We want to win badly," a South Korean official said. "It will take the pressure off us for the Olympics and allow us to experiment for the next two years."

India, who have the Koreans in their preliminary group along with China, Bangladesh and Singapore, realise this tournament is a last-ditch opportunity to return to the elite group.

"It's now or never," said Kaushik, who took over in September before the Commonwealth Games, where India were beaten by hosts Malaysia in the semifinals.

"I am confident we will take one of the two semifinal berths from our group. After that, we'll see... anything can happen," the Indian coach said.

SIX NO TRUMPS
A K Sayeedul Huq

BOTH THE OPPONENTS DID NOT FIND THE KILLING SPADE LEAD (Hand # 144)

North			
♠ A J 9 6 4			
♥ S None			
♦ A 8 6 3			
♣ A 10 8 6 4			
East			
♠ S K 10 3			
♥ H 10 9 7 4			
♦ D K Q 2			
♣ C J 5 2			
South (D)			
♠ S 5			
♥ H A K Q J 8			
♦ D 10 9 7 4			
♣ C K 9 7			

Bidding			
South	West	North	East
1 Heart	Pass	1 Spade	Pass
2 Hearts	Pass	3 Diamonds	Pass
3 No Trumps	Pass		

With a void in partner's suit, North first showed his five-carder Spade, and then Diamond at three level which should have been the final contract but South ambitiously bid three No Trumps. The combined hands had a total of 22 HCP with no particular advantage for No Trump play.

THE PLAY
West led Jack of Diamonds, dummy played small and East played 2. West continued with 5 of Diamonds, dummy again played low, East won the trick with the Queen and returned a small Club. West won with Queen and led back the Ace and another Club. A bad move as this gave the declarer two Club tricks. In addition he made two Diamonds, four Hearts and a Spade for his 3 No Trumps contract.

A Spade attack by either opponent would have set the contract. In that case, the defence could have collected two Spades, two Diamonds and two Clubs.

At close of play England, having scored 373 in their first innings, were 207 for five in their second for an overall lead of 280 runs.

Victoria were all out for 300 in their first innings at the Melbourne Cricket Ground.

But England's satisfaction was soured by Thorpe's injury problems with the third Ashes Test starting in Adelaide on Friday.

The Surrey lefthander, who missed last week's second Test in Perth with the back problem, retired hurt after making one run in England's second innings.

England manager Graham Gooch said the recurrence placed Thorpe in doubt for Adelaide, where England will try to level the series.

"He had to play in this game to prove his fitness... what has happened now has got to cast doubt over his involvement in that game," Gooch said.

England physiotherapist Wayne Morton said Thorpe felt stiffness in his lower back 20 minutes before batting.

"He really has a feeling of not being very safe in his back," Morton said. "It limits him to where he is unable to move."

Morton said Thorpe's condition would be further assessed on Tuesday morning.

Another frustrating sight for England was seeing opener Michael Atherton caught hooking again.

Atherton was brilliantly caught at fine leg by Matthew Inness from the fast bowling of Brad Williams for 14 in a mirror image of his dismissal in the first Test against Australia in Brisbane.

The opener has continually hooked short balls this tour, getting a top edge that appeared set to sail for six runs.

But Inness retreated towards the fence to take a fine falling catch a metre inside the boundary rope.

John Crawley top-scored for the tourists with 68, with captain Alec Stewart scoring 36.

Victorian pace bowler Ashley Gilbert claimed two wickets for 44 runs in his first class debut.

Earlier Victoria lost their last five wickets to be all out for

300, with England guided by pace bowler Dean Headley.

He finished with five for 58 off 27.1 overs, took two catches and was instrumental in a run out.

The tourists were expected to set Victoria a run chase on Tuesday on a shortened day requiring a minimum of 67 overs.