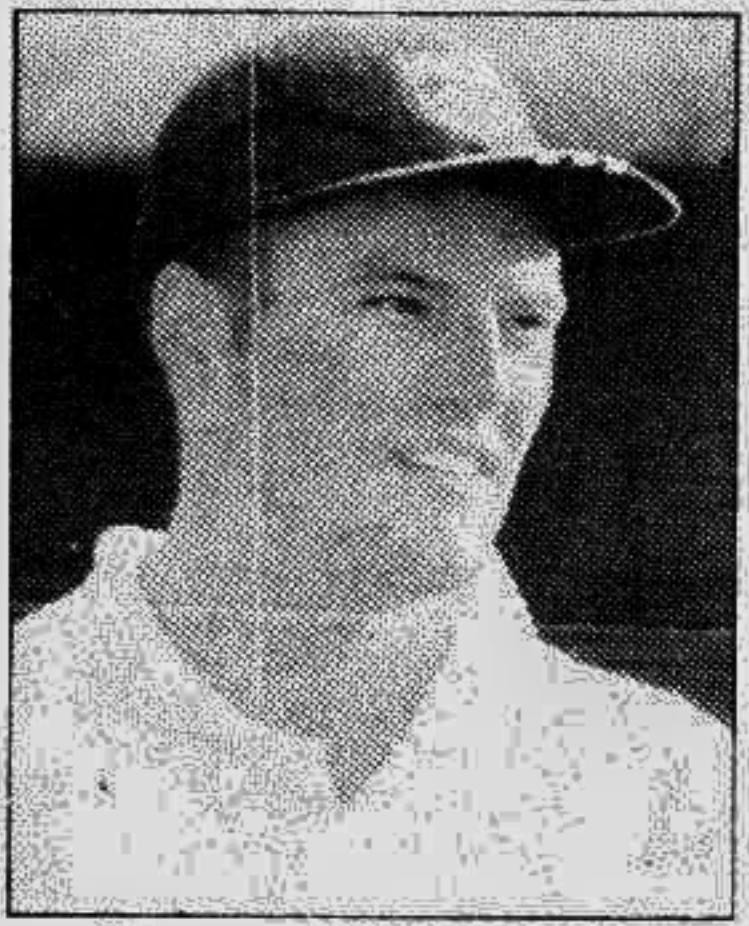


Column One SPORTS TALK



Stuart MacGill

(Australia's new-found leg-spinning star)
The whole time they were in Western Australia, two or three weeks. I was employed as net bowler and used to hang out in the rooms with them. I worked with each of them individually — fortunately they didn't remember any of it.
Recalling the time when he bowled at the touring Englishmen as a net bowler during the 1994-95 Ashes series.

Spinners feature in Brothers' victory

Tarun bow out of league race

Sports Reporter

Brilliant bowling from three tweakers—Ehsanul Haque, Reaz Ahmed and debutant Imran Rahim -- gave Brothers Union their fifth win in the Janakantha Premier Division Cricket League. They comfortably defeated new powerhouse Surjo Tarun by 66 runs at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

With the victory, the Gopibagh outfit, who finished second in the elite league last season, joined leaders Biman and defending champions Abahani at the top of the 12-team table with 10 points. However, if Biman, who have one match in hand with an unbeaten record, can defeat Kalabagan in their sixth match which begins today, they will go up by two points. Both Brothers and Abahani have played six matches so far.

On the other hand, the defeat almost threw away star-studded Surjo Tarun out of the title race with their second defeat in six matches. They are now jointly

balls, apparently thought he had his job done when Surjo Tarun were on 65 in the 22nd over. The tall right-hander paid the price of lethargy while trying to take a single off Ehsan.



He was run out by a magnificent direct throw from Brothers Union skipper Khaled Mahmud.

Two-down Ridwan Hasan returned in a similar fashion after four overs without scoring any runs. But the blame should go to his senior partner Al-Shahriar, who called Ridwan but then suddenly took a U-turn from the half-way mark, which

saw both batsmen standing at the striking end together.

After Ridwan's departure, Sri Lankan Naveed Newaz joined Al-Shahriar and put on 50 runs for the fourth wicket to raise some hopes in the Surjo Tarun dressing room. They took the scoreboard to 136 before lunch. But again it was Al-Shahriar, who threw his wicket in the last ball of the first session. The tall right-hander drove Ehsan to the safe hands of Shahriar Hossain at the long-on fence to throw away the match from a possible winning position.

Skipper Minhazul Abedin then joined Naveed Nawaz as the last recognised batsman and added 37 runs after lunch. But, everything was over when Nawaz, the left-handed Sri Lankan, was caught by Khaled Mahmud at cover off another Ehsan delivery.

Surjo Tarun lost their last five wickets in less than ten overs adding another 27 runs to their total.



Surjo Tarun's Sri Lankan batsman sweeps during their Janakantha Premier cricket league encounter yesterday.

— Star photo

Boost sports WHIZZ KID
COMPETITION FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN
Competition-109

✓ Tick the Correct Answers
Post to The Daily Star
Win attractive prizes

Competition closes at 8 pm
Jan 8 '99 and draw shortly afterwards

- Which country topped the medals table in the 13th Asian Games?
China India Japan
- How many medals did Bangladesh clinch at the Asian Games?
None One Two
- Who scored the first century in this year's Premier cricket league?
Azam Shawkal Selim
- Where will the 14th Asian Games be held?
Paris Pusan Pyongyang
- Which team won the AB Bank Senior Div TT title?
Jatrabari Ansars Biman

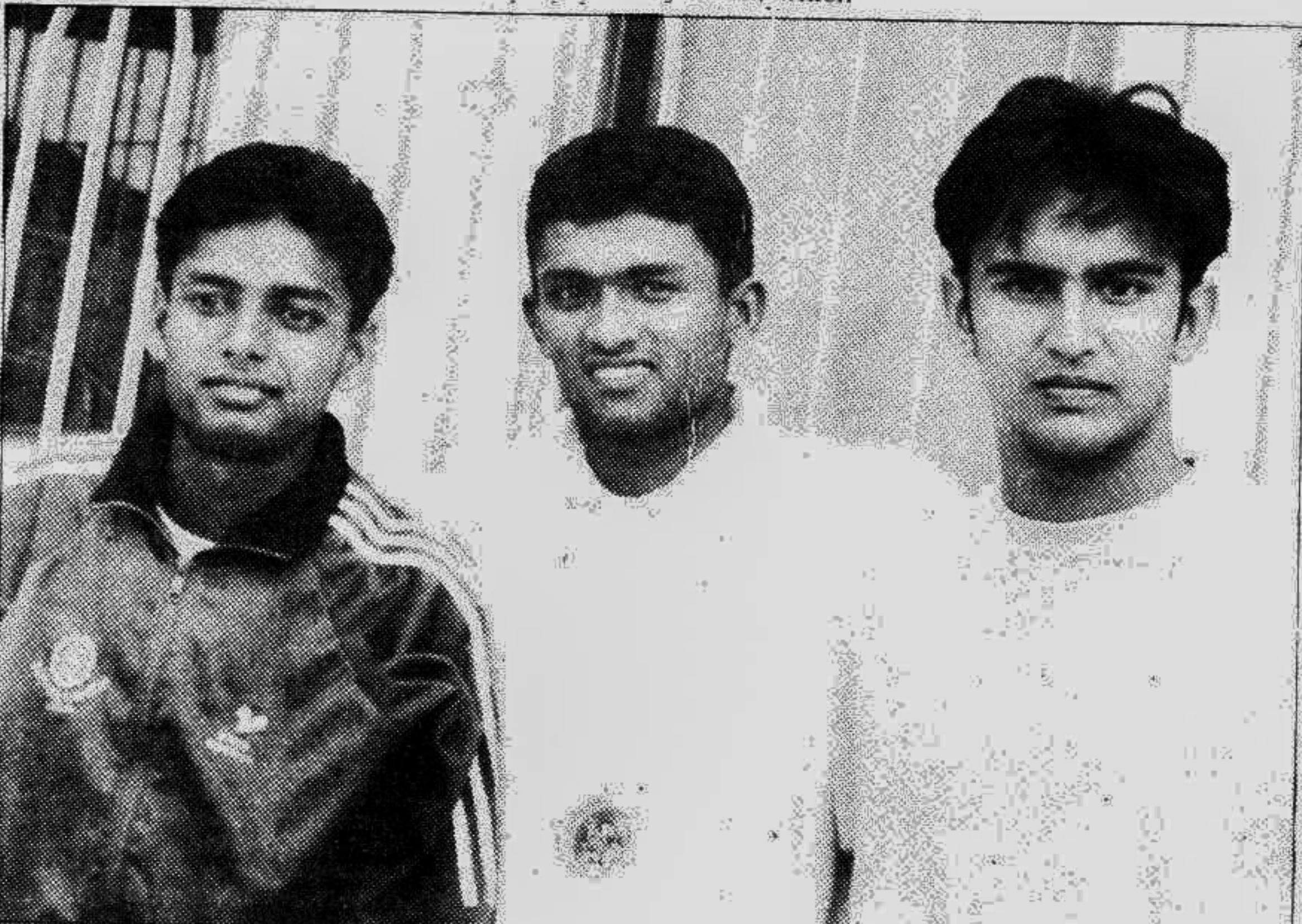
Name

Class Roll No.

School Address

Phone: (if any)

POWERED WITH
EN-VITS
ENERGY RELEASING VITAMINS



THREE MUSKETEERS! Brothers Union's spin trio of Reaz Ahmed (L), Ehsanul Haque (C) and Imran Rahim pose after dismissing Surjo Tarun for 200 at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

— Star photo

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of the Janakantha Premier Division cricket league match between Brothers Union Club and Surjo Tarun Club concluded at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday:

BROTHERS UNION: Overnight 266 all out in 75.2 overs (K. Mahmud 75, A Hanif 67, Jahangir 24, Sanwar 22; Rafiqul 5/45)

SURJO TARUN

Athar Ali c Ehsan b A Hanif	12
Parvez run out	19
Al-Shahriar c Shahriar b Ehsan	40
Ridwan run out	36
N Nawaz c K Mahmud b Ehsan	0
M Abedin not out	27
Enamul c Shafuiddin b Imran	1
K Masood c Jahangir b Imran	2
Rafiqul c Jahangir b Reaz	1
Anis b Reaz	3
N Nazir c sub b Ehsan	0
Extras: (b-4, lb-19, nb-7, w-29)	59
Total: (All out in 58.1 overs)	200

Fall of wks: 1/40; 2/65; 3/76; 4/136; 5/173; 6/178; 7/184; 8/187; 9/193; 10/200.

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Shahnewaz	4	1	12	0
Shafuiddin	4	1	12	0
A Hanif	9	2	35	1
Imran	15	2	23	2
S Sharma	6	1	19	0
K Mahmud	6	0	19	0
Reaz	7	0	23	2
Ehsan	7.1	0	31	3

Results: Brothers Union won by 66 runs.

TODAY'S MATCHES

Janakantha Premier Division Cricket League:
Biman v Kalabagan KC
(Venue: Bangabandhu National Stadium)
Ajax SC v S Bima KS
(Venue: BKSP)
Agrani Bank v Victoria SC
(Venue: Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium)

Olympic solidarity course begins

A five-day Olympic solidarity course on sports leadership begins at the conference room of the National Sports Council today, reports BSS.

President of Bangladesh Olympic Association (BOA) and Chief of Bangladesh Army Lt General Mohammad Mostafizur Rahman will inaugurate the course at 4 pm.

At least 37 sports organisers from Dhaka and other parts of the country will take part in the course, organised by BOA with the financial assistance from the Olympic Solidarity Fund of the International Olympic Committee.

Gavin returns for one dayers

HAMILTON, Jan 6: Gavin Larsen ended a lengthy absence from the New Zealand cricket team Wednesday, being named in the 12-man side to play the first two limited-over matches against India, reports AP.

The 36-year-old medium pace bowler was out of international cricket for 13 months before being named to play in the day-night match Saturday in Taupo and the second match in Napier on Tuesday. The teams will play five matches in the series.

Larsen and Canterbury all-rounder Chris Harris replace current Test players opener Matthew Bell and offspinner Paul Wiseman.

Larsen's last one-day international was against Australia 13 months ago when he limped off the Melbourne Cricket Ground with a stress fracture to his foot. His comeback last season was slowed by a later back injury.

Larsen's return gives him an opportunity to be the seventh New Zealand bowler to reach the milestone of 100 wickets. He is three shy of the century which Harris reached last year against Zimbabwe.

The New Zealand squad: Stephen Fleming (captain), Roger Twose, Matthew Horne, Craig McMillan, Chris Cairns, Chris Harris, Adam Parore, Dion Nash, Daniel Vettori, Gavin Larsen, Simon Doull, Geoff Allott.

Azhar's formula for failure

HAMILTON, Jan 6: India's cricket captain Mohammad Azharuddin said a glut of limited over games was partly to blame for his team's failure to end a run of overseas woes in the series against New Zealand, reports AP.

New Zealand secured a draw in the third Test Wednesday to win the series 1-0. Despite boasting the world's best batsman, Sachin Tendulkar, and match-winning spinner Anil Kumble, India have now gone 19 Tests with a victory away from the subcontinent. The only series they have won abroad since beating England in 1986 was in the subcontinent against Sri Lanka.

Azharuddin admitted India were under-prepared coming to New Zealand after playing just four Tests on top of 41 one-day internationals in 1998.

"There was no doubt about it, it has been tough adopting to Test cricket after so many one-dayers," Azharuddin said. "But we have to play the one-dayers too, there is no way out of it."

He said the New Zealanders deserved to win the series and bemoaned the inconsistency of a team which performed well only in patches.

"You can't expect to win after

you had batted, fielded and bowled badly when it mattered," Azharuddin said.

"We showed a lot of fight in spells, and we showed what we are capable of, but when it mattered we weren't good enough to put the hand up and be counted."

The first Test was a complete washout and India had some good efforts in the final two matches. Tendulkar and Azharuddin scored hundreds in the lost Test while Rahul Dravid became only the third Indian player to make twin centuries in the drawn game



AZHARUDDIN

Wednesday.

"We had the right team nucleus coming here, we talked about winning, but when it came to delivering we just couldn't," Azharuddin said. "We have let a lot of advantages slip away. You just can't let it happen."

"We haven't bowled well at all in this series and it has been compounded by our fielding. Just look at the number of dropped catches. You can't expect to drop catches and win at this level."

Azharuddin said India lacked a "collective" team effort.

"When we batted well, we didn't bowl well or catch and vice versa," he said. "The main problem with our batting was that we didn't get good opening stands and invariably it put the pressure on the middle order."

A country that produced two of the greatest all-time openers — Sunil Gavaskar and Vijay Merchant — is struggling to get a settled combination atop the order.

In the last 60 Tests India has tried out 25 different opening combinations, managing just eight century partnerships.

"Our problem is that we can't find a conventional opener. That is a lot to do with the type of flat wickets we produce," Azharuddin said. "It's because of the one-day influence."

Div I cricket

Uttara Sporting Club beat Gopibagh Friends Association by virtue of losing less wickets in the First Division League at City Club ground yesterday, reports APB.

Sending in to bat first, Gopibagh were all out for 161 in 44.1 overs with middle order Azimul Haq contributing the highest 34 off 55 balls including five fours.

A 33-run came from extras as the second highest while tallenders Nadim Ahmed and Abhiht made 31 and 29 runs followed by opener Adil who scored 10 runs.

Ajanta and Sujon took three wickets each for 19 and 28 while Saifur Alam claimed two for 23.

In reply, Uttara managed same score in 50 overs with one wicket in hand.

Middle order Rashed Rana scored an unbeaten 50 off 109 balls featuring three fours and a six.

The other contributors are Bijan (15), Saiful (15), Intiar (13) and Ajanta (11).

Shaheen captured three wickets conceding 23 runs.

Sub-jr chess

Mohammad Javed and Syed Ejaz Hossain of Kamalapur were leading the 19th national sub-junior chess championship securing full four points after the fourth round matches at the NSC chess room yesterday, reports UNEB.

Javed beat Shahidul Islam Hirok while Ejaz defeated Obaidul Islam.

The players — holder Ruhul Islam, Bobby of Ansars, Farhad Hossain and Mohammad Ullah Mohan of Anushilan — were in the second place collecting 3.5 points after the day's round.

Parag, Ratul, Hirok, Arif, Obaid, Bari, Sagar, Mustafa and Newton have secured three points each to remain in the third position.

In the day's round, Bobby beat Mustafa, Farhad defeated Sajib, Mohan outplayed Sagar, Ratul overcame Belal, Arif overpowered Ripon, Tanveer overran Mrimoy, Parag defeated Jero, Bari beat Satil and Sagar overcame Zia.

The fifth round matches will be held today (Thursday) at 2pm.

Australian fans upset tourists

COLOMBO, Jan 6: Sri Lankans on Wednesday criticised Australian cricket fans for taunting controversial off-spinner Muralitharan during the just-finished match against Australia A team that Sri Lanka won, reports AP.

When the off-spinning sensation came to bowl, spectators in the crowd of 10,000 booed and shouted "no-ball," wrote Elmo Rodrigopulle of the state-run Daily News.

"We hope the spectators will stop showing their ignorance at other venues," Rodrigopulle added.

Late last year, top Australian umpire Darrel Hair accused Muralitharan, 26, of illegal bowling action. During Tuesday's match, Muralitharan, who took two wickets in his tour debut to guide the world champions to a 24-run win, was not called for single "no-ball."

Muralitharan suffers from a birth deformity in his right arm that forces him to use an unusual double jointed wrist action that Hair and Ross Emerson, another Australian umpire, had deemed illegal.

But the International Cricket Council has accepted medical and video evidence from the Sri Lankan board which proved Muralitharan's unusual bowling action was the result of a birth defect, and therefore could not be considered illegal.

India's away jinx extended

Test series New Zealand's



CAIRNS... m-o-m

HAMILTON, New Zealand, Jan 6 (Reuters/AP): New Zealand won their home series against India today after forcing a draw with a big second innings score in the third and final Test.

New Zealand take the series 1-0 by virtue of their four-wicket win in the second Test in Wellington. The first Test, in Dunedin, was abandoned due to rain without a ball bowled.

New Zealand put an Indian victory out of reach on the last day at Hamilton with a mighty second innings, led by a punishing 126 from man-of-the-match Chris Cairns.

The all-rounder also took six wickets in the match. Fleming declared at the fall of Cairns, who holed out to Dravid at long off trying to hit leg spinner Anil Kumble out of the park.



CAIRNS... m-o-m

Cairns, who fashioned New Zealand's second Test win with an equally fine 61, cracked 16 fours and three sixes in his 260-minute stay.

He improved on his maiden Test century — 120 against Zimbabwe in Auckland in 1995-96.

"It was a huge achievement," New Zealand skipper Stephen Fleming said. "We wanted to finish the series with a win, but there wasn't enough time left for it. It is just the start of what we want to achieve in 1999."

Fleming said he had delayed his declaration, because he

wanted to make sure the Indians were out of the game.

"The pitch had hardly deteriorated and there was no way we could have bowled them out. Also, three of our bowlers were injured or ill," he said.

Fleming said his side has developed the fighting qualities it has lacked in the past to beat big names in world cricket and it was commendable overall.

When Fleming declared at 464 for eight 13 minutes after lunch, India were 414 runs behind and could only hope to see off an unlikely defeat.

Their task was made even easier after injuries forced New Zealand to take the field without two of their specialist bowlers.

Dion Nash, who scored a fine 63 while putting on 118 with Cairns for the 6th wicket, had back pain and Daniel Vettori went to hospital for a precautionary X-ray on a finger hurt in fielding practice. Simon Doull was suffering heatstroke but bowled four overs.

Selector Ross Dykes said all three would be fit for the first of five one-day internationals against India on Saturday.

With little left to salvage from the match except some pride, India's Rahul Dravid and Saurav Ganguly hammered New Zealand's part-time bowlers and both reached unbeaten centuries by stumps.

They figured in a 194-run stand in just 136 minutes.

After Ganguly scored an unbeaten 101, Dravid, who hit 190 in the first innings, got his second century of the match — 103 not out off 136 balls including 16 boundaries. Ganguly's sixth test hundred in 23 games included 15 boundaries and two sixes.

Dravid is only the third Indian to score two hundreds in a Test after Sunil Gavaskar and Vijay Hazare. Gavaskar has achieved it three times in his career.

Indian captain Mohammad Azharuddin's body language conveyed more than words his disappointment at India's third defeat in consecutive away series against New Zealand.

He said he did not know how to end India's dismal Test record overseas. But India coach Anshuman Gaekwad blamed poor catching and a

lack of bowling firepower.

"We batted all right and the bowling wasn't too bad, although there is no doubt that three strike bowlers were not enough to beat this fine side," he said.

The failure of India's openers during the tour was another disappointment for the visitors, Ajay Jadeja and Navjot Sidhu went cheaply in all four Test innings played in the series.

New Zealand still faces their biggest challenge of the season, against South Africa at home straight next month.

New Zealand coach Steve Rixon described the series win as "a stepping stone to England '99", but when asked about New Zealand's prospects in the series against South Africa, he said: "I am not thinking that far ahead."

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at the end of the third cricket Test between New

NEW ZEALAND: First innings 366 (McMillan 92, Twose 87; Srinath 5-95)				
INDIA: First innings 416 (Dravid 190, Srinath 76; Cairns 4-107)				
NEW ZEALAND: Second innings (overnight 323 for 6)				
Bell	b	Tendulkar	25	
Horne	c	Mongia	b Srinath	23
Fleming	b	Prasad	18	
Twose	lbw	b Tendulkar	4	
McMillan	c	Mongia	b Robin	84
Parore	c	Robin	b Kumble	50
Cairns	c	Dravid	b Kumble	126
Nash	run out		63	
Vettori	not out		43	
Extras: (lb-9, nb-7, w-1, nb-8)			25	
Total: (For eight wickets declared)			464	

Fall of wks: 1-46; 2-69; 3-76; 4-85; 5-225; 6-225; 7-372; 8-464.

Bowler O M R W

Prasad	33	8	75	1
Robin	19	3	102	1
Srinath	27	6	90	1
Kumble	45.5	13	124	2
Tendulkar	7	0	30	2
Ganguly	6	1	27	0

INDIA: Second innings

Jadeja	c	Parore	b Cairns	21
Bell	lbw	b Cairns		13
Dravid	not out			103
Ganguly	not out			101
Extras: (lb-9, nb-2)				11
Total: (for two wickets)				249

Fall of wickets: 1-33; 2-55.

Bowler O M R W

Doull	4	0	17	0
Cairns	9	1	30	2
McMillan	17	4	59	0
Wiseman	12	0	80	0
Twose	9.1	0	50	0
Horne	1	0	4	0

Result: Match drawn.

Man-of-the-match: Chris Cairns.

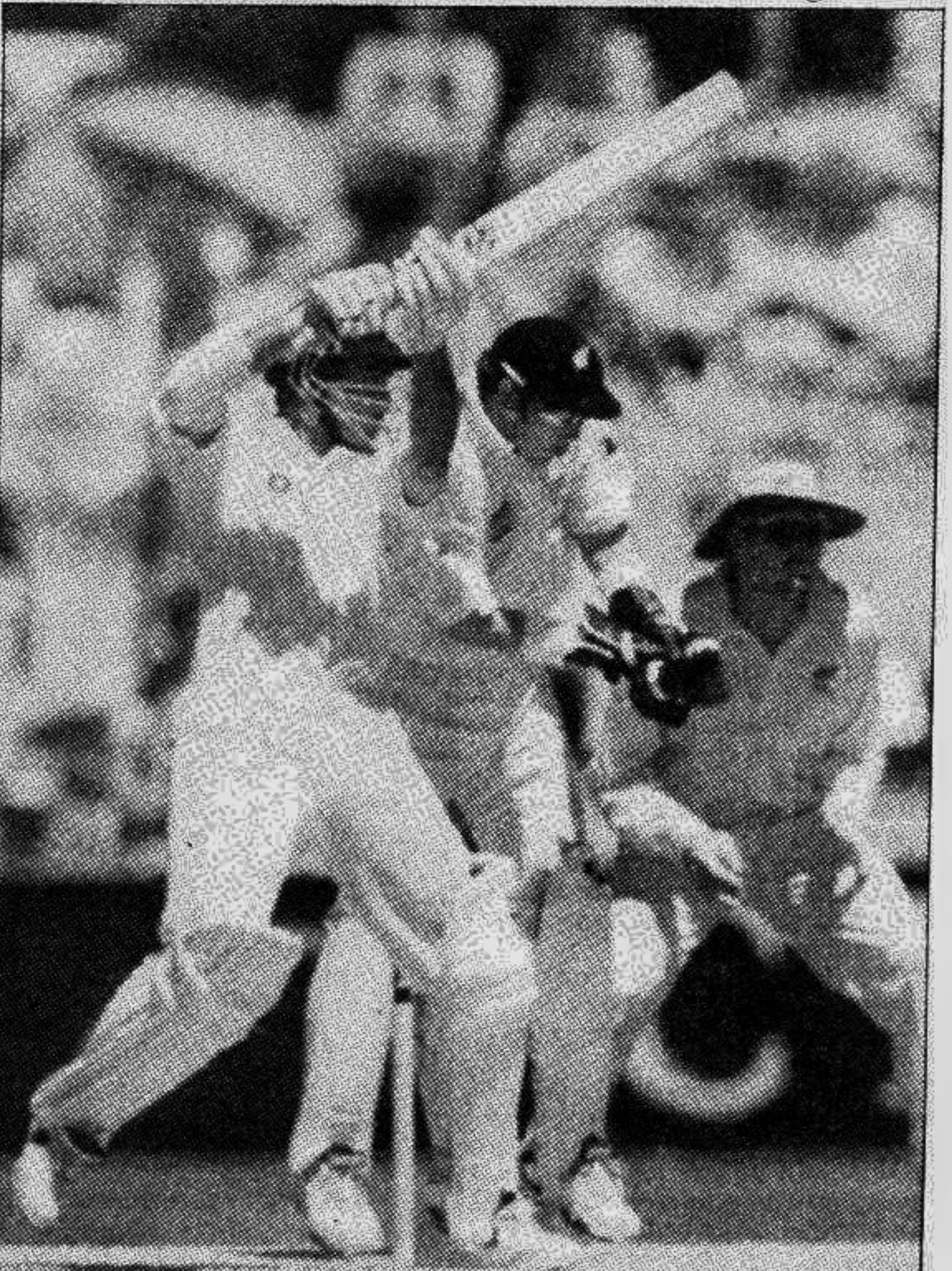
First Test in Dunedin: Abandoned.

Second Test in Wellington: New Zealand won by four wickets.

New Zealand won the series 1-0.

BOA meeting held

The newly formed ad-hoc committee of Bangladesh Olympic Association met at the Sena Kunja yesterday for exchanging views with sports journalists and federation officials, reports APB.



Saurav Ganguly of India drives of the backfoot during the course of his hundred at Hamilton yesterday.

— AP/UNB photo