

### Green Delta hockey Abahani beat Sadharan Bima

Sports Reporter

Two goals in either half propelled title aspirants Abahani to a 2-0 win over Sadharan Bima Krishna Sangstha in their Green Delta Premier Division hockey league opener at the Moulana Bhasani Stadium yesterday afternoon.

In a dull and boring encounter, Abahani dominated the entire proceedings but failed to score more than twice because of poor performance by the forwards. Defender Maminur Rashid struck the first goal from a short corner at the stroke of the breathe while midfielder Mahboob Harun sealed the match converting another short corner in the 68th minute.

Yellow cards: Giasuddin Rubel (Abahani) and Hasan (S Bima)

#### TODAY'S MATCH

Green Delta Insurance Premier Division Hockey League  
Mariner Young's Club v Ajax SC (3:30 pm)

### Harkness on sale

LIVERPOOL, England, Mar 9 (Reuters/ Internet): Liverpool will sell defender Steve Harkness to Benfica providing they can be sure the 1.21 million US dollar fee will be paid, club sources said on Tuesday.

The 27-year-old travelled to Portugal on Tuesday to discuss a move to the club now coached by former Liverpool player and manager Graeme Souness.

But Liverpool are taking steps to make sure they are not caught up in Benfica's financial problems.

#### OPINION

## No more cricket at Eden

The past few days saw a wave of opinions voiced out by a number of readers of this newspaper relating to the titled subject.

Although there were some sparkling differences in each opinion it was a unanimous conclusion that whatever happened on the last two days of the fateful match at the Eden Gardens last month was indeed a disgraceful occurrence for both the game and Calcutta city in general. It was a cruel blow to the spirit of this historic match which was supposed to convey peace to an otherwise strained relationship between our two major neighbours. The fact that the match was finally conducted till a result was obtained was the only silver lining. While fans at both sides now sit back and dwell on what went right or wrong as far as cricket is concerned, the incidents have triggered a chain of reactions from different quarters. Will Eden Gardens be allowed to hold any more international matches in future? Should a ban be imposed? It remains to be seen.

Meanwhile, a thought has also crossed the neutral mind. Is the Eden Gardens the first and only venue in World Cricket to harbour such hooliganism as we have had the chance to witness in recent times? One could be excused for thinking so after having read various commentaries where a non-to-subtle attempt has been made to start the Eden Gardens crowd as the one and only unsparing and partisan group in the world.

Having followed the game earnestly for over twenty years now, the answer is NO. In fact one feels that it is yet another episode of a long running series that has haunted the game of cricket for years. A series which should have been closed and banned a long time ago.

In retrospect crowd trouble in an international cricket match has always been a banal and very few countries can boast of a clean slate in this issue. One of Pakistan's most celebrated cricketers and former captain Zaheer Abbas in his autobiography, Zed-Zaheer Abbas while commenting on crowd reactions of his own country wrote, "The reputation is an unenviable one. There is a sorry chapter of disturbances, motivated by everything from political unrest to sheer boredom... Chair fights, stone throwing and ugly skirmishes with the

### Notts sign Drakes

LONDON, March 9 (AFP/ Internet): Nottinghamshire have signed former West Indies all-rounder Vasbert Drakes as their new overseas player following the decision to part company with Zimbabwe's Paul Strang, the English County Championship side announced Tuesday.

The 29-year-old Barbadian, who has played five one-day internationals for the West Indies, is being given another chance to make an impact in county cricket after having two seasons with Sussex.

Drakes has made a name for himself with Border in South Africa by playing a major part in their success in the Super Sport series, taking 56 first-class wickets to help them reach the final of the four-day competition, which they eventually lost to Western Province.

Drakes' decision to base himself in South Africa has meant that he is ineligible for the West Indies, due to their strict regulations about players playing a certain amount of domestic cricket in the Caribbean.

## Complacency at the core of Caribbean downfall



LONDON, Mar 9 (Reuters/ Internet): Complacency and lack of investment during the great years laid the seeds of West Indies' calamitous fall from grace at Port-of-Spain on Monday.

West Indies, who ruled the cricketing world from 1980 to 1995, were dismissed for 51 in their second innings in the first Test against Australia, their lowest total in Test cricket.

It was their sixth Test loss in a row after a 5-0 defeat by South Africa and the prospects for the remainder of the four-Test series against Australia look bleak.

A players' strike before the South African tour, headed by captain Brian Lara and his deputy Carl Hooper, revealed the open divisions between the team and the West Indies Cricket Board (WICB).

Once in South Africa, Lara's slipshod approach to both the captaincy and his batting betrayed the arrogance developed by leading West Indies players over the years.

Finally, the results in South Africa showed the stream of talent in the Caribbean has dried up, at least temporarily, partly through the counter-attractions of U.S. sport and partly through the failure of the WICB to invest at the grass-roots level.

The despair on the faces of the spectators in Port-of-Spain on Monday as they watched Glenn McGrath and Jason Gillespie scythe through the feeble West Indies batting was eloquent testament to the grip cricket retains in the

Caribbean. There are no more passionate or knowledgeable cricket watchers in the world and despite the predictably optimistic post-match soundbites from Lara they know their team are unlikely to match let alone de-



BRIAN LARA

feat the upbeat Australians.

"All in all I think the team is going to gain something positive out of this, which is most important," Lara said.

"We can't dwell too much on negatives. We are one-nil down."

"I know it is easier said than done but if we get 300-350 on the board we are going to be competitive because the bowlers seem to be able to do their job."

In the first innings Lara batted with the skill and determination he singularly failed

to show against South Africa. But, in the absence of Shivnarine Chanderpaul and Hooper, he was the only batsman likely to surmount for long the vagaries of the pitch and the skill of the four-pronged Australian attack.

"I think that it is important for myself and West Indies cricket that I try my best to solve my batting problems and see how best I can go out and get similar scores like I used to four years ago," Lara said.

The problems with the bowling are less widespread but the West Indies attack is still carried by the ageing warriors Courtney Walsh and Curtly Ambrose, the only pair in the side to show consistently the impersonal pride which distinguished their side's play during the 1980s.

Lara, himself, is on probation as captain and his position will be reviewed after the first two Tests, although a likely replacement is not immediately apparent.

Tony Cozier, the respected Barbadian commentator and writer, said the positions of manager Clive Lloyd and coach Malcolm Marshall were also in jeopardy.

This is their sixth successive defeat and in any other international sport the coach and manager would feel compelled to hand in their resignations," he said.

Cozier also criticised the West Indies Cricket Board decision to put Lara on probation.

"Either he was their man or he wasn't," Cozier said. "If they were going to replace him they should have bitten the bullet."

Reaz Shaheed

On the last day of the first test of the 1982-83 Ashes series at Perth, a group of drunken English hooligans clashed with Terry Alderman, the Australian pace bowler fielding near the boundary and in the process dislocated his shoulder and damaged his nerves. Alderman was forced out of the game for two years!

In 1983, after India was comprehensively beaten by the West Indies at the Eden Gardens the crowd threw rubbish at Gavaskar's wife marsheneil who was standing alongside Clive Lloyd's wife near the pavilion!

In his autobiography All round View Imran Khan expressed his amazement at the treatment given to his team that toured Sri Lanka in 1986 for a three Test series. In one of the tests the crowd was so abusive and caustic in their slogans and comments that a very ugly incident involving Javed Miandad and a section of the crowd near the pavilion took place where a seemingly agitated Miandad ran up the stairs of the gallery to beat up a spectator. With the issue of biased umpiring already colouring the matches, the Pakistanis were so frustrated at that stage of the tour that it was on the verge of being called off and it took the supreme head of the then Pakistan government to intervene and calm down his players.

In the 1987 Test against India at Ahmedabad, Pakistani fielders near the boundary wore helmets to avoid possible injuries caused by persistent stone throwing from the crowd.

In 1988 when India toured the West Indies the Jamaican crowd were at it again and it took the then Windies Captain Viv Richards to do a la-Kalicharan act to pacify the crowd, who were incensed at the nature of his dismissal.

In the last one-day match of the 1989 Pakistan tour of India, play had to be called off after merely an hour in the face of growing crowd violence prompting Imran Khan, the then Pakistan captain, publicly condemning the crowd.

Memories of crowd trouble at the 1996 World Cup semifinal at the Eden Gardens and the subsequent abrupt end to the match are still fresh in the mind.

There was an incident similar to the one involving Javed Miandad at Sri Lanka in a neutral ground like Canada during

the 1997 Sahara Cup when Imzamar Huq (a soft spoken cricketer by nature) was so infuriated at the mindless taunting by an Indian supporter that he climbed up the gallery with his bat to beat up the man. Thanks to the timely intervention by the authorities the incident ended an early death.

Even as recently as last year when the Sri Lankans were touring Australia (termed by many cricketers as the best place to play cricket) their main strike bowler Muttiah Muralitharan came under a barrage of orchestrated boos and shouts of Cheat! Cheat! from the crowd whenever he bowled. It was so intense and upsetting that poor Murali lost his rhythm and confidence completely and came back from Australia a shattered man prompting his captain Arjuna Ranatunga (a soft spoken and articulate cricketer, who faced a similar treatment from the crowd) to say that he would never tour that country again.

There have been many other incidents but these are among the most glaring ones. However, for reason best known to ICC and a section of the popular press incidents like the above (with the odd exception of the 1996 World Cup semifinal) never followed the condemnation they thoroughly deserved. The result is for us to see.

Under these circumstances one tends to agree that such acts in other games like soccer would mean a severe punishment by FIFA. Remember the ban meted out to the English football clubs in the mid and late 80s because of the unruly English supporters. No one claims that the English crowd has softened since then but they now know that they are doing it at the cost of their clubs, and the authorities around the world know what to expect from them.

It is indeed in the best interest of cricket that a ball is set rolling before these recent condemnations of Eden Gardens take a purely political look, which a section of the popular press is trying to give. It is a curable cancer detected long time ago but was ignored to allow to raise its ugly head to millions watching the game now with the advent of the satellite channels. For the game of cricket to survive and flourish, time has now come for immediate and extreme measures strictly because it is a gentleman's game, after all.



Former Australia Test captain Mark Taylor sitting in front of a mega size Sydney 2000 Olympic Games ticket during a ceremony in the host city yesterday.

### Taylor joins Olympic movement

SYDNEY, Mar 9: Retired Australian cricket captain Mark Taylor will chase a new record after his recruitment by Sydney Olympic organizers to promote tickets for the 2000 Games, reports AP.

SOCOG is aiming to sell 9.6 million tickets for the Games, a record by a host city. It needs to sell about two-thirds of those to reach its ticket revenue targets.

Taylor quit the national captaincy last month and is expected to play his final game of first class cricket for New South Wales against Tasmania this weekend. Late last year he matched the Australian run scoring record of 334 set by Sir Donald Bradman.

"I've never been to an Olympic Games but as a sportsman I reckon it's going to be sensational," Taylor said. "I'll be informing people about when and where they can get tickets."

"When I was first approached I think I was like most Australians, I didn't know about the tickets and I thought most of them had gone, but that isn't the case."

Taylor will be seen in a series of television, radio and print advertisements starting Tuesday.

SOCOG chief executive Sandy Holloway said he planned to use other famous Australian sporting figures to help promote the Games.

### TV quiz show double faults!

LONDON, Mar 9 (Reuters/ Internet): What is the minimum number of strokes with which a tennis player can win a set?

A 29-year-old British warehouseman won 200,000 million US dollars on a television quiz show by giving the wrong answer, the Daily Mirror reported on Tuesday.

Faced with four choices Tony Kennedy went for the obvious - but incorrect - answer and said 24.

The computer on the popular prime time "Who Wants to Be a Millionaire" show immediately doubled his winnings and let him play on until he stopped to take his 125,000 pounds in winnings.

But the correct answer was 12. To win a set a tennis player must win six games. Theoretically, a player could win his three service games in 12 shots and win his opponent's three service games without taking a stroke, if the opponent double faulted each time.

"It's a trick question which coaches sometimes give to youngsters," the Mirror quoted a spokesman at a London tennis school as saying.

A spokesman for the quiz show said he did not know whether Kennedy would be allowed to keep the prize money.

### Jonty attributes it to hard work

CHRISTCHURCH, New Zealand, Mar 9: South African batsman Jonty Rhodes, in the middle of a brilliant scoring streak, remains down to earth about his current place in history, reports AP.

"I don't think I'm the next Don Bradman and that's for sure," Rhodes said. "I just feel that the way I'm playing at the moment I'm at least not throwing my wicket away like I used to."

Twin centuries in this week's match against New Zealand A took Rhodes to an average of 495 from his past six innings, where he has scored three hundreds and been out just once.

"The way I am playing, I am making the most of every time I get to the wicket," Rhodes said. "I've tried to minimize the bad shots and maximize the bad balls. That's what Graeme Pollock spoke to us about three years ago. I've really tried hard to make sure my shot selections have been on top."

Rhodes made a mediocre start to his Test career with his first 31 tests bearing 1303 runs at 29.61 with a solitary hundred against Sri Lanka in Colombo in 1993-94.

He fell out of favour but since returning to the side to secure the No. 6 spot against England at Edgbaston last year, Rhodes has scored 808 runs in 11 Tests averaging 50.50 with two Test centuries.

"I'm just trying my hardest to be at the crease for a long time," Rhodes said.

## Tubby rallies behind Warne



SYDNEY, March 9 (AFP/ Internet): The strength of the current Australian cricket team can be gauged by questions about champion leg-spinner Shane Warne's place in the world's No. 1 Test team, former skipper Mark Taylor said Tuesday.

Australia routed the once-great West Indies for 51 to seal a crushing 312-run victory in the first Test in Trinidad Monday, giving Steve Waugh a dream debut as Test captain.

Taylor, who retired from international cricket after Australia won a sixth straight Ashes series last January, said the four-day win in Port of Spain was a combination of Australia's current strength and West Indian woes.

It's not the worst ever West Indian team, that's a harsh

comment (but) they're playing a very good Australian side," Taylor said during a press conference to announce his appointment to promote ticket sales for the 2000 Sydney Olympics.

"Talking to the English players after this year here in Australia they were disappointed about losing 3-1 and I'm sure most English people would be disappointed as well, but the Australian side at the moment is a very, very good outfit."

"There's talk in Australia of leaving Shane Warne out of a Test match - well that's just unheard of."

"No other country in the world could afford to make that sort of comment, but that's how strong Australian cricket is at the moment."

Warne, the new Australian vice-captain and the taker of 313 Test wickets, is under some pressure to retain his position in the side on pitches that don't favour spin bowling after going wicketless in the first Test while fellow leggie Stuart MacGill continued his meteoric rise with three first-innings wickets.

"There were times in the game when the West Indies had the chance of putting the pressure on and taking the initiative but every time it got to that state of the game Australia grabbed it," said Taylor.

"It's a great result once again for Australia and it could herald the side for the rest of the series."

"I think they're going to be very, very hard to beat."

Taylor said the West Indies were struggling without leading batsmen Carl Hooper and Shivnarine Chanderpaul, whose absence further increased the pressure on beleaguered skipper Brian Lara.

Taylor will decide whether to continue for one more season

with New South Wales some time after final Sheffield Shield game against Tasmania starting in Hobart on Thursday.

### Cantona to return in tribute to Cruyff

BARCELONA, Mar 9 (Reuters/ Internet): Former French international Eric Cantona makes a brief return on Wednesday in Johan Cruyff's testimonial at the Nou Camp.

Cruyff, who as Barcelona coach guided the Catalans to their sole European Cup triumph in 1992, returns to his former club on Wednesday to coach his "Dream Team" against the current Barca side.

Cantona is among seven players who have offered to join up as reinforcements to

Cruyff's team in tribute to the great Dutchman, who earlier this year was voted the European footballer-of-the-century.

Paul Gascoigne (England), Jorge Campos (Mexico), Mario Jardel and Aloisio Pires Alves (both Brazil), Joao Pinto (Portugal) and Luc Nilis (Belgium) are other top names confirmed for the gala occasion.

They will join the likes of Michael Laudrup, Hristo Stochkov and Ronald Koeman in the reunited Dream Team.

Cantona, voted greatest player in the history of Manchester United in a recent poll of the club's fans, retired from soccer at the end of the 1996-97 season after figuring high in the English game, first with Leeds United and then at Old Trafford.

## Salt Lake City paid thousands to Coles



SYDNEY, Mar 9: Australian International Olympic Committee member Phil Coles went on paid holidays in the United States as payment for helping Salt Lake City win the 2002 Winter Games, the former head of the bid committee claimed today, reports AP.

Tom Welch, forced to stand down as Salt Lake Games chief after revelations he had organised a cash-for-votes policy running to millions of dollars, told the Sydney Morning Herald that Coles had provided invaluable advice on how to sell their city to the IOC members.

Coles has claimed he went on only one approved trip to Salt Lake City during its bidding campaign and paid for other holidays himself.

A Salt Lake City ethics committee has released scores of documents detailing 60,000 dollars (\$8,000 US) worth of lavish holidays run up by Coles and his family in Utah.

But Welch said Coles and his partner Patricia Rosenbrock never asked for anything.

"I was offered, I never left abused by them," he told the Herald.

"I never felt exploited by them," he added. "If anything we exploited them, they brought to us a great deal."

He said Coles "was a continual stream of advice" on everything from licensing arrangements for the sale of Olympic goods to the sale of international television rights to the games.

Welch defended his policy of offering discounts in the form of cash, shopping trips, holidays and scholarships to at least 25 IOC members and their relatives.

"I don't think Salt Lake City's bid was that much different than anyone else's bid," he said.

"In 1999 we're trying to establish a value system for what was transpiring in a political campaign that took place six or seven years ago in the Olympic

bidding process," he said.

He said he had not engaged in anything corrupt.

"I believe the process to be one of excess, not a corrupt process," he said.

Coles has, meanwhile, been urged to explain a gift of diamond and gold jewellery from the Athens team bidding for the 1996 Olympic Games.

Kevin Gosper, the other Australian IOC member and an executive board member, told the financial review: "I am encouraging him to come out and explain his position now on this matter."

The financial review obtained documents which show the jewellery was valued at 10,000 dollars (6,000 US) - well

in excess of the 1988 guidelines limited gifts to 200 US dollars.

It was alleged last week Coles and his former wife Georgina accepted a set of diamond-studded cufflinks and a gold necklace from the Greeks in 1990.

Athens lost the 1996 Games to Atlanta later that year.



Pakistan opener Wahajuddin Wasti (L) receives the man-of-the-match trophy of the third Asian Test Championship encounter between Pakistan and Sri Lanka from PCB chief, executive Majid Khan in Lahore on March 8.

#### CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

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CRYPTOQUIP  
ATW JWGVS BYU ATVKXD  
ATCA AY MWA KJW  
KWSXJWCG TWTCD  
AYMYAYATCVBCKU  
Yesterday's Cryptquip: COULDN'T YOU PROBABLY CONTENT THAT A TOUPEE IS A BREADTH OF FRESH HAIR?  
Today's Cryptquip clue: X equals K  
The Cryptquip 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.