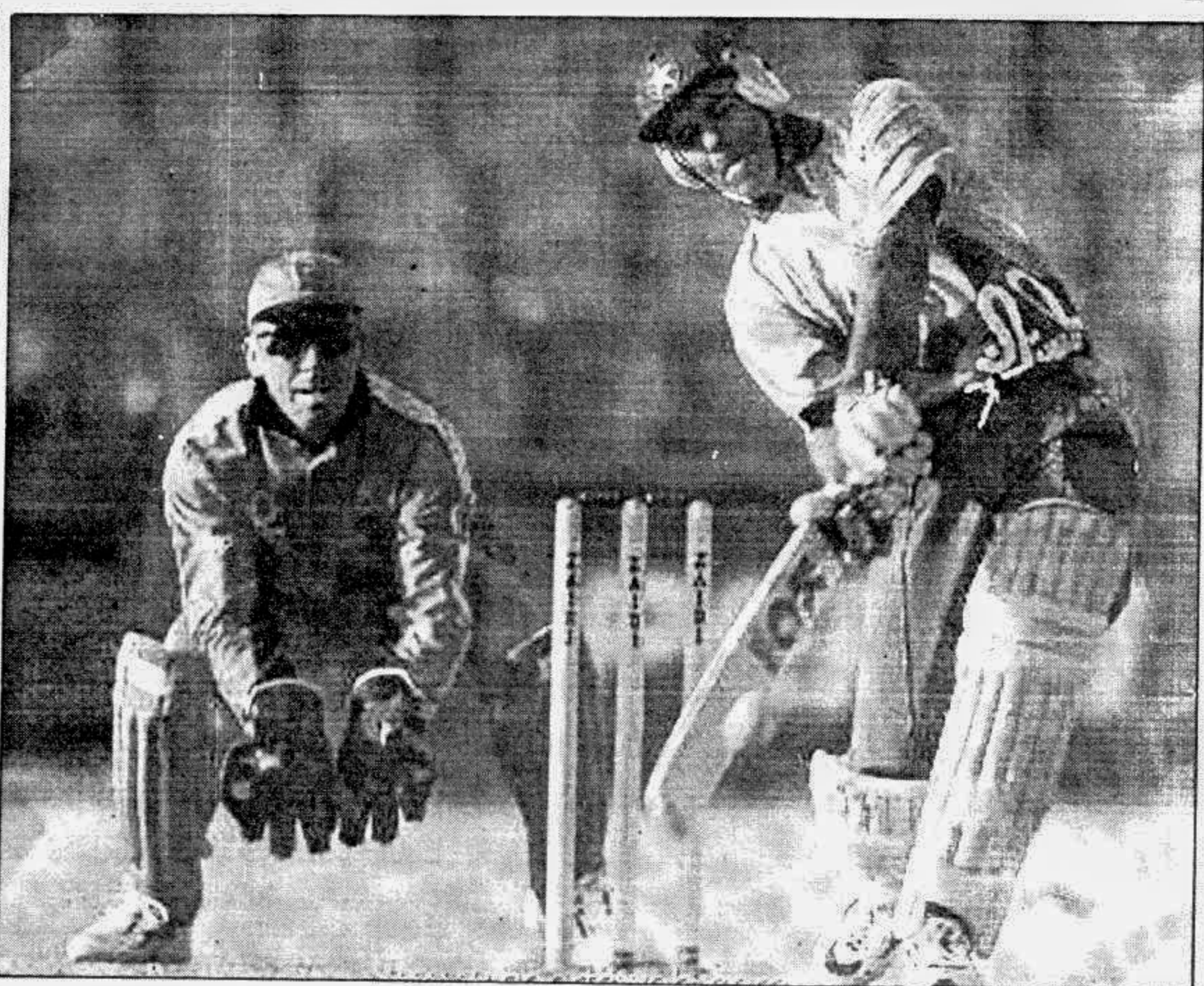


Hockey league resumes Monday

The second phase of the Green Delta Premier Division hockey league is expected to begin on Monday at the Maulana Bhasani National Stadium. League committee secretary Habibur Rahman Yousuf told UNB yesterday "We expect the second phase to start on Monday, as scheduled, but the condition of the turf is not yet good for play."



England captain and wicketkeeper Alec Stewart watches a Pakistan A batsman going for his shot during a practice match in Lahore yesterday. — Internet photo

Asian soccer boss' appeal

TOKYO, Apr 3 (Reuters/Internet) — Asian soccer chief Peter Velappan is asking for Europe and South America to help end the dispute over places for the 2002 World Cup in Japan and South Korea. Speaking during a visit to Tokyo, Velappan said the two soccer superpowers should show "understanding and solidarity" to end a threatened Asian boycott of the qualifying tournament.

When FIFA decided the allocation of places for the 32-team finals last December, Asia was awarded only four, including two automatic spots for the co-hosts. For the last World Cup in France, Asia had three places plus the chance of a fourth via a playoff against the Oceania champions. That playoff spot for 2002 has been given to the fifth-placed South American team, and the Kuala Lumpur-based Asian Football Confederation (AFC) is demanding that FIFA return it to Asia, giving the host continent the opportunity of a fifth place.

Don't mention the crime...

LAGOS, Apr 3 (Mail/Internet): The managers complaining about the safety of their players at the World Youth Championship in Nigeria need only look at the debris scattered along Bar Beach to witness the real casualties of the event. The impoverished residents of the shanty town in Lagos have seen their shacks demolished by a joint military and police operation designed to improve the image of the country before the three-week tournament which starts tomorrow.

Next to Christianity and Islam, there is no doubt that football is the third religion in Africa's largest country. No Nigerian has forgotten the FIFA decision to strip the country of the 1995 tournament, when concerns over health and security matters forced the event to be switched to Qatar. That is why this tournament must pass without controversy. In political terms, Nigeria is only just starting to emerge from the worldwide revulsion

Such is the importance of success for the tournament that the Nigerian authorities consider making a few hundred people homeless a legitimate course of action. In short, everything has been done to camouflage the endemic poverty, crime and general degradation that threaten to blight Nigeria's moment of glory on the world stage. The visitors must not be allowed to see the true picture. Car-jackings, murders, street robberies, burglaries and assaults have become a chilling reality on the streets of Nigeria. Visitors driving alone are warned not to stop at traffic lights because of the inevitable threat of attack and venturing out alone is considered by many to be as good as asking to be robbed.



Players of Sochaux and Renne locked in an aerial duel during the French First Division encounter at Sochaux on April 2. — AFP photo

SA World Cuppers

JOHANNESBURG, Apr 3: South Africa named a powerful World Cup squad today which selection convenor Peter Pollock said was capable of winning the tournament which starts in England May 14, reports AFP. Hansie Cronje leads a team packed with allrounders.

Five of the squad have played in more than 100 limited-over internationals and there are numerous potential match-winners, including allrounders Cronje, Shaun Pollock, Lance Klusener and Jacques Kallis, ace fielder and batsman Jonty Rhodes, batsman Daryll Cullinan and fast bowler Allan Donald. There are seven fast or medium-pace bowlers and two spinners in Nicky Boje (left-arm) and Derek Crookes (off-spin).

Pace man Makhaya Ntini was picked as the only black African player in the squad despite being accused of rape — his trial is set to resume in East London on Tuesday.

Coach Bob Woolmer will be in charge of the side for the last time. His contract with the United Cricket Board of South Africa expires after the World Cup.

Pollock said, "The selectors are very happy with the side we have been able to choose. There is great depth in allrounders and they have the ability to do very well." Pollock paid tribute to Woolmer. "He has done an outstanding job as coach and a good performance at the World Cup would be a fitting tribute to him."

Moody relishing the challenge

PERTH, Australia, Apr 3: Tom Moody left for the West Indies today excited by his opportunity at 33 to play in cricket's World Cup in England later this year, reports AFP. Moody, who led Western Australia (WA) to the Sheffield Shield title against Queensland last month, described his World Cup selection as one of the most satisfying moments of his long career.

He left here with teammates Damien Martyn and Brendon Julian, heading to the West Indies to join the Australian squad for a seven-match one-day series, the final lead-up to the World Cup in England. Fellow WA World Cup selection Adam Gilchrist is already in the Caribbean, having been placed on stand-by for Ian Haly for the fourth Test.

After a season that was disrupted by a knee injury, Moody said his selection in the cup squad was a bonus in the twilight of a career that is nearing 300 first-class matches. "I'm more excited about this one than any other one I've done," he said. "It came out of the blue, I was sort of in the darkness for a while and to get the call-up makes it a very exciting time."

The knee injury set me back a long way and don't think I'll be around when the next World Cup is on, so I have to make sure this one is a winner. "I put it alongside when I first got called up in 1987 for the World Cup."

Moody will be hoping history repeats itself — with Australia winning the 1987 World Cup on the sub-continent after beating England in the final. His first task in the Caribbean is to retain the spot in Australia's one-day team against stiff competition for a berth from Martyn and Julian, with similar all-round talents.

Moody offers the Australian side plenty of experience in English conditions, having enjoyed success with bat and ball at Worcestershire. "They are clear that the government's responsibility is the creation of that environment in which sport and recreation will become the property of an entire nation." Decades of racial discrimination denied sports facilities and opportunities to the majority of black South Africans, who dominate the soccer team but are still all but absent from most other national squads.

Marseille move atop

PARIS, Apr 3: Fabrizio Ravanelli, captain for the night with France's Laurent Blanc rested, struck the winner as Olympique Marseille won impressively 2-1 away to Monaco to go top of the French League championship on Friday, reports Reuters.

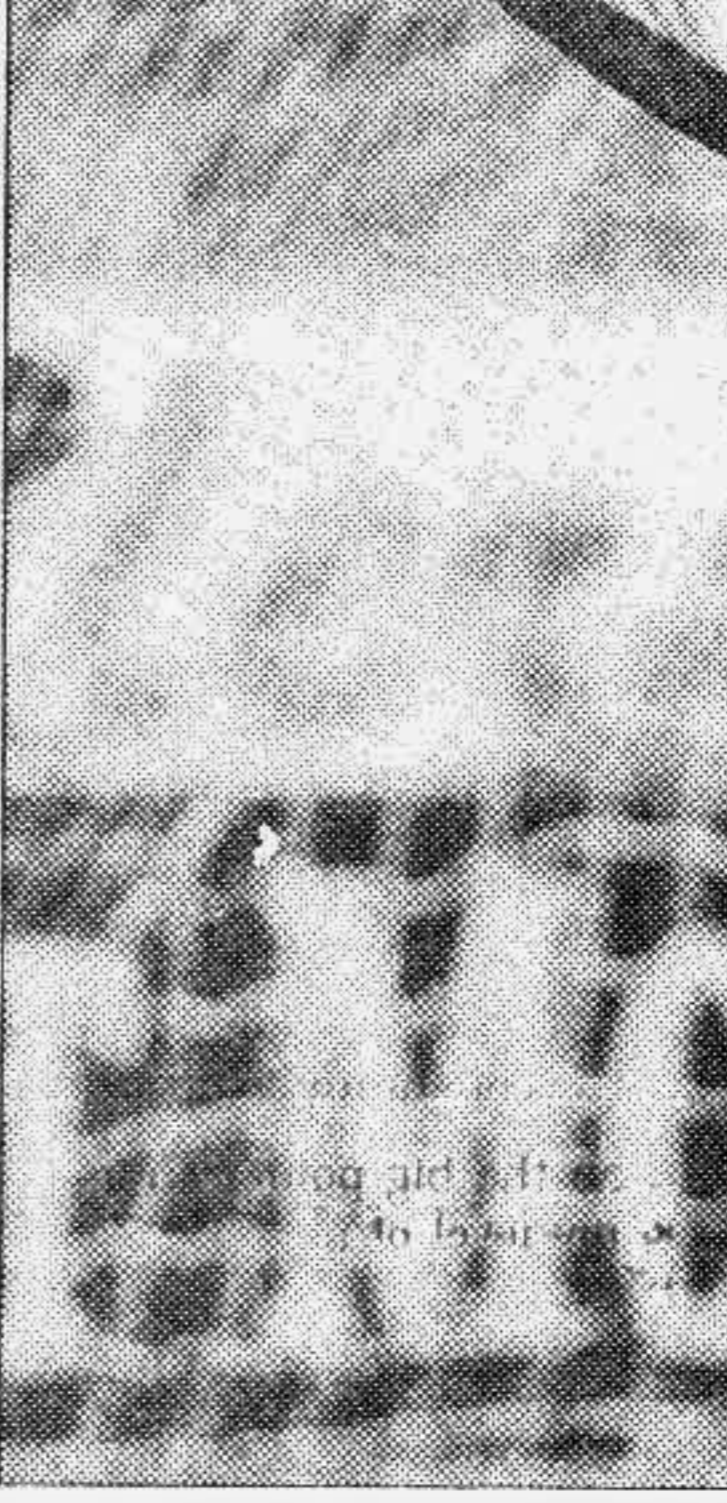
The Italian managed to skip through the Monaco offside trap three minutes into the second half to take a ball from substitute midfielder Robert Pires and beat goalkeeper Fa-

No Lizarazu for 9 weeks

BONN, Apr 3 (Reuters/Internet): Bayern Munich's French left back Bixente Lizarazu will be out of action for up to nine weeks because of a knee injury, his club said on Saturday. Bayern doctor Hans-Wilhelm Mueller-Wohlhahrt said the injury suffered by Lizarazu in France's goalless draw with Ukraine in their European championship qualifier last Saturday was more serious than first thought.

The Frenchman tore a cruciate ligament in his left knee. Bayern will miss not only Lizarazu but also Elber when they visit Dynamo Kiev for the first leg of their European Cup semifinal on Wednesday.

The Brazilian striker was a knee injury as well and will be unavailable for the remainder of the season. Sound in defence against a fighting Monaco, who were de-



Aboubacar Camara of Marseille celebrates his strike against Monaco in the French First Division on April 2 at Monaco. — AFP photo

bien Barthez with a neat chip. Ravanelli, who joined Florian Maurice as Marseille's joint top scorer with 12 league goals, said: "We played really well." This was an essential match for us before playing Bologna". Pires said: "Now we must concentrate immediately on Bologna because in that match the mental concentrate immediately on Bologna because in that match the mental factor will be vital."

Marseille, at home to Bologna in the first leg of the UEFA Cup-semifinals on Tuesday, are two points clear of Girondins Bordeaux, who play at Toulouse today. Guinean striker Titi Camara put Marseille in front in the 14th minute, also in a movement perfectly timed to spring the Monaco offside trap.

Camara was on the halfway line when he ran on to a through ball from Frederic Brandó and slid the ball past the advancing Barthez as he entered the box. Nigeria's World Cup winger Victor Ikpeba equalised for Monaco just before the half hour when he took a pass from Ludovic Giuly and shot across goalkeeper Stephane Porato and inside the far post.

Marseille played an uncharacteristic 4-4-2 with only two strikers, Ravanelli and Camara, as all their outfield French internationals did not start the match. Sound in defence against a fighting Monaco, who were de-

fending a seven-match unbeaten record since Claude Paul took over as coach from Jean Tigana, they hit hard on the break. In the dying minutes and with Monaco going all out for an equaliser, substitute Maurice had three chances to increase Marseille's lead but Barthez foiled him on two occasions.

In the other, Maurice's fine lob from a tight angle on the right sailed just over the bar. Barthez also made a good save in the second half from a fine long-distance shot by Marseille's Brazilian left back Edson. Monaco lost ground in the race for third place AS Rennes, 3-0 winners at bottom club Sochaux, leap over them into fourth place behind Olympique Lyon who are at home to Metz today.

Catherina to miss London Marathon

LONDON, Apr 3: Ireland's Catherina McKiernan will be unable to defend her London Marathon title on April 18 after being forced to pull out because of an Achilles tendon injury, reports Reuters. McKiernan suffered the injury two weeks ago while training near her Dublin home and has been unable to train since, the Irish Times reported on Saturday.

SA sports bodies address 'lily-white' criticisms

CAPE TOWN, Apr 3: (Reuters/Internet): Five years after the end of apartheid, South African sports have finally woken up to the government's disquiet over "lily-white" teams. The ruling African National Congress said last year it had run out of patience over the lack of black players in many of the country's top sports teams and threatened to force cricket and rugby teams to introduce race quotas.

But Minister of Sport Steve Tshwete, who has said he finds it difficult to support all-white teams, has praised recent progress by sports governing bodies and appears to have backed away from considering intervention in team selection. "The federations know very well that it is not and will never be the government's intention to usurp their autonomy and run sport," Tshwete told parliament recently.

"They are clear that the government's responsibility is the creation of that environment in which sport and recreation will become the property of an entire nation." Decades of racial discrimination denied sports facilities and opportunities to the majority of black South Africans, who dominate the soccer team but are still all but absent from most other national squads.

Before the historic all-race election in 1994, many blacks openly supported foreign teams rather than back their home side in white-dominated sports such as rugby and cricket. But a year after President Nelson Mandela came to power, he donned a Springbok shirt to hand the rugby World Cup to the nation's all-white team in a gesture seen as one of the crowning moments of post-apartheid reconciliation.

But two years later relations soured when the South African Rugby Football Union (SARFU) dragged Mandela to court over a government probe into racism in the sport. The ensuing outrage prompted SARFU to oust its president Louis Luyt and replace him with civil rights lawyer Sibisi Nkanunu.

The body has since had a change of heart towards promoting blacks in rugby, while Luyt has formed his own political party, the Federal Alliance, to contest South Africa's second democratic election due in June. Bacher has also said black

players must be selected for all future national squads for international games -- a decision taken after controversy erupted when the country fielded an all-white team against the visiting West Indies. Lulu Xingwana, ANC chairwoman of parliament's sport committee, said she hoped South Africa's final squads for the cricket World Cup in England in May and June and the rugby World Cup would both contain more black players.

"We are eagerly awaiting to see fully representative teams," she said. "I am confident that South Africa will stand united behind our teams." "Our white sports players who are worried about their future in this country, I would like to reassure them that South Africa belongs to all -- both black and white."

Both rugby and cricket have also made a commitment to write black players into their official histories to create black role models even if apartheid barred them from representing their country. But despite the best intentions of sports governing bodies, many white players are resistant to change and racism still blights the sports field.

Former Test all-rounder Brian McMillan was forced to make a public apology recently for a racially offensive comment made during a local match. In a separate incident, Eastern Province second XI player Alan Badenhorst was banned for two years after being found guilty of calling a black opponent a "half-bred kaffir" -- one of the most offensive ways of addressing a black South African.

Last year, a Springbok rugby player also allegedly used the same insult in addressing a black South African woman in a New Zealand bar. But cricket and rugby are not the only problem areas. Parliament's sport and recreation committee has also singled out sports such as netball, fencing, motor racing and rowing for not doing enough to help blacks enter the sports.

Several of South Africa's leading black professional golfers are due to hold talks to address the issue of racism in the game and have threatened to break away to form a uniquely black league if their concerns are not addressed.

Azlan Shah hockey

Pakistan trounce S Korea

KUALA LUMPUR, Apr 3: Pakistan trounced South Korea 6-2 for their second consecutive win in the ninth Sultan Azlan Shah Cup tournament at the National Hockey Stadium here Saturday night, reports AP.

Pakistan managed to contain the speedy Koreans and turned on the heat in the second half to slot in three consecutive goals after a 2-1 lead in the first half. The Pakistanis, making their sixth appearance in the championship and yet to emerge as tournament victors, scored the opening goal through the first penalty corner conversion by Sohail Abbas in the fifth minute.

However, the Koreans who lost 4-4 to Germany in the opening match Friday, equalised through Song Seung Tae in the 11th minute before Pakistan took the lead again through Muhammad Sarwar in the 17th minute.

The Pakistanis, who hammered Canada 6-3 in their first match Friday, came charging out in the second half with Sohail once again hammering another penalty corner in the 41st minute. Captain Atif Bashir, who scored four goals Friday, once again put his name in the score sheet in the 45th minute and a minute later Mohammad Shahbaz Junior added Pakistan's fifth goal.

Unperturbed by the big goal difference, the Koreans mounted pressure inside Pakistan's semicircle with goalkeeper Ahmed Alam kept busy until Kang Keon Wook scored Korea's second goal in the 50th minute.

Shahbaz, who made the team after more than a year off with injuries, justified his selection when he scored his personal second and the final goal for the night in the 63rd minute.

The Pakistanis, with 12 goals to their credit, are leading the six-nation table standing with a full six points in two matches. Pakistan meet New Zealand and South Korea play Canada on Monday.

TEAMS

PAKISTAN: Ahmed Alam, Atif Bashir, Irfan Yousaf, Sohail Abbas, Waseem Ahmad, Muhammad Nadeem, Muhammad Sarwar, Mohd Shahbaz Jr, Naveed Asim, Aamir Saleem, Muhammad Saqlam. Reserves: Muhammad Qasim, Haider Hussain, Muhammad Anis, Mubashir Mukhtar, Danish Kaleem.

SOUTH KOREA: Lim Jong Chun, Kim Young Bae, Han Hyung Bae, Kim Kyung Seok, Jeon Jong Ha, Song Seung Tae, Kang Keon Wook, Lee Young Hwang, Lim Jung Woo, Kim Jung Chul, Yoo Woon Kon. Reserves: Lee Myung Ho, Jeon Hong Kwon, Kim Min Sik, Lee Jaung Seon, Ji Seong Hwan.

Denilson eyes Italian move

SEVILLE, Spain, Apr 3 (Reuters/Internet): Struggling Brazilian winger Denilson is dreaming of a move to Italy, possibly within the next year.

The world's most expensive footballer, who has failed to impress at Real Betis since his \$35 million summer move from Sao Paulo, said he will not consider a move within Spain when the time comes for him to leave the Seville-based club. "The majority of footballers have their dreams and mine is to play in Italy," Denilson told reporters on Tuesday.

"I don't know exactly when that will be, whether it will be within a year or in three years' time, but that's definitely my dream."