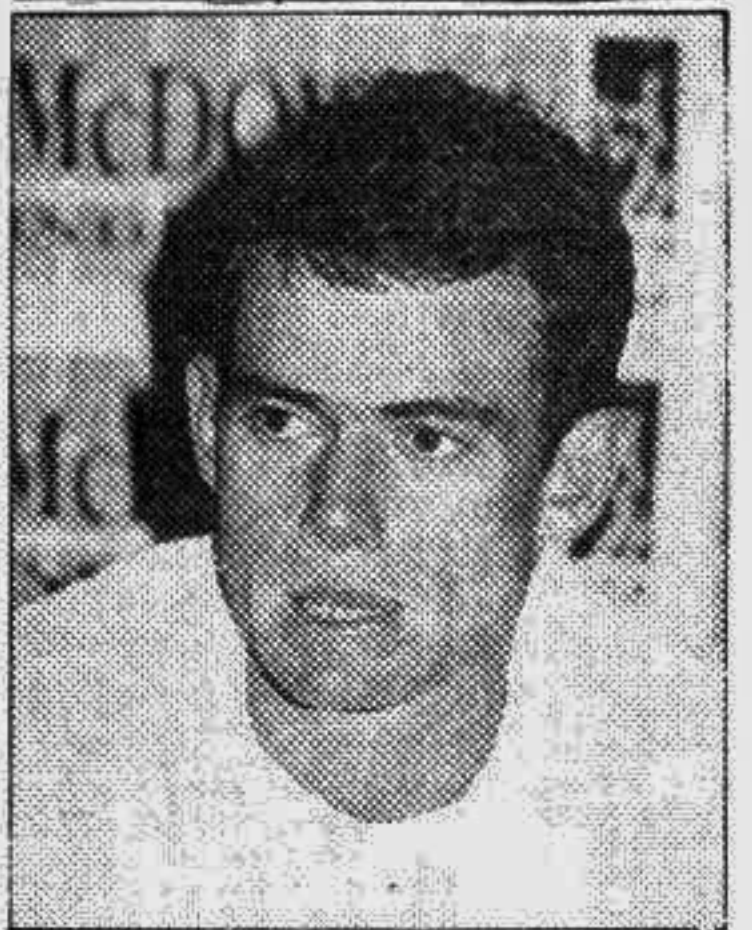


Column One

SPORTS TALK



Byron Black
(Zimbabwean tennis star)
"I always give my best effort whether I win or lose, that's what I've learnt. If the other guy beats you fair and square, there is nothing you can do about it. You have to stay positive."

DID U' KNOW?

(The Professor does)

THAT Kapil Dev and Indian film actress Sareeka hail from the same town in Haryana and were also childhood neighbours. So, when they met as grownups in a party, in true tinsel-world style, they had to fall in love. They did.

Kapil's mother quite liked the idea, but his could-have-been shashuree put her foot down. She did not want her golden hen to run away.

If only she knew? Kapil is still laying golden eggs, but Sareeka? Cock-a-doodle-doo!

Boost sports WHIZZ KID

COMPETITION FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN

Competition-115

✓ Tick the Correct Answers

Post to The Daily Star Win attractive prizes.

Competition closes at 8 pm May 7, '99 and draw shortly afterwards

- Who will replace Bob Woolmer as South African cricket coach?
Ford Stewart Marsh
- When England last hosted cricket World Cup?
1975 1987 1983
- Umpire Steve Bucknor is a
Guyanese Jamaican Trinidadian
- The final match of the 1999 cricket World Cup will be held at
Edgbaston Lord's Oval
- The World Cup match between Bangladesh and Scotland will be played in
Edinburgh Belfast Cardiff

Name

Class Roll No.

School Address

Phone: (if any)



Dinajpur emerge inter-sector v'ball champs

Dinajpur emerged champions of the Bangladesh Rifles inter-sector volleyball championship beating Khagrachhari by 3-2 goals at Dinajpur yesterday, reports UNB.

Hossain Tareq PSC, BDR director of communication, distributed the prizes as chief guest.

Twelve teams: Khulna, Kushtia, Rajshahi, Chittagong, Dhaka, Mymensingh, Sylhet, Comilla, Rangamati, Rangpur, Khagrachhari and host Dinajpur — took part in the competition.

Saiful treble powers City Corporation

Dhaka City Corporation beat Agrami Bank 3-2 in a hard-fought match of the Metropolitan Office football league at the Mirpur Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium yesterday, reports UNB.

The winners led the first half 2-0.

Saiful of City Corporation scored a hat-trick in the 20th, 24th and 61st minutes while Jonny and Pintoo netted for the bankers' in the 62nd and 81st minutes.

Earlier, on Tuesday, Neptune Spinning Mills crushed Apex Foam Industries 7-0 at the same venue while Fields Kings Sports and Garments beat Police AC 2-1 at the Army Stadium.

Bangladesh meet Nepal in semifinal today

Samir, Spittler weigh-in

Al-Amin writes from Margao

More than anyone, Samir Shakir knows that if he has to continue as coach of the Bangladesh team he must find a way to beat Nepal in the second semifinal of the SAFF Championship at the Nehru Stadium in Margao on Thursday.

So far, Samir, a member of the Iraqi World Cup team in 1986, has appeared to be good in his first assignment as coach of any national team. He inspired Bangladesh to finish atop Group A ahead of defending champions India.

Although he adopted a defensive play in the first match against India, Samir came up with a different approach in the next match against Pakistan. His all-out approach in the second match gave Bangladesh a 4-0 victory against Pakistan. Hosts India could manage to score only two goals against Pakistan, thus finishing second in the group.

When Samir came here with a new-look side, he announced that his first target was to reach the semifinals.

That limited outlook was not because he was not aware of his team's strength, but because of the poor track record of the national team in any regional event. Bangladesh finished fifth in the first SAFF Championship in Nepal two years back.

Moreover, his credentials as a coach came under severe criticism at home when he took charge of the national team on February 1.

But the determination of the unheralded Iraq coach, and his ability to read his team's strengths and weaknesses took Bangladesh to a stage where a mouthful coach like Otto Pfister of Germany could not.

"When I came to Dhaka last year I had to struggle to get a decent job. But, after all this hard work, now I'm happy, not because I'm getting results but for making people in Bangladesh happy," said Samir in a cordial cogitation with this reporter at Hotel Dona Sylvia yesterday.

"So far I have achieved fifty percent of my target. I'm now looking forward to the semifinal against Nepal, which I believe will be the final match for us," said Samir, who believes that defence was the best offence.

"If you have a strong backbone, I mean a solid defence, you are always ready to get a better result. I go into every match with the intention of not conceding a goal and there is always a chance to get a goal on a fast counterattack," said Samir.

Bangladesh have so far proved that they possess the toughest defence in the tournament. Captain Jewel Rana is a hard nut to crack even when the chips are low. An airborne Ra-

SAFF SNIPPETS

From Al-Amin

SAD SALIDA
Pakistan and Sri Lanka, semifinalists in Nepal two years ago, made early exit from the 2nd SAFF Championship.

Sri Lanka, a proven force in the regional meet, took an early flight back home when, in a reversal of fortune, they conceded a 3-2 defeat at the hands of a spirited Nepal. The islanders, however, did not return empty-handed, as they drew goalless with Maldives in the first match.

The story of Pakistan was even worse. They lost both their Group A matches, against Bangladesh and India. And more importantly, the physically strong, but technically unsound, Pakistanis conceded highest six goals in the tournament without any reply.

BAYWATCH
To add to their misery, Pakistan coach Mohammed Idrees was reportedly caught while attempting to rape a British lady. Although Idrees had a close shave because the victim failed to produce any concrete evidence, the undesired incident caused an uproar at Hotel Dona Sylvia, the official residence of all the six participating teams.

It was gathered that Idrees invited the lady for an evening walk on the beach, adjacent to Dona Sylvia, on April 25. But the friendly-fervour turned sour, as Idrees swooped on the lady while walking on the beach. But the lady was eventually rescued by security after her boyfriend, who was also walking on the beach, rushed for help.

After the incident, the secretary of the South Asian Football Federation (SAFF), Anand Rajan, and the officials of the organising committee rushed to Dona Sylvia and somehow managed to bury the issue.

"Since we are in the middle of the tournament, we did not want to make a mess of the incident. But we will lodge an official complaint with the Pakistan Football Federation.

"We will also discuss the matter in the next meeting of SAFF," said Rajan, adding that they might go for a severe action against Pakistan.

PATRON PAIN
Amanullah has announced his retirement from international football, but...

The nimble Sri Lankan forward called it quits after Sri Lanka's last group B match against Nepal on April 25.

Amanullah, who made his debut for the national team way back in 1991, said he would not play for his country until he got a sponsor.

The early retirement of the 29-year old Amanullah, an icon in Sri Lanka's success story, will certainly upset the balance in the Sri Lankan attack.

Amanullah formed a formidable duo with Roshen Perera for a long time.

"I will not play for the national team unless I get a sponsor. I will play in the domestic league," said Amanullah at a dinner hosted by the organisers on Tuesday.

But the chances of getting a sponsor nowadays for a footballer in Sri Lanka looked bleak as ever, especially after the prosperity of the cricketers in the international arena.

"Cricketers are taking all the shine from football," said Amanullah, who scored the second goal in his side's 3-2 defeat to Nepal.

Coca-Cola 2nd SAFF Championship

Maldives earn semi spot

From Al-Amin

The islanders went into the Group B final match with the intention of at least a draw against Nepal to pip Sri Lanka to the post for a place in the last four. But, at the end of the day, the booters from the emerald island ran way with a deserving victory after Shah Ismail set them up with a lead in the very first minute.

The fastest goal of the tournament came when Wildhan set Ismail free with a defence-slicing cross.

Buoyed by the early lead, Maldives sent Nepal on the defensive with sorties of attacks, but they had to be content with the slender lead at the lemon break.

The complexion of the game changed in the second session as Nepal came firing all their cylinders for the much-needed equaliser. Their relentless effort eventually paid off in the 65th minute when a menacingly poised Hari Khadka was brought down by a Maldives defender in the forbidden zone, prompting referee Michael Andrews to point at the dreaded spot. Khadka stepped up to convert the 12-yarder with a neat placing shot.

The Nepalese joy was short lived as Maldives punched two goals in the space of 10 minutes. Wildhan scored the second goal in the 73rd minute before Abdul Gafoor shot home the third in the 83rd minute.

Hari Khadka scored his second goal of the match at the stroke of the final whistle. Maldives captain Mohammed Ibrahim was later adjudged MVP.

POINTS TABLE

Team	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	Pts
Bangladesh	2	1	0	0	4	0	4	4
India	2	1	0	0	2	0	2	4
Pakistan	2	0	0	2	0	6	-6	0
Group B								
Maldives	2	1	1	0	3	2	1	4
Nepal	2	1	0	1	5	5	0	3
Sri Lanka	2	0	1	1	2	3	-1	1

Biman Cup soccer

Chittagong blank BKSP
Chittagong earned a facile 3-0 victory over Bangladesh Krira Shiksha Protisthan (BKSP) in the Biman Cup Under-14 national football championship at Joypurhat yesterday, reports UNB.

Babul struck twice in the 25th and 69th minutes while Afsar netted the other goal in the 50th minute.

Earlier on Tuesday, Faridpur and Patuakhali played to a 2-2 draw at the same venue. Palash and Rezaul scored for Faridpur while Rashid netted both the goals for Patuakhali.

Thursday's matches: Joypurhat vs Patuakhali (2:30 pm), Narayanganj vs Rajshahi (4:15 pm).

Inter-varsity athletics

A two-day-long Bangladesh inter-university athletics competition begins today at the Dhaka University central playground, reports UNB.

Water Resources Minister Abdur Razzak will inaugurate the meet in the morning.

Bangladesh's tie rained off

The first warm-up match of Bangladesh against Northamptonshire Second XI was rained off on Tuesday, reports APB.

The ICC champions, preparing for their maiden World Cup appearance, were due to play their second practice match against Hertfordshire Selection XI on Wednesday.

ICC under Lillee fire

PERTH, Apr 28: Australian cricket legend Dennis Lillee Wednesday attacked the International Cricket Council (ICC) over its failure to act on crowd violence in the West Indies, reports AFP.

"The ICC can count itself damn lucky it doesn't have blood on its hands," the former fast bowler said in a West Australian newspaper column following violent disruptions during the recent Australian tour of the West Indies.

Play in the final one-day match at Bridgetown was interrupted when spectators threw bottles at Australian players. In Georgetown four days earlier spectators invaded the pitch preventing the game being completed.

Recalling similar crowd control problems 20 years ago when he toured the West Indies with Ian Chappell's World Series Cricket team, Lillee said it was beyond his comprehension that the ICC "could be still sitting on its hands".

He asked: "Is it waiting for someone to be killed?"

Lillee said that, despite all the assurances after the incidents in 1979, what he saw on television this month was a mirror image of what had happened two decades ago.

"We all know the West Indies board has a budget already stretched to the limit," Lillee said.

"But the ICC, with its coffers bursting at the seams, has a vested interest in West Indies cricket.

"The ICC must get more involved to ensure that happens."

Jr champ Enamul takes solo lead

Sports Reporter

International Master (IM) Ziaur Rahman lost his solo lead at the 25th National Chess Championship when he lost his seventh round clash to fellow IM Reefat-bin-Sattar on Tuesday.

Playing with black pieces, Zia, the leading rated player in the country, lost the board to Reefat after 35 moves. Zia, however, returned to his winning form yesterday when he defeated Rezaul Haque in the eighth round yesterday.

Playing with whites against the Old Indian defence of Rezaul, Zia checkmated his opponent after 41 moves.

With yesterday's win, Zia raised his tally to six points, still half a point short of leader Enamul Hossain. The national junior champion earned the solo lead on Tuesday defeating Ali Amjad and kept the lead intact with an eighth round win over Saifuddin Ahmed yesterday.

Playing with white pieces, Enamul neutralised the Sicilian defence of Saifuddin after 30 moves to raise his tally to six and a half points.

After defeating Zia on Tuesday, Reefat continued in style with an easy win over Taibur Rahman in the eighth round.

Playing with black pieces, Reefat adopted Sicilian defence against Taibur and clinched the board after 34 moves to raise his tally to 5.5 points.

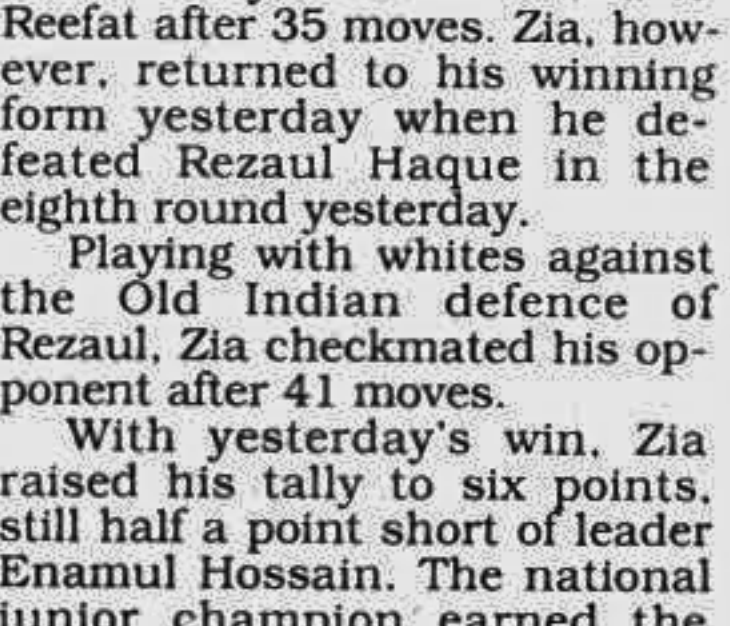
In the other eighth round clashes, Jamilur Rahman defeated last year's runner-up IM Abdullah-Al-Rakib while Ali Amjad drew with Shawkat Hossain.

No matches will be played today.

Leaders (after round eight): 6.5 points—Enamul, 6 points—Zia, 5.5 points—Reefat and Rezaul, 5 points—Taibur.

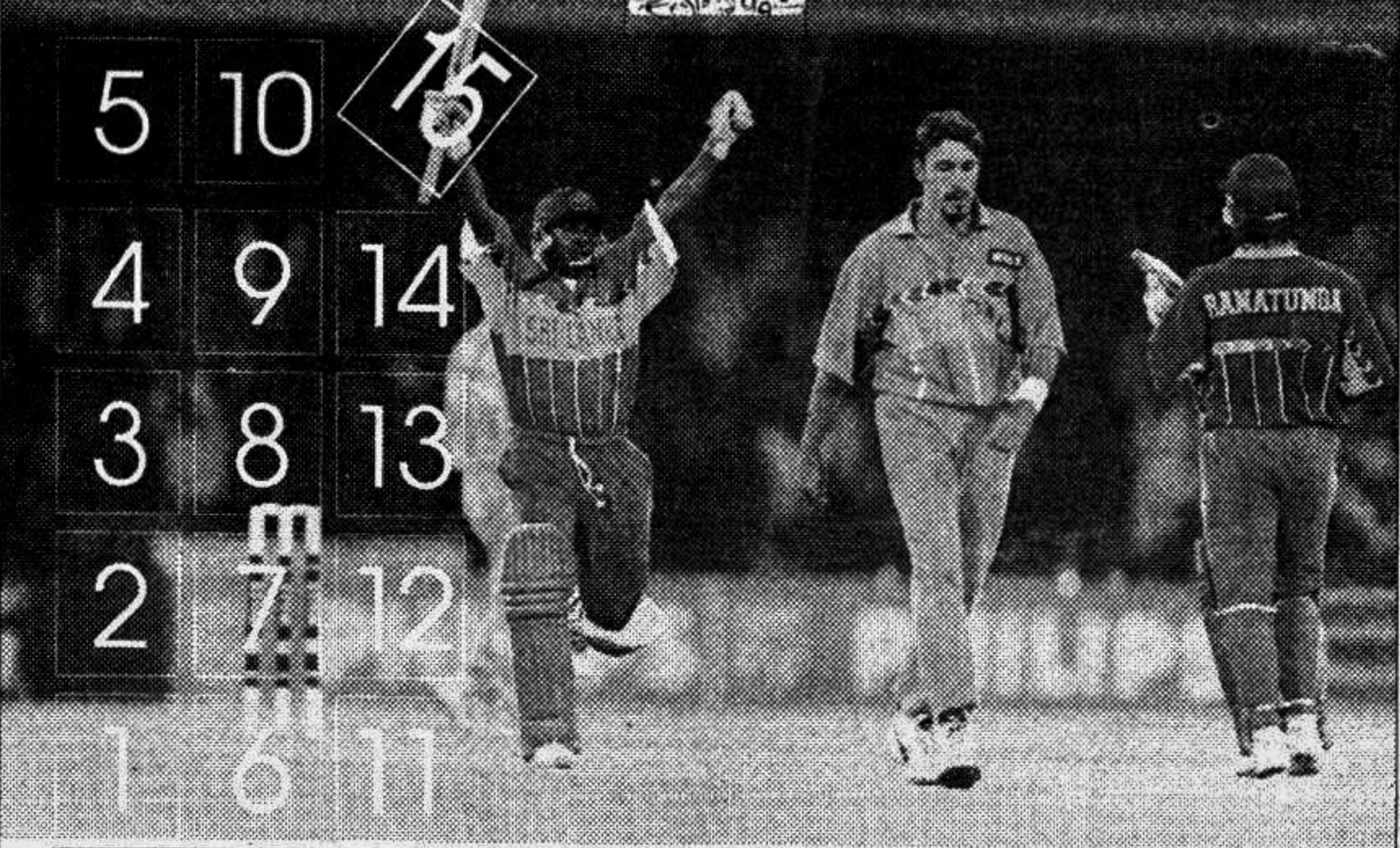
TOMORROW'S MATCHES

Zia vs Taibur
Feroz vs Reefat
Khorshed vs Nasir
Ali Amjad vs Monir
Saifuddin vs Enamul
Jamilur vs Enamul
Rakib vs Aminul
Rezaul vs Javed



Rezaul Haque (R) makes a move against IM Ziaur Rahman during their eighth round clash in the 25th national chess championship yesterday. — Star photo

The Daily Star Sport Countdown Gallery



Aravinda de Silva celebrates his hundred against Australia in the final of the 1996 World Cup at Lahore. — Star file photo

Aravinda, a class apart

COLOMBO, Apr 28 (Reuters): Aravinda de Silva used to bat like he drove his flashy sports cars around the streets of Sri Lanka's capital Colombo.

Then a season with English county Kent in 1995 proved to be an influential phase in his cricket education and he went on to become his country's most prolific scorer in Tests and limited-over matches.

De Silva has enchanted spectators all over the world with his accomplished batsmanship, proving a model professional who is keen to put something back into the game when he retires by coaching his country's budding players.

"The day I finish cricket I want to try and see I transfer the knowledge I've gained over the years to the kids," he told a local newspaper recently.

"I have a lot of ideas which I want to put into practice... I don't know how many years of cricket I have but I want to see it through. That is my dream."

But first, De Silva's cultured, strokeplay, big-match temperament and wealth of experience in English conditions are needed for Sri Lanka's World Cup defence.

De Silva underlined his class when he scored an unbeaten 107 in the 1996 World Cup final against Australia in Lahore, helping to thrust the small Indian Ocean island into the international sporting spotlight for the first time.

De Silva joined Clive Lloyd and Viv Richards as the only batsmen to score centuries in a World Cup final, and the Sri Lankan also took three wickets with his off-spinners and held two catches to win the man-of-the-match award.

His performance in the final sealed an outstanding personal tournament in which he had a run tally of 448 at an average of 89.60.

De Silva's season with Kent a few months earlier was not only a turning point in his own cricket development but left a marked impression on his country teammates.

Kent batsman Graham Cowdrey said in the 1996 Wisden: "When he packed his bags, he hugged each of us and I have never known a professional sports team so close to tears. I cannot believe any player, anywhere, has been so popular."

De Silva wrote his name into the Kent record books with a sequence of outstanding innings, including a majestic century in a losing cause against Lancashire in the Benson and Hedges Cup final at Lord's.

It was acclaimed as one of the greatest innings in a domestic limited over final.

"Playing for Kent gave me a lot of experience, which really mattered for the development of my game," De Silva said.

De Silva, 33, is only the third batsman to score more than 8,000 runs in limited over internationals after West Indian Desmond Haynes and Mohammad Azharuddin of India.

He has played in 254 one-dayers and scored 8,020 runs at an average of 36.12, hitting 11 centuries and 55 half-centuries. In addition he has taken 83 wickets at an average of 39.03 with a best of four for 45.

Faltering champs hope for a renaissance

COLOMBO, Apr 28 (Reuters): Arjuna Ranatunga lifted Sri Lanka to its peak of sporting achievement when his team won cricket's last World Cup in 1996.

Ranatunga would enjoy nothing more in the twilight of his career than leading a successful defence of the trophy in England but the captain of the tiny island nation side looks like facing an uphill task.

Sri Lanka have won only five of their last 20 one-day games and although they still have such match-winners as Aravinda de Silva, Sanath Jayasuriya and Muttiah Muralitharan, Ranatunga's men appear to have lost confidence.

They look a shadow of the side who triumphed so stunningly on the sub-continent three years ago, taking the trophy with an unbeaten record. In the previous five World Cups, Sri Lanka won just four matches out of 24.

Even De Silva, whose brilliant batting was a key element in the 1996 victory, is cautious of the outcome this time. "A lot of things will have to go right," he said recently.

Ranatunga, one of the world's most senior players with 264 one-day internationals under his belt, is familiar with his country being the underdogs.

In fact, he says, it helps their cause since there are no high expectations.

Yet Sri Lanka are world one-day champions to the country's 18.5 million people and they will be closely watching Ranatunga whose authoritarian control over the team has come under fire from local media.

Muralitharan has also missed matches during treatment for a shoulder problem, having experienced the contrasting emotions of delight and despair in the past nine months.

The off-spinner had a match haul of 16 wickets as Sri Lanka beat England in a one-off Test at the Oval last August but when he went to Australia he was called for throwing, repeating the trauma he suffered over his unorthodox action on his country's previous tour in 1995-96.

De Silva, who illuminated Sri Lanka's victory over Australia in the 1996 World Cup final with an unbeaten 107, is battling to find form after an injury to his left leg.

On the plus side, the batting is strengthened by newcomer Mahela Jayawardene, it boasts an effective opening partner for Jayasuriya in Ramesh Kaluwitharana, and will be enhanced if Marvan Atapattu shows the form that brought him and unbeaten 132 against England in a triangular tournament final at Lord's last August.

Sri Lanka's pace attack leans heavily on left-armed Chaminda Vaas and Promodya Wickremasinghe, so that much may be expected from their slow bowlers.

Muralitharan is sure to be a handful whatever the conditions while there is no shortage of variation, with Upul Chandana's leg-spin, Jayasuriya's left-arm spin and the off-breakers of De Silva and Ruwan Kalpage.

The last time Sri Lanka won a limited-over tournament was in England in 1998 when they took a triangular event involving the host country and South Africa.

That may offer a measure of encouragement as Ranatunga's men return to English soil for their World Cup defence which begins in the opening match against England at Lord's on May 14.

Lanka in World Cups

COLOMBO, Apr 28 (Reuters/Internet): Following is the history of Sri Lanka's World Cup performances.

1975 in England
Lost to West Indies by 9 wks
Lost to Australia by 52 runs
Lost to Pakistan by 192 runs

1979 in England
Lost to New Zealand by 9 wks
Sri Lanka v West Indies - match abandoned, rain
Beat India by 47 runs

1983 in England
Lost to Pakistan by 50 runs
Lost to England by 47 runs
Lost to New Zealand by 5 wks

1987 in India, Pakistan
Lost to Pakistan by 11 runs
Lost to New Zealand by 3 wks
Lost to England by 9 wks

1992 in Australia, New Zealand
Beat Zimbabwe by 3 wks
Lost to New Zealand by 6 wks
Sri Lanka v India - match abandoned, rain
Beat South Africa by 3 wks
Lost to Australia by 7 wks
Lost to England by 106 runs
Lost to West Indies by 91 runs
Lost to Pakistan by 4 wks

1996 in India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka
Australia forfeit match against Sri Lanka
Beat Zimbabwe by 6 wks
West Indies forfeit match against Sri Lanka
Beat India by 6 wks
Beat Kenya by 144 runs
Quarter-final: beat England by 5 wks
Semifinal: beat India by default after crowd trouble
Final: beat Australia by 7 wks

Lost to Pakistan by 113 runs
Lost to England by 8 wks