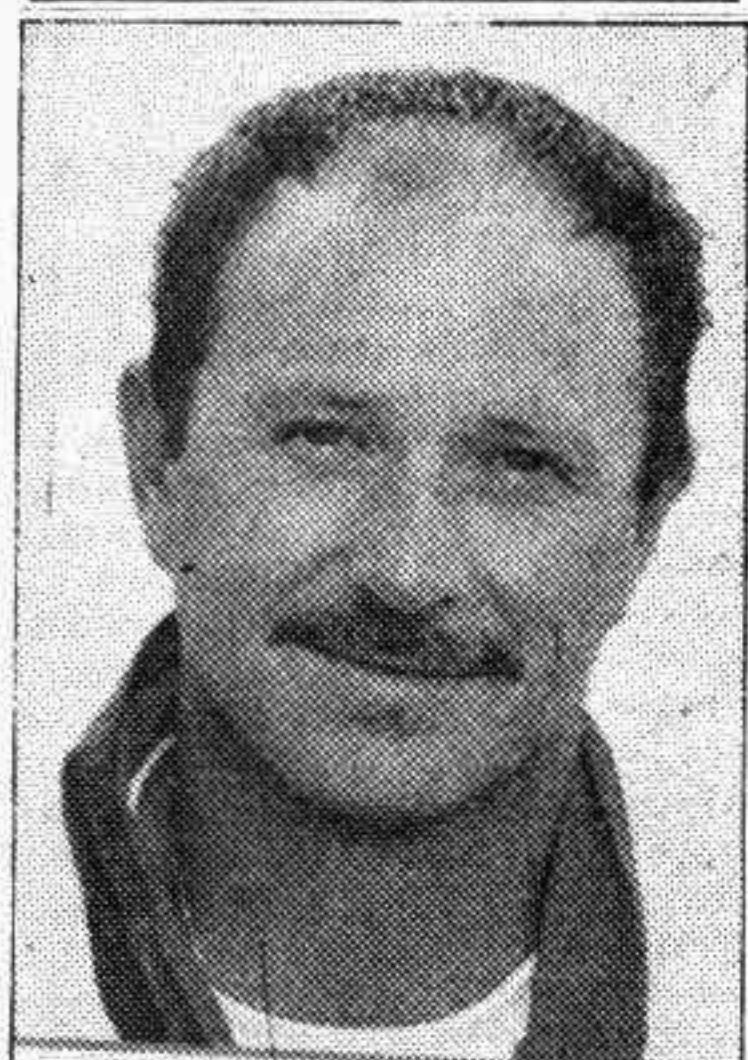


Column One

SPORTS TALK



Dave Houghton

(Zimbabwe coach)
"We have won about 60 per cent of our one-day matches in the last 12 months and our players have matured a lot. I expect the team to do well."

Boost sports WHIZZ KID

COMPETITION FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN
Competition-115

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May 14 '99 and draw shortly afterwards

1	Who will replace Bob Woolmer as South African cricket coach?	Ford	Stewart	Marsh
2	When England last hosted cricket World Cup?	1975	1987	1993
3	Umpire Steve Bucknor is a	Guyanese	Jamaican	Trinidadian
4	The final match of the 1999 cricket World Cup will be held at	Edgbaston	Lord's	Oval
5	The World Cup match between Bangladesh and Scotland will be played in	Edinburgh	Belfast	Cardiff

Name

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School Address

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Joypurhat lift Biman Cup

JOYPUKHAT, May 8: Hosts Joypurhat clinched the Biman Cup under-14 national football championship, beating Chittagong 2-1 in an exciting final at the local stadium today, reports UNB.

All three goals came in the last 21 minutes of the match. Akash and Rinku scored for the home side while Russell netted the lone goal for the port district team.

Last year's runners-up Joypurhat took lead in the 59th minute by a nice goal from Akash while Rinku widened the margin in the 74th minute.

Russell scored the face-saving goal for Chittagong just one minute before the final whistle capitalising on a defensive error.

Quamrunnabur Putul MP witnessed the final and later distributed the trophy.

Nabakumar beat Motijheel High

ANZ Grindlays National School Cricket

Nabakumar Institution beat Motijheel Govt High by two wickets in a rain-curtailed match of the ANZ Grindlays Bank 17th national schools cricket tournament at the Uttara Friends Club ground yesterday, reports UNB.

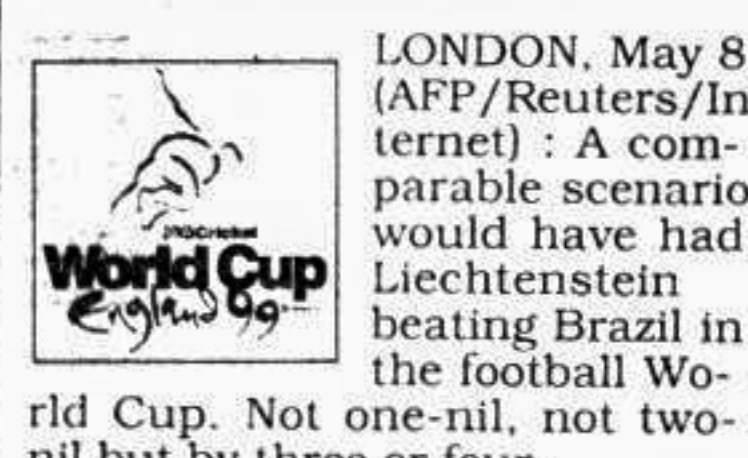
Batting first Motijheel Govt scored 176 for 4 in reduced 20 overs.

In reply, Nabakumar reached their target of 177 runs in the last ball losing 8 wickets.

MOTIJHEEL GOVT HIGH: 176 for 4 in 20 overs (Faisal 51, Riaz 48, Abid 24; Rony 1/25, Sujon 1/30).

NABAKUMAR INSTITUTION: 177 for 8 in 20 overs (Rony 60, Rasheed 57; Taharat 4/23, Abid 3/30).

Can Kenya kill?



LONDON, May 8 (AFP/Reuters/Internet): A comparable scenario would have had Liechtenstein beating Brazil in the football World Cup. Not one-nil, not two-nil but by three or four.

Kenya did not just beat the West Indies in the Indian city of Pune in 1996, they humiliated them in what was the biggest upset in 24 years of cricket World Cup history.

That day, February 29, was the stuff of sporting fairytale. Minnow eats great white shark. The Kenyans had miracle gone into the match star-struck by their opponents, the 1975 and 1979 tournament winners and the 1983 finalists.

Captain Maurice Odumbe had said: "The West Indies have always been our favourite cricketers. It's an honour to play with them... We try to play like the West Indies, aggressive and entertaining at the same time."

Hours later, it was Kenya who were doing a lap of honour around the Nehru stadium, their heroes having lost dismally by 73 runs, dismissed for a not very aggressive, not very entertaining 93.

Nothing recently has suggested that Kenya are capable of repeating the feat in the 1999 World Cup but South Africa, Sri Lanka, England, India and Zimbabwe - their Group A opponents in the coming weeks - will be extremely wary of the African side.

But one thing they are determined to do is to have fun. A victory against anyone would be an added bonus, said their coach Alvin Kalicharran, the former West Indies Test batsman.

"We are underdogs. We love being underdogs. That means we will play without any pressure and we are going to enjoy ourselves. We are going to have fun," he said.

Seven of the side that won against the West Indies in '99 re-

brother Tom was the first indigenous Kenyan to captain the country.

Odumbe, meanwhile, is a name synonymous with Kenyan cricket. There have been six Odumbe cricketers, Edward played alongside Maurice's side in 1996. Maurice, the then-captain, had taken three for 15 from 10 steady overs of off-spin in the match against the West Indies.

Martin Suji, a seamer who has played for Transvaal, also returns.



Cricket is still largely a part-time sport for Kenyan players. Even as the team prepared for the World Cup, many of them were able to attend training sessions only after finishing work.

Cricket was introduced to Kenya at the turn of the century and supplied the bulk of the East African side which played in the 1975 World Cup. In 1981 Kenya branched out on its own

FIXTURE

Kenya - Group A

First-round

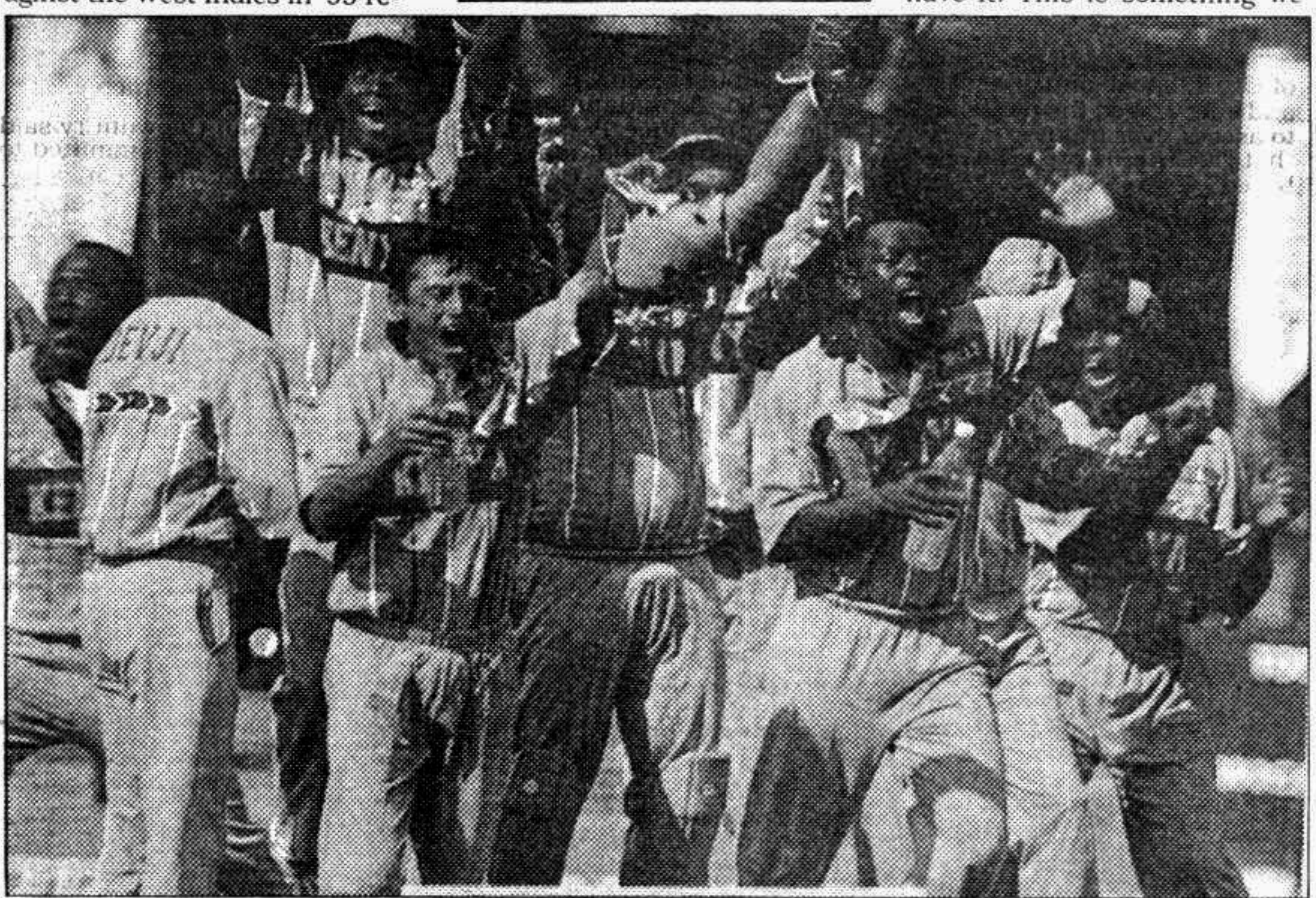
May 15 Zimbabwe, Taunton

May 18 England, Canterbury

May 23 India, Bristol

May 26 South Africa, Amstelveen (Netherlands)

May 30 Sri Lanka, Southampton



MOMENT OF THEIR LIVES: Kenyan players are over the moon after their historic victory over the mighty West Indies during the '96 World Cup. —Star file photo

turn with Kenya this time. Some of the selections, according to the Kenyan Cricket Association, have been influenced by how well they think the players will stand up to the English cold.

Steve Tikolo and Maurice Odumbe, however, the main men of 1996, are both back.

Tikolo, a quality right-handed batsman with Caribbean tendencies, had impressed with a 96 against Sri Lanka last time. His career includes a spell with South African side Border. His

and formed its own team. The 1999 team will have the advantage of professional sponsor - a brewery - and Kalicharran.

His recruitment as coach, however, has been the subject of controversy, with some top players - notably Odumbe - attacking his methods and suggesting he did not have any coaching pedigree.

The row was smoothed over in time for the World Cup, with Odumbe - who was fined for his comments - and Kalicharran declaring they were the best of

friends.

Last May, they completed another giant-killing by beating a sloppy India in a tri-nations one-day tournament. Odumbe top-scoring with 83.

Odumbe, who had the captaincy taken from him after criticising Kenya cricket authorities for poor management, said the players had prepared as well as possible under the circumstances.

"We have worked hard. Clearly we need more exposure to ensure that we can rise to the same level of the game with test countries. But we also need more investment in cricket to improve our facilities," he said.

Poor facilities in Kenya coupled with bad weather has left the squad ill-prepared although they did play in a triangular tournament in Bangladesh last month. They enjoyed only modest success, twice beating their hosts but losing twice to Zimbabwe in the round-robin matches and again in the final.

"We went to Bangladesh, we beat Bangladesh. We were outplayed by Zimbabwe, but Zimbabwe have beaten India and Pakistan in test matches. To beat them, we had to be at the top of our game and we were not," Kalicharran said.

"When you looked at our final game (against Zimbabwe), (Steve) Tikolo had a broken finger and did not bat. Maurice Odumbe didn't bowl and yet he was one of the top five bowlers (in the tournament)."

"We also didn't have the opportunity to bat first. Batting first was best for those conditions. These are things people did not look at. Those who criticise us do not understand cricket."

Jimmy Ravani, chairman of the Kenya Cricket Association, blamed lack of cash for the limited number of one-day internationals the team has played.

"Tours require vast sums of money and we simply do not have it. This is something we

TRACK RECORD

NAIROBI, May 8 (AFP): Kenya's Cricket World Cup track record: 1996 in India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka

Lost to India by seven wickets

Lost to Australia by 97 runs

Lost to Zimbabwe by five wickets

Beat West Indies by 73 runs

Lost to Sri Lanka by 144 runs

Warne's late realisation

LONDON, May 8 (Internet): Shane Warne said on Saturday there should not have been four years of secrecy over fines imposed on himself and Mark Waugh for accepting money from an illegal Indian bookmaker.

Warne and Waugh were fined by the Australian Cricket Board (ACB) in 1994 for providing information about pitch and weather conditions during a tour of Sri Lanka and Pakistan but the episode was not made public until last December.

Leg-spinner Warne, who is in England with the Australian squad for the World Cup starting next Friday, talked about his regrets over the scandal in The Times newspaper.

Warne said it all started when Mark Waugh introduced him to a man called John who told them he bet on cricket.

"The next day he thanked me for taking the time to meet him and handed me an envelope which he said was a token of appreciation," Warne wrote in The Times. "He said: 'Look, there are no strings attached, I don't want anything in return.' The envelope contained 5,000 US dollars."

"It was only later that he telephoned to ask for what I still think is pretty harmless information about weather and pitch conditions."

After Warne and Waugh subsequently told Australian officials about the incident the pair were fined 2,500 Australian dollars (1,550 US) by the ACB which decided to keep the affair quiet.

Warne said in The Times: "People think that because the issue was covered up, there must be more to it. The ACB were protecting the players at the time but with hindsight it should have come out there and then."

LATEST

UNDATED, May 8 (Internet): **Derby: Derbyshire v Pakistan** Pakistan 272-8 in 50 overs (Saeed Anwar 34, Abdur Razzaq 34, Ijaz Ahmed 74, Saleem Malik 44; Phil DeFreitas 2-43, Matthew Cassar 2-43)

Derbyshire 65-3 in 17.3 overs (Michael Slater 3; Wasim Akram 2 wickets)

(Rain stopped play)

Durham: Durham v Scotland Durham 238-5 in 48 overs (max) (David Boon 50, Paul Collingwood 20, Jonathan Lewis 77, Ryan Robinson 39; Gavin Hamilton 2 wickets)

Scotland 90-3 in 24 overs (Mike Smith 38 n.o.; Gavin Hamilton 28 n.o.; Simon Brown 3 wickets)

Bristol: Gloucestershire v West Indies West Indies 58-3 in 16.3 overs (Sherwin Campbell 28; Mike Cawdron 2 wickets)

(No result, match abandoned due to rain)

Southampton: Hampshire v New Zealand Hampshire 135-6 in 39 overs (max)

(Adrian Aymes 44, William Kendall 26, Derek Kenway 23 n.o.; Geoff Allott 2-31, Chris Cairns 2 wickets)

New Zealand 73-0 in 16 overs (Matthew Horne 27 n.o.; Nathan Astle 28 n.o.)

Target: 168 runs from 39 overs (D/L method)

Booters back

Bangladesh national football team returned home yesterday after participating in the 2nd SAFF Tournament in the West Indian resort town of Goa, reports AFP.

Bangladesh had to remain satisfied with the runners-up trophy though they put on a very good performance in the meet after losing 2-0 India in the final.

The side played a friendly match under the banner of Dhaka XI against Calcutta XI at the Salt Lake Stadium, Calcutta on Friday. The match was drawn 1-1.

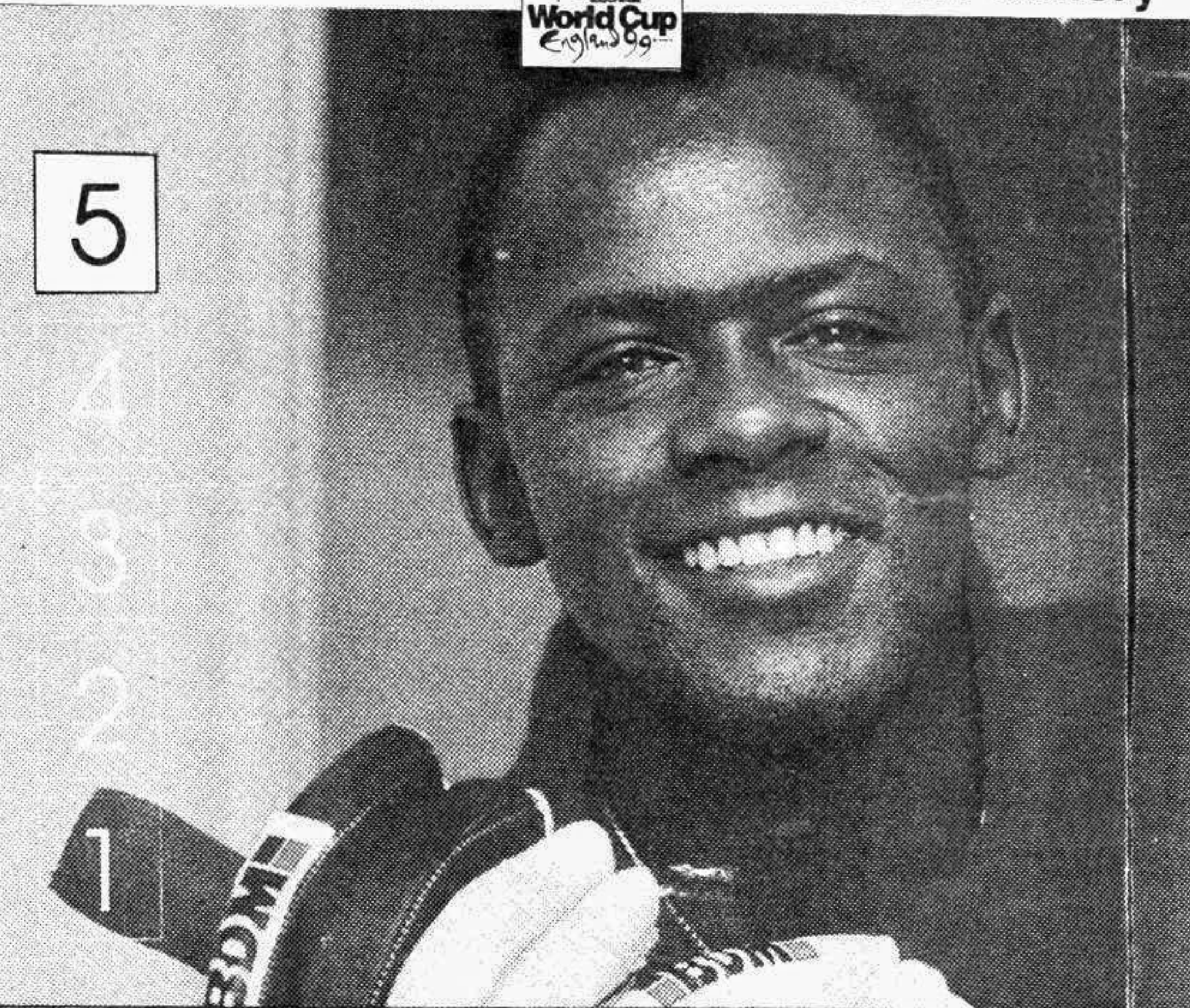


Scotland's premier paceman Gavin Hamilton (L) being congratulated by teammates on getting a wicket during a warm-up game against Durham at Chester-le-Street yesterday. —AFP photo

The Daily Star Sport



Countdown Gallery



days to go

Maurice Odumbe can become a star in the World Cup provided he stays free of controversy. —Star file photo

Karim's work cut out



NAIROBI, May 8 (Reuters/Internet): Aasif Karim the amiable captain of Kenya has a tough job in his hand as he prepares to lead a not so close-knit squad into the World Cup.

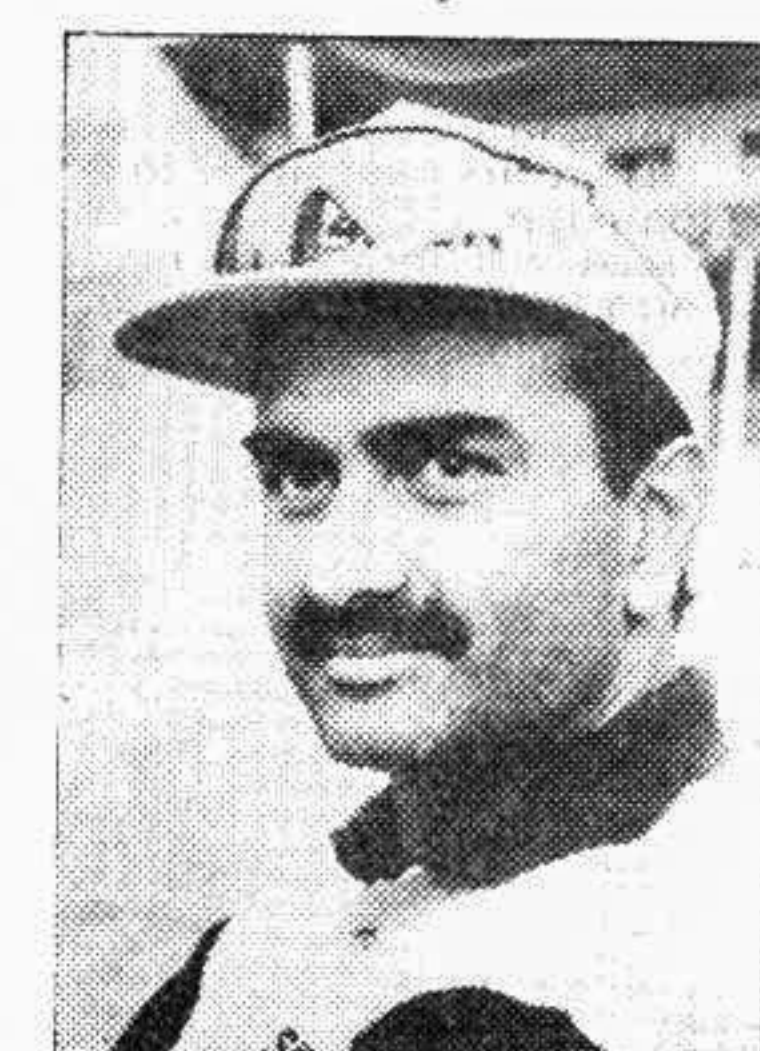
There are reports of internal strains and a cold attitude towards the West Indian coach Alvin Kalicharran. Adding to those, the team hardly had a mentionable build-up to the biggest cricket show on earth.

The fact that Karim has been appointed skipper ahead of more illustrious colleagues Maurice Odumbe and Steve Tikolo has very little to do with his cricketing expertise. Karim has the job simply because he is sensible, easy to deal with and draws respect from fellow players for his personality, still he is a reasonable off-break bowler and handy late order batsman.

In their Group A outings, Kenya will meet hosts England, defending champions Sri Lanka, India, South Africa and neighbours Zimbabwe. Kenya's best chance to cause an upset many feel will come against

Alistair Campbell's men but Karim acknowledges the vast difference in preparations of the teams.

"Zimbabwe have played 130 one-day internationals between 1991 and 1999, compared to Kenya's 25," Karim pointed out. "We should have had more international competition."



ASIF KARIM

Kenya's main groundwork for the World Cup took place in Bangladesh in March when they played in a triangular tournament which also included Zimbabwe.

They beat their hosts twice in the qualifying matches but lost twice to Zimbabwe, who then also crushed them by a massive 202 runs in the final when Kenya were shot out for 123. Kenya have lost to Zimbabwe the last eight times they have met.

Karim acknowledges there are differences between some members of his team and Kalicharran but said that should be put aside.

"We're going to the World Cup and we'll do our best. We must focus there with all our soul, our heart and body, irrespective of domestic problems," he said. "We have a task at hand. The important thing is to retain that focus."

"We can wash all our dirty linen when we return from the World Cup."

Asked who Kenya's likely victims could be this time, after West Indies in 1996, he grinned and said: "Given a choice, I would like to beat England in England."

Hosts warm up in warm-ups



LONDON, May 8 (AFP/Reuters): England's 'wet weather' men made a solid start to their World Cup warm-up campaign on Friday, excelling in their favourite conditions as their rivals were washed out by rain.

The hosts of the 12-nation tournament, which begins next week, beat English county opponents Kent by 32 runs at a damp Canterbury.

World Cup favourites South Africa, however, saw their hopes of acclimatising to the conditions dashed as their game against Sussex was rained off.

Cup holders Sri Lanka and India only managed to complete half their games against Northamptonshire and Leicestershire, while Zimbabwe squeezed in just 10 overs against Worcestershire.

World Cup organisers on rejected Zimbabwe's request to replay their rain-hit practice match.

Zimbabwe coach David Houghton sounded out Worcestershire secretary Mike Vockins about the possibility of re-staging the match.

But the proposal was ruled out after a telephone call to the organising committee. "I would have played tomorrow," Houghton said. "But we got no further than discussing the idea. We were told there could be no change to the schedule — rules are rules."

Houghton's damp return to Worcester, where he was county coach before his departure in 1997, was a frustrating setback for a Zimbabwe side short on practice.

They have not played for nearly a month and there are only two more warm-up matches before they face Kenya in their first World Cup fixture at Taunton next weekend.

The home side, put in, were 45 for one in 10 overs when the match was abandoned.

Tournament minnows Kenya, meanwhile, lost by seven wickets to Somerset.

England, hosting their fourth World Cup and hoping for their first crown, have packed their squad with medium-paced seamers and swingers ideally suited to damp early-summer pitches.

The tactic paid off against Kent. First Graeme Thorpe and Neil Fairbrother shrugged off fitness concerns with half-centuries out of a total of 197 for seven off 38 overs available.

Then, when Australian Andrew Symonds threatened an upset with 57 off 54 balls, England's seamers hit back. Kent were dismissed for 163 in 36 overs, with Ian Austin taking four wickets for 39.

England skipper Alec Stewart said: "I thought it was a real good workout. Thorpe and

Fairbrother showed what class players they are. We stuck at the task... there was some good fielding throughout."

The World Cup begins on May 14. The teams in action on Friday start in Group A, with Group B sides, led by Australia and Pakistan, due to face county sides on Saturday.

South African captain Hansie Cronje could not hide his frustration after he was told his side's wash-out could not be rescheduled to Saturday even though both teams were willing to play.

Worse still, South Africa's Jonty Rhodes continued to struggle with an elbow injury, which could see him ruled out of the start of the tournament.

Cronje, however, said: "He is burning to get back out there. If someone really wants to get out there is speeds up the recovery process."

India also had a poor day. Key batsman Sachin Tendulkar, returning after nine weeks out with a back injury, was dismissed for 29 as they scored an unimpressive 219 for seven off 50 overs. Rahul Dravid top-scored with 60.

Sri Lanka saw Eric Upasanthan upstage his better-known team-mates against English county Northamptonshire.

The beefy seamer grabbed three for 33 in nine overs as Northamptonshire were dismissed for 199 before the rain set in.

Former England paceman Andrew Caddick removed Kennedy Okeno and Stephen Tikolo in a hostile opening burst and finished with three for 33, but 78 from Ravindu Shah helped Kenya regain respectability.

Thomas Odoayo hit two sixes in his 34 and Asif Karim contributed 35 from only 28 balls at the end of the innings as Kenya totalled 224 for eight from their 50 overs.

Kenya, then used as five bowlers but to little effect as Pi-ran Holloway, with 96 and Keith Parsons (68) led Somerset to victory with an unbroken fourth wicket partnership of 134.

Stewart doesn't feel alarmed



UNDATED, May 8 (Internet): Captain Alec Stewart has insisted there is no cause for concern about his form after failing to reach double figures as England clinched victory over Kent in their World Cup warm-up match in Canterbury.

Stewart, who has not scored a half-century in his last 17 one-day internationals, was run out for four today while Nick Knight made just 10 to leave England worried about their opening partnership with their World Cup opener against Sri Lanka just a week away.

But Stewart claimed he was on the verge of re-discovering his rhythm, claiming: "I didn't face too many balls, but I actually felt pretty comfortable at the crease."

"I've worked very hard over the last two weeks and when things aren't going your way, a run out like that is more than disappointing but you just have to accept it."

"I can't say I didn't move my feet or I didn't do this or that because I got run out and from that point of view I suppose it's a positive and over the last 10 days, I just feel I'm coming back into a bit of rhythm."

"If you're not spending a lot of time at the crease it's not ideal, but I'm feeling far more comfortable than I was. People can blame it on my not moving my feet, but I don't do that even when I'm playing well."

"It's all down to rhythm and



ALEC STEWART

when you haven't got it you're worrying about doing this and that instead of concentrating on hitting the ball. There is still room for improvement but it's gradually getting back to how I'd like it to be."

But while Stewart and

Knight struggled, Neil Fairbrother and Graham Thorpe both hit half-centuries to guide England to 197 for seven in a match reduced to 38 overs by rain and chasing a revised target of 196 under the Duckworth-Lewis calculation method. Kent were dismissed for 163.

It gave England a morale-lifting triumph ahead of Sunday's second warm-up match against Essex in Chelmsford and Stewart enthused: "At the crucial stages, the boys stuck at their task and deserved the win."

"It wasn't easy because the wicket started slightly damp and then we had the showers when it sweated a bit under the covers and the ball did something the whole game. We got the ball in the right areas and generally I thought it was a good performance all round."

He admitted, though, that the mysterious system for calculating Kent's victory target left him dumbfounded, adding: "I've never really understood it and I still don't understand it, but that's the way it is and you have to accept it."

"It did seem strange scoring 197 and then they only had to chase 196, but these people have worked out a formula and that's what we're going to be playing in this World Cup."