

Sport

British media

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was unmistakably home-based and a wind that felt like it had last resided in the Cairngorms whipped across the pitch to make it uncomfortably cold when the sun was out and miserable as sin when it propelled the rain at 45 degrees.

"(Scottish captain) put Bangladesh in and the sound of the pipers of the First Battalion of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders had barely faded into the pavilion before half the visiting line-up had joined it."

"The only complaint Bangladesh could have had - apart from the wicket and the weather that is - was Aminul's leg before of John Blain, which looked suspiciously high and going to leg."

On match-winning knock of Minhazul Abedin, The Independent wrote, "In normal circumstances his unbeaten 68 off 116 balls would have been criminally tardy, under these it was an innings saver."

"Bangladesh conquer the brave hearts," The Guardian headline blurted out.

Bits & pieces

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fore the tournament began on May 14, but after losses to New Zealand and Pakistan they now face a tough campaign to even progress to the next stage.

Writing in Rupert Murdoch's string of News Ltd newspapers, respected journalist Robert Craddock said the Australians looked tired and there was now a "growing suspicion the one-day side is slightly over-rated."

"They are a good side who go well in most tournaments, but the core of their reputation is built on the lightweight Australian competition, the Carlton and United Series, where three teams compete for two spots in the final," Craddock wrote.

"Overseas teams which tour rarely seem as motivated as Australia for these matches so it is a bad year when Australia don't win the competition and a terrible one when they fail to make the finals."

"Winning this competition often gives Australia a falsely high impression of their progress in one-day cricket."

Coward and the Sydney Morning Herald's Peter Roe buck, also said the Australian selectors' policy of choosing separate one-day and Test teams had failed.

"While other countries have flirted with this potentially disruptive method ... in the man they believe it to be conduct unbecoming as well as unproductive," Coward wrote in The Australian on Monday.

SL v India

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still struggling and that is worrying."

In normal circumstances, Muttiah Muralitharan's form would be a consolation. He has taken six wickets in three games, with a best of three for 25 against South Africa.

Indians, however, are among the best players of spin in the world and are thus likely to blunt the off spinner's effectiveness.

If Sri Lanka fall on Wednesday it would not only mean, as manager Dulip Mendis put it, a return home in disgrace.

It could also cost some players, and the 35-year-old Ranatunga in particular, their international futures. The same, however, could be said of India and Azharuddin.

SQUADS

INDIA (probable): Saurav Ganguly, Sadagopan Ramesh, Rahul Dravid, Sachin Tendulkar, Mohammad Azharuddin (capt), Ajay Jadeja.

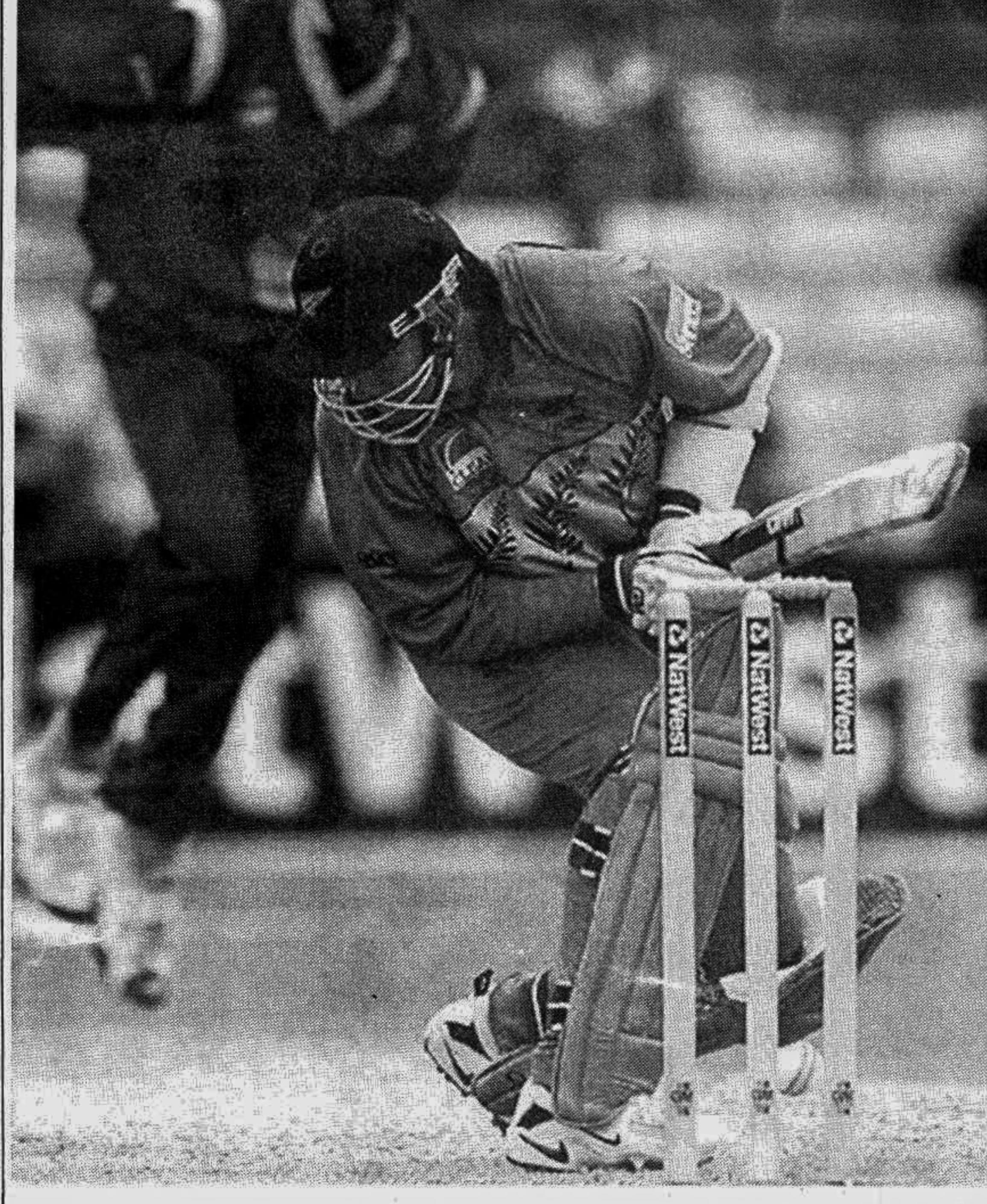
Nayan Mongia, Jagavat Sri-nath, Nikhil Chopra, Debadish Mohanty, Venkatesh Prasad.

SRI LANKA (probable): Sanath Jayasuriya, Roshan Mahanama, Marvan Atapattu, Aravinda De Silva, Arjuna Ranatunga (capt), Mahela Jayawardena, Romesh Kaluwitharana, Chaminda Vaas, Eric Upashantha, Pramodaya Wickremasinghe, Muttiah Muralitharan.

TAUNTON, England, May 25 (Reuters): Brush strokes are complementing batting strokes as the vivid images of the cricket World Cup are captured on canvas by artist Jocelyn Galsworthy.

A professional painter for 30 years who specialises in portraits and sporting scenes, she is in Taunton for Wednesday's Group A match between defending champions Sri Lanka and former winners India. It is her latest assignment in a series of paintings at some of the tournament grounds.

"I did the opening match at Lord's and last Saturday's game at Worcester and I will also be going to Edgbaston," she said on Monday while setting up her easel to start work on the background to her painting.



THAT'S A KNOCK OUT! New Zealand batsman Craig McMillan is felled by a bouncer from West Indies fast bowler Reon King at Southampton on May 24. —Internet photo

'Jac' of terrific trades

LONDON, May 26 (Internet report): Captain Brian Lara hailed Ridley Jacobs as "a breath of fresh air" for West Indies cricket after the wicket-keeper-batsman helped his country demolish New Zealand to get their World Cup campaign back on track.

Jacobs is not a name well known on these shores but he was the Windies man-of-the-series and one of the few bright lights in the 5-0 winter Test whitewash by South Africa.

He showed his prowess as wicketkeeper and opening batsman to claim the man-of-the-match award as Lara's side claimed their second win in the World Cup, by seven wickets with 34 balls to spare at a shivering Southampton yesterday.

Jacobs took five catches to equal the competition record as the West Indies pace attack took full advantage of a bouncy and seaming pitch to roll over the Kiwis for 156 - their lowest ever World Cup score.

Then he ensured there would be no fightback by New Zealand as he went in as opener and batted all the way through the innings for an unbeaten 80 off 131 balls with eight fours and a six.

A third-wicket stand of 72 in 15 overs with Lara, who looked in good form when making 36 off 54 balls, effectively killed off the game as a contest.



RIDLEY JACOBS

Mervyn Dillon and Reon King chance of making big totals and he is doing that."

New Zealand had no answer to old war horses Curtly Ambrose and Courtney Walsh and the younger pretenders in

on a wicket tailor-made for the Windies quick bowlers.

Dillon ended with the best figures of four for 46, but the glory could just have easily gone to the other trio who beat the bat with consistent regularity and gave the Kiwis little chance to escape the shackles.

It was 21 overs before their top scorer Craig McMillan (32) achieved the first boundary of the innings, and there were only 11 in their 49.1 overs.

Lara admitted: "It was a very important toss to win because when you go in with an attack of four or five seamers you want to have first use of the track."

"But equally if we have to bat first in similar circumstances I would want us to perform much better than New Zealand did. You need to hang in there."

New Zealand captain Stephen Fleming was unhappy with the pitch and claimed: "There was too much assistance for the bowlers early on - but if you are going to have that assistance it should be there all game and not just one innings."

"They bowled magnificently and gave us nothing to hit. They took early wickets and never took their foot off the pedal."

People might say we played a few rash shots. But in those conditions on a wicket like that you have got to take a few chances, and things just didn't come off for us."

Nakata's second in a row

KUALA LUMPUR, May 25: Japan's Hideyoshi Nakata beat three other candidates to bag the Asian-player-of-the-year award here Tuesday for a second straight time, reports AFP.

"It is a great honour to be recognised once again as the Asian-player-of-the-year. I am very happy," Nakata said at the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) annual awards ceremony.

The AFC said Nakata, who played for Italy's Perugia, was chosen for "having flown the Asian flag."

"Since the move to one of the world's toughest leagues, the Japanese midfielder has built up a huge following not just in Italy but in Asia as well," the AFC said in a statement.

He is looked upon as the epitome of the new breed of Asian players set to make their mark on international football of the 21st century."

Nakata staved off strong challenges from China's Fan

Kuwarada named as Asian-coach-of-the-year.

Jubilo Iwata, winner of the Asian Club Championship title, was also crowned the club team of the year, while Japanese journalist Yoshiyuki Osumi was selected as football-writer-of-the-year.



Argentine striker Gabriel Batistuta (R) tries to evade German Formula 1 racer Michael Schumacher during a charity soccer match for the children of Kosovo between selections of Italian singers and F1 drivers held in Florence, Italy, on May 24. —AFP photo

Greetings to the cricketers

Individuals and organisations continued to felicitate Bangladesh cricket team for its victory against Scotland, reports BSS.

Bangladesh made their first ever victory in the World Cup beating Scotland by 22 runs in Edinburgh on Monday.

Amawi League general secretary and Minister for LGRD and Cooperatives Zillur Rahman, Water Resources Minister Abdur Razzak, Dhaka City Mayor Mohammad Hanif, Fisheries and Livestock Minister A S M Abdur Rab, State Minister for Youth and Sports and Cultural Affairs Obaidul Quader and State Minister for Jute A K Fayedul Huq in separate messages today congratulate the cricket team expressing the hope that the victory would continue in future.

Jatiya Krira Parishad and BRTC also congratulated the team, coach and manager of the Bangladesh team and said the victory would encourage the whole nation. BRTC also announced cash incentive for the cricketers.

Mustafa Kamal, MP, the chairman of Abahani Cricket Committee, also congratulated Bangladesh team on their historic success on Scottish soil.

Our DU correspondent adds:

Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL), student wing of ruling party, yesterday congratulated the Bangladesh cricket squad for their first victory in the World Cup cricket.

However, his employer, the

Miles to go

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the players starting the game were getting paid and refused suggestions that his team are full-time.

He then claimed that if the Bangladeshi cricket authorities had listened to him, man-of-the-match Minhajul Abedin would have been left at home.

The 35-year-old all-rounder turned the game in the visitors' favour with a fine unbeaten 68, but that cut little ice with Greenidge.

"The authorities have set their stall out to win a World Cup match, so I hope they are happy," he said.

"I am looking at a 10-year plan to try and develop the younger players and give us a chance of being a Test nation in that time.

"But the authorities don't appear to listen, so I have to work with what I am given.

"Minhajul did well, but I prefer to look towards the future."

Greenidge, whose contract is to end after the World Cup, was made an honorary citizen of the country after he coached Bangladesh to ICC Trophy victory in Malaysia two years back.

However, his employer, the

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB), observes different opinion on its claim for Test status. BCB officials hope the country will be granted Test status at this year's annual meeting of the International Cricket

Board on Thursday, reports AFP.

If things had gone to plan for Steve Waugh's side, the game here should have been no more than a gentle work-out and an opportunity to give their reserves a run.

But now, following defeats to Pakistan and New Zealand, the Australians know every run is vital.

They can only reach the second round of the tournament on run rate - and only if they win their two remaining matches against Bangladesh and the West Indies.

Coach Geoff Marsh said here on Tuesday that there would not be any experimenting with the starting eleven.

Against Pakistan, they had picked a batsman - Damien Martyn - rather than an all-rounder to replace the injured Shane Lee.

"It was a bit of a gamble," admitted Marsh. "I think we'll re-look at that when we're ready to play Test cricket."

GORDON GREENIDGE

Council (ICC), the game's governing body.

"That's our aim, that is what we want," team manager Tanvir Ahmed said. "I think, we are ready to play Test cricket."

Partying at Stakis

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SEVEN SKIPPERS

The Stakis party last night was special for many reasons, but also because seven of Bangladesh's eight captains were present. Enjoying themselves were Shafiqul Huq Heera, Raquibul Hasan, Gazi Ashraf Hossain, Faruque Ahmed, Minhajul Abedin, Akram Khan and Aminul Islam.

Only the first captain Shamsur Kabir could not be present.

The PM also doubled the prize money for man-of-the-match.

Naimur Rahman, for his knock against Scotland and Mehrab Hossain for his flair against the West Indies will each receive Tk 50,000, the happy PM made it known over telephone.

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follows the game keenly, doubled the prize money for Bangladeshi cricketers after the victory over Scotland.

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