

Bits & pieces

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McGrath Friday, the ICC made him trim a logo on his bat to the official size.
Tendulkar was spotted by the International Cricket Council using a bat with an oversized logo of the Indian tire and sporting goods company MRF during the May 26 match against Sri Lanka at Taunton.



IN DEMAND: Bangladesh opener Mehrab Hossain obliging a fan at the Central Shaheed Minar yesterday. — Star photo by Anisur Rahman

DRYING GEL
LONDON, June 5 (AP): Bowlers and fielders often have problems keeping their hands dry so that can catch, field or bowl a sometimes slippery cricket ball.

Now a company has come up with a gel which is being used at county and club level and appears to work and the world's cricket authorities are checking whether its use breaks any rules.

Umpires and cricket officials are always wary of the ball being tampered with to make it swing more in the air and give an unfair advantage to the bowler.

Physio Sport has developed a liquid hand powder which, when rubbed onto a damp hand, absorbs small quantities of moisture and improves grip.

Now the International Cricket Council is taking an interest.
'I'll need to get one or two people to look at it because the situation is something we haven't encountered before,' said ICC Technical Committee spokesman Clive Hitchcock.

On-song Johnson

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cessful batsman.
He will be aware, however, that his one international setback in his short international career came against Sunday's opponents.

Bowling the final over of the match, at the mini World Cup in Dhaka last October, Johnson conceded 15 runs as Chris Harris snatched victory with a boundary off the final ball. 'Harris hits me over extra cover for four to win it,' he recalls.

With history beckoning for Zimbabwe as they attempt to reach the World Cup semi-finals for the first time, he will be determined not to allow that one lapse to re-occur.

Javagal goes

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and Anil Kumble gave an indication of their contrasting styles, when the Australian averaged 51 miles an hour against the Indian's 60. Kumble's fastest delivery at 73 miles an hour was just three miles slower than seamer Steve Waugh.

The speed gun will throw up the fastest bowler at the World Cup with Pakistani Shaohab Akhtar, the '97 miles-an-hour' man, tipped to break the 100-mile barrier.

Menacing McGrath

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English conditions and the white ball.
'I was lacking a little bit of rhythm, a bit of form ... but I came back slowly.'

'I think my patience and confidence were pretty good in the last game against the West Indies and that's how you get wickets in one-day matches.'

Euro Olympic meet on

AMSTERDAM, June 5: A two-day European Olympics meeting started in a somber mood here Friday, with delegates vowing to apply 'surgical ruthlessness' in repairing the disgraced world sporting movement and implementing an ethical code for sport, reports AP.

Secretary-General Mario Pescante of the European Olympic movement urged the leaders of 48 European Olympic Committees to meet their responsibilities and overcome 'the most difficult moments in the history of the Olympic movement.'

'I cannot help but feel embarrassed when presenting a report on "regular" activities while the Olympic world is rocked by events that have deeply shaken us,' he said. As examples, Pescante and others highlighted the bribery scandal at the Salt Lake City games and the Tour de France doping affair.

During the annual meeting, which runs through Saturday, members will attempt to agree on a code of ethical conduct for sporting events at home as well as for the Olympics.

On Friday, member countries presented annual reports of their activities and opened seminars on doping, ethics and the upcoming games in Sydney, Salt Lake City and Athens.

'The IOC must now respond with surgical ruthlessness and must create new standards all around... The work of the IOC 2000 commission and the ethical commission must totally exclude self interest and other vested interests,' said Peadar Casey.

Intriguing encounter

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tise at the Lancashire County Cricket Club ground the day before.

The English problem is the grounds, including this one, has no barrier between the sitting area and the playing field. It is not possible to stop the invading crowd, racing to get the stumps as souvenir, or to just touch their heroes, with only the help of outnumbered joyless stewards. More measures will surely be required if the apprehended trouble at Old Trafford is to be averted on Tuesday.

Wasim Akram's security plea was answered with large number of police joining the count stewards to make conditions safe for the players. They returned to the pavilion for the lunch-break through a cordoned-off corridor.

Pakistan fans were rather subdued on the day. They were not in their usual large numbers as at other venues previously. For the first few overs they were not sure whether to forget the Bangladesh sting and enjoy themselves, or to wait and see to save the blushes

later. It is to the credit of their cricket sense that they chose the latter. Their judgement was rewarded for Pakistan crawled to 157 for six in 43 overs. The last seven overs saw a different story as Moin Khan played a gem of an inning.

The Pakistanis need not have worried for much of the support at the county ground went their way. As some English fans told this correspondent in the morning on the way to the stadium, 'We are neutrals. We'll support Pakistan.'

Lady supporters or not, the South Africans were hopelessly outnumbered in the stands. Their fans were sparsely sprinkled around the ground, but not even in one consolidated group. For once an English cricket ground looked to be dominated by the English. It may be recalled that the noisy Bangladeshi fans made every ground a home affair.

The high price of the Super Six tickets could have put many off, but not all of them. One Pakistani bought a sixty pounds ticket at one hundred in the black. As always, whatever

the rush for ticket days before a match, tickets were available near the ground on the match day, but at a premium price.

Only Moin Khan, it seemed, did justice to that Pakistanis' gamble.

Wait! There could have been a mistake. In the 48th over of the Pakistan innings, after Moin hit Pollock for a straight six and then a four through extra cover, pockets of Pakistani supporters popped up from practically all the galleries. There were in fact many more of them than met the eye.

However, as this is being written Moin paid for taking a second run, proving once again the risk of running off a mis-fielding, especially if Hansie Cronje is the fielder.

In the spirit of the 'carnival of cricket' a steel band from Trinidad & Tobago played during the lunch interval. Young children played 'quick cricket', an effort of the England & Wales Cricket Board to popularise the game among them, as the catchy tune drummed on.

Azhar faces the music

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more bounce than others India had played on. It was much harder.

Azharuddin's leadership has been under fire for the past two months and critics have been baying for his blood after India

Pakistan.
It did not help Azharuddin's cause when his deputy Ajay Jadeja led India to three victories in a triangular one-day tournament at Sharjah in April. Jadeja had been elevated to the captaincy as Azharuddin suffered an injury midway in the tournament.

Several opinion polls in India on the eve of the team's departure for the World Cup named Jadeja as the first choice to lead India in the premier one-day tournament.

But the officials ignored the chorus of appeals to make Jadeja captain and stuck with Azharuddin, who had already been named skipper.

Azharuddin again faced flak during the World Cup after India's defeat at the hands of Zimbabwe in the preliminary league but things began looking up again following three straight wins, which took India into the Super Six stage.

The 36-year-old batsman came back from a lean phase two years ago to reclaim the Indian captaincy from Sachin Tendulkar, whose batting had wilted under the pressure of leading the team.

It was after a disastrous tour of England in 1996 that Azharuddin had lost the captaincy but three years later he was back to lead India in the third successive World Cup.



failed to make the final of the inaugural Asian Test Championship and suffered three successive one-day defeats against

Fletcher for England?

LONDON, June 5: Former Zimbabwe captain Duncan Fletcher has become the leading contender to succeed David Lloyd as England's cricket coach, it was reported here on Saturday.

Glamorgan are prepared to release Fletcher from his contract to take the national post even though he has only recently signed a new three year deal with the Welsh county, the Daily Express said.

Glamorgan secretary Mike Fatkin said: 'We see Duncan as a top coach and a very good manager and we are not surprised by England's interest.'

'If they say they want him we would have mixed feelings, but we would certainly do the decent thing and not stand in Duncan's way.'

'I understand Duncan has said he would be interested in the job.'

The England Advisory Management Committee (EMAC), which will make the final decision, meets on Monday to trim

down the list of candidates to two or three main contenders. England's early exit from the World Cup has given EMAC more time than they would have liked to find a successor to Lloyd before next month's Test series against New Zealand.

On leaving the job Lloyd said he would prefer an Englishman to succeed him.

'I just think that if it isn't, then it's just somebody who is drawing a salary,' he said.

Several candidates are being considered for the job, including former England Test batsman Bob Woolmer. He has been in charge of the South Africans for five years, but quits after the World Cup.

Fletcher never played Test cricket, but captained Zimbabwe when they made their World Cup debut in 1983 and played first class cricket in South Africa. After coaching Western Province in South Africa he helped Glamorgan to their first championship in 28 years in 1997.



A jeep carrying Bangladesh skipper Aminul Islam leads the grand motorcade through the streets of Dhaka yesterday. — Star photo by Anisur Rahman

No policing for umpires

LONDON, June 5: World Cup umpires are happy that they have been spared the responsibility of safeguarding the camera stump worth 5,000 pounds (about 700 dollars) from rampaging fans, reports AFP.

In the past, umpires had to guard them with their lives during post-match pitch invasions. West Indian John Holder was once knocked to the ground and there have been numerous failed attempts to snatch the electronic timber.

This summer, television staff have been discreetly replacing camera stumps with normal ones during the day's last drinks break to protect their property.

One World Cup umpire said: 'It's not up to us any more. We don't want pushing and shoving while some idiot, who's had 26 pints, tries to wrestle the stump off us.'

Television broadcasters say that no camera stumps have yet been stolen since they were introduced eight years ago in Australia.

Waugh's plans paying off?

LONDON, June 5 (AP): Australia's 77-run win over India in Friday's opening Super Six game at The Oval is only the first part of skipper Steve Waugh's five-part plan to win the World Cup.

Waugh says Australia will only qualify for semifinals if his team maintains the commitment it showed against India and continues to win its remaining games.

Sent into bat, Australia hit 282 for six in 50 overs and then bowled India out for 205 in 49 overs.

'We can't be guaranteed a semifinal place unless we stay on the winning course,' the Australian skipper said after Australia secured their first two points in second stage league.

Points earned in the preliminary group league against teams which qualify for the Super Six are carried forward but Australia started the second stage without any points, having lost to Pakistan and New Zealand — the other qualifiers from Group B.

'Stretching the winning habit to the remaining two Super Six matches will get us into the semifinals,' said Waugh, attributing the win over India to an all-round performance.

'It was an all-round team performance. Our batting was impressive, everyone got 20s and 30s — that's what we're looking for.'

'Even the guys who hit 20s and 30s looked impressive... we went out and played our shots and backed ourselves.'

'The guys are relaxed and backing themselves, that's what I want.'

Lord Cowdrey lauds 'em

Former England cricket captain Lord Colin Cowdrey has congratulated the captain and members of the Bangladesh cricket team for their excellent performance in the World Cup, reports BSS.

The legendary Cowdrey, who was inducted in the House of Lords in 1988 for his outstanding contribution to his country's cricket, extended the felicitations at a meeting with Bangladesh High Commissioner to the United Kingdom A H Mahmood on Thursday night, a message received here said.

Teachers taught

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way... but this hurts more as I'm a cricket guy,' he said.

Telecommunication salesman Robert Cornley, also from London, said English cricket officials seemed to hope that its past World Cup record would carry it to forward.

'As they were mistaken,' said Cornley, adding that the World Cup was not the same for him after England were eliminated.

'Yes, you feel as if English cricketers now need to learn a lot from these countries,' he said. 'See how South Africa and Pakistan have done in the World Cup.'

'But then, cricket is no longer a passion in England,' he added. 'Imagine Zimbabwe with a handful of cricketers getting ahead of us.'

Mark Allen, a Chinese-Australian who learnt the game at school in Hong Kong before his parents moved to Melbourne, said England may not fit into the top cricket-playing nations for a long time after this World Cup.

'England were a bit unlucky, but you can't leave these things to luck,' he said. 'Look, (England) got a hiding from South Africa and India... and India did not appear any good against the professional Aussies.'

'If you want to watch cricket, come to Australia... that's where the real cricket is played.'

Another Australian Harold Wood, from Sydney, said England's decline started several decades ago.

Heads held high

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this is my last tour for Bangladesh. I will retire as soon as I get back home.

Feeling after beating Pakistan?
'My family always supported me in a big way. My father is no more. But he was a big lover of my game. Although I did not play the match, I was definitely a part of the game. It felt very good. I remembered my family and also the players who bought the game this far. It is not the work of one day. Everybody deserves appreciation,' was Faruque's thoughtful reply.

The sports shop will help him keep in touch with the game and as Faruque said in a PR tone, 'I am really specialised in cricket.'

But his business should not put off Bangladesh Cricket Board officials from calling on him for any support they may need of him because, even if he retires, he was 'really willing to provide' his services to cricket.

World Cup stats: Played: 2, Runs: 16, HS: 9, Ave: 8

Manjurul Islam

How was he feeling?
'Definitely very well,' said the tall paceman, who has drawn the attention of the local press with his effective bowling. He would like to win more matches and do even better in ODIs.

'We've proved against Pakistan that we can win ODI matches,' said Manjurul in his disarming smile.

'Anything is possible in cricket. It cannot be that just because it is Bangladesh, we will lose match after match. We can also win,' was his resolute statement.

The lanky pacer was rather diplomatic when he said, 'I have not yet decided for whom I shall play next season as I am a professional cricketer,' and then laughed it off.

World Cup stats: Played: 4, Wickets: 3, B/Ave: 31.33

Tanveer Muzhar Islam

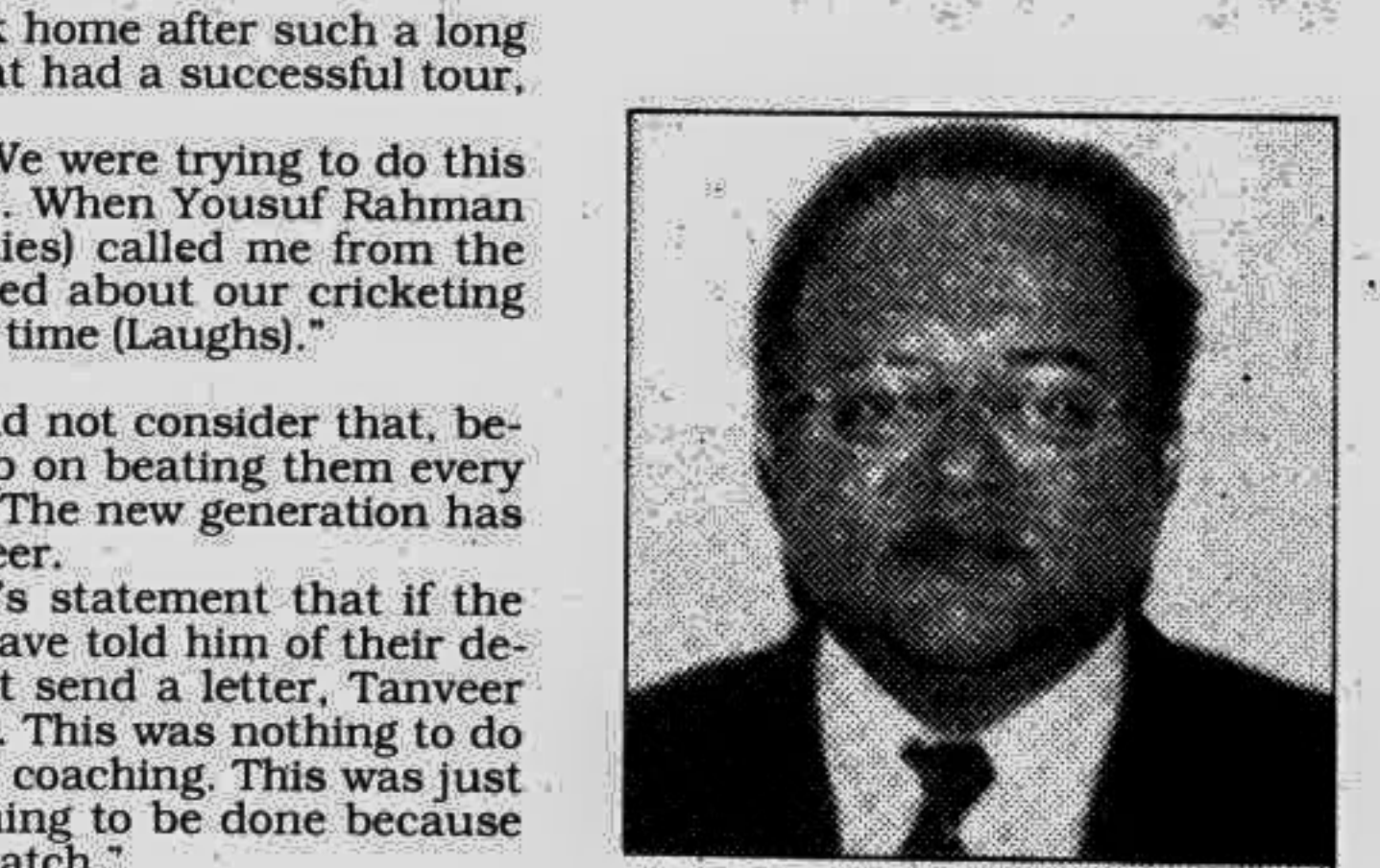
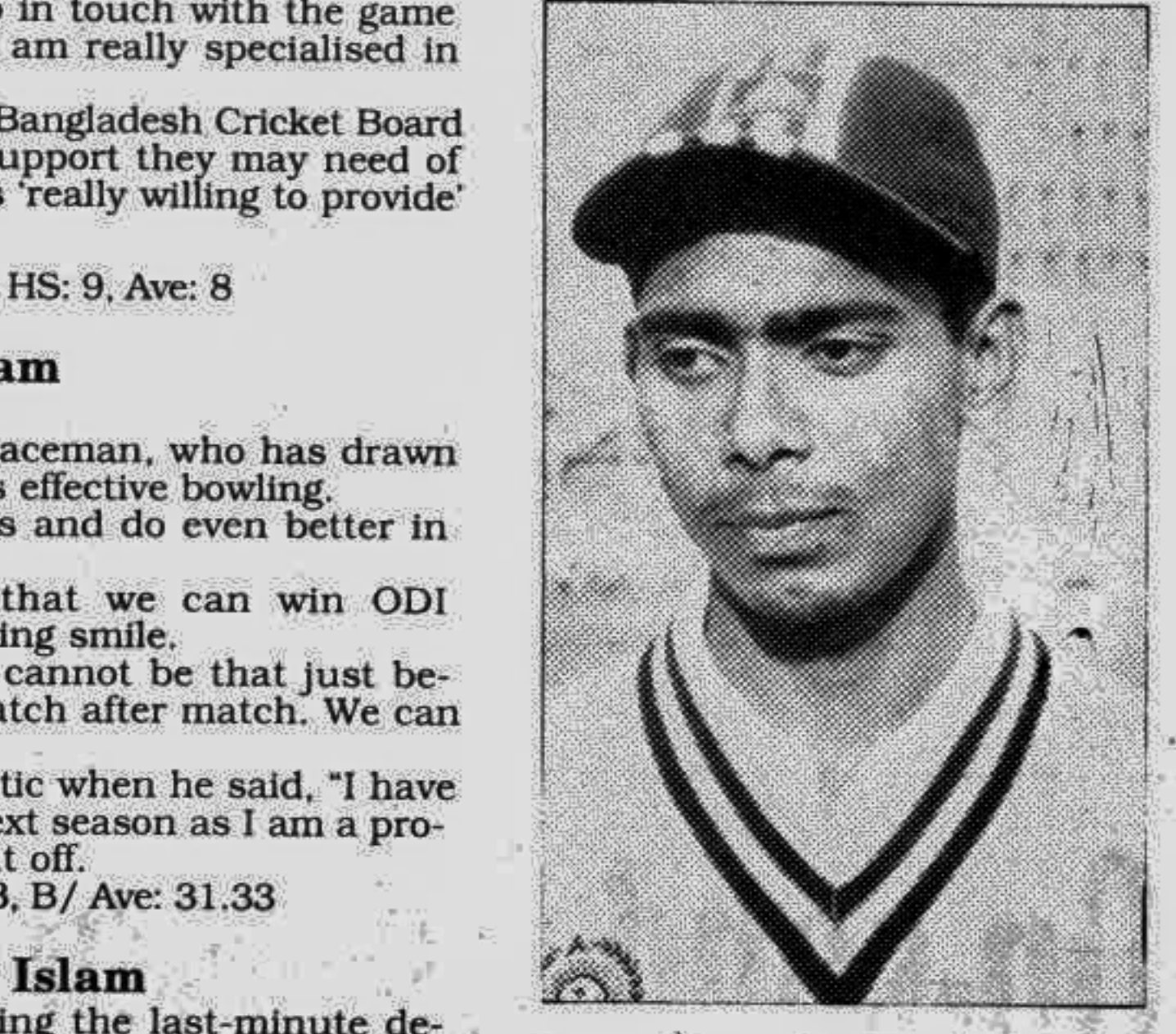
The manager was busy administering the last-minute details as the team was checking in.

'I am really feeling great, going back home after such a long time,' Tanveer, the leader of a team that had a successful tour, said.

On Pakistan he was rather blunt, 'We were trying to do this (beat Pakistan) for the last thirty years. When Yousof Rahman (his national team-mate in the seventies) called me from the States after we beat Pakistan, we talked about our cricketing days and if we could have done it in our time (Laughs).'

'Where do Bangladesh go from here?
'The only way is to go up. We should not consider that, because we beat Pakistan, we would keep on beating them every time. We have to keep on playing well. The new generation has to come up to do better still,' said Tanveer.

Commenting on Gordon Greenidge's statement that if the board was 'man enough' they should have told him of their decision to sack him on the face and not send a letter, Tanveer said, 'This was just a letter for the tour. This was nothing to do with the cricket board or his long-term coaching. This was just a short-term measure. There was nothing to be done because this had to be done the day before the match.'



New Zealand v Zimbabwe

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said: 'The games will be tougher now but we are ready. I think we are peaking at the right time.'

The key to the match may lie in the New Zealand top-order where Craig McMillan and Nathan Astle were expected to blast quick runs.

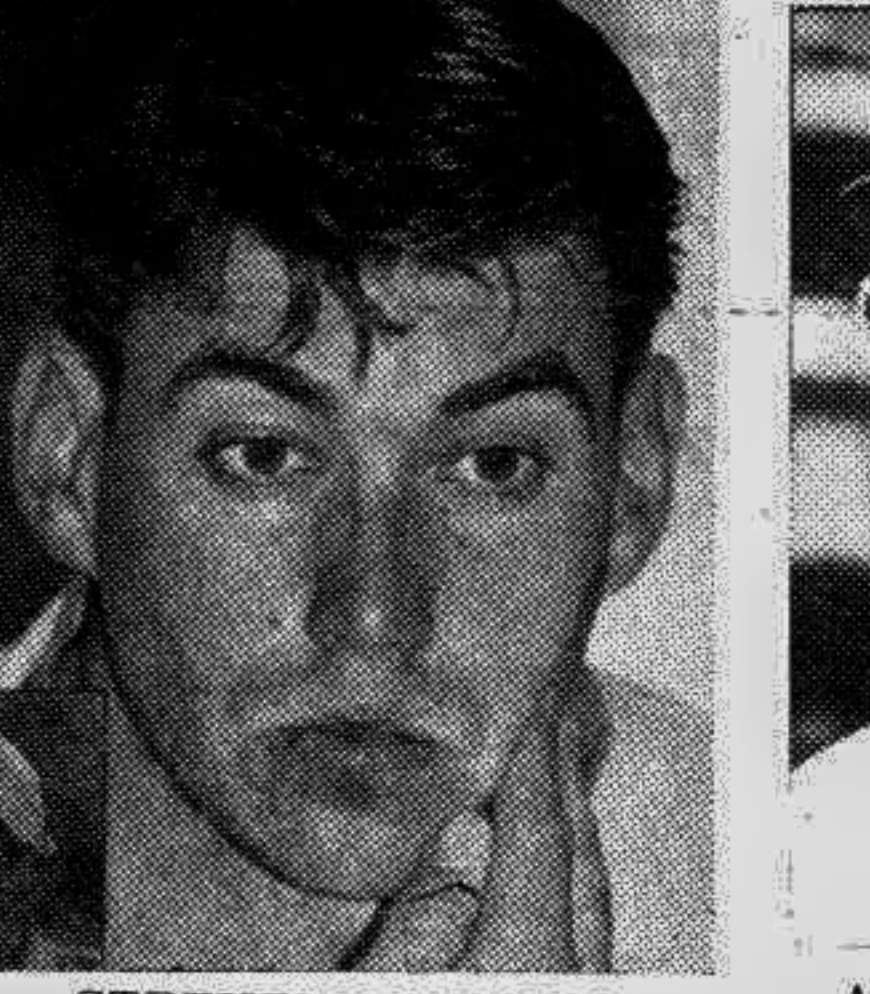
McMillan has looked in form without scoring heavily but Astle has hardly hit the ball off the square, the opener has made 22 in five matches so

far.
'I'd love to get going again,' said Astle, whose highest one-day score of 120 came against Zimbabwe at Eden Park in Auckland in 1995-96.

'I'm going through a bad patch at the moment. Everyone has them. You can't just keep scoring runs every game or it would be too easy.'

SQUADS
NEW ZEALAND (probable): Nathan Astle, Matthew Horne, Craig McMillan, Stephen Fleming (capt), Roger Twose, Adam Parore, Chris Cairns, Chris Harris, Dion Nash, Gavin Larsen, Geoff Allott.

ZIMBABWE (probable): Neil Johnson, Grant Flower, Murray Goodwin, Andy Flower, Alistair Campbell (capt), Guy Whittall, Paul Strang, Andrew Whittall, Stuart Carlisle, Heath Streak, Henry Olonga.



STEPHEN FLEMING



ALISTAIR CAMPBELL

HEAD-TO-HEAD

New Zealand beat Zimbabwe 2-0 in a two-Test series earlier this year. They won the first by 10 wickets as Craig McMillan scored 139. The second Test was won by an innings and 13 runs, the Kiwis piling up 460 - Matthew Horne making 157 and Nathan Astle 114 - and then shooting out Zimbabwe for 170 and 277.

The Kiwis also won the one-day series 4-1. Last October they had beat Zimbabwe in the mini World Cup in Bangladesh, through a last ball four.

1999 WORLD CUP RESULTS
New Zealand: lost to Pakistan by 62 runs, beat Australia by five wickets, lost to the West Indies by seven wickets, beat Bangladesh by six wickets, beat Scotland by six wickets.

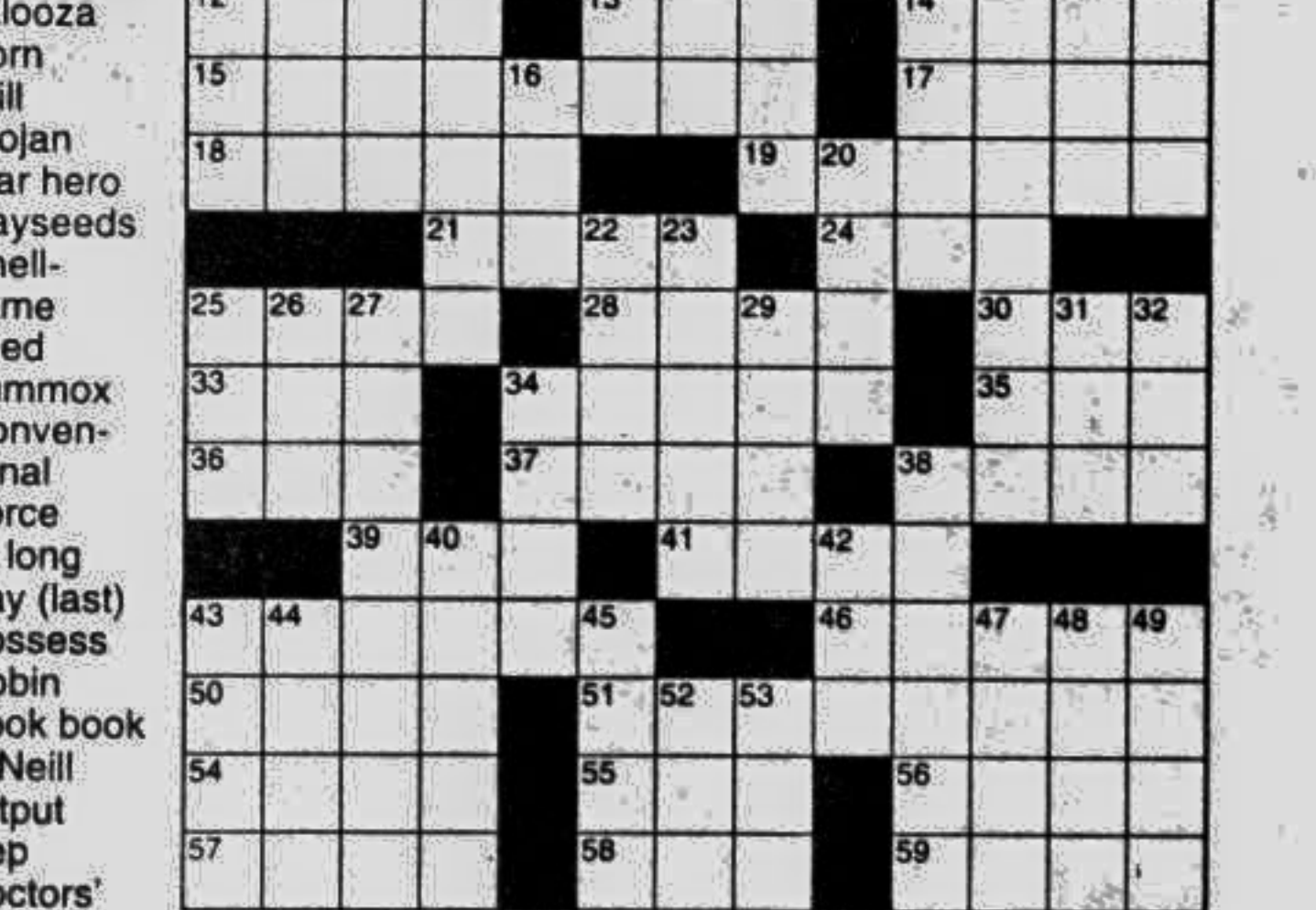
Zimbabwe: lost to England by seven wickets, beat India by three runs, lost to Sri Lanka by four wickets, beat Kenya by five wickets, beat South Africa by 48 runs.

PREVIOUS WORLD CUPS
New Zealand have beaten Zimbabwe in all their three World Cup meetings, including two victories in 1987. At Hyderabad in India, New Zealand overcame a superb 142 by current Zimbabwe coach Dave Houghton to win by three runs. The second win at Calcutta's Eden Gardens was by four wickets, with 14 balls to spare. In 1992, the Kiwis won by 48 runs at home in Napier as Zimbabwe, set a revised target of 153 off 18 overs, managed only 105 for seven in a rain-affected game.

VENUE
Headingley. One of the oldest Test venues, a little cramped but generates a good atmosphere. County side Yorkshire tried to leave the venue two years ago for a new ground but have decided to stay and renovate current site. Don Bradman scored 309 runs in a day here in 1948. Capacity: 14,750 (AFP)

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
38 Actress
1 Gosh, it's hot!
5 Actor
Vigoda
8 Extinct bird
12 Incon- siderate
13 'Ferdinand' cartoonist
14 Ayatollah's land
15 Straighten out
17 Woodwork- ing tool
18 Elsa
Klensch's
19 Hosiery
measure
21 Sartorial
24 Panel truck
25 Milne bur-
28 '— the Obscure'
30 '— and seven —'
33 Listening device
34 Fever source?
35 Ter
36 Sternward
37 Draft team



CRYPTOQUIP
V N S N D H M N V Z P M T K
M N A H M N T V M T E V P K
S D M H M V S T J E A S N D H
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: THE MORON THINKS HE'LL BE ABLE TO CATCH A SCHOOL OF FISH WITH A BOOBYWORD.
Today's Cryptoquip-clue: N equals H
The Cryptoquip 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.