

## Sheikh Kamal's dream

From page 13

"Many people have been trying to spread scandalous stories about my brother in the past. I can say that he was never hungry for wealth and wasn't ambitious. He had not left any property in the earth. His only creation was Abahani which is still there," added the Prime Minister.

She also stressed that the present government is paying extra attention to the sports arena in order to bring back misguided youths to the correct path.

"Last year we had a budget of Taka 52.45 crore for sports. The amount is now 72.25 crore for the current fiscal year. Besides, we have also provided extra funds for cricket and football in the last couple of years. This effort will continue."

Earlier, the function began with a group dance by school children donning Abahani's famous sky-blue. The dance was composed in memory of Sheikh Kamal. Afterwards, Lt Col (retired) Kazi Shahed Ahmed, the director in charge of Abahani, read out the key note paper while club director Harunur Rashid MP, the founder general secretary of Abahani, recalled the memory of Sheikh Kamal.

Sheikh Rehana urged the people to keep up the support for Abahani and make it the biggest sporting house of the nation.

In his speech of thanks, Salman F Rahman said that the sports complex was a long time dream of Sheikh Kamal and he was happy to begin the work at last.

The Prime Minister awarded the Sheikh Kamal Sports Award 1999 to five personalities. They are national football captain Jewel Rana, former national cricket captain Minhazul Abedin and former national hockey skipper Mahboob Harun. Abahani directors-Saber Hossain Chowdhury and Kazi Shahed Ahmed also got the award as sponsor and organizer of the year.

## I'll be back

From page 13

that Azharuddin would have to prove his form in domestic cricket before being considered for international duty later in the season with the home Test series against New Zealand and South Africa and a tour of Australia.

But with the domestic season not due to begin till October, Azharuddin is also likely to miss a four-nation tournament in Kenya in November.

His comeback will depend a great deal on how the top heavy batting line-up which includes Tendulkar, Saurav Ganguly and the World Cup's leading scorer Rahul Dravid, fare in the upcoming series.

India take on world champions Australia and hosts Sri Lanka from October 22 to 31, before playing Zimbabwe and the West Indies in Singapore from September 2 to 10.

The four-nation tournament in Nairobi from September 24 to October 3 features South Africa, India, Zimbabwe and hosts Kenya.

Azharuddin has been an India regular since he burst into world cricket in 1984 with centuries in each of his first three Tests against David Gower's Englishmen.

He is two matches away from the landmark of 100 Tests and has played more one-dayers (323) and scored more one-day runs (9,110) than any other player in the world.

Azharuddin led India through the 1990s except for a 17-month period from August, 1996 when Tendulkar was handed the reins. He remains India's most successful captain with 14 Test and 89 one-day wins.

That record was, however, marred by India's poor record overseas when it has won only one Test since 1986.

## Aussies against lbw changes

SYDNEY, Aug 5 (AFP): Australian cricketers have attacked proposed changes to the lbw law saying the could have a negative impact on the game.

A working party of the Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) has spent a year revising the laws for the first time in 20 years.

One of the proposals is for batsmen to be given out to deliveries which pitch outside off stump regardless of a shot is played.

Australian Cricketers' Association president Tim May said 85 per cent of Australian first-class cricketers were against any revision of the lbw rule.

"It could lead to a massive negative impact on the whole game," he said. "You could have tests constantly ending in three days."

"Imagine the effect that would have on revenue from gate takings, plus it makes an umpire's job even more difficult. It's arguably the most subjective dismissal of them all."

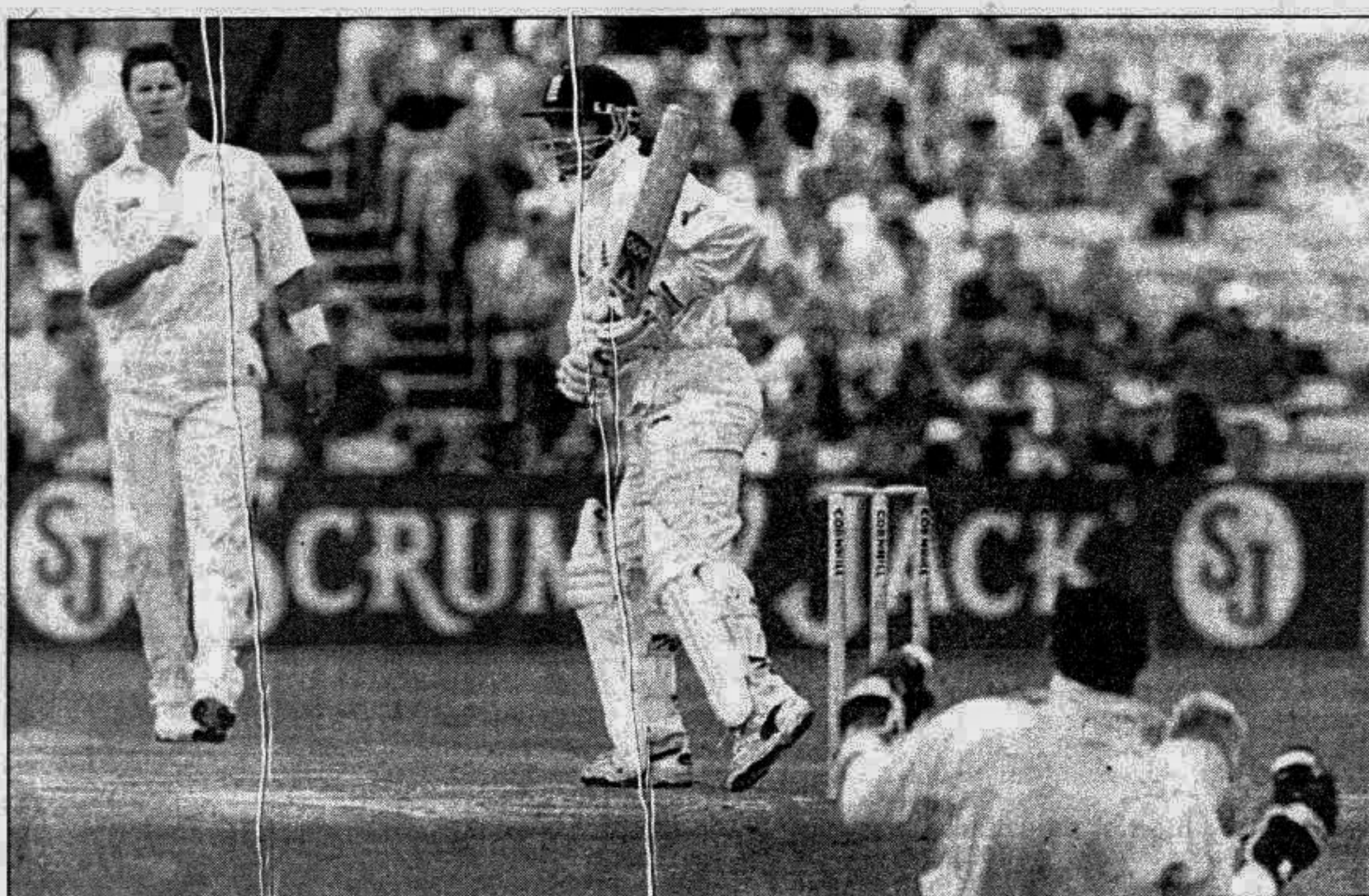
May said those in favour of the change should go over footage of Tests in the past few years and work out how many batsmen previously given not out would be dismissed under the proposed new law.

"I know it's to remove doubt about whether a batsman is playing a shot or not but we feel it would be better to further educate the umpires on that point."

The Lord's-based MCC is also believed to be considering changing the rules so that a batsman who takes a catch and steps over the boundary rope be allowed to claim the catch.

Currently, the batsmen are awarded six runs.

Other changes include a penalty of five runs for each instance of unfair play.



England opener and make-shift captain Mark Butcher lets a Chris Cairns delivery go on the opening day of the third Test against New Zealand at Old Trafford yesterday. —AFP photo

## Rain interruption at Old Trafford

# Bad debut for Butcher

MANCHESTER, England, Aug 5 (AFP): Recalled Mike Atherton produced three scoring strokes in an hour as England battled through to lunch at 33 for one in the delayed third Test against New Zealand at Old Trafford on Thursday.

The home side were happy to be just one wicket down at the break because from the last ball of the session, Alec Stewart escaped off Chris Cairns.

Stewart's false stroke went low and just about carried to Nathan Asle at second slip, but the chance went begging and the former captain trooped off to the dining room a relieved man.

Stewart was on 8 not out and Atherton 6 at the interval which came an hour after the noon start of play, delayed by 60 minutes due to rain.

Stewart had taken 24 balls to get off the mark as Cairns posed him problem after problem until he scored consecutive fours, with a glance and square cut, before Cairns almost got him man in the same over.

England faced 13 overs for their 33, of which 14 were extras and Atherton, returning to the England fold after the Lord's

Test thrashing, scored two singles and an edged boundary as Cairns and new ball partner Dion Nash exploited the help in the pitch and overcast conditions.

After winning the toss, it was unlucky 13 for the stand-in England skipper at Manchester as he failed to negotiate a rising delivery from Chris Cairns and New Zealand skipper Stephen Fleming clutched a fine catch low to his right at first slip.

Butcher had made five from 16 balls - striking a wide half volley from Cairns wide of cover for his only boundary - after deciding to bat first once the morning rain had cleared.

He might have been dismissed earlier in the same over had Craig McMillan made a clean pick-up.

England had included both spinners, Phil Tufnell and Peter Such, and omitted pace pair Alan Mullally and Chris Silverwood in their line-up.

New Zealand made one change from the side which won by nine wickets at Lord's, replacing left-arm Geoff Allott with all-rounder Chris Harris.

The sides are level 1-1 in the four-Test series.

Teams

England: Mark Butcher (capt), Mike Atherton, Alec Stewart, Graham Thorpe, Graeme Hick, Mark Ramprakash, Chris Read (wicketkeeper), Andy Caddick, Dean Headley, Peter Such, Phil Tufnell.

New Zealand: Matthew Horne, Matthew Bell, Stephen Fleming (capt), Nathan Asle, Roger Twose, Craig McMillan, Adam Parore (wicketkeeper), Chris Cairns, Daniel Vettori, Dion Nash, Chris Harris.

## SCOREBOARD

Score at lunch on the first day of the third Test between England and New Zealand at Old Trafford on Thursday:

ENGLAND: First innings  
M Butcher c Fleming b Cairns 5  
M Atherton not out 6  
A Stewart not out 8  
Extras: (b-4, lb-5, w-5) 14  
Total: (1 wk) 33

Fall of wks: 1-13

To bat: G Thorpe, M Ramprakash, G Hick, C Read, A Caddick, D Headley, P Such, P Tufnell.

Bowler: O M R W  
Cairns 7 4 19 1  
Nash 6 4 5 0

Umpires: David Shepherd (Eng) and Russell Tiffin (Zim).  
Toss: England.

# Planning future from sidelines

LONDON, Aug 5 (Internet report): Injured captain Nasser Hussain will use his time spent on the sidelines during this week's third Test to sit down with incoming coach Duncan Fletcher and plan England's future.

Apart from a brief discussion when Essex played Glamorgan at Cardiff last month, the

he sustained at Lord's, over the next few days in Manchester.

It is a small consolation for Hussain having been deprived of leading England out in only his third Test as captain by the injury.

But he anticipates the rest will make him '95-99% certain' of returning for the final Test in the Cornhill series at The Oval in two weeks' time.

Fletcher's tenure as England coach does not begin until October 1, just three weeks before the senior squad depart for this winter's tour to South Africa and Zimbabwe, although he will have a major say in the make up of the tour party.

Before then, however, both Fletcher and Hussain need to develop an understanding of how they intend to improve England's fortunes at international level.

Hussain, who will be replaced as captain by Surrey opener Mark Butcher, explained: "I'm going to try and use this opportunity to try and have a chat with Duncan Fletcher and Lord MacLaurin."

"It's obviously disappointing missing a very important game, but the one constructive thing to come out of all this is that maybe I can have a sit down

with Duncan and have a chat about a few things."

Butcher will become England's 73rd Test captain - and their 14th in the last 20 years - and has already been made aware of the responsibilities of the position by match referee Peter Van der Merwe following the unseemly verbal and sledging which marred New Zealand's victory at Lord's.

Van der Merwe has warned both sides of the 'thin line between disappointment and dissent' and England manager David Graveney revealed: "We've spoken to the referee and he spoke to New Zealand after the last Test."

"The content of the conversation was similar, which was controlling behaviour between what is acceptable and isn't acceptable."

"I made the point, which was endorsed by Mark Butcher, that there is not a place in the game of cricket that once you have dismissed a batsman, then you give him a volley as he leaves the pitch."

Butcher added: "I don't advocate running down the wicket and sending a batsman off, but I don't have a problem with people if they want to have a quiet word when nobody's looking."

## Hasselbaink signs for Atletico

MADRID, Aug 5: Leeds United's star striker Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink signed for Atletico Madrid for 19.5 million dollars on Wednesday, the Spanish club announced, reports AFP.

It said the Dutchman had signed a four-year contract and would be presented to the fans on August 11 before a friendly with Portuguese side Sporting Lisbon.

Leeds, desperate to keep Hasselbaink after he scored 20 goals last season, offered the 27-year-old 40,000 dollars a week, doubling his wages.

But Atletico trumped that by reportedly offering him 64,000 dollars.

Hasselbaink was bought by Leeds for 3.2 million dollars from Portuguese side Boavista two years ago.

## More Old Trafford capacity

MANCHESTER, England, Aug 5: The capacity of English Premiership club Manchester United's Old Trafford stadium will rise to 60,000 by next March because redevelopment work is due to be completed nine months ahead of schedule, reports AFP.

Builders began work on creating a new tier for the East Stand at the end of last season and they expect to finish by the spring.

Work will then begin on the West Stand and when the redevelopment is complete at the end of next year, the capacity of the Manchester United ground will have increased from its present level of 56,024 to 67,000.

## Soccer's curse

LONDON, Aug 5 (AFP): Professional footballers can literally go weak at the knees if they have too much unprotected sex, doctors have discovered.

Research carried out among 10 sportsmen, six of whom were footballers, showed that persistent knee injuries were often a form of arthritis caused by a sexually-transmitted bacteria, the New Scientist magazine reported.

Sexually-acquired reactive arthritis, or SARA, was found to be responsible for typical symptoms such as swollen or sore knees in eight of the 10 cases examined.

Five of the sportsmen said they had had more than 11 sexual partners, a level of promiscuity only reached by one in four British males in their 20s in average.

"The level of promiscuity among these sportsmen calls for concern. Footballer appear to be the greatest culprits," wrote Dr Paul Oyodo, the author of the research carried out at the Queen Mary and Westfield College in London.

"They are very rich and have a lot of spare time."

Five of the six footballers involved in the research were Premiership players, though they were not identified.

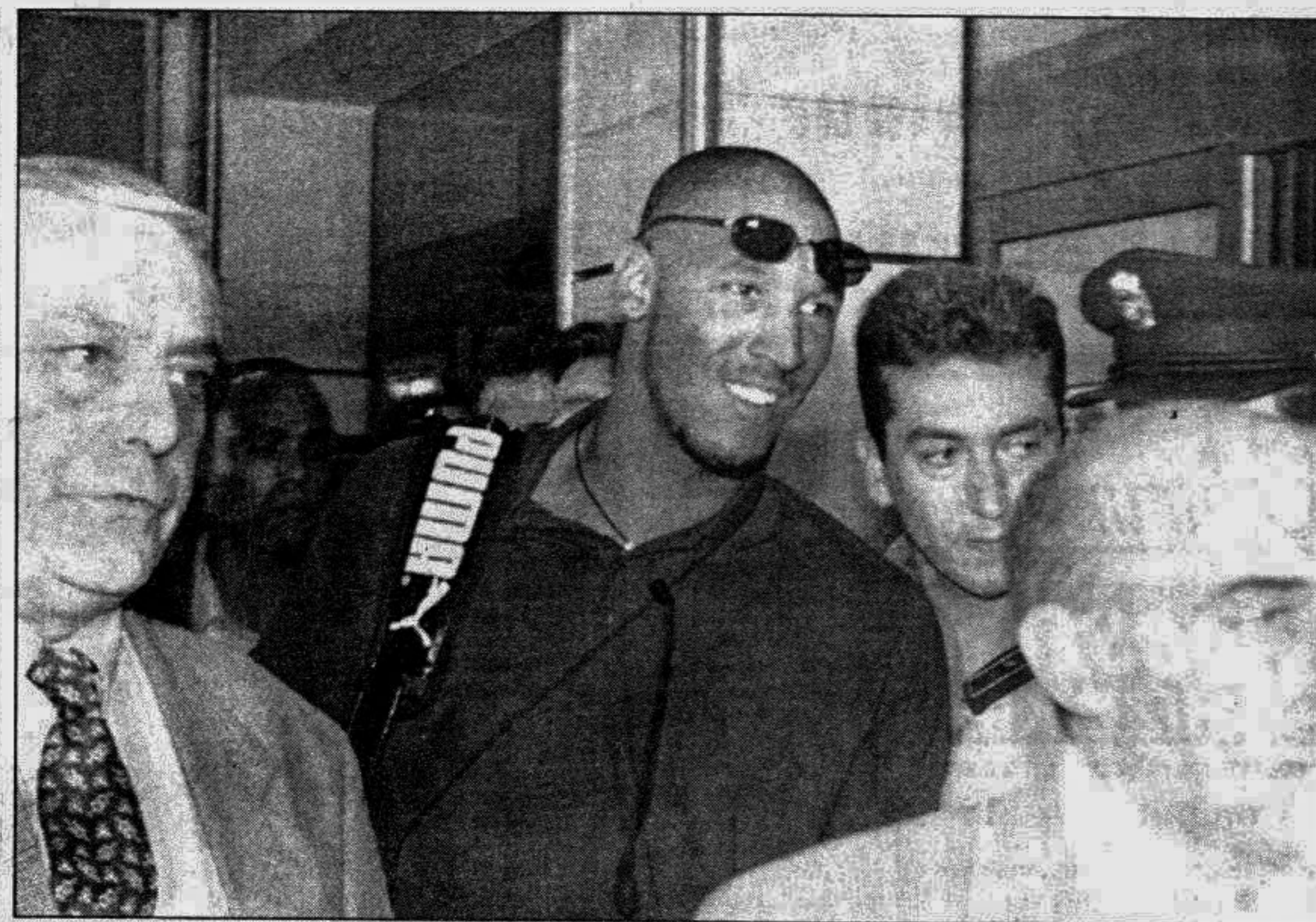
John King, a consultant orthopaedic surgeon at the London Independent Hospital, said: "Doctors should be aware this can happen. The treatment is very different. If it is an injury it may need surgery but if it is SARA it just needs aspiration and an antibiotic treatment."

English Football Association spokesman Steve Double was non-plussed by the claims.

"Some things we can and can't control, and I think this comes into the latter category," he said.

## Tragic

HANOI, Aug 5: Four people died and nearly 150 others were injured in traffic accidents in Ho Chi Minh City as people poured into the streets to celebrate a big victory by the national soccer team, local press reported Thursday, reports AP.



Real Madrid's new signing Nicholas Anelka (C) arrives in Madrid on August 4. —AFP photo

# Bigger, brighter Premiership

LONDON, Aug 5 (AFP): They say success breeds success but in English football it breeds one thing above all - fixture congestion.

Never will that be more true than during this Millennium Premiership season, which opens on Saturday bigger, brighter and busier than ever.

The already unwieldy 20-team top flight of English football has been further cluttered by the inclusion of Manchester United, Arsenal and - in all probability - Chelsea in the ever-expanding UEFA Champions League.

Gianluca Vialli's Chelsea still need to qualify but there will be no respite should they fail to do so. They simply enter the equally-bloated UEFA Cup instead.

After last season's shenanigans over the threatened creation of a breakaway European Super League, the Champions' League has been expanded to include two group stages.

That means the usual spring quarter-finals will be preempted by an additional group stage, amounting to six extra fixtures compared to last season.

With the 2000 European Championship finals awaiting barely a fortnight after the league season ends on May 14, there will be precious little rest for anybody.

So where does that leave the booming English Premiership? For booming it is, awash with cash, foreign stars and more popular than ever.

"Tickets are like gold dust, and nearly as expensive in some cases, and 11 of the 20 teams have sold out their entire season ticket allocation. That's 35,000 in the case of last season's Treble Winners, Manchester United."

Billed as the most exciting looking for three more points against opponents who only escaped relegation by one spot last season.

But Marseille will have to do without defenders Pierre Issa, who has a groin injury, and Patrick Blondeau, who is suspended.

Bordeaux, who play on Saturday, have a far tougher away game against Montpellier.

Montpellier caused the shock of the first day by winning 2-1 at big-spending Lyon, with former Paris Saint Germain striker Patrice Loko setting them on their way with the opening goal.

Bordeaux, however, may be without defender Herve Aliarte, who has a sore knee.

Lyon, meanwhile, third last season, will be strengthened against Troyes on Thursday by

if not the highest quality league in the world, the big three, United, Arsenal and Chelsea, look set to dominate again.

David O'Leary's young Leeds United side, a seemingly resurgent Liverpool and maybe even Ruud Gullit's Newcastle United may have a say in the destiny of the title.

Liverpool are the only leading club not involved in Europe. Embarrassing that may be for the most successful English club in history, but it could also be their trump card as they revel in the occasional weekend off.

Manager Gerard Houllier has bought well, despite a public spat with now-departed Paul Ince, and the arrivals of German Dietmar Hamann and Dutch goalkeeper Sander Westerveld could just provide the solid platform the Merseysiders have been lacking in recent seasons.

At the time of writing, Manchester United have opted out of the FA Cup to play in FIFA's all-singing, all-dancing new world club championship in Brazil.

But in the Premiership they will be the team to beat, their imposing Old Trafford stadium, which is set to rise to 62,000 capacity next year, providing a sumptuous stage for the likes of Dwight Yorke and Andy Cole to terrorise opposition defences once again.

Australian goalkeeper Mark Bosnich apart, manager Sir Alex Ferguson has seemed more interested in signing copies of his new autobiography than any new players, leaving the big spending to his rivals.

Despite the tedium of the Nicolas Anelka saga, finally signed by Real Madrid after months of wrangling, Arsenal have emerged smiling from the summer sales.

Manager Arsene Wenger has secured around 23 million pounds (36 million dollars) for the Frenchman, allowing him to sign the likes of Croatian Davor Suker, French striker Thierry Henry, Brazilian Silvinho and Ukrainian Oleg Luzhny and still have some change in his pocket.

Chelsea's supremo Ken Bates has once again shelled out, splashing 10 million pounds (16 million dollars) on Blackburn's Englishman Chris Sutton and snapping up France's World Cup-winning captain Didier Deschamps among others.

Like it or not, the rest of the Premiership will be fighting over the scraps, namely the FA Cup, the League Cup and qualification for the UEFA Cup.

The paupers at the party are undoubtedly Watford and Bradford, arguably the two weakest teams to have achieved promotion since the Premier League began in 1992.

A few decent days out for their fans and some bumper home crowds are the best respective managers Graham Taylor and Paul Jewell can look forward to before readying themselves for another division one campaign in 2001.

The other promoted side, Sunderland, at least have cash, a fine stadium and support to paper over the ordinariness of their squad.

Manager Peter Reid, who is being groomed as the next England coach after taking charge of the under-21 side, will have his hands full just keeping his side afloat.

Should he manage to do so, nothing has happened over the summer to suggest anyone but the usual suspects - Coventry, Everton, Southampton, Wimbledon and Sheffield Wednesday - will be scrambling to avoid getting sucked down the relegation plughole come May.

# Big guns renew rivalry

PARIS, Aug 5: Bordeaux and Marseille, fresh from spending last season constantly exchanging the lead in the race for the French title, find themselves in familiar territory after their opening matches of the new championship, reports AFP.

The two rivals are back at the top of the table after the opening weekend, with Marseille the pace-setters on goal difference.

Roland Courbis' team, who missed out on the league title to Bordeaux by a single point, go back into action on Thursday when they travel to lowly Le Havre.

The south coast side, who crushed newly-promoted Sedan 3-0 in their opener, will be

looking for three more points against opponents who only escaped relegation by one spot last season.

But Marseille will have to do without defenders Pierre Issa, who has a groin injury, and Patrick Blondeau, who is suspended.

Bordeaux, who play on Saturday, have a far tougher away game against Montpellier.

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Bordeaux, however, may be without defender Herve Aliarte, who has a sore knee.

Lyon, meanwhile, third last season, will be strengthened against Troyes on Thursday by

the debut appearance of Brazilian striker Sonny Anderson, recently signed from Barcelona.

French Cup winners Nantes play at newly-promoted Saint-Etienne on Friday, while Monaco, fourth last season, are hosted by Lens who are set to be without injured striker Pascal Nouma.

Paris Saint Germain, desperate to recapture the league title they last won in 1994, are in action at Rennes on Saturday.

## FIXTURES

Thursday: Troyes v Lyon, Le Havre v Marseille

Friday: Lens v Monaco, Sedan v Nancy, Saint-Etienne v Nantes, Bastia v Strasbourg

Saturday: Metz v Auxerre, Montpellier v Bordeaux, Rennes v Paris Saint Germain

# Damien ejects Wang

EINDHOVEN, Netherlands, Aug 5: Europe's men launched a counter offensive against China here

Thursday with France's Damien Eloi taking the biggest scalp of the tournament so far in the second day of the men's singles in the 45th World Table Tennis Championships, reports AFP.

China had dominated the opening day of the men's competition on Wednesday but Eloi consigned China's Wang Liqin to a third round exit.

Sixth seeded Wang is the highest ranked casualty so far in the men's event and Eloi, seeded 20, was full value for his straight sets scoreline, winning 21-13, 21-18, 21-18.

Reigning men's singles champion Jan Ove Waldner, of Sweden, also served notice Thursday that he will not relinquish the men's singles title without a struggle but his predecessor as world champion, China's Kong Linghui, continued his imperious progress.

Fifth seed Waldner again lost a set to Spain's He Zhi Wen - he also conceded one to Russia's Sergei Andrianov in his second round match - but Kong is still to drop a set and made short work of Canada's Johnny Huang in his match.

Waldner's next opponent

will be France's Christophe Legout who romped to a 21-18, 21-18 victory over Israel's Izak Abramov.

Waldner, who defeated Legout's teammate Jean-Philippe Gatien to win the Olympic gold medal in the 1992 games at Barcelona, knows that Legout will fight him to the bitter end.

The Frenchman, seeded 16, had pulled his second round match against Belgian Philippe Saive out of the first Wednesday, winning 23-25, 13-21, 21-10, 21-19, 21-19.

Kong was typically dominant, seeing off Huang 21-19, 21-14, 21-14.

The 1995 world champion - China's sole victor in this event in a decade - is seeded third here and with number two seed Liu Guoliang is hoping to fulfil the boast of his national federation that the title will return to China.

Top seed Vladimir Samsonov of Belarus impressed in his third round clash with Dutchman Danny Heister, winning 23-21, 21-9, 19-21, 21-8 and will face ninth seed Ma Lin of China in the fourth round later Thursday.

Heister had the backing of the home fans but Samsonov feels equally at home here having lifted the European title in the same arena last year.

Belgium's 13th seed Jean-

Michel Saive dismissed another Chinese seed Ruiwu Tan, ranked 30.

Other early winners were China's Ma Lin and seventh seeded Korean Kim Taek Soo, who saw off England's Carl Prean and Germany's Timo Boll respectively. Kim next faces Jean-Michel Saive.

Meanwhile, India's Chetan Baboor bowed out of the Championships on Wednesday after a brave display.

Baboor lost his second-round match with Izak Abramov after taking the opening set. But Abramov battled back to win 20-22, 22-20, 21-16, 21-13.

In the first round Baboor had beaten English qualifier Terry Young in an exciting battle, winning 21-19, 16-21, 21-11, 17-21, 21-13.

## SOCOG suffers commercial setback

SYDNEY, Aug 5: Sydney's efforts to meet its sponsorship target for next year's Olympic Games suffered a major blow today with the resignation of marketing chief John Moore, reports Reuters.



Frenchman Damien Eloi exults after victory over Chinese Wang Liqin in the third round of the men's singles at World Table Tennis Championships yesterday. —AFP photo