

SL stammer to 200

HARARE, Dec 19: Sri Lanka made unusually hard work of their batting when they were all out for 200 against Zimbabwe in the final of five one-day internationals here, reports AFP.

However, the tourists can afford to relax as they hold a winning 3-0 lead in the series - one match was declared a no result because of rain.

Sri Lanka never fully recovered from the early losses of captain Sanath Jayasuriya and Romesh Kaluwaranayaka for only 14 after Jayasuriya won the toss and decided to bat.

Marvan Atapattu, Mahela Jayawardena, Russel Arnold and TM Dilshan all failed to get going after making good starts to their innings but in Dilshan's defence he had to protect the tail-enders and was rewarded with a fine 51.

The Zimbabwe bowlers were much more accurate than in previous matches and they generally confined the Sri Lankans to taking quick singles.

Guy Whittall was unlucky not to get an outside edge as he beat the bat of Russel Arnold several times when it looked as though Sri Lanka's middle order would raise the tempo.

The batsmen reached 51 in 15 overs and 100 in 25 so they were never able to find the acceleration necessary for a good final score.

The target of 201 offers Zimbabwe their best chance of beating Sri Lanka for the first time on this long tour, but they have so often experienced collapses recently.

Zimbabwe brought back Bryan Strang and off spinner Andy Whittall in place of Eddy Brandes and Gary Brent for this final clash.

Sri Lanka took the opportunity to rest Chaminda Vaas, Promodaya Wickramasinghe and Mutthu Muralitharan who have had a wearying tour.

This gave chances to get more experience for Indika de Seram, Indika Gallage and Sajeewa de Silva.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of the Sri Lankan innings in the fifth and final one-day international against Zimbabwe in Harare on Sunday:

| SRI LANKA | | | |
|--|-----|---|----|
| | O | M | R |
| Jayasuriya c Flower b Rennie | 6 | | |
| K'harana c Goodwin b Olonga | 7 | | |
| Atapattu c G Whittall | 25 | | |
| J'wardena c Strang b Rennie | 17 | | |
| Arnold c Flower b G Whittall | 39 | | |
| Dilshan c Carlisle b Strang | 51 | | |
| De Seram c G Flower b G Whittall | 7 | | |
| Chandana c A Whittall b Olonga | 17 | | |
| Gallage run out (G Flower) | 14 | | |
| P'kumara c A Flower b Strang | 0 | | |
| De Silva not out | 0 | | |
| Extras: (b-1; lb-3; w-11; nb-2) | 0 | | |
| Total: (All out in 48.3 overs) | 200 | | |
| Fall of wickets: 1-14; 2-14; 3-36; 4-96; 5-110; 6-118; 7-161; 8-200; 9-200 | | | |
| Bowler | O | M | R |
| Olonga | 8 | 0 | 42 |
| Rennie | 9.3 | 2 | 21 |
| Strang | 10 | 1 | 36 |
| G Whittall | 8 | 0 | 37 |
| A Whittall | 10 | 0 | 45 |
| G Flower | 3 | 0 | 15 |

Locals score at ease

EAST LONDON, South Africa, Dec 19: Nailed to the wall by a brilliant 72 from former Eastern Province batsman James Bryant, England's attack took an unexpected pounding in sweltering conditions at Buffalo Park here on Saturday, reports AFP.

With Bryant and opening batsman Brad White combining for a second-wicket partnership of 94, a Combined Eastern Province XI had amassed a massive first innings total of 331 for five at stumps on the first day of the four-day encounter.

The run glut also included a quick 63 by Wayne Wiblin, a whirlwind unbeaten 66 by captain Pieter Strydom and a soul-destroying 41 not out off 39 balls from Robin Peterson.

When eventually caught behind, Bryant had given England the run-around for almost three hours. But his dismissal brought no respite to a visibly wilting attack on a day when temperatures soared to the mid-thirties centigrade.

Making the most of a perfect platform, new batsman Wiblin cracked four fours and a six off successive deliveries from off-spinner Graeme Swann to clock up his half century off 101 balls.

He was out soon after, caught behind off Tudor for 63, only to be followed by skipper Strydom, who kept the runs flowing.

The tourists contributed to their own hard labour by missing out on a chance to get rid of White when he was on 13.

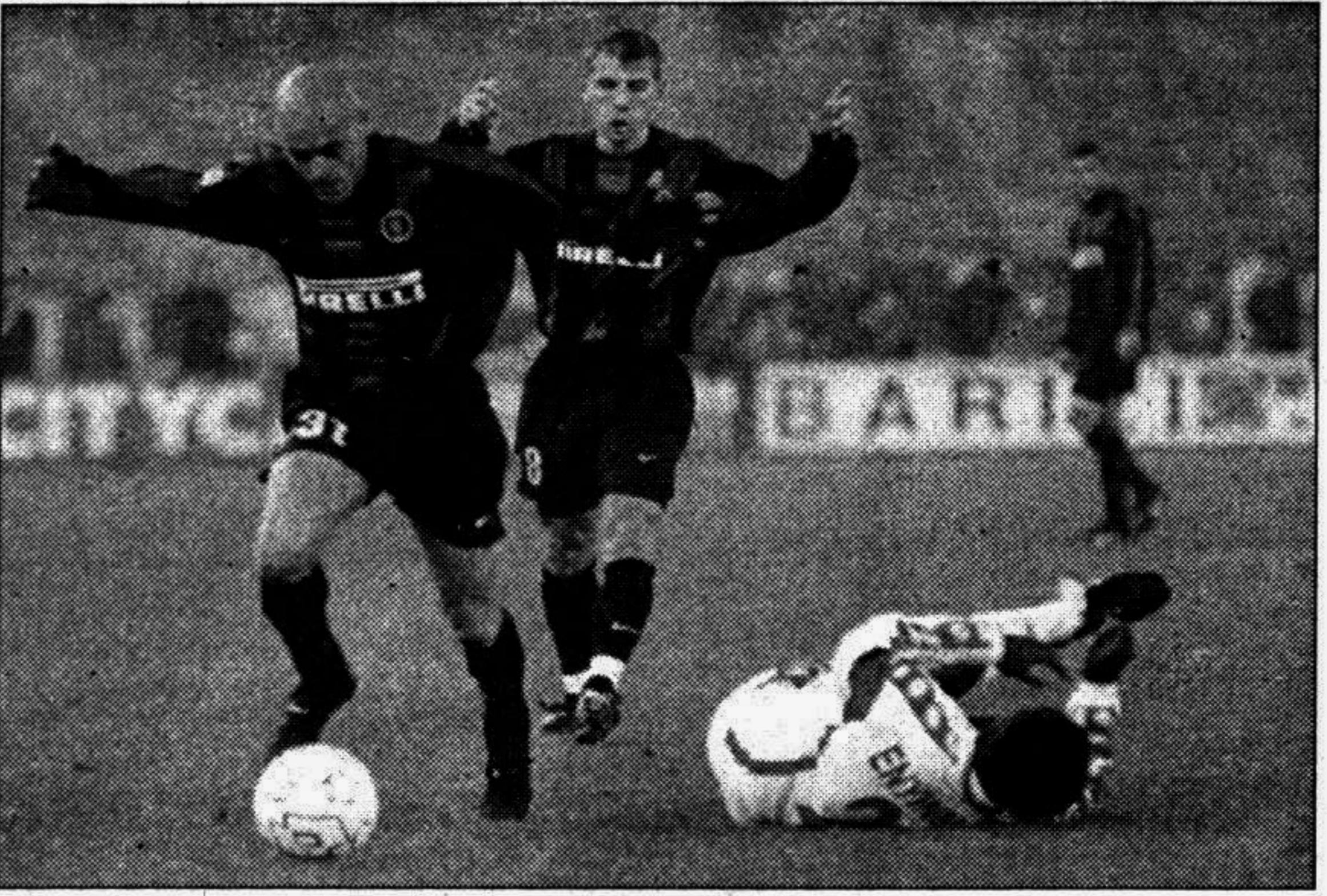
The ball flew hard to Darren Maddy's right in the gully and although the fielder got a hand to it he couldn't hold on and the batsman trotted through for a single.

White went on to score a solid 48 off 127 deliveries before being trapped leg before by Swann.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at close of play on the first day of a four-day cricket match between England and a Combined Eastern Province XI on Saturday:

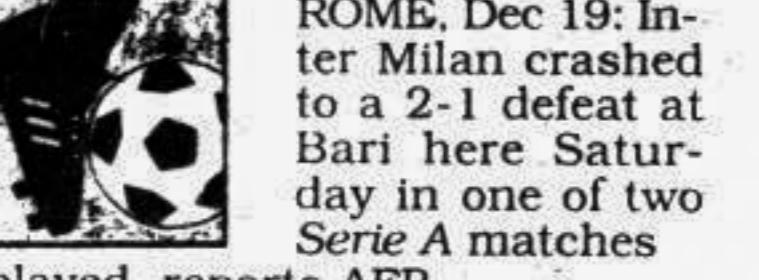
| COMB EP XI: First innings | | | |
|---|-----------------|----|-----|
| B | White lbw Swann | 48 | |
| C Bradfield c Butcher b Gough | 11 | | |
| J Bryant c Read b Hamilton | 72 | | |
| W Wiblin c Read b Tudor | 63 | | |
| P Strydom not out | 66 | | |
| L Gamiel b Tudor | 0 | | |
| R Peterson not out | 41 | | |
| Extras: (b-13; lb-9; b-4; w-4) | 30 | | |
| Total: (For 5 wkt in 90 overs) | 331 | | |
| Fall of wickets: 1/29; 2/123; 3/161; 4/241; 5/253 | | | |
| Bowler | O | M | R |
| Gough | 18 | 4 | 55 |
| Silverwood | 21 | 7 | 45 |
| Tudor | 15 | 1 | 72 |
| Hamilton | 14 | 3 | 49 |
| Swann | 17 | 3 | 79 |
| Adams | 2 | 0 | 8 |
| Maddy | 3 | 0 | 10. |



Inter Milan's Grigoris Georgatos (L) wins possession from Bari's Michael Ennyannaya (lyin) during their Serie A clash at Bari on December 18. — AFP photo

Serie A

Bari lesson for Inter



ROMA, Dec 19: Inter Milan crashed to a 2-1 defeat at Bari here Saturday in one of two Serie A matches played, reports AFP.

Inter are likely to lose touch with the leading pack of Juventus, Lazio, Roma and Parma when Sunday's programme is completed.

Nigerian Ugo Michael Ennyannaya, aged only 18, put Bari ahead with a 35-yard piledriver after just seven minutes.

Inter soon hit back with an equaliser five minutes later from their world record signing Christian Vieri when the 31 million pounds man diverted a mishit shot from Chilean Ivan Zamorano into the net.

But Bari came up with the winner with just two minutes remaining when 17-year-old Antonio Cassano notched the deciding goal in his first appearance in the starting line-up.

In the other match Sunday Verona saw off Venezia 1-0 with a 56th-minute penalty from Brazilian Adailton.

Inter coach Marcello Lippi slammed his men for their

worst performance since he took over the club to Bari's teenagers.

Lippi, who became Inter's coach last summer, made no excuses for his team of millions, saying: "It was probably Inter's worst performance of the season. We were really rotten, we were never in the match."

There were major mistakes being made at the back, in the middle and up front. We played badly, really badly, everywhere. And when you play as badly as that, you lose and there's not much you can do about it."

"Five defeats in 14 matches doesn't change our objectives, because our sole aim must be to play more consistently."

"As for our other objectives," he added, referring to their wavering hopes of winning the championship, "there is still plenty of time. Twenty to go is a lot of matches."

Bari have long established themselves as Inter's bogey team, the mid-table club having won six of their last seven encounters, including each of the last five.

Coach Eugenio Fascetti, like Lippi from the Tuscan seaside resort of Viareggio and who joined Bari in 1995, said: "This is one of the best days since I came here."

Marseille took an early lead but lost 2-1 even though Lens had been reduced to 10 men. Given the intimidating atmosphere it is hardly surprising that the players have started to hit back.

"The fans want this team to live and it is no longer alive," said defender Patrick Blondeau.

Assistant coach Christophe Galtier said: "The players are very disturbed by the environment and what they can hear."

So bad was the abuse that the Marseille players who could not play because of injury or sus-

pened themselves to the match.

Another player, Yannick Fischer lamented: "Lens had one shot at goal and won 2-1."

Marseille coach Bernard Casoni, who replaced Courbis last month, said: "In this situation, the smallest grain of sand can derail us."

Marseille, now only three points above the relegation zone, has already revised their targets for this season - last year they reached the UEFA Cup Final and lost the title race on the last day of the season to Borussia Dortmund.

Casoni said: "We have to look at the table from the bottom up and think just about staying up."

Marchand, who has pledged a radical overhaul of the playing staff during the midwinter break, said: "Until May each match will be a war."

Celtic sign Brazilian

GLASGOW, Dec 19: Celtic have agreed a five-million-pound transfer for Brazilian international Rafael Felipe Scheidt from Gremio of Porto Alegre, reports Reuters.

Celtic coach John Barnes said yesterday that a fee and personal terms for the 23-year-old central defender had been settled after a week of negotiations.

"He is one of the best young players in Brazil," said Barnes after Celtic's 4-1 victory over Dundee United in the Scottish Premier League.

"We have agreed personal terms on a contract for four years and now we only need a work permit to conclude the signing."

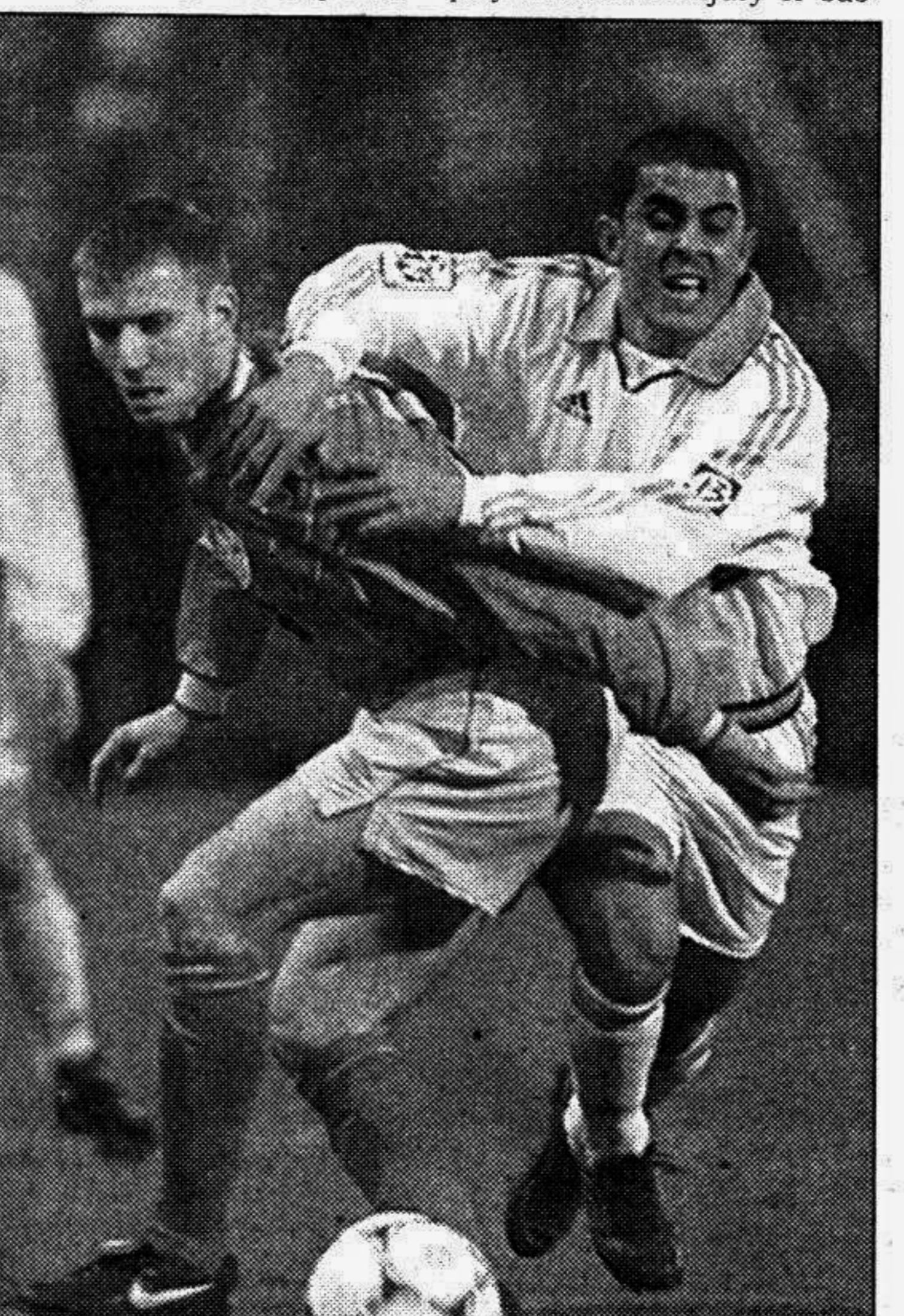
Scheidt, who has made two international appearances, flew back to Brazil on Saturday after a three-day visit to Glasgow.

Another Scottish Premier League club, Hearts, expect to complete the signings of two internationals within the next few days.

Robert Tomaschek, the 27-year-old captain of Slovakia, has agreed to join the Edinburgh club from Slovan Bratislava after a week on trial at Tynecastle.

Finland goalkeeper Antti Niemi, 26, has yet to conclude his move from Rangers but told BBC radio on Saturday that he could sign before Sunday's match with Hibernian.

Marchand denied reports



Marseille's Daniel Gaston (R) vying for ball with Yoann Lachor of Lens during their French First Division engagement at Marseille on December 18. — AFP photo

into fraud.

Fans, unforgiving at the best of times, raided their training ground this week and as well as jostling and verbally abusing several players damaged their cars in the car park.

At the Lens game the players names were greeted by boos and fans refused to sing in support of the team during the match.

Marseille goalkeeper Stephane Porato found it hard to concentrate on the action as he was frequently the target of missiles being hurled from the stands.

Every little mistake by a Marseille player was greeted with a chorus of boos and insults.

SL-ZIMBABWE SCOREBOARD

Final scoreboard after fourth one-day international between Sri Lanka and Zimbabwe played on Saturday:

| ZIMBABWE | | | |
|--|-----|---|----|
| overs (Carlisle 121 n.o.) | | | |
| Jayasuriya c G Rennie b J Rennie | 8 | | |
| Kaluwatharana b Olonga | 99 | | |
| Atapattu c A Flower b J Rennie | 6 | | |
| Jayawardena c A Flower b | | | |
| Brandes | 63 | | |
| Arnold not out | 42 | | |
| Dilshan not out | 20 | | |
| Extras: (lb-2, nb-7, w-15) | 24 | | |
| Total: (For 4 wkt in 44.4 overs) | 262 | | |
| Fall of wkt: 1-25; 2-44; 3-188; 4-213. | | | |
| Bowler | O | M | R |
| Brandes | 10 | 0 | 52 |
| Rennie | 8 | 0 | 36 |
| Brent | 5.4 | 0 | 48 |
| G Whittall | 13 | 0 | 34 |
| Olonga | 10 | 0 | 54 |
| Campbell | 2 | 0 | 9 |
| G Flower | 6 | 0 | 27 |

Result: Sri Lanka won by six wickets.

Final score: Sri Lanka won by six wickets.