

Sport

Sword hanging over Blewett

HAMILTON, New Zealand. Mar 28: Australia's record-breaking win streak could save struggling Greg Blewett from being dropped for Friday's third cricket Test against New Zealand here, reports AFP.

Blewett's head is on the block after Monday's second Test win in Wellington, scratching 25 runs from 115 balls to continue a disappointing summer in the Test team.

Since he was recalled to the national team in the Caribbean 12 months ago, Blewett has averaged just 29.54 in 24 completed innings, failing to score a century.

His form has fallen away in New Zealand, where he has scored 50 runs in four unconvincing knocks, opening the door for Queensland opener Matthew Hayden to return to the Test team.

But captain Steve Waugh provided some comfort for Blewett when he said it would be tough to change the team which had taken Australia to a national record nine consecutive Test wins.

"I haven't really thought about it, but if you think you can improve a side, then you make changes," Waugh said here Tuesday.

"We always sit down before the Test match and work out what our best team is for the conditions and we'll do that again but it's pretty hard to change a winning side when you've won nine in a row."

Blewett was the only batsman in the regular top seven not to score a century during the winning streak, despite passing 80 twice during the home summer.

The South Australian right-hander had done the hard work in two of his Test innings in New Zealand, reaching 17 and 25, but he failed to build on the starts, increasing the pressure for a change at the top.

Hayden, who has not played a Test in three years, did all he could with four half-centuries in his first six innings on tour, looking impressive when he slotted into the No.3 position in the one-day series.

The Queenslander would also provide the advantage of a left-right handed opening combination with Michael Slater, who returned to form with a typically dazzling 143 in Wellington.

Tarun

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tuza, who scored 24 in a vital 55-run ninth wicket stand after Mohammedan were reduced to 99/8, enabled the team escape humiliation.

The experienced Lankan hammered a couple of fours and a massive sixer against slow left-arm Enamul Haque over long on in his polished knock.

The veteran of more than one hundred internationals also gave an unimaginative Mohammedan a ray of hope when he captured two wickets in an unconvincing position with 64 for three.

But Tarun overcame the looming pressure with experienced Minazul Abedin and Khaled Masood producing 46 runs for the fourth wicket. Minazul scored 23 off 40 balls before falling to a fine catch by Talakkaratne at cover.

Masood however had other ideas in mind. He batted carefully to guide his side to safety in association with Enamul Haque after Al-Shahriar was out for only 2.

Masood hammered half a dozen fours in his 89-ball innings. But the most fascinating aspect of the dapper right-hander was his stunning form this season.

It was his fourth undefeated knock in pressure situation. He had earlier scored an unbeaten 73 against Agra Bank, 66 not out against Kalabagan and 74 against Sadharan Bima. His last fifty took his aggregate to 141 in six matches to 289 averaging 144.5.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of the Jankanatha Premier Division Cricket League match between Surjo Tarun and Mohammedan Sporting Club at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

MOHAMMEDAN
Rashedul Ibw b Anis 0
I Hamid c K Masood b Morshed 3
Nahid b Anis 0
Hannan c K Masood b Anis 11
Atiwar b R Chauhan 28
Tillekeratne c Imran b R Chauhan 7
Kaipage c K Masood b R Chauhan 4
Nayamur b Enamul 8
Rashedul run out 1
Monjurul not out 24
Extras: (lb-5, nb-2, w-5) 16
Total: (All out in 49.3 overs) 162

Fall of wickets: 1/4; 2/4; 3/4; 4/26; 6/62; 7/66; 7/97; 8/99; 9/151

Bowler O M R W
Anisur Rahman 10 2 38 3
Morshed Ali 10 4 20 1
Saba Erfan 10 0 28 0
Rajesh Chauhan 9.3 0 27 3
Enamul Haque 4 0 25 1
Jafar Sarfaraz 6 0 25 0

SURJO TARUN
Parvez c b Tillekeratne 30
Imran b Monjurul 7
Jafar Ibw b Tillekeratne 17
Minazul c Tillekeratne b Kaipage 23
K Masood not out 51
Al-Shahriar Ibw b Rafique 2
Enamul not out 13
Extras: (lb-1, lb-6, nb-1, w-19) 27
Total: (For 5 wickets in 44.2 overs) 170

Fall of wickets: 1/15; 2/63; 3/63; 4/110; 5/118

Bowler O M R W
Monjurul 8 0 33 1
Kaipage 10 1 19 1
Atiwar 2 0 12 0
Tillekeratne 10 0 47 2
Rafique 10 0 20 1
Nayamur 3 0 17 0
Nahid 1 0 10 0
Hannan 0.2 0 5 0

Result: Surjo Tarun won by 5 wickets.

Champion of durability



KINGSTON, Jamaica. Mar 28 (Reuters). When Freddie Trueman became the first player in Test cricket to take 300 wickets he was asked if he thought his record would be broken.

"If anyone does they'll be bloody tired," was the Yorkshire and England fast bowler's forthright response after he reached the landmark in 1964.

It is a sentiment Courtney Walsh will appreciate after the West Indies' leading Test wicket-taker on 435.

Walsh's achievement, at the age of 37 and in his 114th Test, is an outstanding feat of great skill, immense stamina and considerable resolve at a time when the volume of Test cricket is far greater than in Trueman's day.

Moreover, during the last five years the indefatigable Walsh has carried the attack with Curtly Ambrose because West Indies have been unable to field their customary battery of four fast bowlers of high quality.

It was a strategy that produced West Indies' all-conquering sides of the 1980s and early 1990s, until they could no longer find the top-class replacements to give Walsh and Ambrose the support their predecessors had enjoyed.

Walsh subsequently shouldered his part of the burden in uncomplaining fashion, as well as taking on the responsibility of captaining the side in 1994 and 1996-97 and continuing to play for English county Gloucestershire.

Throughout this phase, the skills he learned in his native Jamaica, which were developed in England and honed to perfection on Test grounds around the world, remained undiminished.

Walsh has always been a thinking cricketer, as he showed in the way he adjusted to bowling in English conditions.

His 1984 debut season, restricted by West Indies' tour of England, brought 18 wickets at an expensive 34.55 each but 12 months later he was securing a haul of 82 county championship wickets at a mere 19.95.

Walsh, though certainly quick, has never generated speed in the manner of compatriot Michael Holding, with whom his Test career overlapped in the mid-1980s.

Supple, with a high action, Walsh achieves disconcertingly awkward bounce, while his variations in pace and length have brought about the downfall of many batsmen.

What sets Walsh apart in the world of test bowling is his fitness record. The fact he suffers very few injuries has been a key element in the durability that has taken him past some significant landmarks.

He became West Indies' leading Test wicket-taker by passing Malcolm Marshall's mark of 376 in November 1998, then joined Kapil and Sir Richard Hadlee in March 1999 as the only bowlers to take 400 Test wickets. Breaking Kapil's world mark was the crowning achievement.

With a three-Test series against Pakistan in the Caribbean to come, followed by a tour of England that includes five Tests, Walsh could set a daunting target for those with an eye on his record.

The star left-arm spinner was Tuesday diagnosed with a stress fracture in his lower back, ruling him out of the final Test of the season after he bowled only 23 overs in the second Test.

Vettori will need about three months' rest, joining pacemen Dion Nash and Geoff Allott on a list, which contributed to New Zealand's opening two losses in the Test series.

Tuffey showed promise against the Australians earlier this month, taking match figures of 3-16 with his right-arm fast-medium pace on a wicket favouring the batsmen.

Tuffey or Martin could yet carry the drinks in this Test, with off-spinner Paul Wiseman in contention on a wicket which should yield plenty of runs.

Tuffey's inclusion was a tough break for his Northern Districts' teammate Doull, who received only limited opportunities in the opening Tests.

NEW ZEALAND
Stephen Fleming (captain), Craig Spearman, Matthew Horne, Mathew Sinclair, Nathan Aspinall, Craig McMillan, Chris Cairns, Adam Parore, Paul Wiseman, Daryl Tuffey, Shayne O'Connor, Bruce Martin.

Rangpur Area emerge champs
RANGPUR, Mar 28: Rangpur Area of Bangladesh Army emerged champions in the Independence Day Sena-Moltri Gold Cup football tournament beating Rangpur DSA by 6-5 in the tie-breaker at the local stadium on Monday, reports UNB.

The match ended in a 2-2 draw in the stipulated 90-minute.

State Minister for Youth, Sports and Cultural Affairs Obaidul Quader witnessed the final as chief guest and later distributed the prizes.

Chief of Army Staff Lt Gen Muhammad Muizur Rahman was also present.

Shahriar goes
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wickets for 58 runs.

The outcome of yesterday's match left both Brothers and City Club at the fifth place with each having collected six points from six matches.

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Scoreboard of the Premier Division Cricket League match between Brothers Union and City Club at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium yesterday:

BROTHERS UNION
Shahriar c b Jewel 89
Ehsanul c Nuruzzaman b Rezaul 4
Mukhtar c Jewel b Masood 55
Farhan c Rehan b Masood 4
Sanwar not out 38
Jahangir run out 6
K Mahmud c b Rehan 10
S Mahmud c Nuruzzaman b Rehan 14
Ahmed b Saifullah 4
Shafuddin st Nuruzzaman b Masood 1
Imran c Nuruzzaman b Masood 0
Extras: (lb-8, nb-2, w-15) 25
Total: (All out in 49.4 overs) 250

Fall of wickets: 1/17; 2/140; 3/146; 4/175; 5/193; 6/212; 7/241; 8/249; 9/250.

Bowler O M R W
Al-Amin 7 1 21 0
Rezaul 7 0 32 1
Saifullah 9 0 42 1
Rehan 10 0 47 2
Nayem 10 0 49 4
Jewel 8 0 40 1

CITY CLUB
Rehan b Imran 51
Sajid Ibw b K Mahmud 39
Hossain c b K Mahmud 11
Saifullah c b K Mahmud 19
Wahidul st Mukhtar b Imran 17
Nayem c Farhan b K Mahmud 45
Jewel c Jahangir b Imran 18
Nuruzzaman c Mukhtar 15
b S Mahmud 1
Rezaul run out 4
Masood st Mukhtar b Imran 0
Al-Amin not out 1
Extras: (lb-5, nb-6, w-5) 16
Total: (All out in 49 overs) 236

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Ahmed 9 1 27 0
Shafuddin 8 0 28 0
K Mahmud 10 0 58 3
S Mahmud 10 0 53 1
Imran 10 0 48 4
Ehsanul 2 0 17 1

Result: Brothers Union won by 14 runs.

Walsh proclaimed king

From Page 13
amount of tributes that have been paid to him at this time," a beaming Wollastons said. Jamaican Prime Minister P.J. Patterson, Sports Minister Portia Simpson-Miller and West Indies Cricket Board President Pat Rousseau offered their praise, and Dev congratulated Walsh by telephone.

Walsh said he was still focusing on the Test, rather than on extending his new record.

"The most important thing still is winning this Test match," Walsh said. "Once we can win this Test match, then (the record) will be icing on the cake. I'll be a lot more elated then."

Walsh, 37, said he wants to play the upcoming three-match series in Pakistan and in England in the summer, but would not answer when reporters asked how long he will continue in cricket.

"That's as far as I'm looking now," he said. "During England, you can ask that question again."

As soon as Walsh achieved the milestones, congratulatory messages started pouring in.

"Whenever things don't go well, I've always said remember Courtney," said his grateful captain Adams.

Australian skipper Steve Waugh and his vice-captain Shane Warne Tuesday broke from their own record celebrations here to praise Walsh.

Waugh and Warne joined in the praise for the bowler, who made his debut against Australia in 1984-85.

"It's great he's got it. He's well respected and dedicated and it's a great effort for a fast bowler to stay fit and keep going for over a decade," Waugh said.

"He's also a nice fellow so I think a lot of people will be pleased he broke it. He's played it tough and competitive but he's a good man as well."

Warne, who became Australia's most successful bowler earlier this month when he claimed his 356th wicket, said Walsh was setting a record that would be tough to beat.

"He's raised the bar and the rest of us have to chase him," Warne said.

"For him to be the No.1 wicket-taker in the history of the game is fair justice."

"He's an all-time great fellow and an all-time great bowler and I would like to think that

we could have a beer or two together when we next catch up."

"He's as fierce as they come on the field but off the field he's a bit of a softie."

Former England captain Mike Atherton believes Walsh's contribution to Caribbean cricket transcends his technical excellence.

"Returning to the West Indies in 1998, it struck me that Courtney epitomised and carried on that tradition of West Indian leaders from the likes of Sir Frank Worrell to Clive Lloyd who put regional solidarity before island rivalry," he said.

"He always troubled me the most," said former England wicketkeeper Jack Russell, a long-time team mate of Walsh at Gloucestershire.

"Ambling in off that smooth run you just don't know when he will produce that 'effort' ball, the one that appears to be bowled with the same action but picks up pace, angling in at the batsman, sending the 'keeper off balance as he tries to get the ball jaggling back."

The Jamaican, who played for more than a decade with Gloucestershire and was handed a benefit with the county in 1992, made his Test debut against Australia in November 1984.

Some 15-and-a-half years later, the man who stands more than 6ft 5ins tall, is looking down upon some of the game's all-time greats.

HOW&WHOM
UNDATED, Mar 28 (Internet report): Some trivia statistics on Courtney Walsh's world record:

BY TYPE
Caught: 293
Bowled: 80
LBW: 60
Hwk: 2

BY VICTIM (top 6)
IA Healy: 15
ME Waugh: 11
MA Atherton: 11
AJ Stewart: 9
MJ Slater: 8
NS Sidhu: 7

BY OPPOSITION (top 6)
AUS: 124
ENG: 111
IND: 66
PAK: 49
NZ: 43
RSA: 26

BY YEAR (top 6)
1995: 62
1998: 38
1994: 36
1988: 35
1993: 35
1997: 32

BY CATCHER (top 6)
Dujon: 32
Lara: 26
Hooper: 24
Murray: 24
Jacobs: 17
Adams: 17

Source: Internet

Factfile

KINGSTON, Jamaica, Mar 28 (Reuters): Factfile on West Indies fast bowler Courtney Walsh.

1962: Born October 30, Kingston, Jamaica.

1979: Takes record 10-43 in Jamaican school cricket.

1982: Makes debut for Jamaica.

1984: English county debut with Gloucestershire.

1984: Makes Test debut, against Australia in first Test at Perth.

1987: One of Wisden's five Cricketers of the Year for 1986.

1988: Takes hat-trick in first Test of 1988-89 series against Australia in Brisbane with last ball of first innings and first two balls of his first spell in second innings.

1994: Appointed West Indies captain for tours of India and New Zealand after Richie Richardson ordered to rest because of "acute fatigue syndrome."

1995: Captures his Test career best 7-37 in second Test against New Zealand in Wellington.

1995: Reaches 300 Test wickets landmark during sixth and final Test against England at the Oval.

1996: Named West Indies captain after Richie Richardson resigns at end of World Cup on Indian sub-continent.

1998: Sacked as West Indies captain after they lose all three Tests on tour of Pakistan in late 1997.

1998: Becomes West Indies' leading wicket-taker in Tests when he passes Malcolm Marshall's mark of 376 wickets in first Test against South Africa in Johannesburg.

1999: Becomes only third bowler in Test history after Kapil Dev (434) and Sir Richard Hadlee (431) to take 400 wickets, in first Test against Australia at Port of Spain.

2000: Breaks Kapil Dev's world record for most wickets in Tests during second Test against Zimbabwe.

McKenzie, who faced 68 balls to score 39, attempted a quick single only to see Gibbs hit the stumps from close range.

The dismissal of the two batsmen saw India slump from 80-1 to 124-5 in the 39th over as tight South African bowling checked the flow of runs.

Hayward, generating hot pace even on the slow wicket, returned four for 31. Lance Klusener claimed two wickets and Makhaya Ntini and Steve Elworthy one each.

SCOREBOARD
Scoreboard of the Sharjah Coca-Cola Cup one-day international between India and South Africa on Monday:

INDIA: 164 all out in 48.5 overs (Sachin Tendulkar 39, Mohammad Azharuddin 36, Robin Singh 28, Rahul Dravid 26; Nantle Hayward 4/31, Lance Klusener 2/35)

SOUTH AFRICA
Kirsten c Ganguly b Kumble 31
Gibbs c Ganguly b Prasad 8
Kallis not out 53
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McKenzie c Jadeja b Chopra 42
Cronje not out 19
Extras: (b-5, lb-2, w-4, nb-3) 14
Total: (For 4 wickets in 42.2 overs) 167

Fall of wickets: 1-30, 2-30, 3-50, 4-96

Bowler O M R W
Agarkar 10 1 44 0
Prasad 10 1 30 2
Kumble 10 1 25 1
Chopra 8 0 36 1
Tendulkar 1 0 3 0
Robin 3.4 1 21 0

Result: South Africa won by six wickets

Man-of-the-match: Nantle Hayward

NZ bring in rookies for final Test

WELLINGTON, Mar 28: New Zealand cricket selectors Tuesday gambled on a teenaged spinner and a young paceman to help tame the unstoppable Australians in the third Test starting in Hamilton on Friday, reports AFP.

Selectors called debutants Bruce Martin and Daryl Tuffey into the 12-man squad at the expense of injured spinner Daniel Vettori and axed paceman Simon Doull following Monday's six-wicket loss here.

The Hamilton-based pair, who play for Northern Districts, were called up when selectors decided against tinkering with the struggling top order.

The 19-year-old Martin and Tuffey, 22, played against Australia in a four-day tour match earlier this month and had been named for a New Zealand A tour of England later this year.

Martin only made his first-class debut last month, taking 12-55 in his third match against Auckland, before he struggled against Australia.

The left-arm spinner finished with the unflattering figures of 1-139, but selectors obviously felt he could play a role in the absence of his injured Northern Districts teammate Daniel Vettori.

The star left-arm spinner was Tuesday diagnosed with a stress fracture in his lower back, ruling him out of the final Test of the season after he bowled only 23 overs in the second Test.

Vettori will need about three months' rest, joining pacemen Dion Nash and Geoff Allott on a list, which contributed to New Zealand's opening two losses in the Test series.

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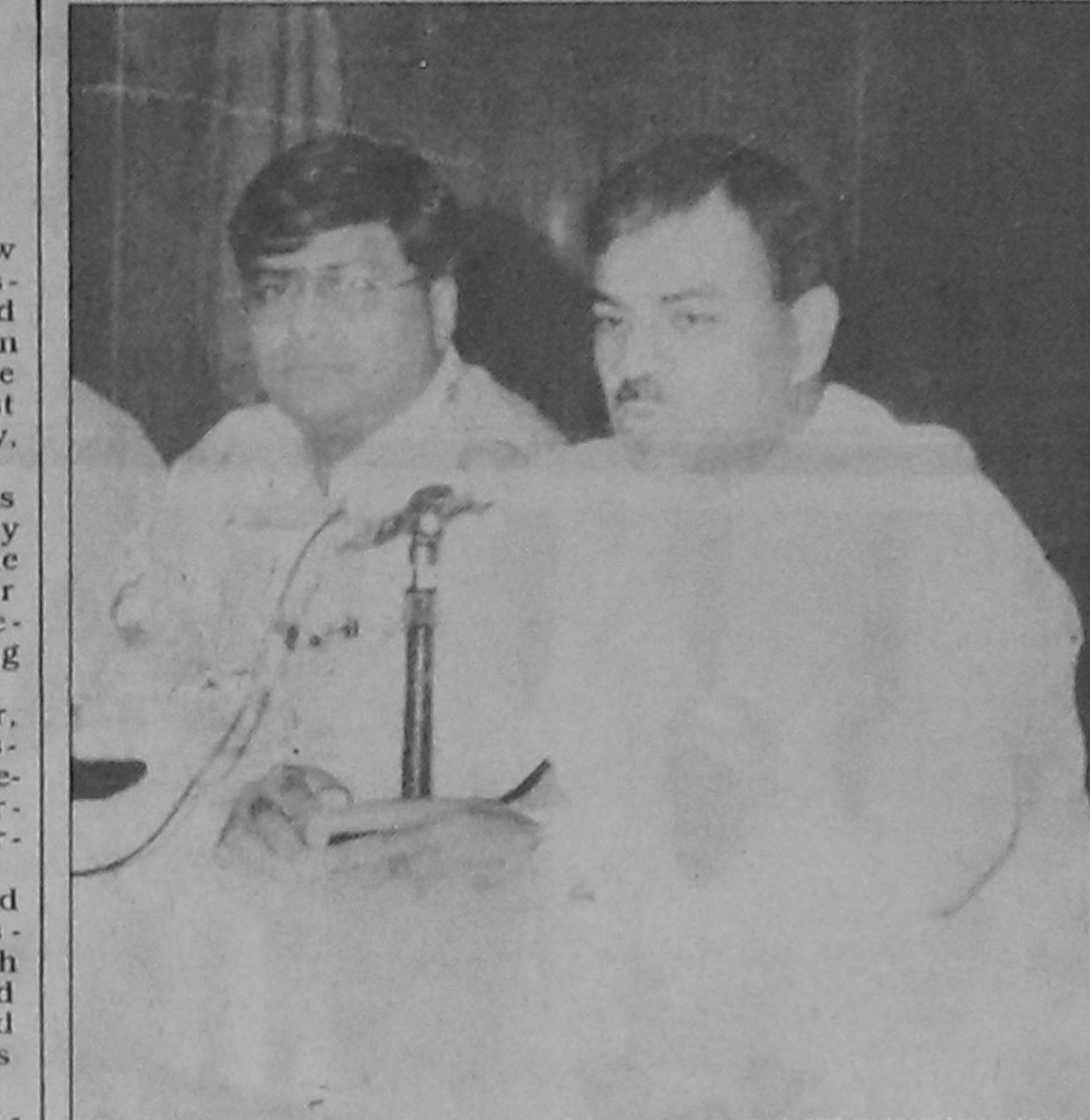
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Result: Brothers Union won by 14 runs.



Faruk Khan MP, the chairman of the second Asian Kho Kho Championship, announces Igloo as the sponsor of the six-nation meet which begins in the city today.

— Star photo

Sayeded shines for Bawani

Sports Reporter

ANZ Grindlays National School Cricket
A brilliant fifty by opener Sayeed propelled Ahmed Bawani Academy to a six-wicket win over Narinda Govt. Boys' High School in one of the ANZ Grindlays Bank 18th National School Cricket Championship at the Uttara Club ground yesterday.

Sayeded scored a run-a-ball 54 as Ahmed Bawani Academy, chasing a fighting Narinda total of 163 in 35 overs, reached 166 in 32.5 overs with six wickets in hand.

Sayeded hammered a six and seven fours in his 53-ball innings. Besides, one-down Shipu scored an unbeaten 41 off 81 balls while Mamun added 29 off 38 balls.

Earlier, opting to bat first, Narinda High School were all out for 163 in 32.5 overs with Mr. Sundries contributing highest 45 to their account.

Middle-order Sohag scored 30 followed by Imran who scored 28.

Shipu and Mizan evenly shared six wickets for Ahmed Bawani Academy.

At the nearby Uttara Police Lines ground, Islamia Adarsha High beat Moonlight Kindergarten by 11 runs.

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