

Doubts over Donald

REUTERS, Bridgetown

South African fast bowler Allan Donald aggravated a hamstring strain while fielding during the third day of the third Test against the West Indies on Saturday.

Donald was off the field for a large part of the final session and is now a serious injury concern.

"Allan's got a tight and slightly sore right hamstring," said South African physiotherapist Craig Smith.

"As a precaution with a second innings still to come here and the fourth Test in Antigua in a few days time, we don't want to make it worse."

"I said to him when he went out this morning not to make it any worse and that if it did deteriorate it would be better just to sit this innings out or sit the day out. We're being a bit more cautious than normal."

Smith added that the injury was bad enough to put Donald's fitness for the Antigua Test which starts on Friday in some doubt.

"I would consider him a concern because he might have to bowl in the second innings here," Smith said. "We'll just have to play it by ear and see how it reacts on a day by day basis."

"We'll be doing a lot of treatment over the next two days. Hopefully it's more of a stiffness kind of soreness as opposed to a strain kind of soreness because he was able to move in the field without much discomfort."

Donald sustained the injury while ducking under a bouncer during his career-best innings 37 on Friday and although the hamstring was stiff on Saturday morning, he was passed fit to bowl.

He made it through 12 overs before leaving the field shortly before captain Shaun Pollock took the second new ball.

WA on a roll

AFP, Perth

A gallant unbeaten 70 by number 10 batsman Andrew Tweedie failed to save South Africa's Kwazulu Natal from defeat by Western Australia in a Champions Cup one-day cricket clash at the WACA Ground here Saturday night.

Tweedie was left stranded without a partner after thumping 10 boundaries in his 67-ball knock when the South African team were all out for 189 in 47 overs as they replied to Western Australia's 270 for four in 50 overs.

Western Australia's 81-run victory was their second in the new tournament, making them a strong bet for Wednesday's final.

Sent in by visiting captain Dale Benkenstein when he won the toss, the State side scored freely after the shock early loss of skipper Justin Langer, Australia's number three Test batsman, for a duck.

Former Zimbabwe star Murray Goodwin led the way, striking 69 from 89 balls, thumping five fours on the way.

Simon Katich stroked 68 from 110 deliveries, Michael Hussey 62 from 44 and Ryan Campbell 42 from 47.

Wade Wingfield earned 2-42 from a steady stint at the bowling crease.

In the South African Standard Bank Cup winner's innings, only opener Ashraf Mall (44 from 45 balls) showed any form as the team skidded to 93 for eight in the 29th over.

Tweedie then stepped in with his 62-minute knock as he shared a spirited 71-run stand with Kyle Bender (19) and another liaison of 25 with last man Gary Gilder (1).

Medium-pacer Darren Wates (3-27 from 8.3 overs) captured major bowling honors for Western Australia, for whom Michael Hussey (2-19) and Bradley Hogg (2-35) also made important contributions.

The South Africans have a chance to atone for their poor effort when they clash with Indian side Mumbai Sunday on the fourth day of the competition.



West Indies captain Carl Hooper plays one square of the wicket during the third day of the third Test against South Africa on Saturday.

Lara, Hooper repair WI

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without taking a wicket. Physiotherapist Craig Smith said he was unlikely to bowl again in the first innings.

Kallis took a wicket with his second delivery and finished the day with three for 52, getting the key wicket of Lara late in the day when the batsman pulled a short ball to mid-on.

Ntini ended a hard-hitting innings of 40 by left-handed opening batsman Chris Gayle and broke a promising partnership between Lara and Ramnaresh Sarwan as he took two for 51.

Pollock and Donald were unable to make a breakthrough at the start of the West Indian innings.

Gayle proved some powerful offside drives off both fast bowlers as he dominated an opening stand of 37 with fellow left-hander Wavell Hinds.

But a double switch of bowlers by skipper Pollock brought a breakthrough. Kallis's second ball swung in to Hinds, who edged a catch to wicketkeeper Mark Boucher. He scored only two off 46 balls.

Gayle's lack of footwork was his undoing when Daryll Cullinan caught him low down at first slip

when he flashed at Ntini. He hit eight fours in a 71-ball innings.

Marlon Samuels was tied down by Kallis before hooking a four. In trying to repeat the shot two balls later he top-edged a simple catch to Neil McKenzie at mid-on.

Ntini made the next breakthrough after Lara and Sarwan had put on 45 for the fourth wicket. With the first ball of his second spell he had Sarwan caught at backward point for 16.

Lara was lucky when he edged Pollock low to Boucher with his score on 21. Umpire Darrell Hair asked television umpire Halley Moore to check whether the ball had bounced before being caught by the wicketkeeper. The South Africans seemed convinced the ball had carried but Moore gave the batsman the benefit, with television pictures being inconclusive.

Lara and Hooper then put on the most attractive batting display of the match. Lara was cautious early on but hit 13 fours in making his 83 off 186 balls.

Hooper made his fourth half-century in five innings in the series and finished the day on 74 off 142 balls with 11 fours.

SCOREBOARD
Scoreboard at close of play on the

third day of the third Test match between West Indies and South Africa at Kensington Oval Saturday:

SOUTH AFRICA: First innings, 454 (D Cullinan 134, N McKenzie 72, S Pollock 106 not out, C Walsh 3/87, M Dillon 4/147).

WEST INDIES: First innings (overnight 7-0)

Table with columns: Player, Runs, Wickets. Includes Hinds, Gayle, Samuels, Kallis, Lara, Sarwan, Hooper, Jacobs, Extras, Total.

Bowler O M R W

Table with columns: Bowler, Overs, Mins, Runs, Wickets. Includes Donald, Pollock, Kallis, Ntini, Boje, Klusener.

To bat: D Ramnarine, M Dillon, C Walsh, C Cuffy, Umpires: Steve Bucknor (West Indies), Darrell Hair (Australia), TV umpire: Halley Moore (West Indies). Match referee: Mike Denness (England).

Nasser against four-day Tests

AFP, London

England captain Nasser Hussain spoke out against a plan to reduce Test matches to four days on Sunday.

Australian Cricket Board chief executive Malcolm Speed, soon to take up a similar post with the International Cricket Council, is in favour of such a scheme.

But Hussain told The Sunday Telegraph: "I think the Test cricket we've been playing for the last few years has been a fine shop-window for the game."

"People are too drugged up on quick-fix cricket so I don't think it's one of the best ideas I've heard."

"If Test cricket has survived this long there can't be broken wrong with it and if it ain't broken don't fix it."

"Even if a game does end in a bore draw there's likely to have been some pretty exciting stuff along the way."

McMillan named NZ skipper

INTERNET REPORT, updated

Craig McMillan, as expected, has been named to captain the New Zealand team to participate in the Coca-Cola Cup tournament in Sharjah.

Hastily laid plans were required for the side to respond to an invitation to take India's place in the tournament after they refused to play Pakistan.

A decision at board level was required before final approval was given for New Zealand to compete. Given all the injury worries that have afflicted the side this year, making an unscheduled end of season tour might not have been high on the list of priorities.

But, in effect, the tournament has become an ideal opportunity to blood even more players for international cricket, or to further extend the experience of players introduced this year.

The side, while inexperienced, does have some exciting potential and it will be interesting to see how some players respond to the foreign environment in Sharjah.

Leg spinner Brooke Walker has recovered from the shoulder injury which forced him out of the final Test against Pakistan while Andre Adams, called into the One-Day International team towards the end of the five-match Pakistan series looks likely to finally get the chance to play.

His Auckland team-mate Kyle Mills has reward for a fine season in New Zealand by also winning selection in the side.

SQUAD

Craig McMillan (captain), Matthew Bell, Mathew Sinclair, Chris Nevin, Lou Vincent, Jacob Oram, Chris Harris, Grant Bradburn, Andre Adams, James Franklin, Brooke Walker, Daryl Tuffey, Kyle Mills.

BCCSL retaliates

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lanka's sacked cricket control board Sunday slammed Sports Minister Lakshman Kiriella for dismissing them amid allegations of financial irregularities.

The board's former treasurer Trevor Rajaratnam denied he had withheld the annual accounts of the Board of Control for Cricket in Sri Lanka (BCCSL) which is the richest sports body in the country.

"It is quite baffling, to say the least, as to why you have held out that no annual accounts had been circulated, thereby causing grave injury, damage, ridicule and humiliation to the members of the BCCSL executive committee 2000/2001," Rajaratnam said in a letter to Kiriella.

Rajaratnam said the minister had sought to discredit the previous committee. There was no immediate reaction from either the minister or the government.

His letter came as the government accused the outgoing board of issuing a large number of cheques in a flurry just hours before the members were sacked on Wednesday.

The new interim-committee of BCCSL which was appointed Thursday told banks to report on all cheques issued by the previous management, a board official said.

"There are suggestions that a large number of payments were made just before the previous committee was dissolved," a spokesman said. "As a precautionary measure, the banks have been alerted."

The sports minister named Vijaya Malasekara as the chairman of a four-member panel to run the crisis-ridden BCCSL.

The minister's action followed allegations that the previous officer holders had violated the sport's laws by not giving adequate notice of an annual general meeting scheduled for March 31.

Other members of the new panel are Ashantha de Mel, Sidath Wettimuny and Michael Tissara.

Venus reclaims crown

Tennis

AFP, Miami

Wimbledon and US Open champion Venus Williams saved eight match points and rallied past Australian Open winner Jennifer Capriati 4-6, 6-1, 7-6 (7/4) to win the WTA Tennis Masters Series title here Saturday.

Williams took her 18th consecutive triumph here in the all-American final and matched Steffi Graf as the only three-time champions here. The 20-year-old won in 1998 and 1999 and missed last year with wrist tendinitis.

"I never had a game with so many match points against," Williams said. "I guess there is a first for everything. I just kept getting back in it some way or another."

Williams was broken twice to

leave Capriati serving for the match, but each time Williams fought back with a break of her own.

"I felt disappointed when I lost my serve those two times to go down 5-4 and 6-5," Williams said. "That is the only time I felt badly. I never felt I was going to lose."

Third seed Williams saved three match points in the 10th game of the third set, five more in the 12th game of the final set and then surged to a 6-1 lead in the tie-breaker.

"I don't think I ever lost a match with so many match points," Capriati said. "I should have won this match. She is beatable. Just a few improvements here and there. But I didn't play my best tennis."

Williams said she relied on her

training when she faced defeat.

"I just kept telling myself what to do at the right time, everything my dad told me to do. All the little things that are really important under pressure. The basics, look at the ball, stay down, hit your top spin, turn your hips."

The match was played in extremely hot conditions that wore both women down by the tension-filled finish.

"The conditions were really really tough out there," Capriati said. "The wind, and then the sun. But of course it was for both of us."

Capriati, 25, had won 17 of her prior 19 matches, including her title run at Melbourne for her first Grand Slam crown and trips to the Oklahoma City final and Scottsdale semifinals.

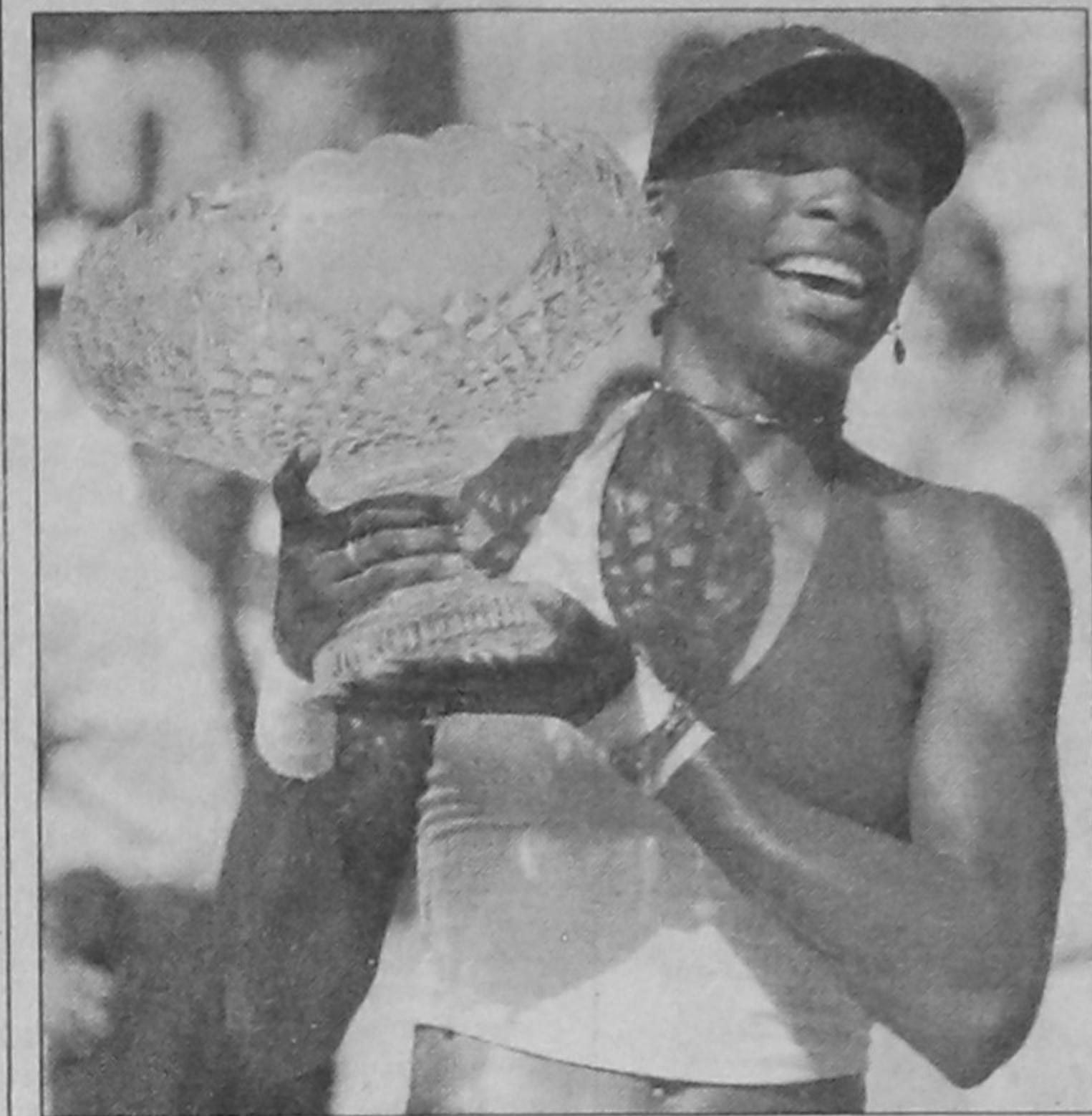
After losing her first set of the tournament, Williams recovered and seized command of the tie-breaker. But Williams sent a backhand wide, double faulted and hit a backhand long before finally winning when Capriati netted a forehand.

"There is not a lot I could have changed," Capriati said. "Maybe just serve a little better. Imagine if I just got a few more serves in and a few less double faults. But the conditions were so hard."

"I couldn't have done much better. But after letting so many match points go, especially two games in a row, I had a letdown in the tie-breaker. At least the first few points. I was just a little bit fatigued there."

Williams withdrew from an Indian Wells semifinal earlier this month and was booed for denying fans a rare showdown with her sister Serena. Her title run here seemed to show Williams was not hurting too badly.

Williams won her 16th career WTA title and rose to 2-0 against Capriati, having taken their first meeting here in 1997 in three sets. Williams last lost here when Swiss star Martina Hingis beat her in the third round in 1997.



Venus Williams of the United States holds the winner's trophy after beating compatriot Jennifer Capriati in the Masters Series final at Miami on Saturday.

All-American final

Tennis

AFP, Miami

Australian Open champion Andre Agassi ousted Australia's Patrick Rafter 6-0, 6-7 (2/7), 6-2 here Saturday to reach the final of the 6.12 million-dollar ATP Tennis Masters Series hardcourt event.

Third seed and three-time champion Agassi will face fellow American Jan-Michael Gambill in Sunday's championship match.

"There's something special about an all-American final," Agassi said. "For me it is great before the match. It is great after

the match. But during the match there is no nationality."

Gambill beat seventh-seeded Aussie Lleyton Hewitt 7-5, 6-4, on Friday in the first semifinal.

"I know Jan-Michael has been playing incredibly well. He has only gotten better this year," Agassi said. "I will feel good if I give a few more opportunities to defend some match points."

Agassi seeks his second consecutive Masters Series title after winning earlier this month in Indian Wells, California. At 21-2 this year, Agassi is off to his best start since 1995.

Agassi dominated the first and last sets, surprising even himself

with the opening blanking.

"I wanted to get off to a good start," Agassi said. "But I consider a good start holding serve with Patrick. I just didn't want him to be up a break early. But I had never beaten him 6-0 before. I sure broke him three times in a row."

"But with him, all he needs is to get his rhythm going on his serve and he can go through an hour stretch where you don't even have a sniff at it. So I was thinking to myself, the match is starting right now up 6-0. I was getting the first set and just trying to go to work."

Agassi also defeated Rafter in this year's Australian Open semifinals, rallying to win the final two sets in the best-of-five match-up when the Aussie veteran suffered serious cramping. Agassi went on to take his seventh Grand Slam title.

Agassi rose to 9-4 lifetime against the two-time US Open champion and 42-11 all-time here.

"He started on fire, really well - didn't let me get into the match and never opened the gates at all in the first set," Rafter said. "I fought hard to get back in the second and then sort of let it go, a couple of unforced errors. You can't afford to do that with Andre."

"I felt I could sort my way back into it. But third set he put the pressure back on and that is when a couple of loose points here and there and the match is over."

Rafter, seeded eighth, lost to Agassi twice before here, including the 1994 semifinals, and has lost seven of nine encounters with Agassi on hardcourts.

Rafter reached his first Masters Series semifinal since 1999 in Cincinnati. He last reached an ATP final last October in Lyon.



Members of the Windows team which became champions beating Linux in the Apteck Dhanmondi inter-batch cricket tournament at the Kalabagan Cricket ground on March 29.

Houllier not going gaga

Football

REUTERS, Liverpool

Liverpool manager Gerard Houllier is delighted with his team's 2-0 win over Manchester United, but says the champions-elect are still on the way.

Great goals by Steven Gerrard and Robbie Fowler rewarded Liverpool for a terrific first-half display at

Anfield, while solid defending kept the reigning champions at bay after Danny Murphy was sent off in the 69th minute.

It was only United's third league defeat of the season and the first time Liverpool had done the double over their old rivals for 22 years.

But Houllier was determined to keep the win over England's most successful team of the last dozen years in perspective.

"We had a fantastic first half, we were lively, very, very sharp and created lots of chances," the Frenchman said.

"Fabien Barthez saved them on two or three occasions -- we could have had four or five."

"It showed what we can do -- but the fact that we beat them doesn't mean we are at their level. Look at the points between them and us, look at their achievements in Europe. They are

a tremendous side.

"Maybe we were a bit lucky that they were a bit off today but you have to make sure they are off. We had eight or nine players who were at their best."



GERARD HOULLIER

Houllier said that the dismissal of Murphy for a second late tackle changed the course of match but more enabled his players to show the other side of their game.

"In the first half we showed ability and daring, in the second we showed character and resilience."

"It's a different face but sometimes you have to show you are able to do both in the same game."

Gerrard was voted man-of-the-match but Houllier said he was not certain if the midfielder would be fit to face Barcelona in a UEFA

Cup semifinal first leg tie on Thursday.

Gerrard, whose team face an FA Cup semifinal against Wycombe next Sunday, missed England's trip to Albania after playing against Finland last week Houllier was looking forward to the next eight days as Liverpool seek a cup treble following their success in the League Cup earlier in the season.

"It is very important week," he said. "The semifinal of the UEFA Cup, then the FA Cup. But I say to them 'let's keep working, and keep our feet on the ground.'"

"I know where the team is and what we are capable of."

United manager Alex Ferguson was not too disheartened by the defeat, only his team's third at Anfield in the league since the premier league began in 1992.

"I thought it was a very, very good game actually," said the Scot.

"The first goal can often decide it and once they got it they counter-attacked very well and at half-time we were glad of it."

"It was an engrossing game, a great atmosphere and there is no damage to pride."

"We've had a lot of success here over the years. It's a difficult place to come but we've done exceptionally well. It's not always going to last."

Jadeja's wicket falls at last

INTERNET REPORT, New Delhi

Disgraced cricketer Ajay Jadeja on Friday began a new innings in life tying the nuptial knot with his childhood sweetheart Aditi Jaitley, daughter of politician Jaya Jaitley.

Banned from playing cricket for five years, the popular cricketer was dressed in white kurtan and wearing red coloured headgear in traditional Rajasthani style.

A host of leaders including Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah, Minister of State for Railways Digvijay Singh, cricketer turned politician Kirti Azad and Agriculture Minister with the additional charge of Railways Nitish Kumar attended the marriage, which was solemnised away from media glare.

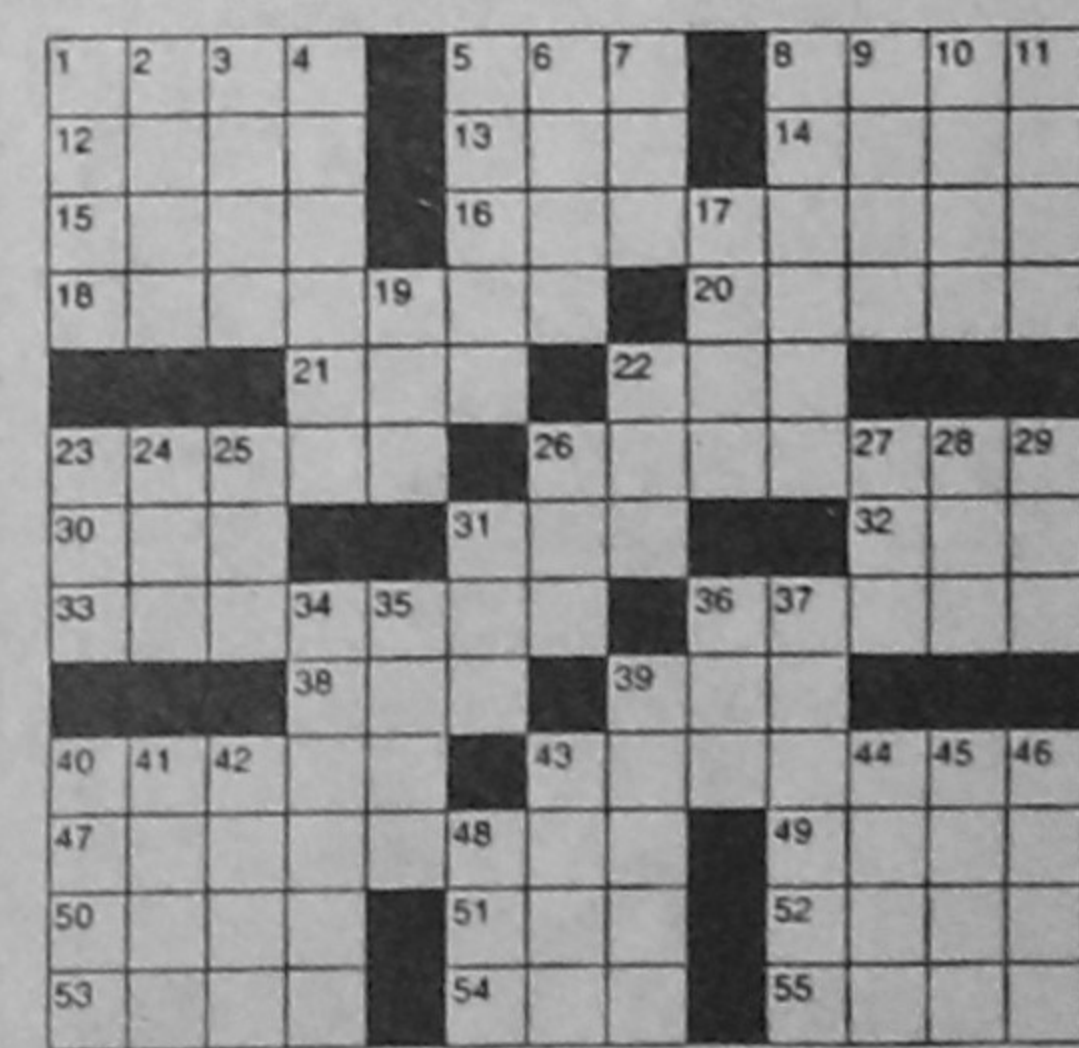
Popular cine artiste Madhuri Dixit and classical dancer Sonal Mansingh were also sighted among the luminaries.



Players and officials of Bangladesh Navy who clinched the BGIC Independence Cup basketball tournament title at the Dhanmondi gymnasium on Saturday.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS 1 Burn a bit 40 Most of Iberia 41 Applaud 19 Erstwhile acorn 5 Jazz style 43 Pilot's place 2 "— but we have 22 "Houston, know, ... we have 8 "That's a relief!" 47 "Mutiny on the Bounty" island 3 Body sci. no problem 4 Talk incoherently 23 Ball in a gym 5 Domineering 24 Blackbird 6 Possesses 25 Still 7 Cause of royal 26 Chart 27 Links insomnia standard 8 Christmas door decor 29 "My country, 'ry, ... together holders 31 Addresssee 34 Cut 5 Editor 35 Editor Adamses Brown 11 Anti-Prohibitionists 36 Fond du —, WI 37 High-pH chemical 39 Mini-lakes 40 Unwanted e-mail 41 Heap 42 Like — of bricks 43 Deposit of lilt 44 Stroller 45 Old Peruvian 46 Adolescent 48 Aloof



CRYPTOQUIP

CSBJ X CDARS CXJABY AK RKJAXRA X RQKJV, D'Z O G Q B OSB ODZWFV R X G F Y O K J A S B W S K J B

Yesterday's Cryptogram: A WOMAN WORKING AT A CRYSTAL-BALL FACTORY BRAGS TO US, "I MAKE A FORTUNE!"

Today's Cryptogram Clue: C equals W The Cryptogram is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that X equals Q, 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.