

CCDM supports clubs' appeal

UNB, Dhaka

The Cricket Committee of Dhaka Metropolitan (CCDM) unanimously supported the appeal of 12 Metropolitan First Division clubs to stop relegation as the clubs are not in a position to continue the league due to inclement weather.

The decision was taken in an emergency meeting of the CCDM yesterday at the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) office with Victoria SC representative MA Kabir in the chair, participated by some 37 representatives of Metropolitan first, second and third division clubs.

However, for final decision the CCDM referred the case to BCB, which will meet on May 21.

Nine super and 10 relegation league matches of the First Division League still remained pending.

John seems to be afraid of Eng seamers

AFP, Sydney

Australian cricket coach John Buchanan warned Wednesday England's seam attack would pose a special threat on the upcoming Ashes tour.

Australia's batsmen struggled in India in March when they lost that series 2-1 and Buchanan said although those problems were unlikely to be repeated in England they would still need to adjust to the specific conditions.

"We're going to face a pace bowling attack that can swing and seam the ball," he said.

Formers

FROM PAGE 13

on the field. Because, at the end of the day, it is me who will have to be held accountable for the team performance," said Naimur. "Selection may upset someone. But, we are professional players and we will have to accept the fact that only eleven out of fifteen would play."

He also pointed out that it is not only the captain who makes team decision. "I have talked with my vice-captain before every selection. Besides, coach Trevor and manager Mahamud Anam had also played their part in the team selection."

Naimur however admitted that he was not happy with his performance in Zimbabwe, where he scored 80 runs in two Tests and took three wickets. He was also unimpressive in the one-dayers with a score of 69 runs from three games and no wicket under his belt.

He however opines that Board should allow longer stint to whoever the captain is.

Outgoing general secretary Syed Shafiqul Haq also supported the view. "When we appointed Naimur as the captain, we thought of him as a long term prospect. Although the Board is maintaining a policy of appointing captain on tour basis, but it is implied that he would get more time before coming under scrutiny," said Ashraf.

BKSP

FROM PAGE 13

Sohel c Maruf b Tanveer	4
Rocky c Tanveer b Asif	0
Johnny b Nayeem	24
Ashraf run out	4
Ashim c Nadif b Nayeem	5
Bidyut c Rubaiyat b Nayeem	0
Kajal c Dhiman b Nayeem	2
Prince c Dhiman b Nadif	1
Jamil st Dhiman b Nayeem	9
Liton not out	1
Extras: (b-3, lb-3, nb-2, w-13)	21
Total: (All out in 34.4 overs)	73
Fall of wickets: 1/5, 2/8, 3/30, 4/39, 5/53, 6/53, 7/55, 8/60, 9/60.	
Bowler	O M R W
Asif	6 1 11 2
Rubaiyat	6 0 11 0
Nazmul	6 1 8 0
Tanveer	5 0 12 1
Nadif	4 0 13 1
Nayeem	7.4 2 12 5

Result: BKSP won by 44 runs.

Man-of-the-match: Nayeem Islam (BKSP)

ROLL OF HONOUR

1982-83: Dhaka Residential Model School.
1983-84: Dhaka Willis Little Flower School.
1984-85: Dhaka Willis Little Flower School.
1985-86: Dhaka Little Flower School.
1986-87: Dhaka West End High School.
1987-88: Narayananj High School.
1988-89: Mukul Niketan.
1989-90: Final round was not held.
1990-91: Final round was not held.
1991-92: Gomilla Zila School.
1992-93: Narayananj High School.
1993-94: Narayananj High School.
1994-95: Tangail Bindubasini School.
1995-96: Dhaka Scholastica School.
1996-97: Dhaka Scholastica School.
1997-98: Final round was not held.
1998-99: Tangail Bindubasini School.
1999-00: Mymensingh Zila School.
2000-01: BKSP.

Time for Test business

Cricket

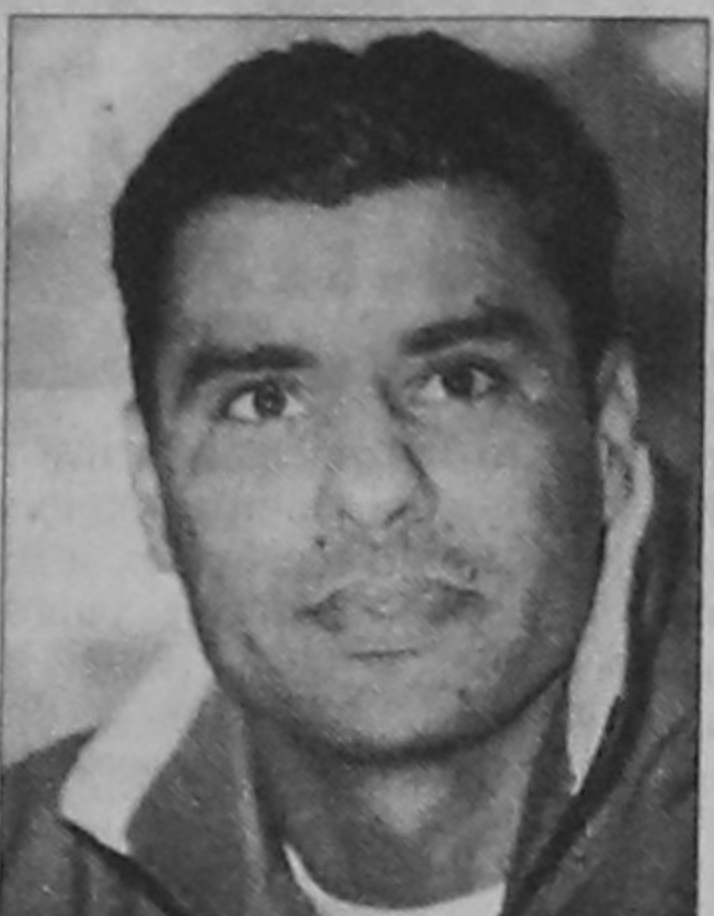
AFP, London

Pakistan will be out for revenge when the first Test against England starts here at Lord's on Thursday.

The tourists lost their unbeaten record at Karachi during the winter when England won the third Test of three and took the series 1-0.

But Pakistan will have to be quick about their work: there are just two Tests on this tour, which serves as an appetiser for the five Test Ashes series here between England and Australia.

The decision to play just two Tests against Pakistan this summer, when series between the two sides here have usually been comm-



WAQAR YOUNIS

prised of three and sometimes five matches has caused ill-feeling.

Certainly Pakistan, a team with plenty of star names, deserve to be more than an Ashes warm-up act and it's hard to imagine Australia being treated in the same way.

However, Tim Lamb, the chief executive of the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) insisted no slight was intended.

"It is completely wrong to suggest that the ECB's decision to host two Test matches against Pakistan this summer reflects poorly on the tourists," said Lamb.

"Our original plan for this summer was to play a six Test Ashes series against Australia only."

However, following our new broadcasting deal with Channel Four and Sky in 1998, we agreed to expand the international match programme to seven Test matches per summer and introduce a triangular one-day tournament.

"I can reassure Pakistan supporters that the ECB has the utmost respect for their team's ability."

"They are one of the most exciting sides, to watch in world

cricket and we will be looking to play a minimum of three Test matches and possibly four when Pakistan are next due to tour here again in 2006."

England, unusually, will start this series as favourites: they have won four series on the trot while Pakistan have won just once in their last six, although they did manage a 1-1 draw against New Zealand earlier this year.

Nevertheless, a number of their leading players — captain Waqar Younis, fast bowler Wasim Akram, leg-spinner Mushtaq Ahmed and off-spinner Saqlain Mushtaq all have extensive experience of English conditions thanks to their time on the county circuit.

England's Graham Thorpe told AFP that Waqar his former Surrey teammate was "an inspiring leader of men" and what he may lack in tactical experience he may well make up for in force of personality.

That and the collective Test experience of the other senior players may help compensate for a lack of pre-Test match practice.

This has been a particular handicap for two of their key batsmen — Yousuf Youhana and Inzamamul Haq, neither of whom has yet played a major innings on tour.

Yousuf has so far managed nought, five and four while vice-captain Inzamam's contribution stands at 18 and 13.

Their pace attack will prefer an overcast Lord's to a lifeless slab in Lahore but it will be a tougher task for their batsmen, not that Pakistan's English coach Richard Pybus is unduly worried.

"Inzamam's such a key figure in our batting and I think he'll be fine. These are experienced Test players and guys like 'Inzi' know when to turn it on."

One player not expected to feature at Lord's is Shoaib Akhtar. The "Rawalpindi Express," as the fast bowler is known has been struggling with the after-effects of gastroenteritis and it seems as if his place will be taken by 20-year-old Mohammad Sami.

The youngster struggled with the slope at Canterbury, bowling 14 first-innings no-balls but at least it prepared him for the famous Lord's incline which has disturbed the rhythm of many a bowler in the past.

"You can't get too technical so close to a Test match, specially with a raw kid," said Pybus. "But we have had a chat about the problem and Sami was relaxed."

England may also feature a change in the bowling line-up. ENGLAND (possible): Nasser Hussain (captain), Michael Atherton, Marcus Trescothick, Michael Vaughan, Graham Thorpe, Alec Stewart, Ian Ward, Dominic Cork, Andrew Caddick, Darren Gough, Ryan Sidebottom.

PAKISTAN (possible): Waqar Younis (captain), Saeed Anwar, Salim Elahi, Abdur Razzaq, Inzamamul Haq, Yousuf Youhana, Younis Khan, Rashid Latif, Wasim Akram, Saqlain Mushtaq, Mohammad Sami.



NASSER HUSSAIN

cision. It was becoming obvious that he was struggling to handle batting at three," he said.

"It came as no surprise when he rang me to say he was going to do things differently this summer."

A return to consistent run-scoring would be a relief to Hussain but he would rather England kept winning.

Home fans will hope for both while Pakistan will be desperate to restore their standing.

But bad weather, not unknown in England at this time of year, could ruin at least one Test in this all-too-brief encounter.

TEAMS

ENGLAND (possible): Nasser Hussain (captain), Michael Atherton, Marcus Trescothick, Michael Vaughan, Graham Thorpe, Alec Stewart, Ian Ward, Dominic Cork, Andrew Caddick, Darren Gough, Ryan Sidebottom.

PAKISTAN (possible): Waqar Younis (captain), Saeed Anwar, Salim Elahi, Abdur Razzaq, Inzamamul Haq, Yousuf Youhana, Younis Khan, Rashid Latif, Wasim Akram, Saqlain Mushtaq, Mohammad Sami.

'Run, Inzy, run!'

Cricket

REUTERS, London

Inzamamul Haq is a man worthy of superlatives.

He is — arguably — the world's top current batsman.

He is — indisputably — the worst runner between the wickets, perhaps even in the history of the game.

Pakistan will hope he demonstrates the first point at Lord's this week, in the first Test against England. The home team would rather he illustrate the second.

Recent history suggests that the 31-year-old Inzamam, possibly the biggest, least athletic player the game at the very top level, will produce another batting masterpiece.

Inzamam has scored a century in each of his last six Test series. Pakistan managed to win just one of those series and lose four but no blame could be attached to the ample cornerstone of their batting.

In February in New Zealand he averaged 51.66. At home against England at the end of last year, it was 60.60, preceded in turn by 59.56 in Sri Lanka, 59 against West Indies, 71 at home to the Sri Lankans and 43.33 in Australia.

It is a consistency without equal, out of the reach even of India's celebrated Sachin Tendulkar.

It has also been achieved with the minimum of hard work.

Inzamam's inclination to steal a nap in a deckchair while his teammates go through their fielding drills is well documented.

All heroes, of course, must have a fatal flaw.

Inzamam seems to be indecisive. That and the turning speed of a tanker.

When the times comes to set off for a sharp single, he seems to be blighted with such doubt and confusion that he and his wild-eyed partner inevitably end up together at one end.

Ironically, however, it is a village-green weakness which has inspired even more affection among his supporters, if not among his teammates.

He turned the 1999 World Cup into pure pantomime at times, his every innings alive with comic possibility as one partner after another was run out while Inzamam survived at the other end.

He earned grudging forgiveness by regularly going on to score the runs needed to take Pakistan



INZAMAMUL HAQ

all the way to the final.

Former Pakistan captain Imran Khan said: "Inzamam is such a wonderful batsman to watch but he must be a nightmare to bat with ... (it) looks as if he does not know what he is doing half the time."

"His running between the wickets is appalling. Inzamam does not appear to grab even the basics of running and calling."

His delighted fans, however, saw the funny side, coining the chant of "Run, Inzy, run!"

Inzamam appreciated the joke. "I never took it as derogatory or an insult," he laughs. "I can run

faster than anyone. Anyway, it's the batsmen at the non-striker's end who make the mistakes, not me."

He is, indeed, a hard man to rile, although one person has managed it.

A spectator armed with a loud-hailer at a one-day international in Toronto gave Inzamam the immortal sobriquet of "aloo," or potato and so incensed the big man that he waded into the crowd, swinging a bat in pursuit of his tormentor, before he was pulled away.

Inzamam, who is also a fine slip fielder, has yet to show any form since arriving with the squad in England almost two weeks ago, with 18 runs in his first visit to the crease and 13 in the second.

But neither Pakistan nor Inzamam himself are breaking into a sweat.

"I'm not new to English conditions. I know I have a responsibility as an anchor man," he says. "Test matches aren't the same as warm-up games, they're different."

Team coach Richard Pybus adds: "They are experienced Test players and guys like Inzy know when to turn it on."

"I don't think he has got any concerns himself."

He rarely has.



PHOTO STAR

Action from yesterday's National Bank Metropolis volleyball league encounter between Titus Club and Bangladesh Bank Club at the volleyball court. Titus won 3-0.

1st Test factbox

REUTERS, London

England v Pakistan fact-file before the first Test starting at Lord's on Thursday:

Head-to-heads: England have the upper hand since the teams' first meeting in 1954 but Pakistan have dominated recent exchanges.

Until losing at home to Nasser Hussain's team at the end of last year, they had won five successive series against the English, with seven Test wins and only one defeat during that run. They have won their last three series in England.

Recent form: A resurgent England team have won their last four Test series, at home against Zimbabwe (1-0) and West Indies (3-1) and away to Pakistan (1-0) and Sri Lanka (2-1).

Pakistan had a mediocre 2000-01, losing to England and drawing 1-1 in New Zealand after being robbed of their best players through injury.

Key players:

Dominic Cork — the Derbyshire captain and all-rounder, refreshed after several months off with a back injury, loves this venue. He took seven for 43 on his 1995 debut and last year took four for 39 and three for 13 against West Indies before snatching victory from the jaws of defeat with 33 not out.

Waqar Younis — not only will he play a vital part in the game as an opening bowler, he also has a key role as captain. If he fails to unite his team behind him, England will fancy their chances.

Venue: Lord's — regarded as the home of cricket, housing the headquarters of the International Cricket Council as well as the England and Wales Cricket Board. Owned by the Marylebone Cricket Club, which was established in 1787.

Injury scares both camps

REUTERS, London

Pakistan pace bowler Mohammad Sami is doubtful for the first Test against England after suffering a recurrence of a shin injury.

Sami was expected to be selected as the tourists' third pace bowler for the Lord's match starting on Thursday.

But captain Waqar Younis said on Wednesday: "The chances are 60-40 against him playing. We will have another look at him in the nets today."

Pakistan may also go into the game without paceman Shoaib Akhtar, who is short of match fitness after an injury break and a bout of illness.

Younis, meanwhile, said he would also wait until Thursday morning to decide his line-up.

Meanwhile, England will wait until the final moment on Thursday before finalising their team in the hope that all-rounder Craig White will be declared fit.

England captain Nasser Hussain said: "He's such a key man — we're going to give him the extra day, the extra night."

The all-rounder, suffering from a stiff back, has failed to train with the squad for the past two days and Hussain added after an indoor net session: "Craig didn't bowl too much today either."

Earlier off-spinner Robert Croft was released, meaning the home team will start with an all-seam attack.

17 million dollar man

REUTERS, New Delhi

Indian batsman Sachin Tendulkar has signed a five-year contract worth 800 million rupees (17 million dollars) with sports management company WorldTel, an unnamed cricket industry source told on Wednesday.

Bangalore-based WorldTel will handle the 28-year-old's commercial endorsements and marketing activities for the next five years.

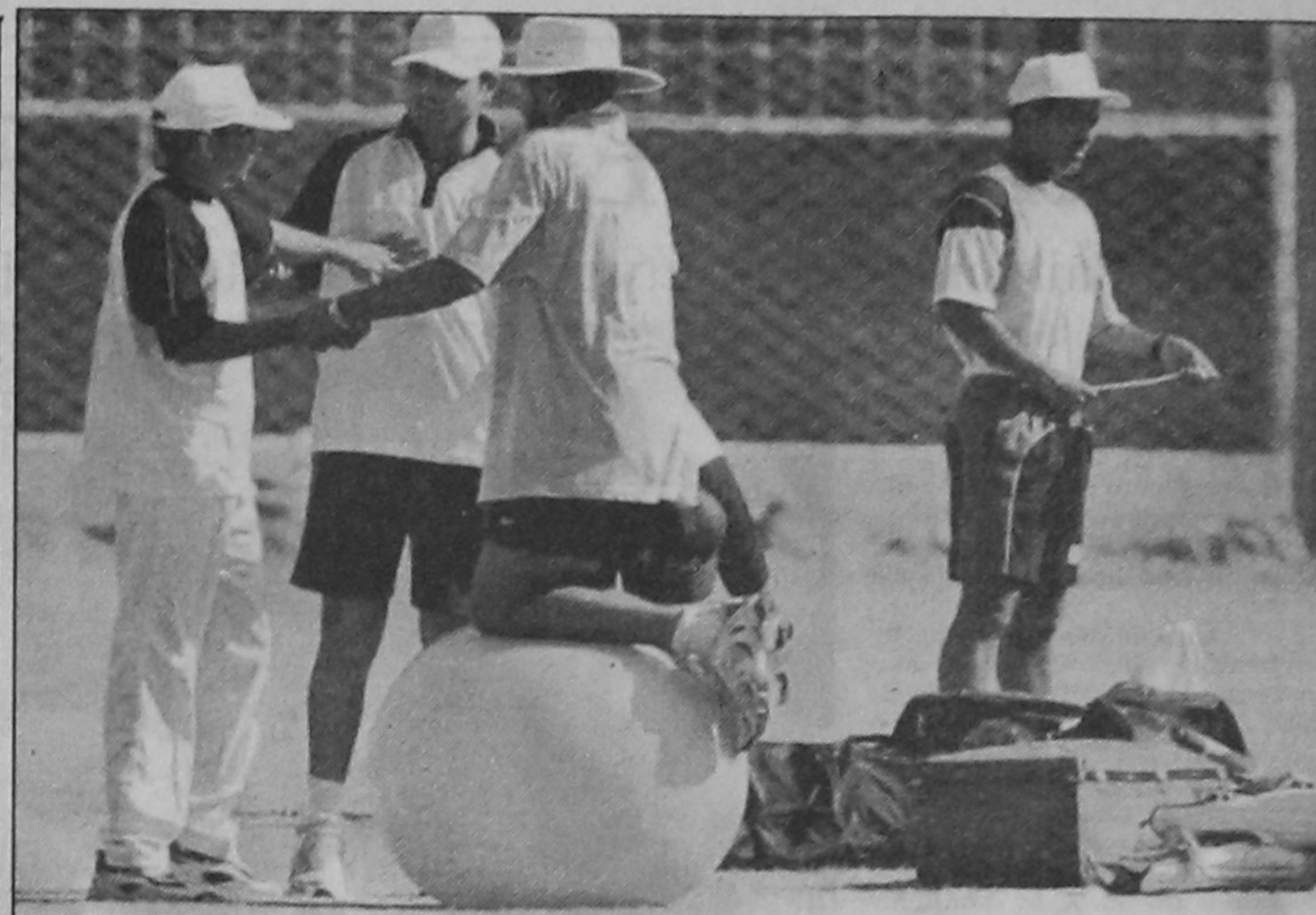
Tendulkar signed a five-year deal worth 300 million rupees with WorldTel in October 1995.

"During the last five years, our appreciation of Sachin has grown leaps and bounds. This is not just because of his performance on the field, it's also about him off the field," the company said in a statement.

Tendulkar, widely regarded as the world's leading batsman, is one of the best-known faces in cricket-crazy India.

The only player to score 10,000 one-day international runs, he already endorses products ranging from credit cards to health drinks.

"There's been considerable speculation in the market but the break from a busy cricket schedule has given us the opportunity to cement our relationship," the statement quotes Tendulkar as saying.



India cricketers (L-R) Rahul Sangvi, Dinesh Mongia, Harbhajan Singh and Sunil Joshi take a break from the rigours of training at the their conditioning camp in Bangalore yesterday.

Starry words for Indians

Cricket

AFP, Bangalore

A galaxy of legendary international cricket stars are motivating Indian players to clinch their first Test series outside Asia in more than a decade.

Former Australian wicket-keeper Rodney Marsh, Indian off-spinner Erapalli Prasanna, all-rounder Roger Binny and leg-spinner Anil Kumble have lined up at the Indian probables' training camp in the southern city of Bangalore.

India, led by Saurav Ganguly, are scheduled to tour Zimbabwe from later this month for two Test matches and a limited-overs triangular also featuring the West Indies.

The Indians, who built on a creditable home record by defeating one-day world champions Australia 2-1 in March, have not won a Test series outside this continent since a 2-0 win over England in 1986.

Marsh, who is a consultant to India's National Cricket Academy, had a half-an-hour chat with the three wicketkeepers about the

basic drills.

"The first rule in wicketkeeping is to figure out the rhythm and develop confidence," Marsh said. "You have to take these two into the game if you want to become a good wicketkeeper."

The three Indian 'keepers, Sameer Dighe, Ajay Ratna and Deep Dasgupta were all ears as Marsh explained and clarified wicketkeeping skills and techniques.

The team for the 42-day tour will be named on Thursday.

Prasanna, who was a part of the famous spin quartet along with Bhagwat Chandrasekhar, Bishan Bedi and Srinivas Venkataraghavan, gave valuable tips to slow bowlers Sharandeep Singh, Harbhajan Singh and Rahul Sanghvi.

"I help them with the guidelines. It is basically correcting their line and length," said Prasanna, whose off-spinners scalped 189 wickets in 49 Tests.

"The camp is meant to condition their mind," he told AFP. "These young spinners are at the start of their career. They will take time to mature. It may take another two to three years and a lot of exposure for them to be the best in the business."

Cloud over ICC Knockout

Cricket

AP, New Delhi

The Indian cricket board is fast losing interest in hosting next year's ICC knockout tournament, since getting into a spat with the country's sports ministry last month, a senior official said Wednesday.

The secretary of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) said India "wasn't necessarily keen" on hosting the ICC Cup unless the revenue-sharing formula was attractive.

"We've asked the International Cricket Council for the details on revenue-sharing," Jaywant Lela told reporters in New Delhi. "We've got no idea about the revenue sharing terms offered to Bangladesh and Kenya for hosting the previous ICC Cup tournaments."

"Until we know these terms and conditions, the BCCI isn't necessarily keen on hosting this tournament," he said.

The ICC Cup, popularly known as the "Mini World Cup," was

conceived to generate funds to fuel the game's growth in non-test-playing countries.

Lela said the issue of sharing revenues will be discussed at the ICC meeting in London, Britain, next month.

The BCCI secretary's comments come against the backdrop of a waiting game being played between the Sports Ministry and the cricket board over the issue of tax exemptions, which is a prerequisite for hosting the event.

The Indian sports ministry stalled an application for tax exemptions following the standoff with the BCCI, which threatened to stay away from major limited-over competitions unless the government clarified where it could play and against whom.

The Indian government last month banned the cricket team from playing in three venues — Sharjah, United Arab Emirates, Singapore and Toronto, Canada — and called them "non-regular" venues.

Government clearance is mandatory in India for any international sports event — at home or abroad.

The cricket board responded

Prasanna said he was monitoring their progress at the camp.

"They are doing exceptionally well and it is a question of time when we will have them in the forefront."

India's injured leg-spin ace Kumble too has chipped in with his experience.

"I share my vast experience with the youngsters," said Kumble, who has claimed 276 wickets in 61 Tests. "I tell them how I approach the game."

Kumble is recovering from a shoulder injury and is expected to return to international cricket during the tour of South Africa in October.

Binny, a member of India's World Cup winning squad in 1983, is another star to give a boost to the team's preparations.

"The boys are in good shape and I am here to help them gain more self confidence," said Binny, the current national junior coach.

Senior players in the team including batting maestro Sachin Tendulkar and skipper Saurav Ganguly are also holding separate "pep talk sessions" with junior players at the camp.

Indian team is set to leave for Zimbabwe on May 27.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS	37 Cal-length skirts	61 Church seat	12 Daytime TV VIP
1 Upper limit			19 Calendar abbr.
4 Whale group	39 Auto bath	DOWN	
7 Haberdashery display	41 Flora	1 String	21 Greek consonants
	43 Simpson's expletive	2 What "there oughta be"	23 Indispensable
11 Hodge-podge	44 Coal or gas	3 Tower city	25 Turner or Louise
13 Helene's H	46 Emulates keggers	4 Hair application	26 Raw materials
14 Farm fraction	50 Cracked, maybe	5 On	27 Netting
15 Grate	53 Medic	6 Prestidigitation	28 Pack down
16 Journal	55 Close	7 12-Down is one	29 Satan's forte
17 Long-legged wildcat	56 Loathe	8 Unfriendly	30 Last few notes
18 Sleepy or Grumpy	57 Past	9 Compass point suffix	31 Pouch
20 Pastel color	58 Become bored	10 Kinsey subject	35 Frenzied
22 Clumsy craft	59 Vacationing point		38 R-V link
	60 Without delay		40 Filch
			42 Auto style
			45 Trademark symbol
24 General usage	Solution time: 24 mins.		
28 Electronics experts	MAJOR	MINOR	47 Cat-o'-nine-tails
32 "Rocky" actress	MARINE	AGUENET	48 Entertainment
33 Acknowledge	ANIMUS	GUMENVA	49 Leftovers recipe
34 Sweet potato	CLISSOLE	GENEVA	50 "Caught ya!"
35 Potato salad	EATS DAN PILE	48	
	SCAMP	STARTED	
	OIL	ARA	
	YANKES	TYROS	
	AGE	WIMMER	
	ROW	DECOY	
	DUMBER	SAMON	
	STAPLE	ELAINE	
	INSET	YELLS	
			51 Mandible
			52 "glance"