



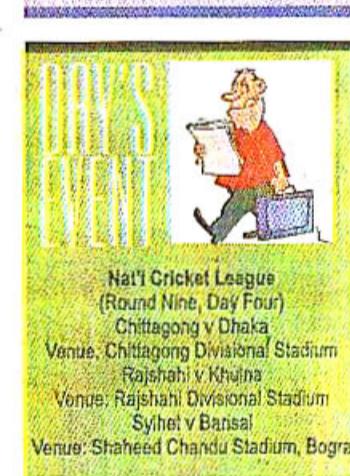
## Did U Know?

The Hockey World Cup, sometimes called the Hockey World Championships, is an international field hockey competition organised by the International Hockey Federation (FIH). The tournament started in 1971.



**Brett Lee**  
 (Australia fast bowler)  
 "It feels fantastic... when you're nine years of age, you think about playing one Test match or even taking one Test wicket. But to think that you're in the 250 club, it's a pretty special moment. I'm a very proud man."

After reaching the milestone during India's first innings in the first Test.



'We did well on foreign pitch'

PTI, Melbourne

Australian skipper Ricky Ponting Saturday declared that if the Indian batsmen feel suffocated at a "sub-continent" track like the MCG, they will not find it easy at any of the remaining three matches of the Test series.

Ponting said the Australian team's homework on the Indian batsmen was thorough and the hosts would not concede an inch in the upcoming matches as well.

"We have not one but five or six plans against each batsman for different conditions and in different scenarios. That's the beauty of technology. The way our plan came off at the MCG, I would say that we have really been well prepared," he said after the hosts thrashed India by 337 runs in the first Test Saturday.

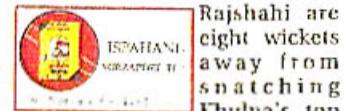
Ponting said it was extremely satisfying to achieve such a big win against a good Indian side on a wicket which was not a typical Australian strip.

"It was a kind of pitch which was more sub-continent type, more foreign to us. Here in Australia we are looking to blast sides out," he said.

"Here we needed to do things differently and I am glad we were able to do it so well. After the first day's play the match was 337-run win over India in such conditions was extremely satisfying," he added.

## Win beckons Rajshahi

SPORTS REPORTER



Rajshahi are eight wickets away from snatching

Khulna's top spot as they dominated Day Three of their ninth round match in the 9th National Cricket League at the Rajshahi Divisional Stadium yesterday.

Rajshahi, set 322 for victory, were 56-2 after Rajshahi put up 284-10 in their second innings.

Chittagong lost only one wicket as they moved from 26-3 overnight to 259-4 in a re-toss to Dhaka. They now lead by 41 runs after having conceded a 216-run first innings deficit at the Chittagong Divisional Stadium.

At the Shaheed Chandu Stadium in Bogra, Sylhet must survive the final day after Barisal amassed 383-5 declared. They were 4 for two.

**RAJSHABI-KHULNA**

From an uncomfortable 62-2 overnight, Rajshahi slowly moved out of danger through first, a solid 61

from opener Jahurul Islam. The lanky right-handed batsman, who was unbeaten on 39, struck eight boundaries and a six in his two-hour knock.

After his dismissal to five-wicket bowler Ziaur Rahman, it was the turn of captain Khaled Mashud to hold the baton and then a spirited effort from Anisur Rahman, who scored 64 off 82 balls with the help of five boundaries and two sixes.

Chittagong lost only one wicket as they moved from 26-3 overnight to 259-4 in a re-toss to Dhaka. They now lead by 41 runs after having conceded a 216-run first innings deficit at the Chittagong Divisional Stadium.

**BARISAL-SYLHET**

Middle-order batsman Abul Bashar struck an unbeaten 82 and Nasiruddin Faruque and captain Imran Ahmed struck 70s as Barisal took a huge 200-run first innings lead.

SEE PAGE 18 COL 5

## Vettori questions Tigers

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

New Zealand captain Daniel Vettori has said that Bangladesh could have shown more resolve in chasing a mammoth target of 336 in the second one-day international in Napier yesterday.

Bangladesh failed to build on a solid opening stand of 63, losing three wickets for the addition of only five runs and went on the defensive for the rest of the chase. Bangladesh ended on 181 for 6 before rain forced an early end to the match, handing New Zealand a 102-run victory by the D/L method, and the series 2-0.

"There was probably a little bit of frustration about the style of play," Vettori said. "We thought Bangladesh would chase a little bit harder -- whenever you chase 330 [sic] you have to take a few risks. If you don't, you stall and that's what

happened."

Bangladesh coach Jamie Sodden said the quick loss of wickets, including that of captain Mohammad Ashraful, was rather unfortunate as it threw the team's plans off balance.

"We had a plan in mind and we were going along according to that plan but we lost three wickets for five runs and the plan changed," Sodden said. "The batsmen really did not get going after that and we probably lost our biggest strokemakers."

Sodden also backed his batsmen to go for their strokes, despite several instances of experienced players throwing away their wickets in the first two matches. He said a lot of improvement was needed on the bowling front, after each of the New Zealand batsmen enjoyed a good hit in the middle, in particular Jacob Oram, who clubbed 55 off 31 balls in the slog overs.

"If the ball is not swinging or spinning, which it really didn't

today apart from the early overs where I think we bowled really well today, then it is a problem," he said. "The pace is also not there."

Despite the heavy defeat, Sodden was willing to be patient. "These are young players and it's going to take time. We are going to suffer some pain, there's no way

round it."

The other topic of discussion was Ashraful's controversial dismissal, after he spooned a low catch to Ross Taylor at cover. Taylor claimed the catch while Ashraful stood his ground, convinced that it was a bumb ball and that prompted the umpires to confer. Vettori backed Taylor's honesty and theumpires' decision.

"You saw Ross' reaction," Vettori said. "He left it in the umpires hands and they made the call. From what I've heard it was the right call."

The third and final one-day international will be played in Queenstown on December 31.



PHOTO: STAR

Chittagong opener Masumuddin sets off for a run during his century against Dhaka on the third day of the National Cricket League match at the Chittagong Divisional Stadium yesterday.

## Kumble orders runs

Cricket

AFP, Melbourne

Skipper Anil Kumble, stung

Saturday by one of India's heaviest Test defeats, says the tourists must toughen up mentally if they are to improve against Australia in next week's second Test in Sydney.

"It's a difficult position for me. If (openers) Virender Sehwag and Dinesh Karthik were in great form then the choice would have been easier."

Ricky Ponting's all-conquering Australians dusted off the Indians by 337 runs inside four days at the Melbourne Cricket Ground to take a one-nil lead in the four-Test Border-Gavaskar Trophy series.

"It hurts, not just as an individual but as team that we haven't put up a good show and I can tell you we will address that and try to put up a better show in Sydney," Kumble said.

"It's mainly a mental thing and that is something we will address so we are hungry for success when we go to Sydney."

"It's just a matter of going out there and batting freely. We didn't do that in our two innings here."

Amid a clamour in the Indian

media for team changes, Kumble said he will check on the pitch conditions in Sydney before making any decisions.

"If you look at our batting order then all seven of them are batting well and the other two openers, who could have possibly taken someone else's place, weren't really getting runs," he said.

"It's a difficult position for me. If (openers) Virender Sehwag and Dinesh Karthik were in great form then the choice would have been easier."

One burning issue is the selection of 116-Test batsman Rahul Dravid as opener to fit in Yuvraj Singh at number six in the batting order.

Yuvraj was a big disappointment in Melbourne, failing twice to impress -- scoring zero and five runs -- while Dravid was castigated for his painstaking scoring -- five off 66 balls and 16 off 114 balls.

"(Dravid) is too good a player to worry about his batting. He just needs to go out there and enjoy his batting," Kumble said.

"Whatever the best fielding unit we have then we have to manage with that. You can't win a match by fielding alone, you need to score

He has played more than 100 Tests and has scored more than 9000 runs. I am really confident he will be able to come out and bat the way he does.

"It's difficult when Yuvraj is playing so well and we don't pick him, you (media) say why not? Then when we put Rahul up the order and then make way for Yuvraj, you say: 'No, you shouldn't have done that'."

"There are always ifs and buts... but for me personally I need to look at the team dynamics and see who is batting well."

Kumble also has the problem of rectifying India's shoddy fielding, which was exposed during the MCG Test in comparison to the slick Australians.

"We can't really change that. We have some of the guys, including me, on the other side of 35 so it is tough for us to make those adjustments," he said.

"Whatever the best fielding unit we have then we have to manage with that. You can't win a match by fielding alone, you need to score

SEE PAGE 18 COL 5

Mahmudur's tenure won't be extended

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) on Saturday officially confirmed that its current chief executive officer Mahmudur Rahman's contract will not be renewed at the end of his current tenure in mid-February next year.

The board's working committee has decided to form a three-member committee headed by its chairman Syed Fahim Munain to search for a new man for the post.

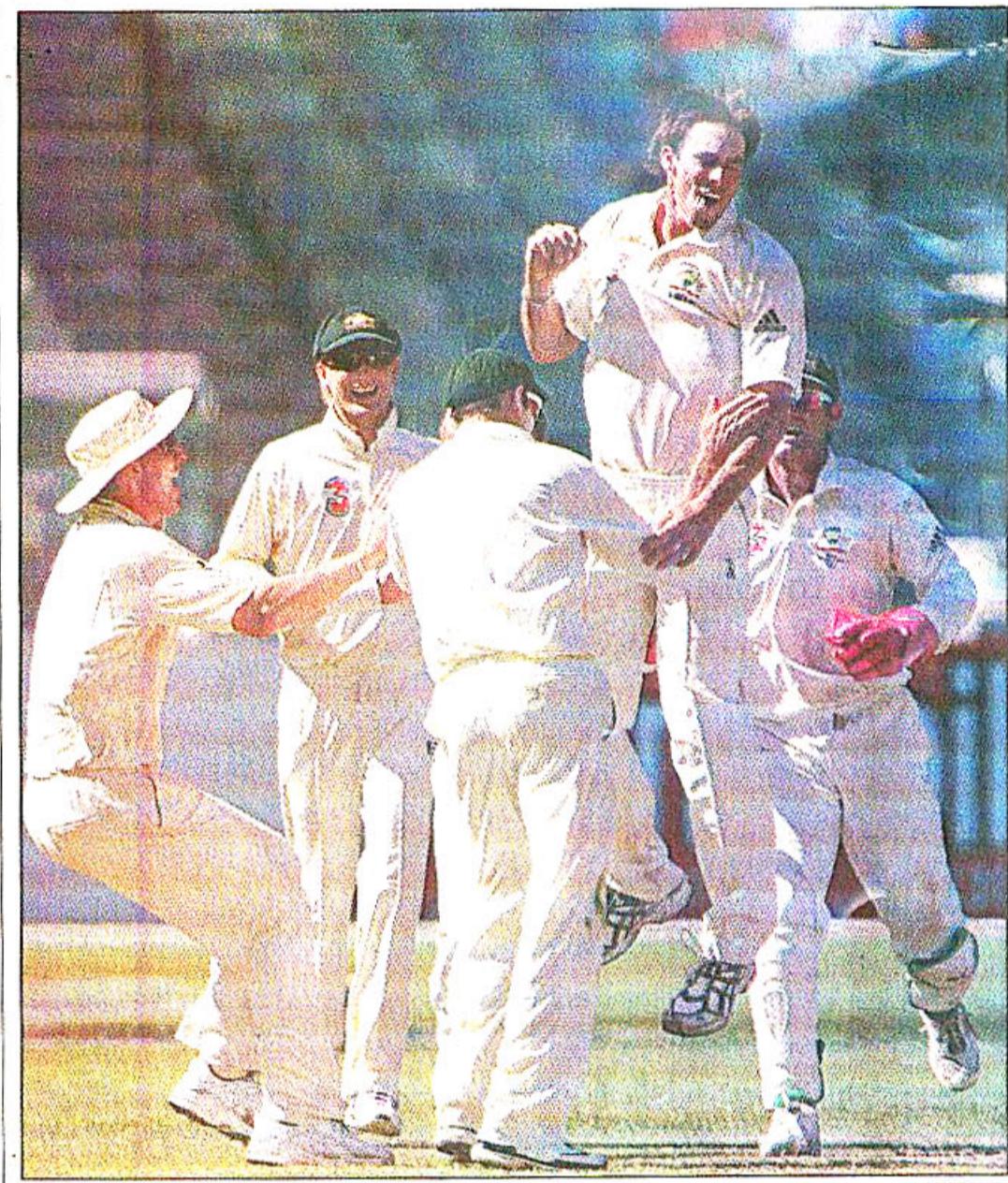
"As per the working committee decision our current CEO will continue till his tenure ends in mid-February and after that we will look for a new candidate for the post. Our working committee chairman Fahim Munain will head a three-member committee to find out the new man," informed Ishitaque Ahmed, vice-chairman of the media committee.

He however didn't want to make any comment on whether Rahman has tendered his resignation.

Ishitaque also said that a decision was also taken in the meeting that a three-member committee headed by Shafiqur Rahman Munain will be formed to examine the issue of women's wing member secretary Nazma Shamim, who was sacked by committee chairperson Monwar Anis Khan.

"It was also approved that we will appoint a fast bowing development coach as well as finding a high performance coach," he added.

Ehsanul Haq and Masum also added



CANT BRING HIM DOWN: Australia left-arm fast bowler Mitchell Johnson (2nd from R) celebrates after he took the final Indian wicket, that of Rudra Pratap Singh (not in picture), on the fourth day of the first Test at the Melbourne Cricket Ground on Saturday.

## Aussies storm to win

Cricket

AFP, Melbourne

Australia inflicted one of India's heaviest Test defeats Saturday, winning the opening match of the four-Test Border-Gavaskar Trophy series by 337 runs on the fourth day at the Melbourne Cricket Ground.

The Australians claimed their 15th consecutive Test victory and will look to equal their world record of 16 wins set from October 1999 to February 2001 in next week's second Test at the Sydney Cricket Ground.

"We played excellent cricket all the way through with the discipline we showed with the bat to grind out the runs and with the ball to stick to our plans and do things differently on this type of pitch," skipper Ponting said.

"It was a pleasing win because this wicket was probably more suited to the sub-continental style of play and we adapted well."

Once Australia dismissed key batsmen Sachin Tendulkar and VVS Laxman in the middle session, the end was inevitable.

Much depended on the two stalwarts to stick it out against

sessions in fierce heat, unravelled after tea, losing five wickets for 27, with left-arm paceman Mitchell Johnson taking 3-21 off 15 overs.

After almost dismissing

Australia on the opening day, India dropped away under the relentless pressure of Ricky Ponting's five-wicket stand with 103 runs on the fourth day at the Melbourne Cricket Ground.

"We played excellent cricket all the way through with the discipline we showed with the bat to grind out the runs and with the ball to stick to our plans and do things differently on this type of pitch," skipper Ponting said.

India set a historic 499 runs to win, fell away late in the day to go down to one of their heaviest

losses.

India, chasing an improbable

499 for victory, were bowled out for 161 late on the fourth day and lost the match by 337 runs.

Dravid struggled against the new ball on a low and slow wicket, making five and 16, while Yuvraj made a duck and five in his two appearances.

"I think it was the right decision," said Kumble, who was forced to defend the selection several times at a media conference after the match.

"You go with form and the team composition and looking at the series against Pakistan, going by form this was the best combination going into this test match."

"It's difficult when Yuvraj is

playing so well and we don't pick him, you say: 'Why not?'

"Then when we put Rahul up the order and then make way for Yuvraj, you say: 'No, you shouldn't have done that'."

"There are always ifs and

butts... but for me personally I need to look at the team dynamics and who is batting well."

"If you look at our batting order then all seven of them are batting well and the other two openers, who could have possibly taken someone else's place, weren't really getting runs."

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