

Amal bags double

SPORTS REPORTER

Amal Roy finished with double success in the Prestige Bengal Victory Day tennis competition that ended at the Ramna National Tennis Complex yesterday.

Amal beat Dipu Lal 4-6, 6-4, 7-5 to clinch the men's singles title and the pair with his Engineers Club partner Ranjan Ram to beat Niranjan Ram and Dipu Lal pair 6-2, 6-2 on way the men's doubles crown.

Ayami emerged champion in the women's singles by beating Sathi Sarker 6-3, 6-1 in the final while Mofazzel Hossain beat Omar Faruque Sunny 6-4, 6-2 to clinch the boys' singles (under-16) title.

Sheikh Hasibur Haq became champion in the boys' singles (under-13).

1st Div v'ball

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sathkira

The Mir Eshrak Ali First Division Volleyball League got underway at the local stadium yesterday.

In the opening day's encounters, Sathkira Seba Sangha defeated Young Ariance Club, Chapra Hindal Sangha beat Udit Sangha, Kukhrali Sporting Club defeated Anirban Club and Gava Kira Sangha earned full points against Junior Anirban Club.

Harbhajan

FROM PAGE 17

of play on Saturday. Television replays showed Harbhajan beckoning Symonds and the two of them having an extended conversation before Matthew Hayden and Sachin Tendulkar, who was batting at the other end, intervened. The two umpires then spoke to Harbhajan.

Following a complaint by Ricky Ponting, the umpires laid the charge.

Tendulkar was asked about the incident at the press conference following the day's play and said he thought it was not an issue. "There were a couple of lines exchanged," he said. "It keeps happening virtually every day. As far as I'm concerned (as long as) the games move on and the players don't cross their limits it's fine. It's good for the spectators too. Sometimes it's humorous and sometimes it's funny."

Asked whether the exchange was funny, Symonds, Tendulkar replied, had said: "You seem to be very friendly with our bowlers. Why don't you be friends with me now? I am a bowler as well."

Symonds has had previous run-ins with the Indian cricketers, particularly with Sreesanth. Earlier this year when Australia toured India for seven ODIs in October, Symonds had slammed India's on-field behaviour and said Harbhajan and Sreesanth had been the major instigators of on-field conflicts between the two sides. Sreesanth, while acting as 12th man during the fourth ODI in Chandigarh, reportedly taunted Symonds as he returned to the pavilion after his dismissal.

A Sachin

FROM PAGE 17

Jaffer b Lee 3
David c Hayden b Johnson 3
Laxman c Hussey b Hogg 109
Tendulkar not out 154
Ganguly c Hussey b Hogg 67
Yuvraj lbw b Lee 12
Dhoni c Gilchrist b Lee 2
Kumble c Gilchrist b Lee 2
Harbhajan c Hussey b Johnson 63
RP Singh c Gilchrist b Clark 13
Sharma c & b Lee 23
Extras: (b-4, lb-13, w-6, nb-8) 31
Total: (All out in 138.2 overs) 532
Fall of wickets: 1-8, 2-183, 3-185, 4-293, 5-321, 6-331, 7-345, 8-474, 9-501, 10-532.

Bowler O M R W
Lee 32.2 5 119 5
Johnson 37 2 148 2
Clark 25 3 80 1
Symonds 7 1 19 0
Hogg 30 2 121 2
Clarke 7 1 28 0

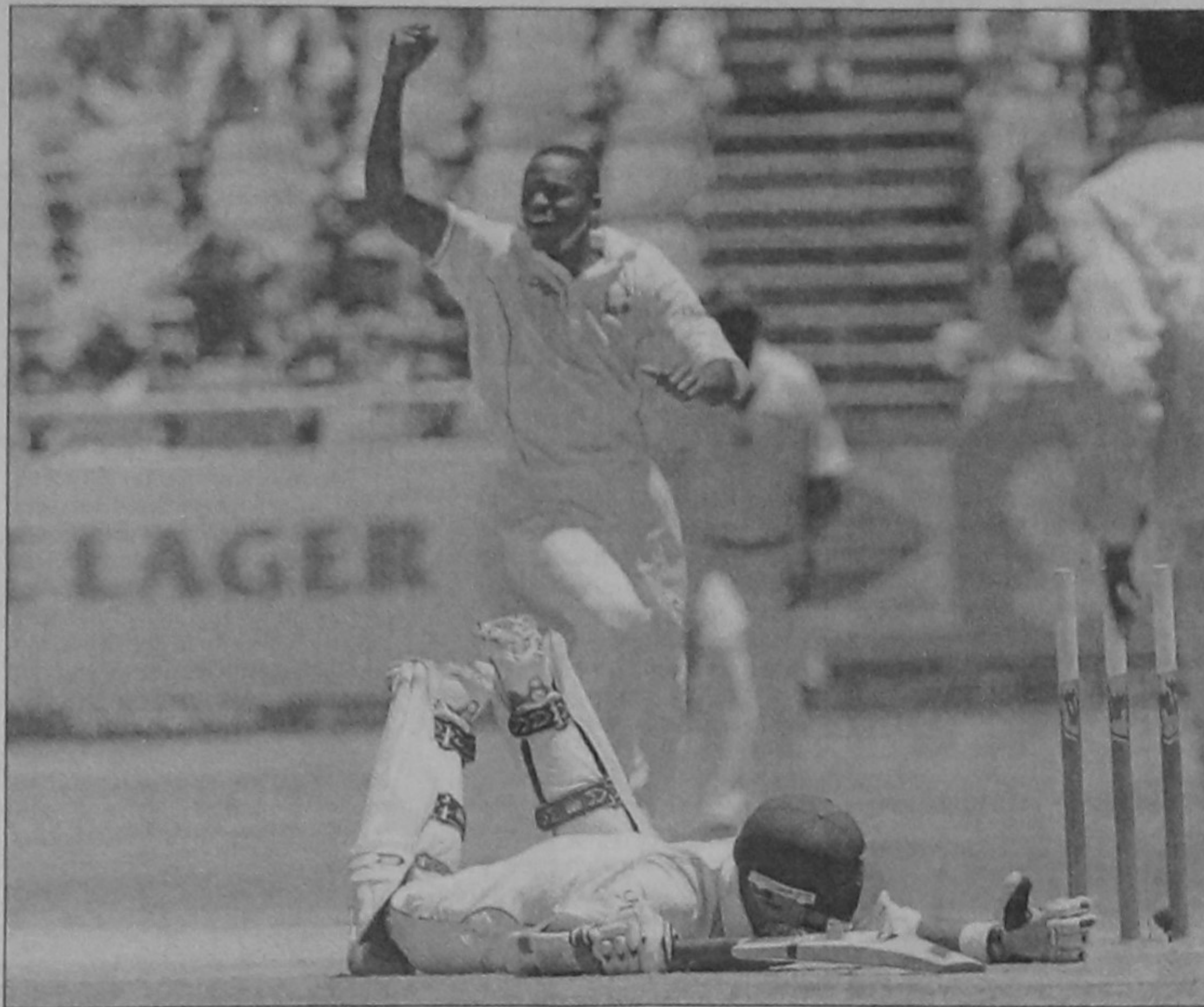
AUSTRALIA: Second innings
Jacques not out 8
Hayden not out 5
Extras: 13
Total: (For no loss in 5 overs) 13
To bat: Ponting, Hussey, Clarke, Symonds, Gilchrist, Hogg, Lee, Johnson, Clark.

Bowler O M R W
RP Singh 2 0 7 0
Sharma 1 0 4 0
Harbhajan 1 1 0 0
Kumble 1 0 2 0



Did U Know?

Judit Polgar (born July 23, 1976) is a Hungarian chess Grand Master (GM). In 1991, she achieved the GM title at the age of 15 years and 4 months. She was, at that time, the youngest person to do so.



West Indies quick Darren Powell (L) celebrates the dismissal of South Africa batsman Ashwell Prince during the third day of the second Test at Newlands in Cape Town on Friday.

'Bond has signed' ICL confirms 3-year deal

Cricket

REUTERS, Mumbai

New Zealand fast bowler Shane Bond has joined the rebel Indian Cricket League (ICL) in a move that could jeopardise his international career.

"Shane Bond has signed up," senior ICL official Ashish Kaul told Reuters on Friday. "It's a three-year contract that he has with the Indian Cricket League," the executive vice-president of ICL promoters Essel Group added.

Bond is widely regarded as New Zealand's best fast bowler after Richard Hadlee and his departure would be a huge blow to the national team.

The 32-year-old has taken 79 wickets in 17 Tests at an average of 22.39 but is unlikely to play for his

country again after New Zealand Cricket instructed selectors to consider other players over those who have joined the unofficial league.

Bond becomes the seventh New Zealand international to join the ICL, which is not sanctioned by the International Cricket Council.

All-rounders Chris Cairns, Nathan Astle, Chris Harris and Craig McMillan, batsman Hamish Marshall and bowler Daryl Tuffey took part in the recent breakaway Twenty20 league.

Bond, presently injured, is the biggest draw among current international players to have signed up for lucrative ICL, a body bankrolled by the controllers of India's largest listed media firm.

Media reports speculated that Bond's three-year contract was worth \$800,000. Kaul did not confirm the amount.

Financed by Essel Group, which controls media firm Zee Telefilms, ICL are seen to be challenging the national board's monopoly of the game in cricket-obsessed India.

After successfully organising their inaugural tournament late last year, the ICL announced a series of events in 2008.

The cash-rich Indian board meanwhile roll out their multi-million dollar Indian Premier League (IPL) in April which has nearly 50 top international players in its line-up.

The ICL, meanwhile, has recruited retired batting greats Brian Lara of West Indies and Pakistan's Inzamam-ul-Haq.

They also have on board ex-internationals from South Africa, Pakistan and Sri Lanka and England players such as Vikram Solanki, Chris Read and Paul Nixon.

Johnson's riddle

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

At one end Mitchell Johnson was struggling with his line while at the other Brett Lee's was almost perfect. Since accepting Glenn McGrath's responsibilities, Lee has not only bowled as tightly as his predecessor, but has been able to maintain the pace that ensures his penetration remains undiluted. Over the past four Tests he has been a damaging performer and an intelligent role model.

Players from the subcontinent come to Australia expecting bouncers by the over whenever they encounter a springy surface. Lee has been particularly thoughtful with his use of the short ball, employing it like a savvy wrist-spinner and his wrong'un. Having been made aware of Lee's danger, a batsman's weight drifts on to the back leg and he wonders when the next missile will be aimed at his chest or forehead. Enacted properly, the strategy disrupts both mind and footwork.

The method was illustrated best against Yuvraj Singh, who was hit on the body turning into a speedy short delivery. David, Laxman and Tendulkar were able to avoid any lasting physical pain during their innings, but Yuvraj's energy has sagged over the past week and

evasion was too complicated.

With a bruise and further uncertainty adding to his inclination to play back, Yuvraj's legs grew heavier and he was unable to deal with a follow-up full ball, which angled away and caught him lbw. It was similar to Lee's removal of Wasim Jaffer on Thursday, when the batsman could not convince himself to move forward and negate the swing from what turned into a potent yorker.

In the first over after lunch Lee welcomed Tendulkar with consecutive bouncers. Neither was meant to get him out, but they were delivered to remind him immediately of what might follow. Only the best survive such high-quality operations for sustained periods. Lee refused to let Tendulkar rest even after he reached his century.

Two edges in a row came after tea without Tendulkar's wicket. His steps have slowed in middle age, but they have been too certain for Australia over the past couple of days. Mahendra Singh Dhoni and Anil Kumble were not as fortunate and they fell to similar nicks, contributing to Lee's 5 for 119, which was completed with the caught and bowled of Ishant Sharma. In two months as the attack leader he has 27 wickets, a collection an in-form McGrath would have been pleased with, and his opening five-for of the season went with first-innings 59.

Lee has also tried to guide

Johnson during his early journey with the Test side. The pair has spoken throughout the India and Sri Lanka series, but any magic advice has not worked in this innings. Johnson has tended to push his deliveries a long way outside off stump despite determined attempts to correct his wrist position and direction.

At delivery his hand is rolling towards the off side instead of being behind the ball and the change in action is preventing in-swing to the right-handers. What were meant to be challenging deliveries provided few difficulties for the batsmen. Too many times he has either been driven through cover or left alone and he faces a busy time before the game in Perth to correct the flaw.

The problem has not stopped Ricky Ponting from giving Johnson a heavy workout and he pushed through 37 overs, the most of anyone in the match. After promising displays in his first three games, his return of 2 for 148 was not one to remember and the second innings could be critical with Shaun Tait bursting for inclusion at the WACA.

At 26, Johnson does not need to be in a hurry to master his skills. Lee waited until he neared 30 to mature into a bowler worthy of the world-class tag. He looked to McGrath for help and inspiration. Now Johnson needs to do the same thing with Lee.

'I didn't look at scoreboard'

FROM PAGE 17

was just one fielder at gully saving one otherwise all were virtually on the boundary line or half-way down. To try something stupid and get out would have been unwise.

"I thought if runs had come earlier with Harbhajan and RP Singh, the same strategy should be applied. Ishant scored some important 23-24 runs. What eventually matters is the partnership and not who takes the initiative. We had these calculations going our way."

Tendulkar's innings was greeted with such a tremendous response that it often appeared he was the home batsman. "I am very happy with the way the crowd have supported us. Australians are known for that, they enjoy good cricket, they enjoy competitive cricket and it makes the players feel it's worthwhile to have the spectators to enjoy the game in the right spirit. They know and understand the game very well. It was truly a pleasure to be out there in the middle and get runs in front of the

Australian crowd."

Was the SCG, where he now averages 326, his favourite ground? "It is one of my favourite grounds," he said. "I've enjoyed batting here and it has truly been a memorable one. Sometimes you walk on the field and it gives you good feelings. It is one of those grounds."

Barnak given a lesson

SPORTS REPORTER

Sonali Bank outclassed Barnak Samaj 13-0 goals in the Dhaka Bank Victory Day Hockey Competition at the Maulana Bhasani National Hockey Stadium yesterday.

Mamunur Rahman led the goal-feast with four goals while Zahidul Islam netted three, Russell Mahmud Jimmy two and Zahid Bin, Musa Mia, Russell Hasan and Rimon Kumar scored one goal each for the winners.

The winners dominated the first half-0.

BKSP take on Bangladesh Navy today.

Sajid, Simon in Bolly flick

BBC ONLINE, undated

England bowlers Sajid Mahmood and Simon Jones are among a group of Test players set to feature in an upcoming Bollywood movie about cricket.

"Victory" is the story of a boy who dreams of playing cricket for India and filming has already begun in Sydney.

"I don't have a big role in the movie, I play myself and bowl -- that can't be too difficult to do!" said Mahmood.

The film will also feature members of the current India side, as well as Australians Brett Lee and Mike Hussey.

New Zealanders Craig McMillan, Daryl Tuffey and Nathan Astle are also set to appear in the production, which stars Bollywood newcomer Harman Baweja and actress Amrita Rao.

The plot centres around a father who dreams his young son will rise from a small village in Rajasthan to play cricket for India.

The film is being shot to coincide with India's four-Test tour to Australia, but no official release date has been confirmed.

"I was quite surprised when approached to be involved, but it's a great opportunity to do something very different," said Lancashire seamer Mahmood, who will fly to India after filming to take part in an ECB fast bowling camp in February.

Victory is not Bollywood's first foray into the world of cricket.

Lagaan was released to rapturous reviews in 2001 and was nominated for an Oscar for best foreign language film.

And in 2003 British-made film Wondrous Oblivion told the story of a young Jewish cricket fan growing up next door to West Indian immigrants in south London in 1960.

Benaud in bronze

CRICINFO, undated

Richie Benaud became the first of ten Australian sporting greats to have sculptures of themselves unveiled at the SCG. Benaud was at the informal but intimate gathering behind the Ladies Stand and the audience included the Invincibles Arthur Morris and Neil Harvey and the former Australia captains Steve Waugh and Ian Craig.

"The first thing I want to say is that I like it," Benaud said. In the sculpture a relaxed Benaud, the bowler, is calling for a change in the field and his shirt has a couple of buttons undone in the tradition of the day.

Dressed in a blue jacket, grey pants with a pink shirt and mauve tie, Benaud was his usual effusive self, throwing out nuggets of information that have helped make him such an endearing personality. "I don't how they did it, but the positioning of the sculpture could hardly be better," he said. "I would think that if they went back to people I played with, people who knew me well, that is the spot that I used to park the car. It's a very nice gesture."

Benaud made his debut for New South Wales in 1948 and recalled the cherished moment. "I love this ground for a lot of reasons, but the main one is I started and finished my career here," he said. "I started my first-class career on New Year's Eve and Arthur Morris was my captain. It was one of those days where it rained from the start of the day till the finish and we had no play."

"We played against Queensland and I was something of a surprise choice. I'm not sure I was precisely what Arthur wanted because the pitch out there was green. It was very low-scoring game and in fact there were only 160 overs bowled."

"New South Wales were behind in the first innings and won the game, with Morris spanking 108 not out of 143 before lunch on the last day. It was a terrific game. Of those 160 overs I'd like to tell you I was a star. However, Arthur came up to me and said: 'Son, I'm sorry I couldn't get you to bowl.'"

The moment that became the first turning point of Benaud's cricketer life came in 1940 when he came to the SCG for the first time with his father, who took him by steam train and tram to watch New South Wales play South Australia. "It was at about the moment when they were about to abandon the Sheffield Shield due to the war," he said. "New South Wales were captained by Stan McCabe and South Australia captained by Don Bradman."

"Clarrie Grimmer was in the South Australian side and Bill O'Reilly in the New South Wales side. I sat with my father in the old Sheridan Stand with a little pack of sandwiches and a bottle of blue currant orange juice. I saw Grimmer's 6 for 118 and next morning I was out bowling leg breaks against the wall."

Dull draws

FROM PAGE 17

Agrani Bank took the lead through a 27th-minute striker form Tutul but Sabuj equalised for Youngmen's Club in the 51st minute.

Dipali Jubo Sangha meet Wari Club today at the same venue.

A regal knock

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

A banner at the ground summed up Australia's affection for Sachin Tendulkar. "Commit all your crimes when Sachin is batting," it read. "They will go unnoticed because even the Lord is watching." Great players have a feel for the big stage and Tendulkar couldn't have chosen a better moment to turn in such a regal performance.

Efficient and authoritative, this was a flawless innings.

He had a royal audience. Neil Harvey and Arthur Morris, two Invincibles, were here. Steve Waugh had come in, as had the prime minister. Morris couldn't stop gushing about the 'little' batsman. "The Don and me were right," he smiled. "Little men like batting on this ground." A nonagenarian on a wheelchair entered the ground at lunch with only one question on his lips, "Is he still there?" The adulation reserved for Tendulkar often make him appear like an Australian hero.

When a bunch of school boys, sitting in the Monty Noble stand, were being noisy after lunch the teacher who had accompanied them screamed, "Nobody talks when Tendulkar is on strike". Soon the boys started chanting: "Nobody talks when Sachin strikes". The heartfelt applause when he reached hundred carried on for close to two minutes. First there was a cheer for the couple, then an even bigger one for the celebration. Sydneysiders knew they were

witnessing something special; importantly they knew they may never see him again.

Here was an expert innings from a batsman in control, someone who knew what the situation demanded. Tendulkar's dazzling array of strokes make him the icon that he is but it's his consolidation skills that make him revered. Some batsmen give you a chance, Tendulkar, in this mood, gives you no hope.

It was an innings reminiscent of his 194 in Multan four years ago. Virender Sehwag had pummeled the Pakistan attack before India needed someone to build the advantage. It's ideal for Tendulkar, a master at knowing how to make use of an advantage. VVS Laxman's innings pushed Australia back but it took Tendulkar's masterclass to open up the Test. Ignition is vital but it means nothing if there's nobody to switch on cruise control.

If Laxman loves batting at Sydney, Tendulkar seems obsessed with it. In four Tests here he's rattled 148 not out, 45, 4, 241 not out, 60 not out and 154 not out. His average here is a staggering 326. Add a couple of fine one-day innings here, including a 54 not out in the 1992 World Cup match against Pakistan, and you have someone turned on by the SCG. "Sachin Cricket Ground," said a banner fittingly.

He ran hard, both for himself and his partners. He trusted the tailenders, a tactic which Brett Lee was to later term "brilliant". Bowling to a great batsman is bad enough, knowing he trusts his allies more so. He refused to farm

the strike and saw his tactic pay off with Nos. 9, 10 and 11.

Amid this run-accumulation were sparks of brilliance. Anil Kumble's wicket perked him up: two fours dripped off his bat. Lee had trapped him with the wide one in Melbourne and he chose to slash more judiciously. Rarely did he flash awkwardly and, even when it was airy, it was well over. The second fifty came up in exactly two hours, a precision Tendulkar displayed through his innings, knowing when to score and when to leave.

He hugged along with a bit of help from his friends. Sourav Ganguly conjured up some magical strokes to provide the impetus early on before Harbhajan Singh joined in the fun. "I've always believed that Harbhajan can bat," said Tendulkar before cheekily adding, "and Harbhajan has believed in that more than I do." Close friends who love to play pranks on teammates, the duo thwarted the Australian attack -- Harbhajan with unconventional shots, Tendulkar with mathematical exactitude.

Tendulkar's childhood coach loved to take him from one game to another, fitting in three or four matches in a day. When he was out in one game, he would be put in the back seat of the scooter and taken straight to another. Tendulkar has spoken about how that shaped him as a cricketer. It was fitting to see him walk into the press conference with the bat in hand. Nobody could get him out on the field and he was ready for more at the end of the day.

Anybody's game: Lee

Cricket

REUTERS, Sydney

Australia have not given up hope of equaling their world record for consecutive Test wins despite taking a pounding from India's batsmen in the second Test on Friday.

The Australians, who need just one more victory to match their record of 16 straight wins, have their work cut out after Sachin Tendulkar blasted 154 not out in India's impressive 532 to give the tourists a 69-run lead on the first innings.

The hosts wiped 13 off the deficit by stumps on day three but remain hopeful of producing something special over the weekend to keep their streak going.

"There is a chance of winning this match," Australian fast bowler Brett Lee told a news conference. "We are in a great spot right now. Both teams can win from this

situation.

"We've got through both first innings, now the mind games and tactics start -- that's the reason we all play Test cricket. The next two days promise to be two cracking days."

Lee, who finished with five wickets after being made to toil hard on a placid Sydney Cricket Ground deck, said Australia needed to make a good start on Saturday to set up a declaration before the pitch started to break up.

"The first session of day four will probably be the most important session of the match. It's going to set up the whole game," he said.

"It's going to be the tell-tale of the whole Test match. When Ricky (Ponting) thinks that we've got enough runs, if we bat well, then it's time to go out there and have a crack at them."

Tendulkar, meanwhile, said the match had all the makings of a classic.

"I don't want to take anything for granted in this game. Right now

it's evenly poised," he said.

"There's plenty of cricket left. "We need to put the ball in the right areas and it should be backed by good fielding for us to have a chance."

While Tendulkar's innings ensured India surged past Australia's first innings total of 463, the 34-year-old paid tribute to his teammates for their strong response after last week's 337-run loss in Melbourne.

Vangipurappu Laxman laid the foundations for the fightback with a brilliant hundred on Thursday while Sourav Ganguly, Rahul Dravid and tailender Harbhajan Singh all chipped in with half-centuries.

"We believe in our ability. We knew that one bad match doesn't mean we can't bounce back," Tendulkar said. "We've got faith in the team."

"It's a long tour, it's going to be a tough tour. We're prepared to be mentally tough."

Another batting debacle

FROM PAGE 17

delightful drives, played loosely at an away swinger and was caught by keeper Mushfiqur Rahim (3-58).

Mortaza bowled a fast spell, continuously pushing the 140kmph region and his perseverance paid off when Matthew Sinclair (29) was adjudged lbw by umpire Peter Parker who had refused another convincing shout a ball earlier (4-121 in 30.5 overs).

Throughout the innings opener Matthew Bell (74 not out) was a model of stability. He waited for the bad balls from the pacers and confidently saw off left-arm spinner Enamul Haque Jr. who found no turn. Bell was however lucky as early in his innings umpire Parker turned down an appeal for lbw from Shahadat although replays suggested that the ball was going to hit the leg stump.

"The pitch was a sporting one with something in it for both the batsmen and the bowlers. It was good to get a fifty on debut but I am not entirely happy because I could not convert it into a big score which I had targeted," said Tamim.

Coach Jamie Siddons felt the effort could have been so much better.

"There was nothing unusual in that wicket. We looked comfortable and then got out. I am also not at all pleased with the bowling. We weren't consistent enough and the bowlers gave away a four almost every over. We had built up pressure over three overs and Mortaza got a wicket. We had bowled in good areas in patches and that's why they are four down but it could have been a lot better for us," said Siddons.

SCOREBOARD
Scoreboard at stumps on the first day of the first Test between New Zealand and Bangladesh at University Oval in Dunedin on Friday:

BANGLADESH: Firstinnings
Iqbal c Fulton b Marti 53
Zunaed c Fleming b Martin 23
Bashar c McCullum b Martin 1
Ashraf lbw b Martin 16
Nafees b Vettori 0
Aftab b Oram 7
Rahim c Bell b Mills 22
Mortaza b Oram 2
Shahadat c McCullum b Oram 4
Sajidul c McCullum b Mills 0
Enamul not out 9
Extras: (b-1, lb-2, w-3, nb-3) 2
Total: (All out in 46.1 overs) 137

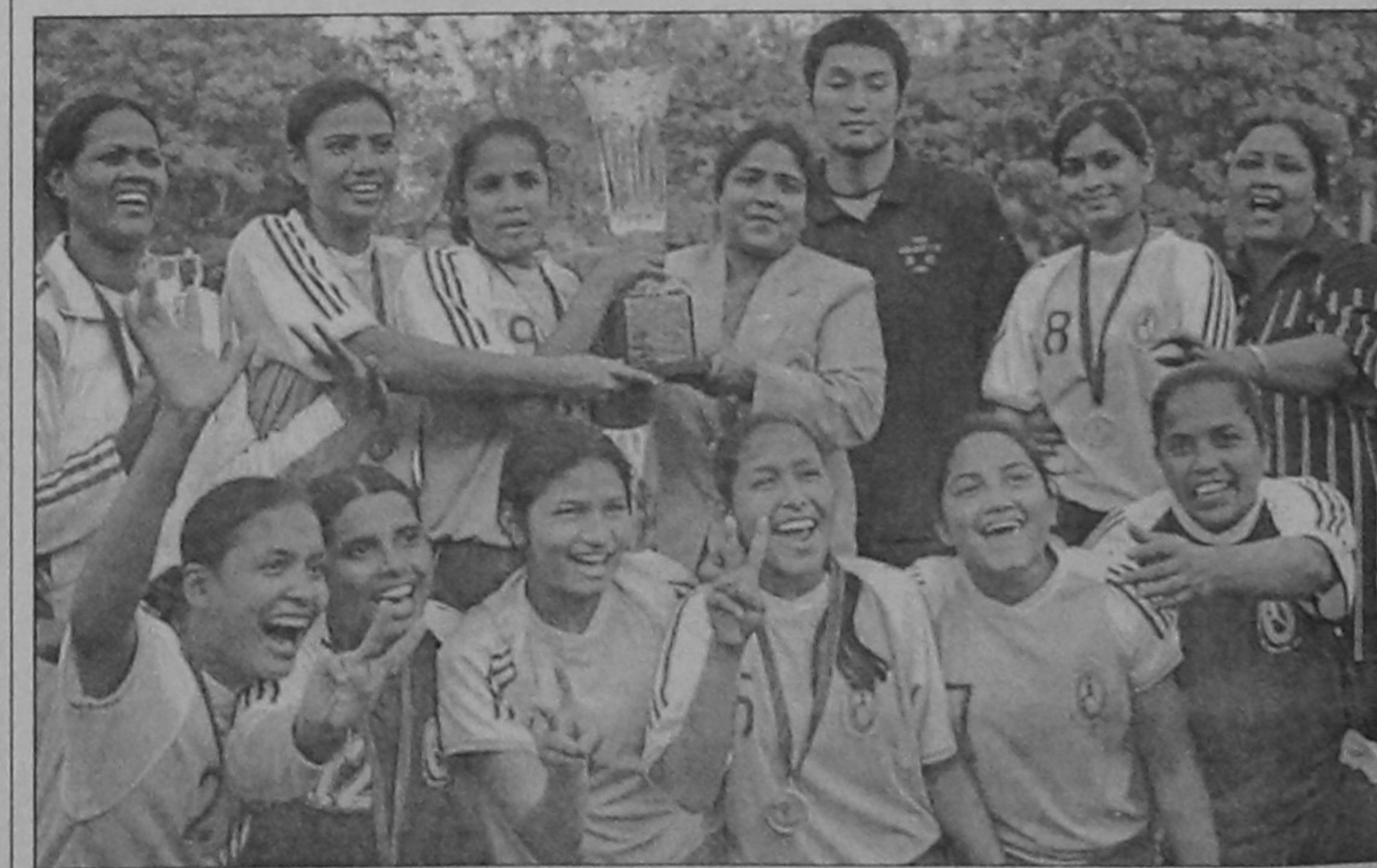
Fall of wickets: 1-5, 2-43, 3-47, 4-82, 5-98, 6-100, 7-129, 8-129, 9-133, 10-137

Bowler O M R W
Marti 13 1 64 4
Mills 7.1 1 29 2
Oram 13 4 23 3
O'Brien 7 2 10 0
Vettori 6 2 8 1

NEW ZEALAND: Firstinnings
Cumming lbw b Sajidul 1
Bell not out 74
Fulton b Shahadat 14
Fleming c Rahim b Sajidul 14
Sinclair lbw b Mortaza 29
Oram not out 17
Extras: (lb 4, w 2, nb 1) 7
Total (For 4 wks in 41 overs) 156
Fall of wickets: 1-5, 2-31, 3-58, 4-121

To bat: McCullum, Vettori, Mills, Martin, O'Brien.

Bowler O M R W
Shahadat 10 0 50 1
Sajidul 11 2 42 2
Mortaza 11 2 35 1
Enamul 8 1 20 0
Ashraf 1 0 5 0
Toss: New Zealand
Umpires: Nigel Llong (ENG), Peter Parker (AUS)
Match referee: Chris Broad (ENG)



Victorious members of the Dhaka team celebrate winning the Inter-Divisional Women's Handball Competition at the Dhanmondi Women's Complex yesterday.