

Kolkata can't forget Greg

PTI, Kolkata

The discontent against former Indian coach Greg Chappell over his bad blood with local hero Sourav Ganguly yesterday made him face a demonstration here when he was on a talent hunt.

Chappell, the director of the Cricket Star and Rajasthan Cricket Academy, here on a talent hunt launched by 'Emerging Media', the owners of the Jaipur IPL team Rajasthan Royals, ironically chose a young protégé of Ganguly's cricket academy.

Chappell faced the demonstration after emerging from a cricket coaching centre in south Kolkata, where he had gone amidst tight security.

The demonstrators, all from Ganguly's neighbourhood, carried posters 'Go back Chappell' and 'Chappell quit city' and shouted slogans.

"He conspired against Sourav. We don't want him here. Our protest is as much against him as against those who have brought him here," said one of the demonstrators.

There was, however, a good response to the talent hunt with 487 applicants from West Bengal, Orissa, Bihar, Jharkhand and Uttar Pradesh turning up to present their mettle before the legendary cricketer.

Chappell short-listed eight batsmen and 12 bowlers, as also two wicketkeepers after the first round.

'Budget not enough for Ishant'

PTI, New Delhi

Delhi Daredevils captain Virender Sehwag yesterday insisted that his is a balanced side even though they could afford the Australian tour hero Ishant Sharma because of his "high price".

Sehwag said the gangling fast bowler was among players he listed but decided not to bid for him because the franchisee would not have got other top players the team wanted.

"We wanted Ishant but the team budget forced us to decide against going for him. His bid price had soared up. We have to spend a lot more on the icon player (Sehwag himself) and had we bid for him and we would not have got some other big stars," Sehwag said.

"I would not call it (not getting Ishant) a loss but it would have been great if he was in our team. I am happy that he was taken by Kolkata on a big sum," the dashing batsman said at a press conference to announce Hero Honda as official partner and sponsor.

Kingfisher will be the associate sponsor and sports shoes major Adidas the apparel sponsor.

Delhi Daredevils also approached local player left-arm seamer Ashish Nehra who was acquired by Sachin Tendulkar's Mumbai Indians.

"We approached him but I think he was offered more money by the Mumbai team than we had offered to him," Sehwag shot down suggestions that Delhi Daredevils was comparatively a weak team than others.

"Our team combination is good, it is a balance side. We have very good batsmen, brilliant bowlers and excellent all-rounders. It is young side. Leaving a few, most of the players are young and I think we have the best fielding side of all the IPL teams," he said.

Smith climbs

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The batting list behind Tendulkar and Australia skipper Ricky Ponting.

New Zealand spinner Daniel Vettori heads the one-day rankings for bowlers while Pakistan's Shoaib Malik remains the best one-day all-rounder, said the International Cricket Council (ICC) in a news release on Saturday.

Arthur's eyes

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Policy, to play on for the country. "We have spent a lot of time with him because we believe strongly that he is a vital cog as we go forward, especially against England and Australia who are on our calendar this year. So I hope he decides to stay on with South Africa. But ultimately, it's his decision because only he knows what's best for himself."

Nel is believed to be in talks with the unofficial Indian Cricket League (ICL) after being dropped in tune with a CSA selection policy that mandates at least six players of colour in a 14-man squad.

South Africa swept the two-Test series against Bangladesh and wrapped up the one-day series 3-0 with a seven-wicket win in Mirpur on Friday. The team will leave Bangladesh on Saturday and is scheduled to fly out from Johannesburg for Chennai on March 21.



A tiny-tot attired fully in cricket gear practices a few swings before coming on to bat during the Boost Power Cup tournament being held at the Kalabagan cricket ground yesterday.

FIFA backs quotas

Football

REUTERS, Zurich

FIFA will press ahead with controversial proposals to limit the number of foreign players available to clubs, president Sepp Blatter said on Friday.

Under the so-called '6 plus 5' system, Blatter wants club sides to field a minimum of six players eligible to represent the team's home international side.

Blatter, who has the full support of his executive committee for the proposals, said the idea would strengthen the identity of clubs and promote investment in developing young players.

There are doubts, however, over whether the proposals contravene European laws forbidding restraint of trade on the grounds of nationality.

"The executive committee has unanimously stated that 6 plus 5 is indeed a positive solution but, of course, we do not want to clash directly with existing laws," Blatter told a news conference at FIFA's Zurich headquarters.

He believes an exception could be made for sport in line with an agreement in the European

Union's new reform treaty.

The Lisbon treaty, adopted by EU members in October 2007, makes explicit reference to the specific nature of sport but the precise areas to which that applies are still to be negotiated.

Blatter said he would raise the issue again at a meeting with EU representatives in April.

The FIFA president said the executive committee was less enamoured with a proposal by the English Premier League to stage an additional round of its league fixtures overseas.

"There was a very strong response from the committee... that this idea does not work," Blatter said.

Premier League officials were due to hold talks with FIFA last month but instead decided on "further consultation" after strong domestic and international criticism.

Summing up the rest of Friday's executive committee meeting, Blatter called on clubs to "abide by the Olympic spirit" and release players over 23 who want to play at the Beijing Games.

Olympic soccer teams can use up to three 'overage' players although there is no obligation for clubs to release them.

FIFA also said its ban on high altitude internationals will be maintained after the issue was discussed following a request by the South American football confederation (CONMEBOL).

FIFA's ruling states no international matches should be played above 2,750 metres "without acclimatization".

Blatter declined to comment on court claims linking a senior member of his organisation to alleged bribery payments.

FIFA executive committee member Nicolas Leoz was on Tuesday named in a prosecution file listing payments from a secret bank account set up by FIFA's former marketing partners ISL.

"Let us wait and see what justice says and then we will have a look at that," Blatter told reporters. "It is a case in progress and it would be bad for me to intervene."

Leoz, who is also president of the South American football confederation (CSF), is not a defendant in the case and the confederation has repeatedly denied any wrongdoing on his part.

The 79-year-old Paraguayan was absent from Friday's FIFA executive committee meeting for medical reasons.

Missing

FROM PAGE 17

Teammates of Rana though, have not moved on. Some, like former captain Habibul Bashar still finds it hard to believe that he is not around.

Rana would be among the few in a team who cared about teammates. Say, one youngster is missing his parents; Rana would be the first to realise his trouble and make sure of the player's well being.

He would make sure the players understood the foreign coach's instructions properly if they struggled to understand the language whenever he camped at BKSP with the national or A side.

He led a very simple life in Khulna, where the local cricketers doted on him. There are numerous players who were provided breaks in Dhaka by Rana. And he would not just fix them clubs. He would make sure they are comfortable in training and in the houses they were residing in.

He could speak in accents of Rajshahi, Sylhet and Chittagong and always had that smile in his face that made his untimely death even more painful for those who were near him.

As a match-winner, he was vital for Abahani, Khulna and whenever he played for Bangladesh, he wanted to perform. The man played 25 ODIs with a fifty and two four-wicket hauls. The fifty was during Bangladesh's win over Zimbabwe and the two bowling efforts were man-of-the-match performances against the same opponents at home to level the series which Bangladesh won 3-2.

It won't be a bad idea to name a pavilion after him and Sajjadul Hasan, the talented batsman who was with him in the motorcycle when Rana lost balance and an oncoming truck hit him. How about a memorial in that very same place or even a museum with all his cricketing belongings?

His last match read an unbeaten 89 and two wickets for Boyra Tarun Club. Another man-of-the-match performance and another win.

He passed away on this day last year, in a road crash with Sajjadul Hasan. After the Tigers conquered India in a World Cup match on the same day, it was supposed to be one of the happiest days in this country's history but the day shall forever be remembered when the cricket world lost a wonderful man.

Kamal, Mithun fashion win

SPORTS REPORTER

Kamal and Mithun ensured Lalmitia won by 19 runs win over Mariners Youngs Club in the First Division Cricket League at the Fatullah Cricket Stadium yesterday.

The right-hander slammed 10 fours in his 61-ball 53 as Lalmitia scored 220-9 in 50 overs. Humayun of Mariners scored 69 off 121 balls but his efforts were not enough as they were bowled out for 201 in 49.1 overs as Kamal took five wickets for 40.

In other matches, a valiant 98 from Azad Sporting Club's Tariquzzaman was not enough as Agrani Bank (209-7 in 50 overs) beat Azad (203-10 in 50 overs) by six runs in Savar while there were wins for Khelaghar and Young Pegasus B.

LOCAL SNIPPETS

SPORTS REPORTER

Narayanjan registered their second win in the final round of the JFA Cup Under-15 football championship beating Cox's Bazar 3-1 at Rajshahi Divisional Stadium yesterday.

Sharif, Milon and Rabbi scored one goal each for the winners in the 30th, 59th and 63rd minute respectively while Mohiuddin struck one for the beach town in the 80th minute.

In the day's other match, BKSP played out a goalless draw with Moulvibazar at the same venue.

GAIBANDHA CRICKET

Our Correspondent: Cricket Coaching Center (CCC) beat Kishalay Krira Chakra by seven runs in the Naheed Cotton First Division Cricket League at the local stadium.

CCC won the toss but only scored 171 in 44 overs. In reply, Kishalay were bowled out for 164 runs in 49 overs.

INTER-UNIVERSITY CRICKET

Rubel slammed exactly 100 to power Chittagong University (CU) to a six-run win over BUET in the inter-university cricket tournament at the Jahangirnagar University ground.

Batting first, CU scored 214-2 in 25 overs with Rubel's hundred and Rajib scoring 81. In reply, BUET went close, as they scored 208-9 in 25 overs. Rifat top-scored with 75 but three wickets each from Nayeem and Riazul ensured CU's victory.

Kaushal gets suspended sentence

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lanka spinner Kaushal Lokurachchi on Saturday was handed a four-year suspended jail sentence for driving carelessly and killing a woman pedestrian in 2003.

Judge MNA Gaffoor also ordered the cricketer to pay a fine of 500,000 rupees (4,716 US dollars) that would go to two charities.

Lokuarachchi, 25, pleaded guilty to killing the pedestrian and injuring her son in a late-night car crash in August 2003.

The judge said the player would not have to serve time as he was "suspended" the sentence for five years.

If the offence is repeated within the next five years, the player would be jailed for the four-year term.

The leg-spinner, who has played 21 one-day internationals and four Tests, was banned for four months by Sri Lanka Cricket on disciplinary grounds following the car crash.

Football hurts Anderson

CRICINFO, Wellington

England's hopes of victory in the second Test against New Zealand at Wellington have taken a serious blow after their hero of the first innings, James Anderson, twisted his left ankle while playing football on the outfield after the close of the third day's play.

Anderson was a surprising selection for this match ahead of Matthew Hoggard, but he excelled in the first innings taking 5 for 73 in 20 overs of pacy swing bowling. According to an England spokesman, he received immediate ice treatment after going over his ankle during England's warm-down session.

There are no plans to send him for a scan as yet, and he was able to put weight on his foot soon afterwards. But he was seen leaving the ground on crutches, and it remains to be seen whether he will be fit to bat when England resume tomorrow on 27/9, let alone bowl.

If Anderson is unable to lead the attack, England's chances of drawing level in the series will rest on their remaining frontline seamers, Ryan Sidebottom and Stuart Broad, as well as the spin of Monty Panesar. With an overnight advantage of 421, they would still remain huge favourites against a side that has only ever passed 400 twice in the fourth innings and lost both matches, but even before the news broke, New Zealand were confident of putting up a fight when their turn comes to bat.

Both sides confident

Cricket

REUTERS, Wellington

New Zealand remained confident they could chase down England's target of more than 420 runs to wrap up the second Test and series, pace bowler Kyle Mills said after the third day's play on Saturday.

England, who already had a lead of 144 after the first innings, batted all day on Saturday to score 277-9 -- a lead of 421 -- to set New Zealand a daunting task on the final two days.

The highest successful run chase at the Basin Reserve was the 277-3 achieved by Pakistan in December 2003, while the highest fourth-innings total was the 286 by New Zealand against Sri Lanka in December 2006.

New Zealand has twice scored more than 400 in a fourth innings, but lost both matches.

"We feel a tick over 400 is definitely gettable," Mills told reporters. "There's so much time left in the match."

"There's two full days and if we can get a couple of batsmen in and post a good score it's definitely game on because we bat a long way down."

Mills said the wicket had flattened out during the day, which augured well for the New Zealand batsmen on Sunday.

"It definitely flattened out after the first half hour," Mills added. "I walked up to the first drink's break of the day and came to a good batting wicket."

"Hopefully we can get the wicket fairly early tomorrow and hopefully there won't be many too clouds around, get that sun on the wicket and it can turn onto a flat (wicket)."

"If we get a day like today tomorrow and the (NZ) batsmen can get in and cement themselves I think it's game-on."

England, however, remained just as confident they could bowl New Zealand out again, but were more than aware of the length of time remaining in the game and the home side's aggressive batting lineup, all-rounder Paul Collingwood said.

"The thing is there are still two days left in the game, which plenty of time to bowl them out but also plenty of time for them to get the runs," said Collingwood.

"I think they will play the same way they are always playing and that's pretty positive."

"That is a good thing for us because it gives us chances."

"They're an aggressive side and if... they get four or five down, it'll be interesting to see how the McCullums and Orams come out to play it."

"It's a big total but the wicket has played really well and we have to bowl well to stop them from getting the target."

Bindra hinges on age rule

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

As the clock winds down to the International Cricket Council's (ICC) executive board meeting in Dubai, the selection of the next chief executive is developing into a potentially fractious matter with the Indian board backing the candidature of IS Bindra, its former president, who, the ICC secretariat is keen to point out, is over the specified age. In the event of Bindra failing to get the job, it is likely to go to Imtiaz Patel, a South African, who heads Supersport, the broadcast network.

Dave Richardson, the ICC general manager, and Haroon Lorgat, the former chief selector of South Africa, are said to be the other names in the fray to replace Malcolm Speed.

Bindra's candidacy is viewed with some concern given that, once Sharad Pawar, the BCCI president, takes over as ICC chairman in 2010 as scheduled, the top two positions in world cricket will soon be held by

India.

The BCCI has already faced a hurdle which it tried to sidestep. Pawar is learnt to have recently sent a letter to the ICC picking out holes in an "age rule" that could hamper the chances of their candidate. The letter was apparently sent in response to a note from the ICC to all national boards pointing to the age bar prevalent in the UAE, where it is based.

Pawar's letter asks the ICC not to attach much value to the rule, which bars those above 65 from taking up employment in the country, because it refers only to a particular category of employees. "The rule refers only to a specific category of candidates, essentially government employees, and Bindra doesn't fall in that group," a top source said. "Bindra is above that age limit but he is a veteran in these matters. He knows enough about the rules and regulations of the ICC and helped Pawar prepare the letter."

The chief executive will be selected by a four-person sub-committee comprising Ray Mali, the ICC chairman, David Morgan, the

ECB head and Mali's chosen successor, Creagh O'Connor, the Cricket Australia chairman and Pawar. Bindra has confirmed to Cricinfo that he was contacted by a head-hunting firm early this year regarding a shortlist.

"A recruitment firm called Egon Zehnder International was appointed to source potential candidates and make recommendations to the four-person sub-committee. That process is complete," an ICC spokesman told Cricinfo. "The sub-committee will make its recommendations to the ICC board and then it will discuss the matter at the meeting."

However, with Pawar slotted to take over as ICC chairman in 2010, after Morgan's two years at the helm under a compromise formula reached last year, the other national boards are concerned that an all-India show may lead to a monopoly on world-cricket administration.

Already, the WICB, which has supported India over various issues in the past, is learnt to have switched sides, leaving Bindra with the BCCI's traditional support base of Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Zimbabwe.

But Bindra told Cricinfo that he would take a call on this issue only after he was offered the job. "Even if I am offered the job, I will have to take a call on whether I need to take it up or not. I have certain issues to work out even if the job is offered, about my quitting the Punjab Cricket Association (the heads the association), my daughter's education and other personal issues," Bindra said.

If the BCCI is not able to get its way on Bindra, then Patel, a former director with the then United Cricket Board of South Africa, is likely to emerge as the candidate who will fit the bill. "The key criteria for selection: Whatever makes them the best person for the job," the ICC spokesman said.

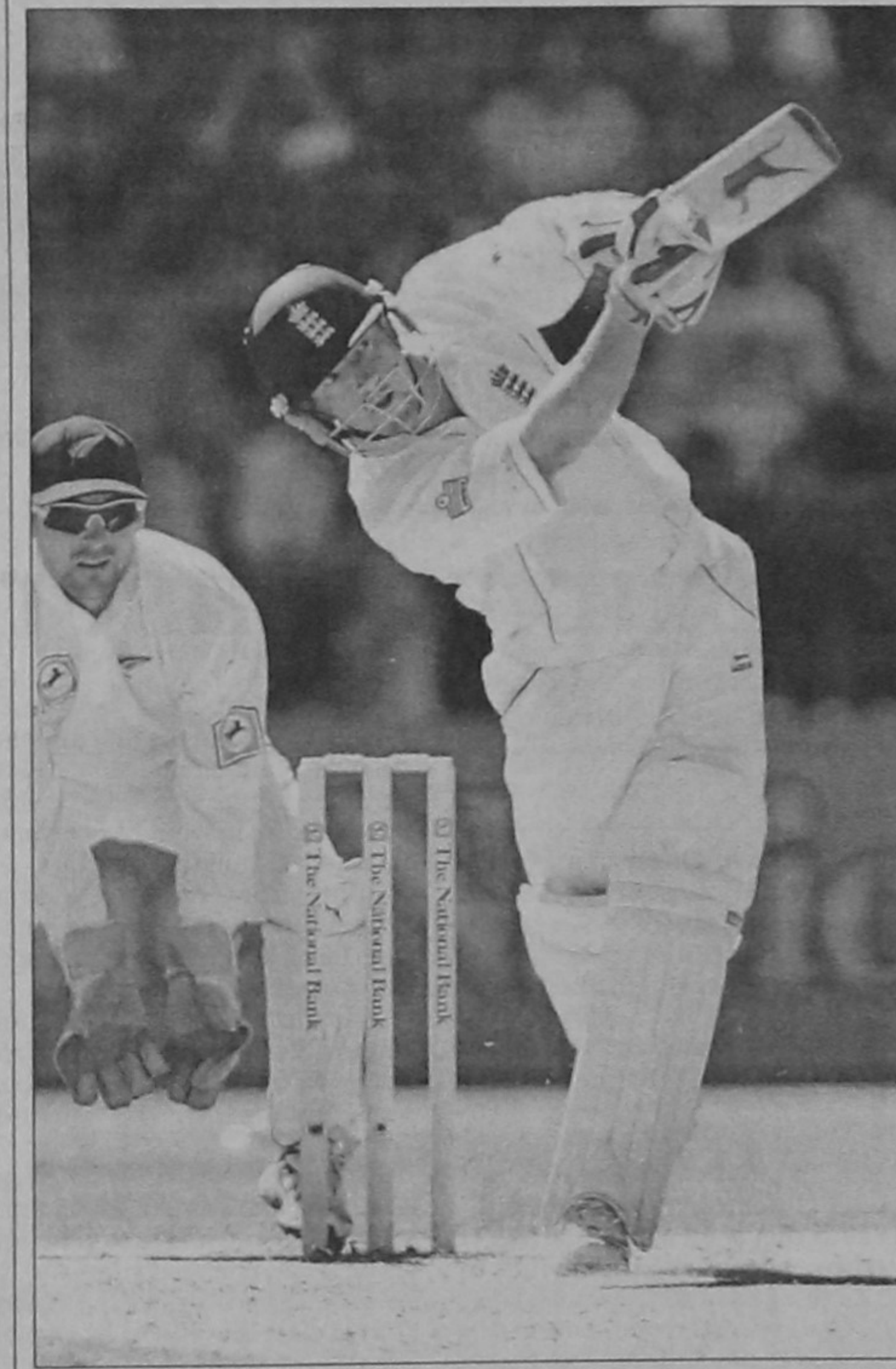
Oram fined for dissent

REUTERS, Wellington

New Zealand all-rounder Jacob Oram was fined 20 percent of his match fee after being found guilty of dissent during the second Test against England, the International Cricket Council (ICC) said on Saturday.

Oram pleaded guilty to the offence after being charged for showing "serious dissent at an umpire's decision" when he was given out lbw by umpire Steve Davis off the bowling of paceman Ryan Sidebottom.

The ICC said Oram openly showed dissent at the decision by looking at his bat then punching it.



England batsman Paul Collingwood (R) drives over mid-on as New Zealand wicketkeeper Brendon McCullum looks on during the third day of the second Test at the Basin Reserve in Wellington on Saturday.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS	DOWN
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8 Shrek is one	3 Burden with dark hair
12 Top-rated	4 Old communications machine
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14 Lakeside structure	6 Illustrations
15 Casino game	7 "Slammin' Sammy" of golf
17 Blueprint	8 Battles in razors
18 Add, in a way	9 Big name in razors
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23 Recede	20 Infamous peeper
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CRYPTOQUIP

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V C R Z E V K B ' Z C R B C W B R S E ?
Yesterday's Cryptquip: WHEN SPIDER-MAN OR THE GREEN LANTERN GOES TO A DELI, DOES HE MUNCH ON A SUPER HERO SANDWICH?

Today's Cryptquip Clue: V equals Y