

GOODBYE CAPTAIN FANTASTIC: Stephen Fleming takes a final bow after cracking 66 against England on the fourth day of the third and final Test against England at McLean Park in Napier yesterday. It was Fleming's final innings for New Zealand after he announced his retirement from international cricket.



Did U Know?

Wimbledon Championships was first televised in colour TV in 1967.



Mahela Jayawardene

(Sri Lanka cricket captain) 'The more cricket you play, you tend to learn a few things. I'm in that mode where I'm still trying to learn, trying to challenge myself to be a better cricketer.'

Babu-Kutub showdown

There will be voting in only one post for the new committee of the Bangladesh Olympic Association (BOA) in its April 3 election with acting secretary-general Kutubuddin Ahmed facing the challenge from ex-secretary-general and Bangladesh Volleyball Federation president Golam Quddus Chowdhury Babu.

Only one nomination paper was submitted before yesterday's deadline for each of the remaining 35 posts, meaning the candidates winning without any contest.

It is an irony for Kutub, the acting chief executive of BOA since the death of Zafar Imam in 2004, who has apparently formed an 'acceptable' panel for the first BOA polls in eight years.

Surprisingly, the incumbent committee's vice-president Anjan Chowdhury Pintoo and deputy secretary-general Ishiaque Ahmed were missing in the 'panel'.

It was also shocking to see Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) vice-president Sirajul Islam Bachchu's name in the list of vice-presidents especially with the election of the controversial BFF body to be held also next month.

Rasel returns

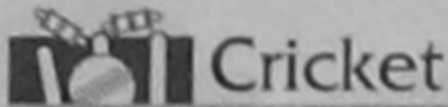
FROM PAGE 17 are yet to deliver their best because they didn't get enough opportunities in the last series to bat,' explained Rafiq.

He was very confident about the Tigers' good showing in the series. 'This team has the potential to do something if they maintain the team rules,' he hoped.

Rafiq also informed that they need two more men in the selection panel to keep standard on selection of different teams.

'We already expressed our desire to the board and hopefully within a short time we will get two more selectors in the panel,' he informed.

Fleming 'just' satisfied



CRICINFO, Napier

Had Stephen Fleming's final Test innings been scripted for a film about his life, it would have been deemed too boringly realistic to make the final cut. He entered with the stage set for heroism and sparkled briefly as New Zealand began their long and unlikely trek towards salvation. By tea he had achieved his first aim, the 54 runs required to nudge his career average past 40, but within minutes of the resumption, he was gone -- not to a sublime piece of skill from the bowler, Monty Panesar, but to yet another waxy, half-concealed flash outside off-stump.

That's been the story of his career for 14 eventful, eye-pleasing, but ultimately under-filling years. 'It was short and wide, and I was trying to run it down to point,' said Fleming, as he reflected on the delivery that ended his 189-innings, 111-Test career. 'But it was the quicker one, and it seemed to skid through, out of the rough, and hit the bottom edge of the bat. Once again, it wasn't flamboyant, it was just another mistake that I'd have liked to get away with. But not this time.'

And so he trooped off the field, applauded all the way to the boundary's edge by the England team who had broken off their celebrations to join his ovation. At Michael Vaughan's instigation, the players had also got together a guard of honour to welcome him to the crease, a tribute that Fleming described as 'humbling', even if -- as a fellow tactician -- he recognised the underlying ploy in Vaughan's actions.

'I took three or four, maybe half-a-dozen, balls to get into my innings, which was probably very smart from Michael,' said Fleming. 'I regard him as a very good captain and a nice guy, and the same goes for the English side, so it was humbling. I tried to think about everything that would go on, but it's hard to keep a lid on the emotions when you walk through a thing like that.'

Ever the professional, Fleming kept his feelings in check for 103 deliveries, right up until the

moment a puff of the cheeks and a guilty glance at the umpire betrayed the error that sent him on his way. 'I walked off frustrated, which has happened about 50 or 60 times in my career,' he said. 'I did have a wry smile at myself, thinking that was a fitting way to go. If I'd scored a hundred it would have been an anomaly. Instead it was another fifty, and there we go.'

Fleming's pregnant wife, Kelly, was among those who stood to applaud him, as Fleming at first appeared lost in his own thoughts, then belatedly lifted his head, removed his helmet and saluted all corners of the ground. 'I had a lot of things to cram into 55 metres, and it seemed to happen pretty fast,' he said. 'Those first 30 paces, I was just annoyed to be walking off with another start to my name. Then it was about savouring who was here, and what it was about, and enjoying the ovation. It was all just mixed emotions, which is what I'll have for the next two or three weeks, maybe longer.'

Fleming's international retirement has been a long drawn-out process, which began when he stepped down from one-day cricket in Jamaica last April, following New Zealand's defeat in the World Cup semi-final. It continued through to Auckland earlier on this tour, when he announced that the current Test series against England would be his last, and finally culminated in today's anticlimactic departure.

It's a fairly open secret that this is not how he would have envisaged his final days in the game -- he had designs on a final tour of England before handing the Test captaincy over to Daniel Vettori, but events overtook him and now, at the age of 35, he's walking away for good. 'The selectors seem to have their ideas of what they want,' he said darkly, when asked who he believed could fill his shoes as a No. 3 batsman. 'My ideas are a lot different to the selectors.'

'I loved the captaincy and everything that went along with it,' he said. 'The pressure, the emotions, the ability to control a game and a group of men. That's something I do miss and have missed, so if the opportunity with other sides, I'll look forward to it.' His next stop

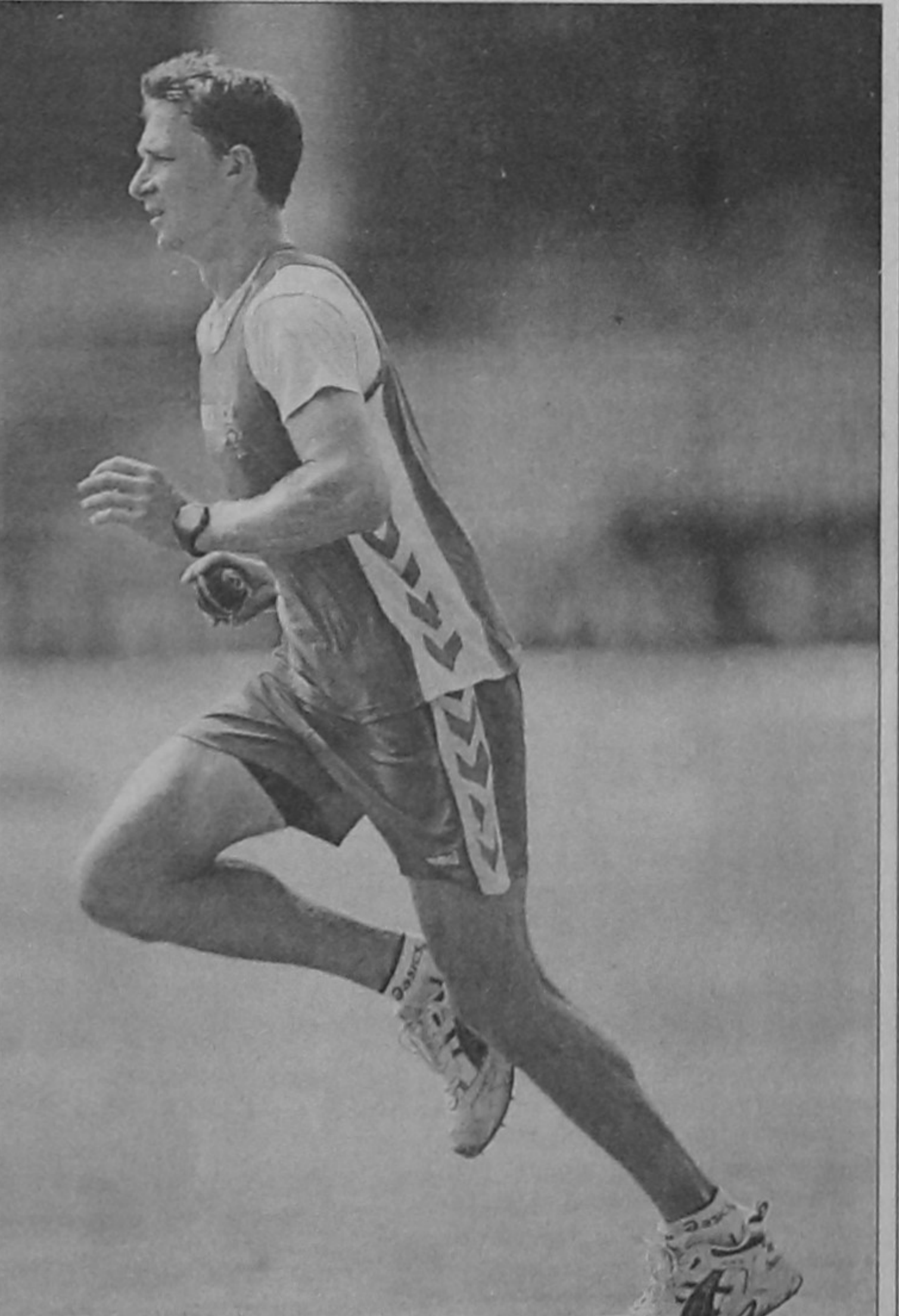
is the Indian Premier League, while Nottinghamshire and Wellington also beckon. His tactical nous, not his runs, are what he will be remembered for, and in that regard, he's not quite finished yet.

Regardless of the unspoken grievances, Fleming was asked if he would leave the game satisfied with his contribution. 'Only just,' was his disarmingly honest answer. 'I am satisfied with 40 on the chest. It sets you apart, in terms of New Zealand batters anyway, but as a batsman I'll always feel I under-achieved because I couldn't convert my starts, and I'll never know why. Sometimes I was the master of my own failings, other times it just wasn't meant to be.'

'Even if I'd converted a quarter or a half (of my fifties) I'm up into the 20-25 centuries category which, as we know, is pretty good going,' he said. 'I'll always rue that fact and wonder why, but I guess there are bigger things out there so it won't last too long. When I take time to reflect, I'll be satisfied to have 4 in front of my average, but it would have been nice to chalk up ten hundreds, and have a crack at saving this game.'

At 222 for 5 overnight, New Zealand are not completely beaten yet, but Fleming's role in the match is finished, and he's seen too much in his 14-year career to start believing in miracles at this late stage. 'We've got some batting to come but we've got our backs against the wall,' he said. 'But that's the way it goes. In the first innings we were going pretty comfortably ... and look at my career, things go comfortably until the mistake, and then we're in trouble.'

'Unfortunately four wickets in a session is trouble,' he said. 'If we'd lost one or two, we'd be going into a tight final day, but as it is, it's going to take some pretty strong resistance in the morning, and then we'll see how we go in the afternoon. The belief would be stronger if we hadn't lost those wickets but unfortunately the tendency of this side is to lose five or six wickets, not one or two. We'll make England work damn hard, but we only did that in patches today.' The same, to his eternal chagrin, will also be said of his batsmanship.



PICTURE PERFECT: South African speedster Dale Steyn runs up to bowl during a net session at the MA Chidambaram Stadium in Chennai yesterday.

Salma again

FROM PAGE 17 producing 89 runs. But once the pair was separated in the 25th over, the innings fell apart. They were eventually bowled out for 140 with two overs yet to be bowled.

Neisha Pratt scored 35 off 49 balls while four of their batswomen in the middle got out for duck. After her batting heroics, Salma took two wickets for 8 runs in her 9-over spell to win the player-of-the-match award for the second successive game.

The captain however didn't hesitate to express her disappointment for missing a century. 'I must have been there for a couple of overs more to get those runs,' she said after the match.

The third game of the four-match series will be held at the same venue tomorrow.

SCORES IN BRIEF

BANGLADESH: 249 for 5 in 50 overs (Sathira Zakir 17, Suktara 2, Ayesha Akter 11, Panna Ghosh not out 80, Salma Khatun 86; Connie Wong 2-31, Neisha Pratt 1-23, Godiva Li 1-57)

HONG KONG: 140 all out in 48.0 overs (Connie Wong 26, Kennu Gill 62, Neisha Pratt 35; Salma Khatun 2-8, Romana Ahmed 3-30, Tithy Rani Sarker 2-30, Sathira Zakir 3-33)

Result: Bangladesh won by 109 runs. Player-of-the-match: Salma Khatun (Bangladesh).

England near series win



AFP, Napier

Monty Panesar took England to the brink of a series victory as New Zealand slumped to 222 for five, 330 runs in arrears at stumps on the fourth day of the third cricket Test here Tuesday.

With New Zealand set a record target of 553 to win, Stephen Fleming and Matthew Bell were providing stout resistance for the second wicket before Panesar removed both batsmen in the space of 12 deliveries.

Stuart Broad then carved through the middle order as New Zealand lost four wickets for 25 runs in the final session.

Ross Taylor was not out 34 and Brendon McCullum on 24 at stumps with Daniel Vettori the only recognised batsman left going into the final day.

Fleming and Bell both posted half centuries as they battled to save the Test for New Zealand with a 99-run stand for the second wicket.

But with the third ball after tea Panesar made the breakthrough, dismissing Bell for 69 when he gifted a straight forward catch to Broad at deep backwards square.

Two overs later Fleming's acclaimed 111-Test career ended on 66 when he edged the spinner to wicketkeeper Tim Ambrose.

Fleming achieved a personal milestone when he reached 54, raising his career average to 40, the benchmark for a recognised batsman.

But he had said before the match it was more important for him in his final Test to produce a match-winning innings which would have meant a much longer stay at the crease if New Zealand were to reach their formidable target.

After Panesar removed Jamie How early in the New Zealand innings, Fleming and Bell moved the innings along with ease, showing the pitch was ripe for batting despite the high wicket count on the first three days.

Bell, batting for survival in the New Zealand squad after a disappointing series so far, brought up his fifth career 50 driving Ryan Sidebottom through cover for four.

Fleming reached his 46th half-century sweeping Panesar through midwicket.

When New Zealand went to tea at 146 for one their target was distant but still achievable.

But the momentum changed three balls after the resumption with the removal of Bell and Flemingsoon after.

Mathew Sinclair reached six before he was caught by Ambrose fending off a rising Broad delivery, and Grant Elliott was on four when he prodded Broad to Ian Bell at shortleg.

Taylor and McCullum have put on 50 for the sixth wicket.

Taylor moving cautiously to 34 off 75 balls while the more flamboyant McCullum was on 24 from 38 deliveries, and was dropped by Kevin Pietersen in the gully off the first ball of the final over of the day.

England resumed their second innings on the fourth morning at

416 for five and with Andrew Strauss targeting a double century. But he only lasted 11 balls before being caught at mid-off by Bell off the bowling of Jeetan Patel for 177, ending a marathon eight-hour innings in which he faced 343 balls and hit 25 fours.

Fellow overnight batsman Ambrose lasted three further overs before he was caught and bowled by Vettori for 28 and when the innings ended Broad was not out 31 with Ryan Sidebottom on 12.

Vettori, the most successful of the New Zealand bowlers, produced figures of four for 158 off 45 overs, while Patel took two for 104 from 30.5.

It's the second time in the series that England have set New Zealand a world record fourth innings target after being asked to chase 438 in the second Test in Wellington and falling 126 runs short.

New Zealand won the first Test in Hamilton by 189 runs.

The highest successful run chase by a New Zealand team was 324 for five against Pakistan 14 years ago.

The record winning fourth-innings total is 418 by the West Indies when they beat Australia in 2003.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at close of the fourth day of the third and final Test between New Zealand and England at McLean Park on Tuesday:

ENGLAND: First innings 253 (Pietersen 129, Broad 42; Southee 5-55, Patel 2-37, Martin 2-74) NEW ZEALAND: First innings 168 (Fleming 59; Sidebottom 7-47,

Broad 3-54)

ENGLAND: Second innings (over-

night 416 for 5) Vaughan c McCullum b Patel 37; Ambrose c McCullum b Martin 4; Strauss c Bell b Patel 177; Pietersen c Taylor b Vettori 34; Bell c Sinclair b Vettori 110; Collingwood c b Vettori 22; Ambrose c b Vettori 31; Broad not out 31; Sidebottom not out 12; Extras: (lb-3, w-1, nb-5) 9; Total: (For 7 wks) 9

ded in 131.5 overs) 467 Did not bat: Panesar, Anderson. Fall of wickets: 1-5, 2-77, 3-140, 4-327, 5-361, 6-424, 7-425.

Table with columns: Bowler, O, M, R, W. Rows: Martin (18, 2, 60, 1), Southee (24, 5, 84, 0), Elliott (14, 1, 58, 0), Patel (30.5, 4, 104, 2), Vettori (45, 6, 158, 4)

NEW ZEALAND: Second innings

Howlbw b Panesar 11; Bell c Broad b Panesar 69; Fleming c Ambrose b Panesar 66; Sinclair c Ambrose b Broad 6; Taylor not out 34; Elliott c Bell b Broad 4; McCullum not out 24; Extras: (lb-4, w-3, nb-1) 8; Total: (For 5 wks in 82 overs) 222. To bat: Vettori, Martin, Southee, Patel. Fall of wickets: 1-48, 2-147, 3-156, 4-160, 5-172.

Table with columns: Bowler, O, M, R, W. Rows: Sidebottom (14, 3, 41, 0), Anderson (10, 2, 54, 0), Broad (23, 9, 40, 2), Panesar (31, 14, 49, 3), Collingwood (2, 0, 20, 0), Pietersen (2, 0, 14, 0)

LOCAL SNIPPETS

SPORTS REPORTER

BDR became champions of the KFC Pizza Hut Independence Day volleyball competition after they beat Bangladesh Navy 17-25, 27-25, 25-23, 18-25, 16-14 in the final at the Volleyball Stadium yesterday.

Director of Immigration and Passport Directorate Mohammad Mahfuzur Rahman Siddiqui witnessed the final match and distributed the prizes.

Bangladesh Volleyball Federation president Golam Quddus Chowdhury and general secretary Anisur Rahman were also present.

BEACH KABADDI The first-ever beach kabaddi tournament begins at the Cox's Bazar sea beach on Saturday.

Bangladesh Kabaddi Federation (BKF) organized the meet with the intention of forming a national beach kabaddi team to participate in the Asian Beach Games to be held in Bali, Indonesia.

A total of six teams -- split into two groups -- will compete in the women's group while five teams will contest in the men's group on straight league basis matches and the highest point holder will be declared champions.

General Secretary of BKF Nazrul Islam disclosed the details of the tournament at a press conference at the NSC conference room yesterday.

Men's Section BDR, Police, Navy, Fire Service and Jail Directorate.

Women's Section Group A: Jatrabari, Jurain Janata and Azad Sporting. Group B: Ansar, Matuail and Cox's Bazar.

SCHOOL HANDBALL Holders Narinda Government High School completed their second consecutive victory in the boys' section of the 17th Bata School Handball tournament at the Dhanmondi Women's Sports Complex yesterday.

They beat Radian School 17-9 while there were wins for Willes Little Flower, Banani Bidyanketan, Sunnydale, BIS, Play Pen, Basha Shaheed Ansar and Scholastica in the boys' competition.

In the girls' section, Maple Leaf, Moghbazar Ispahani, Viqarunnissa Noon, Banani Bidyanketan, Sunnydale and Scholastica won their respective matches.

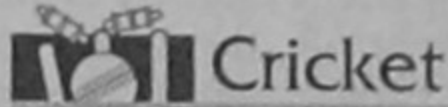
Focus back

FROM PAGE 17 with Virender Sehwag and Jaffer at the top and Rahul Dravid, Sachin Tendulkar, Sourav Ganguly and VVS Laxman in the middle. India are likely to field two spinners in Anil Kumble and Harbhajan Singh, which means there would be no place for Irfan Pathan unless the management decides to play him as a new-ball bowler instead of either Rudra Pratap Singh or Shanthakumaran Sreesanth, or asks him to open instead of Jaffer. Both scenarios are equally unlikely.

TEAMS

INDIA (probable): Virender Sehwag, Wasim Jaffer, Rahul Dravid, Sachin Tendulkar, Sourav Ganguly, VVS Laxman, Mahendra Singh Dhoni, Anil Kumble (captain), Harbhajan Singh, Rudra Pratap Singh, Shanthakumaran Sreesanth. SOUTH AFRICA (probable): Neil McKenzie, Graeme Smith (captain), Hashim Amla, Jacques Kallis, Ashwell Prince, AB de Villiers, Mark Boucher, Morne Morkel, Paul Harris, Dale Steyn, Makhaya Ntini. Umpires: Asad Rauf and Tony Hill.

Lanka keep dominating



AFP, Providence

Sri Lanka seized control of the opening Test against West Indies on Monday although their hosts need eight more runs to avoid the follow-on.

West Indies, replying to Sri Lanka's first innings total of 476 for nine declared, reached 269 for nine when stumps were drawn on a compelling third day's play.

Sri Lanka's bowlers toiled all day on the easy-paced Guyana National Stadium pitch, but Ramnaresh Sarwan with a top score of 80 and the West Indies lower-order thwarted their plans to enforce the follow-on.

Chaminda Vaas, fellow left-arm fast-medium bowler Thilan Thushara, and off-spin legend Muttiah Muralidaran shared eight wickets between to bolster Sri Lanka's hold on the Test.

Vaas has captured three wickets for 45 runs from 22 overs, Muralidaran three for 104 from 38 overs, and Thushara two for 59 from 20 overs.

But Sri Lanka found it difficult to dislodge the second half of the West Indies batting, after the home team subsided to 109 for five in the first over after lunch.

The Sri Lankans bowled with discipline, but Sarwan, batting with aplomb, added a valuable 53 for the sixth wicket with left-hander Ryan Hinds.

Sri Lanka breathed much easier, when Sarwan, whose 4-1/2 hour stay at the crease resulted in four boundaries from 199 balls, was caught behind off Vaas as West Indies reached 186 for six at tea.

After the break, the energised Sri Lankans sought to finish the demolition job, but Hinds scored 37, Denesh Ramdin made 38, Test newcomer Suleiman Benn got 28, and Jerome Taylor compiled 24 not out before the close to dash their opponents' hopes.

Things had progressed much

smoother for Sri Lanka earlier, after West Indies continued from their bedtime total of 29 for one.

Sri Lanka captured three wickets -- including the prized scalp of Shivanine Chandernaul -- before lunch to fortify their hold on the match, and leave West Indies wobbling on 107 for four.

Muralidaran removed Chandernaul in the last 15 minutes before lunch to deliver a significant blow to the West Indies' effort, after Thushara removed left-handed opener Devon Smith and the silky Marlon Samuels in the first hour of the morning.

Thushara struck in the fourth over of the day, when a flat-footed Smith drove lazily at a delivery outside the off-stump and was caught behind for 14.

Sri Lanka increased the pressure, when Samuels ill-advisedly chased a wide delivery from Thushara and was caught behind for five to leave West Indies 58 for three.

The Sri Lankans were then put on the defensive, when Chandernaul joined Sarwan and they proceeded to conduct a repair operation.

Sri Lanka saw Sarwan reach his 50, when he turned his 99th ball from Muralidaran between the forward short leg and leg gully fielders to the fine leg region for a deuce.

Sri Lanka were just beginning to get nervous, when Muralidaran had Chandernaul caught at short mid-off for 23, and they could have applied further pressure just prior to the interval, when their captain Mahela Jayawardene failed to grasp a sharp chance at leg gully from Dwayne Bravo -- on one -- off Muralidaran.

Sri Lanka continued to make headway after the interval, and had immediate success, when Dwayne Bravo was adjudged lbw for eight playing back and across to a well-pitched off-break.

For the next 1-1/2 hours, Sri Lanka toiled with little reward, as Hinds and Sarwan batted doggedly

to defy their opponents, and set an example which the lower-order followed.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at close on the third day of the first Test between West Indies and Sri Lanka at the Guyana National Stadium on Monday.

SRI LANKA: First innings 476 for eight declared (Jayawardene 136, Warnapura 120)

WEST INDIES: First innings (over-

night 29 for 1) Gayle lbw b Vaas 0; D Smith c P Jayawardene b Thushara 14; Sarwan c P Jayawardene b Vaas 80; Samuels c P Jayawardene b Thushara 5; Chandernaul c Warnapura b Muralidaran 23; Bravo lbw b Muralidaran 8; Hinds c P Jayawardene b Muralidaran 37; Ramdin c Dilshan b Vaas 38; Benn run out (Sanghan) 28; Taylor not out 22; Powell not out 6; Extras: (lb-4, nb-4) 8; Total: (For 9 wks in 106 overs) 269. Fall of wickets: 1-4, 2-46, 3-58, 4-99, 5-109, 6-162, 7-193, 8-236, 9-252.

Table with columns: Bowler, O, M, R, W. Rows: Vaas (22, 7, 45, 3), Thushara (20, 3, 59, 2), Dilshan (1, 0, 2, 0), Muralidaran (38, 6, 104, 3), Herath (24, 6, 54, 0)

Mass resignation

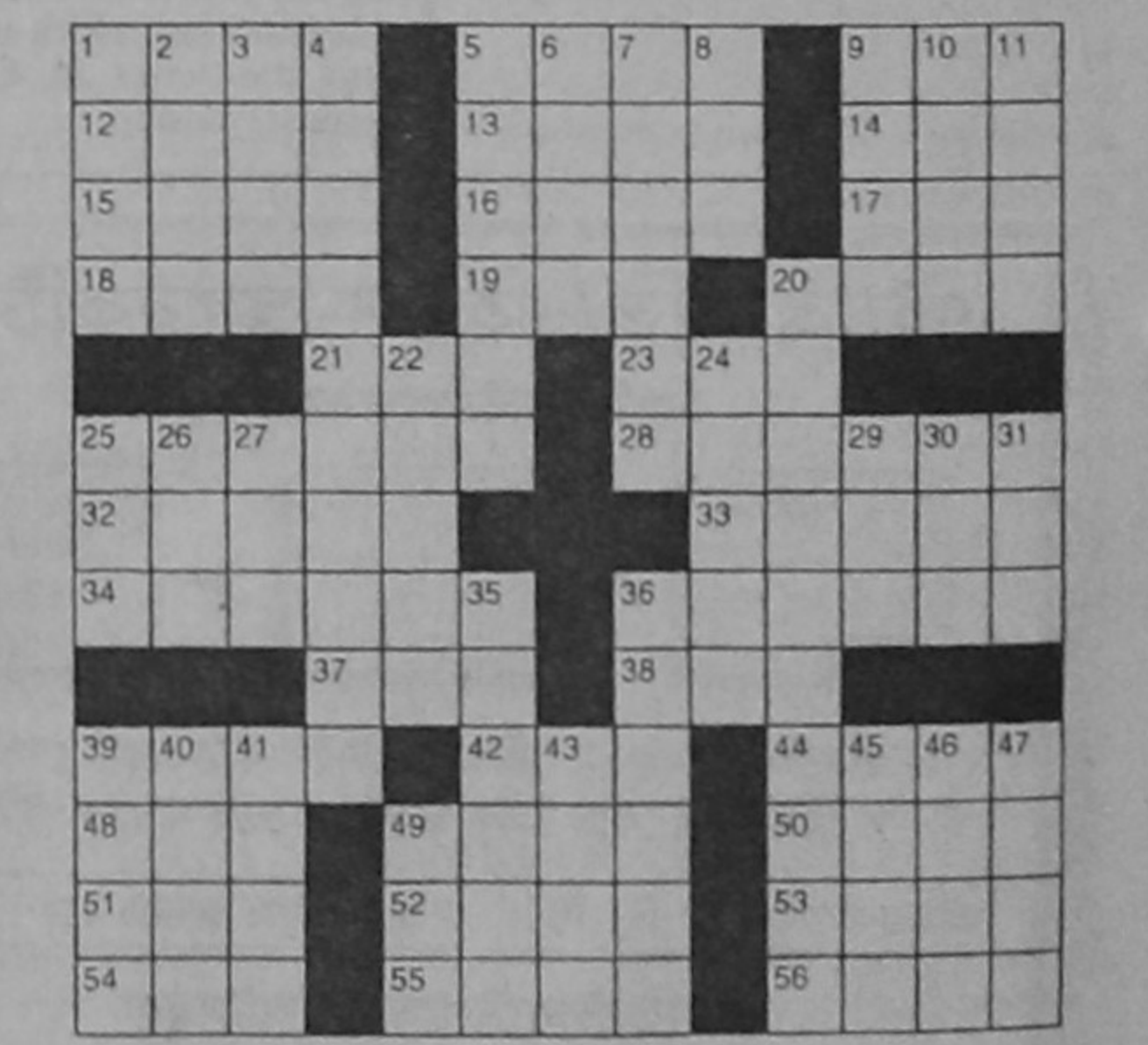
FROM PAGE 17 Mariner Youngs Club, another force in local hockey, also remained silent although they had said during setting up the pool quota that they would take six pool players.

'We are facing an economic crisis. Our sources of income have been stopped. We can't pay the players because lack of fund,' said Mariners official and federation joint secretary Alaagir Kabir.

With other teams completing the formalities on the final day, Mohammedan signed a dozen players from BKSP including four-Pintu, Rana, Kiron and Tapash -- of the national pool. They had previously signed national defender Issa Mia and Asif-e-Noor from Abahani.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS 35 Investigated 55 'The Yeating' subject 20 South Carolina Island 12 Yucky semiliquid 37 Commotion 5 Info 9 Play-ground 42 Exploit 2 Biographer's fiber 44 Cordage 12 Old Italian 48 Once around 13 Tennis 49 Weapons venue 50 Falco 14 Wish or undone 51 'Rocks' 15 Some-where 52 High-lander 16 Shaving-cream 53 City of India 17 Ode 54 Common-est 18 Sandwich shop 55 Lily variety 19 Kitten's call 20 Result of friction 21 The girl 22 Parisian pal 25 Under these circumstances 28 Cowards 32 Recluse 33 Expialoo 34 Bobcats



CRYPTOQUIP UL IKULGNG CGNYSRCSLYN. WF HFR YKULV PFNY PSXUIUFRN, CGIVXGNN YHOGN JFRXW FCWGC JSLYFL NFR? Yesterday's Cryptoquip: STANDING IN SUCH A DIZZYING ARRAY OF CORNFIELDS, I FEEL AS THOUGH I'M LOST IN A MAIZE. Today's Cryptoquip Clue: H equals Y