

**Bopara makes history**

**CRICINFO, undated**  
Young English talent overcame imported South Africans as Ravi Bopara etched his name in the record books at Grace Road, with a breathtaking 201 off 138 balls, to guide Essex into the Friends Provident semifinals. Bopara's stunning innings lifted Essex to a mammoth 350, which proved well out of reach for Leicestershire.

It was the highest score by an Essex batsman in one-day cricket, beating Graham Gooch's 198 against Sussex in 1982, which came in a 55-over game, and only the eighth double century in List A cricket. He added 150 with James Foster after the top order had been trouble at 37 for 3 against the new ball.

This innings came in front of Geoff Miller, the national selector, and Bopara has done everything the England hierarchy have asked of him since a disappointing winter where he was dropped from the Test and one-day teams. He is back in the one-day squad for the series against New Zealand, and his form means he must be next in line should the selectors decide changes are needed to the Test team.

Bopara was in charge throughout his innings, reaching his double century with a six over long-on, his tenth, off the penultimate ball of the innings. The breakdown of his innings shows how he pressed the accelerator in dramatic style during the closing stages.

His first century took 85 balls, remarkable in itself given Essex were tottering when he came in, but his second arrived off a blistering 52 balls. His final fifty was even more destructive, taking just 16 deliveries as Leicestershire's attack was sent to the cleaners.

Leicestershire found themselves in similar trouble to Essex at 53 for 3, following two early wickets for Alex Tudor, but no one was able to come near matching the heroics of Bopara. Matthew Boyce and Paul Nixon added 104 to keep their heads just above water until David Masters, against his former club, had Boyce caught behind off a top edge.

**Kamal goes**

**FROM PAGE 17**  
Hockey Stadium by his fans who gave him a flowery farewell.

"After playing 20 years, it is great for a player to retire from the field," said a tearful Kamal, who began his career at second division side Combined Sporting in 1988.

"I thank all my friends, colleagues, coaches and fans for whose support I have come this far." Kamal and Sadeq, who has migrated to the USA, made a deadly attacking pair although the national duo failed to produce any league title for Usha in a long run.

Kamal, after joining Usha in 1991, left the club ten years later to join Mohammedan for two seasons when he enjoyed his first league trophy. He played one more year for Mariners before returning to be a part of Usha's hat-trick campaign.

"This is a memorable moment for me to go out as a champion. I want to be involved with the game and I am planning to continue help the Fazul Haque hockey academy, which nurtures young players," informed Kamal, who has more than 200 goals in local competitions and 56 international goals.

**Last laugh**

**FROM PAGE 17**  
Mohammedan in a 'fixed match' I was sure we would win."

Jahir's allegations were strongly denied by his counterpart Mahbub Harun. "There had never been any fixed match between Abahani and Mohammedan. If anyone can prove that our officials or players tried to fix that match, I will leave the hockey arena," said Abahani coach Harun challenging Jahir's claims.

"The two misses in the first half proved vital. Also, if Rana could score that goal, it would have been 3-3 with nearly 7-8 minutes remaining," said the former national captain.

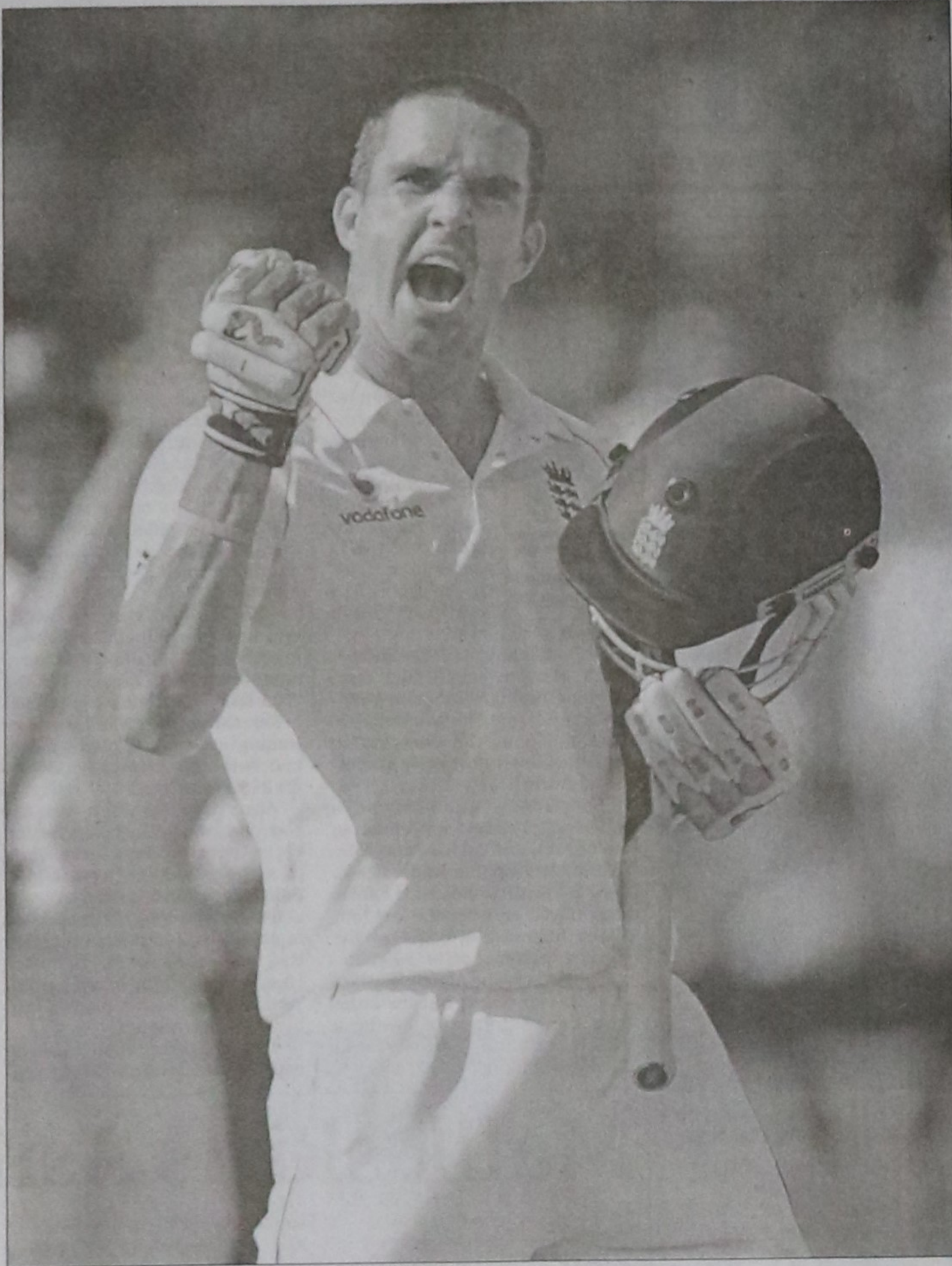
"Our defence was really at shambles and we conceded at least two goals due to their mistakes. I think the local players relied too much on Kashif."

"Kashif's arrival failed to inspire the others and it were the local players who made the difference. While ours flopped, Usha's local collection played a tremendous game," admitted Harun adding that Musa Mia, as marker of rival playmaker Akhter Ali, lost the battle.



**Did U Know?**

Modern badminton began as 'poona' in India. In the 1860s it was adopted by British army officers stationed in India.



England batsman Kevin Pietersen punches the air in delight after reaching his century against New Zealand on the first day of the third and final Test at Trent Bridge in Nottingham on Thursday.

**Asif situation dubious**

**PCB calls it '50-50'**

**CRICINFO, undated**

**PTI, Dubai**

Confusion reigns supreme in absence of any official clarification on Mohammad Asif's detention and local media yesterday quoted the chief prosecutor as saying that charges have not yet been framed against the detained Pakistani pacer.

Chief Prosecutor Mohammad Ali Rustom told local newspaper Gulf News that forensic examinations have confirmed that the substance recovered from the Pakistani pacer at the Dubai airport was opium.

According to Rustom, charges are yet to be framed against Asif, who remains at the Dubai Airport detention centre since he arrived here on transit from India on Sunday.

"Dubai police's forensic laboratory results have confirmed that the contraband substance which was discovered in Asif's wallet is

opium," Rustom was quoted as saying by the daily. "The suspect is still being detained at the airport and is being questioned by the public prosecution facing charges of smuggling and possessing drugs," he said.

Media reports in Pakistan had yesterday claimed that the beleaguered pacer had been charged for alleged possession of contraband drugs. Later, the Pakistan Cricket Board also dismissed such reports as "untrue".

Rustom said charges might be framed against the cricketer once the investigation wraps up on Sunday. Only then it would be decided whether to refer the case to the Dubai Court of First Instance or deport the cricketer, he said.

Rustom said after the finding of the laboratory analysis reached the authorities, they asked Asif about it and the player said he was not aware that it was a drug.

Apart from Asif, the statement of the custom officer who intercepted the player was also recorded yesterday.

PCB officials also expressed doubt over the case, saying that despite testing negative for a banned drug, Asif has only a '50-50' chance of escaping unscathed from the Dubai police net.

The News quoted an anonymous PCB official as saying that though Asif had tested negative, he has only 50 percent chance of avoiding conviction after he was found carrying a small amount of opium.

"After having taken a thorough look at his situation, I believe he has a 50-50 chance of avoiding any punishment," the official was quoted as saying.

Other top PCB officials are also 'working behind the scenes' to get Asif off the hook by trying to use their connections in the influential circles in the UAE, the daily said.

However, the official said that the PCB will continue trying its best to get Asif back home.

"Our biggest target is to get the player released and bring him back home on the first available flight," he said.

**Battle begins today**

**FROM PAGE 17**  
Euro 2000 winner stays will be taken on Sunday, the day before the Romanian clash.

Germany coach Joachim Loew is convinced that the Germans can at least break their winless streak in terms of matches at the finals which dates back to when they won their last title in 1996 -- starting with beating old rivals Poland on Sunday.

"We have made progress since 2004 in all aspects of our game in terms of tactics, fitness and organisation," said Loew reflecting on the difference between Germany's class of Euro 2004 and 2008.

"If we go flat out on Sunday and are physical we will win the game." But while Germany are favourites to win what Loew described as "the toughest tournament on earth", the German coach insists sides such as France and Italy, as well as Portugal, Spain or even Russia are also threats.

"There is no such thing as a clear-cut favourite, because there are so many unusual factors which

you just can't plan for," said Loew. The Dutch as usual go into the championships loaded with offensive talent -- sadly the same cannot be said of their defence and even more importantly lack of top class defensive midfielders.

As is also traditional with the Dutch there has also been the schisms that has led to Marc van Bommel and Clarence Seedorf both refusing to play, though, for the neutral it will be no loss not to have the former there, as his displays during the 2006 World Cup did little to enhance the image of the game.

The team that perhaps embodies the old style of Dutch football as in terms of 'Total football' are the 2004 semifinalists the Czech Republic, whose veteran 68-year-old coach Karel Bruckner believes are as strong as the 2004 squad even with the retirements of Karel Poborsky and Pavel Nedved and the absence through injury of playmaker and captain Tomas Rosicky.

The Czechs have their first

challenge against co-hosts Switzerland on Saturday and could well show that the Swiss and their fellow hosts Austria are the weakest countries ever to host the championships -- but while one can discount those two that does not make it any easier to pick who the overall winner will be.

**Asif's family**

**FROM PAGE 17**  
Some of his friends did finally agree to speak but not near his home but at the Sheikhupura stadium where Asif is staying playing cricket.

One of the friends said, "Asif was a role model for many youngsters and Sheikhupura was very proud of him. But after this incident we feel ashamed. He has let us down."

Another said he had played with Asif at the club level and he never did anything wrong in front of him. "What he does privately I don't know. But yes we had started hearing about things that don't befit a cricketer," he stated.

"He has changed a lot since he played for Pakistan. He was friendly and always roaming with us but now he no longer wants to speak to any of us and has become arrogant," quipped another friend of the beleaguered pacer.

Former skipper Rashid Latif was of the opinion that players coming from humble backgrounds need proper grooming before they take climb the fame ladder.

"There is a need to have a proper grooming programme for them so that they can carry themselves well when they play for Pakistan. That is why we are seeing more and more of these young players getting involved in unethical and unbecoming behaviour," Latif said.

**Broad, Anderson shine**

**CRICINFO, undated**

Stuart Broad recorded his maiden Test half-century and James Anderson followed up a career-best 28 with two new-ball breakthroughs, as England stamped their authority on the third Test at Trent Bridge. By tea on the second day, New Zealand were toiling on 57 for 2 in response to England's first innings of 364, which - as an indication of England's dominance - was 85 runs better than the previous highest total at Nottingham this season.

It represented quite some turnaround for England, after their first-day scoreline of 86 for 5, and on the second day, it was entirely down to their bowlers. When New Zealand took the field under late-grey skies, with England evenly poised on their overnight 273 for 7, they doubtless envisaged a swift denouement. Instead Broad and Anderson combined in an unlikely 76-run stand for the eighth wicket, as New Zealand's bowlers toiled lucklessly and with mounting frustration.

For Broad, it was yet another demonstration of his rich promise as an allrounder. Since his batting breakthrough in partnership with Kevin Pietersen at Napier in March, he has reached at least 25 in each of

his last five innings, and his shot selection and patience has borne all the hallmarks of a pedigree cricketer. It was especially appropriate that his best innings to date should come at his new county home of Trent Bridge, where his father Chris made his name as a batsman in the mid-1980s.

His poise and balance at the crease was exemplary, and any international cricketer would be proud of his back-foot driving, which earned him three more boundaries in the morning session. He did require one massive, and tone-setting, moment of good fortune in the third over of the day when, on 21, he edged Chris Martin firmly to second slip, only for Brendon McCullum to fumble the opportunity. McCullum handed over the wicketkeeping gloves on the morning of the match because of a bad back, and clearly had not been able to adjust to the angles required in his new role.

After that, Broad's performance was plain-sailing, until he reached the threshold of his half-century. On 49, he was made to sweat as Daniel Vettori pinned him down for three tight maidens in a row before Jacob Oram - New Zealand's most economical seamer - extended Broad's runless run to 22 balls with a strangulating final over before lunch. But crucially, Broad refused to succumb to a rash slog, and after the break he waited three more

balls before flicking Vettori through midwicket for a hugely cathartic boundary.

Anderson by now had fallen, 20 minutes before lunch, and his disappointment was tangible as he feathered an edge to the keeper off Oram, to give New Zealand their only breakthrough of the morning session. Up until that point he had produced some shots that belied his lowly reputation, including a crunching cover-drive and a confident slog sweep in consecutive overs from Iain O'Brien and Vettori. But when Monty Panesar, to his bemusement, was given out caught at bat-pad for a second-ball duck, the fires within Anderson were still burning bright.

There are few more mercurial performers in world cricket than Anderson, but when he gets it right, no line-up in the world can resist. Just as he had done at Wellington back in March, he found a full, late-swing length with the new ball, and detonated the off stumps of both Aaron Redmond for 1 and, vitally, McCullum for 9. Ross Taylor, flushed with confidence, counter-attacked gamely to go to tea on 22 not out, and Jamie How continued his low-key run of fine form with an unbeaten 20, but it was England who held all the trump cards.

**SCOREBOARD**  
Scoreboard at tea on the second day of the third Test between England and New Zealand at Trent

**Bridge on Friday:**  
ENGLAND: First innings (overnight 273-7)

Strauss c Taylor b Mills	37			
Cook b Mills	6			
Vaughan b O'Brien	16			
Pietersen c Hopkins b O'Brien	115			
Bell lbw b O'Brien	0			
Collingwood c Taylor b Mills	0			
Ambrose c Hopkins b O'Brien	67			
Broad b Martin	64			
Anderson c Hopkins b Oram	28			
Sidebottom not out	7			
Panesar c McCullum b Vettori	0			
Extras: (b-10, lb-9, w-1, nb-4)	24			
Total: (All out in 126.5 overs)	364			
Fall of wickets: 1-14, 2-44, 3-84, 4-85, 5-86, 6-247, 7-262, 8-338, 9-361, 10-364.				
<b>Bowler</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>W</b>
Martin	22	5	83	1
Mills	31	8	76	3
O'Brien	23	4	74	4
Oram	22	7	35	1
Vettori	28.5	4	77	1

**NEW ZEALAND: First innings**  
How not out

Redmond b Anderson	1			
McCullum b Anderson	9			
Taylor not out	20			
Extras: (lb-3, w-1)	4			
Total: (For 2 wickets in 19 overs)	57			
Fall of wickets: 1-2, 2-14.				
To bat: Flynn, Hopkins, Oram, Vettori, Mills, O'Brien, Martin.				
<b>Bowler</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>W</b>
Sidebottom	7	1	18	0
Anderson	8	0	26	0
Collingwood	2	0	5	0
Broad	2	1	5	0

**Zone Cup football**

**OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari**

Marma Unnayan Sangsad drew 2-2 with Yong Star Club in the first Zone Cup Football at the Khagrachhari Stadium yesterday.

Striker Rubel of Marma Unnayan Sangsad scored the first goal in the 13th minute while and Basanta Tripura levelled the score in the 27th minute.

After 20 minutes in the second half, Marma midfielder Uchala made it 2-1 but again Yong Star pulled one back ten minutes before the final whistle to give each team a point each.

Earlier in the first match of day, Takurchara Jagaran Club and Pahar Sidar Club ended the match with a goalless draw.

**Div II cricket**

**OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj**

Palli Bulbul Club and Muslim Sporting Club won their respective matches in the Sunlife Insurance Second Division Cricket League at the Shaheed Miraj-Tapan Stadium here yesterday.

Palli Bulbul defeated Kulfra Gosthi by six wickets in the first match after Kulfra batted first and were all out for 111 runs in 23.4 over.

Khokon top-scored with 34 runs. Masud took three wickets while Shahidul took two.

In reply, Palli Bulbul reached 115-4 runs in 20 overs. Aslam and Alim of the winning team remained not out on 44 and 35 runs respectively.

In the second match, Kowri MSC defeated Jovat Sangha by seven wickets.

**Malik skirts**

**FROM PAGE 17**  
"Who told you? I didn't say that. It's always a big thing to represent my country," he responded.

For Pakistan coach Lawson, it was however not an easy job to shift the concentration of his boys into the one-day cricket from a Twenty20 game.

"IPL looks like a very successful tournament and it is not so easy to shift the focus. We have talked about it and nobody has played any 50 overs cricket in the last five weeks. So everybody is in the same boat, I suppose," observed Lawson adding that his boys will continue their one-day success here.

"But you should understand one things that IPL was a domestic and restricted tournament not an internationally recognised meet. I hope my team keep winning in the one-day and show consistency both individually and as a team," he added.

No doubt their archrivals India is their main opponents in the tournament but Lawson was not ready to take hosts Bangladesh lightly in the tri-series which will kick off with the match between Bangladesh and Pakistan tomorrow.

"Bangladesh is playing at home so we have got to be a lot careful," he warned.

"India recently won series against Australia in Australia, so their confidence is high but we also have to take Bangladesh seriously as they are playing at their home condition," said Malik.

**Vaughan bashes Kolpak**

**CRICINFO, undated**

**CRICINFO, undated**

The row over the number of Kolpak players in English cricket rumbles on.

On Wednesday, Michael Vaughan waded into the debate. "I'm slightly concerned about it," he admitted. "There are a number which have obviously taken over a couple of the teams. Looking around the whole circuit, there seem to be a few who aren't doing that and that's my biggest concern."

"If they're coming in and improving the standard, playing in the right fashion then it can only be a good thing but if they're coming in and not doing that then that's not so good. The one thing it does do is make sure you have to be good to get into that XI. If they are quality then it's fine because they add to the standard, but if they're not quality it's like anything they're not going to add to the standard."

And on Thursday Mark Pettini, Essex's captain, told Cricinfo it was a "nice feeling" to beat a Kolpak-heavy Leicestershire in the FP Trophy quarterfinals.

"It was a shame for me to see Leicestershire fielding only four English-qualified players against us -- it appears their emphasis is not on bringing through young English players," he said. "They had a couple of decent young English batsmen in their squad last year in John Maunders and John Sadler but they've since left the club, to be replaced by non-

qualified players. At Essex we do put the emphasis on bringing through our English-qualified players."

Leicestershire's chief executive David Smith immediately hit back. "Was it not Graham Gooch and the mighty Essex who signed the two Kolpak Flower brothers Grant and Andy and then played them in their side along with two overseas players in Championship cricket? While their younger players were developing, that means they only had seven players on the field qualified to play for England during that period of time."

"Essex are certainly much further advanced in their development programme than we are, but we do care about producing young English-qualified cricketers. Our development programme is in its infancy and we will be judged on my aim to have produced five players from our Academy playing regular first-class cricket for the club over the next four seasons."

"Essex had two Kolpaks in their squad on Thursday, Grant Flower and Ryan ten Doeschate, along with Danish Kaneria as an overseas player," said Smith. "I have a lot of respect for Essex as a club and their youth development programme, and their emphasis on bringing on young qualified England cricketers, but I would also point out that they have taken (Jason) Gallian from Nottinghamshire, (James) Middlebrook from Yorkshire, (David) Masters from Essex, and (Alex) Tudor from Surrey to help balance the young and old and they are not all home-grown."

On the subject of Sadler and Maunders, the two England-qualified players that Pettini mentioned, Smith was equally forthright. Sadler joined Derbyshire where, in Smith's opinion, "he has hardly set the world alight", while Maunders was released last season because he was "not good enough", and replaced by a 22-year Englishman, Matt Boyce, who has been with the county since the age of 11.

"I would also point out," said Smith, "that Leicestershire have recently produced what I would consider to be the best all-round Test cricketer for England since Flintoff in Stuart Broad only to lose him to a Test-match county (Nottinghamshire) who could offer him more money."

Pettini's comments come three days after Ashley Giles, Warwickshire's director of cricket and England selector, described the Kolpak situation as "serious" and called on the counties to take responsibility.

The arguments will continue, but the ECB, which is powerless to act because of the current European Union legislation, is hopeful that the situation might be about to change.

It is believed that the EU may rule that the Cotonou Treaty, which provides the Kolpak loophole, should no longer entitle migrant workers from the countries affected to freedom of movement within the Community. While those on existing contracts will not be affected, the flood of players, mainly from South Africa, could as a result become a trickle.

**Legends speak on IPL**

**INTERNET, undated**

He might not be in the one-day cricket reckoning anymore and his performance in the IPL might have received more brickbats than bouquets, but all that has not stopped Rahul Dravid from embracing the latest version of the game -- the Twenty20.

The former India captain, who has consistently weathered criticism about the suitability of his batting style in limited overs cricket, does not subscribe to the view that Test is the only genuine form of the game.

Contrary to general opinion, Dravid believes that the new generation of cricketers must take to all the three forms with equal enthusiasm and passion.

"I don't want the upcoming players to grow thinking that Test cricket is the purest version. As a sports person, what you should be looking for is job satisfaction at the end of the day," Dravid said at a promotional event on Thursday.

"What is more important is to discover your range of personality and so you must play all facets of the game."

"Twenty20 is a new form and is going to be there. Youngsters have to make it a part of their cricket. They must learn it, adjust and adapt, and make it part of their skill sets."

Dravid, however, said that he has no grievance about Twenty20 emerging as a strong format towards the end of his career.

"I played through a great era. When I was 21, I didn't have a choice. We knew that our focus for the next 10 years was on Test cricket," he said.

Dravid predicted that the number of ODIs on the international calendar would come down as the sport tries to accommodate Twenty20.

"There is a limited time in a year. As Twenty20 becomes popular, something has got to give," he said. "Maybe the number of ODIs will reduce. You might see that start to happen."

Meanwhile, former Pakistani fast bowler Wasim Akram said on Thursday that young cricketers should realise that tournaments like the IPL are only for entertainment and should focus on the longer version of the game to develop themselves.

"In Twenty20 there is no technique for the bowlers or batsmen and a player's skill is found in Test matches," the Pakistani pace bowler said at a function in Mumbai to announce the Castrol Asian Cricket Awards.

"Twenty20 is perhaps the only format of the game where a bowler is paid to get hammered around the ground," Akram said, adding that a bowler could not experiment with too many techniques in this format.

Dravid said youngsters entering the sport now had to choose between three formats of the game, all of which were different. "When I was 21, I knew I wanted to play Test cricket but if I were the same age now it would be harder with tournaments like the IPL to decide which format of the game to focus on," he said.

**Doubt over**

**FROM PAGE 17**  
and three behind Sohail Tanvir's 22.

Sreesanth had been at the centre of a controversy during the inaugural edition of the Twenty20 league, having been slapped by his India team-mate Harbhajan Singh after the match between Punjab and the Mumbai Indians in Mohali. Harbhajan was barred from taking further part in the tournament, and the BCCI banned him for five ODIs, while Sreesanth was asked to improve his on-field behaviour.

India play their first match of the tournament, a preparatory event ahead of the Asia Cup later this month, against Pakistan on June 10. No standby had been named in the squad for the tri-series, also involving hosts Bangladesh, and the Asia Cup, but with four other fast bowlers in RP Singh, Ishant Sharma, Praveen Kumar and Irfan Pathan, a replacement might not be necessary.