

Capriati win displaces Seles

CARLSBAD, Calif., Aug 5: After finally putting to rest rumors about why she skipped Wimbledon, Monica Seles has something new to worry about Jennifer Capriati, reports AP.

The 15-year-old Capriati defeated Seles 4-6, 6-1, 7-6 Sunday to win the \$125,000 Mazda Classic and knock the Yugoslava native from the No. 1 ranking. It was Capriati's second defeat of Seles in two weeks and first ever in a sanctioned tournament.

"I think I'm definitely a little closer (to being No. 1)," Capriati said. "This gives me confidence."

Seles and Capriati last met two weeks ago in an exhibition at Mahwah, N.J., where Capriati won 6-3, 7-5. Seles had prevailed in both of their previous tour matches.

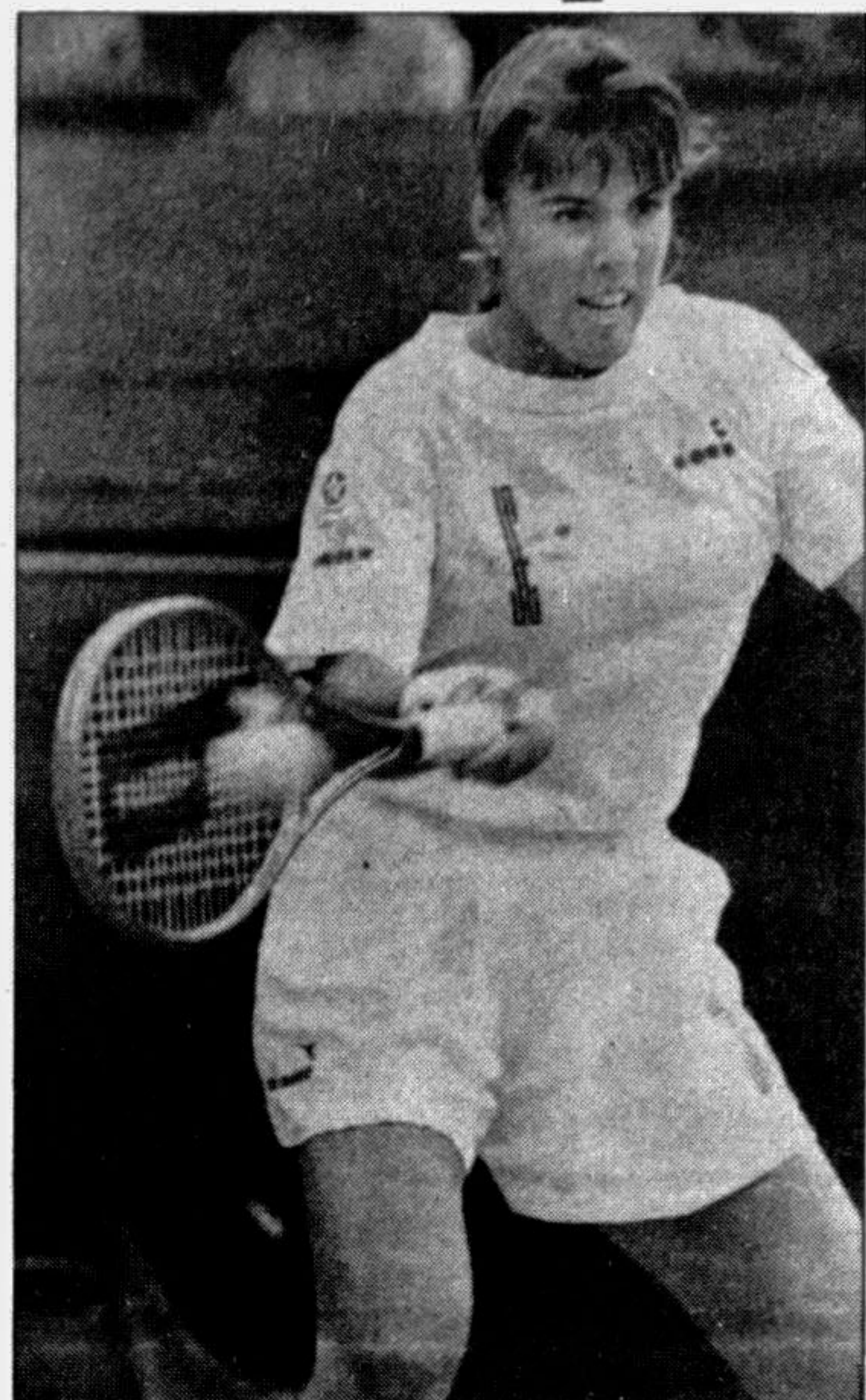
Capriati only has a learner's permit to drive, but had no trouble testing her prize, a special-edition car, on the roads at the La Costa Resort and Spa.

"She was perfect. With a stick (shift), too," said her father, Stefano, who went along for the ride.

The keys and \$45,000 were presented to Capriati after she rebuffed a comeback by Seles in the third set and then prevailed by winning the last five points of the tiebreaker for a 7-2 edge.

"I played very well," Capriati said. "I just had to keep fighting until the end. I went in thinking that I'd play mitt game an serve well, which I did. I just tried to attack and go for it."

By recording her second career title, Capriati moved from 10th to eighth in the rankings. She last won at the



Jennifer Capriati of US on way to her victory over Seles

Puerto Rican Open in October 1990.

Seles, who received \$125,000 for second place, returned to the tour for the first time since winning the second Grand Slam title of the year June 8 at the French

Open.

The match brought together the two youngest finalists in the Open era of women's tennis that began in 1968.

Seles, 17, and Capriati are younger than Tracy Austin and

Andrea Jaeger, who met in 1980 at the Florida Federal Open, by at least one month respectively.

Seles, making her first tour appearance since her well-publicized and mysterious withdrawal from Wimbledon, came to the end of the No. 1 reign that she held since March 11.

Inheriting the top position will be Steffi Graf. But because she won't lay this week because of a shoulder injury, Graf will yield the top spot back to Seles after a week.

Still, Seles said, it figures to be a tight race for No. 1 the rest of the year among Graf, Gabriela Sabatini and herself.

"Being No. 1 is great," Seles said. "I'm going to try to get it back. I still have a long way to go until the end of the year. It's a very close struggle."

Both played like crafty veterans, exchanging baselines blasts for nearly two hours.

Seles claimed the opening set with the help of a second and decisive service break in the ninth game when her cross-court backhand kissed the sideline for a winner.

Capriati stormed back, running off the first five games of the second set behind aggressive baseline play to send the match into a third set.

The fourth seed continued to dominate as she built a 5-3 third set lead, but Seles battled back to 5-5 with a 10th game service break.

Seles won the opening point of the tiebreaker, but Capriati took control from 2-2 as she ran off the last five points of the match to complete one of her biggest career victories.

"Jennifer played a great match today," said Seles.

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The players were greeted with garlands and bouquets by a large crowd of fans and hockey officials who crowded the airport to receive the team, which coach Balkishen Singh said was on its way back to the top.

"This is not the end, this is just the beginning," the beaming coach said of the victory in Ipoh, which fetched India its first major hockey title after the 1988 Marshalls Cup in Nairobi, Kenya.

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India beat Oman

HYDERABAD, India, Aug 5: Mario Soares headed in the equaliser in the final seconds to help hosts India force a 1-1 draw against Oman in the opening match of the Asian Group B pre-Olympic football tournament here Sunday, reports AFP.

Both teams were locked goalless at half-time.

Soares headed in high corner kick from Indian captain Bruno Coutinho in the 90th minute to level scores after Naser Mohammad had put Oman up in the first minute of the second session.

Oman's speedy striker Younis Eid set up his team's goal with a lightning run down the right flank and an elegant backpass to the unmarked Naser who kicked hard into the empty Indian goal.

India pressed hard for the equaliser but were pushed back by the sturdy Oman defence before Soares found the target to the delight of over 40,000 home fans at the Lal Bahadur Shastri Stadium.

Favourite Syria, Lebanon and Kuwait are the other countries taking part in the ten-day, round-robin league tournament. The winner moves up to the final qualifying round for next year's Barcelona Olympics.

Syria take on Lebanon today.

Teams

INDIA: Mohammad Qadir, Mohammad Syed, Alok Das, Jacinto D'Silva, Emmanuel, Mario Soares, Jhantu Dey (I.M. Vijayan), Thomas Khursboo, Roy Barreto, Kiran Khonsai (Godfrey Ferreira), Bruno Coutinho.

OMAN: Suleiman Khamis, Faraj Freish, Zahir Salim, Khalifa Abdullah, Ahmed Khamis, Naser Mohammad, Mohammad Zaid, Khalif Zaid, Self Mohammad, Shahad Ramzan, Younis Eid (Matar Khalifa).

Hosts dominate Pan-Am games

HAVANA, Aug 5: Sabrina Dornhoefer won the first US athletics gold of the Pan-American Games on Sunday as her team fought to stem an early medals surge by Cuba that put the hosts on top of the medal table with 13 golds after two days of competition, reports Reuter.

There was bitter disappointment for the United States when their women's basketball team went down 87-83 to Brazil in a qualifying round ending a 42-game winning streak by the Americans.

Dornhoefer's victory in the women's 3,000 metres, the last event of the second day of the Games, took the US to five gold medals. Canada and Colombia had two golds apiece and Mexico followed with a single gold medal.

The US athletics gold followed earlier US successes in the women's cycling 50 km team time trial, the women's three-metre springboard diving and the men's 1000 metres single kayak.

US kayaker Mike Herbert had the satisfaction of receiving his gold medal directly from the hands of Cuban President Fidel Castro, who put sportsmanship before politics to make the presentation.

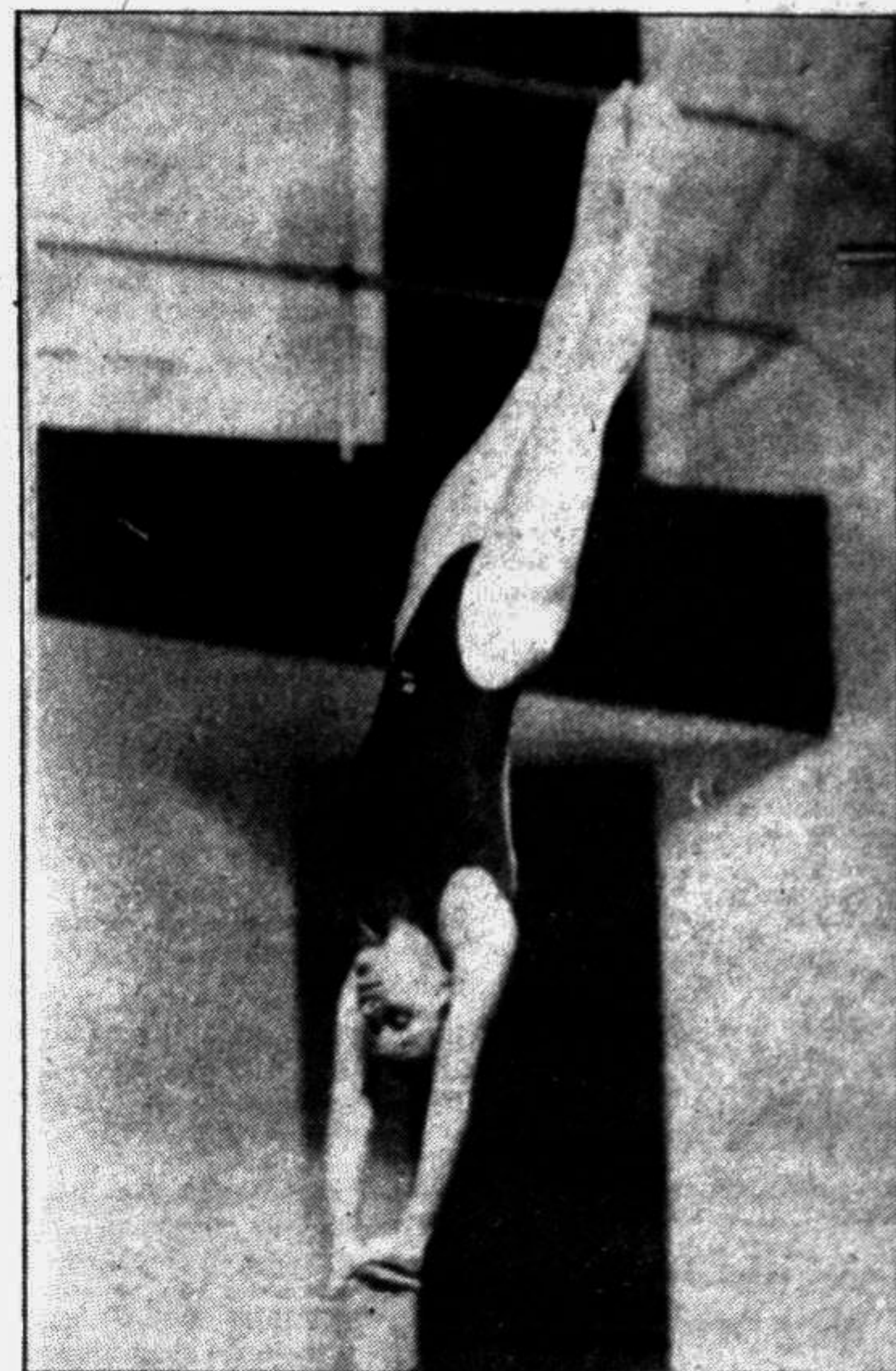
The Cuban President, who is a keen sports fan, made a surprise visit to the canoeing course outside Havana to watch Cuban paddlers demolish traditional US supremacy in the sport.

Herbert briefly disappointed him by beating Cuban Angel Perez, who had won three gold medals in the first day of competition Saturday.

But the lone US gold could not stop a near Cuban sweep in the canoeing and kayaking. By the end of the day they had dethroned the US as Pan-American canoeing champions with 10 golds out of the 13 disputed over the two-day competition.

Signalling communist-ruled Cuba's determination to take on the US on all fronts, Betsy Laza outstripped her US challengers to win the gold in the women's shot put with a throw of 18.87 metres.

Cuba's cyclists also shared gold with Colombia in the men's 100 kilometre team time trial, squeezing the US into third place over the fast, flat course on the central highway south west of the



US diver Karen Laface executes a dive during the women's three metres springboard final won Sunday at the eleventh Pan-American Games. Laface won the gold medal with a total of 473.970 points.

Cuba capital.

Confirming their sparkling form in Europe this season, Cuba's Ana Fidelia Quirot and Roberto Hernandez both easily won their 400 meters semi-finals heats.

Quirot, the reigning Pan-American 400 and 800 metres champion, bounded ahead of the field from the gun and never looked back, winning in 50.69 seconds as the stadium resounded to chants of "Cuba, Cuba."

World 60 metres indoor champion Andre Cason ignored a tropical downpour to comfortably win his 100 metres semi-final ahead of Brazil's Arnaldo Oliveira.

He will face tougher opposition in the final today from Brazil's Robson Caetano da Silva and John Mair of Jamaica

who also qualified for the final without difficulty. The sudden rain all but emptied the 35,000-seat Olympic Stadium which had filled slowly during the afternoon as Cubans foresook their normal Sunday activities to watch the biggest sporting event their country has ever staged.

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Sampras ends title drought

LOS ANGELES, Aug 5: Pete Sampras, fine-tuning his form to defend his U.S. Open title later

this month, won his first championship since the Open, beating Brad Gilbert in three sets late Sunday at the Volvo Tennis tournament, reports AP.

Sampras, the second seed, defeated fourth-seeded Gilbert 6-2, 6-7 (5-7) 6-3 in two hours and six minutes.

"It was important for me to win today for my confidence," said Sampras, who had been sidelined much of the year with injuries. "To win in Los Angeles makes me happy."

Sampras, 19, grew up in suburban Los Angeles and now lives in Florida.

After losing the first set, Gilbert came back in the second, jumping out to a 3-0 lead. Sampras broke later in the set to narrow Gilbert's lead to 4-3. Both held serve the rest of the way.

In the tiebreaker, the two traded points until Gilbert capitalized on two unforced errors by Sampras to even the match.

"I started playing better in the second and I got unlucky in the third," said Gilbert, who turns 30 next week. "I was coming in more and I couldn't work myself in. He was hitting very hard and I couldn't get any rhythm."

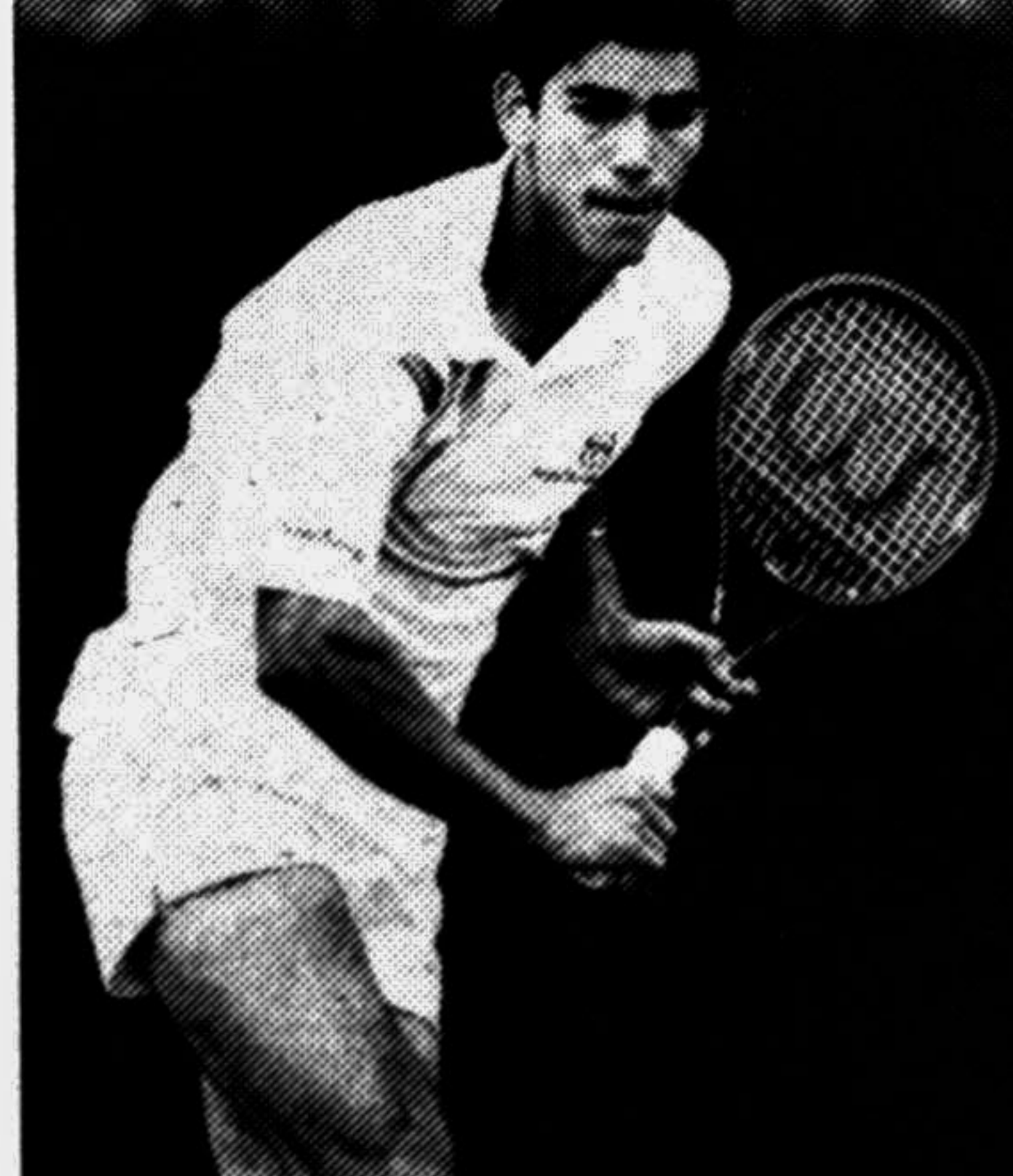
In the third set, Sampras went up 4-2 on a break and held his serve to rest of the way to take the \$125,000 winner's share.

After overcoming shin splints and injuries to his hamstring and calf, Sampras was hungry for a victory. But then again, so was Gilbert, who hasn't won since September 1990 and was playing in only

his second final this year. "I had to fight to the last point," Sampras said. "He could have won the match."

Gilbert advanced to the final with a three-set upset of Stefan Edberg, who was slowed by tendinitis in his knee.

Sampras broke Gilbert to go up 2-1 in the first set and



PETE SAMPRAS

went on to win the last three games. He lost only five points on his serve and aed Gilbert on set point.

Gilbert said Sampras' powerful serve continues to be his

best weapon.

"He's going to get aces because he's like a guy that throws a curve when you're not looking for it," said Gilbert. "He has a hard serve to read because it comes quickly out of his hand."

With three weeks until the U.S. Open, Sampras said he is

nally feels prepared to defend his title.

"I'm healthy and I'm more experienced," he said. "My confidence is up and I'm ready to go to the Open."

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S Africa may host '92 World Open

ADELAIDE, Australia, Aug 5: South Africa will host the 1992 World Open Squash Championships provided the country meets certain conditions on unified non-racial sport and the dismantling of apartheid, the International Squash Players Association (ISPA) said on Monday, reports Reuter.

The ISPA said it had accepted a tender for the men's event to be held in Johannesburg, probably in August.

The ISPA decision had the backing of all its players including six times world champion and ISPA board chairman Jahangir Khan of Pakistan who has never played in the republic.

"I am happy to go there if the conditions we have laid down for non-racial sport are met," Jahangir told reporters, adding that all ISPA players felt the same way.

ISPA executive director Roger Eady, in Adelaide for the 1991 World Squash Open, won on Sunday by Australia's

Rodney Martin, said he welcomed the move.

"I'm sure the appearance of our fully multinational organisation in a world event in South Africa can only help give a boost not only to squash but also to all other sports under the new circumstances there (South Africa)," Eady said.

"We have the opportunity to show what can be done."

The ISPA has asked the

Devoy's crown

ADELAIDE, Australia, Aug 5: New Zealand's Susan Devoy won the South Australian Open women's squash championship on Sunday but only after being taken to five games by Australia's Liz Irving, reports Reuter.

Devoy, the top seed, eventually wore down sixth-seeded Irving to win 9-3, 4-9, 9-2, 7-9, 9-3.

The experienced New Zealander showed few signs of fatigue from Saturday's tough semifinal against Michelle Martin of Australia, sending Irving running all over the court in the final game.

Squash Rackets Association of Southern Africa to form a united, non-racial controlling body with the South African Squash Federation (SASF).

The SASF was a former rival body of the SRASA whose standpoint had been "No normal sport in an abnormal society," Eady said.

Eady said the proposed merger between the two organisations would enable South Africa to rejoin the International Squash Rackets Federation (ISRF).

"I am assured the merger of the two bodies is likely to happen in the relatively near future," Eady said.

The planned tournament will offer a record purse of 160,000 US dollars compared with this year's 120,000 dollars.

The current record prize purse for an individual tournament is 125,000 US dollars being offered for the Agia World Cup event in Dubai in December.

The last significant ISPA-sanctioned event held in South Africa was the world individual and team championships held in 1973.

Heroes' welcome

NEW DELHI, Aug 5: India's jubilant team returned to a hero's welcome here Sunday after ending a long

drought by winning the six-nation Sultan Azlan Shah hockey tournament in Malaysia, reports AP.

"All of us played extremely well," captain Pargat Singh, named player-of-the-tournament, said of the victory which no one at home had expected.

The players were greeted with garlands and bouquets by a large crowd of fans and hockey officials who crowded the airport to receive the team, which coach Balkishen Singh said was on its way back to the top.

"This is not the end, this is just the beginning," the beaming coach said of the victory in Ipoh, which fetched India its first major hockey title after the 1988 Marshalls Cup in Nairobi, Kenya.

NZ pip Malaysia

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 5: New Zealand scored a 3-2 win over Malaysia in a friendly match here Monday after the two sides were tied 1-1 at half-time, reports AP.

The New Zealanders, who finished fourth in the six-nation Sultan Azlan Shah invitational field hockey championships over the weekend, opened accounts in the first minute when Richard Schoeman connected a free hit by Craig Russ.

The Malaysians slowly

worked their way back and equalised in the 16th minute when K Embaraj scored from a penalty corner.

The Kiwis had a chance to take the lead in the 30th minute when umpire Balbeer Singh awarded a penalty stroke but Jamie Smith's shot was saved by keeper Ahmad Fadil.

However, New Zealand took the lead in the 46th minute when skipper Peter Daji