

# Top seeds sail on

**NEW YORK, Aug 28**: Top seed Boris Becker led the top five men into the second round of the US Open Tennis championships on Tuesday, but Ivan Lendl was lucky to be among the survivors, reports Reuter.

The fifth-seeded Lendl was taken to the brink of first round elimination by hard-serving 19-year-old Dutchman Richard Krajicek, who had the three-time champion on the ropes but could not deliver a knockout punch.

Second seed Stefan Edberg, eager to avoid the first round humiliation he suffered here last year, also had some tense moments before beating 124th-ranked American Bryan Shelton 6-4, 2-6, 7-6, 6-1.

The second-ranked Swede fought off three successive set points in the third set to force the tiebreak and gain control of the match.

"It sort of took me nearly two hours before I found any rhythm," a relieved Edberg said. "I didn't want to lose today after what happened last year."

All three of this year's Grand Slam winners kept alive their chance of adding a second major title.

A bearded Becker, who first became number one in the world after winning the Australian Open in January, defeated Argentine Martin Jaite 7-6, 6-4, 6-4 as a glowing orange sun set behind the National Tennis Centre.

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In a night match, four-time champion Martina Navratilova, 34, and the No 4 seed, seemed to enjoy her 6-2 6-2 romp over Argentine Patricia Tarabini.

"It was a real pleasure to be out there," said Navratilova, who had not played a tournament match since Wimbledon. Earlier fourth seed Arantxa Sanchez Vicario of Spain blew out Italian Katia Piccolini 6-0, 6-1. Fifth-seeded American Mary Joe Fernandez and eighth seed Conchita Martinez of Spain also easily advanced.

Most of the day's drama was provided by Lendl, whose superior conditioning, nerves of steel, vast Grand Slam experience and French foreign legion hat helped him to survive, while Krajicek wilted in the blistering heat.

"I said to myself 'this is my court, if I go down, I go down kicking,'" said Lendl, who reached eight consecutive finals here between 1982 and 1989. "I'm not going to roll over for anybody."

When Krajicek began to falter in the tiebreak after well over three hours in the stadium court heat, Lendl knew the Dutch teenager, who wore no protective headgear, was on his last legs.

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Jaite gamely tried to extend Becker, but was no match for the three-time Wimbledon champion on a fast surface.

The Argentine broke Becker to level the third set 4-4, but the top seed broke right back for 5-4 and served out the match, ending it with an emphatic overhead smash.

Becker was pleased with his performance. "From beginning to end I served always good. It was pretty good tennis for the first match."

But Becker knows there is a lot of hard work ahead. "Of the four Grand Slam tournaments, this is the toughest one to win," he said.

The Croatian news agency Hina reported Tuesday that the players' decision was taken because of what it called the "Aggression against Croatia" by Serbian and government troops.

Yugoslavia's non-playing captain Radmilo Armuniculic confirmed the non-availability of the two players in the Wednesday edition of the daily newspaper Borba claiming that they had been ordered to make their decision by the Croatian authorities.

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Armuniculic said he would wait until Sept 9, before posting the Yugoslav team.

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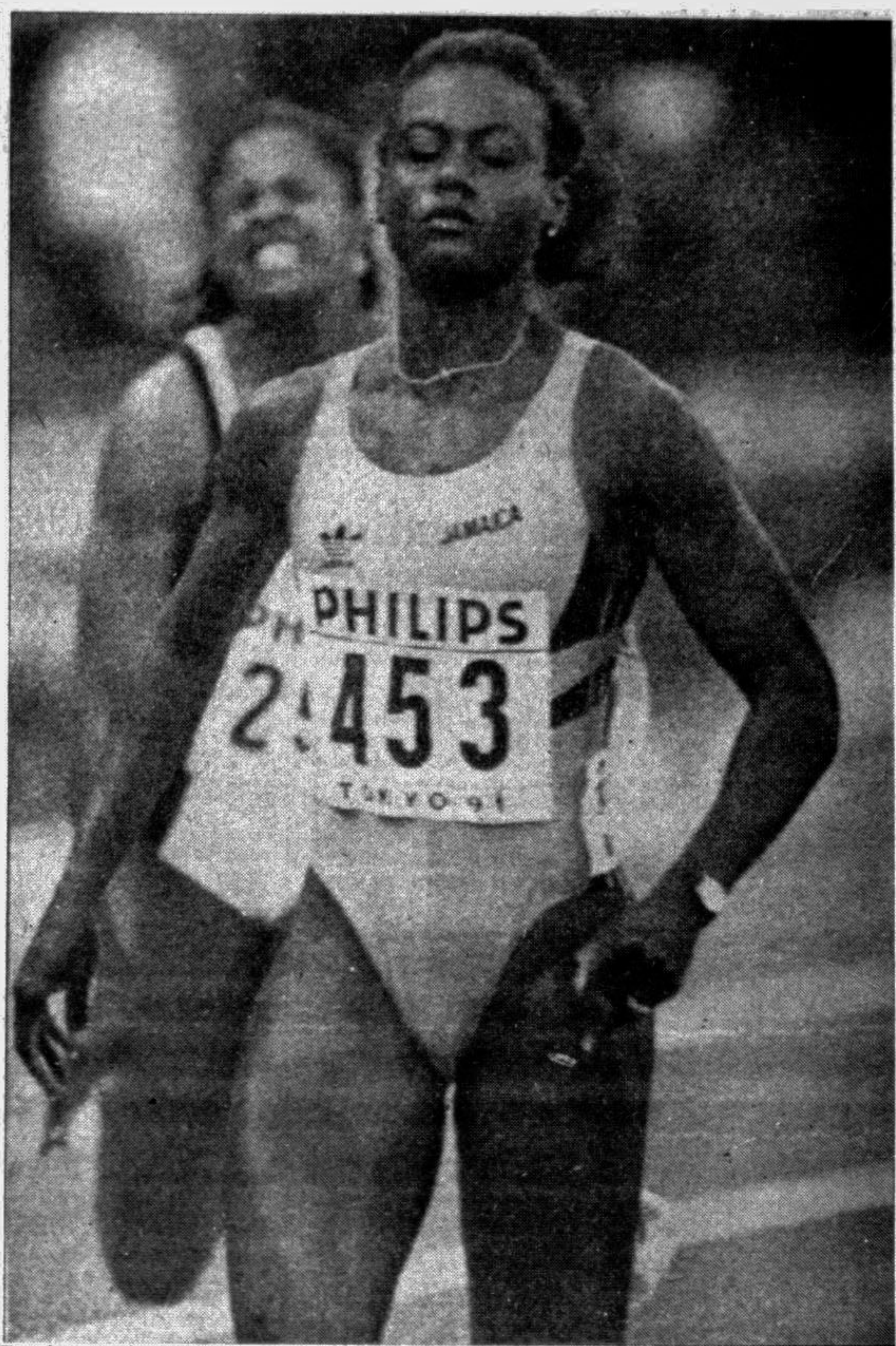
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Top bet Merlene Ottey, seen here after winning one of the heats for the 100m dash on Tuesday morning, was shocked by European champion Katrin Krabbe of Germany in the final later in the day. The defeat in the Tokyo World Championships was the first for the Jamaican sprint queen after a winning streak of 56 races. — AFP photo

# Crowd pulls Connors thru'

**NEW YORK, Aug 28**: The Stadium Court at the US Open had it all Tuesday night — Connors and McEnroe, disputed line calls, an unruly crowd and, above all, great tennis, reports AFP.

After a marathon match that lasted more than four hours, 38-year-old Jimmy Connors emerged the winner, rallying from two sets down and 0-3 to beat McEnroe — Patrick, not John — 4-6, 6-7 (4/7), 6-4, 6-2, 6-4.

Connors, making his 21st appearance at the US Open as an unseeded wild card, displayed all the tenacity and stamina he had 10 years ago when five-set comebacks were one of his trademarks.

Perhaps more importantly, though, he still had the ability to fire himself up at the right moment and to get the rowdy New York crowd firmly in his corner.

That moment came in the third game of the fourth set, after Connors had rallied to take the third set and was looking to go up a break in the fourth.

McEnroe had just come up with an ace and a service winner to erase a double-break point, when another first serve was called good for an ace by the line judge even though television replays showed it was several inches wide.

Connors, who had disputed two earlier line calls, erupted, demanding that chair umpire



**JIMMY CONNORS**  
Dana Loconto call for the referee.

When he refused, the fans who remained booted loudly, ignoring Loconto's pleas for order as Connors stood well behind the baseline, soaking it all in.

Amidst the commotion, McEnroe found the poise to serve and win the game, but it was the beginning of the end for the younger brother of Flushing Meadow's favourite bad boy.

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Connors broke McEnroe's serve in the third game but McEnroe fought on bravely to the very end, turning the final set into a pitched battle.

The final game was a microcosm of the entire match, with Connors falling behind 0-40, only to rally back to deuce and triumph on the third set point — a service winner that McEnroe deflected into the sets behind the chair umpire.

Afterward, Connors received a standing ovation from the crowd to whom he gave all the credit.

"The crowd won it for me," he said, adding, "They pulled me through this match."

McEnroe, who was playing on the Stadium Court for the first time, confessed that he had underestimated his opponent.

"I thought I had won the match," he said. "But that's when Jimmy Connors is his most dangerous. Obviously, he got a second wind. It's a great comeback for him."

Asked whether the crowd was a factor, McEnroe responded: "I expect it to be like that. If I were in the crowd I'd have been rooting for him, too."

Connors admitted things looked bleak in the third set. But he refused to give up.

"It wasn't looking good," he said. "Once I got on the board and broke at 3-2 then by game lifted, by racket felt better, my feet felt better and I was playing more like I should have."

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# English booters defy drug tests

**LONDON, Aug 28**: Drug tests in English football have been abandoned until further notice after objections from the Players' Union, reports AFP.

The Football Association tried to introduce the mandatory checks on the opening day of the season at the Chelsea-Wimbledon match, but the players refused to take them.

Gordon Taylor, chief executive of the Professional Footballers' Association, said: "We urged our members not to co-operate because neither ourselves nor the managers had been consulted and we were not made aware of the methods of testing, the banned substances or the penalties."

"I've received the support of quite a lot of managers, particularly those in the First Division, which has been heartening. Now we intend to liaise with the FA to produce a concise pamphlet on drug-testing."

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# E Bengal new Calcutta champs

**CALCUTTA, Aug 28**: East Bengal won the prestigious Calcutta Super Division league title with a hard-earned solitary goal victory over a fighting Eastern Railway at their home ground here today, reports PTI.

Needing only one point to regain the title which they had won in 1989, the men in red-and-yellow found the spirited railwaymen a hard nut to crack on a slushy ground.

However, East Bengal prevailed over the Railway team which was reduced to a nine-man outfit after the referee sent off two players for arguing over a disputed spot kick decision.

The winning goal was scored by striker Kuljit Singh just two minutes before the final whistle. Four Bangladesh stars — Aslam, Rumi, Munna Sr. and Golam Ghous — played for East Bengal this season.

The match, witnessed by an overflowing East Bengal crowd, could have ended in an anticlimax had a brilliant attempt by Railway striker Nandapradhan not hit the post after East Bengal custodian Debashis Mukherjee was comprehensively beaten.

However, the estimated 40,000 people in the ground were relieved when Kuljit, after getting a ball from medio Bikash Panji, scored the match-winner with an angular right-footer.

The victory brought East Bengal the toughest league title in the country. The champions accumulated 46 points from 18 matches spread over three months, winning 14 outings and drawing four. They did not concede a single goal, scoring 23 in total. With this East Bengal equalled Mohun Bagan's record of 21 wins in the league.

Their nearest rivals Mohun Bagan are to play one more match, but even if they win that match their tally of points will be 43 only.

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# Soviets beat Norway 1-0

**KRISTIANSAND, Norway, Aug 28**: The Soviet Union beat Norway 1-0 (halftime 1-0) in a European Under-21 championship Group Three soccer qualifier on Tuesday, reports Reuter.

Scorer: Yuri Tishkov (10th minute)

Standings (tabulate under — Goals, Won, Drawn, Lost, Points For, Goals Against, Points):

|              |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|--------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Italy        | 4 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 6 | 6 |
| Norway       | 4 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 5 | 5 |
| Soviet Union | 4 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 4 |
| Hungary      | 4 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 5 | 1 |

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