

Powell rewrites history

TOKYO, Aug 31: With one explosive leap on Friday, Mike Powell rewrote the record books in the greatest long jump competition in the history of athletics, reports Reuter.

Powell's 8.95 metres winning jump in the men's final at the World Athletic Championships erased what has become the most famous record of them all.

It also ended Carl Lewis's 10-year unbeaten streak and gave the third World Championships its latest, greatest and most unexpected superstar.

Bob Beamon's mark of 8.90 metres set at the 1968 Mexico Olympics seemed barely credible at the time.

As the years rolled by it gained added lustre, a golden memory from an era when flower power was at its height and the youth of American were on the streets protesting against the Vietnam War.

"If Bob had jumped that far in 1968, it wouldn't be such a big deal right now," Powell reflected on Friday night as he struggled to comprehend the enormity of his achievement.

"It took so long to break it. All I can say to him is thank you the next time to see him. I will shake his hand and say thanks."

Beamon's jump, immortalised in a famous photo which catches the American seemingly in flight, was the culmination of a series of uniquelyavourable conditions.

An athlete of wonderful natural gifts, Beamon had the twin advantage of high altitude and a following wind of exactly the legal limit of two metres a second.

His jump was well beyond the operational level of the measuring device and a steel tape had to be hurriedly found before the result could be announced.

The gasp and the instant applause when it was announced that Beamon had broken the previous world record by an incredible 55 cm were echoed at Tokyo's National Stadium on Friday.

But at first they were for Lewis, who soared 8.91 metres with his fourth attempt.

Joy was quickly replaced by disappointment as Lewis was just looking for somebody to hug. I was just happy and I wanted to share it with somebody — so he got hugged."

"I didn't say anything," Powell explained. "I was just looking for somebody to hug. I was just happy and I wanted to share it with somebody — so he got hugged."

That was effectively the end of the contest although Powell still feared Lewis, the ultimate competitor.

"I always thought he could come from behind, deep down I felt he could come and jump nine metres."

Lewis sprinted down the runway and flew 8.84 metres, good enough for silver but not good enough to keep his title.

He still put together two legal jumps in excess of 8.80 metres, a distance previously achieved only by Beamon and Soviet Robert Emmiyan, who failed to qualify for the final here.

In a not particularly gracious tribute to Powell, Lewis was at pains to point out that the loser had put together the greatest series of jumps in his history.

"Mike had that one great jump," Lewis said.

Whereas Lewis, the world 100 metres record holder, relies on speed, Powell depends on strength and aggression.

He conceded that he was not as fast as Lewis or third-placed compatriot Larry Myricks but said he had been building up his strength since last November.

"It was the perfect situation, the perfect track at a big meet," he said.

"I have always felt I could do what I needed to do to break the world record."

"It was the realisation of a dream. I have been dreaming about this for the last seven to eight years," he said.



Liz McColgan holds up her shoes after winning gold in women's 10,000m event with a time of 31:14.31 in the World Athletics Championships on August 30. —AFP photo

Capriati beats both Hy and the heat

NEW YORK, Aug 31: Jennifer Capriati claimed the first berth in the third round of the US Open tennis championships on Friday as the heat wave continued to sizzle at Flushing Meadows, reports Reuter.

Strength-sapping, hazy heat and air thick with humidity once again settled heavily over the National Tennis Centre.

The seventh-seeded Capriati, in a reprise of her second-round match here last year, used her powerful ground strokes to defeat Patricia Hy of Canada 6-1, 6-4 and beat the heat by taking just one hour to advance.

On Thursday, when on-court temperatures soared above 100 degrees (38 C), four men's players were forced to retire before completing their matches.

Only one, Christian Bergstrom of Sweden, defaulted specifically because of heat illness, but fatigue from playing in the horrid conditions could have been a factor in the other injuries.

Capriati, heading towards an eagerly anticipated date with defending champion Gabriela Sabatini in the quarter-finals, lost her service only once to Hy, who made the second set close by coming to net against the American teenager.



Jennifer Capriati of US leans into a return to Patricia Hy of Canada on August 30 in the US Open. Capriati won 6-1, 6-4. —AFP photo

Coach misses Durie's deed

NEW YORK, Aug 31: Briton Jo Durie gave her golf-loving coach the day off, then proceeded to upset former finalist Helena Sukova of Czechoslovakia to reach the round of 16 at the US Open tennis championships on Friday, reports Reuter.

Durie posted one of four upsets in the women's draw as expected form fell apart on a hectic fifth day at the year's final Grand Slam event.

Durie, ranked 107 places below the 15th-seeded Czechoslovak at 121 in the world, thoroughly dominated Sukova in the third set to advance 6-4, 2-1.

"I was surprised to get two breaks out of the first three games. That was a real bonus because then I just had to hold my serve," said Durie, who was delighted with her best Grand Slam showing of the year.

The 31-year-old Durie, who reached the semifinals at the Open in 1983, said the match was not the most inspiring tennis she had ever played, but was thrilled to find herself in the fourth round where she will next face American teen sensation Jennifer Capriati.

"It was a better match last year," she said of her 1-8, 7-6, 7-6 1990 first round loss to Sukova here. "But I won the bloody thing so I don't mind," she added with a laugh.

"I'm just so pleased to have won a string of matches, which I haven't done for a long time," she said.

The six-foot tall (1-83m) London resident said her coach, Alan Jones, had missed her big upset win way out on Court 18 on the outskirts of the National Tennis Centre because he was out playing golf — with her permission.

Durie said Jones had an opportunity to play Pine Valley in nearby New Jersey, which is considered one of the best golf courses in the world, and she just didn't have the heart to deny him.

Chang lobs too fast for McEnroe

NEW YORK, Aug 31: Michael Chang's speed and timely topspin lobs were too much for John McEnroe here Saturday as the four-time former US Open champion was sent packing from Flushing Meadow after a five-set late night battle on the Stadium Court, reports AFP.

Chang, unseeded for the first time in three years, saved his best for last as he won 6-4, 4-8, 7-6 (7-1), 2-6, 6-3 in a match that lasted four hours and 33 minutes.

"Overall, it was a very close match," Chang said. "I can say it's very good to be able to come through that match. At the end, it was difficult and the crowd was trying to get John back in it."

McEnroe, seeded 16th, had beaten Chang in all four previous encounters, but this time was ultimately outmatched by the former French Open champion, who frustrated his serve-and-volley tactics with blistering passing shots and lobs.

"He certainly used it (the lob) quite well today," McEnroe said.

"It's a smart shot to hit against someone who is attacking a lot."

Chang even came up with 11 aces, three of which were in the final game of the match, which ended appropriately with McEnroe helplessly watching a backhand lob sail over his head.

"That's something I'm going to have to keep in mind," Chang said of the lob, which won him 13 points.

The first two sets of the match saw dramatic reversals of fortune as first McEnroe then Chang took 4-2 leads only to end up losing the set.

In the third set, Chang led 3-3, but McEnroe broke back to tie the 10th game, aided by a questionable baseline call.



The Dhaka kabaddi league final between Mirpur JS and Sonali Bank in progress yesterday at Outer Stadium kabaddi court. Mirpur won 14-8. —Star photo

Tyson testifies

INDIANAPOLIS, Indiana, Aug 31: Former world heavyweight champion Mike Tyson testified on Friday before a grand jury investigating charges that he raped an 18-year-old beauty pageant contestant earlier this summer, reports Reuter.

Tyson, wearing a dark pinstriped suit and accompanied by promoter Don King, refused to comment on the proceedings as he left the courthouse, but paused to sign a few autographs.

Testifying along with Tyson, who spent two to three hours on the stand, was Dale Edwards, Cleveland policeman who was acting as Tyson's bodyguard at the time of the alleged assault in July.

Tyson, who is scheduled to fight Evander Holyfield for the world heavyweight title in November, was accused of rape by one of the contestants at the Indiana Black Expo in July. She said she was driven to his hotel, where he assaulted her.

The six-member country grand jury has heard from 20 witnesses to date and officials said more will be called next week in view of Tyson's testimony.

He was accused in a recent suit of being a "Serial buttocks fonder" as a result of one incident in which he allegedly mistreated women.

Kenyans suffer double blow

TOKYO, Aug 31: The Kenyan team at the World Athletics Championships suffered a double blow today when two runners, including favourite Douglas Wakithuri, were forced to withdraw from Sunday's men's marathon, reports Reuter.

A Distant View

SRI LANKA YET TO COME OF AGE

—A M CHOWDHURY

The expected thing happened against England. When they were obliged to field, having lost the toss, inspiration played a major part in their efforts in being able to restrict England's first innings total to a moderate 282. Rumesh Ratnayake bowled with sustained accuracy and returned his career best figures of 27-4-5-69. Ramanayaka with 2 for 75 and Anurasiri with 2 for 42 playing a supportive role. The spin of Anurasiri kept the England batsmen at bay and skipper Aravinda de Silva must have regretted his decision of not playing Madurasinghi instead of Vijaya Gunawardene, who proved absolutely ineffective and could only be used for 10+2 overs in the two innings for 35-13 runs.

England's hero in the first innings was Alec Stewart who, coming in at No. 3 with 70 on the board, carried his bat through remaining unbeaten with 113. Capitalising on his Test recall at the Oval he went on with added courage and conviction and produced a superb innings, which won him England's player-of-the-match award. Gooch (38) and Hugh Morris (42) made a good start. But the middle order did not flourish; only Botham chipped in with 22.

Sri Lanka had about an hour's batting on the second day and finished the day on 75 for 2. In the last 60 minutes they collected 70 runs and offered the Lord's crowd a very sumptuous feast of batting at its best. The chief of the feast was none other than the Sri Lankan captain Aravinda de Silva, who cracked seven four in his exhilarating innings of 42, which lasted for only 35 minutes.

He came to the crease on 22 for 2 and choosing aggression to be the answer, produced some superb shots and one pull off DeFraitas was of such a grand quality that it was adjudged as the 'Champagne moment' of the match. But next morning he was out to the second ball of the second over, the first he faced, and that was the end of the flicker of the lighting, which had raised expectations of Sri Lankan supporters sky high. The innings then gradually succumbed to the good consistent swing bowling of DeFraitas.

Only Rumesh Ratnayaka, coming in at No.8 chanced his arms with determined courage and reached the total of 52 and thereby earned the distinction of becoming the first Sri Lankan to take 5 wickets and score a half century in a Test match, a distinction which earned him the prize for the Sri Lankan player-of-the-match.

Young opening batsman Haturusinghe played with patience and showed great promise. He was ninth out after making 66.

Sri Lanka folded up their first innings for 224: a deficit of 58. For this deficit they could blame only their approach to the game rather than anything else. They always looked reaching the England total, but did not. The failures of Gurusinha and Mahanama, their two experienced batsmen, were to a great extent demoralising.

With a slender lead of 58 England began their second innings. The first wicket fell at 78; Gooch and Stewart (43) consolidated and the two led England to the invincible position of a lead of 422.

Many an experienced side has saved Test matches from even worse situations; the most recent example being that of the Indians at the Oval last year where Tendulkar scored a brilliant century and Prabhakar remained unbeaten with 70-odd runs.

But the Lankans are yet to mature to that standard. The deficit in his first-set tie-break against American Jim Grabb.

Washington, a second-year pro who has proven himself a dangerous opponent at this year's Grand Slams, threatened to be as lethal to Stich as the heat.

As in every other Grand Slam of 1991 it took five sets to dismiss the dangerous, 22-year-old Washington.

Stich, the third seed, stopped him for a second time. The German prevailed 6-4 in the fifth set of his first-round match against the stubborn American at the Australian Open.

The German took the upper hand by blasting a forehand winner down the line to break for a 3-2 advantage in the final set. Washington fought off Stich's first match point from 15-40 in the ninth game with an overhand smash but watched the German rifle a forehand cross-court passing shot that landed untouched for a winner.

Close call for Stich

NEW YORK, Aug 31: Wimbledon champion Michael Stich survived a serious scare on the steamy Louis Armstrong Stadium court on Friday but four women's seeds were not so fortunate at the US Open tennis championships, reports Reuter.

Stich, who looked wobbly going into the final set in broiling heat at the National Tennis Centre, somehow summoned the strength to overcome determined American Maliva Washington 5-7, 7-5, 6-2, 4-6, 6-3 to reach the round of 16.

On another day of oppressive heat and humidity with court-side temperatures sizzling at 120 degrees Fahrenheit (49 Celsius), major cracks developed in the women's draw.

Fifth-seeded American Mary Joe Fernandez, a semifinalist here last year, and 11th-seeded Katerina Maleeva of Bulgaria both fell to Czechoslovaks.

Radka Zrubakova routed Fernandez, a semifinalist this year at both the Australian Open and Wimbledon, 6-1, 6-2, while Regina Rajchrtova ousted Maleeva 2-6, 6-3, 6-3.

"It was the biggest win of my career," said the 20-year-old Zrubakova. "I didn't make any mistakes at all. A lot of the time she seemed so tired she couldn't even move."

Defending women's champion Gabriela Sabatini, second seed Monica Seles and seventh-seeded Jennifer Capriati advanced in straight sets, but as the debilitating day wore on two other seeds, Czechoslovak Helena Sukova, a 1986 finalist, and Soviet Lella Meskhi, joined the upset list.

Second seed Stefan Edberg and fifth seed Ivan Lendl, a three-time Open champion, both needed four sets to advance. Edberg escaped big trouble by overcoming a 5-0

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