

# France end 52-yr Davis Cup wait

**LYON, Dec 1:** Underdogs France won the Davis Cup for the first time in 59 years Sunday, as a euphoric, foot-stamping crowd cheered Guy Forget to a high-pressure, four-set victory over Pete Sampras of the United States, reports AP.

Hammering aces on many of the crucial points, Forget triumphed 7-6 (8-6), 3-6, 6-3, 6-4 to give his team an insurmountable 3-1 lead in the best-of-five showdown. France had not beaten the Americans in Davis Cup play since the 1932 final, the last year it won the coveted silver trophy.

An earlier report said: Leconte, who pulled off a sensation when he beat Pete Sampras in the second singles on Friday, teamed with Guy Forget to beat the experienced American partnership of Ken Flach and Robert Seguso 6-1, 6-4, 4-6, 6-2.



French team captain Yannicke Noah (L) encourages French pair Leconte (R) and Guy Forget during the Davis Cup doubles final match between France and USA in Lyon on Nov 30. France won 6-1, 6-4, 4-6, 6-2.

Forget played the first return singles against Sampras today with Leconte concluding the tie against Andre Agassi. France need to win just one of today's singles to take the cup for the first time since 1932.

As world number seven, Forget had been expected to be the kingpin of France's squad but he lost the opening singles on Friday to Agassi and looked surprisingly fragile at times in the doubles.

Leconte, who fell to 161st in the world after a third back operation in July this year, was in masterly form however as he constantly egged Forget on to victory.

It was their eighth Davis Cup match as a doubles pair and their eighth victory. The American pair had lost only once in 12 previous ties.

The first set showed just

and volleying poorly. The Americans began to play better in the second set but Seguso again double-faulted to let France take a 4-3 lead.

With the crowd in full cry and performing the Mexico wave, Leconte and Forget went on to take the set.

Both Frenchmen were broken for the first time in the third set as the Americans came back into the match but all thoughts of a possible five-set victory were soon erased.

Leconte played two inspired returns and punchy volleys to break Flach's serve for a 3-2 lead in the fourth and when Seguso double-faulted yet again to present another break point at 4-2, the match was as good as over.

Fittingly it was Leconte who served out the rubber, winning on the first match point with a service winner.

"We've played them many times before all over the world and always won," Flach said. "Sometimes they showed flashes of brilliance but they never played sustained tennis at that level before."

Seguso said the crowd had undoubtedly lifted the French players. "They made an awful lot of noise for a small stadium like that," he said.

Leconte said he was delighted by his performance. "I've played well for two days but there's another day tomorrow and I want to play well again."

"Yannick gave me my chance and I wanted to prove I deserved it. I think so far it produced the right rewards."

Forget said he was confident he could complete victory in today's first match with Sampras. "Sampras will have to play a great match to beat me because I'm not going to give anything away," he added.

Noah said his team had played well so far but he would not be satisfied with a 3-2 defeat.

"The players are focused. They really want to win tomorrow," he said. "In the past French tennis and sportsmen have been too easily satisfied with second place. We want to change that."

## Soviet spikers clinch world men's title

**TOKYO, Dec 1:** European champions the Soviet Union won the 1991 World Cup men's volleyball tournament with a better set average here Sunday after they were tied with Cuba and the United States, reports AP.

The Soviet spikers, who had kept their title hopes alive by beating defending champions Cuba Saturday, whitewashed South Korea 3-0 (15-7, 16-14, 15-8) to end with four wins against one loss and then waited for the outcome of the Cuba-USA match.

The Cubans, whose chance to retain the title was dashed the moment the Soviets won, ran out 3-0 (15-9, 15-12, 15-8) winners over the United States to tie the three teams with identical win-loss records.

But the Soviets clinched the gold with a better set average, followed by the Cubans and the Americans.

It was the fourth triumph for the Soviet Union in this tournament, following their victories in 1965, 1977 and 1981.

Brazil was to take on hosts Japan later Sunday at the Yoyogi National Stadium.

Cuba retained the women's crown here two weeks ago.

Medal round results:  
USSR bt S Korea 3-0 (15-7, 16-14, 15-8)  
Cuba bt USA 3-0 (15-9, 15-12, 15-8)

## BSWA awards

The prize-giving ceremony of the Bangladesh Sports Writers' Association (BSWA) will be held on December 8 at the Engineers' Institute auditorium at 4 pm.

President Abdur Rahman Biswas will be the chief guest at the function while State Minister for Youth and Sports Sadeq Hossain will attend as a special guest.

The BSWA, in a press release, requested the awardees for 1989 and 1990 to contact the association office.

## JU cricket

History Department trounced Pharmacy Department by 62 runs on the second day of the inter-department cricket championship of the Jahangirnagar University at the Mir Mosharraf Hossain Hall ground, says a press release.

Making the first use of the strip after winning the toss, History Department collected 142 runs for eight wickets.

Kamrul was the top scorer in the History innings with 68, followed by Sanowar, who scored 15.

For Pharmacy Kamrul and Sayeed shared the bowling honours with 3/30 and 3/24 respectively.

Pharmacy, in their stipulated 26 overs, managed 80 for runs wickets. Jewel was the only batsman to reach double figures for Pharmacy with 26. Sohel, the next highest scorer, made nine.

Sanowar was the wrecker-in-chief in the Pharmacy innings, picking up four for 15.

## Ctg soccer

**CHITTAGONG, Dec 1:** Agrabad Nowjoan Club shared points with Power Development Board (PDB) RC in the only match of the Chittagong Elite Paints First Division Football league today, reports UNB.

The rough and robust match between them ended in a goalless draw at the local stadium here.

Bakar of PDB and Swapan of Nowjoan Club received red cards in the 32nd minute of the second half for clashing with each other.

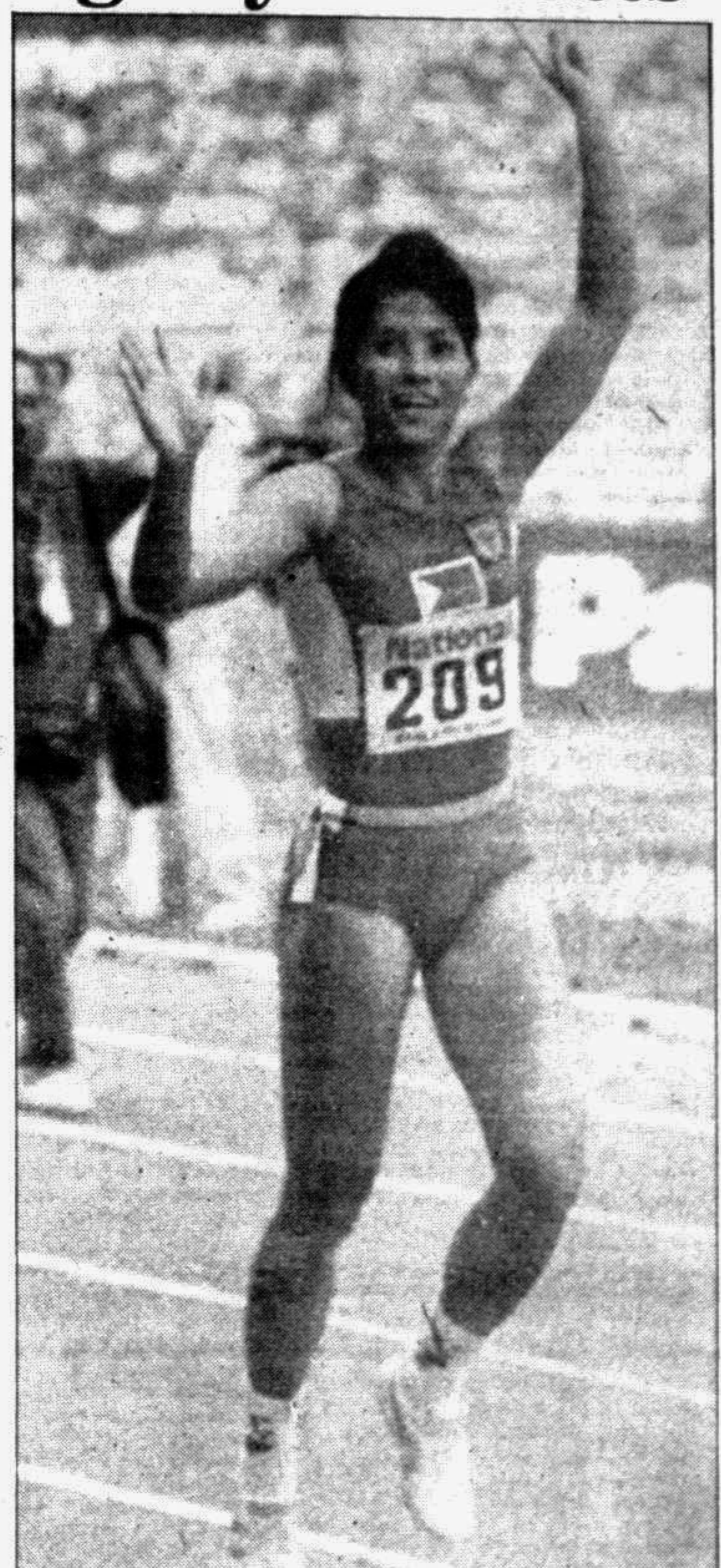
Officials of both teams also became involved in the controversy following the showing of red cards by referee F Kabir. As a result the match was held up for about four minutes.

Agrabad Nowjoan have secured 13 points from 14 outings while PDB Club have collected 10 from 12 matches so far.

Kallol Sangha will take on Mohammedans Blues tomorrow (Monday).

# Late charge by the hosts

**MANILA, Dec 1:** Indonesia's long reign as southeast Asia's sports overlord was in dire peril today as the Philippines sustained a last ditch charge to the top of the 16th South East Asian Games medal race here, reports AFP.



The hosts lifted both the men's and women's softball titles, halved the first four karate golds at stake with Indonesia, shared one of two cycling golds, and captured the team win in the sport pistol for women to come within a gold of the defending champions '60.

Thailand were now a distant third with 46 golds, followed by Malaysia with 17, Singapore and Burma with seven each, and Vietnam with six. Laos and Brunel have yet to collect any medals.

Indonesia replied to the Filipino challenge by taking one cycling gold and two in karate.

Burma captured the day's earliest gold when barefoot walker MA Kyin Lwan upset defending champion Hasati Lawole and reset the Indonesian's Games record in the 10. kilometre walk for women.

A Vietnamese housewife, 32-year-old Dang Thi Dong of Ho Chi Minh City, emerged as one of the best performers of the Manila Games so far when she shot 595 points in the standard rifle prone event to surpass the 594-point mark set by Jin Dongng Xiang of China in the 1982 New Delhi Asian Games.

Vietnam also took the team gold, while Thailand carried away the sport pistol individual women's title and Singapore took the women's team gold in squash.

Dang also broke the existing South East Asian Games record of 585 points set by Philippine shooter Chona Samaniego in Bangkok in 1985.

Conception Samaniego also surpassed the old SEA Games record with 567 points to take the silver while Thailand's Thirunam Jinda bagged the bronze with 583 points.

Dang's efforts in the event also gave Vietnam the gold medal in the team event with a total of 1,755 points, another improvement on the existing sea games record.

The ladies shooting teams from Thailand and Philippines garnered the silver the the bronze medals with respective totals of 1,731 and 1,727.

Philippines runner Lydia de Veda Mercado waves to supporters after winning the women's 100 metres gold at the 16th South East Asian Games (SEA) in Manila on Nov 30. Lydia beat the favourite G. Shathi of Malaysia clocking 11.44.

Thailand's Rampai Sriyat took the gold in the individual competition of the sport pistol finals, winning over hometown best Celina De Castro and Indonesian Nuris Melly. The team gold went to the Philippines with a total of 1,689 points. An earlier AP-report said,

# Time stands still for them

**MANILA, Dec 1:** The sun takes a long time to set for Southeast Asia's champion athletes, reports Reuter.

Winner of six medals, Malaysia's 'Iron man' Hanapiyah Nasser still jumps, runs and heaves at 33, a full decade after he won his first decathlon title in the South East Asian Games.

The Games' oldest swimmer, Singaporean Ang Teng Stong, continues to strike gold at 29, winning the 50-metre freestyle race at the current 16th Games in Manila.

Bull-necked Bancha Supanorns of Thailand still hurls the shot further than any man in Southeast Asia. He is 33.

Only a shoulder injury prevented 35-year-old Philippine musician Jaime Sebastian from winning his 25th gold medals last Wednesday as the Games' dominant weightlifter in the past 14 years.

These four are among an elite group of athletes in the Manila Games who have shown that discipline and being able to endure the pain of training can slow down the ravages of time.

"It's very difficult to decide whether to retire or not", Nasser said.

"Athletics is in my blood. To retire is like parting with someone you have loved all your life... If I win another medal this year, I'll carry on."

Nasser has won six medals, four of them golds, since he first represented Malaysia in the 1981 decathlon.

Another Malaysian, Nordin Jadi, who has won nine medals in the 400 metres since 1981, said he would run for as long as his legs could carry him.

"The American hurdler George Foster won the world title in Tokyo this year. He is 35. If he can make it, why should I quit? I still have two or three years left," Jadi said.

Built like a sumo wrestler, Thailand's Bancha clenched, made faces at the crowd and flexed his muscles like a boy before throwing the shot 16.25 metres to win the gold medal on Saturday.

It was a Games record and Bancha's fifth shot put title at the biennial Games.

"I want to show my son that his father can do it one more time," Bachan said. "Being old is no problem."

Many Filipinos though Lydia de Vega-Mercado, 26, slowed down by marriage and childbirth, had seen better years.

But on Saturday, 10 years after winning her first Games gold in the 100 metres,

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"The determination to take hard work, I don't see that anymore," Nasser said. "They don't work to death... because things come quite easy for them."

When he was younger, Nasser recalled, he found it difficult to get even a pair of spikes for training.

"An athlete will know when it's time to quit", he said.

"When you feel that there is no motivation that you can get from yourself, then the time has come. If you cannot follow the training schedule, then you should make a full stop."

"In athletics, you cannot cheat anybody. When you run, you're competing against yourself because that's the biggest enemy in athletics... You have your enemy inside you."

# Morales makes a triumphant return

**MINNEAPOLIS, Minnesota, Dec 1:** Pablo Morales made a triumphant return to competitive swimming on Saturday by winning the 100 metre butterfly at the US Open swimming championships, reports Reuter.

Morales, the 1984 Olympic silver medalist and world record holder in the event, led an American sweep of the top three places with a winning time of 54.18 seconds.

Sean Quackenbush finished second in 54.60 and Mark Henderson clocked 54.85 to finish third.

Morales, who had not competed since losing a quality

for the 1988 Olympics, admitted to a bout of nerves on his return.

"I had to remember how I used to approach races three years ago, it felt good to be back out there," he said.

"I'm lucky the race was 100 metres instead of 105 or 110 as I'd be in trouble," he added, laughing.

American swimmers also swept the women's 200 metre freestyle with Gitta Jescen leading the way in 2:01.20 Sarah Anderson was second in 2:02.07 and Mizzi Kremer clocked 2:03.45 for third.

Janie Wagstaff, one of the top US Olympic prospects for 1992, posted an impressive

win the women's 100 metre backstroke in a time of 1:01.51 seconds, nearly a second and a half faster than teammate in a Thames, who finished second.

Australian swimmers again demonstrated their strength, winning for events for the second successive night.

Jacqueline McKenzie won her second race in as many nights with a 4:49.63 victory in the 400 metre individual medley. McKenzie won the 200 M on Friday, the opening night of the three-day meeting.

Australian Simon Upton held off US Olympic veteran and former world record holder David Berkoff to win the men's 100 metre backstroke in 56.87 seconds. Berkoff clocked 57.03.

Ian Brown scored an Australian victory in the men's 200 metre freestyle and Susan O'Neil beat American Angel Martino to win the women's 100 metre butterfly by more than a full second.

Australia's O'Neil clocked 1:00.50, while Martino, winner of Friday's 50 metre freestyle, was second in 1:01.73.

But Australia's Hayley Lewis, the world 200 metre freestyle champion, was forced to pull out of Saturday's races despite

qualifying for the 400 M.

Lewis suffered a punctured eardrum in a freak practice accident earlier this week and, although a doctor gave her the go ahead to compete, she complained of dizziness during her individual medley prebendary.

"Everything I put my head underwater it hurt," she said.

## Beijing launches Olympiad bid

**BEIJING, Dec 1:** Beijing formally submitted its application on Sunday to host the 2000 Olympics, the New China News Agency (NCNA) reported, reports Reuter.

The city plans to build a 100,000 seat stadium, gymnasium, swimming pool, tennis centre, indoor cycling track, equestrian course and Olympic village, the NCNA said.

Beijing announced it intended bidding for the Olympics immediately after hosting the 11th Asian Games last year.

Other cities seeking to host the Games are Berlin, Brasilia, Sydney, Manchester, Milan and Istanbul.

## Monaco win in French soccer

**PARIS, Dec 1:** Monaco showed glimpses of their old form on Saturday to beat bottom-placed Nancy 4-1 in the French soccer league and close the gap on leaders Marseille to three points, reports Reuter.

James Debah more than compensated for the absence of leading striker George Weah by scoring twice.

A goal in the closing minutes by Brazilian Geraldo gave Prit St Germain a 2-2 draw at Auxerre. The Paris Club are third, four points behind Marseille who drew 0-0 at home to struggling Lyon.

Fins recorded their first home win this season by beating Toulon 2-1, thanks to two goals from Jules Bocande.

## DC Gold Cup on in Rajbari

**RAJBARI, Dec 1:** The Rajbari DC Gold Cup football tournament began at the local stadium yesterday, reports ISS.

State Minister for Youth and Sports Sadeq Hossain inaugurated the tournament. State Minister for Cultural Affairs Professor Jahannara Begum was also present.

Speaking on the occasion, the State Minister for Youth and Sports said that Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman had tried his best to improve the standard of sports and games in the country. He reaffirmed that the present government was committed to materialising the dreams of Shaheed Zia. He said that the Rajbari Stadium would be converted into a full-fledged stadium in future.

In her speech, the State Minister for Cultural Affairs Prof Jahannara Begum said that the government would do everything possible for the promotion of sports in Rajbari district. She called upon the sportsmen to uphold the glorious sporting tradition of Rajbari.

Seventeen football teams including Federation Cup champions Brothers Union of Dhaka are taking part in the tournament.

## Asia Cup karate

The third Asia Cup karate competition is going to be held in Modhya Pradesh, India, from December 16, says a press release.

Interested clubs willing to take part in this journey on a club basis are requested to contact K M Rahman Bappt (Black belt fourth Dan) chief instructor of the Bangladesh Royal Bengal Tiger Karate Rangfa Club at 20, Banagram Road, Dhaka.



Scene from yesterday's First Division league play at the NSC chess room. — Star photo

# Witsken wins S Africa Open

**JOHANNESBURG, Dec 1:** American Todd Witsken won the first singles title of his career Sunday, beating defending champion Wayne Ferreira 4-6, 6-3, 6-4 in the Altech-Xerox South African Open, reports AP.

Witsken, 28, fought back with a patient baseline game and sharp returns of Ferreira's second serve after dropping his first set of the tournament. His victory denied Ferreira, 20 of South Africa, the chance to become the first repeat winner of the \$100,000 tournament since American Vitas Gerulaitis took the title in 1981 and 1982.

In the doubles final, to be played later Sunday, fourth seeds Stefan Kruger and Danie Visser of South Africa took on unseeded American Kevin Curren and South African Royce Depe. Curren was born in South Africa but moved to the United States in the 1980s to avoid a sporting ban because of apartheid.

The partisan crowd that in-

cluded 80 Miss World finalists visiting South Africa tried to cheer-Ferreira, the fifth seed, to another gutsy victory in the weeklong tournament.

Hindered all week by a sore right knee, Ferreira took part in some of the tournament's most memorable matches. He outlasted, compatriot Gary Muller in a three tiebreaker struggle to reach the semifinals, then led top seed Petr Korda 7-6, 2-0 when the Czechoslovak had to quit playing because of a sore back.

Sunday's match opened with the unseeded Witsken breaking Ferreira's serve, but the South African quickly broke back to take a 3-2 lead. In the 10th game, with Ferreira up 5-4, the American fired long then double-faulted on set point.

Witsken came back in the second set, breaking Ferreira early by returning winners off the South African's second serve. Ferreira tried to overpower Witsken with powerful ground strokes, but Witsken ran them down and fired back his own well-placed missiles.

Another winner of Ferreira's second serve gave Witsken the break and the set in the ninth game.

Ferreira regained control early in the third set, breaking Witsken in the first game and setting the tempo with strong baseline play. Ferreira led 4-2 when Witsken seemed to increase his intensity to win on his service, then break Ferreira in the eighth game.

Witsken then held service and outgained Ferreira, again taking advantage of the South African's second serve, to win the match.

The tournament was the second in two weeks to draw top players to South Africa.

South Africa was boycotted for years by most international sporting bodies because of apartheid, but sports barriers have dropped with recent political reforms.

"I know all the players are happy that we can finally come back and play tennis in South Africa," Witsken said during post-match ceremonies.