

Parameswaran shares lead

Sports Reporter

India's International Master T.N. Parameswaran scored an impressive victory over Bangladesh FIDE Master Jamilur Rahman to move jointly on top

Tahmidur Rahman's crucial match against India's V. Koshi was adjourned yesterday after 62nd move with the Indian FIDE Master in advantageous position. Tahmid now needs at least 1 1/2 points to earn his first

of Bangladesh in 39th move. Ashraf in yet to register a victory and have only 1/2 point after eleven matches. Lodhi's point collection rose to 7 1/2 after 10 matches. Zillur Rahman won against Maroof Ahmed after 33rd



Action from yesterday's United Insurance chess match between Indians V. Sareen and Neeraj Kumar Misra at the NSC chess room. The match ended in a draw. —Star photo

of the point table with FIDE Master Tahmidur Rahman of Bangladesh after the completion of the eleventh round matches of the United Insurance International Masters Chess Championship yesterday at National Sports Council's chess room. Parameswaran playing with white pieces beat Tahmidur Rahman in 38 moves.

norm for International Master. After this match he will be playing against two local players — FIDE Master Yonus Hasan and International Master Zillur Rahman in Chittagong. Pakistani International Master Mahmud Ahmed Lodhi moved up to second position after his victory over Tahmidur Rahman in 38 moves.

move. Zillur have now earned seven points from eleven outings. Younus Hasan beat Almasur Rahman after 37th move. Two Indian players Niraj Kumar Misra and Vishal Shareen drew their game after 45th move. The twelfth round matches will begin today at the same venue.

BTF fetes Davis Cuppers

The Bangladesh Tennis Federation yesterday accorded a reception at its office in honour of the Bangladesh Davis Cup team which beat Bahrain 3-2 in the Asia Oceania Zone Group Two first round recently at Manama, reports BSS. The team led by Prof. Rashiduddin Ahmed, returned home Tuesday. Bangladesh will play Sri Lanka in the Group Two quarter-final from June 14 to 16 in Dhaka.

Evert's pick

NEW YORK, May 8: Seventime French Open champion Chris Evert is picking Steffi Graf and Andre Agassi to win this month's French Open, the second Grand Slam tournament of the year, reports Reuter. "I have to go with Steffi. I feel she has a lot to prove. She is the hungriest of all the players," said Evert, who made her predictions on Tuesday at a news conference announcing the name-change of 38-year-old magazine World Tennis to Tennis Illustrated starting with the September issue. "I think her confidence will grow and grow," said Evert, referring to Graf's victory in Monday's Hamburg final over Yugoslav teenager Monica Seles, who supplanted Graf as world number one. "She's my pick. And it will be one of her biggest wins because she's gone through a dry spell of 15 months." Graf, who won her last Grand Slam title at the 1990 Australian Open, lost to Seles in last year's French final. Evert, a contributor to the magazine, was not as confident about her pick on the men's side. "I'd love to see (Boris) Becker win it. The last time he played he was very discouraged. Evert, who is five months pregnant, said in a telephone hookup from Florida. "Then there's Lendl and... oh boy," she said, contemplating the possibilities. "I'm going to pick Agassi."

Fowler, Akram inspire Lancs

LONDON, May 8: Graeme Fowler blasted 136 to inspire holders Lancashire to a record breaking day and a place in the quarter-finals of the Benson and Hedges Cup on Tuesday, reports AFP. Unbeaten Lancashire beat Sussex by 123 runs and finished top of Group C of the one-day competition. Fowler's 136 was the highest by a Lancashire player in one-day competition and the country's total of 330 for four off their 55 overs was also its highest in the competition.

Worcestershire, Northamptonshire, Essex, Warwickshire, Kent, Yorkshire and Hampshire join them in the quarter-finals. Lancashire thrilled an Old Trafford crowd with their performance. Neil Fairbrother joined the run feast with 50 in 21 balls and England opener Mike Atherton hit 91. Jamie Hall's 71 was the best for Sussex who slumped to 207 all out after a devastating spell by Wasim Akram (four for 18).



WASIM AKRAM...4 for 18

Worcestershire's Australian run machine Tom Moody finally had an off day as his country lost their unbeaten record in the tournament to Northamptonshire at Northampton. Moody has scored three centuries already this season, but got only 17 this time. His partner Graeme Hick managed only 14 and Ian Botham was out for a duck as the visitors finished 75 runs short of Northamptonshire's 248 for nine. But Worcestershire captain Phil Neal hit an unbeaten 52 and the tail end did enough to ensure the county reached the 161 needed to finish top of Group A.

Northamptonshire finished second. Opener Alan Fordham hit 70 and vice captain Robert Bailey 55 to build the foundations of Northants total. Warwickshire claimed a one-run win over Surrey with 23.2 overs to spare after the Londoners had put down their pocket calculators and launched a bold chase at the Oval. Some quickfire runs were scored in the day's other games as counties scrambled for qualifying places. Darren Bicknell scored a rousing 53 in 34 balls, but Surrey failed to make their 185-victory target in 23.2

Nottinghamshire's Paul Johnson hit an explosive century off only 75 balls to set up a 51-run victory over Minor Counties at Trent Bridge, but they still failed to qualify. Johnson made 102 not out and Derek Randall chipped in with 84 as the home side made a commanding 279 for five. The part-timers produced a spirited reply thanks to 100 not out from Nick Folland who completed his ton off the game's final ball. Kent made the last eight with a crushing 130-run win over Scotland at Hamilton crescent in Glasgow. The visitors made 319 for eight — their highest score in the competition. Gold award winner Neil Taylor hit 110 and the innings also saw a whirlwind 52 off 19 balls from Matthew Fleming, including four sixes on the trot off Jerry Moir.

Close call for Permadi

BRONDBY, Denmark, May 8: Indonesian badminton star Fung Permadi rode his luck here on Tuesday to avoid becoming the second big-name casualty in the world men's singles championship, reports AFP. The 23-year-old joint fifth seed was taken all the way by England number two Steve Butler before claiming his place in the third round with a 4-15, 15-10, 15-11 victory. Permadi's performance in the first set incurred the wrath of coach Rudy Hartono, the eight-times All England champion. "He should not have let Butler dictate his game," stormed Hartono. "Butler is a fighter." But the Indonesian coach was delighted with the come-

back in the final two sets which stretched Permadi's unbeaten run against Butler to four matches. "Luckily in the second and third games he didn't give Butler a chance to attack and his netting was good," Hartono commented. "That is how he should play." The Permadi-Butler match was the closest in the men's singles second round. The women's singles second round produced two surprises, but not major ones as two of the joint ninth seeds - Thailand's Somharuthai Jaroensiri and Canadian Doris Piche were knocked out. Piche fell 12-10, 2-11, 4-11 to Indonesian Lilik Sudarwati, while Jaroensiri crashed 9-11, 5-11 to Chinese number six Liu Yuhong. While the 18-year-old from

Sichuan province is better known as a doubles player, she did win a bronze medal at the Asian Championships in the singles and lifted last year's Swedish Open title. Jaroensiri's drubbing completed an unhappy 10 days for the chunky Thai number one as she managed only one win in her three Sudirman Cup matches last week. Clearly her world ranking of nine is way too high. Earlier, Sweden's Catrine Bengtsson - joint ninth seed in the women's singles and fifth in the doubles - pulled out of the championships because of illness. She was replaced in the doubles by Christine Magnusson, who will partner Maria Bengtsson. They will not be seeded, however, even though they are ranked seventh in the world.

Rotterdam to take no chances

ROTTERDAM, May 8: Rotterdam mayor Bram Peper may call off next week's European Cup Wimmers' Cup final in his city if the danger of crowd violence is too great, reports Reuter. The match between Manchester United and Barcelona on May 15 marks the first appearance of an English club in a European soccer final since the Heysel Stadium disaster in Brussels six years ago. Peper told a news conference on Tuesday: "Our conclusion after many consultations is that the match can go on. There is no evidence to lead us to think we should prevent it."

"But if it appears there are too many risks, change in this decision is still possible." Rotterdam police officials are to visit their counterparts in Barcelona and Manchester this week for discussions and the situation will then be reviewed. This season English clubs were readmitted on a limited basis to European competition for the first time since 1985 when 39 people died when fans rioted before the European Cup final between Liverpool and Juventus of Italy. Some 1,000 police will be on duty on the evening of the match and a further 500 soccer officials and plainclothes security personnel will be stationed inside the city's Feyenoord stadium.

The mayor said Rotterdam had built on the experience of the past and consulted with police in Spain, Belgium, Britain and France on how to cope with the estimated 32,000 supporters expected to stream into the city from abroad. Rotterdam police chief Jaap de Leeuw said visibly drunk fans would not be allowed in. "The main principle is to keep the supporters from the two sides apart," De Leeuw said. United fans will be kept to the north of the city, while Spanish supporters will be led to the stadium from the south. Ample space will be kept between fans in the seated stadium which has a capacity of 56,000. Some 16,000 tick-

ets have been sold to each side and no more than 47,000 people would be allowed in, De Leeuw said. Many city restaurants and bars have said they would close or refuse to serve alcohol to avoid rowdiness in the city. Ferries carrying fans will not have alcohol on board. The city has seen soccer violence before. In 1988 a fan hurled a home-made bomb onto the pitch during an international between the Netherlands and Cyprus, injuring the Cypriot goalkeeper, and the following year some 40 fans and three police were injured in street clashes between Dutch and supporters of the former West Germany before a World Cup qualifier.

Sabatini's smooth sailing

ROME, May 8: Former champion Gabriela Sabatini made a smooth start in the 500,000 dollars women's Italian Open tennis tournament with a straight sets victory in the second round on Tuesday, reports Reuter. Argentine second seed Sabatini, who had a bye in the first round, beat South African Amanda Coetzer 6-2, 6-2 following an afternoon delay because of rain. Sabatini, champion in 1988 and 1989, said that although world number two Steffi Graf was not playing in Rome, the tournament promised to be a tough one. "Only Graf is missing, but it's very hard all the same. The rival to beat is always (holder Monica) Seles," Sabatini said. Italy's number one Sandra



GABRIELA SABATINI

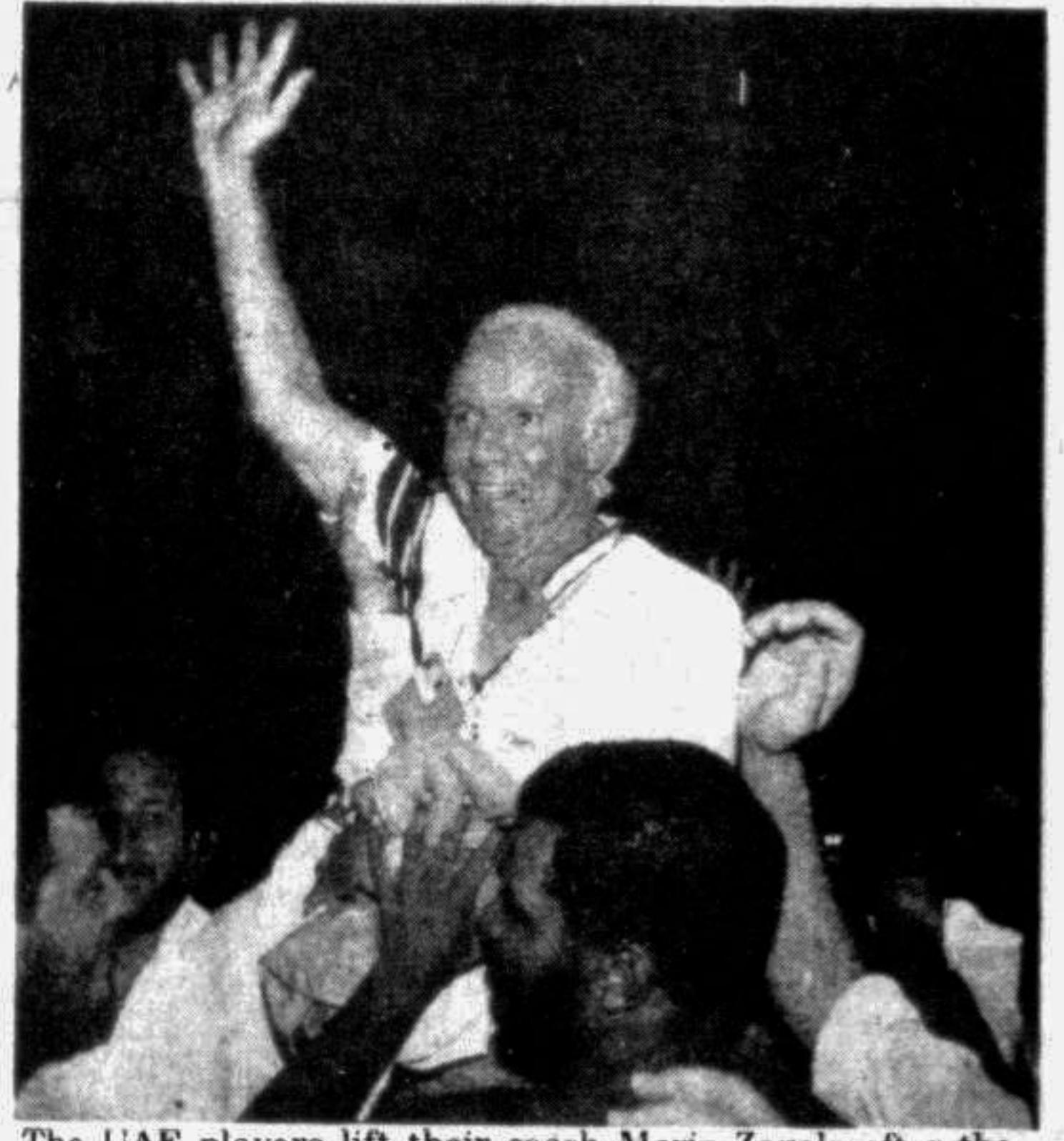
world, pulled back to 4-1 in the second set before rain again interrupted play. "I was pathetic. I gave the match away," Cecchini said. Compatriot Laura Garrone, who struggled to beat Eva Sviglerova of Czechoslovakia 2-6, 7-6, 7-5 in the first round, said: "Here in Rome there's a particular tension in the air for us Italians. Defeats hurt more and aren't so easily forgotten." Title given up NEW YORK, May 8: Simon Brown became the second champion in two weeks to relinquish his International Boxing Federation title when he gave up his IBF welterweight crown on Tuesday, reports Reuter. Brown still holds the World Boxing Council welterweight title, which he won from compatriot Maurice Blocker



Citizen of Pamplona in Spain put up this effigy of Maradona on May 7 which they will burn on June 2. —AFP photo

The dance of the chairs

RIO DE JANEIRO, May 8: Managing a Brazilian soccer club must rank as one of the sporting world's most insecure jobs, reports Reuter. The statistics are alarming. Of the 20 teams in the First Division of the Brazilian championship, none has had the same coach for more than seven months. The international club from Porto Alegre have used seven coaches in the past year, while Sao Paulo and Portuguesa have each employed four in the same period. Only Santos and Bragantino among the First Division teams have employed fewer than three coaches in the past 12 months. The coaches have been sacked since the Brazilian championship started at the end of January. They include Mario Zagalo, Brazil's World Cup-winning coach in 1970, who was unceremoniously ditched after less than six months in charge of Vasco Da Gama. Zagalo, who shared in Brazil's 1958 and 1962 triumphs as a player, is a legend abroad but failure to provide the instant success Brazilian clubs demand outweighed his past achievements. "In Europe you get a one or two year contract and you know you have got that time ahead of you. But in Brazilian soccer they want miracles. They want you to turn something that is bad into some-



The UAE players lift their coach Mario Zagalo after the Gulf state qualified for last year's World Cup in Italy. —Star file photo

thing that is good overnight." Zagalo said. Corinthians are currently the most loyal employers, having kept Nelsoninho Asecoach since last September. "If you stay in the same job for one year, you can consider it a historic fact," Botafogo coach Valdir Espinosa said. His chances of long service look slim. The Brazilian press are predicting he is about to become the latest casualty. A Brazilian coach knows that two successive defeats can be enough to put his job on the line. But the alarm bells really sound when the team's supporters begin to chant "burro", a Portuguese word meaning stupid and donkey, during a match. When that happens the coach knows it is time to start looking for a new job. The frequent changing of coaches is known in the trade as "the dance of the chairs." But there are now so many unemployed coaches that some have renamed it "dancing with wolves" after the award-winning Hollywood film. Zagalo's dismissal in February was typical. "I inherited a team that had problems but that also had a good future ahead of it. We got a lot of draws, away to some of Brazil's best teams, but the results had to come today," he said. "There is no stability. The blame always falls on the coach." Espinosa said: "Zagalo is a world champion. But nobody values this. It is totally wrong. There is no respect for the professional at all." Brazilian coaches say the lack of the stability seriously affects the standards of the country's national game. "As a coach you need two years to develop a good understanding with the players," Espinosa said. "But here this does not happen. Just as the players are beginning to get used to one coach and his methods, out he goes. In comes another and they have to start all over again." "I'd say in Brazil a coach holds on to one job for an average of six months." A change for the better is unlikely. "In Brazilian soccer, the directors want to win so they look good. And when they don't, they throw the blame on the manager. They don't know to wait," Zagalo said.

Santoro fuels French hopes

PARIS, May 8: France, sorely in need of new tennis talent to replace a generation of fading stars, may well have found one in a Roman arena in southern France last weekend, reports Reuter. Fabrice Santoro came of age in tennis terms in the Cauldron of the Davis Cup, one of the most demanding yet rewarding competitions for professionals. While most of the French team were accompanied by glamorous girlfriends and wives, the 18-year-old Santoro's kiss after his victory over Australian Wally Masur in the final rubber was from his mother. French tennis is at a turning point, with some stars past the peak, others in their mid-20s failing to live up to their promises and youngsters like Santoro coming at the bit. Yannick Noah, at 30 the country's most flamboyant player, sat nervously at court-side during the Davis Cup quarter-final tie in Nimes, showing mixed feelings about his new role as team captain. Tempted to select himself,

Noah said on Saturday. "I'd love to be out there. It's as much as I can do to stop myself taking off my tracksuit and picking up the racket." Guy Forget, French number one and world number five, was the obvious choice for the team, and played in three rubbers, winning two of them to set up France's victory. But Henri Leconte, who has promised so much for years, has been unable to maintain the dazzling form that occasionally makes him one of the world's best. Apart from Forget and Leconte, France's strength is limited, with players like Jean-Philippe Fleurian, Thierry Tulasne and Cedric Pioline the most promising until Santoro arrived on the scene. Team spirit under Noah has obviously soared since he took over the Davis Cup team. Singing in the restaurant after Sunday's victory and vocal support during games attest to his positive influence. But team spirit will not be enough if Noah wants to recreate the golden era of the 1920s and '30s, when France's 'Four Musketeers' held the Davis Cup solid bowl on six occasions before losing it in

1933 to a British team led by Fred Perry. French tennis veterans still speak in hushed tones of the team led by Jean Borotra, with Rene Lacoste, Henri Cochet and Jacques Brugnon. The Roland Garros Stadium in Paris was built solely to host the country's Davis Cup matches. Sixty years on, with Noah at the helm, fans sense a resurgence and youngsters like Santoro are fueling the hope. "I believe this team can succeed. There's an atmosphere that reminds me of 1982 when we reached the final," Noah said. At 18, the Tahiti-born Santoro has had a solid grounding in the two years since he turned professional. Ranked 571st in the world in 1988, he has jumped to his current status of 66th. Santoro's Davis Cup debut on Friday was a disappointment. He lost in straight sets to Richard Fromberg, his precision game wrecked by the gale-force winds that swept Nimes. But he came into his own in Sunday's decider, passing to the right and left with his double forehand and backhand and lobbing Masur with a precision

that Bjorn Borg would have envied in his heyday. "It seemed like a stroll in the park for him," Masur said afterwards. The youngster, whose biggest individual feat until now has been to reach the third round of the US Open last year, still has a lot of work to do on his game. He acknowledges his service is weak and relies on the double-handed grip to increase the power of his shots. But colleagues say his speed around the court and the accuracy of his shots make him the hottest prospect for many years. Unlike many top players, he is only too willing to talk about his weaknesses, one of which is grass. Asked by an overweight British journalist if he was considering playing at Wimbledon this year, he shook his head, telling his questioner: "No, but I think I might be able to beat you if you give me a set's start." Santoro said he planned to play in the Italian and French Opens this summer, interspersing competition with training for the Davis Cup semifinal against Yugoslavia in September.

Juventus' prescription

TURIN, May 8: Ailing Italian soccer giants Juventus have imposed strict controls on players speaking to the media until the end of the season, reports Reuter. "Juventus is unwell and we think the best medicine is a bit of silence," the Turin Club's general manager Enrico Bondini said on Monday. Juventus, rich in talent with Italian World Cup players Salvatore Schillaci and Roberto Baggio and Germany's Thomas similar margin in a later match. In the two other quarter-finals of the under-16 tournament, scheduled Wednesday, hosts India will take on Hong Kong while New Zealand will meet Thailand. All four semi-finalists will travel to Barcelona, Spain in September for the final rounds of the tournament, regarded as a junior Davis Cup. In the girls' section, Chinese Taipei, South Korea and China made it into the last eight round earlier in the day.

Chang overcomes nerves

CHARLOTTE, North Carolina, May 8: Top seed Michael Chang overcame a case of nerves to oust Sweden's Niclas Kroon 6-0, 7-5 in a first round match at the US men's clay court tennis championships on Tuesday, reports Reuter. Second seeded American Derrick Rostagno, however, let a big first set lead slip away and fell to Peruvian clay court specialist Pablo Arraya 7-6, 6-3. In other first round encounters, third seeded defending champion David Wheaton bounced fellow-American Chuck Adams 6-4, 6-3 and fourth seeded American Richey Reneberg, fresh from claiming his first career title in Tampa on Sunday, fought off Raul Viver of Ecuador 6-4, 7-5. Despite an admitted case of pre-match jitters, the speedy change rolled through the opening set without dropping a game.

The second set proved to be more of a battle as the players exchanged service breaks the opening two games and again in games six and seven. Kroon forced Chang on the defensive, but the world number 10, a natural counter puncher, was up to the challenge. The Swede became his worst enemy when serving to stay in the match at 5-8 a series of errors, including a missed backhand volley a backhand groundstroke error. Rostagno had built 4-0 and 5-2 first set lead when his game began to unravel, especially from the service line. Arraya, ranked 102 places below Rostagno at 124th, broke the American in the ninth and 11th games to force a tiebreak which he won 7-3. The Peruvian continued to play a patient clay court game in the second set, breaking Rostagno in the eighth game on the second seed's seventh double fault and served out the match. "I figured that he's not the kind of guy who likes clay, so I just played a really boring game and kept the points going as long as I could," Arraya explained.

Israeliis shock Aussies in world youth tennis BOMBAY, May 8: Unfenced Israel, inflicted a shock defeat on top-seeded Australia in the boys quarter-finals of the 13-nation World Youth Cup Australia Zone tennis tournament here Tuesday, reports AFP. The Israelis bounced back from a 0-1 deficit to oust the unimpressive Aussies 2-1