

Club Cup kicks off today

Sports Reporter

telecast live all the nine matches of the meet from the Dhaka Stadium. BTW will pay Taka 50,000 per match to BFF for the telecasting rights. The tournament is being jointly organised by the Bangladesh Football Federation and the Dhaka Metropolitan Football Clubs Association with three leading teams from Calcutta and Dhaka fighting for the honours. The Big Three of Calcutta soccer — Calcutta Mohammedans, East Bengal and Mohun Bagan and the Dhaka Mohammedians and Brothers Union — have been split in two clusters with the top two finishers in the robin league qualifying for the semifinals scheduled for June 4 and 5. The final will be on June 7. The tourney is being sponsored by the Bangladesh Tobacco Company (BTC) who are



The stage is set for the BTC Club Cup charity football tournament in aid of the April 29 cyclone victims with the celebrated East Bengal Club of Calcutta meeting local Brothers Union in the curtain raiser to day at the Dhaka Stadium. The match kicks off at 4.30 pm. In the second match of day, at 6.30 pm, Mohun Bagan will face their traditional arch Calcutta rivals Mohammedan Sporting. Sports Minister for Youth and Sports Sadeq Hossain Khoka will inaugurate the six-team, eight day meet. The BFF and BTW settled their differences over match royalties yesterday and as a result Bangladesh Television will



Former stalwarts Chunnun and Gaffar briefing Abahani players after practice yesterday at the Abahani ground on the eve of BTC Club Cup soccer. — Star photo.

Calcutta sides hopeful

Sports Reporter

All the three Calcutta teams taking part in the BTC Club Cup soccer, expressed their deep sympathy for the cyclone affected people of Bangladesh in separate press briefings yesterday at a local hotel. The Indian clubs said that they are not taking any guarantee money or appearance money keeping in their mind the noble cause for which the tourney has been arranged. Despite forming the team only three weeks back, East Bengal are optimistic about winning this tournament. East Bengal last year had quite a successful season by winning Rovers Cup, Durand Cup and IFA shield. They will represent India in the 11th Asian Club Cup tournament. The star-studded East Bengal with 13 international and seven national players in their ranks have high respects for the Dhaka Clubs. Calcutta Mohammedans are bubbling with enthusiasm after winning two tournaments in Indian last month. The tourneys were Strafford Cup and Nagji Trophy. Despite having some injury problems they hope to provide a positive brand of soccer with blend of youth and experience in their ranks. The reigning Calcutta league champions Mohun Bagan said they hope to win the Cup.

providing the organisers with a sum of Tk eight lakh, but organisers hope to reap in another 26 lakh from gate receipts. The Calcutta teams and the local clubs had their practice sessions yesterday "at the Dhaka Stadium. Following are the groupings: Group A — Mohun Bagan, Calcutta Mohammedans and Abahani KC. Group B — East Bengal, Dhaka Mohammedans and Brothers Union. Rate of gallery tickets has been fixed at Tk 20 each, VIP Gate No-2 Tk 70, Gate No 3/A Tk 50 and Gate No 3/B at Tk 30 each. With the local soccer scene virtually in limbo due to the non-holding of the Senior Division League last season the club cup meet should go a long way in whetting the thirst of the innumerable soccer fans of the city and the country as a whole.

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Women's soccer

FUKUOKA, Japan, May 30: Defending champions China overwhelmed Taiwan 3-0 here Wednesday in the eighth Asian women's football meet, a qualifier for the world Championships in November. Second seed Becker, who dreams of taking his first court title, came back from two sets down as he struggled with a leg injury to beat Australian Todd Woodbridge 5-7, 1-6, 6-4, 6-4, 6-4. Connors, four times a semifinalist here and still going strong at the age of 38, thrilled the Centre Court crowd with his 6-4, 6-2, 3-6, 0-6, 6-4 victory over Haitian Ronald Agassi.

But the centenary tournament lost one of its favourites, Spaniard Sergi Bruguera, the Monte Carlo Open champion and the most successful man on clay so far this season. Bruguera, the fifth seed, hurt his back while leading Italy's Omar Camporese 6-1, 6-2, 4-6, 0-1 and was forced to pull out in agony. His departure, coupled with the defeat of his compatriot Emilio Sanchez by Switzerland's Jakob Hlasek on Wednesday and the first-round retirement of injured Czechoslovak Karel Novacek, cleared a path for Andre Agassi, last year's losing finalist. After three days of the tournament, there are no other seeds left in Agassi's quarter of the draw, giving the American an easy run to the semifinals. Agassi, seeded fourth, was barely stretched on Wednesday, beating Czechoslovak Petr Korda 6-1, 6-2, 6-2. His easy victory provided a sharp contrast with Becker's struggle, which lasted four hours and 25 minutes. "I don't know how I won it, to tell you the truth," admitted Becker, who came into the French Open after nearly four weeks troubled by back and leg injuries. Broken in the opening games of the fourth and fifth sets, Becker had to battle uphill all the way for victory, winning both sets on a break. Cheered on by screaming, squealing youngsters, Becker finally made it when Woodbridge put a backhand into the net on matchpoint. "It came down to his strength," said an admiring Woodbridge who was happy with his best-ever performance against a top player. "He is a champion." Becker, three times Wimbledon champion, was reluctant to discuss his injury. "I am still in the tournament so I don't want to talk about it," he said. "But already this morning I didn't feel so good." Connors left Centre Court to a standing ovation after three hours 39 minutes of entertaining tennis. The American, who has won eight Grand Slam singles titles but never the French in his 21-year career, will play 1989 champion Michael Chang, half his age, in the third round. Connors, who finished the match with a break, admitted to letting the fourth set go in a bid to conserve energy. Second seed Steffi Graf, who had expected to meet Maleeva-Fragiere in the fourth round, displayed the power of old in her 6-0, 6-1 thrashing of Czechoslovak Petra Langrova.

They are very talented. I admire them. "Needless to say I'm disappointed, unhappy. The players were in tears. "The teams were so even you can't say the best team won. "I speak for my players when I say they will do everything to win next year." Red Star coach Ljupko Petrovic admitted his team never looked like winning and told them to play for a penalty shoot-out. "We realised we could not really beat Marseille unless they made a mistake, so I told my players to be patient and to wait for penalties. "The only trouble (with the shoot-out) was that Savcevic was originally designated to take a penalty. When he was injured I was a bit worried. I replaced him with Bivic, and when Bivic, normally a nervous person, scored from a penalty I knew we were on our way to winning," said Petrovic. "It was not a great game. It was heavily influenced by tactics and players could not play as freely as they would like to. "Marseille are a very good team and we realised very quickly we could score only through a counter-attack. Prosnicki admitted they were fortunate to win. "We were luckier at the end, but those are the rules of the game. "Marseille are a great team. They completely killed our counter-attacks by good offside traps. "But they missed their chances, and you need to score to win." Goalkeeper Stevan Stojanovic said of his save: "I just decided to dive on the right side, totally instinctively. I guess I was lucky he shot at that side."

Red Star defended well and looked dangerous on the break in the first half when Savcevic and Prosnicki tried to put quick balls through to Bivic and Pancev. But the attacks dried up after the interval as the Yugoslavs concentrated on smothering their way to victory. Marseille president Bernard Tapie said: "There was no injustice. Penalties are part of the game. Maybe my players were not prepared for the penalties. Without being pretentious we thought we could win earlier. Money isn't everything. Red Star managed with no money to build a good team.

Red Star Belgrade lift European Cup

Penalties sink Marseilles

BARI, Italy, May 30: Red Star Belgrade won the European Cup final on penalties on Wednesday at the end of a disappointing game which failed to produce a single goal in two hours of teptid soccer, reports Reuter. A missed spot kick by full back Manuel Amoros with the French side's first attempt ultimately cost victory for Bernard Tapie's expensively assembled outfit as they went down 5-3 on penalties. Striker Darko Pancev, blotted out of the game in a one-sided match which had been totally dominated by Marseille, had the honour of blasting home the winning penalty to an explosion of joy from the 18,000 Yugoslav fans in the San Nicola Stadium. It was the first time a Yugoslav team had won the European Cup and only the second that a team from eastern Europe had done so. Steaua Bucharest of Romania were the first five years ago when they beat Barcelona, also on penalties after a goalless match. Red Star sweeper Modrag Belodedic, then a Romanian international but later a defector to Yugoslavia, became the first player to win the trophy with two different teams. Balodedic was one of the successful penalty takers for Red Star, along with Robert Prosnicki, Dragisa, Bivic, Sinisa Mihajlovic and Pancev. But the verdict by penalty lottery was an over-generous reward for Red Star's thoroughly inadequate contribution to a game many hoped would be a classic. Conditions were perfect—a great stadium, great fans from both sides, great weather and a great atmosphere. But the soccer was pitiful as the Yugoslavs showed an astonishing lack of ambition, contenting themselves with stalling the Marseille build-ups and scarcely attempting any serious attacks of their own. The result was a match almost totally devoid of interest, despite the presence of great players on each team such as Prosnicki and Dejan Savcevic for Red Star and Marseille's Chris Waddle and Abedi Pele. Marseille tried but at the end of a long season they lacked the freshness and imagination to unlock the secrets of the massed Yugoslav defence. They did have a few chances, the best 13 minutes from the end of normal time when Englishman Waddle was agonisingly close wide with a header from close range after a cross from captain Jean-Pierre Papin. Waddle was close again on the stroke of full time with another header, a miss which once again proved costly for Marseille, continuing a dismal series for French clubs in Europe. The outcome left France still unable to boast a winner in the history of the three European competitions.

Belgraders rejoice

HELGRADE, May 30: Thousands of joyous Belgraders dancing, firing in the air, letting off fireworks and sounding car horns poured into the city centre on Wednesday night to celebrate Red Star's European Cup victory, reports Reuter. Finally finding a reason to rejoice after months of crisis in Yugoslavia, people sang, cried and chanted nationalist slogans as they squeezed into Trg Republike, the city's main square. Fireworks lit up the sky and smoke belled out from smoke bombs, flares and fire crackers. Some passionate Serbs, Yugoslavia's biggest nationality, fired pistols into the air screaming "We are the champions" and "Serbia, Serbia" — the republic in which they live. Others climbed a huge statue of 19th century Serbian ruler Prince Mihailo on horseback and waved Serbian flags. A traffic policeman raised his arms in joy as he gave up trying to direct and endless line of cars honking horns with flag-waving fans on their bonnets. The Republic, often the scene of anti-communist opposition rallies where police have in the past battled protesters with tear gas, turned into a huge street party. "It was not a great game but the important thing is we won," one fan said after Red Star beat French champions Marseille on penalties in the Italian city of Bari after a disappointing 0-0 draw. Many fans, known as the "Delije" (heroes), were letting off steam after months of tension with the rival republic of Croatia which has triggered clashes that have killed more than 20 people this year.

Robson to stay at United

LONDON, May 30: England midfielder man Bryan Robson snubbed newly-promoted Shrewsbury Wednesday on Wednesday when he signed a new two-year contract with European Cup winners Manchester United, reports AFP. Wednesday, who are managed by former United boss Ron Atkinson, wanted the 34-year-old in a coaching capacity, but Robson clearly believes he can win a first English championship winners' medal with United in the next two years. "We're delighted to have reached agreement with Bryan," said Martin Edwards, United's chairman and chief executive. "It was obvious from our two Cup final appearances this season that Bryan is still a super player who has a lot to offer this club over the next two years. "Bryan himself thinks he

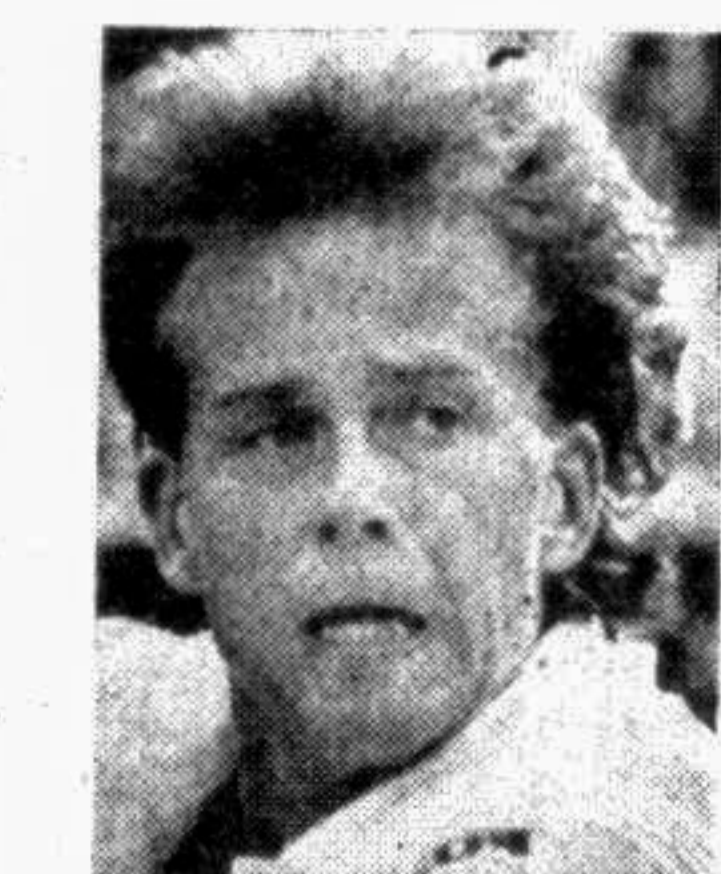


BRYAN ROBSON

has two years left at the highest level and when his contract expires he may well think the time is right for his career to take a new direction. Robson had also been linked with the assistant manager's vacancy at Old Trafford, but the favourite to replace Archie Knox as Alex Ferguson's deputy is Brian Kidd. One England midfielder definitely on the move is Nottingham Forest's Steve Hodge. He is thinking over a 700,000-pound transfer to Leeds. While Hodge may well be on the way to Elland Road, Glyn Snodin is on the way out, probably to Sunderland, although they face competition from two other Second Division sides in Blackburn and Barnsley. Meanwhile, Liverpool manager Graeme Souness has denied reports that he has agreed personal terms with Derby's England centre-half, Mark Wright. "It's a load of nonsense," the Scot stormed. "I've not done a deal with Mark Wright. I've spoken to Arthur Cox, the Derby manager, and he has promised to keep me in touch with the situation."

Edberg, Sabatini win easy

PARIS, May 30: Top-seed Stefan Edberg advanced to the third round of the French Open with a hard-fought four-set victory Thursday over Austria's Horst Skoff, but last year's giant-killer, Goran Ivanisevic, was ousted, reports AP. Edberg, No. 1 in the world rankings, had breezed through his first-round match in straight sets, but was within a break point of trailing two sets to one against Skoff before prevailing 6-4, 5-7, 7-6 (7-4), 6-3. The eighth-seeded Ivanisevic, who knocked Boris Becker out of the tournament last year, was ousted by Paul Haarhuis 6-1, 6-4, 6-1. The Dutchman, ranked 53rd in the world, never let Ivanisevic into the match. Most of the top women in



STEFAN EDBERG

action advanced easily, including No. 3 seed Gabriela Sabatini and 10th-seeded Jennifer Capriati. But Canada's Helen Kelesi, twice a French Open quarter finalist, eliminated 12th-seeded Helena Sukova, 4-6, 7-5, 6-0. It wasn't the first major upset for

Injured Becker battles through

PARIS, May 30: Roland Garros, saluted its heroes young and old when Boris Becker and Jimmy Connors battled through tough five-set matches to reach the third round of the French Open on Wednesday, reports Reuter. Second seed Becker, who dreams of taking his first court title, came back from two sets down as he struggled with a leg injury to beat Australian Todd Woodbridge 5-7, 1-6, 6-4, 6-4, 6-4. Connors, four times a semifinalist here and still going strong at the age of 38, thrilled the Centre Court crowd with his 6-4, 6-2, 3-6, 0-6, 6-4 victory over Haitian Ronald Agassi.

But the centenary tournament lost one of its favourites, Spaniard Sergi Bruguera, the Monte Carlo Open champion and the most successful man on clay so far this season. Bruguera, the fifth seed, hurt his back while leading Italy's Omar Camporese 6-1, 6-2, 4-6, 0-1 and was forced to pull out in agony. His departure, coupled with the defeat of his compatriot Emilio Sanchez by Switzerland's Jakob Hlasek on Wednesday and the first-round retirement of injured Czechoslovak Karel Novacek, cleared a path for Andre Agassi, last year's losing finalist. After three days of the tournament, there are no other seeds left in Agassi's quarter of the draw, giving the American an easy run to the semifinals. Agassi, seeded fourth, was barely stretched on Wednesday, beating Czechoslovak Petr Korda 6-1, 6-2, 6-2. His easy victory provided a sharp contrast with Becker's struggle, which lasted four hours and 25 minutes. "I don't know how I won it, to tell you the truth," admitted Becker, who came into the French Open after nearly four weeks troubled by back and leg injuries. Broken in the opening games of the fourth and fifth sets, Becker had to battle uphill all the way for victory, winning both sets on a break. Cheered on by screaming, squealing youngsters, Becker finally made it when Woodbridge put a backhand into the net on matchpoint. "It came down to his strength," said an admiring Woodbridge who was happy with his best-ever performance against a top player. "He is a champion." Becker, three times Wimbledon champion, was reluctant to discuss his injury. "I am still in the tournament so I don't want to talk about it," he said. "But already this morning I didn't feel so good." Connors left Centre Court to a standing ovation after three hours 39 minutes of entertaining tennis. The American, who has won eight Grand Slam singles titles but never the French in his 21-year career, will play 1989 champion Michael Chang, half his age, in the third round. Connors, who finished the match with a break, admitted to letting the fourth set go in a bid to conserve energy. Second seed Steffi Graf, who had expected to meet Maleeva-Fragiere in the fourth round, displayed the power of old in her 6-0, 6-1 thrashing of Czechoslovak Petra Langrova.

Bubka to leave USSR for France

OSLO, May 30: Record-breaking Soviet pole vaulter Sergei Bubka was quoted today as saying he wanted to leave his native country because it had become too unstable, reports Reuter. Bubka, who has broken the world record 10 times, said he hoped to move with his family to France this year. "The political and economic situation is uncertain," he told the Norwegian daily Verdens Gang in Seville, Spain. "The situation is so unstable it's impossible to know what may happen. I hope to move to France this year." Bubka, 27, last broke his world record on May 6, clearing the bar at 6.07 metres. Verdens Gang said Bubka, his wife and two sons, now lived in relative luxury near Kiev in the Ukraine. Among other things, Bubka expressed concern about the effects of radioactive fallout from the 1986 accident at the Chernobyl nuclear plant, 100 km (62 miles) from his home. Bubka did not say why he had chosen France, but Verdens Gang said a French club had offered him a contract.

Li Jing champion

BRISBANE, May 30: Chinese ace Li Jing recovered from a fall on the horizontal bar and won the men's all-round competition Wednesday night in the Selko Grand Prix international gymnastics championship, reports AP. Li, the Asian Games Champion and rated the world's No. 2 all-round gymnast, finished with 58.05 points. Andrei Kan of the Soviet Union had 57.45 and teen-age Australian champion Brennan Dorrwick 57.15. Li, 21, earned the top score of the night in the parallel bars, scoring 9.90 for his last routine. He was also dominant on the pommel (9.8), rings (9.8), vault (9.65) and floor exercises (9.65). He scored only 9.25 on the horizontal bar after his fall, which forced the judges to automatically deduct 0.50 points. "I was disappointed with my high bar routine, but otherwise I'm very happy with the win," Li said through an interpreter. "I was confident coming into the competition. I knew I was going to win." Li said he was particularly happy with his floor routine. "That was the first time I've performed the double twisting, double back somersault in competition," he said. In the women's individual rhythmic all-round competition, Bulgarian Diana Popova won the gold medal with 37.50 points, ahead of Julia Rosliakova of the Soviet Union (37.45) and fellow Bulgarian Zornitza Kalenska (37.05). More than 60 gymnasts from 12 nations are competing in the event, held every two years. Other participating nations include the United States, Canada, France, Japan, Romania, Italy, New Zealand and Britain. Many of the teams are using the event to prepare for the world championships in Indianapolis in September.

Asylum sought

LISBON, May 30: Portugal is ready to give "every help" to two East Timor footballers who are currently held up in Canberra and seeking Portuguese nationality, the Foreign Ministry announced here Wednesday, reports AFP. They held 1-0 at half-time. Home scorers were Fischer (32 and 56), Hilgers (43) and Saliger (65) while India's goals came from Kumer (54) and Pillay (63).

Friendly hockey

KREFELD, May 30: Germany beat India 4-2 in Wednesday's friendly hockey international here, reports AFP. They held 1-0 at half-time. Home scorers were Fischer (32 and 56), Hilgers (43) and Saliger (65) while India's goals came from Kumer (54) and Pillay (63).

Botham rules himself out

LONDON, May 30: Injured England all-rounder Ian Botham said on Thursday he had abandoned all hope of being fit in time for the first cricket Test against West Indies next week, reports Reuter. "I don't think I could honestly say I could get through a five-day match," he said in a radio interview. "To be fair to the team and myself, I think it's best if I say 'no now.'" Botham tore a hamstring during the first one-day international, his first appearance for England in almost two years. His four wickets in that match coupled with a century against West Indies when playing for Worcestershire a few days earlier looked to have made him a near-certainty for the first Test which starts next Thursday. "It's obviously very disappointing because I was in a bit of a purple patch. It's up to me to be sensible with the injury and then hopefully get some runs and wickets as soon as I get back," Botham said. His comments came as the England selectors were meeting to pick the Test squad which will be announced on Friday.

TENNIS TIDBITS

Seles' earnings eclipse Lendl's
World No 1 seed Monica Seles, now playing in the French Open championships, is leading both, men and women money winners till now this year, reports agencies. The Yugoslav teenager, who is now 17, earned 569,058 US dollars after her Monte Carlo appearance last week while Czechoslovakian Ivan Lendl, the leading money winner among top 20 men tennis player in the world has earned, 515, 949 US dollars till Monday. Seles earned 53,109 dollars more than Lendl this year.

Lendl enters Beckenham
BECKENHAM, England, May 30: Ivan Lendl, who pulled out of the French Open with an injury, has entered next week's grass court tournament at Beckenham, organizers said here, reports AP. Lendl was seeded third in Paris but was forced to withdraw Sunday because he hadn't fully recovered from surgery on his racket hand. Beckenham organizers said Lendl decided to sign up for their event with the expectation he would be fit enough to play next week. Lendl won the Beckenham tournament last year when he skipped the French Open to prepare for Wimbledon.

Officials ignore ban

JAKARTA, May 30: The Indonesian government has rimanded sports officials for allowing the national junior tennis team to play against Israel in a recent tournament in India, the English language Jakarta Post said Tuesday, reports AFP. It quoted Sports and Youth Affairs Minister Abjar Tanjung as saying the May 8 match in the World Cup junior qualifying rounds in Bombay violated the ban on Indonesians competing in sports tournaments against Israel and South Africa. Mr Tanjung blamed the National Sports Council (Koni) and the Indonesian Tennis Association (Peiti) for failing to forfeit the match. Indonesia lost 1-2 but still qualified to represent the region, along with four other Asian countries, in the World Cup junior tennis championships, according to the Jakarta Post.

ATP's leading players

MONACO, May 30: Leading men's singles rankings released by the Association of Tennis Professionals (ATP) on Monday, reports Reuter. 1. Stefan Edberg (Sweden) 3,783 points; 2. Boris Becker (Germany) 3,425; 3. Ivan Lendl (Czechoslovakia) 2,696; 4. Andre Agassi (US) 1,872; 5. Sergi Bruguera (Spain) 1,659; 6. Pete Sampras (US) 1,613; 7. Guy Forget (France) 1,589; 8. Goran Ivanisevic (Yugoslavia) 1,537; 9. Jim Courier (US) 1,478; 10. Michael Chang (US) 1,426; 11. Emilio Sanchez (Spain) 1,375; 12. Michael Stich (Germany) 1,329; 13. Jonas Svensson (Sweden) 1,317; 14. Karel Novacek (Czechoslovakia) 1,296; 15. Johan McEnroe (US) 1,252; 16. Brad Gilbert (US) 1,208; 17. Andrei Cherkasov (Soviet Union) 1,208; 18. Goran Prpic (Yugoslavia) 1,171; 19. Magnus Gustafsson (Sweden) 1,127; 20. Jakob Hlasek (Switzerland) 1,098.

WTA's top 20 players

PETERSBURG, Florida, May 30: Top 20 women's singles players, according to rankings issued by the Women's Tennis Association on Sunday, reports Reuter. 1. Monica Seles (Yugoslavia); 2. Steffi Graf (Germany); 3. Gabriela Sabatini (Argentina); 4. Martina Navratilova (US); 5. Mary Joe Fernandez (US); 6. Arantxa Sanchez Vicario (Spain); 7. Jana Novotna (Czechoslovakia); 8. Conchita Martinez (Spain); 9. Manuela Maleeva-Fragiere (Switzerland); 10. Zina Garrison (US); 11. Jennifer Capriati (US); 12. Katerina Maleeva (Bulgaria); 13. Helena Sukova (Czechoslovakia); 14. Nathalie Tauziat (France); 15. Lella Meskhi (Soviet Union); 16. Natalia Zvereva (Soviet Union); 17. Barbara Paulus (Austria); 18. Anke Huber (Germany); 19. Judith Wiesner (Austria); 20. Amy Frazier (US).