

Argentines win clash of Latin giants

SANTIAGO, July 18: World Cup runners-up Argentina defeated Brazil 3-2 in a gruelling South American soccer championship final-round match on Wednesday to confirm their status as favourites, reports Reuter.

Despite the expulsion of their star forward Claudio Canniggia, Argentina held on to their lead in a bruising encounter that saw four players sent off.

Argentina lead the round-robin finals of the 10-nation Copa America, with Chile and Colombia in second place after playing to a 1-1 draw.

Argentina opened the score in the first minute of play with a header by Dario Franco from a corner.

Five minutes later Brazil left-winger Branco slammed in

a 30-metre free kick to equalise and the match became a rough battle with heavy mid-field marking.

Two Brazilian defenders constantly neutralised swift Canniggia, who scored the decisive goal that knocked out

Brazil in the World Cup quarter-finals in Italy last year.

A late tackle by Mazinho, to which Canniggia responded with an elbow blow, had both men sent off in the 31st.

But Argentina, powered by Leonardo Rodriguez in midfield, kept up the pressure on Brazil's goal area.

Rodriguez broke away up the left-wing in the 40th and Franco headed a cross to the right post beating World Cup goalkeeper Taffarel and putting Argentina back in the lead.

In the first minute of the second half, Rodriguez sped up the right-wing and shot a high centre for Battistuta to head into the net for Argentina's third.

Brazil, under heavy criticism at home for their poor performance in the tournament, including a 2-0 defeat by Colombia, lacked coordination and failed to press the attack.

Coach Paulo Roberto Falcao, whose job is on the line, substituted Renato for ineffectual forward Silva to strengthen Brazil's offensive.

A move up the right-wing by Branco, passed on by Renato, allowed Joao Paulo to shoot through Argentina captain Ruggieri's legs to score Brazil's second in the 52nd.

The game turned increasingly vicious with both sides losing another player as the teams finished with only nine on each side.

TEAMS

Argentina - Goycochea, Basualdo, Vasquez, Ruggieri, Enrique, Astrada, Franco, Simeone, Rodriguez (Blas Giunta), Canniggia, Battistuta.

Brazil - Taffarel, Marcio Snaoto, Marcio, Ricardo Rocha, Branco, Mauro Silva, Mazinho, Neto, Silvio (Renato), Lotz Henrique, Joao Paulo (Careca). Referee: Carlos Maciel (Paraguay).



Brazilian soccer legend Pele kisses a World Cup '94 T-shirt before testifying to a US congressional sub-committee in support of legislation authorizing a commemorative coin for the 1994 World Cup Championships to be held in the US.

Velappan in town

Mr Peter Velappan, General Secretary of the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) arrived in Dhaka yesterday a four-day visit to Bangladesh, reports BSS.

The AFC General Secretary will attend the opening ceremony of the 10th Asian Club Football championship at Dhaka Stadium Today at 5 pm.

Mr Velappan, after holding meetings with the football officials of Bangladesh, will leave here on July 21 for a short visit to Kathmandu.

Before his return here to attend the closing of the Asian Club Football on July 29, he will visit Hyderabad, India to see for himself the facilities for holding the pre-Olympic football competition there.

National snooker from today

The eighth National Snooker Championship '91 resumes today at the Dhaka Club here at 4 pm, reports BSS.

Bangladesh Billiards and Snooker Federation has also announced its revised fixture for the participants.

In all, 55 snooker players from different clubs are taking part in the meet.

Handball results Sports Reporter

Hathkholo Krira Chakra and Mansoor Sporting Club won their respective matches of the 7th monsoon handball tournament yesterday at the outer stadium handball court.

Hathkholo KC came from 5-6 halftime goal deficit to beat Nawabpur Sporting Club by 10-7 goals.

Palash, Ripon, Apu and Farooq scored two goals each for Hathkholo while Apu was the highest scorer for Nawabpur with two goals.

Mansoor Sporting scored a narrow 5-4 victory over Anirban KC.

England to play 3 Tests, 3 one-dayers in NZ

WELLINGTON, July 18: England will play three Tests and three one-day internationals during an 11-match cricket tour of New Zealand in January and February, New Zealand Cricket said today, reports Reuter.

The itinerary was finalised in London with Test and County Cricket Board officials, New Zealand Cricket Chairman Graham Dowling said in a statement.

The tour will serve as a warm-up for both countries for the World Cup to be held in New Zealand and Australia in February and March.

The itinerary: January 2 v Auckland at Auckland; January 3-5 v New Zealand emerging players at Hamilton; January 7-9 v New Zealand XI at Napier;

January 11 v New Zealand (one day international) at Auckland; Auckland; January 13-15 v New Zealand XI at Nelson;

January 18-22 first Test at Christchurch; January 24-26 v Central Districts at New Plymouth; January 30-February 3 second Test at Auckland;

February 6-10 third Test at Wellington; February 12 v New Zealand (one day international) at Dunedin;

February 15 v New Zealand (one day international) at Christchurch.

Hirst memorabilia fetch £13,569

LONDON, July 18: A collection of cricket memorabilia created by one of England's greatest all-round cricketers, George Herbert Hirst, was sold at Phillips in London on Wednesday for 13,569 pounds (over 22,455 dollars), reports AFP.

His personal photograph album containing many unpublished photographs sold for 4,180 pounds (over 7,000 dollars) to a private collector.

Hirst played 24 times for England in the 1890s and early 1900s.

Ambrose spoils Morris' chance

SWANSEA, Wales, July 18: West Indies hit man Curtly Ambrose claimed his 36th first-class victim of the England tour on Wednesday - and may have cost Hugh Morris his chance of a Test debut, reports Reuter.

Ambrose's strike meant the Glamorgan opener bagged a pair and England's selectors may now omit him from next week's fourth Test at Edgbaston.

Morris lasted seven balls in the first innings before, falling to the first delivery he faced from Ambrose.

Second time around he stayed for only six balls. It was an uncomfortable 10 minutes for left-hander Morris, who entered the game with 1,165 first-class runs at an average of 58. He had not fallen for a duck all season.

His prolific form had put him into Test contention as Graham Gooch's opening partner, especially with Mike Atherton an injury doubt.

Morris apart, the second day was full of runs. Riche Richardson hit his third century of the tour, and Clayton Lambert and Carl Hooper weighed in with 99 and 80 respectively before the tourists declared at 416 for seven, 164 ahead.

Richardson struck 16 boundaries in 109 off 176 deliveries.

Hick again hogs the headline



LONDON, July 18: Graeme Hick, battling to retain his Test place, sent the ideal message to England's selectors with a fighting century to revive Worcestershire in their county cricket match against Hampshire on Wednesday, reports Reuter.

Forced to follow on 255 behind, Worcestershire had made 271 for five in their second innings at the close of the second day of the three-day match at Portsmouth.

Hick cracked 23 fours in scoring 141 in a 229-minute innings which ended just before the close when he became one of eight victims in the day for pace bowler Kevin Shine.



The day produced a heavy crop of three-figure scores but England skipper Graham Gooch did not join in the run harvest, falling for his first championship duck of the season against Kent at Southend. Essex made light of Gooch's early departure, however, as

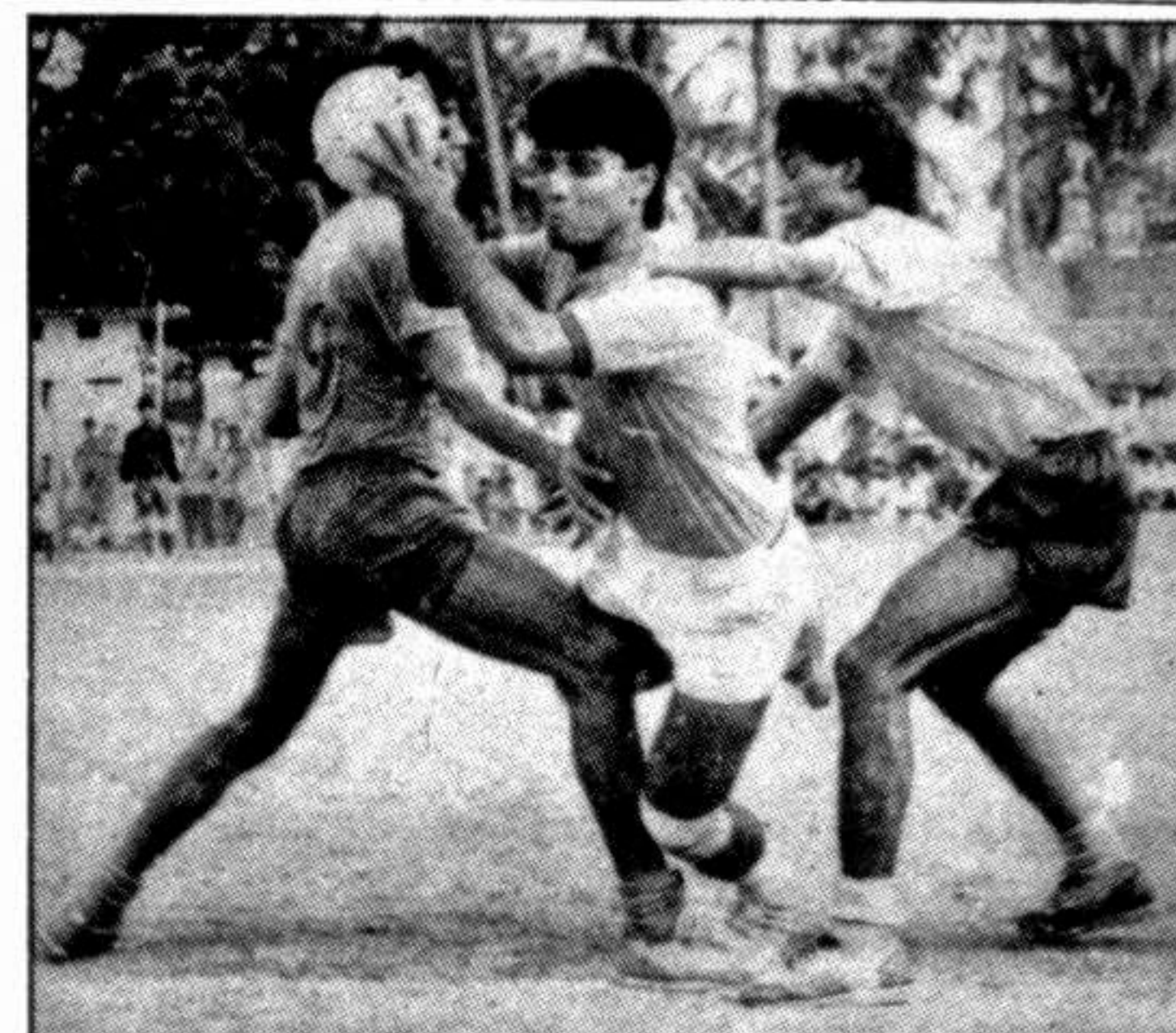
John Stephenson and Paul Prichard both made centuries and put on 216 for the second wicket.

Stephenson hit 20 fours in an unbeaten 113 and Prichard had 17 boundaries in his 122. Their efforts enabled Gooch to declare at 251 for two, 129 behind.

Mike Gatting shook off the effects of a heavy cold to flay the Northamptonshire attack for an unbeaten 89-ball 100 at Uxbridge.

Gatting's blitz included two sixes and 15 fours and when he declared Middlesex were 303 for five.

Northants, 348 in their first innings, had extended their lead to 88 with two wickets down by the close.



Action from yesterday's monsoon handball match between Hathkholo SC and Nawabpur at Outer Stadium's handball court. Hathkholo won the match.

Shooting club officials' confce

A national conference of the general secretaries of the rifle shooting clubs will be held today at the National Shooting Range, Gulshan here, reports BSS.

The conference will discuss the latest situation prevailing in the shooting scene and its future programmes.

All club secretaries have been requested to attend the conference at 9 am.

State Minister for Youth and Sports Saadeq Hossain will attend the closing session of the conference as the chief guest. Chairman of the National Sports Council Major General Mubtubur Rahman will be the special guest.

Ottey, Jackson dazzle in Rome

ROME, July 18: Jamaican Merlene Ottey won her 52nd successive 100 metres and Briton Colin Jackson ran the fastest 110 hurdles this year at the Golden Gala Grand Prix athletics meeting on Wednesday reports Reuter.

Ottey powered her way to a comfortable victory in 10.87 seconds in front of 40,000 fans at the Olympic Stadium in her adopted home city of Rome.

It was the Jamaican's second best time of the year after clocking 10.84 at Lausanne.

American Carlette Guidry was second in 11.07 and Nigerian Mary Onyal third in 11.11, edging Olympic silver medalist and former world record holder Evelyn Ashford of the United States into fourth place.

European champion Jackson defeated Greg Foster with a time 13.09 after two false starts, the second attributed to the American.

Foster clocked 13.10 - 0.10 faster than his 1991 world best.

Canadian Mark McKoy was

third in 13.32, leaving American veteran and former world record holder Renaldo Nehemiah in fourth place.

The Golden Gala, 12th event on the Grand Prix circuit.

Fredericks surged to the second fastest 200 metres of the year, winning in 8:8.39.

Compatriot Moses Kiptanui, who clocked 8:07.89 in Stockholm, was second in 8:08.53.

Fredericks beat experienced Brazilian Robson da Silva, the World Cup champion in Barcelona in 1989, who was second in 20.18.

An invitation men's 100 metres went to Nigerian Olapade Adeniken in 10.15, with Jamaican Raymond Stewart second in 10.22.

World record holder and World Championship favourite Leroy Burrell withdrew at the last minute, saying he had aggravated a muscle he pulled in London last week in Monday's event at Nice. He returned to Houston for treatment, organisers said.

Kenyan Ibrahim Kinutia won an exciting 5,000 metres ahead of local favourite Salvatore Antibo in a 1991 world best 13:09.76.

The Italian, who left his attack on the final bend too late, clocked 13:10.10. Moroccan Brahim Boutaib was third in 13:10.24.

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Foo struggles

SINGAPORE, July 18: Defending champion Foo Kok Keong of Malaysia scored a hard-fought three-game win over South Korea's Park Sung Woo in the first round of the Singapore Open badminton championships on Wednesday, reports AFP.

Foo, after winning comfortably at 15-1 in the first game, suddenly hit a bad patch in the second, losing 12-15. A number of poor returns, particularly along the sidelines, gave the South Korean the edge.

But a touch-and-go rubber game saw the Malaysian winning at 15-11 to move into the second round and keep alive his hopes of retaining the title.

"I made too many mistakes in the second set and played a cautious game in the rubber," Foo admitted, although still pleased with his tough win.

Foo's opponent in last year's final, Zhao Jianhua of China, had an easier time, winning comfortably at 15-2, 15-11 against Christophe Jeanjean of France.

Foo and Zhao are strongly tipped to meet in the final once again. Zhao is the tournament's top seed while the Malaysian is rated second.

Indonesia's Bambang Suprianto, strongly tipped to be among the outsiders likely to challenge the two top seeds, also had an easy win over Indrajit Murkerjee of India at 15-4, 15-7.

Another Indonesian hope, Eddy Kurniawan, also remained in the fight with a straight games win over Jergen Van Dijk of the Netherlands at 18-17, 15-6.

Ben bent on running in Tokyo

TORONTO, July 18: Sprinter Ben Johnson will try to qualify in the 100 metres next week for the Canadian team going to next month's World Championships in Tokyo and will also race in the relay to hone his competitive edge, his manager said on Wednesday, reports Reuter.

Kemeel Azan, Johnson's manager, vehemently denied reports that Johnson had abandoned hopes of running in the individual sprint and had decided instead to run in the relay at the World Championships from August 24 to September 1.

Ben has to qualify for the 100 metres in Tokyo, Azan said in an interview. It shouldn't be news.

He added: "The story is that Ben has not yet run fast enough to qualify to represent Canada. He has to run 10.30 (seconds)."

Azan said Johnson plans to race in the 100 metres at the Canadian nationals in Montreal, July 25-28.

"If Ben doesn't run 10.30 he won't qualify, Azan said but he automatically has a spot on the 4 x 100 (metre relay)."

"What he wants to do is use

the relay to improve his time. He's only had six competitive races in three years."

Johnson has struggled since returning to competition after the expiration in September of a two-year ban for failing a dope test at the 1988 Seoul Olympics.

On Tuesday the organiser of a Swiss track meet said Johnson should run in a relay race to avoid the humiliation of having to compete in the "B" 100 metres.

Azan said Johnson plans to run with the relay team in Europe to get himself in better shape and improve his time.

Special Summer Games in Minneapolis & St Paul

An Olympics with a difference

WASHINGTON, July 17: An army of volunteers and thousands of spectators are ready to cheer on athletes from nearly 100 countries in the eighth International Special Olympics Summer Games.

The Games, with about 6,000 athletes taking part in 16 sporting events, will be held July 20-26 in the "twin cities," Minneapolis and St Paul, in the midwestern state of Minnesota.

R Sargent Shriver, chairman of Special Olympics International, was in New York City recently to receive the Olympic torch, brought from Greece, that athletes will carry to Minneapolis to light the Olympic flame at the opening ceremony of the Games on July 20.

Special Olympics International is a sports organization for people with mental retardation. It has been holding games since 1968. Eunice Kennedy Shriver of the United States is founder and honorary chairman of Special Olympics International.

Games include aquatics, athletics, basketball, bowling, equestrian events, soccer, gymnastics, roller skating, volleyball, softball, table tennis and powerlifting.

Special Olympics are assigned to "divisions" with people at similar levels of athletic ability. A division assignment is based on the athlete's past performance.

Special Olympics athletes in 105 international delegations from 93 countries, as well as a delegation from each of the 50 United States, will take part in the Summer Games. Of the 6,000 athletes in the Games, about half will be from outside the United States.

"It's exciting right now throughout the world to have delegations heading to Minneapolis for the world's largest sporting event," says Doug Single, president and chief executive officer of Special Olympics, in a recent USA telepress conference, he predicted that this year's Games will be "a beautiful moment in time for all of us in Special Olympics," and "an

experience our athletes... will never forget."

All the athletes will stay in university dormitories in the Minneapolis-St Paul areas during the Games.

Single observed that although the Games are the highlight of Special Olympics activity, "The real work of Special Olympics occurs before and after the Games" as athletes and their families, coaches and sponsors prepare year-round for the competition.

As the opening of the Games approached, Special Olympics had "over 30,000 volunteers in Minneapolis right now," to provide support services ranging from language interpretation to medical assistance, Single said.

"We have over 500,000 volunteers worldwide in Special Olympics," he said. "Our volunteers are the backbone of Special Olympics."

For medical care alone during the Games, he said, the eight hospitals in the Minneapolis-St Paul metropolitan area will be "mobilised in every respect" to meet the

athletes' needs at all the Special Olympics sites. About 45 doctors, 500 paramedical volunteers and the American Red Cross will stand ready to assist as needed.

Tickets for all the Special Olympics events are sold out, Single said, adding that more than 65,000 people are expected for the closing ceremony July 26.

An estimated 60 million people worldwide will see at least part of the Special Olympics either in person or on television, Single said.

The ABC television network plans to broadcast a two-hour programme on the Special Olympics on August 15 and later to distribute the programme in other countries, he said. In addition, the NBC television network will feature the Special Olympics on August 4 and also will make the programme available in other countries afterward, according to Single.

More than 1,000 journalists from around the world will cover the sporting events, he said.

WTA verifies Seles' injury

NEW YORK, July 18: Monica Seles, the world number one broke her long silence on

Wednesday and explained that her dramatic last minute withdrawal from Wimbledon last month was due to shin splints and a stress fracture, reports AFP.

Seles, who pulled out of the championships just three days before the start, set off a rash of speculation when she went into virtual hiding for three weeks.

Rumours were rife that she was pregnant and other hypotheses put forward included the fact that she was trying to maintain her top ranking in order to get a million-dollar sponsor bonus.

Speaking on American television, Seles disclosed the exact nature of her injury and apologized for the furor she caused.

"I was so confused," she said. "I was going to these different doctors. One was saying it was a stress fracture. The other was saying 'go ahead and play.'"

"When I look back on it, I hope I never have to be in this situation again in my life."

Seles explained that the reason for her silence. "I went away for two weeks and didn't care about anything," she said. "At the time, I wasn't totally emotionally ready to tell the press I wasn't going to play Wimbledon."

The 17-year-old Yugoslav said she was surprised and even shocked to read the rumours about her in the newspapers.

"I don't know how people came up with all these ideas because they're extreme ideas and totally out of line," she said. "When I say I'm injured, I can only hope people trust that I was."

Gerard Smith, Executive Director of the Women's Tennis Association, was finally able to talk to Seles on Tuesday and said he was "satisfied" with her explanation.

"We will have a doctor's statement," he said. "The injury has been verified at end of issue."

Seles will play an exhibition match in Mahwah, New Jersey, on Thursday, but is not scheduled to compete on the women's circuit until the week of July 29 in San Diego, California.

Other winners included Johan Carlsson of Sweden, South African Grant Stafford and Czech player Petr Korda.

Arias, a former top-10 player, admitted he was looking ahead to the third set when "All of a sudden, it's 5-2 and I'm down just one break. I said, well, let's try and hold here and see if he gets nervous."

Mronz, ranked 88th in the world, self-destructed over the final four games, committing countless unforced errors and talking aloud to himself.

Afterward, Arias admitted it was one of his better career comebacks.

"If it had been in the third set, it would've been an amazing comeback," he said, adding: "Since it was in the second set, it was just a dawn good comeback."

but was able to recover and beat Brian Garrow 6-3, 7-5, advancing to the third round of the Washington Tennis Classic, reports AFP.

McEnroe, coming off a disappointing fourth-round loss at Wimbledon, surrendered just six points on his serve before Garrow took him to three break points in the seventh game of the second set and then broke him in the ninth game to draw even at 5-5.

The 32-year-old former world number one staged an impressive rally. However, winning the 11th game at 40-15 and breaking his unseeded opponent at love to close out the match.

"Basically, I choked a little," McEnroe said. "I didn't put him away. I got careless a little, but I'm happy I got back on

and finished him off. It was a together match than it could've been."

Earlier, sixth-seeded Peruvian Jaime Yzaga got past Brian Knowles of the Bahamas

Capriati off to flying start

MAHWAH, New Jersey, July 18: Jennifer Capriati opened her drive for the title in the 150,000-dollar Pathmark women's tennis classic with a 6-2, 6-1 second-round victory over fellow-American Stacey Martin on Wednesday, reports Reuter.

Capriati, runner-up here last year to Steffi Graf, ran around her backhand to smack a forehand winner to end the one-sided, 49-minute match.

Capriati, who lost her serve once, scored three service breaks in each set against Martin. She fought off a triple break situation in the sixth game of the second set.

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