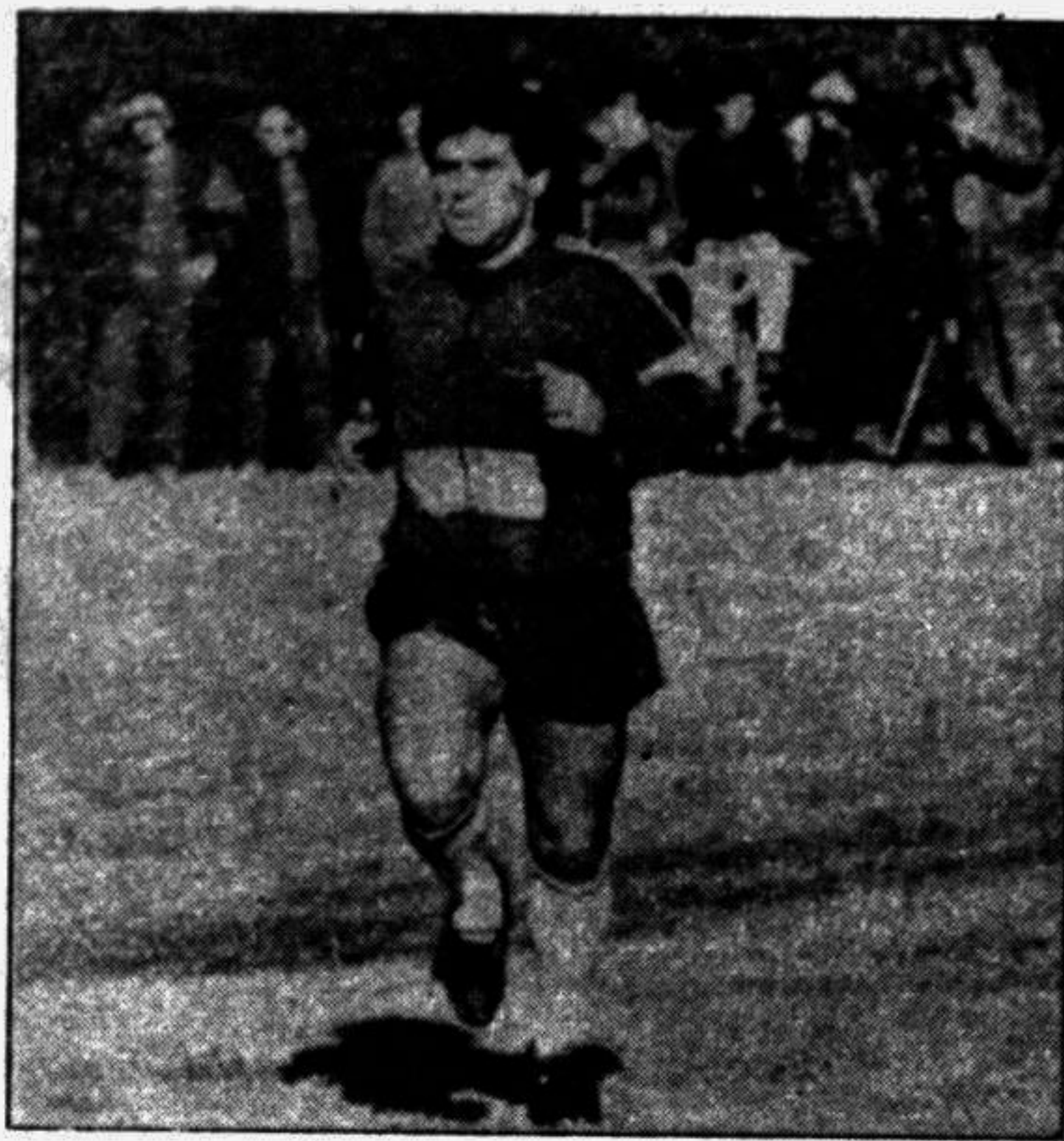


Maradona plays charity tomorrow

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina, July 31: Argentina's Diego Maradona, banned from world soccer until July 1992 for failing a drug test, said on Tuesday he will play in a friendly match on Saturday to raise funds for a local hospital, reports Reuter.

Maradona, 30, told reporters watching him jog with his former Boca Juniors Club that he would play in a fund-raising match organised by the Argentine Footballers guild and local actors to honour an actor killed in a recent car accident.

"I'll be playing on Saturday," the former Argentina skipper said as he trotted with members of Boca Juniors First



Diego Maradona runs on July 30 after starting to train again after being arrested for cocaine possession in April. Maradona is training with the Argentine professional soccer team Boca Juniors after not playing soccer for nearly four and a half months. —AFP photo

friends and five-a-side soccer.

The International Football Federation (FIFA) banned Maradona from soccer in April after an Italian League tribunal slapped a 15-month suspension on him because a urine test he took in March revealed cocaine traces.

Later in April Maradona was arrested here with two friends and charged with cocaine possession and supplying it to others for free. He was freed on bail and now faces trial and up to 12 years in prison if found guilty.

Before his arrest Maradona — often hailed as the world's best player of his time — said he wanted to quit professional soccer because he was sick of the game.

While hundreds of fans and a flock of reporters watched Maradona working out, his agent Marcos Franchi said the former Napoli captain was making progress in his drug rehabilitation.

"He still has a lot of ground to cover but he is advancing in great strides," Franchi said. "He still has not decided whether he will continue playing but he has another year to think about it."

Franchi said that Saturday's fund raising match would be part of his treatment. "It's a way of helping him get back in touch with his profession", he said.

E Bengal stay top in Calcutta

East Bengal Club maintained their lead in the Calcutta Super Division football league beating Port trust Club by a solitary goal yesterday, according to All India Radio (AIR), reports UNB.

Krishnendu Roy netted the winning goal from a penalty two minutes before the final whistle.

East Bengal Club earned the spot kick when their Bangladeshi player Munna was seriously fouled by an opponent defender inside the danger zone.

With this hard-earned victory, Indian triple crown holders East Bengal now lead the league table securing 27 points from eleven outings.

League champions Mohun Bagan Club closely follow them with 26 points having played the same number of matches, while Mohammedan SC are in the third position collecting 24 points, also from eleven ties.

East Bengal Club dominate the match all through but failed to create clean scoring chances due to the defensive football of Port Trust.

Division team in Buenos Aires Palermo Park.

While looking trimmer than when he returned to Argentina

in April, Maradona was exhausted after the 45-minute workout. Since coming home he has only played soccer with

FA to clamp down on doping

LONDON, July 31: The English Football Association (FA) issued a pre-season warning to clubs on Tuesday saying that they intended to step up random dope testing, report Reuter.

"We do not consider we have a drugs problem in our sport when compared to some others but the message to all clubs and players is now clear," FA spokesman David Bloomfield said.

"We don't want in football

and we have the power to impose penalties on people found guilty," he said.

In June the FA decided to introduce legislation "specifically prohibiting the taking of banned drugs" by players.

FIH's faux pas?

IPOH, Malaysia, July 31: The International Hockey Federation (FIH) has named Japan in the list of reserve countries in the men's pre-Olympics hockey tournament in Auckland, New Zealand in October, reports AFP.

FIH competitions secretary, Els van Breda Vriesman, who issued the list here Tuesday, could not explain why Japan was ranked higher than South Korea, the 1986 Asian Games champions.

Ms Vriesman, who is the assistant technical delegate for the ongoing six-nation Sultan Azlan Shah Invitational field hockey tournament, said "I am telling you what the FIH has drawn up."

The other two countries in the reserve list are Italy and Switzerland.

South Korea finished second in the Inter-Continental Cup qualifying round held here in 1989 and took fourth place in last year's Beijing Asian Games.

As Asian Games champions, Pakistan automatically qualified for the Barcelona Olympics next year while India and Malaysia, who were second and third, respectively, qualified for the pre-Olympics rounds.

Besides Pakistan, four other countries have also earned a place in the Olympics by virtue of world standing. They are Germany (European champion, Australia (Oceania), World Cup holders the Netherlands and Britain (defending Olympic gold medalists).

Twelve teams will play in the pre-Olympics rounds to select four teams for the final round in Barcelona.

Another two automatic qualifiers will be the champions of the Pan American Games next month and the All African Games in September.

Teams in the pre-Olympics tournament are: Argentina, Belgium Canada, Egypt, France, India, Ireland, Malaysia, New Zealand, Poland, the Soviet Union and the United States.

It said "With immediate effect drug tests will be compulsory and any player testing positive will be charged under FA rules."

On Tuesday they sent all 93 league clubs a list of some 500 banned substances, including many everyday medicines. They also issued a list of "safe" common medications.

The FA had previously concentrated on voluntary testing with "a degree of judgement" exercised where players are found to have unknowingly taken banned drugs in medication.

Officials say the new warning allows fewer excuses.

"Club doctors will now have to keep an even closer check on what their players are eating and drinking and what medicines they are taking," Bloomfield said.

Former England defender Graham Roberts of West Bromwich Albion tested positive last season. He said he had taken an appetite suppressant not knowing it contained a banned substance.

The FA accepted his explanation and no action was taken. Commentators said such a case would almost certainly bring an automatic suspension next season.

Lankans struggle

LONDON, July 31: Chris Tolley, one of the younger breed of Worcestershire players queuing up to replace Ian Botham next season, turned in a career-best performance against Sri Lanka on New Road on Tuesday, reports AFP.

The 23-year-old all rounder took three for 43 in 19.2 overs, claiming the wickets of top scorer Asanka Gurusinha (44), captain Aravinda de Silva (26) and Marvan Atapattu for two with a brilliant leg-side stumping by Steve Rhodes.

A leftarm seamer, who played for Combined Universities while studying for three years at Loughborough, Tolley bowled unchanged for two hours as Sri Lanka struggled to 115 for seven at tea in the Tolley Bitter challenge match.

Tolley also held a neat catch a third slip to send back Chandika Hathurusingha but when Phil Newport began the tourists' problems in an opening spell of two for 28. In all, 29 overs were lost for rain in three interruptions and Sri Lanka were looking damp and bedraggled when Stuart Lampitt snapped up two wickets in five balls in the penultimate over before tea.

Rain the spoiler

KURUNEGALA, Sri Lanka, July 31: Heavy overnight rains washed out the second day's play in the second four-day international between Sri Lanka A and Pakistan A here today, reports AFP.

The umpires decided to call off play due to adverse weather conditions and a water-logged pitch.

Pakistan had made 141 for no loss on the rain-curtailed opening day.

Fernando new chief of Lanka Cricket Board

COLOMBO, July 21: Sri Lanka's Minister for Legal and Prison Reforms, Tyrone Fernando has been elected president of the Board of Control for Cricket in Sri Lanka (BCCSL), officials here said today, reports AFP.

Mr Fernando polled 35 votes to defeat incumbent president Ian P Piets who obtained 27 votes, in elections held Saturday, officials said.

Volleyball result

MILAN, Italy, July 30: The Soviet Union, who pushed Cuba to the limit in their semi-final, took third place in the World League Volleyball Championship here defeating the Netherlands 3-1 in the third place play-off, reports AFP.

Pan-American Games begin tomorrow

Americans arrive in Cuba

HAVANA, July 31: The first members of the US team to the August 2-18 Pan-American Games arrived in communist-run Cuba on Tuesday and its leaders said they were there to play sports and not politics, reports Reuter.

"Politics? No. The reason we're here is because the winner goes to the Olympics," George Tyler, manager of the US women's hockey team, said.

Hockey is one of the several sports in which the winners in the Pan-American Games will qualify for the 1992 Barcelona Olympics.

In spite of 30 years of political enmity between the two neighbouring countries, the United States is sending a 1,000-member delegation, second only to Cuba.

The advance party of more than 200 athletes who arrived on Tuesday consisted of weightlifters, gymnasts, judokas, archers and handball, softball and field hockey players.

"We will stay out of politics," delegation chief Eric Dennis told reporters. US sports officials heaped

praise on three Cuban hosts for their hospitality and the speed with which the US party was whisked through customs and immigration.

They were given their credentials immediately and their baggage was given only cursory inspection.

The Cubans have been bemoaning their backwardness and treating us royally," Ralph Hale, a US Olympic Committee official who met the party at the airport, told reporters.

Meanwhile, on earlier Reuter reports from Havana said: Cuba has installed a modern, multinational anti-doping laboratory to ensure a clean bill of health — and a clear conscience — for athletes competing in the Pan-American Games.

The anti-doping laboratory, which will operate at the national scientific investigation centre in Havana, combines technology and expertise from Spain, Mexico and host Cuba.

"I think I can say that up until today this is the most complete laboratory put together for any regional or continental Games," Pan-American Sports Association (PASO) president Mario Vazquez Rana told Reuters on Monday.

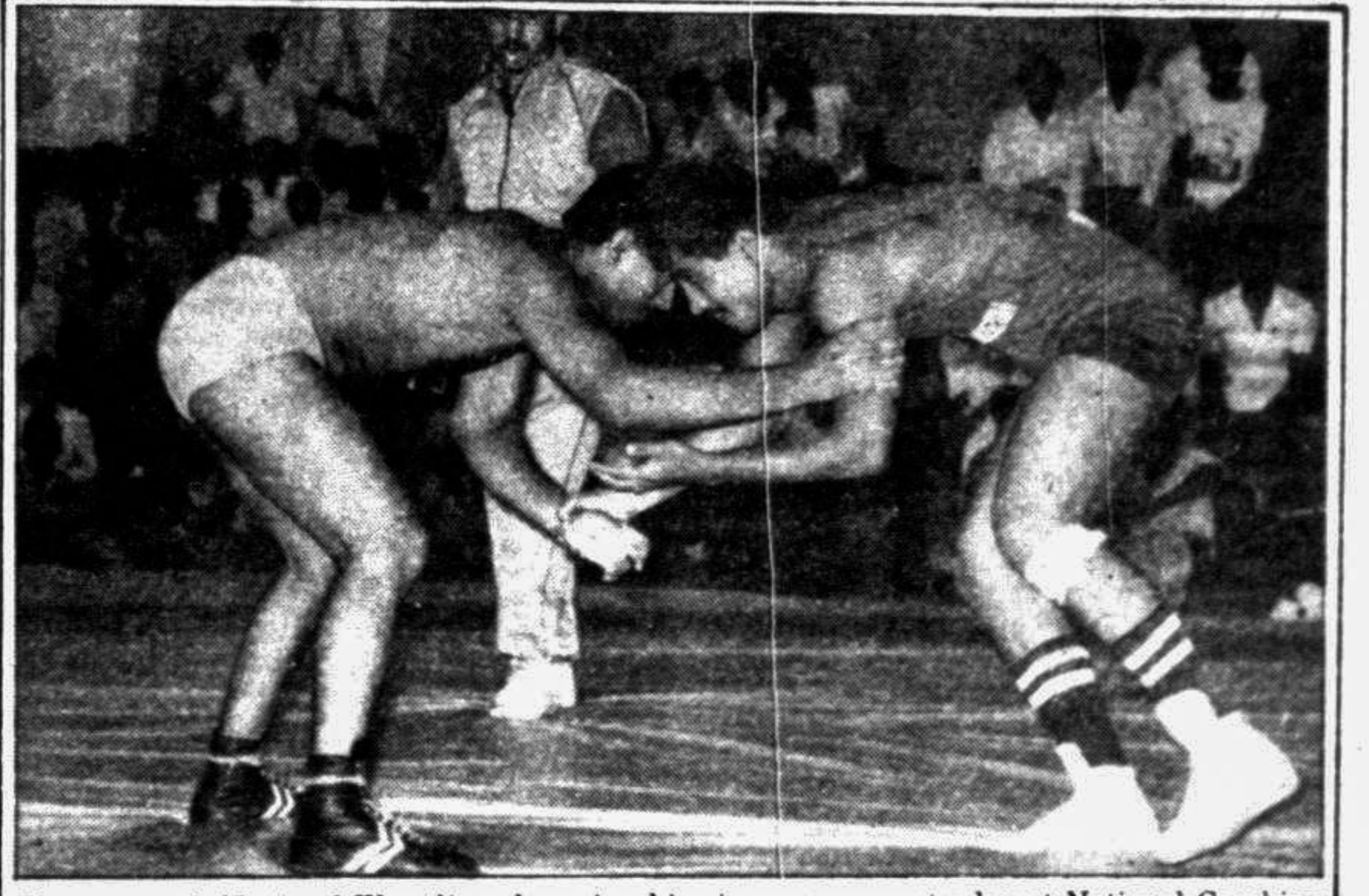
The laboratory, approved by the International Olympic Committee (IOC), will provide rigorous testing for banned substances like stimulants, narcotics and steroids which can enhance athletes' performances. There will also be sex verification tests for female competitors.

Organisers of the 11th Pan-American Games are anxious to avoid repetition of a doping scandal that soured a previous edition of the Games in Caracas in 1983, when 19 athletes from 10 nations were caught.

Ten were subsequently stripped of their medals.

Cuban officials say between 800 and 1,000 doping tests, costing 250 dollars a test, administered by 13 doctors from each of the three nations, will be given during two-week competition in Havana and the eastern city of Santiago de Cuba.

This is more than the 720 tests carried out in the last Games in Indianapolis in 1987.



The sixteenth National Wrestling championships in progress yesterday at National Coaching Centre. 42 grapplers from six teams are taking part in 10 weight categories. —Star photo

At stake: World records and a Ferrari

SESTRIERE, Italy, July 31: Carl Lewis, Leroy Burrell, Michael Johnson and Sergei Bubka shoot for world records and a luxury Ferrari Testarossa in a meet at

Europe's highest track on Wednesday, reports AP.

Lewis, in the long jump, and Johnson, in the 200 metres, could make history breaking two of the longest standing world marks.

This Alpine resort, at an altitude of about 6,600 feet (2,010 metres), is expected to offer ideal record conditions to the sprinters and long jumpers, while Bubka will have to rely on his own pole vault.

To give athletes extra incentive in record attempts, organisers are offering Ferrari car worth about \$200,000 in addition to a regular record bonus of \$10,000.

Burrell, who set a world mark of 9.9 seconds in the 100 metres last month, said his main goal is to get ready for the World Championships in Tokyo next month.

"I can improve my world record, all the better. I always want to be fast. It's my nature," Burrell said.

Lewis, expected to compete in four events in Tokyo, will not run the sprints here, but instead will make a bid to break the oldest world mark in track and field — Bob Beamon's leap of 29 feet, 2 1/2 inches

(8.9 metres) at the 1968 Olympics in Mexico City.

Lewis has been training in Sestriere since Thursday.

"I will focus on jumping farther, not on altitude... Bob did it at the right time, in good conditions," said Lewis, who denied reports that this could be his last season as a long jumper.

The meet, made up of 19 events, will be held in the morning when usually there is no wind.

Johnson, whose best performance above sea level was 19.88 seconds last year, said he could not predict a world record.

"I am in very good shape right now. I expect to go below 20 seconds," Johnson said.

He faces a tough challenge from fellow American Danny Everett and British champion Linford Christie. Their target will be the world record of 19.72 seconds, set by Italy's Pietro Mennea in Mexico City in 1979.

Merlene Ottey of Jamaica will try to beat Florence Griffith's marks of 10.49 and 21.34 seconds in the women's 100 and 200 metres.

Chess and soccer apart, Agdestein is no slouch on the academic front. He holds a degree in English, Sociology and Political Science.

SOCCER SCENARIO

Nicholas haunts the gunners

LONDON, July 31: Charlie Nicholas came back to haunt Arsenal on Tuesday night as the English champions struggled to a 2-2 draw with Celtic in a testimonial at Highbury, reports AFP.

Nicholas, who was judged surplus to requirements by Arsenal chief George Graham three years ago, opened the scoring for the Scottish Premier Division side after 15 minutes of Paul Davis testimonial.

Alan Smith made it all square in the 49th minute and Lee Dixon looked to have wrapped it up for the gunners after a 70th minute penalty.

His shot was blocked by Republic of Ireland goalkeeper Packie Bonner but Dixon converted the rebound.

However, Celtic's Polish defender Dariusz Wdowczyk soon made up for having laid on Smith's earlier goal with a slack back-pass, blasting home a 30-yard free-kick in the 75th minute.

Liverpool manage to beat Ludvika

UDVIKA, Sweden, July 31: Liverpool could only manage a 3-2 victory over Swedish amateurs Ludvika on Tuesday night, after the mighty English First Division side took a 2-0 lead, reports AFP.

Ronnie Whelan and Steve McManaman put the Merseysiders ahead in the first half. But the Third Division side drew level through Kent Sjoeborg and Magnus Bark Skog in the second half of the friendly.

Welsh striker Dean Saunders, who became Britain's most expensive player when he joined Liverpool for 2.9 million pounds from Derby earlier this month, came to the rescue with his first goal for his new club.

Saunders had failed to score in three previous games in Sweden and Ireland.

Elstrup's price down

LUTON, England, July 31: English First Division Luton on Friday accepted a cut-price fee of 250,000 pounds sterling (420,000 dollars) for Danish international striker Lars Elstrup, reports Reuter.

Elstrup, 28, has returned to his previous club, Odense, who sold him to Luton for 650,000 pounds (one million dollars) two years ago.

Elstrup, Luton's leading scorer last season, had insisted on leaving under the freedom of contract rule despite being offered a new deal.

The English side expected 500,000 pounds (840,000 dollars) under the European transfer formula but part-timers Odense said they could not match that fee.

Luton were upset when Elstrup threatened to use a loophole to beat the problem. He said he would retire for six months, go back to work in banking and then resume playing in Denmark as an amateur, leaving Luton with nothing at all.

Luton manager David Platt said: "It's better than nothing."

More woes for Napoli

ROME, July 31: Napoli have discovered that, without Diego Maradona, even cut-price tickets have little appeal, reports Reuter.

The 1990 Italian soccer champions, deprived of the banned Argentine World Cup captain, have found their fans are definitely not rushing to buy season tickets for the 1991-92 First Division championship which starts in September. With Maradona on their books last year, they sold nearly 42,000 season tickets at their 80,000 capacity San Paolo Stadium in the poverty-stricken southern port city of Naples.

This season, despite signing ace French international sweeper Laurent Blanc to join established Brazilians Careca and Alemão and despite reducing prices in some parts of the stadium, they have sold just 13,000 season tickets to date.

The situation has become so grave that club boss Corrado Ferlaino has ordered consultations with the fans.

While Napoli's takings amount to a paltry 5.4 billion lire (4.9 million dollars), other clubs have fared better.

AC Milan, despite the setback of a year's ban from European soccer and the loss of double European Cup-winning coach Arrigo Sacchi, have sold 54,000 season tickets so far worth a staggering total of 25 billion lire (22.7 million dollars). And that was despite raising their fees this year.

Juventus, also out of Europe but with six-times title winning coach Giovanni Trapattoni back in charge in Turin, have sold 31,300 tickets, according to a provisional list published on Monday in the sports daily Corriere Dello Sport.

Lowly Bari had sold just 8,000 tickets until England World Cup midfielder David Platt joined nine days ago. A further 17,000 Bari fans quickly applied for their season tickets. With a month still to go, 122.5 billion lire (111.4 million dollars) have been paid by soccer fans.

Wiranata, Susanti top the rankings

- LONDON July 31:** Leading world rankings issued by the International Badminton Federation (IBF) on Monday:
- MEN**
1. Ardy Wiranata (Indonesia)
 2. Zhao Jianhua (China)
 3. Wu Wenkai (China)
 4. Foo Kok-Koeng (Malaysia)
 5. Joko Suprianto (Indonesia)
 6. Allan B. Kusuma (Indonesia)
 7. Bambang Suprianto (Indonesia)
 8. Rashid Sidek (Malaysia)
 9. Fung Permadi (Indonesia)
 10. Liu Jun (China)
- WOMEN**
1. Susi Susanti (Indonesia)
 2. Tang Jiahong (China)
 3. Sarwendah Kusumawardhani (Indonesia)
 4. Huang Hua (China)
 5. Bang Soo-Hyun (South Korea)
 6. Zhou Lei (China)
 7. Lee Heung-Soon (South Korea)
 8. Young-Suk Lee (South Korea)
 9. Minarti Timur (Indonesia)
 10. Helen Troke (England)

An uncommon combination!

OSLO, July 31: Simen Agdestein must be one of the world's most bizarrely gifted sportsmen — a soccer-playing chess Grandmaster, reports Reuter.

The striker, capped six times by Norway, held former world champion Anatoly Karpov to a 2-2 draw this month.

Agdestein, with Norwegian First Division side Lyn, has a clause in his club contract allowing him time off to play chess.

"It's very difficult to do both sports," he said. "Football training takes so much time."

At present, Agdestein's soccer career is in check. He tore ligaments in his right knee in May and the injury could keep him out until the end of the year.

But it does give him more time for his other pursuit at which he is ranked about 30 in the world.

The youngest Grandmaster ever at 18, Agdestein, now 24 took a shock first game lead against Karpov after racing a pawn to the end of the board

to create a new queen. He lost the second and drew the last two.

Norway's soccer coach Egil Olsen rates Agdestein highly. "He's very aggressive, penetrative and unpredictable in his play. I want him back," he said.

Agdestein said he was more nervous before he faced world champion Garry Kasparov than his 1988 international soccer debut against Italy.

"I've played against Kasparov three times and lost all of them. I was so nervous that I played badly."

Agdestein was raised in Asker, just outside Oslo, in a family fond of chess and with a rich sporting tradition. For example, his grandfather was the first Norwegian to run 1,500 metres in under four minutes and was also a top skier.

"It was never my ambition to do both chess and football," Agdestein said. "It was just fun."

Anand plays Karpov Aug 11

MADRAS, July 31: Grandmaster Vishwanathan Anand today left for Bombay en-route to Brussels, where his world chess championship quarterfinal encounter against former world chess champion Anatoly Karpov begins on August 11, exuding confidence that he would topple the Soviet chess giant, reports PTI.

"If I win, it will be a major landmark, not only for me but also for Asian chess," Anand said just before his departure at the Meenambakkam airport, expressing satisfaction about his six-week training stint with Mikhail Gurevich of the Soviet Union.



National Junior Chess Championship in progress in the Chess Room of National Sports Council. —Star photo

Fenech to fight Franchia Sept 13

SYDNEY, July 31: Three-time world boxing champion Jeff Fenech of Australia will face Argentine Miquel Angel Franchia in a 10-round non-title bout in Melbourne on Sept. 13, the promoter said Tuesday, reports AP.

Fenech last month was given a controversial draw with World Boxing Council super-featherweight champion Azumah Nelson of Ghana in Las Vegas. Many ringside observers believed Fenech deserved to win the bout.

The WBC has ordered a rematch between Nelson and the unbeaten Fenech, which will be held in Melbourne in December, said promoter Bill Morley.

If Fenech wins that bout, he will become only the fourth fighter in history to win world titles in four weight divisions.

"Obviously I have the rematch with Nelson on my mind, but first I have to dispose of Franchia," Fenech said.

The Australian has a 25-0-1 professional record and is

rated No. 1 in the super-featherweight division by the WBC.

Franchia has a 32-9-6 record as a professional and has won his last 11 fights. He formerly held the WBC international featherweight title and is rated No. 8 as a super-featherweight.

Morley said the Fenech-Franchia bout would be fought at 132 pounds (60 kilograms). Just over the super-featherweight limit, at the National Tennis Centre.

Australian-Guy Waters will defend his Commonwealth light-heavyweight title against Ugandan Paul Muiyodi on the same card.

Waters, top-10 rated by the WBC and WBA, has a 13-2-1 record and was outpointed by WBC champion Dennis Andries of Britain last year.

Muiyodi, a native of Jinja, Uganda, has a 16-9 record but has won eight of his last nine bouts.

Morley has promised the winner a crack at IBF champion Gianfranco Rosti of Italy.