

Nat'l badminton put back

Sports Reporter
The 16th national Badminton championships, scheduled to begin September 7 at Jessore, has been postponed till first week of October...

Kabaddi final tomorrow

Sports Reporter
The final match of the Dhaka Kabaddi league between Mirpur Jubo Sangha and Sonali Bank will be held tomorrow (Saturday) at the Outer Stadium kabaddi league.

Aussie-Pak hockey Tests in May likely

KARACHI, Aug 29: Pakistan's Hockey Federation has invited Australia to make a short tour next May, reports Reuter.

AFC programme

Sports Reporter
Two former national players - Hasanuzzaman Bablu and Abdul Gaffar will leave for Hong Kong on September 12 to join Asian Football Confederation's school coaching programme...

O'Brien leads decathletes

TOKYO, Aug 29: American Dan O'Brien took the lead after the first event of the decathlon at the World Athletics Championships in Tokyo today with an easy win in the 100 metres, reports Reuter.

Foster's hat-trick



TOKYO, Aug 29: American Greg Foster powered his way to his third successive 110-metre hurdles World championship title here on Thursday, report agencies.



Greg Foster, the 32-year-old American hurdler, on way to his third consecutive 110-m victory in the World championships. He was not considered a real medal hope.

In the end the judges gave it to Foster but 29-year-old Pierce was credited with the same time of 13.06 secs.

Britain's Tony Jarrett gave his country their second medal of the Championships by taking third spot in 13.25.

"It was a hell of a race," said Foster. "Wasn't sure at the end if I had taken it or not. Both Jack and I ran a tight race," he added.

Foster, who has been at the top for 12 years, admitted that winning is getting tougher. "I am 32 now. This was the hardest race of all. It really does not get any better with age," he said.

Foster was the second triple gold medalist after Carl Lewis won the 100 meters for the third time. Both also captured titles in Helsinki in 1983 and Rome in 1987.

Foster, who also captured titles in Helsinki in 1983 and Rome in 1987, had a great start, but Pierce was with him all the way. At the finish, Pierce just failed in an effort to move in front.

LEDOVSKAYA'S GOLD

Meanwhile, European champion Tatyana Ledovskaya of the Soviet Union became the second fastest women in history over 400-metre hurdles when she caused an upset by becoming world champion on Thursday.

Ledovskaya, who had thought about giving the Championships a miss because she considered herself in such bad shape, won the race with a time of 53.11 secs.

Britain's Sally Gunnell took the silver in 53.16, the third fastest time in history and a new national record, while Janeene Vickers of the United States clocked a personal best 53.47 to win the bronze.

Sandra Patrick-Farmer, world number one since 1989 but without a gold to her

Sabatini stretched

NEW YORK, Aug 29: Gabriela Sabatini took another step forward in defence of her US Open women's championship on Wednesday but was again tested by a spirited challenge, reports Reuter.

Sabatini struggled to a draw after the first two sets but dominated the third set and was serving at match point when Barbara Paulus of Austria was forced to retire with a badly twisted left ankle.

The score was 6-3, 4-6, 5-1 in the third-set Sabatini's favour when Paulus's ankle caved in under her as she tried to set herself to hit a running backhand at the baseline.

Paulus was certainly a difficult draw for Sabatini, who joined second-seeded Monica Seles, Mary Joe Fernandez (5), Jennifer Capriati (7), Jana Novotna (9), Katerina Malecva (11), Lella Meskhi (13) and Helena Sukova (15) into the third round.

Still, Sabatini has yet to show the all-court brilliance that carried her to victory last year at the National Tennis Centre for her first Grand Slam triumph.

In the first round, the 21-year-old Sabatini was down 4-1 in the first set against

Australian Nicole Provis, ranked 50th, before battling back to force a tiebreak.

STING MISSING

But the sting is missing from the Argentine's serves and the groundstrokes are not being fired with the same sure-angled aggression that characterised her brilliant match to the title last year.

Most importantly, the serve-and-volley game she surprised her opponents with at Flushing Meadows last year has not flowed easily.

Sabatini, however, accentuated the positive when asked about her two difficult opening matches.

"I think it's always good to have these kinds of matches, tough matches," said Sabatini. "It helps you get into the tournament and you can get your confidence."

Sabatini was sure of her own formula for success.

"The main thing is to concentrate on each match," she said. "I have to concentrate for each match."

The Argentine is also enjoying her time off the court in a city she says is one of her favourites.

"It's very exciting to be here again for this tournament. I love to play here," she said. "I like the lights, the night."

Bubka's gold

TOKYO, Aug 29: Sergei Bubka of the Soviet Union won a tight pole vault competition barely clearing 5.95 meters (19-6 1/4) and refusing to continue after securing the gold medal, reports AP.

Bagyula of Hungary was second at 5.90 (19-4 1/4) and Maksim Tarasov, also of the Soviet Union, third with 5.85 (19-2 1/4).

Bubka had just two good jumps in the whole competition. He cleared 5.70 (18-8 1/4) easily, then passed 5.90 (19-4 1/4), which Bagyula cleared on his first attempt, taking the lead.

Bubka missed at 5.90 (19-4 1/4), then moved up to 5.95 (19-6 1/4), where he missed again with his first attempt.

That left the world and Olympic champion and world record with one attempt — where if he was unsuccessful he would have finished sixth.

Bubka touched the bar with his chest, but cleared the height. He then turned to wave to an astonished crowd, which expected him to make a world record attempt.

It was a repetition of the final at the Seoul Olympics, when Bubka missed his first two attempts and risked finishing fourth. He cleared 5.90 (19-4 1/4) on his third attempt to secure the gold and then stopped.

Bubka has said he plans to make his home in a Western country in the near future. If he does, he could become part of an exodus of athletes from a powerful Soviet team that faces an uncertain future.

Bubka comes from the Ukraine — one of seven of the Soviet Union's 15 republics that have declared their independence.

Three of those — the Baltic republics of Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania — have sought recognition from the International Olympic Committee and other international sports bodies.

They are expected to receive it, at least temporarily, in September.

Bubka, who reportedly has purchased a home in Berlin, also refused to comment on the political turmoil. But the world and Olympic champion and world record holder spoke of his personal life last week.

"One of the main problems for an athlete is to be able to relax and concentrate during training," Bubka said.

There were reports that Bubka intended to go to Berlin with his family in a few months. He has stressed, however, that he plans to return to the Soviet Union once he retires.

Jansher moves up

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 29: Top seed Jansher Khan of Pakistan breezed in to the quarter-finals of the Malaysian Open squash championships with an easy win over Australian Brett Newton on Wednesday, reports Reuter.

Jansher appeared unperturbed by the divorce petition filed against him on Tuesday by his Malaysian wife Rukhsana Soh as he comfortably beat Newton 15-10, 15-7, 15-8 in 37 minutes.

Western CC champs

Sports Reporter



Western Cricket Club emerged champions in the qualifying cricket for Second Division league when they outplayed Evergreen Sporting Club by nine wickets in the final encounter yesterday at Dhaka Stadium.

Both Western CC and Evergreen SC are assured of playing in next year's Second Division league.

Evergreen, after electing to bat, struggled against some tight bowling and brilliant fielding by Western CC score a meagre 75 runs for loss of seven wickets in their allotted 30 overs.

Liton topscored for Evergreen with 22 not out.

Poor pitch dents Warwickshire



LONDON, Aug 29: Warwickshire took advantage of a poor pitch at their Edgbaston ground on Wednesday to dismiss Worcestershire for 166, but their championship challenge was soon dealt a blow when they were called to bat, reports Reuter.

Warwickshire bowler Tim Munton took seven for 59 and Gladstone Smith three for 20 on a pitch that only Australian Tom Moody, who scored a superb 91, seemed able to handle. But then Warwickshire had

green with 22 not out. Mustafa and Tareque bagged two wickets each for 14 and 18 runs respectively.

In reply, Western CC inspired by their opening batsman Shonchoy's hard hitting 43 runs easily raced to their victory target of 76 runs for the loss of only one wicket in 20.2 overs. Ashrafal was the other Western batsman to reach double figure with 20 not out.

Shonchoy was later adjudged as the man of the match.

National coach Syed Altaf Hossain gave away the prizes among the winners as chief guest.

Hooper leads Windies charge

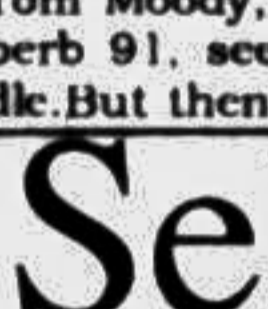
SCARBOROUGH, England, Aug 29: Carl Hooper cracked an unbeaten 164 as West Indies batsmen dominated a Rest of the World XI on the opening day of their three-day cricket match on Wednesday, reports Reuter.

Test batsman Hooper shared an unbroken seventh-wicket stand of 191 in just 96 minutes with Roger Harper as West Indies amassed 423 for six before declaring.

Hooper who finished fourth in the West Indies batting averages in the Test series against England, struck five sixes, one five and 24 fours.

Harper finished not out 63, while opener Clayton Lambert struck an impressive 80.

Seles, Capriati sail on



NEW YORK, Aug 29: Seventh-seeded Jennifer Capriati and No 2 Monica Seles both advanced with second round victories at the US Open Wednesday, reports AP.

Capriati defeated Petra Ritter 6-3, 6-0 in a 42-minute match interrupted briefly by a shower.

Seles who continued her successful return to Grand Slam tennis, eliminated Emanuela Zardo 6-0, 4-6, 6-0. The Yugoslav sailed through the first set with no problem but found some difficulty in the second against the 21-year-old Zardo from Switzerland.

Zardo broke her in the fifth game and took the set. But Seles regained her touch, dominating the third set, breaking her opponent at love in the second game and winning easily.

"I wasn't worried," Seles said. "I was kind of disappointed in myself I just have to concentrate a little bit more."

Meanwhile on Center Court, less than 10 hours after his younger brother, Patrick, had lost a four-hour marathon against Jimmy Connors, John McEnroe faced Martin Laurendeau in a second-round match.

McEnroe, a four-time Open champion and seeded 16th this year, jumped in front against Laurendeau, winning the first two sets 6-3, 6-4.

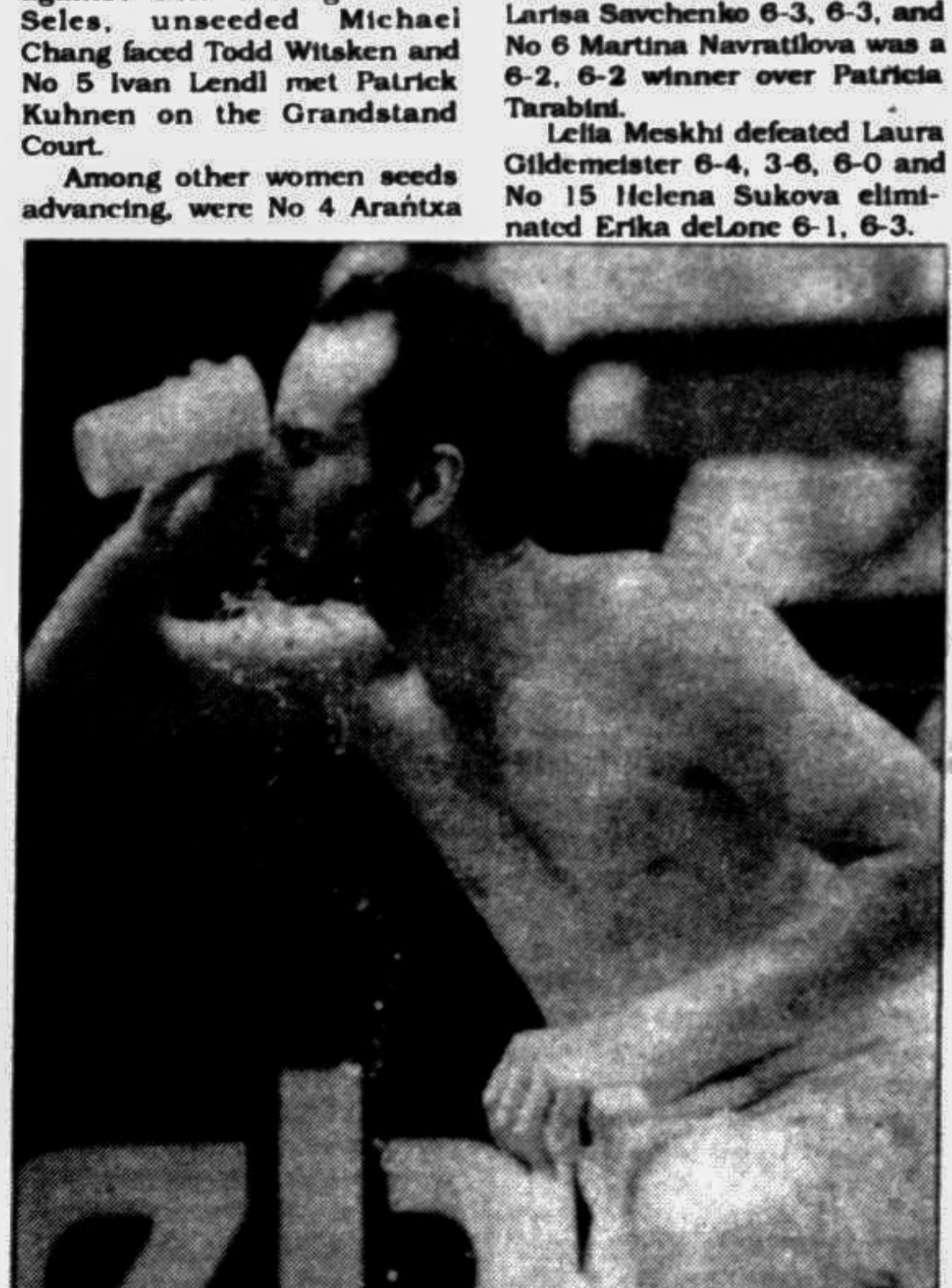
Their Center Court match was followed by No 7 Jennifer

Capriati against Petra Ritter and No 2 Stefan Edberg against Jeff Tarango. After Seles, unseeded Michael Chang faced Todd Witsken and No 5 Ivan Lendl met Patrick Kuhn on the Grandstand Court.

Among other women seeds advancing, were No 4 Arantxa

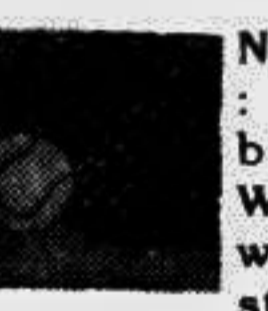
Sanchez Vicario defeated Katia Piccolini 6-0, 6-1. No 5 Mary Joe Fernandez eliminated Larisa Savchenko 6-3, 6-3, and No 6 Martina Navratilova was a 6-2, 6-2 winner over Patricia Tarabini.

Lella Meskhi defeated Laura Gildemeister 6-4, 3-6, 6-0 and No 15 Helena Sukova eliminated Erika deLone 6-1, 6-3.



John McEnroe of the US pours water on his face on August 28 at the US Open during his match against Martin Laurendeau of Canada. McEnroe defeated Laurendeau 6-0, 4-6, 6-0. — AFP

Edberg, Lendl post easy wins



NEW YORK, Aug 29: Stefan Edberg broke out his Wimbledon form with a convincing straight-sets victory in the US Open tennis championships on Wednesday, reports Reuter.

The second-seeded two-times Wimbledon champion, who crashed out in the first round here last year, won his last nine games to complete a 6-3, 7-5, 6-0 victory over American Jeff Tarango on Stadium Court at the National Tennis Centre.

After his tentative first-round victory, Edberg's vaunted serve and Grand Slam confidence were both very much in evidence on Wednesday, a relatively quiet day following Tuesday's thrilling come-from-behind wins by Ivan Lendl and Jimmy Connors.

The one big surprise of the day may have made Edberg's quest for his first US Open ti-

tle a bit easier. Seventh seed Guy Forget, who was seeded to meet Edberg in the quarter-finals, was ousted by 41st-ranked Dutchman Jan Siemerink 4-6, 6-3, 6-2, 7-6.

"Forget is very dangerous with his big serve," Edberg said. "This opens up the draw a bit for other players."

Forget, who had more aces this year than anyone else but Wimbledon champion Michael Stich, had won three titles this year, including an important open tune-up in Cincinnati, and had reached the quarter-finals at both Wimbledon and the Australian Open.

The Frenchman was suffering from some stomach problems on Wednesday but refused to use that as an excuse.

"I didn't feel too good. Still it doesn't explain. It just doesn't," said the disappointed Forget.

The only other upset of the day came when ninth seed Sergi Bruguera, who survived a

tough five-set match on Tuesday, fell to fellow-Spaniard Javier Sanchez 7-6, 6-3, 6-0.

Three-time champion Lendl, who came back from the brink of first-round elimination to win a five-set thriller against Dutchman Richard Krajcek, settled down on Wednesday to reach the third round.

The fifth seed defeated German serve and volleyer Patrick Kuhn 6-3, 6-2, 6-4.

Also advancing was the unseeded but always dangerous Michael Chang, a former French Open champion who brushed aside fellow-American Todd Witsken 6-3, 6-0, 6-2.

In his next match, Chang should provide the first real challenge for 16th seed John McEnroe, who rolled into the third round with only a few line call histrionics. The four-times champion, playing his 15th US Open, beat Canadian Martin Laurendeau 6-3, 6-4, 6-2.

Man United top league table



LONDON, Aug 29: Manchester United leap-frogged over neighbours Manchester City to take the English Division One lead on Wednesday thanks to a Brian McClair goal five minutes from time against Oldham, reports Reuter.

McClair struck the only goal of the match with a superb header off a fiercely-volleyed Neil Webb cross to dislodge City on goal difference.

City lost the last 100 per cent record of the first division when they drew 0-0 away to Norwich.

Webb, playing his first full game of the season for United, was back to the form which once made him an England

regular. He was denied first-half goals from 20-metre drives by two excellent saves from Oldham goalkeeper Jon Hallworth and produced a striking of telling passes and crosses.

He also hit a viciously swerving 32nd-minute corner which saw Paul Ince send a header crashing against the Oldham bar.

After being on the receiving end for most of the first half against Norwich City dominated in the second but never seriously threatened the home side's back four.

Their best chance, after 56 minutes, was presented to them by Ian Crook — the Norwich midfielder who had

been their chief tormentor earlier in the game. His disastrous back pass put Gary Megson in the clear, but Megson pushed his shot wide.

City were almost made to pay for that missed chance a minute from time when Norwich midfielder Rob Newman cracked a stunning left-foot drive against the crossbar from 25 metres.

Nottingham Forest's England full back Stuart Pearce joined the long list of early-season sendings-off as Tottenham battled to a 3-1 victory at the city ground.

Pearce appeared to exchange words with the referee as team mate Roy Keane was being treated for injury. Pearce's dismissal com-

pleted a disastrous night for Forest as Spurs strikers Gordon Durie and Gary Lineker once again showed their worth.

Lineker pounced to grab his fourth goal of the season from Durie's flick eight minutes from halftime after Nigel Clough had given Forest the early lead.

Then Durie, signed from Chelsea during the close season, struck home a superb solo effort on 68 minutes, leaving two defenders trailing before shooting inside the near post.

Icelandic substitute Gudni Bergsson added a last-minute third goal for good measure off a one-two with Lineker.

Leeds continued their impressive start to the season with a 4-0 win over Southampton that put them in fourth place, trailing third-placed Coventry on goal difference.

Spain, Ghana in world U-17 final

VIAREGGIO, Italy, Aug 29: Spain and Ghana, who drew 1-1 when they clashed in the qualifying round, will meet in the final of the world under-17 soccer championship on Saturday, reports Reuter.

Spain, who won the European under-16 championship earlier this year, beat Argentina 1-0 in the semifinals on Wednesday, Pardo scoring in the 23rd minute.

Ghana beat Qatar 2-2 on penalties in the other semifinal after the sides had finished 0-0 after extra time.

In the final, Spain's Antonion Segura and Ghana's Nii Lamptey will be vying for the title of leading scorer. Both have four goals.

Goalkeeper Owu was Ghana's hero, saving Qatar's second and fourth penalties from Al-Mazroet and Al-Shaif.

Ghana, with Lamptey of Belgian First Division Anderlecht showing flashes of brilliance, dominated the match with their greater skill but finished poorly.

Qatar reached the semifinals with a surprise victory on penalties over favourites the United States in last Sunday's quarter-finals.



Peter Loken (R) of Norway passes Soviet player Vasilii Kulkov on August 28 in European Cup qualifying match. The Soviet team won 1-0. — AFP photo

Gritty Connors grabs limelight



NEW YORK, Aug 29: It happened far too late in the night for most of the players to have watched, but Jimmy Connors' thrilling five-set victory was still the talk of the US Open all through the next day at the National Tennis Centre, reports Reuter.

"It's quite astonishing," second seed Stefan Edberg said of the courageous first-round victory by Connors.

"He is like a living legend," said John McEnroe, himself the owner of seven Grand Slam championships, including four US Opens.

Connors, at age 38 playing in his 21st US Open, lost the first two sets to Patrick

McEnroe, John's younger brother, and trailed 3-0 in the third set of the match on Tuesday night.

But the gritty Connors, whose fighting spirit has endeared him to the Louis Armstrong Stadium crowd, clawed his way back and claimed a 4-6, 6-7, 6-4, 6-2, 6-4, victory in the wee hours of Wednesday morning after a four-hour 18 minute struggle.

Connors will take on Michiel Schapers of the Netherlands today in his second-round match.

Other featured men's matches have top-seeded Boris Becker playing Alexander Volkov, defending champion Pete Sampras facing South African Wayne Ferreira, and

French Open champion Jim Courier going against fellow-American Jimmy Arias.

John McEnroe was disappointed for his brother, but the demonstration of competitive grit by the 38-year-old Connors moved McEnroe to praise his old adversary.

"I think no one in tennis has the inspiration to have the longevity and the love of the game that he has got," McEnroe, 32, said after his second-round victory over Canadian Martin Laurendeau on Wednesday.

"That is basically what has kept him playing. I wish I had as much love for the game as he does. That is what keeps him going when things are looking

so bleak." McEnroe likened Connors to other heroes of American sport.

"Guys like Connors come around once in every sport. It is like when Pete Rose played baseball. And (professional basketball star) Kareem Abdul-Jabbar playing at the top level for 20 years."

"It probably happens in a sport once every 50 years."

Ivan Lendl, who lost to Connors in the Open finals of 1982 and 1983, showed no surprise at the victory by Connors.