

# Underdogs stun the favourites

LYON, France, Dec 2: Underdogs France won the Davis Cup for the first time in 59 years on Sunday when Guy Forget took up the baton passed on by the hero of the tie, Henri Leconte, reports Reuter.



HENRI LECONTE  
Forget beat US Davis Cup debutant Pete Sampras 7-6, 3-

6, 6-3, 6-4 to give France an unbeatable 3-1 lead over the defending champions. The triumph for which France had been waiting since 1932 produced an explosion of joy at Lyon's Palais Des Sports where 8,000 exuberant home fans had egged on their team and disheartened their opponents with a constant cacophony of ear-splitting cheers and jeers.

French non-playing captain Yannick Noah led his team in a conga dance on court to celebrate a victory which few but he had believed in before the start.

"I don't think this was an upset after what I saw this weekend," Noah said. "I always knew if Guy and Henri played their best tennis we would be in there and it would be decided by which team had the biggest heart."

Though Forget delivered

the Cup-winning point, most of the credit must go to the amazing performance of Leconte, written off by many after a third back operation this year.

"Leconte was the man of the tie as far as I'm concerned," American captain Tom Gorman said. "We weren't ex-



GUY FORGET  
pecting him to play at all and we couldn't understand from

his record that he would play so well." Leconte, ranked only 161st in the world, rescued the tie for France after Forget had lost Friday's opening singles to Andre Agassi, by beating Sampras in straight sets in the second.

He then proved to be the anchor man when he teamed with Forget to beat experienced American pair Ken Flach and Robert Seguso in the doubles.

Leconte, whose final, meaningless match with Agassi was called off to leave the final score at 3-1, was speechless and in tears after Forget's win.

Forget, normally the most placid of players, was punching the air after winners as his match with Sampras reached its climax.

After playing a winning forehand to seal the triumph, he leaped into the air and then fell to the ground, overcome with emotion, after France's historic triumph.

Forget said an ace on set point for Sampras in the first set tiebreak and another ace — off a second serve — at break point when he was serving for the third set, had probably changed the course of the match.

"But for those two aces, Andre might have been playing Leconte in the decider now," he said.

"The crowd was fantastic. There's no doubt that the support of the crowd helped Henri and Guy. But that's part of Davis Cup."

Forget described his second serve ace as "Aupacious - and lucky."

"There came a time in the match when I felt I had to take a big risk and it came off," he added.

"But this wasn't just my win. It was the victory of five, 10 friends and of a whole country."

Sampras, who looked lonely and forlorn on court, said the crowd had disturbed him, especially in his match with Leconte, as had the new experience of playing in the Davis Cup.

"This ends my year on a sour note," he said. "It's different playing for your country when you don't want to let anyone down."

"Hopefully, it will be different next time I play Davis Cup."

It was France's seventh Davis Cup victory after the six in a row won by the four Musketeers - Jean Borotra, Henri Cochet, Rene Lacoste and Jacques Brugnon - between 1927 and 1932.

## France rejoices

PARIS, Dec 2: From President Francois Mitterrand on down, Frenchmen rejoiced Sunday over their first victory in the Davis Cup tennis tournament in 59 years, reports AP.

"I followed with passionate interest the matches you played with your worthy adversaries," Mitterrand said in a telegram to the French team after they beat the United States 3-1 in the southeastern city of Lyon.

"I extend you my warmest congratulations and thank you sincerely for bringing the Davis Cup back to France," the French President said.

After winning six straight Davis Cup titles from 1927-32, France's only other appearance in a Davis Cup final was in 1982 when the French were whipped 4-1 by the Americans. French Premier Edith Cresson joined in the jubilation, saying in a separate telegram, "You have made reality of a dream that many shared with you. Pass on in my name... the thanks and congratulations of all who share your enthusiasm and your joy."

Guy Forget's four-set victory over Pete Sampras on Sunday clinched the title for the French, three victories to one.

The win set of euphoria across the nation, with church bells tolling and cars honking on the Champs-Elysees.

# A harsh baptism for Sampras

LYON, France, Dec 2: As another ace flew past him and the crowd broke into another chant, Pete Sampras could only shake his head in frustration and wonder what he'd gotten himself into, reports AP.

Welcome to the Davis Cup, Pete. A very unfriendly welcome, indeed.

Sampras is no slouch. He won the US Open last year. He's been the hottest player on the tour lately, winning the ATP Championships in Frankfurt two weeks ago. He's ranked No. 6 in the world.

But nothing prepared the 20-year-old American for the pressure-charged challenge of playing in a Davis Cup final in a foreign country.

Sampras, who had never competed in Davis Cup, suddenly found himself as the United States' No. 1 singles player for the championship round against France.

There were no rookie heroics. Sampras lost both of his matches as France won its first Davis Cup trophy since 1932.

"It's very disappointing," Sampras said. "I feel like I let down my team. It certainly ends my year on a very sour note."

On Friday, after Andre Agassi had beaten Guy Forget, Sampras lost in straight sets to the resurrected Henri Leconte. With Forget and Leconte beating Ken Flach and Robert Seguso in the doubles Saturday, Sampras and Agassi needed to win the reverse singles Sunday.

But Sampras went down in four sets to Forget, giving France a 3-1 victory. With the outcome already decided, the last match was scrapped.

"I'll have to use this as a kind of (learning) experience," Sampras said. "I just hope it never happens again. Hopefully it will make me better in Davis Cup the next time I play."

Forget said both he and Leconte felt Sampras was the US team's weak link because of his Davis Cup inexperience.

"Pete gets affected by the crowd and he misses a few balls. We took advantage of each weakness Pete had," he said.

Not that Sampras choked or collapsed. He played Forget virtually even, winning only three fewer points (122-119) for the whole match. Sampras even had more winners, 35, to 29.

The differences was that Forget served slightly better, hitting 17 aces, including several in crucial situations.

"Up until the last point I still felt Pete was in the match," said team captain Tom Gorman.

Gorman, who passed over world No. 2 Jim Courier for the team, defended his decision to select Sampras for the final.

"I thought a lot about it beforehand and I talked to a lot of players," Gorman said. "Pete was playing so well. I felt if he played at just 75 per cent of that level we would win."

The reasons for the US defeat lay not with Sampras, Gorman said, but with an unexpected French hero.

"We didn't know about Leconte. He was the man. We never thought he would play so well," Gorman said.

# Tough draw for Soviet spikers

TOKYO, Dec 2: Olympic champions the United States and the Soviet Union will have a tough job defending their titles following the draw here today for the volleyball preliminary tournament of the 1992 Barcelona Games, reports AFP.

Conducted by International Volleyball Federation vice-president Yuri Chesnokov at a hotel in Tokyo, 12 men's and eight women's teams were divided into two groups each in the preliminary round robin competition.

The United States, two-time consecutive gold medalists, will lead Group-A, which includes current world champions Italy, North American representatives Canada, Asian champions Japan, hosts Spain and a qualifier.

The Soviet Union, which grabbed the European title beating Italy two months ago and added the World Cup to their credit last weekend, will spearhead Group-B and will take Cuba, Brazil, Algeria, South Korea and another qualifier.

The qualifier for Group-A will be fought among France,

## Shooters hope US trip will help them in SAF Games

Thirteen Bangladeshi shooters who recently completed a three-week training session in Colorado, USA, expressed confidence about winning laurels for their country at the upcoming South Asian Federation (SAF) Games to be held in Sri Lanka from the last week of December. The shooters were speaking at a reception in their honour at the Gulshan Shooting Club December 1, says a USIS press release.

Jute Minister Hannah Shah, who is the chief patron of the club, was present on the occasion as the chief guest. Officials of the Bangladesh Shooting Federation were present, as were several American diplomats.

Speaking at the function, Hannah Shah said that this was the first time a shooting team from Bangladesh has gone to the United States for training. There they learned the latest techniques. He thanked the United States for extending the cooperation that made this training possible.

During the last days of the training, the Bangladeshi shooters had a friendly competition with an American junior team. A teen-age Bangladeshi trainee, Fazle Rabbi, scored the highest total in the contest, while the nearest American shooter finished 16 points behind.

The training for the Bangladeshi shooters was jointly sponsored by the US Olympic Committee and the National Rifle Association (NRA) of the United States.

Yugoslavia, Argentina, Cameroon, Finland and Australia in France, May 10-15, while the other will be chosen among the Netherlands, Peru, Poland, Egypt, China and Bulgaria in the Netherlands, May 10-17.

Four teams from each group will advance to the quarter-finals, while the other four countries will play in the 9th-12th place playoffs.

In the women's Group-A will be world champions the Soviet Union, the United States, Japan and Spain, while

## McEnroe skips EC meet

ANTWERP, Belgium, Dec 2: John McEnroe on Sunday became the second player to withdraw from the European Community tennis championship, the organisers said, reports Reuter.

McEnroe, who has won the tournament three times, is suffering from tendinitis in the right knee. Holder Goran Ivanisevic of Yugoslavia pulled out on Friday with an achilles tendon injury.

The tournament, famous for a diamond-studded golden winner's trophy shaped like a tennis racket, starts today.

World number one and top seed Stefan Edberg is recovering from a knee injury and will play if he can. He is due to arrive in Antwerp today to prepare for his second-round match on Wednesday or Thursday.

The tournament's eight seeded players, who also include Boris Becker, Ivan Lendl, Pete Sampras and French Davis Cup hero Guy Forget, all received byes into the second round.

Group-B will include World Cup holders Cuba, European champions the Netherlands, China and Brazil.

Second and third finishers from the two groups will move into the quarter-finals and the two winners from that round will then take on the winner of each of the preliminary groups in the semi-finals.

## Milla on target for Kuwait!

CAIRO, Dec 2: Cameroon's veteran World Cup star Roger Milla scored Kuwait's first goal in international soccer since the end of the Gulf War in a 1-1 draw against Egypt on Sunday, reports Reuter.

Making a guest appearance, the retired 39-year-old striker slammed the ball into the net from five metres in the fourth minute to put Kuwait ahead. Ismail Youssef equalised in the 39th minute.

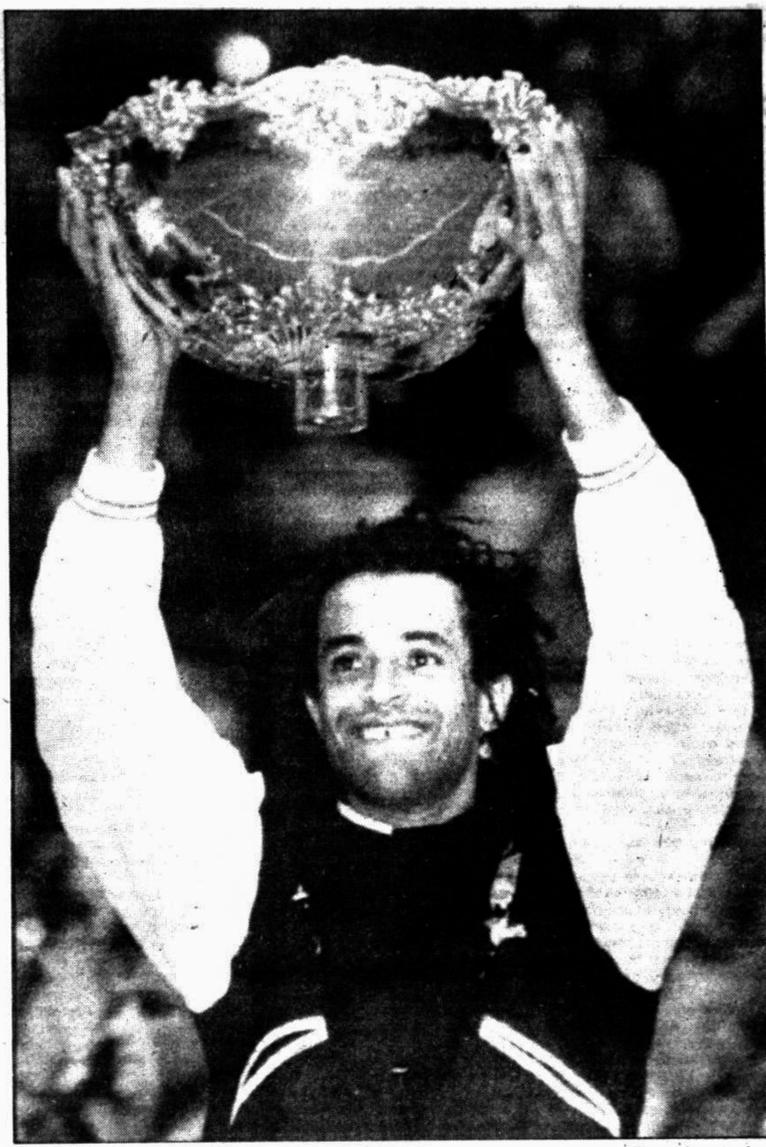
Fans from both countries, allies during the Gulf War, waved political banners.

## Iranian Pas Club DCM champions

NEW DELHI, Dec 2: Iranian league leaders Pas Club are the new DCM football champions, reports PTI.

The defeated Rovers Cup champions Mohun Bagan by a surprise 25th minute goal by midfielder Akbar Yousefi, in the final played at the Ambedkar Stadium here today.

Pas Club captain and defender - marker Aghajanian received the trophy from the Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting Mr Ajit Kumar Panja.



Yannick Noah, captain of the French tennis team, brandishes in Lyon on December 1, the Davis Cup silver bowl that France had not won back since 1932. France defeated the US by 3 to 1. — AFP photo

# Special security for Indians at SAF Games

NEW DELHI, Dec 2: India is to participate in all the 10 disciplines of the fifth South Asian Federation (SAF) Games, to be held in Colombo of Sri Lanka from December 22 to 31, reports Xinhua.

The events are: Athletics, basketball, boxing, football, shooting, swimming, table tennis, tennis, volleyball and weightlifting, according to Indian Olympic Association (IOA) president Sivanti Adityan yesterday.

Talking to reporters after the annual general meeting of the IOA in Hyderabad, capital of the southern state of Andhra Pradesh, Adityan said the 224-member Indian contingent at the SAF Games would be provided special security.

He was quoted by the Press Trust of India as saying that IOA had written both to the Sri Lanka Olympic Association and the Sri Lankan government seeking details of security arrangement for participants.

The Sri Lanka Olympic Association had assured IOA about the Indians' safety, he added.

## Asian record

MANILA, Dec 2: Vietnam's Dang Thi Dong set a South East Asian Games record as she claimed gold in Sunday's standard rifle prone event, and became the first competitor here to better an Asian Games best mark, reports Reuter.

Dong scored 595 points to surpass the Asian Games mark of 592 set in Beijing last year by China's Qiu Ping Zhang, shooting officials said.

Her record performance, which broke the South East Asian Games record of 583 set by compatriot Ngo Ngan Ha in 1989 in Kuala Lumpur, gave Vietnam their sixth gold medal in the nine-nation Games.

Maria Concepcion Samaniego of the Philippines also passed the South East Asian Games mark, scoring 587 to take silver.

The Philippines, trailing Indonesia by five golds overnight in the overall medal standings, closed the gap with victories which included the men's and women's softball and men's discus and cycling.

## Buhain has no illusions

MANILA, Dec 2: Five gold medals in the 16th South East Asian Games is not enough to make a happy man out of Filipino swimmer Eric Buhain, who has set his sights on an Olympic medal, reports AFP.

He is richer by 250,000 pesos (about 10,000 dollars) in the form a \$0,000 peso cash reward offered by the government for every gold medal won in the Manila Games, a small fortune by Philippine standards.

But the most bemuddled athlete's main concern is shaving some time off his personal best record in the 100 meters butterfly to at least make it to the finals of the event in the 1992 Olympics in Barcelona.

"My best time is way off the world or Olympic records but I am working very hard to bring my time to Olympic standards," the 21-year-old Buhain, told reporters.

His personal best in the 100 meters butterfly is 56.24 seconds while the world record has been set by American Pablo Morales at 52.84 seconds.

The Olympic record is held by Surinam's Anthony Nesty at 53.00 seconds.

Three weeks after the current Games end Buhain and another Filipino swimmer Akiko Thomson will renew their rigorous training for the Barcelona Olympics in the United States.

This training involves a 12-hour daily regimen composed of two five-hour swimming practices, lifting weights, aerobics and running.

Buhain, Thomson and a Canadian swimmer also aspiring for an Olympic gold medal, are training under Ed Barsh, the head coach of the swimming team of the University of Southern California.

## Barrientos claims men's tennis gold

MANILA, Dec 2: Filipino Felix Barrientos beat Indonesian Benny Wijaya 6-3, 7-6 (7-2) to capture the hotly-contested men's tennis singles title at the 16th South East Asian Games here today, reports AFP.

The victory was marred by complaints aired by Wijaya that linesmen favoured the Filipino with their calls.

"Even before the match, I was not afraid of losing to Felix but of losing because of the linesmen," said Wijaya.

The 23-year-old Barrientos, ranked number 199 in the world by the Association of Tennis Professionals, gave the country its first tennis gold in the Games since Manuel Vallarinos won at the 1983 staging in Singapore.

# Juventus close in on AC

ROME, Dec 2: Juventus, helped by an all-too-rare goal from Salvatore Schillaci and a very late Roma own goal, moved to within a point of Italian league leaders AC Milan on Sunday, reports AFP.

For while Juventus were winning 2-0 in Turin, AC dropped a point in the tense atmosphere on the Milan derby.

Schillaci, he of the wide staring eyes and spectacular scoring tricks throughout the World Cup, came out of comparative anonymity to open the scoring in the 37th minute with only his second of the season, but his Italian teammate, Roma skipper Giuseppe Giannini, levelled after 71.

And just when it seemed that was how it would finish, the unfortunate Mareo De Marchi, signed from Juventus in the summer, knocked the ball past his own goalkeeper Angelo Cervone to gift his old club both points.

In Milan, honours remained even with the inevitable goalscoring skills of Dutchman Marco Van Basten, for AC in the 18th minute. And

Germany's Jurgen Klinsmann, for inter in the 55th, cancelling each other out.

Napoli remain in third place, three points behind Juventus, after a 3-3 draw away at Lazio.

Lazio, Italy's draw specialists, lived up to their reputation from the penalty spot after 68 and all Napoli had to show was a 43rd minute effort from Ciro Ferrara.

Frenchman Laurent Blanc began the recovery with 11 minutes left and then Gianfranco Zola, the little Sardinian ably filling Diego Maradona's boots, snatched a point with a last-minute goal, leaving Lazio a point behind.

Parma continue to impress and are a point further back after a Sandro Melli goal 10 minutes into the game gave them victory at Atalanta, but Foggia surprisingly went down by the same score at struggling Verona.

There was no change at the bottom, where Bari lost again, 2-1 at home to Genoa, despite a late consolation goal from Englishman David Platt, and Ascoli came off worse in the relegation battle at Cagliari, whose Uruguayan star Daniel Fonseca scored twice in 11 minutes early in the second half to ensure victory.

Sampdoria, impressive winners over European champions Red Star Belgrade in Genoa in midweek, struggled at home again and escaped with a point in the goalless draw with Torino.

# Indonesians strike back

MANILA, Dec 2: Defending champions Indonesia struck back in the women's karate Monday to overtake the Philippines and ensure a close race for the overall title at the 16th South East Asian Games here, reports AFP.

The two countries have 70 golds each with three days of competitions left before the flame for the biennial Games is extinguished on December 5, but Indonesia have 53 silvers to the hosts' 50.

The hosts claimed victory this early in this best-ever performance since joining the Games federation in 1977.

Regardless of the final outcome, the Philippines has already made sports history. Philippines Olympic Committee chairman Cecilio Hechanova said in a statement.

Indonesia, who momentarily relinquished the overall lead to the hosts on Sunday, swept all three kumite events in the women's karate contested Monday, led by their veteran international campaigner Rita Mujiarso in the over-60 kilograms class.

Two divisions went the way of all-Indonesian finals. The Philippines took the men's singles gold in tennis with Felix Barrientos beating Indonesian Benny Wijaya who

## Seles' success

SAO PAULO, Brazil, Dec 2: Top-ranked Monica Seles beat No. 4 Martina Navratilova 6-4, 7-6 (8-6) Sunday to sweep a pair of weekend exhibition matches, reports AP.

complained of biased linesmen.

Thailand stamped their mark on the women's shooting with four golds in the air pistol and small bore standard rifle three positions events to boost their gold catch to 54.

Malaysia have 22 golds with S Karananih winning the 10-kilometer walk for men, but the result was put under protest by Indonesian Jamaluddin Lawa, the eventual fifth placer. The athletics jury were meeting Monday to rule on the protest.

Singapore now have 13 golds, pocketing the ladies masters in bowling on Monday through Kegler Grace Young.

## It's a family affair!

MANILA, Dec 2: The javelin throw event for men became a family affair here Sunday as Indonesia took two golds. Three silvers and a bronze in the centerpiece athletics discipline at the 16th South East Asian Games, reports AFP.

Frans Mahuse, 28, beat off the challenge of younger brother Freddy Mahuse, 27, to dominate the event for the third Games running with a best throw of 75.18 meters to his brother's 71.14 meters.

But Frans Mahuse failed to improve on his meet record of 75.38 meters established in Jakarta in 1987.

Indonesia also captured the javelin event for women, Tati Ratnainingsih throwing a best of 50.76 meters. She also

failed to improve on the meet record of 51.10 meters which she held.

The Philippines won two golds and Burma took the fifth gold.

Hector Bego broke his own 10-year-old Games record in the 3,000 meter steepclimb with a winning time of 8 min 55.85secs, way below his personal best, while compatriot Fidel Replzo also set a new Games record of 52.10 meters in bagging the discus throw gold for men.

Ma Kyin Lwan took the day's first athletics gold when the barefoot Burmese ruled the 10 kilometer walk for women, in the process setting a new Games record.



A group of Bangladeshi shooters representing several shooting clubs of the country at a reception in Dhaka on December 1. The group recently completed a three-week training session in the United States jointly sponsored by the US Olympic Committee and the National Rifle Association. — USIS photo