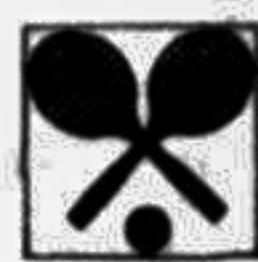


Seles retains her Aussie Open title



MELBOURNE, Jan 25: Although Monica Seles is the undisputed champion of women's tennis, her most recent victim has issued a warning: improve or face losing the top spot, reports AP.

Top-seeded Seles was as dominating as usual Saturday in successfully defending her Australian Open titles, her two-fisted groundstrokes pounding No 7 Mary Joe Fernandez into submission 6-2, 6-3 to earn the 270,000 US dollars first prize.

No 1 Stefan Edberg meets No 2 Jim Courier in the men's final Sunday.

Fernandez showed only flashes of the sharp net game she unveiled in ousting No 3 Gabriela Sabatini in the semifinals.

But she said she knows she must continue the switch to a more aggressive style, and that it's a lesson Seles should learn if she wants to add to her collection of five Grand Slams.

"I think when you're No 1 and you win all the time, it's hard to change," Fernandez said. "I think that's a mistake. Someone is going to come along who is going to beat her. She's not improving. When I did attack, I won most of the points."

Although the 20-year-old said Seles already is beatable now, "You have to play a perfect match. She creates shots from nowhere. But eventually someone is going to catch up to her."

Seles, 18, agreed that she must improve, particularly if she wants to conquer the speed of grass courts and win the only Grand Slam she hasn't claimed yet — Wimbledon.

"I would really like to have the serve stronger, just come in more often. I think for Wimbledon, I'm going to have to," she said. "That's going to be hard, because I don't feel secure."

Seles won all three Grand Slams she contested last year but pulled out of Wimbledon, citing injury. She has reached the finals of 19 consecutive tournaments, winning 13.

Fernandez said Seles' big advantage is mental.

"I think the best part of her game is her tenacity," Fernandez said. "I think that's what wins her most of her matches."

Seles looked coquettish at her post-match news conference in a pink, crushed silk-and-lace floppy hat and call-length sundress reminiscent of the 1920s style of the woman she most admires in tennis, Suzanne Lenglen.

She said she wanted people to know she's just a normal teenager when she sheds the serious demeanor she wears on the court.



Monica Seles holds a toy koala and the Australian Open women's singles trophy after beating American Mary Joe Fernandez in yesterday's final in Melbourne. Seles won in straight sets 6-2, 6-3.

Seles said the final score against Fernandez, far from the tension of the 9-7, third-set victory in last year's semifinals here, wasn't indicative of how close the match was.

"The score was pretty tight, just decided by a few points," she said.

Fernandez lost the first four games despite holding game points in each one, including three break points on Seles' second service game, when the champion fought back from a 15-40 deficit. Fernandez lost the next game after starving off three break points.

"I was unlucky not to win any of the first four games," Fernandez said. "There is a big difference between 4-0 and 2-2."

Both Seles and Fernandez, got off to slow starts and looked a little tight on a warm, sunny day. Seles set the early tone with a double-fault on the first point. Six of the nine service breaks came in the first set.

Seles got untracked first, although each game was a struggle. The combination of Seles' winners and Fernandez' errors proved deadly to any hopes for an upset.

Fernandez ended up with 32 unforced to 21 for Seles. Many came off the backhand side, which Seles exploited to the fullest.

Fernandez, who had

promised to continue the attacking style she used to dismantle Sabatini, looked unsettled by three errors on approach shots in the first game and largely remained pinned to the baseline by Seles' powerful groundstrokes.

She ended up with nine winners from the net, compared with 17 against Sabatini. After Fernandez pulled to within 5-2 in the first set on her second service break, Seles won the next five games to all but extinguish Fernandez's hopes.

Fernandez, who also made the final here two years ago, now has lost 11 straight matches to Seles after winning their first encounter.

Wanderers earn first point

Sports Reporter

Dhaka Wanderers Club shared points with newly-promoted Eskaton Sabuj Sangha in the first match of the day of the Star First Division football league at the Mirpur Stadium yesterday.

In a match that was mostly confined to midfield with the team launching sporadic forays mainly because of the lapse of defence than individual brilliance by any player from either side.

Belal, the hardworking Wanderers player who has already caught the notice of the football enthusiasts, gave Wanderers the lead in the 35th minute of the match after Mosharrar had done the spadework.

Eskaton pressed hard for the equaliser but the goal eluded them till the fag end of the match when Arman, another player to make his mark in this year's league, drew level two minutes from the final whistle on getting a ball from Liaquat.

TODAY'S MATCHES

Victoria vs Police (3 pm)
Mohammedan vs Wari (5 pm)

Gazza returns for Spurs Mar 4

LONDON, Jan 24: England international Paul Gascoigne has pencilled in March 4 for his Tottenham comeback, reports AP.

Gascoigne hopes to play in the European Cup Winners' Cup quarter-final first leg against Feyenoord at White Hart Lane. He has not played since damaging his knee in the FA Cup final last May.

"My target is to play against Feyenoord, although I will obviously try to play for the reserves before that," the Sun reports him as saying in its Saturday edition, adding: "I'm also certain I will be a Lazio player by May 31 — if not earlier."

Gascoigne is said to have had an x-ray on his injured knee earlier this week, which confirmed that he can step up his rehabilitation programme.

And the midfield star is reported as saying he will be fit for the European Championships in the summer.

Ctg soccer

CHITTAGONG, Jan 25: Kollol Sangha beat Hafiz Jute 3-1 in the CJKP Elite Paint First Division football league at the Chittagong Stadium here this afternoon, reports BSS.

Kollol led the first half 1-0. Tipu scored twice and Masum once for Kollol while Akbar reduced the margin for Hafiz Jute Mills.

The other match of the day, between BCIC and Bakolia, ended in a two-two draw.

Santosh scored both the goals for BCIC while Bakolia levelled through Tinku and Mamun.

Stiffer fines for 'Seles syndrome'

MELBOURNE, Jan 25: The "Monica Seles fine" is now in effect.

Seles sparked a controversy by skipping a tournament last year to play an exhibition. That sort of action will be five times more costly this year, following adoption of an increased rate of fines Saturday by the Women's International Pro Tennis Council, reports AP.

Effective this year, a player in violation of the exhibition rule will be automatically fined in accordance with the following schedule:

Those ranked No 1 to No 4, 100,000 dollars; No 5-No 8, 50,000 dollars; No 9-No 20, 25,000 dollars; and No 21-No 50, 12,500 dollars.

"The members of the Women's Pro Council anticipate that these new fine levels will deter promoters from staging exhibitions which negatively impact the women's professional circuit," said Anne Person, the council's managing director.

"Ideally, these increased fines will not need to be imposed, but the WPTC felt that it was important to take a stronger initiative in protecting Kraft Tour tournaments from ill-timed exhibitions."

She said there are more than 20 exhibitions scheduled this year.

"We're not trying to prevent players from participating in exhibitions, we're just trying to regulate the timing and location," she said.

Seles was fined 20,000 dollars for playing an exhibition instead of a tournament in Brighton, England, even though she hadn't entered the Brighton event. Steffi Graf and other players complained that the fine wasn't enough.

The council is the governing body that administers the tour. It is a non-profit group, comprised of voting members representing the players of the Women's Tennis Association, the International Tennis Federation, and the tournaments.

Abahani leave it late

Sports Reporter



Title - aspirants
Abahani Krira Chakra defeated Bangladesh Jute Mills Corporation 3-1 in the Star

First Division football league at the Mirpur Stadium yesterday.

The great expectations that were raised in Abahani's previous encounter against Wanderers ran to seed with the Dhanmondi side, the defending champions, playing a fairly pedestrian brand of soccer.

The BKSP pupils playing for BJMC did well to hold their more powerful rivals 1-1 in the first half.

Abahani, playing without key defender and skipper Munna, looked rather jittery in defence. Rehan, exposed by the pacy, enthusiastic BJMC forwards resorted to ugly, cynical tactics and the tall stopper was lucky to get away with a yellow card. Referee

Ansarul Islam Mintu's poor supervision gave birth to other incidents like depriving Abahani of a penalty and awarding BJMC a penalty for an infringement that was not any the greater than as Aslam.

As for the match, Alexey Arefiev was pushed behind to marshal the Abahani defence in Munna's absence along with Alamgir, Rehan and Nira.

The reigning league champions pitched in early with Sergei Zhukov feeding the front liners well but the pincer intensity was missing; yet Alamgir's long throw flummoxed the BJMC defence which lacked in inches and Gaus, after Aslam had missed, nodded the ball home in the 15th minute of the match (1-0).

BJMC equalised eight minutes later, much to surprise of the Abahani supporters when Arifur Rahman Mamun latching on to a fine pass from Shovon.

Pioneer soccer

Sports Reporter

T & T Recreation Club swapped Khilgaon Smrjony Sangsad 4-1 in the Janata Bank Pioneer football league yesterday at the Khilgaon School ground.

Dipu and Suman netted two goals each for the winners while Rashid reduced the margin for Smrjony.

In the other match at the venue, Rainbow AC beat Painadi by two goals (Ripon, Dulal) to nil.

At the Outer Stadium, KR Boys beat Lalbagh Tarun Sangha by a similar margin. Selim and Arman scored for the winners.

At the Dhanmondi ground, Dhaka Dynamo shared points with Fire Service (Jrs) after the match ended in a 2-2 draw.

Shanto and Titu netted for Dynamo while Karim and Rana scored for Fire Service.

The other match at the venue, between Kalindi KC and Khwaja Dewan Juba Sangha ended goalless.

At the Banani ground, the tie between Mirpur Naburam and Unique SC ended in a two(Milon, Kamal)-two (Ujjal, Asad) draw.

Kendrio Kishore Kafela edged past Sonargaon Isaa Khan 1-0, Mahmood being the scorer, at the Mirpur Outer Stadium.

Roy Shaheb Bazar got a walk-over against Shyamoli Club in the other fixture at the venue.

Hockey league resumes today

Sports Reporter

Green Delta First Division hockey league matches resume today at the Hockey Stadium.

Sonali Bank will take on Dhaka Wanderers' Club in the first match at 1:45 pm while Sadharan Bima will clash with Wari Club in the second fixture at 3:15 pm.

The league programme came to a standstill with the umpires going on a wildcat strike in protest against the untoward incident last Monday when an Usha Krira Chakra official, who is, ironically, also a hockey umpire, refused to accept his team's 1-2 defeat at the hands of Dhaka Mariner Youngs Club and abused one of the umpires who officiated in that game.

Navy hockey on

The three-day long annual hockey championship of the Bangladesh Navy began yesterday at the Sailors' Colony, Dhaka Cantonment, says an ISPR press release.

On the opening day, BNS Shaheed Moazzem, BN Frigate Squadron, BN Patrolcraft and hosts BNS Mohsin beat BNS Isaa Khan, Khulna Squadron, BNS Titumir and BN Dockyard respectively.

Rangamati soccer

RANGAMATI, Jan 25: Local Mohammedan Sporting Club beat Sabuj Sangha by a lone goal in a keenly contested match of the Rangamati First Division football league played today at the local stadium here, reports UNB.



The BJMC goalkeeper makes a daring save to thwart an Abahani forward in yesterday's Star league match at Mirpur Stadium. Abahani won 3-1.

—Star photo

Rehan felled Ants two minutes from the breather inside the box and a hiss of relief cleaved out of the lungs of the anxious Abahani supporters when Salam Khan wasted BJMC's spot kick by shooting over the bar.

Abahani began the post-lemon session in sober sadness and goals looked only a matter of time with the relentless waves of offensives leaving the shores of the BJMC defence.

Sergei Zhukov scored in the 23rd minute from the melee after BJMC defenders failed to clear a free-kick by Nira.

Abahani sealed the fate of the match when Aslam scored

his third goal of the season in the very next minute.

Abahani ran all over their opponents for the rest of the match but poor marksmanship thwarted them from widening the victory margin.

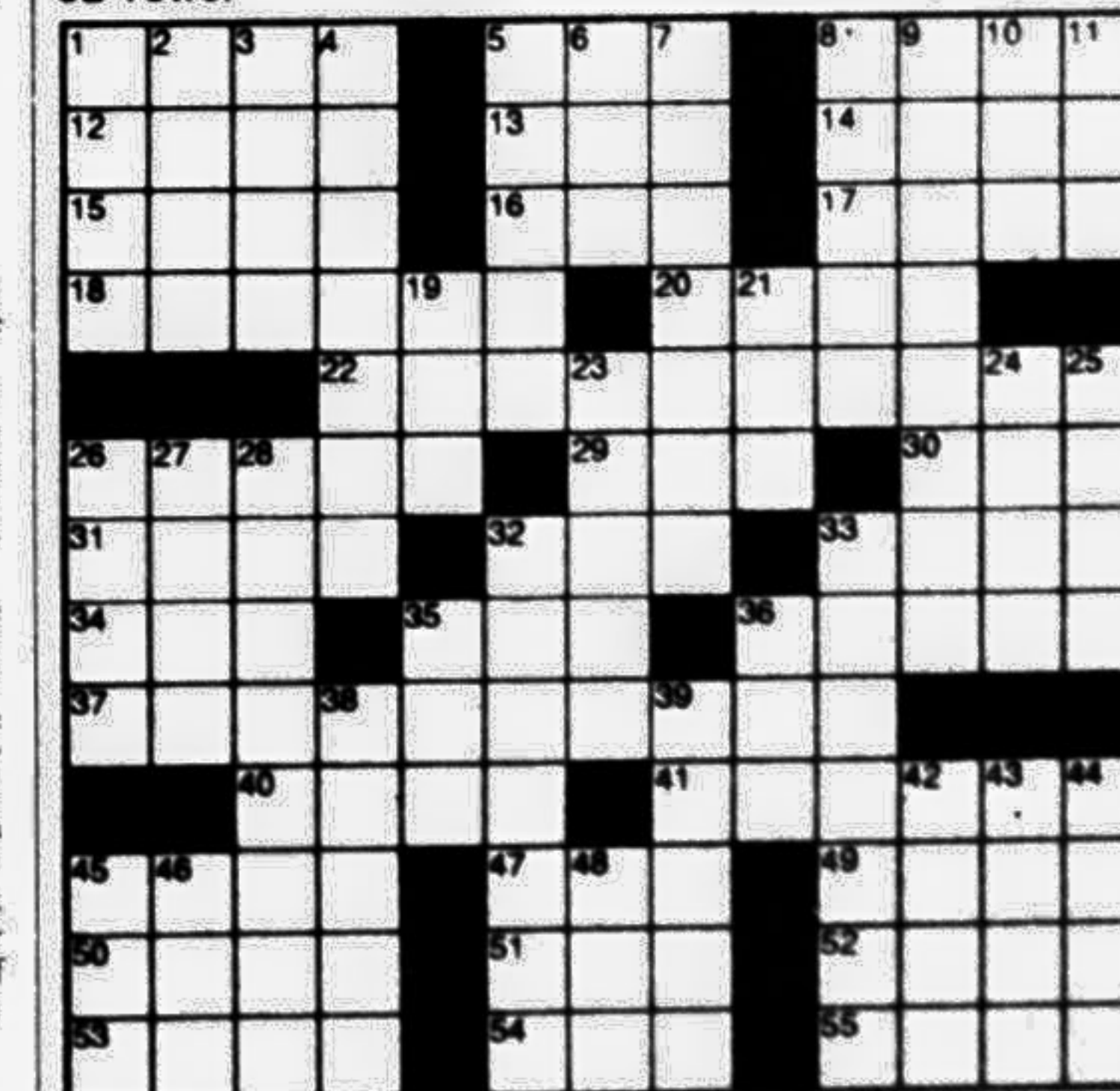
This was Abahani's fourth straight win while BJMC have lost all four games they have played so far.

Yellow cards: Rehan of Abahani and Salam of BJMC. Abahani KC: Selim, Alamgir, Rehan, Arefiev, Nira, Munir (Zakir), Zhukov, Shakil (Swapan), Gaus, Rumi (Mamun) and Aslam.

BJMC SC: Selim (Nasir), Mamun, Rasheed, Shovon, Younus, Salam, Bari, Papeli, Anis, Arif and Maruf.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS	marking	53 Flat-	blind
1 Bygone days	33 Cans	bottomed	10 Summer quencher
5 Ill-lit	34 Lummo	boat	11 Harrison or Reed
8 Admitting a draft	35 Hallow-	54 Profit	19 Petrol
12 Vocal comeback	36 Sugary	55 Dame Myra	21 Merry
13 Royal flush	37 Writings	DOWN	23 Low-IQ type
14 Baseball's Boggs	40 Sharif or Khayyam	1 Carrots' mates	24 Descartes
15 Obsessed seaman	41 Cagney and Lacey, e.g.	2 Rue the run	25 Into the sunrise
16 Royal flush	45 Change residence	3 "Pyg-malion" playwright	26 Imple-
17 "Family Ties" role	47 "Mayday!"	4 "— Road"	27 Jai
18 Ed	49 Continued flow	5 Librarian's device	28 Remain-
Norton's concern	50 PC owner	6 "Rocks"	32 Become laryngitic
20 Exchange premium	51 Ram's ma'am	7 Threatens	33 — Night
22 Al Hirschfeld's art	52 Fatigue	8 Lie in store for	35 Bikini part
26 Bath powders	Solution time: 23 mins.	9 Window	36 No-seats sign
29 "L.A. Law" actress			38 Abrasive powder
30 Cous-teau's milieu			39 Unex-pected defeat
31 Pseudo butter			42 Netman Nastase
32 Towel			43 Mutts
			44 Former mates
			45 Slander
			46 Bear: Sp.
			48 Have bills



CRYPTOQUIP

LUIZ YCZS ODAAQIME TIO

ODTIQUIM, OUIS YCVI

EYCQQ OCQV

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: THE GERMAN DOCTOR'S IDEA FOR AN ALLERGY CLINIC STARTED FROM SCRATCH.

Today's Cryptoquip clue: Q equals L

The Cryptoquip is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

RU-CU semis today

RAJSHAHI, Jan 25: Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) became Group A champions in inter-university cricket tournament defeating Jahangirnagar University by five wickets at the university stadium here today, reports UNB.

Jahangirnagar University batted first after winning the toss and scored 148 runs for 9 in the allotted 40 overs. Shahriar hit 56 and Selim 40.

In reply, BUET reached the winning target of 149 for the loss of 5 wickets in 38.2 overs. Channu scored 57, Hassan 29 and Kaiser 25 runs.

The first semi-final between hosts Rajshahi University and Chittagong University will be held tomorrow (Sunday) at the same venue.

Martin's return

CARDIFF, Jan 25: World champion Rodney Martin will return to the international circuit after an absence of four months when he competes in the Welsh classic next month, reports Reuter.

Australian Martin who became the first man to beat both Jahangir Khan and Jansher Khan in the same tournament on his way to winning the world title in Adelaide in August, has not played since a foot injury forced him to retire during the Canadian Open final in October.

Both Jahangir and Jansher are expected to compete in the Welsh classic which starts in Cardiff on February 19.

Waldner beat Ma

TADOTSU, Japan, Jan 25: Former world champion Jan-Ove Waldner of Sweden needed 50 minutes to beat Ma Wenge of China and win the opener of the four-leg world All Star circuit men's table tennis tournament here Friday, reports AP.

The Swede, who lost the world title to his compatriot Jorgen Persson last year, scored a 21-13, 16-21, 18-21, 21-19, 21-14 win over the tenth-ranked Chinese in the final.

Waldner defeated Jorg Rosenkopf of Germany and Kim Taek-Goo of South Korea earlier in the day.

Courier faces real test today



MELBOURNE, Jan 25: Jim Courier has had a pretty easy run to the final of the Australian Open.

He'll find out Sunday if it's been too easy, reports AP.

Courier, the second seed, faces No. 1 Stefan Edberg in a rematch of the US Open final that the Swede won in straight sets. Edberg holds a 4-2 edge over Courier, but one of the American's wins came en route to the French Open title last year.

After three consecutive straight-set victories in which he yielded only seven games each time, Courier didn't even have to take the court in Friday's semifinals when unseeded Richard Krajicek defaulted with a shoulder injury.

The burly Courier will be facing a seeded player for the first time in a tournament marked by early upsets and No 6 Pete Sampras' withdrawal with a shoulder injury.

While the layoff between matches is nice — he last played Wednesday — Courier is worried about his sharpness.

"The down side is that I don't get to play," he said. "You'd like to be in a rhythm going into a final of a tournament."

A straight-set victory over unseeded Wayne Ferreira in the semifinals was just what Edberg was looking for. He has improved with each match and feels he has overcome nagging injuries and a lingering cold.

"I am happy I won in three

Australian men win doubles

MELBOURNE, Jan 25: Australians Mark Woodforde and Todd Woodbridge won their first Grand Slam doubles title as a pair by beating Americans Kelly Jones and Rick Leach in straight sets Saturday at the Australian Open, reports AP.

Woodforde and Woodbridge, the No 4 seeds, beat the 11th seeded American combination 6-4, 6-3, 6-4.

Left-hander Woodforde then combined with compatriot Nicole Provis to beat Woodbridge and Arantxa Sanchez Vicario of Spain in the mixed doubles final.

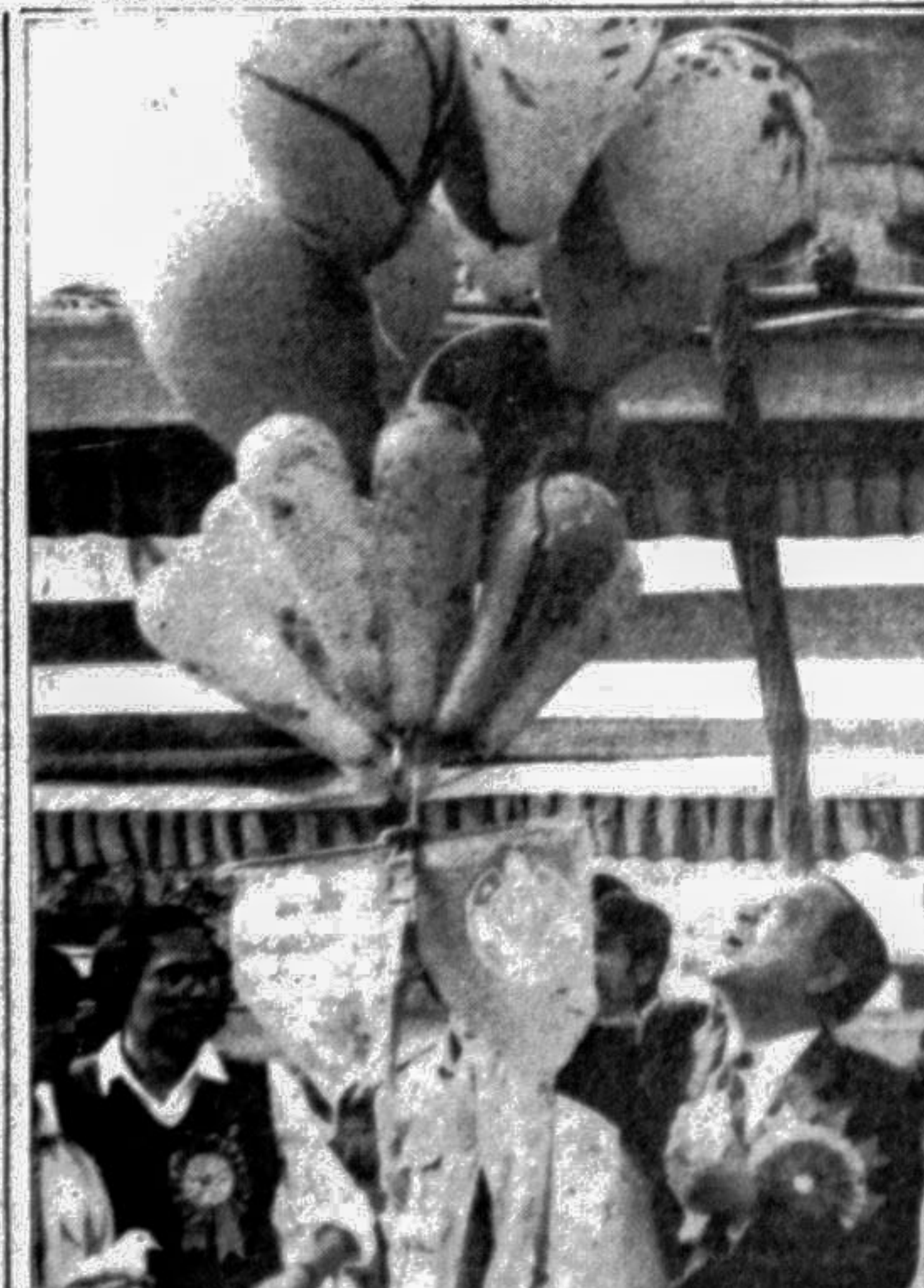
sets. That's a good preparation," Edberg said. "Now he hasn't played since Wednesday, and I am not sure if that is good for him. You lose a bit of the routine and you don't like to walk around too many days without playing."

While the match is the latest in one of the newest rivalries at the top of men's tennis, there is a similarity in both men's styles, particularly their hard work and low-key approach off the court.

"He sort of likes to be a little bit more quiet and doing what he likes doing best, and that's playing tennis," Edberg said.

"The moment you don't work as hard, you will slip sooner or later, just a matter of time."

Courier's charge to the No.



Harunur Rashid Khan Monno, MP, (R) releasing balloons marking the inauguration of the fourth annual sports meet for the deaf organised by the Dhaka Bodhr Sangha at the College of Physical Education, Mohammadpur playground yesterday.

—Star photo