

# US girls set world record

BARCELONA, July 30: The United States broke the world record in the 400-metre medley relay Thursday, winning the gold in a time of 4:02.54. Germany won the silver in 4:05:19 and the Unified Team won the bronze in 4:06.44, reports AP.

The previous record was 4:03.69 by East Germany in 1984.

The relay team was made up of Lea Loveless, Anita Nall, Crissy Ahman-Leighton and Jenny Thompson.

## Wrestling results

BARCELONA, July 30: An Han-Bong of South Korea won the gold medal Thursday in the bantamweight (57-kilogram, 125.5-pound) class of Greco-Roman wrestling, winning a 6-5 decision over Rifat Yildiz of Germany.

Sheng Zetian of China won the bronze with a 5-4 decision over Alexander Ignatenko of the Unified Team.

Maik Bullmann of Germany won the gold medal Thursday in the light heavyweight (90-kilogram, 198-pound) class of Greco-Roman wrestling, winning a 5-0 decision over Hakki Basar, Turkey.

Gogui Kogouachvili of the Unified Team won the bronze medal with a 2-0 decision over Sweden's Mikael Ljungberg.

## Meili shoots down Olympic mark

MOLLET DEL VALLES, Spain, July 30: Launi Meili of the United States won the Olympic gold medal Thursday in women's three-position small bore rifle, reports AP.

It was only the second women's shooting gold for an American in Olympic history, and one of the biggest surprises of the Barcelona Games.

Ralf Schumann of Germany won the men's rapid fire pistol gold with 885 points. Afanjsjs Kuzmins of Latvia took the silver with 882. Vladimir Volkmanine of the Unified Team got the bronze, also at 882.

The silver and bronze medals were determined by scores in the final round.

Kuzmins was the first to receive an Olympic medal under the Latvian flag since 1936.

Meili, 29, had a final-round score of 97.3 for an overall total of 684.3. Both are Olympic records.

She missed the world record by six-tenths of a point. "Right now, it's hard for me to comprehend it," Meili said. "I feel like I have 10 shots to go. There's no more pressure in the world."

Nonka Detcheva of Bulgaria won the silver with 682.7. Malgorzata Ksiazkiewicz of Poland won the bronze at 681.5.

The only other US shooter to win an Olympic gold in women's competition was Pat Spurgin, in the air rifle in 1984, the first year women's shooting was an Olympic sport. Other US women have won golds in mixed shooting.

## Cuba beat China

BARCELONA, July 30: Cuba fought back from a first game loss to beat 1988 Olympic bronze medalist China in four sets on the opening day of women's volleyball at the Barcelona Games Wednesday, reports AP.

The score was 13-15, 15-11, 15-9, 15-11.

Cuba started out fast, making the first three points of the opening game. Then China caught the Cuban women at 4-4 and pulled ahead by three. Cuba fought back to 9-9, and was ahead at 13-11, when the Chinese scored four in row to take the game.

Then China made the fast start, building a 4-1 lead in the second game before the Cubans caught them at 4-4. China gained a four point lead, Cuba recovered at 9-9, then dropped to 9-11 before staging a six point rally to take the game 15-11.

The teams were even in the third set, until China stalled at 9-9 and Cuba ran up a quick 15-9 win.

China scored first in the deciding game, but then Cuba got two and led most of the game to take the match 15-11.

## BRAZIL WIN

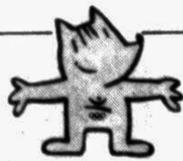
Brazil beat the Netherlands in four sets to take its opening match.

The score was 15-9, 15-3, 11-15 and 15-7.

Brazil built a 13-4 lead in the opening set, gave up five straight points, then took the next two to close out the game.

The Netherlands fell apart in the second set, letting Brazil pull to an 8-0 lead before scoring its first point. Brazil stayed far ahead on its way to the 15-3 thrashing.

In the third set, the Netherlands regained its footing, scoring the first three points. Brazil caught up at 6-6, and built a three-point lead before the Netherlands fought back to tie, and went on to win 15-11.



# OLYMPIC SPECIAL



US swimmer Mike Barrowman celebrates after winning the men's 200m breaststroke gold in a world record time in Barcelona Wednesday.



China's Qian Hong waves her bouquet after winning the gold in the women's 100m butterfly last Wednesday. Christine Ahmann-Leighton (USA) won silver and Catherine Plewinski (France) the bronze.

## Music fires them up

BARCELONA, July 30: A rock song called "All fired up" launched Mike Barrowman to a world record and an Olympic title on Wednesday, reports Reuter.

The 23-year-old American unplugged his personal stereo only seconds before standing on the blocks for the start the 200 metres breaststroke.

The jangle of sound from the cassette worked its magic for Barrowman. He broke his own world record with a time of two minutes 10.16 seconds and scooped the gold medal ahead of Hungary's Norbert Rozsa and Britain's Nick Gillingham.

Barrowman said the slow march which accompanied the entry of the finalists into the arena over the public address system was so uninspiring that he switched on his cassette.

"The music they play here is the dulcetest you could imagine," he said. "Music gets me going. It is a big part of my life. It calms me down and it makes me excited at the right time."

Barrowman who just missed out on a medal when he finished fourth in the 200 at the 1988 Seoul Olympics, led from the first turn under pressure from Gillingham. He kept his lead despite a late surge by Olympic 100 breaststroke silver medalist Rozsa down the last 50 metres.

The world champion, who

set his earlier mark of 2:10.60 in August last year, was still in a daze 30 minutes after scooping his first Olympic crown.

"I'm in a state of shock at the moment," he said.

"I am normally running around and talking. But I mobilised every piece of my mental strength in that race and I am drained."

"All day I have been dreaming about what it would be like to win. All day I felt that I could do it."

Gillingham, the fastest man in the world this year before the Olympics, also spent the last seconds before the race listening to music on his headphones.

The Briton's choice was pink Floyd's dogs of war.

But the 1988 Olympic silver medalist from the English midlands was unable to overcome a recent groin strain and show his normal strength down the final 50 metres.

"There are eight guys competing and it is basically a war," said Gillingham who finished in 2:11.29, six hundredths of a second behind Rozsa.

"It helped me to get psyched up, I did not have total faith in the injury and I tried to put it out of my mind."

"But I swam a lifetime best tonight and you can't complain about that."

## China's Lin Li shatters 11-yr-old world record

# Popov pips Biondi and Jager

BARCELONA, July 30: Alexandre Popov of the Unified Team won the 50-metre freestyle Thursday in 21.91 seconds, an Olympic record.

Matt Biondi of the United States won the silver in 22.09, and American Tom Jager won the bronze in 22.30.

The previous record was 22.14 set by Biondi in 1988.

Chinese swimmer Lin Li broke an 11-year-old world record in the Olympic women's 200-metre individual medley Thursday, and American Melvin Stewart narrowly missed a world mark in winning the men's 200 butterfly.

Lin outdueled American Summer Sanders, winning in 2 minutes, 11.65 seconds and beating the world mark of 2:11.73 set by Ute Geweniger of East Germany in 1981. It was swimming's oldest mark.

Daniela Hunger of Germany won the bronze in 2:13.92.

Stewart had to settle for an Olympic record in his race. He was on a world-record pace after 100 metres but finished in 1:56.26 — .55 seconds off his world record of 1:55.69.

Danyon Loader of New Zealand won the silver in 1:57.93, and Franck Esposito of France got the bronze in 1:58.51.

The previous Olympic record was 1:56.94 by Michael Gross of West Germany in 1991 World Championships.

In qualifying earlier Thursday, Sanders was fastest in qualifying for the women's 200 individual medley and an American also led qualifying for the men's 100 backstroke. The Unified Team headed

head-to-head series, and hopes to add his first individual Olympic gold medal to the four golds he's won on relays.

Biondi was the golden man in Seoul, with seven medals, including five golds. He'll try for his first individual medal in

qualifiers for the men's 50 freestyle and the women's 400-metre medley relay.

Alexandre Popov of the Unified Team qualified ahead of world record-holder Tom Jager in the 50 freestyle, finishing in 22.21 seconds, followed by Matt Biondi of the United States in 22.32 and Jager, also an American, in 22.45.

Popov threatened to spoil the showdown sprint race for rivals Jager and Biondi, meeting for the 25th time in the final of the event they have dominated for years. Popov won the gold in the 100 freestyle, where Biondi finished an astonishing fifth.

Between them, Jager and Biondi own 24 of the top 25 times in the 50 free. Jager holds a 15-8 lead in their

Barcelona, having won gold with Jager on the 400 freestyle relay.

American Janet Evans qualified first Wednesday in the 800 freestyle, and was to swim the final Thursday night. The defending gold medalist from 1988 and world record holder was trying to become the first swimmer to win back-to-back 800 freestyles in Olympic history.

Jeff Rouse of the United States was the fastest 100 backstroke qualifier in 54.63 seconds, .70 seconds off his world record of 53.93. Mark Tewksbury of Canada was second in 54.75.

David Berkoff, the former world record-holder from the United States was third in 54.84.

## Chinese sports machine in high gear

BARCELONA, July 30: While the sports machines of the former Communist bloc were being dismantled, the Chinese were cranking theirs into high gear, reports AP.

The Olympic team from the world's most populous nation has rolled through these Games, picking up a surprising 17 medals through the first four days of competition. Only the Unified Team, with 26, and the United States, with 21, have more.

Some of the success was expected. Fu Mingxia's gold medal in women's platform diving followed the script, and Tan Liangde's third consecutive diving silver wasn't a big shock, either. But the Chinese women have unexpectedly made their presence felt in the pool, getting two gold and three silvers.

"In swimming, for example, the Chinese are advancing very fast," Tan said Wednesday.

And not just in swimming. Zhang Shan, an unknown 24-year-old shooter, beat a male-dominated field to win the skeet competition. One of her countrywomen, Zhang Xiaodong, is in position to win a medal in biathlon.

Communist China did not participate in the Summer games until 1984. These days, China is sports mad, especially when it comes to the Olympics.

"In the beginning, China wasn't qualified to participate in the Olympics," Tan said

"Now, we are able to participate, we are attaching more importance. It's natural."

With six gold medals thus far, China already has surpassed its 1988 take. In Seoul, it won 28 medals in all.

At the rate it's going in these games, China could surpass its 32-medal performance in the boycott-weakened 1984 Games.

As they have begun winning, the Chinese have taken over the role Soviet athletes enjoyed during the height of the Cold War — the Mystery Opponents. They seem to perform like automatons, offer only terse comments in news conferences and sometimes disappear from their sports without explanation.

All most outsiders can find out about China's sports machine is that children are singled out for athletic potential at a tender age and placed in state-run sports schools far away from their families. Little is known of their lives outside sports, if they even have lives outside sports.

Tan claims he does, but he didn't elaborate.

Diving "has not had much impact on my personal life," he said. "When I'm not diving, I lead another life, so the two are not related at all."

Zhang Tingquan, sports editor for the state-run Xinhua news agency, defends institutional athletics, saying criticism of his country's system is based on misunderstanding.

"China has a different social system," he said. "In your

country you have a different system. You have sports clubs, but in China no one can afford to open a club. If we want to open sports to our children, the government has to spend the money and open schools."

The Chinese have found success, and with success comes the inevitable suspicion — whispered rumors about performance-enhancing drugs.

Zhuang Yong's upset victory in the 100-metre freestyle became the subject of controversy when she wasn't among the two athletes selected for drug testing. American Jenny Thompson, who came in second and was tested, complained about the procedure but didn't come right out and accuse Zhuang of doping.

Yet the matter was taken seriously enough by the head of the International Olympic Committee's medical commission, who raised the possibility of changing drug-testing procedures for swimmers so that the top four finishers will be tested.

Some of the suspicions have arisen because the Chinese believe a good performance in Barcelona will help Beijing's chances of attracting the 2000 Summer Games. There is pressure to win, Zhang said.

"Every Chinese wants to have to Olympics in China, and the athletes are very conscious of showing themselves to the world," he said.

The Chinese medal harvest in these games won't end with the swimming and diving competitions. They could pick

## Melli keeps Italians in chase

BARCELONA, July 30: A stunning goal from Parma striker Alessandro Melli earned Italy a 1-0 win

against Kuwait on Wednesday and a potentially stormy quarter-final with hosts Spain in the Olympic soccer tournament, reports Reuter.

Melli's goal after just nine minutes was enough to clinch Italy's under-23 national side runners-up spot in Group A at the expense of the United States.

The tournament draw had put Spain and Italy — who have both had two players sent off — on a collision course for the final, but Poland's victory over the Italians ensured them top spot.

Spain beat Qatar 2-0 in Valencia on Wednesday to maintain their unblemished record and finish top of Group B ahead of the tiny Arab nation.

Poland, who eliminated the United States by holding them to a 2-2 draw earlier in the day, will meet Qatar in the vast Nou Camp Stadium in Saturday's second quarter-final.

Spain and Italy meet in Valencia on the same day.

Melli, who scored the first goal of the tournament, raced in from the right wing past two defenders and blasted his shot into the top far corner of the goal to give the European under-21 champions a perfect start to a game they had to win.

Kuwaiti goalkeeper Falah Al-Majidi kept the Italians scoreless for the rest of the game with three superb saves, although Dino Baggio rattled the bar with a free-kick in the 81st minute.

Italy, playing without three first-choice players because of suspensions, will lose midfielder Gianluca Sordo for the quarter-final. The Torino player was booked for a second

time for a senseless foul. Kuwaiti defender Mohammad Al-Khaledi was also booked.

Qatar thwarted Spain for 40 minutes before Real Madrid's Alfonso Perez Munoz scored. Francisco Quico Narvaez made the game safe with a second goal 10 minutes from time.

Qatar finished with three points, one more than Egypt.

In Zaragoza, Marek Kozminsky and Andrzej Juszkowski scored nine minutes apart in the first half Wednesday, leading Poland to a 2-2 draw with the United States and winning the top spot in Group A.

The United States took the lead in the 20th minute when Erik Imler outraced Dariusz Adamczuk to a rolling ball at the top of the penalty area, cut it back with one touch and then hit a shot just past the outstretched hand of Polish goalkeeper Aleksander Klak and just inside the near post.

Eleven minutes later, however, Adamczuk hit a blast from the penalty arc that US keeper Brad Friedel blocked out couldn't control the rebound.

The ball came to Kozminski on the left side of the penalty area and he rocketed a shot to the far corner that found the net. Friedel was able to get just a finger on it.

Juszkowski gave Poland the lead in the 40th, beating several defenders and eluding a sliding Friedel. He settled the ball about 5 meters from the line and some 5 meters to the left of the goal before calmly chipping in to the far post.

Steve Snow gave the United States hope, heading in a pass from Imler in the 52nd minute, but Poland thwarted every attempt for a go-ahead goal.

Hady Kashba scored two quick goals with time running out to rally Egypt to a 4-3 victory over Colombia and knock the South American team from

## Militosian does Armenia proud

BARCELONA, July 30: Militosian of Armenia beat arch-rival Yoto Totov of Bulgaria in the lightweight (67.5 kg) class on Wednesday to take the CIS's first gold medal of the Olympic weightlifting competition, reports Reuter.

Militosian, from the city of Leninakan which was devastated in the 1988 Armenian earthquake, hosted a total of 337.5 kg to defeat his Bulgarian opponent by 10 kg.

German boat builder Andreas Behm took bronze with 320 kg.

Militosian, pushed into second place by Totov at the last European and World Championships, equalled his own Olympic record of 155 kg in he snatch and added a gold medal to the silver he won at Seoul in 1988.

Militosian, a former world champion, leapt onto the victory rostrum with one bound, waved his fists in the air and kissed his gold medal in celebration.

He then watched emotionally as the red, blue and gold flag of Armenia was hoisted and the national anthem played for the first at an Olympic Games.

Totov, who crossed himself before several lifts, looked nervous and uncomfortable throughout.

China's Wang Yong crashed out of contention by failing all three clean and jerk attempts, leaving the curly-haired Behm comfortably placed for the bronze.

The German, who stands poised over the bar for up to 40 seconds in trance-like concentration before big lifts, made two attempts to jerk 185 kg for the silver medal, but failed to raise the barbell.

Militosian's performance marked the CIS's debut in the Barcelona weightlifting.

## Lenzi lured by Louganis' laurel

BARCELONA, July 30: Bill Lenzi wanted his son to be a wrestler. But Mark Lenzi had been captivated by the diving of Greg Louganis at the Los Angeles Olympics and he was adamant his future was in that sport, reports Reuter.

Their arguments grew so fierce that Mark moved out of the family home for two weeks until his father cooled down.

Eight years on, as he watched his son collect the Olympic springboard gold medal on Wednesday, Bill Lenzi was prepared to admit his boy had been right.

"Parents can be very, wrong sometimes. They don't always know what's best for their kids," he said.

"He was a real good wrestler and I was worried about how I could afford to send him to college, we didn't have a whole lot of money. But once he had seen Louganis it was no more wrestling for him," said Bill, leaning over to hug his son.

"I can understand how my parents felt," said Mark, from Virginia. "I threw away a wrestling scholarship for a sport no one knew — there were no pools or boards in our area."

"It took so long to find a team but my desire just got bigger and bigger. Louganis made it look so easy and I thought if it's that easy I want to do it."

I always knew I could do it (win the gold) after the Olympics in 1984. I can't describe how, but I did," said Lenzi.

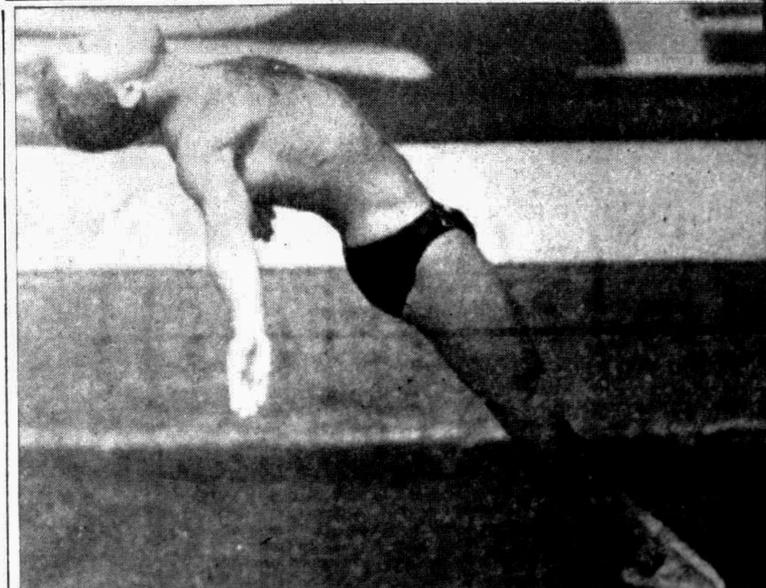
Lenzi's performance at the Montjuic pool was in the Louganis class in terms of technique and coolness under pressure.

Chinese favourite Tan Liangde, silver medalist behind Louganis in 1984 and 1988, had few complaints about finishing below an American on the medals rostrum for the third successive Games.

"It is fairly regrettable for me to finish for the third time with a silver," said Tan. "But Mark put up a very good performance today."

No other diver attempted as difficult a series of 11 dives Lenzi now 24, in the final.

He had the courage to finish with the hardest dive in the competition, an inward-tucked 3-1/2 somersaults. It was not perfect, scoring 71.40 points, but by then his lead was almost insurmountable.



Gold Medalist Mark Lenzi of the US dives in the men's 3m springboard competition in Barcelona Wednesday.