

Another gold for Egerszegi

BARCELONA, July 31: Kristina Egerszegi of Hungary set her second Olympic record of the day Friday to win the 200-metre backstroke gold medal, reports AP.

She finished in 2:07.06 Germany's Dagmar Hase won the silver in 2:09.46. Nicole Stevenson of Australia got the bronze in 2:10.20.

Evans in two minds on retirement

BARCELONA, July 31: Janet Evans won her gold medal at last in Barcelona and then kept everyone guessing about whether she would retire, reports Reuter.

The 20-year-old American, star of the 1988 Olympics in Seoul where she won three golds, had been expected to



JANET EVANS

quit the sport if she won the 800 metres freestyle, ending a great career with a fourth gold.

But Evans, though talking at length about the heavy demands of training six hours daily, was clearly in two minds on the subject.

"I'll take a long break and think about education," she said. "I want to get a college degree. That's very important to me now."

"But the sport has given me a lot. I think if I miss it, you'll probably see me out there again."

"Maybe this is my last Olympics. But maybe I'll be at the 94 World Championships. Things happen, you never know. Matt (Blond) came back. Who knows?"

Evans said it was easier to think about continuing just after winning a gold medal.

"It's been hard but it's taught me a lot about life," she said. "There's been hard times and good times. The bad times make the good times feel so good."

Evans said her defeat by Germany's Dagmar Hase in the 400 metres freestyle had made her more determined to get gold in the 800.

"I decided to be disappointed for one night but get the fire back in my eye the next day," she said.

"I've swum a lot for coaches. I've swum a lot for family. This time I needed to do it for myself to prove I could do it one more time."

Shooting result

BARCELONA, July 31: Gracchia Petukhina of the Unified Team won the gold medal in the men's free rifle competition Thursday with the Olympic record 1,276.4 points, reports AP.

Robert Foth of the United States took the silver medal. Ryohhei Koba of Japan won the bronze.



OLYMPIC SPECIAL



Twin peaks scaled on eventful day

BARCELONA, July 31: Australia's Kieren Perkins broke his own world record in Olympic swimming's longest race, and China's Yang Wenyi did the same in the women's shortest race Friday, reports AP.



KIEREN PERKINS

much of his race, finishing in 14 minutes, 43.48 seconds. His old mark, set earlier this year, was 14:48.40. Fellow Australian Glen Housman was second in 14:55.29 and Joerg Hoffman of Germany won the bronze in 15:02.29.

Yang, the 1988 silver medalist, led a 1-2 Chinese sweep in the women's 50. She won China's fourth swimming gold of these Games in 24.79 seconds, breaking the world mark of 24.98 she set in 1988. Zhuang Yong was second in 25.08. Martino was third in 25.23.

An earlier report said: Chinese swimmer Yang Wenyi broke her own world record in the women's 50-metre freestyle Friday and Hungary's Tamas Darnyi won the men's 200 individual medley, completing his second Olympic sweep of both medley races.

In other races, American Summer Sanders came from behind in the women's 200 butterfly and won in 2:08.67, with China's Wang Xiaohong second in 2:09.01. Bronze medalist Susan O'Neill of Australia finished in 2:09.03.

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sweep in the women's 50. She won China's fourth gold of these Games in 24.79 seconds, breaking the world mark of 24.98 she set in 1988. Zhuang Yong was second in 25.08, with American Angel Martino third in 25.23.

Darnyi, who had won the 400 medley on Monday, won the 200 in 2 minutes, 0.76



SUMMER SANDERS

seconds — .21 seconds ahead of American Guy Burgess. He also had swept both medley races in the 1988 Games.

Fellow Hungarian Attila Czene took the bronze in 2:01.00.

Darnyi also won the 200 and 400 medleys at the Seoul Olympics.

America's Ron Karnaugh, whose father died after suffering a heart attack at last Saturday's opening ceremony, finished sixth in 2:02.18. Neighbours had raised \$125,000 to send the Karnaugh family to Spain, where the swimmer's father, Peter, 60, wanted to see his son win a medal.

Sanders had to come from behind in the women's 200 butterfly. She won in 2:08.67, with China's Wang Xiaohong second in 2:09.01. Bronze medalist Susan O'Neill of Australia finished in 2:09.03.

The women's 200 backstroke final was set for later Friday. Hungary's Kristina Egerszegi set an Olympic record of 2:07.34 in qualifying, breaking her own previous record of 2:09.29 set in 1988.

'Bronze' wins a silver for Israel's first medal

BARCELONA, July 31: Judoka Yael Arad won Israel's first ever Olympic medal on Thursday, reports Reuter.

Arad, whose name means bronze in Hebrew, won silver in the women's light middleweight category, narrowly losing 2-1 to Catherine Fleury of France.

It was France's first gold of the Barcelona Games.

Japan's Hidehiko Yoshida won the men's gold in the

same category, throwing US judoka Jason Marris in spectacular style for a complete ippon victory.

Arad, who was just five years old when Palestinian "Black September" guerrillas murdered 11 Israelis, beat German world champion Frauke Eickhoff in dramatic fashion to reach the final.

She came back from a point down to hurl the German over for an ippon complete win, although Eickhoff thought she had secured victory in the tumbler.

"It was my ippon, not hers," a stunned Eickhoff said afterwards.

Goutsou new golden girl of gymnastics

BARCELONA, July 31: Tatyana Goutsou, a late replacement for an injured Olympic teammate, ran away with the women's individual all-round gold medal at the gymnastics on Thursday, reports Reuter.

Goutsou, a 15-year-old blonde and blue-eyed pixie from the Ukraine, was not even supposed to be in the all-round competition. She was the fourth-placed gymnast from the Commonwealth of Independent States in the team event earlier this week.

But when 14-year-old qualifier Roza Galyeva injured her knee, Goutsou found her chance.

The top 36 from the team event qualify for the all-round final, with a limit of three per nation.

With Svetlana Boguinskaya and Tatyana Lysenko ahead of her, as well as Galyeva, Goutsou had been expecting to watch the all-round event from the stands.

"Roza should have been here but she needed a replacement because her knee was hurting," said Goutsou after beating American Shannon Miller to the gold medal.

Romanian Lavinia Milosovic took the bronze but big rivals Boguinskaya and American world champion Kim Zmeskal missed out.

Zmeskal's hopes all but vanished on the first routine, the floor, when she overstepped the marked area on her first pass. It was a terrible error for someone of her ability and she was penalised 0.10 points. She finished a disappointing 10th.

After a close-fought competition, the gold medal was decided on the vault on the final rotation with Goutsou and Miller competing in the same group.

Miller, going before her opponent, scored 9.975 for her first vault and looked set to

become the first American gymnastics champion in a boycott-free Olympics.

Goutsou stepped up for her

marked at 9.950. The higher of the two marks counts.

By then, only 19-year-old Boguinskaya was still in the



Tatyana Goutsou of the Unified Team performs on the vault in the women's all-round competition Thursday. She won the individual gold with 39.737 points.

two vaults knowing that she needed more than 9.938 to win. The first jump earned her only 9.925 but the second was

running and all eyes in the Sant Jordi Hall turned towards the former world all-round champion as she took to the

Swedes pay for overconfidence

BARCELONA, July 31: A severe dose of overconfidence ended in heartbreak for gold medal favourite Jorgen Persson and Erik Lindh as they crashed out of the men's Olympic table tennis doubles here on Thursday, reports AP.

The two famous Swedes, who have twice been together in world title-winning teams led by a game and 17-11, yet still lost their first round match to the young South Koreans Kang Hee-Cahn and Lee Chul-Seung.

It was a classic case of two brilliant but sometimes unpredictable talents relaxing slightly before a likely victory had been sewn up as they went down 17-21, 22-21, 21-13.

"It is very easy to lose points quickly if you are not careful," said an angry and upset Swedish coach Anders Thunstrom.

"Then when you lose the second game closely like that

it can affect you. And the third game was a case of not being well played from our point of view."



JORGEN PERSSON

Persson and Lindh tended to make counter-hitting and counter-looping errors against

the Koreans, who often prospered when they retreated to half distance from the table. Another major factor in the career-best win for Kang and Lee was their exceptional mobility — often a vital factor in doubles in which partners have to hit the ball alternately.

There was brief mini-revenge by the Swedes from 5-15 to 10-17 in the final game, but that was effectively ended when Lee stopped a good-looking attack by the Swedes with an unstoppable running counter-hit.

The men's doubles title now looks wide open to half a dozen pairs, and Persson, who has not so far had a happy time here in two visits to the Estacio del Nord, will today have to pick himself up for the men's singles, at which he is world champion.

Back in November in the World Team Cup here Sweden failed to defend the title, with Persson suffering a couple of defeats, and nearly losing to the young defensive part-time player Matthew Syed.

Wiranata serves strong warning

BARCELONA, July 31: An impressive revenge signalled the return of Ardy Wiranata, the world number two from Indonesia, as a genuine Olympic gold medal contender here Thursday, reports AP.

Ardy, seeded three, has had a moderate year, but was brilliantly quick in his court coverage in beating Jens Olsson, the Swedish number one who brought him down in the Thomas Cup world team finals in Kuala Lumpur in May.

In theory the cooler condition here should have suited the European better, but little Ardy set out to rive up the pace of the rallies as high as possible, and it worked spectacularly.

Olsson, beaten 15-11, 15-6, just could not get involved in the long, patient contest at which he often excels, while Ardy leapt about like a mountain goat in acrobatic defence.

It was a different Ardy from the one he previously met.

"I have spent a lot of time preparing my physical condition in the last two months," said Ardy. "But when I saw it was Olsson I had again, I put more effort into preparing mentally as well."

The self-doubts and the long-lasting tight strain which have sometimes inhibited Ardy's efforts since winning the All-England title 16 months ago had gone.

"Our confidence is high, and we just want him to win an Olympic medal of any kind," said trainer Rudy Hartono, the former world champion.

"But if he wins gold he will have been a true champion."

That remark referred to Ardy's draw — without doubt the worst in the tournament.

After one dangerous floater, Olsson, he gets another, Foo Kok-Keong, perhaps the biggest of all the heroes of Malaysia's win over Indonesia in the Thomas Cup final.

If he survives that Ardy would be likely to play the talented European champion from Denmark, Poul-Erik Hoyer, the winner of the pre-Olympic tournament in the same Pavellon De la Mar Bella.

Any medal won by an Indonesian here will be only the second of any kind in any sport won by an Olympic competitor from that country.

Yoshida wins gold

BARCELONA, July 31: Hidehiko Yoshida of Japan won the men's judo half-heavyweight (78-kilogram, 172-pound) gold Thursday, beating Jason Morris of the United States in the final, reports AP.

PROFILES IN COURAGE

BARCELONA, July 31: American platform diver Mary Ellen Clark suffers from vertigo. She cures it by doing handstands and throwing herself off the equivalent of a three-storey building, reports Reuter.

Equestrian Ian Stark thinks nothing of jumping off a horse into a lake on his tearaway mount Murphy himself. Adrenalin still pumping after a death-defying round, he concluded: "It must be the nearest thing to flying without an airplane."

Canadian world champion sculler Silken Laumann, her right leg shattered by a rowing accident, wins a race against time to be fit and proudly sends her doctor a postcard from Barcelona.

American swimmer Ron Karnaugh's father dies of a heart attack while watching his son march past in the opening ceremony. Shaking off his grief, he vows to go ahead and compete.

To many people, the modern-day Olympics may be no more than a giant entertainment industry, a multi-million dollar circus for athletes to parade their sponsors' wares before billion-strong television audiences.

But displays of raw courage and the pure Olympic ideal of striving against adversity to be the best do shine through.

This does not always come across in the carefully selected clips you see in those Olympic wraps on television every night from the comfort of your

armchair. But witness it live and it is unforgettable.

In the gymnastic hall, the tiny waifs who look to be barely out of their cradles risk instant paralysis every time they hurtle at breath taking speed towards the vault. One minute slip of the hand and they could land on their necks.

Greg Louganis, the exquisite American diver who turned the sport into an art form, smashed his head on the springboard in Seoul, had his wound patched up and went on to win gold.

The cross-country course in the mountains north of Barcelona truly is only for the brave. As a British writer once admiringly said of one consummate horseman: "Rides cross-country as though he carries a spare neck in his pocket."

Few who sat in the stands at the Los Angeles Olympics in 1984 will ever forget the finish of Swiss marathon runner Gaby Andersen-Schless.

She only came 37 but for sheer guts she easily won the gold. It was the most poignant moment of the Games.

Exhausted, she staggered and stumbled round the final lap of the sun-baked Coliseum being roared on by 75,000 spectators.

Doctors hovered but she persevered, drunk with fatigue, staggering half blind with exhaustion. She lurched across the finish line and collapsed. The cheers were deafening, the loudest of the Games. Courage had been saluted.

China profit from GDR formula

BARCELONA, July 31: China's decision to copy the kind of sophisticated sports system which helped fuel formed East Germany's remarkable success in swimming has paid off at the Barcelona Olympics, reports Reuter.

The communist state, which had never won an Olympic gold medal in the pool before the Games, has already scaled three individual titles in the women's events before Friday's final day of action.

Lin Li capped the Chinese success on Thursday by shattering the oldest record in the book when she clocked two minutes 11.65 seconds to win the women's 200 metres individual medley.

Fittingly, the previous 11-year-old record of 2:11.73 had been held by former GDR star Ute Geweniger.

China sought out the know-how of East German sport several years before the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 opened up the former communist state's technical training secrets to the rest of the world.

East German coaches visited the country where children are sent at an early age to special pressure-cooker sports schools for intense training.

Like the old GDR, which won 10 of the 15 women's titles at the 1988 Seoul Games, the state also offers rare privileges and financial benefits to

swimmers who bring home gold medals.

After the collapse of East Germany, the Soviet Union and many other communist states, the country has one of the last

remaining socialist sports system where the state treats its amateur athletes like virtual professionals.

The country has emerged in the last five years from obscurity, announcing its arrival as an international force at the 1987 Pan-Pacific Championships in Brisbane when Qian Hong beat top Americans to win the women's 100 butterfly.

Qian, who took the gold in the same event in Barcelona, went to a special sports school at the age of nine and sees her parents only two or three times a year.

Revelation that drugs had a lot to do with East German success in the past have also led to suggestions that doping could be behind some of the Chinese success. Such allegations have always been vehemently denied.

American Jenny Thompson complained that Zhuang Yong was not tested for drugs after the Chinese swimmer beat her to win the 100 freestyle.

Gold medal winners have had to fend off questions about doping every time they have got off the podium in Barcelona.

Lin's coach Zhang Xiong dismissed the suggestions after watching the swimmer he had trained for more than 11 years seal the Olympic title.

"I must stress that she has never been trained by an East German coach," Zhang said. "It is totally meaningless to go into such matters at an Olympic Games."



Chinese swimmer Lin Li shows her gold which she won in the women's 200m medley in Barcelona Thursday. Lin Li set a new world record with a time of 2:11.65 secs. — AFP photo

BARCELONA BRIEFS

French fakers

BARCELONA, July 31 (Reuter): Two Frenchmen have been arrested after selling fake Olympic lapel pins on the streets of Barcelona, police said on Thursday.

They said the two men detained on Wednesday had more than 1,000 fake pins depicting the Olympic mascot Cobi and the "Barcelona '92" logo. Both designs are copyright.

Buying, selling and swapping pins has become such a craze in Barcelona that city officials are considering opening a fixed trading centre to keep pin-freaks off the streets.

False alarm

FANS on their way to shooting events were sidetracked on Thursday when police closed roads and railways for up to two hours to investigate a suspected car bomb, police and local government officials said.

"Fortunately it was a false alarm," a police spokesman said.

A bomb disposal squad was sent to inspect the car, which had been parked in a pine grove near the Mollet del Valls shooting venue since Wednesday afternoon, he said.

Spectators heading to equestrian events at El Muntanya, 15 km (nine miles) away, were also delayed when their buses were stopped while police searched the car.

Death strikes again

AN official of Ecuador's Olympic team died of a heart attack early Friday.

Wilson Malo Harris, 61, vice president of the national shooting federation, suffered the attack in his room in the Olympic Village. He was pronounced dead at the Hospital del Mar, said Pedro Palacios, spokesman for the Barcelona organising committee.

Gaston Gagliardi, Ecuador's consul in Barcelona, said he was making arrangements for the return of Malo's body to Ecuador. Palacios said Malo had a history of heart problems.

It was the third death reported during the Olympics.

Peter Karnaugh, father of US swimmer Ron Karnaugh, died of a heart attack while watching the opening ceremonies. Officials said another spectator had died, but they had no details on the identity of the victim or the circumstances of the death.

Lightest, heaviest

IT is probably best if Burma that tug of war, an Olympic sport until 1920, does not feature at the Barcelona Games. Panama might have been happy though.

Burma weighs in as the team with the lightest males of the Games at a trim 53.0 kg average.

The Panamanians tip the scales with a whopping 104.2 kg.

Latin American comes out tops in the women's league as well — an average 77.6 kg for the female competitors from Honduras compared with a feathery 41.0 kg for the Maldives.

Statistics are the stuff of the official Games computer, where the curious can discover that the average male Olympian from Costa Rica stands 1.92 metres tall.

Among women, the Syrians are the tallest at an average 1.87 metres and the little Lesothans the shortest at 1.28. The youngest women of average at the Games are from El Salvador and Seychelles — 15 — the oldest are from Luxembourg — 44.

The British Virgin Islands have the oldest men. Their average age is 37, old enough to be the fathers of the 19 year old from Monaco and Yemen.

Olympics spirit

TURKISH skuller Ali Riza Bilal, given a second chance to qualify after an ignominious plunge into the Olympic rowing lake two days ago, finished last in his heat on Wednesday — but emerged from his boat smiling.

In the repechage on Monday, Bilal capsize halfway through the race and had to be fished out of Lake Banyoles.

Under the rules of racing he should have been disqualified but FISA, the international rowing body, can waive the requirement to complete the course — as long as the other competitors in the event agree.

In the true spirit of the Olympic Games his fellow rowers decided that Bilal should be given another chance.