

Courier crashes

BARCELONA, Aug 1: Jim Courier's game came unraveled Saturday against big-serving Marc Rosset of Switzerland...



OLYMPIC SPECIAL



BARCELONA BRIDES

A smashing best-seller BARCELONA, Aug 1 (Reuters): A recording of opera arias sung at the Olympics opening ceremony...

Perkins feels he can do better

BARCELONA, Aug 1: Kieren Perkins believes he is quite capable of breaking the world record he set winning the 1,500 metres freestyle Olympic gold on Friday...



KIEREN PERKINS

It's a very tough event and it's okay when you're young, I think as long as I still have the will I can keep improving my times...

Perkins proved himself a worthy Olympic successor to the great Vladimir Salnikov, one of his swimming heroes who won the 1,500 metres gold in Seoul.

onds, almost 12 seconds ahead of fellow Australian Glen Housman.

Germany's Joerg Hoffmann, who touched out Perkins at the 1991 World championship in probably the greatest 1,500 metres race of all time, won the bronze.

Your best swims are always the easiest to do and this swim did not feel that hard," Perkins said.

It didn't matter about the world record. Winning is what you want. World records don't count. It would not have mattered if I'd swum 16 minutes."

Perkins, who also won a silver medal in the 400 metres freestyle, said there was no secret to his success. "I just train very hard, about 15 to 16 kilometres a day in preparing for this," he said.

Coach John Carew believes it's only a matter of time before Perkins goes below 15:40 with his languid, efficient stroke.

But it wasn't always so easy. When he first started swimming Perkins was so terrified of putting his face in the water that his then-coach used to keep it under with a broom handle.

As a young boy he found it hard to concentrate but a near-fatal accident when he was nine calmed him down.

Chasing his younger brother in the garden, he ran through a closed glass door at full speed, Perkins had 86 stitches in his left leg and was not able to walk properly for many weeks.

Swimming played an important part in his rehabilitation and he saw soon modelling his stroke on compatriot Murray Rose, a 400 and 1,500 metres Olympic champion in 1956.

Twiddling a ring modelled on the five Olympic rings studded with three diamonds for the world records he held before the Games, Perkins said his victory had still not sunk in.

In years to come I'll look back on this but at the moment I'm just spun out," he said.



Summer Sanders of the US waves to spectators after winning the women's 200m butterfly swimming gold in Barcelona Friday.

Swimming finishes with a fantastic flourish

BARCELONA, Aug 1: Kieren Perkins annihilated his rivals. Krisztina Egerszegi achieved a dazzling double and the Olympic swimming programme closed in a cascade of world records on Friday, reports Reuters.

Eighteen-year-old Australian Perkins turned the men's 1,500 metres freestyle into a procession and carved nearly five seconds off his world record as he left German world champion Joerg Hoffmann trailing out of sight.

Jeff Rouse trimmed his 100 backstroke world mark and inspired the US men's medley relay squad to equal the world record set by the American team at the Seoul Games.

The United States finished top nation in the Bernat Picornell pool with 11 titles.

Yang Wengyi lowered her own world mark to win the 50 metres freestyle gold and bring China's powerful women's squad their fourth title.

Hungary's Egerszegi, without peer in women's backstroke, retained her 200 backstroke title with astonishing ease. She became the only swimmer to win three individual titles at the Games after collecting the 400 individual medley and 100 backstroke.

Fellow Hungarian Tamas Darnyi managed to repeat his golden 200 and 400 individual medley double of Seoul but had to fight a tremendous battle to win Friday's 200 event by a fraction.

American Summer Sanders, a silver and bronze already in her possession, finally clinched her Olympic gold with a brave win in the women's 200 metres butterfly.

Most momentous win But Perkins supplied the most momentous victory of the day, leaving the rest for dead as he forged further and further ahead. He finished in 14 minutes 43.48 seconds to slice 4.92 seconds from the world record he set in Canberra last April.

But after narrow defeat by Russian Evgeny Sadovyi in the 400 metres freestyle final, Perkins wanted the title far more than the record.

It didn't matter about the world record," he said. "Winning is what you want. World records don't count. It wouldn't have mattered if I'd

swum 16 minutes."

Hoffmann, who beat Perkins to the 1991 World Championship gold by just 0.22 seconds in a Titanic duel in Perth, could not live with the pace this time.

Glen Housman made it an Australian one-two by taking the silver in 14:55.29, with Hoffmann just hanging on for the bronze in 15:02.29.

Best swimmers are always easiest to do. The swim didn't feel that hard but I don't think I could have gone a helluva lot faster," Perkins said.

I think what I did was amazing," he added. "If I hadn't got a gold medal, I didn't want to go home."

ROUSE REDEEMS Rouse, beaten to the 100 backstroke gold by Canadian Mark Tewksbury, made amends in the relay by lowering his backstroke world mark to 53.86.

It gave the US the perfect medley relay start. Nelson Diebel, Pablo Morales and Jon Olsen concluded the business by equalling the world mark of 3:39.93 set in Seoul by their US predecessors.

EGERSZEGI'S CLASS APART Egerszegi lowered her own Olympic 200 backstroke record for the second time in a day to 2:07.06 but the 2.40-second gulf which separated her from silver medalist Dag-

mar Hase of Germany was more remarkable.

Egerszegi said: "I knew I could win again."

DARNYI'S UNIQUE DOUBLE Teammate Darnyi had to work harder than ever to complete a unique Olympic individual medley double at successive Games.

Darnyi, double world champion in both 1986 and 1991, trailed fourth at the final turn but hauled his way past his rivals to win by just 0.21 seconds from American Greg Burgess.

CHINESE ONE-TWO Yang and Zhuang Yong, the women's 100 freestyle champion, made it one-two-for China in the 50 freestyle and Yang trimmed her four-year-old world record from 24.98 to 24.79.

The US team is not as terrifying as we thought," Zhuang said.

Sanders was one American who got the better of Chinese opposition, overtaking Wang Xiaong to win the women's 200 butterfly in 2:08.67.

Having been beaten to the 200 individual medley gold by Lin Li, Sanders staked everything on her last event.

The pressure started to hit me last night. It was all getting a little too much. It's a relief it's over," she said.

Hungarian heroes defy the odds

BARCELONA, Aug 1: Tamas Darnyi and Krisztina Egerszegi proved at the Barcelona Olympics that the fall of communism in eastern Europe has not sunk Hungary in the swimming pool, reports Reuters.

While former communist-controlled East Germans have failed to dominate in the same way as in the past in the newly-united German team, Egerszegi and Darnyi boosted Hungary's gold medal tally to five on Friday with two superb performances.

While other eastern European sports stars are having to worry for the first time about their livelihoods without state backing, Hungarian swimmers are going through a boom period thanks to an astute businessman.

The 25-year-old Darnyi, regarded as the best all-round swimmer in the world, completed a remarkable double on Friday by defending his 200 metre individual medley title. He had already defended his 400 medley title from the 1988 Seoul Olympics.

The 17-year-old Egerszegi sealed her third title in the Barcelona pool with an Olympic record of two minutes 7.06 seconds in the women's 200 backstroke—the Hungarians' ninth swimming medal of the Games.

The fall of communism across eastern Europe has led

to the collapse of most of the Socialist sports systems which picked out talented youngsters at a young age and bred them into Olympic Champions.

But the Hungarian swimming squad, backed by shrewd businessman Gyorgy Zemplyeni, have managed to keep the cream of their swimming talent intact since the political changes.

Zemplyeni has helped raise the money for travel abroad to help the Hungarians escape from a cold, landlocked country to training camps in the sun as well as leading sponsorship programmes to ensure the financial backing of the swimmers.

Darnyi paid tribute to Zemplyeni as he sat with him at a post-race news conference.

"It has been a great help. I



KRISZTINA EGERZEGI

don't need to concentrate on anything apart from swimming," Darnyi said.

Zemplyeni, who used to work in soccer sponsorship, was asked by Darnyi's coach Tamas Szeczy to help out Hungarian swimming after state funding for sport was cut by a half with the political changes three years ago.

Before they could just ring up and ask for money and would get it. But the money went down by half and its value was reduced," Zemplyeni said.

My job is to create good conditions for their work. I'm responsible for everything from the moment the swimmers get out of the pool until they get in it again."

The framework has helped the reserved Darnyi keep up his eight-year dominance of the medley events since the 1985 European Championships.

Darnyi and Egerszegi have now both won a total of four Olympic titles at the last two Games. Egerszegi also triumphed in the 100 backstroke and 400 individual medley in Barcelona.

But although Darnyi plans to continue his Olympic career at the 1996 Atlanta Games where Egerszegi is almost certain to compete, there is no race between the two swimmers to win the most medals.

There is not going to be a battle between us although we have both won four medals. We are friends," Egerszegi said.



Hungarian swimmer Tamas Darnyi (L) gets a kiss from teammate Attila Czene after winning gold in the men's 200m medley in Barcelona Friday.



US swimmers (L-R) Pablo Morales, Jeff Rouse, Jon Olsen and Nelson Diebel show off their gold medals when they won in the men's 4x100m medley in Barcelona Friday.

Spanish puncher shocks Griffin

BARCELONA, Aug 1: Rafael Lozano of Spain pulled off the biggest upset so far in the Olympic boxing competition, beating world champion Eric Griffin in a light flyweight fight Saturday, reports AP.

US officials immediately filed a protest over the scoring.

The protest questioned the accuracy of a new computer scoring system, introduced as a result of a scoring uproar at the last Games.

Lozano, draped in a Spanish flag as the decision was announced, was ruled the winner by one punch in the 48-kilogram bout against the top US gold medal hope in boxing.

He frustrated Griffin in the first two rounds, then landed decisive punches in the third round to take a 6-5 win.

Griffin appeared to be landing well in the second round after taking a 2-1 first-round edge over Lozano, who stands only 1.49 meters tall. The Spaniard was forced to take a standing 8 count with a flurry of head punches with 15 seconds left in the round.

Despite the flurry, Griffin was credited with landing only one punch the entire round.

I felt like I dominated from the first to the third round," Griffin said. "I feel like I scored 25 to 30 points. I think sometimes the judges get mixed up and give punches to the wrong corner."

US boxing executive director Jim Fox said the protest was filed because four of the five judges backing up a new computer scoring system being used in the Olympics had Griffin scoring 23 more punches than Lozano.

With the computer system, however, at least three of the five judges have to record each blow within a second for it to count.

The scoring system resulted from a scoring scandal at the 1988 Olympics when judges awarded South Korean home favourite Park Si-Hun a points victory over Roy Jones of the United States in the light middleweight final. The decision was widely considered a blatant mistake.

One bout judge, Keith Dudzic of Ghana, was working his first fight since returning from a two-day Olympic suspension for low scoring.

Eric fought the same fight he's won everything with," US coach Joe Byrd said of Griffin, who has dominated his division for three years and is a two-time world champion.

In the 54-kilogram class, North Korean bantamweight Li Gwang Sik took a 15-8 win over Sergio Reyes of the United States.

Appeal rejected BARCELONA, Aug 1: International volleyball officials today rejected what was probably the final attempt to restore the United States' opening-game victory over Japan, reports AP.

The International Volleyball Federation turned down the request from the US Olympic Committee to reconsider its decision to give Japan the victory, but pledged to review the protest procedures, according to USOC spokesman Mike Moran.

No further appeals were planned, Moran said.

The federation politely turned down the request and promised to look into the matter in the future," Moran said. "There's nothing more we plan to do."

The review committee Monday upheld a Japanese protest that US player Bob Samuelson should have been ejected at match point in the fourth set because he was given a second yellow card for yelling at officials. Two yellow cards result in a red card and a point for the opposing team.

The recording is of a selection of arias sung by Placido Domingo, Jose Carreras, Montserrat Caballe and other stars at the lavish opening last Saturday.

Things people lose THE woman who lost her underwear has been luckier than the Olympic archer who mislaid his bow and arrows and the vaultier who can't find his pole.

Her belongings have turned up among nearly 300 items of lost property handed in at the Athlete's Village since the Games began last Saturday. Theirs have not, yet.

You wouldn't believe the things people lose," said Maria Angelis Rabassa, who runs an office that has been deluged with sunglasses, keys, Olympic accreditation passes, cameras, bathing suits and jewellery. "I never expected this much."

Real golden bear MARIANA Logvinenko, Russia's 'Golden Bear', won a second gold medal for the Unified Team when she took the women's air pistol title here Saturday, reports AFP.

The stocky Logvinenko, only 1.57m (5ft 1in) tall, won the women's sports pistol crown on Monday.

Olympic holder Jasna Sekaric from Serbia led before Saturday's final shot and finished level on points, but had to settle for the silver as Logvinenko scored better in the final.

The bronze went to Maria Grusdeva of Bulgaria.

Good for marathoners BARCELONA'S Olympic traffic regulations are a breath of fresh air for marathon runners.

Pollution in the city centre could fall by 15 per cent now that cars have been banned from the most central streets to stop snail-ups, according to a study being conducted by a Barcelona University in collaboration with German and US scientists.

We compared a normal day before the Games with a day when the traffic restrictions were in place," team member Lázaro Fremales said.

More than 30,000 cars a day normally belch out exhaust fumes which clog the seaside air leaving a hazy smog over the city.

In addition, the Athletes' Village and several sporting venues are within five km (three miles) of the city's principal waste incinerator which releases fumes as it burns most of Barcelona's trash every night.

Competitors, already battling with sweltering heat and high humidity, earlier complained the sea was filthy and swimming with condoms.

The women's marathon begins on August 1 and the men's event on August 9, the last day of the Games. Both end with a steep climb to the hilltop Montjuic Stadium.

And now, free condoms OLYMPICS organisers are giving away 60,000 condoms free to athletes after they complained they never had the right change to buy them from dispensing machines.

They will now be available from the 24-hour chemist in the Athletes' Village instead of in the discotheque, where competitors were surprised they had to pay for them since most things in the village are free.

Many of the 15,000 athletes and coaches will have more time for rest and relaxation now the first week is over and several of the big events have finished.

Steffi Graf's fantasies STEFFI Graf daydreams about winning a gold medal in basketball or track.

Graf, the 1988 gold medalist at Seoul and the top seed at Barcelona, has yet to lose a set in three matches. But she has more than tennis on her mind.

I'd like to play with the Dream Team (US basketball), that's for sure," she said with a laugh. "And in track and field, the 800 metres or 100 metres would be something I would really love to compete in."

Though a fan of other sports, Graf hasn't seen many during the Games.

Yesterday I slept all day," she said. "I'm going to try to go to the 100 metres tonight, though."