

Waldner wins TT men's gold

BARCELONA, Aug 6: Jan Ove Waldner, a two-time world champion, gave Sweden its first gold medal of the Olympics Thursday by beating Jean Philippe Gatten of France 21-10, 21-18, 25-23 in men's singles table tennis, reports AP.

Kim Taek-Soo of South Korea and Ma Wenge of China won the bronze medals, as they did at the World Championships last year.

Waldner won the first game easily, but the next two were close. Gatten led 14-10 in the final game but Waldner won the next six points, then fought off repeated challenges by the Frenchman.

Waldner, 26, won the world title in 1989 and 1990 before losing it to Swedish teammate Jorgen Persson last year. Persson lost to Wenge in the Olympic quarterfinals.

Waldner was the first non-Chinese to win a gold medal in Olympic table tennis this year. China had won in women's singles and doubles and men's doubles after taking two of four titles in 1988.

Lu Lin and Wang Tao won the men's doubles. Deng Yaping and Qiao Hong took the women's doubles, then Deng beat Qiao in the women's singles finals.

Pickpockets' paradise

BARCELONA, Aug 6: If pickpocketing were an Olympic sport, records would have been set at the 1992 Games. Not in quantity, perhaps, but in quality, reports AP.

Tourists, athletes, reporters — many have a story to tell of how they discovered their wallet was missing and belatedly recalled a slight bump while standing or walking in a crowd.

Barcelona police and Olympic security officials insist the number of crimes this year is down from last year. But their statistics cover the period from September 1991, and anecdotal evidence suggests that bag snatching and pickpocketing are rampant.

With more than 100,000 visitors in town for the Summer Olympics, it's a petty criminal's paradise.

Eladio Jareno, a spokesman for the Barcelona Olympic Organizing Committee, said 850 crimes have been reported since July 21, mostly theft from people on the street and from parked cars. Approximately 180 have been violent, involving knives or other weapons, he said.

This despite an abundant and obvious police presence. Some 17,000 police have been brought from throughout Spain to create a police force of approximately 28,000.

Jareno said 822 suspected criminals had been detained since July 21. "Quickie courts" have been set up to process these Olympic suspects in less than 15 days, he said.

Much of the crime occurs at the three most popular sites in the city — the Montjuic hill where many of the events are held, on the main shopping and entertainment drag Las Ramblas, and along the waterfront where giant cruise ships and smaller yachts are berthed.

Barry McMahon, a New Yorker buying popcorn on the Ramblas, felt some salt "accidentally" sprinkled on his arm by the man behind him. But when he put his hand in his pocket to pay for the snack, the wallet was gone. So was the man.

"Living in New York I should have known better, huh?" he said wistfully.

The city's underground trains are also popular with pickpockets. An Olympic official travelling on the subway felt a slight tug on the belt bag he had clinched around his waist. He didn't pay too much attention but shifted the belt slightly. He later discovered a slash in the fabric, from which the thief apparently had planned to empty the contents.

Athletes have reported some problems, too, especially now that some have finished their competition and are free to wander the streets.

American athletes haven't reported any crimes — "Maybe we're too big to mess with," suggested runner Dennis Mitchell.

But the mayor of Lillehammer, the Norwegian town where the Winter Olympics are scheduled in 1994, wasn't so lucky.

Audun Tron was strolling down the Ramblas last week, a bag in his hand, when he felt his leg kicked. Tron was sufficiently distracted for the thief to snatch and run.

In Lillehammer, a tranquil town in south Norway's mountains, crime isn't expected to be a problem, say Norwegian organizing officials.

Atlanta, two Spanish Olympic officials suggested, might be different.



OLYMPIC SPECIAL



Germany edge past Pakistan

TERRASSA, Spain, Aug 6: Germany reached their third men's Olympic hockey final in a row on Wednesday, beating three times champions Pakistan 2-1 after extra time, reports Reuter.

Germany, silver medalists in 1984 and 1988 and winners in 1972, will face Australia in Saturday's final.

Australia, fourth in the last two Games and without a hockey gold, beat world champions the Netherlands 3-2 in the other semifinal.

Germany's burly penalty corner expert Carsten Fischer scored both goals — including a well-placed flick from the set-piece — to win the match in the 12th minute of extra time.

Jubilant flag-waving German fans invaded the artificial pitch at Terrassa, outside Barcelona, after the win.

Pakistan, who defeated Germany in the 1984 final but lost in 1972, will play the Netherlands for the bronze on Saturday.

Pakistan took the lead through penalty corner expert Khalid Bashir, who slammed in

a goal from the set-piece in the 28th minute.

But the Germans kept their discipline and gradually wore down the speed and mercurial dribbling of the Pakistani forward line. Fischer equalised from a penalty flick early in the second half.

The Pakistanis had most of the possession and the chances for field goals, but were unable to break through.

"We missed two good chances. In such a big match you can't afford to miss such chances, but I was very happy with my team," Pakistani manager Isiahuddin said.

Muhammad Shehbaz flicked over the bar from close range late in the game.

Germany and Australia met in a pool game last week — and drew 1-1.

Pakistan, the only team to win all their pool games, beat the Netherlands 3-2 last week.

TEAMS

PAKISTAN: Shahid Ali Khan, Rana Mujahid, Khalid Bashir, Muhammad Khalid, Farhat Khan, Muhammad Junaid, Musaddaq Hussain, Thair Zaman, Muhammad Shehbaz (Muhammad Asif Bauwa 95th), Shahbaz Ahmed, Wasim Feroz.

GERMANY: Volker Fried, Klaus Michler, Christian Blumck, Andreas Keller, Michael Metz, Seven Meinhardt (Stefan Teves 88th), Michael Hilgers (Stefan Saliger 50th), Andreas Becker (Oliver Kurtz, 95th).

In classification games Wednesday, Britain defeated New Zealand 3-2; Spain blanked India 2-0; Malaysia downed Argentina 6-4 in extra time; and the Unified Team beat Egypt 4-2.

On Thursday, Britain women playing Spain for fifth place, and New Zealand meeting India to decide the seventh spot. On Friday, Malaysia and the Unified Team play for ninth place and Argentina oppose Egypt for 11th.

Pakistanis rue luck

BARCELONA, Aug 6: Pakistan were trying to recover from a mood of utter despair on Thursday following their titanic Olympic semifinal defeat to Germany, reports AFP.

"My boys were totally devastated," said coach Isiahuddin, who himself was disconsolate after Wednesday night's 2-1 defeat which ended their run of five wins.

"They are still very upset. I am just hoping they recover from the depression because we have got one more match to go."

"Winning and losing is a part of the game but still..."

Germany will meet Australia in Saturday's final and Pakistan will square off with the other losing semi-finalists, world champions Holland.

The extra-time loss to Germany was a huge personal disappointment for Isiahuddin and skipper Shahbaz Ahmed who are both set to bow out of the international game.

Neither the manager nor the skipper have won a major title and Shahbaz, only 25, had wanted to retire with an

Olympic gold medal.

"It was a big heart break for me," Isiahuddin admitted. "But time is a great healer as they say."

The Pakistanis threw everything they had into the first half but failed to score more than a Khalid Bashir penalty corner.

Shahbaz managed to evade his two markers most of the time and Wasim Feroz, Thair Zaman and Musaddaq Hussain were outstanding, but they faded in the second half and Carsten Fischer struck twice for Germany.

German coach Paul Lissek admitted his team enjoyed a bit of luck but had no complaints about the result which put them in the final for the third time in a row gave them another shot at elusive gold.

"My team played excellent hockey right through the tournament," Isiahuddin said. "I am happy about that but not the result."

He agreed with Lissek that luck had gone the German way.

"They had the luck we did not have," he said. "We did everything we could do to win but God had other ideas."

Krabbe and co in dire straits

BONN, Aug 6: Double world sprint champion Katrin Krabbe said she took a steroid-related

anabolic but had been advised it was not on a list of banned drugs, the German newspaper Bild-Zeitung reported, reports Reuter.

German sports officials said on Wednesday former East German Krabbe and her teammate Grit Breuer had tested positive for the outlawed drug clenbuterol in random out-of-competition tests in July.

"We are totally shocked. We've taken this product since April 16," Krabbe told Bild in an interview released ahead of publication on Thursday.

"Our doctor, Dr Seidl, recommended it to us. He gave us

advice by a doctor who said there was no problem with it," the Dresdener Morgenpost quoted Springstein as saying in the advance text of an article for Thursday's edition.

Derr, like 100 and 200 metres champion Krabbe and world 400 metres silver medalist Breuer, is not at the Barcelona Olympics.

She said the trio had taken German clenbuterol, an asthma relief treatment which contains an anabolic agent and powerful stimulant, to help with breathing.

"We wouldn't be so stupid and use a banned drug," she told the Dresdener Morgenpost.

The German Athletics Federation (DLV) issued a statement confirming that two unnamed athletes had tested

until the second tests.

"But if it is proven ... it would raise the enormous suspicion that a group is at work which can no longer be tolerated," he said.

Krabbe's main sponsor, Nike, said her contract would be scrapped immediately if she was banned for taking performance-enhancing drugs.

Track star of former communist East Germany and glamour-girl symbol of German sport after unity, Krabbe was suspended by the DLV in February along with Breuer and Moeller for returning identical "clean" urine samples in random testing.

The three challenged the results, denying they had manipulated the urine tests, and the IAAF lifted a four-year ban in June, saying the DLV had no legal right to test athletes at random outside of competition.

German sports officials on Tuesday said two of the latest tests were carried out on Krabbe and Breuer within a week of their return from London by the German Sports Federation (DSB).

The DLV did subsequent dope tests later in July.

Clenbuterol contains a powerful stimulant and a steroid-related anabolic agent which helps convert fat to muscle. It has been used to increase the meat content of calves.

The IOC Medical Commission confirmed last week clenbuterol was outlawed inside and outside competition after two British weightlifters tested positive for the drug and were sent home from Barcelona by their Olympic team.

CIS, China in final

BARCELONA, Aug 6: The CIS shocked twice defending champions the United States and China routed unbeaten Cuba on Wednesday to set up an unlikely gold medal game in the women's Olympic basketball tournament, reports Reuter.

The US women had their Olympic record 15-game winning streak ended by a smooth running CIS side who won 79-73.

China enjoyed a brilliant shooting night for a crushing 109-70 victory over Cuba who, like the Americans, had gone through the three-game preliminary series without defeat.

The CIS defence throttled the US attack in the final minutes of a tension-filled, seesaw struggle as the Americans tried unsuccessfully to push the ball inside against a sagging zone.

Natalia Zassoulskaya dominated inside for 20 points, pulled down eight rebounds and helped break the vaunted US press with her passing. Elena Khoudachova scored 19 points on 9-15 shooting.



British runner Sally Gunnell holds the Union Jack after winning the gold medal in the women's 400m hurdles in Barcelona Wednesday. — AFP photo

Barcelona Games lack glitz

BARCELONA, Aug 6: In 1984 Carl Lewis was the star of the Los Angeles show.

Four years later Florence Griffith-Joyner stole the sporting headlines in Seoul.

With only four days of competition to go, Barcelona is still waiting for a hero or heroine to make the Olympic experience complete, reports Reuter.

Stirring deeds there have been a plenty. But no Olga Korbut, Cassius Clay or Mark Spitz has yet appeared whose name will be linked forever with the 1992 Games.

Lewis and Griffith-Joyner lived up to their pre-Olympic hype but events before the 1992 Games has robbed Barcelona of many potential candidates for the Olympic Hall of Fame.

Lewis failed to qualify for the Olympic 100 and 200 metres at the US trials and a similar fate befell world champion decathlete Dan O'Brien, robbing journalists of potentially the best rags-to-riches story of the Games.

Katrin Krabbe lacked the glitz and public relations know-how of Flo-Jo but she was blonde, pretty and extremely fast.

But she decided to miss the Barcelona party because of a protracted dispute over whether she used illegal drugs.

Following news on Tuesday that she failed another drug test in July, it's probably just as well Krabbe didn't come as she might have joined Canada's Ben Johnson in the rogues' gallery.

Two Olympic competitions which supply more than their fair share of characters, gymnastics and swimming, have failed to come up with the goods this time.

American Matt Biondi, a multi-medalist in Seoul, found the going too tough at 26 and there was no one to take his place as the untouchable of the pool.

Hungarian Tamas Dranyi and Kieren Perkins of Australia were majestic but neither earned the crown of Olympic hero.

Kim Zmeskal was seen before the Games as the latest in a women's gymnastics line which included Olga Korbut.

US spikers beat CIS in qtrs

BARCELONA, Aug 6: American captain Steve Timmons took his players back four years to beat

World Cup champions CIS in the Olympic volleyball quarterfinals on Wednesday, reports Reuter.

When the defending champions looked in danger of following world title-holders Italy out of the tournament, Timmons called time out to remind his teammates of the gold medal match in Seoul four years ago against the then Soviet Union.

"I reminded the team that they had come out strong just like that in 1988 and said that if we kept on fighting they would come down to earth," Timmons said.

The pep talk worked. The United States came back from losing the first set to beat the CIS 12-15, 15-10, 15-4, 15-11 and meet Brazil in a semifinal on Friday.

But Italy were not so lucky, despite a lot of pep talking from coach Julio Velasco.

"I thought I had prepared the team properly to overcome the psychological difficulties of being favourites," Velasco said after Italy's shock 15-9, 12-15, 8-15, 15-2, 17-16 defeat by the Netherlands.

"But there was loss of concentration and loss of determination. The human being is the greatest mystery of the universe."

The Netherlands will now play Pan American champions Cuba who beat surprise quar-

ter-finalists Spain 16-14, 15-9, 15-6.

American coach Fred Sturms said he expected a tough match against Brazil, who beat Japan 15-12, 15-5, 15-12, on Wednesday and have dropped only two sets in getting to the last four.

"Nobody here has challenged them yet," Sturms said.

The Americans were glad to avoid another meeting with Japan after controversy in the preliminary group when their win was overturned by a jury. Japan had protested against the referee's decision not to dock a penalty point for an infringement by middle blocker Bob Samuelson.

The entire American team, save Samuelson who is bald, had their heads shaved after the match in protest.

CIS freestyle wrestlers win golds

BARCELONA, Aug 6: The CIS grabbed two of the three gold medals in the Olympic freestyle wrestling competition on Wednesday, reports Reuter.

The CIS won the lightweight and mid-heavyweight divisions.

The only medal to escape

their grasp was the flyweight title where US world champion Larry Lee Jones suffered a shock 8-1 defeat by North Korean Li Hak-Son.

Six times world champion and Seoul gold medalist Arsen Fadzaev led the medal charge with crushing 13-1 points lightweight division.

The bronze medal went to Japan's Kosei Akaishi, who beat Ali Akbarnejad of Iran 4-0. There was no score for three minutes of the five-minute bout.

Leri Khabelov took the second CIS gold in the mid-heavyweight division with a hard-fought 2-1 victory over Heiko Balz of Germany.

Khabelov, who won a silver in Seoul, grabbed two points with a reversal in the early moments of the bout and then desperately held on to his advantage.

Balz managed to grab one point back and with only 30 seconds of the match left Khabelov was content to hang on to the German's legs as they grappled on the mat.

The bronze in the mid-heavyweight division went to Turkey's Ali Kayali who beat South Korean Kim Tae-Woo with just one reversal in the early seconds of the fight.

Kayali then made little attempt to attack and was penalised for passivity. He kept the desperately charging Kim out of range, and irritated him with repeated slaps to the back of the head.

The bronze medal in the flyweight class went to Valentin Jordanov of Bulgaria.

Jones seemed to have little defence against the aggression of his largely unknown North Korean opponent in the flyweight final. Li went straight into the attack and rapidly built up an unbeatable lead.

But the evening belonged to Fadzaev, a peerless fighter whose supremacy over Getzov was almost embarrassing.

Fadzaev kept piling on the points despite a badly cut left ear which left blood all over the back of his opponent. His strength and experience were clearly too much for the Bulgarian.

Afterwards Fadzaev, whose four brothers, mother and wife all watched him win, said he would give up wrestling — but might take it up again in time for the 1996 Atlanta Games.

Venezuela beat China

BARCELONA, Aug 6: Ivan Olivares scored 32 points to lead Venezuela to a 100-97 victory over China on Thursday in the 11th-place game of the men's Olympic basketball tournament, reports AP.

Venezuela (2-5), both of whose wins were over China (0-7), was making their first Olympic appearance and came in off a surprising second-place finish to the United States in the Americas qualifying tournament.

BARCELONA BRIEFS

Amnesia

BARCELONA, Aug 6 (Reuter): A Ukrainian visitor to the Barcelona Olympics lost his wife and then couldn't remember where he was staying, police said.

Vasily Lisecchko went to the police and then realised he had forgotten the name of his hotel in the coastal resort of Salou, south of Barcelona.

An interpreter was summoned, the Spanish police set to work on the telephone and two hours later tracked down his hotel and worried wife waiting there for him.

Scalpers nabbed

POLICE said on Wednesday they had seized almost 7,000 Olympic tickets from scalpers.

Some were being sold for as much as 2,500 US dollars each.

No more pampering

THE eight cities bidding for the 2000 Olympics have promised not to wine, dine and lavish gifts on International Olympic Committee (IOC) members.

"The candidate cities have entered into a gentleman's agreement. We are very pleased. It gives us a chance not to appear as a bureaucratic police force," IOC Secretary-General Francois Carrard said on Thursday.

"They will stop giving gifts to Olympics officials, cut down on lavish parties and confine themselves to one hotel suite each at future IOC meetings to canvas the 94 committee members."

"I want to commend the candidate cities for their sporting spirit," Carrard told a news conference.

The cities competing for the 2000 Games are Beijing, Sydney, Manchester, Tashkent, Istanbul, Brasilia, Milan and Berlin.

The IOC will meet in Monte Carlo in September 1993 to select the host city.

Asked just how lavish gifts had been in the past, Carrard said: "We didn't mind Swatch watches as an acceptable gift. A Rolex is not. It creates a strong relationship."

"We are not a police force. We do not send detectives out at night to see what is slipped under the door."

... always a next time

THREE Olympic silver medalists said yesterday that they plan to make up for the disappointment of not winning gold by breaking world records after the Barcelona Games.

Richard Chelimo of Kenya, who lost to Moroccan Khalid Skah in Monday's controversial men's 10,000 metres final, said he would attack Mexican Arturo Barrios' record of 27 minutes 08.23 seconds in Brussels on August 17.

American Tony Dees, fastest man in the world last year in the 110 metres hurdles but second to Canada's mark McKay in the Olympic final said he would aim for Roger Kingdom's 12.92 seconds mark at Grand Prix in Monaco, Brussels and Zurich.

Charlie Simpkins of the United States said he believed he could break the 18-metre barrier and beat Willie Banks' world record of 17.97 before the end of the season.

Simpkins was runner-up to fellow American Mike Conley in Barcelona.

Kenyan to continue

KENYAN track and field athletes will not boycott the rest of the Olympic athletics programme despite their failure to get Richard Chelimo's gold medal reinstated, Chelimo's agent said on Wednesday.

The Kenyan team had hinted it might pull out of the track and field events after the International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF) first stripped Moroccan Khalid Skah of his 10,000 metres gold medal before reinstating him on appeal.

But John Bicourt, agent for Chelimo, who placed second in the final and who would have got the gold in Skah's place, said there was no question of a withdrawal.

Asked if the boycott was going ahead, he replied: "Absolutely not. What purpose would it serve?"

The controversial incident came in Monday's final when Chelimo was impeded by another Moroccan, Hammou Boutayeb.

The race jury disqualified Skah for illegally receiving help from a lapped runner but the appeal jury ruled on Tuesday that Skah had not broken any rules.