

Sport

Becker's big birthday bash

FRANKFURT, Nov 22: Boris Becker celebrated his 25th birthday Sunday by beating top-ranked Jim Courier 6-4, 6-3, 7-5 to win the ATP Tour World Championship, the season-ending event, reports AP.

The 9,000 fans in Frankfurt's Festhalle greeted Becker's entrance by singing "Happy Birthday."

He paid them back by playing nearly flawless tennis and giving them a victory they have been waiting three years to see.

At the end, as Becker stood spotlighted in a dimmed hall, a large birthday cake in the shape of a tennis racket was wheeled out, while Stevie Wonder's version of "Happy Birthday" blared from the loudspeakers.

Becker had trouble blowing out the 25 birthday candles, and then cut a piece of the cake and ate it to the cheers of fans.

Becker won the season-ending tournament in 1988 in New York, but it was his first title since the event moved to his native Germany in 1990. The victory, his fifth tournament title of the season, made his career record against Courier 6-0.

"He just beat me every time we played. Fair and square," said Courier, who lost his second World Championship final in a row.

Courier, who was the only player to win two Grand Slams this season—the Australian and French Opens—made sure of finishing the year as No 1 earlier in the week, thanks to Becker's elimination of No 2 Stefan Edberg in the quarter-

finals. He is the first American since John McEnroe in 1984 to end the year as No 1. Becker's victory meant that

clinched the game. Becker fought off one break point to take a 5-3 lead and broke again with another forehand to the corner to take the

In the final game, a double-fault by Courier gave the German two match points. Courier saved the first with a short forehand volley.



BORIS BECKER of Germany gave himself the perfect 25th birthday present by winning the ATP title yesterday in Frankfurt beating world number one Jim Courier of the United States.

the three-time Wimbledon champion will move up two places to No 5 in the world rankings. The German collected dlr 625,000 for the title and a total of dlr 1,090,000 for the week, while Courier took home dlr 465,000.

Becker dominated the final, scoring service breaks in the seventh game of the first two sets.

Becker hit a backhand down the line that gave him the first break in the first set, and closed out the set with an ace.

A risky return down the line that gave Becker three break points in the seventh game of the second set and a passing shot to the corner

set. The German dropped his serve for only the second time in the tournament at the start of the third set. But he broke right back in the next game to even the score and Courier had to save two break points in the fourth game.

The American saved five more in the eighth game and put Becker in trouble in the 11th. Becker staved off two break points and then slammed his 14th ace of the match and a service winner to escape.

"That was one of the bigger moments, yeah," Courier said of his missed opportunity. "That is the momentum switcher if you can get the third set."

Becker hit a good return on the next, Courier got to it but his backhand sailed long and Becker had his victory after two hours and 24 minutes.

"He seems to keep winning the last point against me,"

Becker denies marriage plans

FRANKFURT, Germany, Nov 22: German tennis star Boris Becker, who plays world number one Jim Courier in the ATP World Championships final later on Sunday, has dismissed reports of his forthcoming marriage, reports AFP. "There's nothing to it," he said of reports he would marry American model Barbara Felts in Monaco in December.

PSV march on despite the marching order

AMSTERDAM, Nov 22: Even the penalty of having a man sent off failed to halt Dutch league leaders PSV Eindhoven who swept aside struggling Dordrecht 90 4-1 on Saturday, reports Reuter.

With arch-rivals Ajax Amsterdam being surprisingly held to a 0-0 draw at home by Willem II, Tilburg, PSV stretched their lead to six points with a solid performance ahead of Wednesday's trip to FC Porto for their opening match in the European champions league.

PSV were leading 2-0 when international defender Adri van Tiggelen was sent off for a bad foul, but even reduced to 10 men they still doubled their tally.

Midfielder Edward Linskens opened the scoring after 38 minutes and attacker Juul Ellerman added the second for PSV 15 minutes into the second half.

Arthur Numan grabbed the third in the 72nd minute, while Ellerman added his second a minute later.

Striker Jerry Simons wroting-footed PSV keeper Hans van Breukelen to give Dordrecht their solitary goal in injury time.

A miserable afternoon for Ajax strikers Dennis Bergkamp, Stefan Epitseros and Marc Overmars left the Amsterdam club awaiting with some concern the arrival of Kaiserslautern for Tuesday's UEFA Cup match after the German side won 5-0 at Bayer Ubrdingen.

Vitesse Arnhem also did little to boost their confidence before facing Real Madrid in their UEFA Cup match when they lost 1-0 away to MVV Maastricht on Friday.

Bayern widen Bundesliga lead

BONN, Nov 22: Bayern Munich produced some of their best soccer this season as they crushed Bayer Leverkusen 4-2 away from home to increase their lead at the top of the Bundesliga on Saturday, reports Reuter.

They recovered from the shock of conceding an early goal and overwhelmed Bayer Leverkusen in any inspired second half sparked by captain Lothar Matthaeus who marked his return from his latest injury with their second goal.

With second-placed Eintracht Frankfurt held to a 0-0 draw at Schke, Bayern moved three points clear. Werder Bremen joined Eintracht on 19 points with a 2-0 away win against Borussia Moenchengladbach.

Bayern trainer Erich Ribbeck was delighted with his side's performance. "The second half was our best this season," he said. "Everything went according to plan. An unlucky first goal against US wasn't used by Bayer, who could have in-

creased their early lead to 2-0. I'm sure that practically decided the match."

Leverkusen, trainer Reinhard Safting said "It will be very hard to stop Bayern if they continue in this form."



LOTHAR MATTHAEUS

Leverkusen went ahead through midfielder Heiko Scholz after 11 minutes to lead at halftime.

Christian Ziege equalised in the 58th minute and former German captain Matthaeus,

back in the side after suffering thigh and back problems, put them ahead in the 69th minute.

Dutch international Jan Wouters made it 3-1 six minutes later, Andreas Thom pulled one back three minutes from time but Bruno Labbadia restored the two-goal difference in the last minute.

Borussia Moenchengladbach were reduced to 10 men in the 44th minute when Bachtrou Salou was sent off for a vicious foul and Werder Bremen made the most of it, both their goals coming within two minutes of each other in the second half.

Eighth-placed Kaiserslautern slaughtered lowly Bayer Uerdingen 5-0 away, with Marcel Witeczek scoring twice. Dane Bjarne Oldback, Demir Hotic and Marcus Marin hit the other goals.

Kaiserslautern trainer Rainer Zobel said. "It wasn't as easy as it looked. It was hard work. We were just hoping to keep he scores even."

Karlsruhu moved fourth with a comfortable 3-1 victory at home to struggling Cologne.

Leeds regain winning touch

LONDON, Nov 22: Defending champions Leeds ended a run of seven games without a win by beating 1991 title winners Arsenal 3-0 in an English Premier League match played under a constant downpour on Saturday, reports Reuter.

Defender Chris Fairclough and former Arsenal striker Lee Chapman headed two second half goals in five minutes to put Leeds in command.

Scottish international midfielder Gary McAllister sealed

their victory with the third three minutes from time.

Norwich stayed top of the table with a 2-1 home win over Sheffield United. They have 33 points, four more than second-placed Arsenal, who had won their last six games and not lost in 10.

Manchester United ended a worrying run of four matches without a goal and seven without victory in the league by crushing Oldham 3-0 at home. Scotland international Brian McClair scoring twice.

Leeds, who gave the European Cup priority and

slipped to 14th in the league, were being written off as title contenders unless they won their home match with Arsenal.

They crashed 4-0 at Manchester City in their previous league game following elimination from the European Cup semifinal stage by Glasgow Rangers.

Fairclough, a member of the much-criticised Leeds defence which had conceded 27 goals in 15 previous league games, broke the deadlock when he headed home in the 51st minute.

Arsenal goalkeeper David Seaman, hampered by a thigh injury, was substituted by Allan Miller immediately after Fairclough's goal.

Two former Arsenal players combined for the second five minutes later, Chapman's goal ending a move begun by midfielder David Rocastle who was making his first start in the league since joining Leeds in the summer.

Former Manchester United striker Mark Robins, who hit a hat-trick against Oldham in Norwich's previous league game two weeks ago, took his goals tally for the season to 11 when he volleyed home the winner in the 31st minute.

Aston Villa extended their unbeaten run to 13 matches with a 0-0 draw at Tottenham, but the point they gained was not enough to lift them above Arsenal into second place. Blackburn will claim this spot if they win at Southampton today.

Manchester United, whose manager has been criticised by club fans and shareholders for failing to strengthen the side's strike force, ended their goal drought in style.

McClair and Mark Hughes combined for all three goals in the opening 28 minutes, the Welshman sliding the second wide of advancing keeper John Hallworth and laying on the Scot's second with a deft, back-heeled pass.

Striker Mick Quinn, on loan from First Division Newcastle, marked his Coventry debut with two early goals, but visitors Manchester City fought back for a 3-2 victory, their fourth in a row. Keith Curle hit the winner from the penalty spot in the 79th minute.

Lim continues her Scottish success

GLASGOW, Nov 22: Lim Xiaoping, who left Beijing after the Tiananmen Square troubles to settle in Sweden, continued a happy return to Scotland here yesterday, reports AFP.

Lim, who won the European women's doubles title in the same Kelvin Hall seven months ago, reached the women's singles final in defence of her Scottish Open title in the last world Grand Prix tournament of 1992.

Frost wins Dunlop Phoenix golf

MIYAZAKI, Japan, Nov 22: David Frost of South Africa beat Japan's Kiyoshi Murota on the second playoff hole Sunday and won the 200 million yen (dlr 1.6 million) Dunlop Phoenix Tournament, reports AP.

Frost, starting the final round two strokes behind Murota, caught up with a 5-under-par 67 while Murota shot a 69, leaving the two tied at 11-under-par 277 for the regulation 72 holes.

Both players parred the first playoff hole, but Murota failed to save par from the rough at the back of the green on the second extra hole when he chipped 10 feet past the pin and then missed his par putt coming back.

Frost, playing his first tournament in Japan, safely two putted for par and the 36 million yen (dlr 288,000) first prize.

Barcelona are brilliant

MADRID, Nov 22: League champions Barcelona, in hot pursuit of Deportivo Coruna, showed their most devastating form to crush Real Zaragoza 6-1 away on Saturday, reports Reuter.

Real Madrid, level with Barcelona until this weekend, slipped back when they were held to a 1-1 draw at lowly Cadiz.

Barcelona's Hristo Stoichkov, Ator Beguiristain and Ronald Koeman shared the goal feast with two apiece.

Koeman scored first in the 21st minute and followed it four minutes later with another goal from a penalty. Beguiristain scored in equally quick succession in the 41st and 45th minute before Zaragoza forward Miguel Pardeza gave the home side some consolation with a penalty in the 55th minute.

Stoichkov's second goal in the 67th minute makes him the top league scorer this season with 12 goals in 11 matches.

Barcelona were a man short for the last 10 minutes after defender Albert Ferrer was sent off for a second yellow card offence.

Real Madrid were far from convincing against Cadiz, and made things harder for themselves when Defender Ricardo Rocha was sent off early in the second half for a blatant foul against Cadiz's Francisco Narvaez 'Kiko'.

Angel Oliva scored from the

free-kick given away by Rocha to take Cadiz to 1-0.

Real struggled to break through the southern team's well ordered defence and their own erratic game often left gaping holes in their lines.

But Madrid finally equalised in the 66th minute when Luis Enrique made a brilliant run down the right wing and

slipped to 14th in the league, were being written off as title contenders unless they won their home match with Arsenal.

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Seles, Navratilova in repeat final

NEW YORK, Nov 22: Top seed Monica Seles held off a determined challenge from third seed

Gabriela Sabatini on Saturday to set up a final round rematch with Martina Navratilova at the season-ending 3 million dollar Virginia Slims Championships, reports Reuter.

Seles, who is going for her third consecutive title in the 16-player season finale and 10th of the year, edged the Argentine—in a thrilling first set, then rolled through the second for a 7-6 (8-6), 6-1 victory.

"It was pretty important for me to win the first set. I was up so many times. I had so many chances, but she kept fighting back," said Seles who is riding an 18-match winning streak and is 69-5 for the year.

The remarkable Yugoslav world number one has now reached the final in 14 of 15 tournaments in 1992 and 30 of 31 over the past two years.

By reaching today's final the Australian, French and US Open champion also broke her own all-time record for earnings in a single year. Including the top year-end bonus pool prize of 500,000 US dollars, Seles will earn at least 2,492,353. She can pick up an additional 130,000 US dollars with a victory over Navratilova today.

The fourth-seeded Navratilova, eight times a winner on the carpet at Madison Square Garden, will be making her 14th appearance in a final here after taking a tough serve-and-volley duel from unseeded American Lori McNeil 7-6, 6-4.

"I'm just thrilled to be in the final," said the 36-year-old Navratilova, who extended her perfect record against McNeil to 11-0. "It's three-of-five (sets). I hope I can last that long."

The sell-out crowd of more than 18,000, squarely behind Sabatini, were treated to a remarkable first set filled with long rallies and brilliant shot-making on both sides of the net.

Three times Seles went up a service break and three times the determined Argentine fought back to put the set on serve again.

Sabatini, who won this event in 1988 and was playing her sixth consecutive semifinal here, nixed up her shots well against the Yugoslav power-hitter.

She attacked net when the opportunity presented itself, used drop shots and slicing backhands, and often just slugged away from the baseline to try to keep Seles guessing.

But the 18-year-old top seed's awesome power was just a bit too much for Sabatini, who fought back from 4-6 down in the tie-break only to succumb 6-6 when Seles whipped a blazing two-flsted volley past the third-ranked Argentine.

The crowd tried to get the 22-year-old Sabatini pumped up to start the second set but her serve failed her and Seles gathered momentum quickly.

"In the second set I lost my speed a little bit. I wasn't as quick as in the first set," Sabatini said.

That slight loss of quickness and her difficulty from the service line was all the edge Seles needed.

Sabatini double-faulted three times to lose the first game of the set and double-faulted twice more to drop the third game and fall 3-0 down, a deficit from which she never recovered.



MONICA SELES

"I lost a little bit of concentration there. The first game of the second set was a very big game and I made a few double faults and that made the difference," said Sabatini, winner of five tournaments this year.

Navratilova also had her problems from the service line, but McNeil failed to capitalise on her opportunities. In each set McNeil went up a break but the 18th-ranked Texan was unable to maintain the advantage.

Navratilova also trailed 5-4

in the first set tie-break, but won the last three points — two off McNeil's serve.

From 0-2 down in the second set, Navratilova picked up her game and rolled to a 5-2 lead. But an attack of nerves kept her from closing out the match until she lost her serve at 5-2 and squandered three match points in the final



M. NAVRATILOVA

Sabatini's satisfying year

NEW YORK, Nov 22: Gabriela Sabatini suffered a tough loss to Monica Seles on Saturday but the irrepressible Argentine ends her week in New York and her year on the tour a happy and confident tennis player, reports Reuter.

"I'm pretty satisfied with my performance. I'm very satisfied with the whole week," Sabatini said after her loss to

the top-seeded defending champion at the Virginia Slims championships.

While many players are often visibly shaken by defeat — as American teenager Jennifer Capriati was after falling to Sabatini in the quarter-finals here — the attractive Argentine always seems to find something positive in her setbacks.

"Bad Boy" of squash shines at Andorra

ANDORRA, Nov 22: Top seed Austin Adrraga, once the "bad boy" of squash, won the European Champion of champions tournament on Saturday with a 15-8, 15-13, 15-8 success over Dutchman Lucas Buit, reports Reuter.

Adarraga, born in Australia of Spanish parents, dominated proceedings with some excellent drives and drop shots to win in 47 minutes. But had played two matches of over an hour each the previous day to reach the final.

"I feel very good, especially at the net," said Sabatini, whose volley game has improved tremendously.

The 22-year-old from Buenos Aires at times looked like a natural serve-and-volleyer against Capriati and she was again impressive when able to fight her way to the net against the power-hitting Seles on Saturday.

For a player who once spent all her matches hitting topspin groundstrokes from the baseline, Sabatini has every right to be proud of her expanded game.

"I improved very much," she said of her net game. "I'm moving much better and I won a lot of points in yesterday's match (against Capriati), and today I was doing the same thing and doing it very well so I'm very happy with that," she said.

Sabatini ends the year ranked third in the world with five tournament titles to her credit. She posted a 65-12 match record, was one of only five players to beat Seles in 1992 and earned 1,207,565 in prize and year-end bonus pool money.

"I thought it was a good year, my best year so far," said Sabatini, whose lone career Grand Slam title came at the 1990 US Open.

"I didn't win a Grand Slam. I was close, but that's okay," added Sabatini, a semifinalist at Wimbledon and the Australian and French Opens and a quarter-finalist at the US Open.

"I thought I played good tennis. Mentally I have improved a lot.

"My game has improved and I'm very happy with the year."



Australian Craig Parry with the Australian PGA golf championship trophy in Sydney on November 22. Parry won his third domestic title with a 3-under par 68 in the final round to finish with 15-under 269 overall.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS (Dickens) 1 Greek portico 5 Queen of the fairies 8 Pause for Pavarotti 12 Injure 13 Actress — Alicia 14 Old revelers' cry 15 Word with code or rug 16 Like a "new-laid egg" 18 Liquid measure 20 Cower in fear 21 — Domino 23 Near the stern 24 Roman general 28 News 31 Mimic 32 Pancake topper: all spelling 34 Swiss canton 35 Rapunzel's pride 37 — Nickleby

DOWN 1 Rug or dance 2 Scarlett's home 3 City on the Oka 4 Town in Italy 5 Keep in good repair 6 New England cape 7 Judge's bench 8 Brazilian seaport 9 Momentous 10 — and dance 11 Henri's head 17 — man —

mouse? 19 Louts 22 Fractional currency 24 Scrooge's exclamation 25 WWII org. 26 Cup-of-sugar borrower? 27 Synthetic alkaloids 29 Refrain syllable 30 Sibling 33 TV's Donahue 36 French poet and dramatist 38 Alloy used in cheap jewelry 40 Give a bad review 42 Tag on sale item 43 Hindu garment 44 Nest of pheasants 46 Flowering shrub 47 Marshy meadows 48 Heraldic bearing 50 Goal

Solution time: 26 min.

COMIC APACHE MONICA DARREN ENAMEL ACCORD GENE LAME SOB SAIL DDS ASK GOAL OBOE CHIROPRACTORS TYNE EMMA WET SOW EBRO SHH ALDA LOCI HOARSE SLIPON UPSETS TAVERN LEAVES EMEND

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CRYPTOQUIP

X O U I J N Q S I T L B Y Q C

I U X L F N L Q A U F P S I U A , B C U J -

X U S T O Q N I F O B J X N L Y S J U A .

Saturday's Cryptoquip: WHAT EARLY AIRPLANE PIONEERS URGENTLY NEEDED: THE WRIGHT STUFF.

Today's Cryptoquip clue: X equals W

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.