

Sport

Martinez makes it look so easy

HOUSTON, Mar 29: Third seed Conchita Martinez of Spain ran unseeded German Sabine Hack ragged on Sunday to win the 375,000 Virginia Slims of Houston tennis tournament, reports Reuter.

German was left drained after taking more than three hours to defeat fourth seed Jana Novotna late on Saturday night.



CONCHITA MARTINEZ

"I was a little impatient, maybe a little tired mentally," admitted Hack, who had won just one match in 1993 prior to this tournament.

Martinez, a clay-court specialist, drilled 18 winners, mostly off her forehand, and wore the German out by forcing her to scramble around the court. But the Spaniard said it took her some time to get used to Hack's heavy top spin ground strokes. "It was difficult," said Martinez, who plans to take three weeks off to give her finger a chance to heal.

Sweden sweep it clean

KALMAR, Sweden, Mar 29: Sweden's Stefan Edberg and Nicklas Kulti easily won the reverse singles Sunday to give Sweden a 5-0 victory over Cuba in the Davis Cup first round match, reports AP.

Indonesia in the next round

JAKARTA, Mar 29: Suwandf beat Joseph Lizardo 6-7, 6-2, 7-5, 6-2 in the final singles Monday, giving Indonesia a 3-2 victory over the Philippines in the first round of Davis Cup Asia Oceania Zone tennis play, reports AP.

Suwandi played with an injured leg but the heat foiled Lizardo, who collapsed at the end of the match. The Philippines' Felix Barrientos had tied the competition 2-2 earlier Monday with a 6-3, 1-6, 4-6, 7-5, 6-3 victory over Benny Widjaja in a singles match that had been suspended on Sunday with Widjaja leading two sets to one.

Czechs sail easy

COPENHAGEN, Denmark, Mar 29: Favored Czech Republic and Slovakia, playing as a unified Czechoslovakia team this season, qualified Sunday for the Davis Cup World Group quarter final by defeating underdog Denmark 4-1, reports AP.

Asian players not far behind

INDIAN WELLS, California, Mar 29: Riding the wave created by the continent's economic boom, Asian tennis has emerged onto the sport's world stage, reports AP.

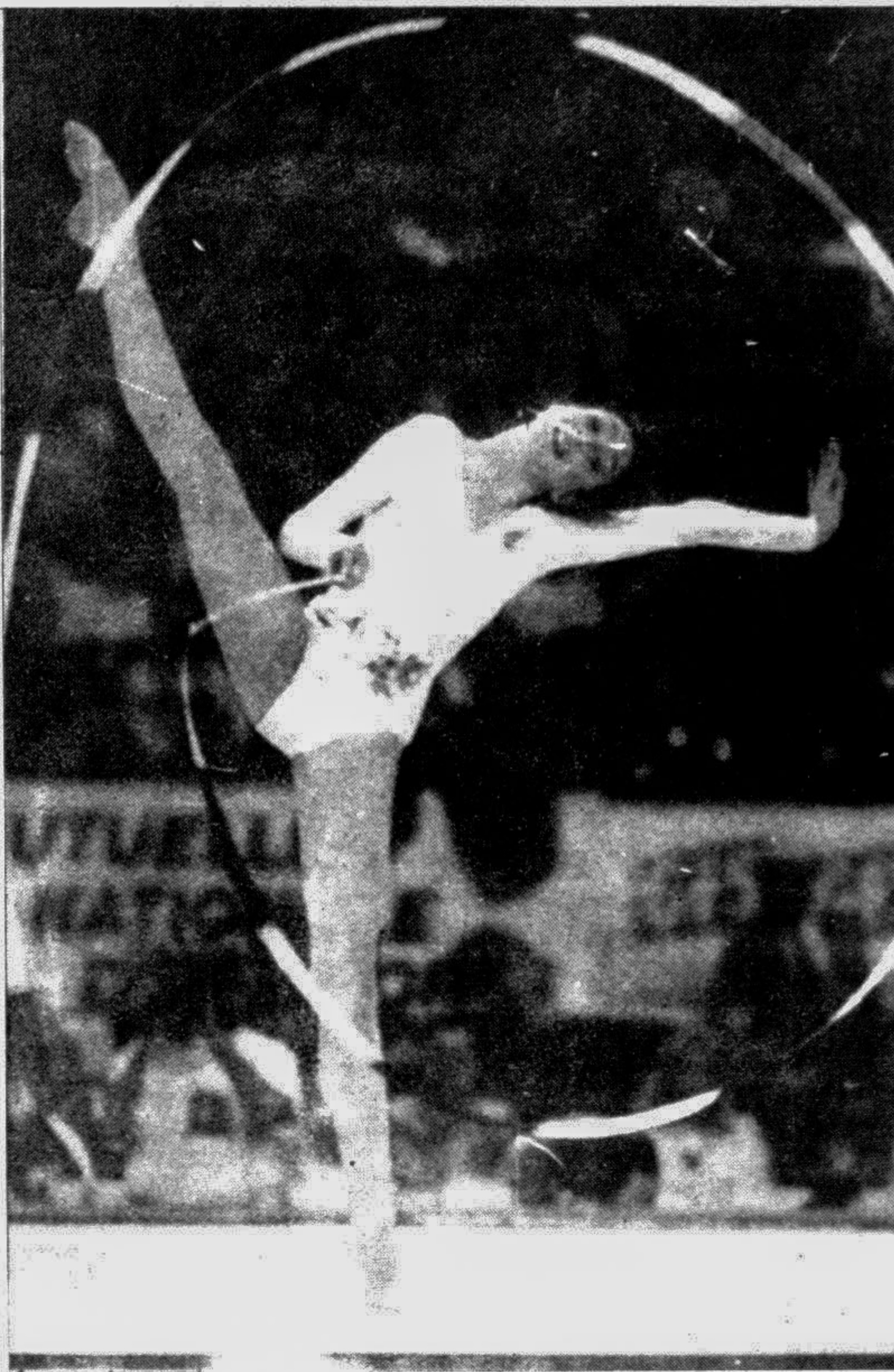
said Livesey. "He's still a fanatical tennis supporter, and the standards



KIMIKO DATE

he set for Japan and the rest of Asia over the years has been quite phenomenal. He's now president of the Asian Tennis Federation, and he's also the ITF committee of management representative for his area.

pete against each other to be the best." They've also put an enormous amount of money into tournaments, and the corporate people, the sponsors, have got behind the game in a very positive way. That money has, however, made it unnecessary for many Japanese to travel overseas, especially the men. Suzo Matsuoka is enjoying some success, but most prefer to stay at home playing on the lucrative and extensive Japanese circuit.



Bulgarian gymnast Svetlana Petrova performs during the ribbon-assisted rhythmic and sportive gymnastic event at the French international gymnastics championships in Paris on March 28. Petrova finished first in the event.

Kenya unveil another champ

BILBAO, Spain, Mar 29: Individually and collectively, Kenya sounded a chilling warning to the athletics world at the weekend, reports Reuter. With another World Championships just over the horizon, the Kenyans unveiled yet another remarkable long distance talent in William Sigel, winner of the men's cross country title in the Basque town of Amorebieta on Sunday.

Kenyan Richard Chelimo was the victim on that occasion, enjoying the status of Olympic champion for less than 24 hours before being relegated to second place. The decision understandably angered the Kenyan team who briefly considered pulling out of the Olympics.

fast well grassed surface ideally suited to Africans, Sigel kept out of trouble in third place. "We were taking care of them," Cosgi explained. "We didn't want anybody to spike him. That was why he was running alone."

From affluence to insolvency

BUCHAREST, Mar 29 The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 shattered the once-proud world of Soviet sport and turned legions of formerly elite and affluent athletes into paupers, reports Reuter.

of meat costs 1,000 roubles (1.8 dollar), so I have to help them." In the four-story grey building which is Dinamo's shabby headquarters, Nicula shares a small dilapidated room with another former member of the Soviet team, Andrey Christyakov.

"The Romanian players have no such problems." But team coach Oliviu Raducanu said: "Both players are quite satisfied with the contract... they signed it quite eagerly."

Kim claws his way to the main draw

OSAKA, Japan, Mar 29: Kim Bong-Soo of South Korea survived two tough matches here Monday to secure a berth in the main draw of the 500,000 dollar Salem Open men's tennis tournament, reports AP.



Jakob Hlasek goes sprawling after attempting a backhand return against Ramesh Krishnan during their Davis Cup reverse singles match at the South Calcutta Club court on March 28. India knocked outlast year's runners-up Switzerland when Krishnan clinched the deciding game against Hlasek 6-3, 6-4, 6-2.

Top seed falls at French Open

PARIS, Mar 29: Unseeded Indonesian Hendrawan, who defeated top seed Dong Jong of China in the third round, won the French Open badminton men's singles title on Sunday, reports Reuter.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down. Includes a solution time of 24 mins and a Cryptquip section.

Italy make it 4-1

MODENA, Mar 29: Jaime Oncins beat Omar Camporese 6-4, 3-6, 6-3 in the first reverse singles match Sunday, earning Brazil's lone consolation victory in a 4-1 Italian win in a first-round Davis Cup World Group match, reports AP.

Fiji edged

HONG KONG, Mar 29: Western Samoa upset defending champions and seven-time winner Fiji 14-12 Sunday and won the Cathay Pacific-Hongkong Bank Sevens Rugby tournament for the first time, reports AP.

The speedy Fijians took the lead in the first minute with a try by Sakeasi Vonolagi before a capacity crowd of 33,000 at the Hong Kong Football Stadium.

Teammate Wasale Serevi, the most popular Fijian player among Hong Kong fans because of his mazy runs, failed to convert the try.

Both teams battled hard for the ball in the second half but could not add to the scoreline. The Fijians, who had won the tournament for the last three years in a row, advanced to the final with a 17-14 victory over five-time winner Australia.

In Western Samoa's only previous trip to the final, in 1979, it lost to Australia. Tonga beat Italy 38-28 to win the Plate event for teams that finished in second place in preliminary group competition.

Romania took the Bowls trophy with an 17-14 victory over Papua New Guinea in competition among last-place teams in preliminary play.

Other teams participating in the two-day tournament were Argentina, American Eagles, Canada, Hong Kong, Ireland, Japan, South Korea, Kwang-Huah Taipei, Malaysia, Namibia, Scotland, Singapore, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and the Welsh President's Seven.

Ngugi faces drug investigation

AMOREBIETA, Spain, Mar 29: Five-times world cross country champion John Ngugi faces a drugs investigation on April 7, Kenyan team manager Samsuero said here Monday, reports AP.

Cryptquip puzzle: FX OCP KCP IVM H IHB-IP EE WFTI HPMC OCP J KA H MHJ XPAWFBV. Yesterday's Cryptquip: HAM ACTOR PROBABLY HAS PROBLEMS WITH HIS TEETH SINCE HE CHEWS THE SCENERY.