

# Majoli leaves Graf short of breath

**PARIS, May 30:** Top-seeded Steffi Graf survived her toughest test so far at the French Open, holding off 15-year-old Iva Majoli on Sunday to reach the quarter-finals, reports AP.

Graf, seeking her third title here, had her hands full with the Croatian teen's powerful groundstrokes, but hung on for a 6-4, 7-6 (7-3) victory.

Third-seeded Gabriela Sabatini also advanced, crushing 14th-seeded Katerina Maleeva of Bulgaria, 6-1, 6-2. Sabatini has now beaten Maleeva in eight of their nine career meetings.

In a five-set thriller lasting four hours, seven minutes, men's No 12 seed Richard Krajicek outlasted Carlos Costa of Spain.

The Dutchman slammed his 14th ace on his second match point to prevail, 7-5, 3-6, 6-3, 5-7, 10-8 in the longest Centre-Court match of the tournament. Costa was unseeded.

Like Graf, fifth-seeded Mary Joe Fernandez faced her toughest challenge, but rallied to beat Brenda Schultz of the Netherlands, 2-6, 7-5, 6-3. Schultz, yet to reach the quarter-finals in 22 Grand Slams, served for the match while leading 5-4 in the second set, but was broken.

Czech veterans Karel Novacek and Jana Novotna also advanced, with straight-set victories over two other East Europeans.

Novacek, the men's No 13 seed, hit 11 aces while defeating fellow Czech Ctislav Dosedol, 7-5, 6-4, 7-5. He also reached the quarter-finals here in 1987, his best previous Grand Slam performance.

Novotna, the women's No 7 seed, downed Natalia Zvereva of Belarus, 6-3, 6-3. Her best showing here was a semifinal loss to Steffi Graf in 1991.

All eight women's quarter-final berths were at stake Sunday, and four of the men's spots.

Play was interrupted by two rain delays, one of 25 minutes and another of 40 minutes.

Graf had trounced Majoli, 6-

2, 6-2 in the one previous meeting, but Sunday was different.

"She played a great, great match," Graf said. "I was lucky to win in two sets. She was really pressuring me a lot. I have a lot of respect for her."

Majoli attributed the outcome to Graf's experience.

"She didn't miss on the important points," Majoli said. "I wanted to go for it too much. She played a good tiebreak and I made some errors I shouldn't have."

Among the men in action late in the day were two-time defending Jim Courier, the No 2 seed, against 15th-seeded Thomas Muster of Austria, and ninth-seeded Michael Stich of Germany against unseeded

Goran Prpic of Croatia. In all, players from Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union had captured 10 of the 32 men's and women's berths in the fourth round.

One of the day's highlights was a Centre-Court showdown between sixth-seeded Jennifer Capriati and No 12 Mary Pierce, raised in the United States but playing for France. In the only previous meeting of the teenage stars, at the same stage of last year's French Open, Capriati won, 6-4, 6-3.

Pierce's father and coach, Jim Pierce, was ejected from his daughter's third-round match for disturbing play with his screaming. Later, officials decided to bar him from the

rest of the tournament, revoking his credentials and saying he would be tossed out if he tried to enter the grounds with a regular ticket.

Gerard Smith, executive director of the Women's Tennis Association, said tour officials were deliberating whether to ban Pierce from future tournaments, including Wimbledon starting June 21. Smith said Pierce would be given a chance to tell his side of the story.

Earlier on Saturday, top-seeded Pete Sampras and No 3 Stefan Edberg, fine-tuning their serve-and-volley games on clay, advanced to the fourth round with straight-set victories Saturday.

Sampras had little trouble in a 6-4, 6-4, 6-2 victory over Jonas Svensson of Sweden.

Edberg won stylishly over hard-serving American Jonathan Stark, 6-4, 6-4, 7-6 (7-4). Edberg was unable to break serve in the third set, and won the tiebreaker with a smash after Stark barely pushed back a shot that had trickled over net cord.

"I'm probably playing as well this time as I have in some time," Edberg said. "I feel good, playing solid on the clay."

Also advancing to the round of 16 were 11th-seeded Andrei Medvedev of Ukraine, 7-6 (7-4), 3-6, 7-5, 6-4 over Gabriel Markus of Argentina; Paul Haarhuis of the Netherlands, 7-6 (7-2), 6-3, 6-1 over Germany's Carl-Uwe Steeb, and Marc Goellner of Germany over Australian Mark Woodforde, 3-6, 7-6 (7-1), 6-3, 6-7 (10-8), 7-5.

Joining them was the biggest longshot left in the field, Brazilian qualifier Fernando Meligeni. Ranked 167th in the world, Meligeni rallied from two sets down to defeat German Patrick Kuhnen, 3-6, 3-6, 6-1, 6-3, 8-6.

In fourth-round matches Monday, Haarhuis will play Edberg, and Goellner, who earlier ousted sixth-seeded Petr Korda, will play Medvedev in a battle of two of the tournament's brightest young stars.



Richard Krajicek of the Netherlands appears to be in dark about what hit him during his match against Spaniard Carlos Costa in the French Open at Roland Garros yesterday. The 12th seeded Dutch prevailed 7-5, 3-6, 6-3, 7-5, 10-8 in the longest Centre-Court tie of the tournament.

— Star TV photo

## Dementi of a bruit

**PARIS, May 30:** Rumours that Monica Seles may never play again were strongly denied by the Women's Tennis Association's (WTA) director of public relations Ana Leatrad at the French Open tennis championships here on Sunday, reports AFP.

"That's absolute rubbish. There's no truth in it whatsoever," she said.

There was speculation in certain newspapers that the world number-one, who was stabbed on court in Hamburg last month, could be forced to retire.

According to reports Seles, who has been unable to defend her title here and will also miss Wimbledon, cannot raise her left arm above shoulder-level or comb her hair.

But this was described as "totally exaggerated" by the WTA official.

Seles' agent Stephanie Tolleson was quoted as saying the player was "depressed at the seriousness of the wound which is half-an-inch long."

Graf, bidding for a third French title and who is top seed at Roland Garros because of Seles' absence, has appealed to the American-based left-hander to return to the tour "as soon as possible."

The German will recapture the world number one ranking if she reaches the final in Paris. She has made it clear this will be meaningless to her while Seles is not playing.



American Mark Lenzi, who won gold in the Barcelona Games last year, on the third round of the men's 3-metre springboard preliminary at the eighth diving World Cup in Beijing yesterday. Lenzi finished second in the preliminary behind China's Yu Zhoucheng.

— AFP photo

# Bubka flies high in windy sky

**SAN JOSE, California, May 30:** Pole vault star Sergei Bubka made the highest outdoor jump on

US soil on Saturday when he cleared six metres at the Bruce Jenner Classic Athletics Grand Prix meeting, reports Reuter.

The Ukrainian, who holds the world record of 6.13 metres, passed the bar at six metres at the first attempt after a long competition held in difficult, windy conditions at the picturesque San Jose City College stadium.

Igor Potapovich of Kazakhstan was second with a vault of 5.75 metres while American Kory Tarpenning was third with a leap of the same height.

It was the first time Bubka had competed outdoors in the United States and he outstripped the previous American all-comers outdoor record of 5.96 metres. Bubka has previously vaulted six metres indoors in the United States.

Bubka did not attempt a higher vault, citing the length of the competition which was delayed at the start while organisers shifted the position of the mat because of the wind.

"It was a very strange situation. You start practice in this one place and it moves to another place. It was a very long competition," said Bubka, who was given a standing ovation by the crowd and mobbed by autograph hunters.

Bubka said that if all the conditions were right, he would attempt a new world record at the Prefontaine athletics meeting in Eugene, Oregon next weekend.

"At the beginning of the season, it's sometimes important to do some good results rather than set records," he said.

Six metres was a good result and it was now possible for him to concentrate on possibly attempting a new world record, he said.

"I was feeling really well today. The race was a little slow for me. Today I was looking to run fast, around 3:35. This was a very easy win," he said.

American Kevin Young, the Olympic gold medal winner and world record holder, set the fastest time in the world this year in the 400 metres hurdles, an event which did not count towards the Grand Prix standings.

He sprinted home in 84.17 seconds, well clear of second-placed American David Patrick.

Marc Davis of the United States notched up the fastest outdoor time in the world this year in the 3,000 metres, winning in seven minutes 43.62 seconds.

Olympic champion Svetlana Krivoylova of Russia won the women's shot put with a throw of 19.53 metres while Maria Mutola of Mozambique won her third Grand Prix event out of three with a time of two minutes 01.35 seconds in the 800 metres.

Jackie Joyner-Kersey, the Olympic heptathlon champion, won the women's long jump with a wind-assisted leap of 7.09 metres, but pulled out of the 400 metres hurdles after suffering a bout of asthma caused by an allergy.

Fellow American Sandra Farmerpatrick won the 400 metres hurdles in 55.25 seconds.

American Antonio Pettigrew was second in 45.84 seconds

and Jason Rouser, also of the United States, third. Watts was sixth in 46.85 seconds.

Bile, the 1987 world champion, took his record in Grand Prix events to three wins out of three with a comfortable, stylish victory in the men's 1,500 metres, winning in a time of three minutes 39.01 seconds from Branko Zorko of Croatia.

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## Cuba, Russia, Japan in a deadlock

**TOKYO, May 30:** Barcelona Olympic champions Cuba, Russia and Japan ended the preliminary Group A competition with a 2-1 record each here Sunday at the one million dollar eight-team World Grand Prix women's volleyball tournament, reports AFP.

The Cuban women, who suffered a major setback when they lost to Olympic silver medalists Russia 1-3 Saturday, cut down the challenge from Japan 3-1 (13-15, 15-11, 15-11, 15-10) at the Yoyogi national gymnasium.

The Russians ran out 3-1 (15-7, 7-15, 15-5, 15-8) winners over winless Germany earlier in the day in the four-team round robin competition.

## Asia-Pacific Cup goes to Japan

**FUKUOKA, Japan, May 30:** Hosts Japan whitewashed Indonesia 3-0 for a fifth consecutive victory here Sunday and the championship of the six-team Asia-Pacific Cup men's volleyball tournament, reports AFP.

Fighting for the Cup at the Fukuoka Municipal Gymnasium, the Japanese spikers notched up a 15-9, 17-16, 15-3 win, putting their Indonesian opponents into the runners-up position with four wins and one defeat.

In the other matches, Thailand outplayed the Philippines 3-1 (15-10), 15-10, 14-16, (17-15), while Malaysia overcame a two-sets deficit to beat Hong Kong 3-2 (8-15), 11-15, 15-0, 15-8 (15-9).

Thailand finished third with three wins and two defeats, Malaysia in fourth with a 2-3 record, the Philippines in fifth at 1-4 and winless Hong Kong at sixth.

## Japan, ROK make it

**FUKUOKA, Japan, May 30:** Japan and South Korea advanced Sunday to the volleyball world youth championships following successful play at the four-team Asia youth tournament, reports AFP.

The Chinese women, who lost to South Korea 0-3 on Saturday and desperately needed to beat Japan by 3-0 to finish in the top two positions, took the first match 17-15.

But the Japanese team raced to 15-4, 15-4 and 15-11 wins in the following matches, finishing the tournament with three wins and no defeats.

South Korea overpowered Taiwan 3-0 (15-9, 15-5, 15-3) earlier Sunday to take second place with two wins and one loss.

China ended third with a 1-2 record, while Taiwan was at the bottom with four defeats.

# 'Second Seles' soars higher

**PARIS, May 30:** Just sixteen months ago the latest teenage sensation Iva Majoli was ranked in the world's top 600 players, reports AFP.

But when the Croatian-born, 15-year-old arrived at the French Open tennis championships on Monday, her ranking had shot up to 43rd after winning a series of matches she was expected to lose.

On Sunday, Majoli, who is being described as the new Monica Seles of women's tennis, shrugged off any fears of what might happen to her when she faces another former teenage sensation — Steffi Graf.

"I won't be nervous," she promised after her straight-sets win over Germany's 15th-seed Sabine Hack in the previ-

ous round. "I'm just excited and happy to be playing Steffi. I will play my game. She will play her game. We shall see what happens."

Majoli has made it clear that she is flattered to be compared with Yugoslavia's world number one Monica Seles but she stressed: "We are two different people and two different players."

The comparisons between Majoli and the absent reigning champion, who is recovering after being stabbed on court in Hamburg last month, however, are toasty.

Majoli has followed the same trail blazed by Seles a few years ago .... Settling in Florida and working on her baseline game with Nick Bolletieri, who has coached stars like Jim

Courier and who is still in charge of Andre Agassi's career.

Referring to Graf, Majoli admitted: "She is a great athlete and a great player .... but for me nobody is as good as Martina Navratilova."

Graf is playing for high stakes at the championships. She will reclaim her world number one status if she reaches the final and she is bidding for her third crown after her 1987 and 1988 triumphs.

Graf didn't look too upset to discover Majoli in her path.

"I only lost four games to her when we met earlier this year in Florida and she didn't give me too many problems then," said Graf, adding: "But she is a very solid player and is improving."

# All is well for Marseille

**MARSEILLE, France, May 30:** European Cup winners Marseille secured a record fifth consecutive French league title on Saturday with a 3-1 home win over rivals Paris St Germain, reports Reuter.

But trouble flared when smoke bombs and missiles were hurled on the pitch and the game was stopped for a few minutes after visiting fans rioted.

Fights erupted when security forces moved in to restore order and several police were slightly injured.

Marseille, who became the first French club to win the European Cup when they beat AC Milan on Wednesday, needed only a draw to outclass St Etienne, crowned four times between 1968 and 1971.

The team built by million-

aire Bernard Tapie are now six points clear on Paris SG and Monaco with one game remaining.

Paris midfielder Vincent Guerin opened the scoring after seven minutes but German veteran Rudi Voeller equalised nine minutes later.

Defender Basile Boli, who scored the winner against Milan, put Marseille in front with a superb header in the 36th minute and Croatian marksman Alen Boksic wrapped it up when he collected his 22nd goal of the season with 14 minutes left.

"All the Paris fans were searched before entering the stadium and I wonder how they managed to get smoke bombs," an angry Tapie said. "There will always be a problem with Paris and we will certainly not be looking forward to playing them here again."

"It's becoming serious and very dangerous," said Paris defender Alain Roche. "We lost all the credit we won in Europe just because a handful of fans can't behave. Something has to be done about it."

The Paris club, who have spent millions in their bid to end Marseille's dominance of French soccer, lost to Juventus in the UEFA Cup semifinals.

The match was tense on the pitch as well and Paris SG's Brazilian sweeper Ricardo Gomes was sent off early in the second half for handling the ball.

"It was a very tough, very physical game and both sides were nervous," said Marseille midfielder Didier Deschamps. Monaco beat Lyon 2-1 to make sure of a place in Europe while Bordeaux and Nantes kept their chances alive by defeating Metz and Toulouse respectively.



Spaniard Carlos Costa, who stunned world number five Goran Ivanisevic in his previous game, makes a forehand volley during his marathon match against Dutch Richard Krajicek in the French Open yesterday. Carlos went down fighting after a gruelling five-setter.

— Star TV photo

## Wiranata in, Arbi out

**BIRMINGHAM, May 30:** Former All-England men's singles champion Ardy Wiranata won a call-up to the Indonesian Sudirman Cup final team to face South Korea here on Sunday, reports AFP.

Wiranata was picked ahead of world number two Heryanto Arbi, who paid the price for his defeat on Saturday.

Wiranata's father, team manager Leo, had hinted that the current All-England champion would be axed after his shock loss to China's Wu Wenkai and that proved the case, with Ardy being picked for his first match of the tournament.

He was due to face Kim Hak-Kyun, who was recalled to the Korean side along with Olympic women's singles silver medalist Bang So-Hyun as the holders continued their policy of switching their singles players.

Arbi did have some good news on Sunday, though. Ukraine's Leonid Pugach withdrew, leaving the top seed with two consecutive byes and an automatic place in the third round.

Joint third seed Thomas Stuer-Lauridsen of Denmark also went straight into round three after Belgium's Pedro Vanneste pulled out.

## Scifo sure to switch sides

**MONACO, May 30:** Torino's unsettled star Enzo Scifo, the Belgian international midfielder, is expected to join French league side AS Monaco or Italy's new European Cup Winners' champions Parma for next season, reports AFP.

Torino, the Italian Serie A club, are asking for a transfer fee of around 35 million French francs (6.5 million dollars) for the Belgian, who will make a decision within the next few days.

# US athletes ahead of schedule

**LONDON, May 30:** World long jump record holder Mike Powell heads an advance group of Americans who arrive in Slovakia this week for the start of the European athletics season, reports Reuter.

World champion Powell, Olympic 200 metres women's champion Gwen Torrence and Olympic 100 metres bronze medalist Dennis Mitchell are among the US athletes who land in Europe for an international meeting in Bratislava on Tuesday.

The European Grand Prix circuit starts in Seville next Saturday with a further Grand Prix in Rome on June 9 before the US Championships in Eugene, Oregon, from June 18-19.

The Bratislava meeting, billed by the organisers as "The best eastern European meet", has attracted a high-class entry.

Czech Olympic champion Jan Zelezny, who set the first world record of the year when he hurled the javelin 95.94 metres in Petersburg, South

Africa, on April 6 is a confirmed entrant as is Canada's Olympic high hurdles champion Clark McKay.

The elite Santa Monica Track Club have opted to stay in the United States until after the American championships when they will arrive in force for Grand Prix in Lausanne, Stockholm, Oslo, Zurich and Monte Carlo before the Stuttgart World Championship.

The Grand Prix Circuit, inaugurated in 1985, has at least three innovations this year as money continues to pour into the sport.

## CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

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