

Gullit signs for Sampdoria

GENOVA, Italy, July 14: Ruud Gullit, AC Milan's Dutch Striker, is to play for Sampdoria next season...

Terms of the deal were not announced. Gullit, 31, has played for Milan for six seasons...

Gullit, who had become increasingly unhappy at Milan in the jostling for a regular first team spot...

Last month a deal to transfer him to Bayern Munich also fell through.

Sampdoria, Italian champions in 1990-91, are widely reported to be interested in signing England midfielder David Platt from Juventus...

No Polish clubs in UEFA Cup competitions

GENEVA, July 14: Legia Warsaw, stripped of the Polish title, and LKS Lodz, who finished as runners up...

UEFA spokesman Andre Viel said: "The club competitions committee has decided not to allow Legia Warsaw and LKS Lodz to take part in the UEFA Cup competition..."

"We accepted the proposal that Lech Poznan takes the place of Legia Warsaw as Polish champions but there will be no Polish Clubs taking part in the UEFA Cup."

The draws for all three European club competitions takes place today.

UEFA's ban follows the punishments handed out to the clubs by the Polish FA for alleged match-rigging on the final day of the season.

Both Legia and LKS, who finished first and second respectively, had two points deducted which deprived Legia of the title. Lech Poznan, who finished third, were named as champions by default.

Both Legia and LKS wanted big scores to improve their chances of winning the title in their final matches on June 20. Legia romped to a 6-0 victory over mid-table Wisla Krakow while LKS thrashed lowly Olimpia Poznan 7-1.

Mitterrand's kind words for Bernard Tapie

PARIS, July 14: President Francois Mitterrand has urged greater prudence by the judiciary and the media towards his former government minister Bernard Tapie...

The French head of state said on Wednesday that since Tapie had not officially come under suspicion he should be treated as an innocent party.

"It's not up to a magistrate to keep anybody informed while he is examining a case because the secrecy of an investigation is what ensures respect for the person under suspicion..."

Tapie's General Manager at Marseille, Jean Pierre Bernes, is in custody facing accusations that he organised a pay-off for players from Marseille's First Division rivals Valenciennes in May...

Throughout the investigation, state prosecutor Eric de Montgolfier has briefed the media and made clear there are grounds for suspicion against Tapie.

The French media have also speculated about the millionaire entrepreneur's possible role.

"I think greater prudence is called for," Mitterrand said, praising Tapie's abilities both as a soccer manager and a government minister.

Tapie was named Urban Affairs Minister in April 1992 under France's last socialist government. He resigned after just six weeks after being indicted on fraud charges following a suit brought by a former business partner...

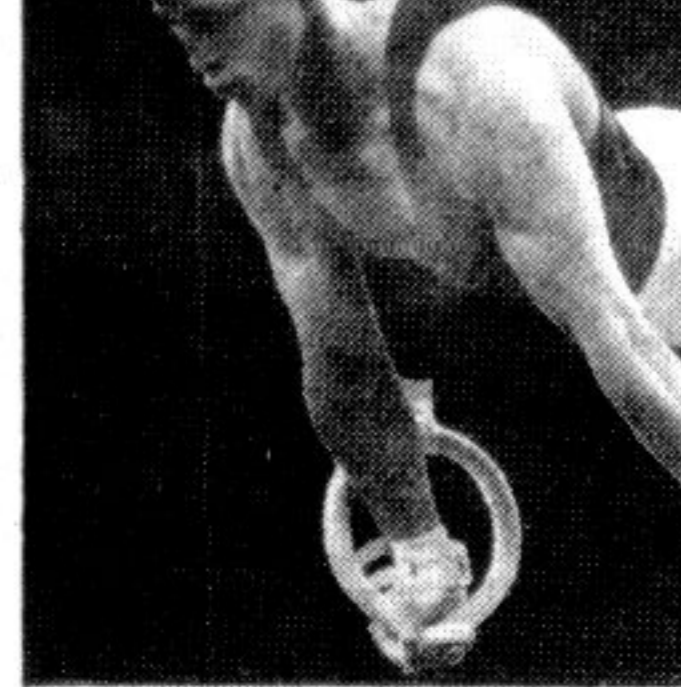
Mitterrand said it was important to clean up any corruption in French soccer but would not say whether he thought it was widespread. "I hope not," he said.

Scherbo craves for a break

BUFFALO, New York, July 14: Vitaly Scherbo looks tired. Six gold medals at the Barcelona Games, three golds at the World Championships in April...

The Belarusian turned in an excellent vault to win the men's all around title at the World University Games on Sunday, pressed until the last moment by Italian Yuri Chechi.

"I think I still have momentum from the Olympic Games," said Scherbo, who won team, all-around, vault, pommel



VITALY SCHERBO

horse, rings and parallel bars titles in Spain.

"But if I keep going at the current pace this momentum will be gone soon," Scherbo won the all-around, vault and parallel bars titles at the World Championships in April.

This summer he is working at the Woodward Gymnastics Camp in Pennsylvania as a teacher, and keeping a gruelling

schedule of exhibitions. He is also helping his wife, Irina look after their four-month old baby.

"I am very tired of it," he said. "There is no rest for me. A lot of training, a lot of exhibi-

tions, almost one exhibition a month, and a lot of trips."

He decided late to join his Belarusian teammates at the World University Games, and his performance in the team competition on Friday was, by his standards, poor.

In the all-around, he made a mistake in a simple section of his floor routine, brushing the floor with his leg, but made up for it in the vault.

"I began to prepare for competition very late, only a week ago," he said.

"(At Woodward) I train only for an hour because the gym is full of children."

"The gym is also hot, like a swimming pool. Besides, I have a wife and baby. I don't have time."

Scherbo said he would return to Belarus in September. It is still home, despite the economic problems of the fledgling republic.

"I have my friends, my family, my wife's family," he said. "It is my life."

And despite his current weariness, he has not lost his appetite for gold, a hunger he plans to satisfy at the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta.

"I would like at least one more gold medal to add to my collection," he said. "Or more."

Robert rides on dual success

BUFFALO, New York, July 14: Australian Martin Roberts grabbed the early lead and held off a late challenge by German Oliver Lampe to win the 200-metre butterfly and his second gold medal at the World University Games on Tuesday, reports Reuter.

Roberts posted a time of 2:00.91 to Lampe's 2:01.12. "I knew I had to get out there reasonably fast and set myself up for a good chance in the last 50 metres," Roberts said.

Asked how it felt to be the first Australian male to win two gold medals at a University Games, Roberts said: "It feels good but I didn't know that."

Outside a window of the room where the news conference was being held, a dozen or so of Roberts' teammates peered

inside, genuflecting and saying: "We are not worthy."

Canada's Turlough O'Hare also earned his second gold of the Games, winning the 400-metre free-style in 3:55.01. He won the 800-metre event on Saturday.

France's Yann de Fabrique, who attends University of North Carolina, was second and Hungary's Walter Kalasus was third.

O'Hare and De Fabrique clocked identical times of 2:55.50 at the 300-metre split and De Fabrique continued to press O'Hare over the final 50.

"I think both of us were racing all the way. I was just lucky to come out first," said O'Hare.

De Fabrique said he decided to compete at these Games because he has been training nearby in the United States for the European Championships

which begin July 30 in Sheffield, England.

"I'm not here to be serious. I was a little tired," he said.

Germany's Heike Luensch won the 200-metre free-style in a time of 2:03.18 by overtaking Whitney Hedgepeth of the United States as they turned for the final 50 metres.

Hedgepeth was second in 2:03.53 while Claire Huddart gave Britain its first medal of these Games by earning the bronze in 2:04.05.

Ninety minutes after that final, Hedgepeth earned a bronze in the 200-metre individual medley, won by Marianne Limpert of Canada. Hedgepeth now has a complete set of medals, having won a gold in the 200-metre back-stroke on Saturday.

Kalinina gets another gold

NIAGARA FALLS, New York, July 14: Ukrainian Natalia Kalinina became the only gymnast to win golds in two events at the World University Games on Tuesday when she placed first on the vault and uneven bars, reports Reuter.

Her teammate Tatiana Lisenko, who won the all-around title Monday, won the gold medal on the beam.

A third Ukrainian, Lyudmila Stovbchataya, captured silver medals on the balance beam and floor exercise to go with a bronze on the uneven bars.

In all, Ukrainian women took three golds, a silver and two bronzes quite a successful result for a programme Kalinina insists has a bleak outlook.

"We have dismal conditions in the Ukraine," Kalinina said. "Our young gymnasts at home train on apparatuses that are very poor. Then when they travel abroad they are not prepared for the conditions of a world-class event."

She added "It will not be so easy for our country in the future. We are the last of those who have had a strong programme as a training base."

Gymnasts from the former Soviet Union won a total of five gold medals.

Vitaly Scherbo of Belarus won medals of every colour: gold on the vault, silver on the parallel bars and bronze on the horizontal bar.

But Scherbo, winner of six gold medals at the Barcelona Olympics, described his performance as only "so-so."

"I began well on vault," he said, "but after many months of exhibitions and attention, let-down could be anticipated." Ukrainian Igor Korobchinsky scored 9.525 to win the men's

floor exercise, but then opted out of the pommel horse final with a sprained wrist.

Benedicte Evrad of Belgium won gold on the floor exercise with a performance as dazzling as it was courageous. Evrad scored 9.725, the finals highest score among the women, to win Belgium's first gold medal of the Games.

On the previous event, Evrad limped off he podium after whacking her right foot against the balance beam and settling for a score of 7.587 on the apparatus.

"I was very nervous and I was not concentrating on the beam," Evrad said. "I was hurt at the time, but afterwards, it was not a problem because I was thinking of the medal."

Italy's Yuri Chechi, the defending world champion on rings, received the evening's highest score, 9.787, to win the event.

China won its first two gymnastics golds. Wang Xun finished first on the men's parallel bars and Chen Jian won the gold medal on the men's horizontal bar.

France's Eric Poujade gave an energetic display to capture the gold medal on the pommel horse.

Perkins, narrowly dented the Olympic 400 free-style title, utterly dominated the 1,500.

Filipino sports in a shackle

MANILA, July 14: Rey Antoque and Wilfredo Bailester sleep on a double decker bed inside a men's bathroom at the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex here, using shower stalls for cabinets and cooking their meals on a gas stove, reports AFP.

The two men are not among the millions of squatters in the Philippine capital. They are international marathoners, and the complex is home to the country's star athletes.

Such living conditions — along with complaints of corruption and sexual assault — have triggered unprecedented outrage from the athletes, now locked in a bitter combat with sports officials which could yet reach the courts.

Their pent-up anger finally vented itself last week after a debate over why the country placed only third behind Indonesia and Thailand in last month's Southeast Asian Games in Singapore. The Philippines had nearly bagged the championship two years before.

Culminating in a protest march to the presidential palace led by Southeast Asian sprint queen Lydia de Vega, the dispute has become a national issue whose outcome could reshape the future of the country's sports programme.

President Fidel Ramos on Friday suspended three top officials of the Philippine Sports

Commission (PSC) while a special committee investigates their alleged involvement in corruption, physical injuries and sexual harassment.

During a recent hearing of the Senate, which has launched a separate investigation, PSC commissioner Jose Castro, one of the suspended officials, described the two marathon runners' accommodation as a "comfort room," saying the toilets were "clean and beautiful."

A suburban government sports academy supposed to house the athletes had rented out its dormitory to a private group, forcing them to be transferred to the rundown and cramped Rizal complex.

Catherine Chua, a member of the Philippine women's diving team, accused Castro of calling her one day to his office and making sexual advances towards her, while a weightlifter said another sports official had kicked him in the stomach.

The teenaged Chua said she had skipped the Singapore Games because of her experience and was considering criminal charges against the commissioner.

Castro denied the allegation and threatened to file counter-charges in court.

Filipino athletes have quietly complained for years of being neglected by government sports bodies, which they accuse of having become virtual fiefdoms given out as political favours.

China won its first two gymnastics golds. Wang Xun finished first on the men's parallel bars and Chen Jian won the gold medal on the men's horizontal bar.

France's Eric Poujade gave an energetic display to capture the gold medal on the pommel horse.

Perkins, narrowly dented the Olympic 400 free-style title, utterly dominated the 1,500.

Such living conditions — along with complaints of corruption and sexual assault — have triggered unprecedented outrage from the athletes, now locked in a bitter combat with sports officials which could yet reach the courts.

Their pent-up anger finally vented itself last week after a debate over why the country placed only third behind Indonesia and Thailand in last month's Southeast Asian Games in Singapore. The Philippines had nearly bagged the championship two years before.

Culminating in a protest march to the presidential palace led by Southeast Asian sprint queen Lydia de Vega, the dispute has become a national issue whose outcome could reshape the future of the country's sports programme.

President Fidel Ramos on Friday suspended three top officials of the Philippine Sports

Christie lashes back at Lewis

LONDON, July 14: Olympic 100m champion Linford Christie hit back at sprint rival Carl Lewis on Wednesday, after the American claimed that the Englishman was trying to avoid a showdown, reports AFP.

Lewis has accused Christie of behaving "like an artful dodger."

But Christie countered: "I don't really need to say anything at all. As always, I will let my feet do the talking."

"But it's a shame that such a great athlete like Carl should be making these sort of comments."

"You know my racing programme. I don't avoid people. We shall see who has the last laugh at the World Championships next month."

Reynolds saga ends

COLUMBUS, Ohio, July 14: A US federal judge reaffirmed on Tuesday the 27.4 million dollars he awarded to 400 metres world record holder Butch Reynolds, who was banned by athletics' world governing body for allegedly using steroids, reports Reuter.

Judge Joseph Kinneary rejected an appeal by the International Amateur Athletic Federation. The IAAF based its appeal on the argument that US courts had no jurisdiction over the international body.

The lengthy legal saga began when Reynolds was banned after testing positive in a urine test at a meeting in Monte Carlo in 1990.

Reynolds, who set his 400 metres record in 1988, said the urine test was faulty and insisted he did not take steroids.

The IAAF imposed a two-year ban and extended it by another year when Reynolds participated in the US Olympic trials last year.

Reynolds sued the IAAF for 39.5 million dollars and judge Kinneary awarded him 27.4 million dollars, saying the IAAF acted maliciously toward the athletes.

The IAAF subsequently had the award overturned by an Ohio appeals court, but Reynolds won a final appeal to the US Supreme Court.

Beach v'ball has a 50-50 chance

BEIJING, July 14: Beach volleyball has a 50-50 chance of being included in the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta, International Volleyball Federation (FIVB) president Ruben Acosta said here Wednesday, reports AFP.

Beach volleyball is suitable for developing countries and now more than 100 countries or regions are developing the sport, Acosta was quoted as saying by the official Xinhua news agency.

He said it had a "50 per cent chance" of being included in the Atlanta Games, Xinhua reported.

The Atlanta Organizing Committee, US Olympic Committee and FIVB have jointly asked the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to give its approval to beach volleyball for 1996.

The IOC will make a decision in September.

The World Games in the Hague later this month and the Goodwill Games in Russia next year will include beach volleyball.

For Ondieki life begins at 32

LONDON, July 14: For Yobes Ondieki, life may just be starting at 32.

On Saturday, Ondieki slashed more than nine seconds off the world 10,000 metres record when he became the first man to run under 27 minutes, writes Reuter.

Now further world records beckon, both at the 10,000 and, possibly, the marathon.

"With one lap to go I knew I had a chance," Ondieki recalled only hours after clocking 26 minutes 58.38 seconds at the Bislett Games in Oslo.

"Then with 200 metres to go I knew I would break the world record."

Ondieki last ran the 10,000 metres in 1983, clocking nearly 28:30.

Injuries and misfortune at major championships followed until he made his major breakthrough at the 1991 Tokyo World Championships, running away from the field after the second lap to win the 5,000.

It has long been obvious that a man possessing Ondieki's raw talent and basic speed could drastically reduce the world 10,000 mark given the right conditioning and proper pace making.

But this year attention has been on everybody but the Kenyan as the European track season moves into full swing before next month's Stuttgart World Championships.

First, Moroccan Olympic champion Khalid Skah announced he would attack the world mark in Oslo.

Skah was upstaged in Stockholm just six days before the Oslo meeting when Ondieki's teammate Richard Chelimo sliced the four-year-old mark to 27:07.91.

Then another Kenyan, world cross-country champion William Sigel, announced he would try and break Chelimo's mark in Oslo, although there was an indication that Ondieki had his own plans when organisers revealed he had asked for a pacemaker as well.

In fact, Ondieki had been planning an assault on the world record for the past three months.

"I had been planning to run here for a long time," Ondieki said. "My training was a secret. I can't be public property, that would be like sharing yourself."

Ondieki's Australian wife Lisa, the Commonwealth marathon champion added: "Yobes has been planning this since I ran the London Marathon in April."

He concentrated on my training until London then started preparing for Oslo."

Ondieki merges Kenyan talent and training methods along with the western sophistication acquired during his years as a student in the United States.

His experience showed on Saturday when he judged the pace adroitly, refusing to get ruffled when Sigel threw in a

couple of 63-second laps. Now, while he remains fit and injury free, he clearly has the potential to reduce the 10,000 mark still further while a move up to the marathon is a possibility.

The current world marathon best is 2:06:50 Ondieki could be the first to break 2:05.

Yobes and Lisa Ondieki form the most cosmopolitan couple in athletics.

Together, they own houses in Australia and Kenya and are currently living in Flagstaff, Arizona.

This European summer they have been based in the Swiss resort of St Mortiz and, according to Lisa, are considering moving to nearby Davos.

Yobes is unlikely to defend his 5,000 title in next month's World Championships while Lisa has long made it clear that she has no intention of running in Stuttgart.

The Kenyan federation has said it will not pick any runner who does not appear at this month's trials and at the weekend Ondieki was adamant that he would not return to Nairobi.

Lisa has set her sights on the Tokyo Marathon later in the year to add to the New York title she won last year.

"I'd really like to run there," she said. "They really appreciate the marathon." Yobes will have 10 days off and plans to ease his way back onto the circuit with a 3,000 metres in Nice on July 21.

Another Cuban changes lealty

BUFFALO, New York, July 14: A third Cuban athlete has left his team and defected at the World University Games, the head of Cuba's delegation confirmed on Tuesday, reports Reuter.

Manuel Morales Quintana, Chef-de-Mission of Cuba's 125-member team at the Games, identified the latest athlete to disappear as baseball shortstop Reynaldo Ardones.

Quintana said he believed Ardones was contacted by an ex-patriot Cuban journalist at the teams dormitory on Monday and was offered assistance by the journalists.

Ardones is the second baseball player and third Cuban athlete to leave the team in three days.

On Saturday, pitcher Edilberto Oropesa jumped a fence at the Baseball Stadium and was driven away in a waiting car shortly before game time. He later turned up in Miami, expressing a desire to play professionally in the United States.

Geovany Perez, Cuba's second-ranked sabre fencer, left the teams quarters on Saturday. A source at the Athletes Village who requested anonymity said Perez told a coach he was going to the washroom but instead sought out a security guard and said he wished to defect.

Asked what he thought motivated the athletes to seek asylum in the United States, Quintana said: "May be they thought they'd be received well. They're not being persecuted politically in any way (in Cuba), he said, adding he thought it unnecessary for Oropesa to have climbed over the stadium fence in front of several hundred spectators.

"He (Oropesa) could have done it without being so conspicuous," Quintana said at a news conference. "There's a door at the end of this table. You don't have to jump over the table to get to the door."

US Immigration and Naturalisation officials in Buffalo said on Tuesday they would not comment on any of the athletes, saying they were obligated to keep all cases confidential.

Oropesa said on Monday from Miami that he had planned his defection for months.

He said he wanted to follow in the footsteps of compatriot Rene Arocha, who now pitches for the St Louis Cardinals. On July 10, 1991, two years ago to

the day of Oropesa's defection, Arocha decided not to board the Cuban team plane for the trip home after a national tour of the United States.

Neither Oropesa nor Ardones were members of Cuba's 1992 Olympic gold medal baseball team.

Quintana said he considered the three athletes' actions "a personal decision" and was not concerned that others would follow.

"Even if there was five," he said, "I would not be concerned for our national team and thousands of players under that level. So three out of thousands is really nothing to worry about. Three or four or 10 that think another way is not representative," he said.

"It is craziness on the part of the players, but I don't doubt they could find a job playing baseball here."

Quintana said the defections had no effect on Cuban team morale at the Games, which continue through Sunday.

"The same day the first athlete defected, our team won their baseball game shortly afterwards. And swimmer (Rodolfo Falcon) won a second gold medal Sunday."

The tale of a notorious dad

LATINA, Italy, July 14: Jim Pierce, the controversial American father of France's rising tennis star Mary Pierce, was stabbed during a scuffle with one of his daughter's bodyguards here on Monday, reports AFP.

Pierce was not seriously hurt and, after being questioned by police, both he and the bodyguard were released.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down. Includes a solution time of 27 mins and a Cryptoquip section at the bottom.

Cryptoquip puzzle grid with letters X, S, P, F, I, U, Z, B, V, Y, V, I, N, A, B, H, S, Q, W, B, N, N, I, P, P, A, W, P, P, G, V, X, Z, B, P, X, X, N, B.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: ANY JUICY SANDWICH IS JUST WHAT THE DOCTOR ORDERED. Today's Cryptoquip clue: Y equals C. 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.