

Sport

Goellner guns Korda down

HALLE, Germany, July 17: Germany's rising star Marc Goellner made a confident Davis Cup debut when he beat Petr Korda 6-4, 6-7, 6-1, 7-6 to give Germany a 1-0 lead over Czechoslovakia after the opening singles of their world group quarter-final on Friday, reports Reuter.

The 22-year-old Goellner showed few signs of nerves despite a frustrating four-hour wait while the match was held up because of rain and dealt the world number nine his second defeat in less than two months.

The German upset Korda in the second round of the French Open.

Goellner is a major showman in the making. His baseball cap — worn the wrong way around — the clenched fist he displays when he has sealed important points and his extravagant antics at disputed points are all signs of a player determined to bring drama into his game.

But despite showing some pieces of brilliance at times, the Bonn-based player sometimes let his youthful enthusiasm run away with his tactical sense.

Goellner should have finished off the match earlier than the fourth set against Korda who never looked entirely comfortable on the fast surface. But the German often tried to finish off points with ambitious shots rather than waiting for his moments to take his chances.

Goellner's superb backhand cross-court return which sealed the crucial break of Korda's service in the third game was typical of his dominant form in the first set which he clinched in 36 minutes.

But the German had a break point in the ninth game of the second set to go 5-4 ahead which would probably have finished off the Korda challenge. But the Czech player saved the

point and battled back into the match with a crisp volley at the net to seal the second set tiebreak 7-5.

Goellner needed a lucky net cord to break Korda in the second game of the third but rarely looking back afterwards. The German broke again with a delightful lob to lead 5-1 and serve out for the set after 29 minutes.

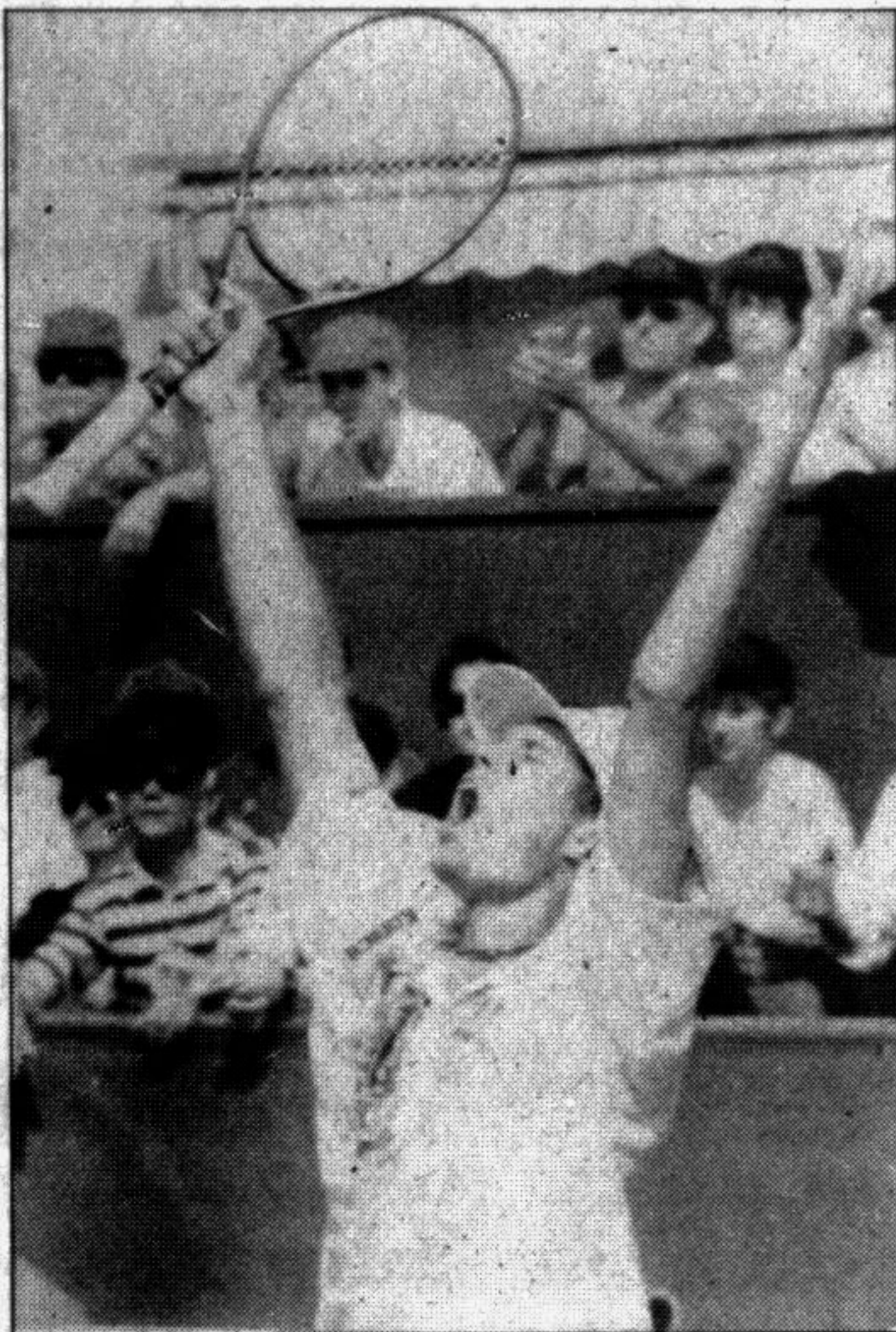
Goellner went for his shots again in the vital fourth-set tiebreak and his gambling fi-

nally paid off as he took the tiebreak 7-3.

Goellner said: "I felt the pressure but it was no different from a regular tournament. I like the team spirit in Davis Cup. It's great when you get support from the other players."

Korda said he felt luck did not go his way on important points in the match but paid tribute to Goellner.

"He has a great future," he said. "I fought hard today but nothing happened."



MARC GOELLNER ... confident Davis Cup debut

Graf boosts German morale

FRANKFURT, July 17: German hopes of retaining the Federation Cup which opens here on Monday were given a boost on Friday when world number-one Steffi Graf, who has been suffering from a foot injury, came successfully through a stiff work-out, reports AFP.

Team trainer Klaus Hofsaess said after the training session: "Steffi worked out for one and a half hours and there were no problems."

Graf was equally delighted with the session.

"I'm still not one hundred per cent sure but I think I shall be able to play," she said.

Graf, winner of the French Open and Wimbledon titles this year, has had a foot injury for several weeks.

Germany, second-seeds for the cup and drawn to play Spain in the final, face a tough opener when they launch their campaign in Frankfurt's Waldstadion. They face Australia — last year's semi-finalists — in the first round.

WTA's top 20

ST PETERSBURG, Florida, July 17: Top 20 women's tennis players, according to rankings issued by the Women's Tennis Association on Monday, reports Reuter.

- 1. Steffi Graf (Germany)
2. Monica Seles (Yugoslavia)
3. Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario (Spain)
4. Martina Navratilova (US)
5. Gabriela Sabatini (Argentina)
6. Conchita Martinez (Spain)
7. Mary Joe Fernandez (US)
8. Jana Novotna (Czech Republic)
9. Jennifer Capriati (US)
10. Anke Huber (Germany)
11. Magdalena Maleeva (Bulgaria)
12. Helena Sukova (Czech Republic)
13. Manuela Maleeva-Fragniere (Switzerland)
14. Nathalie Tauziat (France)
15. Amanda Coetzer (South Africa)
16. Mary Pierce (France)
17. Katerina Maleeva (Bulgaria)
18. Kimiko Date (Japan)
19. Zina Garrison-Jackson (US)
20. Sabine Hack (Germany)

DLV's new chief

DUISBURG, Germany, July 17: The German Athletics Federation (DLV) elected a new president on Saturday who promised to tackle the problem of doping in German sport, reports Reuter.

Helmut Digel, 49, head of the Institute for Sports Science at the Technical University of Darmstadt, replaces Helmut Meyer.

Digel said one of his main tasks would be to tackle doping in German athletics and restore the credibility of the DLV, which was damaged by its handling of doping allegations against double world champion sprinter Katrin Krabbe.



LEANDER PAES ... proved everyone wrong

Paes keeps Indo hopes afloat

FREJUS, France, July 17: Leander Paes put India in sight of a new Davis Cup upset when he beat French star Henri Leconte on Friday, reports AFP.

After Arnaud Boetsch had beaten Indian veteran Ramesh Krishnan in straight sets 6-3, 6-3, 6-1, the French crowd expected to see Leconte all but wrap up the tie.

But Paes, a former Wimbledon and US Open junior champion, soaked up the pressure and rattled his opponent, star of France's Davis Cup winning team two years ago.

The 20-year-old won 6-1, 6-2, 3-6, 6-3 in just under three hours sealing victory with his fourth match point. The Indian team, who reached the Davis Cup final in 1987, were left dreaming of a repeat of their defeat of Switzerland in the last round.

Leconte suffered back pains during the match and is now doubtful for today's doubles.

"Henri will be treated until Saturday morning. We won't know till then whether he will be able to play," said French team captain George Goven.

If Leconte is ruled out then Stephane Simian will play alongside Boetsch and Rodolphe Gilbert will take over in Sunday's reverse singles in the Amphitheatre at Frejus on the Mediterranean coast.

Despite his dislike of clay courts, Paes won nine games on the trot as he took the first set 6-1 and went 4-0 up in the second. Leconte took the third set, but after coming back from a short storm break was clearly in pain.

The veteran Frenchman did well to save five break points before losing the fourth game of the last set to go 3-1 down. Paes kept up the punishment though. He took the seventh game without conceding a point and Leconte had to save two match points in the next.

Leconte saved two more match points but his resistance was always going to be in vain.

Boetsch was always in control after breaking Krishnan's service in the opening game of their earlier match. The Frenchman gained in confidence as he raced to a 5-1 lead in the second.

The 32-year-old Indian battled back to 5-3 and led 30-15 on Boetsch's serve. But the Frenchman produced a passing shot to kill of the fightback and it was one-way traffic from then on. A netted Krishnan backhand brought proceedings to a close.

Paes said: "It is a great honour for me to score such a big victory over someone like Leconte. With the captain I had planned my tactics against him, to break up the rhythm of his game with some false attacks."

The Indian Papers said we would lose every match. But I think the doubles will be 50-50."

Swedes deflate Dutch hopes

THE HAGUE, July 17: The Netherlands hopes of causing a major Davis Cup upset were sent crashing on Friday when Sweden won the opening two singles of their world group quarter-final tie, reports Reuter.

Magnus Gustafsson put Sweden into the lead early on with a 5-7, 6-1, 6-2, 6-3 victory over Paul Haarhuis.

Then the Dutch suffered a far greater disappointment when big-serving Richard Krajicek, the world no 12, lost in straight sets to Magnus Larsson, ranked 50 places below him in the computer listings. Larsson won 6-3, 6-4, 6-4.

The Netherlands, attempting to reach the semifinals for the first time, now have to win the doubles today and both the reverse singles on Sunday to save the tie and that looks unlikely following their opening display on the red clay court at the Malveid Club.

In the 93-year history of the Davis Cup only 28 teams have failed to win a match after leading 2-0 on the first day. The Dutch went into the tie

feeling deflated after Larsson's victory over Krajicek. The Swede played flawless tennis, ruthlessly punishing Krajicek's mistakes as the Netherlands' best hope of victory suffered a dis-

astrous loss of form. The big Dutchman never found his natural game, despite raucous support from a deeply partisan 10,000-strong crowd.

A string of double faults in the second set almost drove him to 'serve under-arm at one point.

Larsson did not falter, aching himself out of trouble and sealing the second set after Krajicek stole two break points.

The opening singles started brightly for the Netherlands as Haarhuis, ranked 63rd in the world, won the opening set against Gustafsson, ranked 33rd.

But Gustafsson kept his cool under pressure, although at one stage John: Anders Sjogren, Sweden's non-playing captain, had a word with the umpire about the noise from the crowd.

Afterwards Gustafsson wryly observed, "I don't think I have ever played, against so many spectators at the same time before."

Sweden are without Stefan Edberg, their top player. Also missing is world no 36 Jonas Svensson who pulled out of the team after suffering a loss of form.

Indonesians again to the fore

KUCHING, Malaysia, July 17: The 180,000 US dollars Malaysian Open badminton championships reaches its pinnacle today, with the fight for the men's singles crown to be an all-Indonesian affair between top seed Heryanto Arbi and third-placed Ardy Wiranata, reports AFP.

Heryanto ousted Denmark's Poul Erik Hoyer-Larsen in the semi-final Friday to set the final clash with Ardy who dislodged South Korean Kim Hyake-Kyun.

The two, however, qualified for the Open's ultimate battle in contrasting fashion, with Heryanto easily beating Larsen while Ardy was involved in a titanic battle, against Kim.

Heryanto went on the offensive from the start and left his Danish opponent no room to

manoeuvre to win 15-4, 15-6. "Larsen normally plays an attacking game when he faces me," said the 20-year-old Indonesian after making it to his first Open final.

Larsen conceded defeat graciously: "I never really played my game. I was chasing Heryanto's shots all the time. He was the ruler."

Ardy, meanwhile, slugged almost 90 minutes before clinching at 8-15, 15-7, 15-5 victory over Kim.

"This year has not been very good for me, hopefully things would change for the better now," said the 23-year-old who clinched his first final in the world circuit this year.

Ardy lost to Heryanto in the semi-final of the Taiwan Masters in January but felt that the Open title could go either way.

"We have beaten each other in training and I think I have a fair chance," Ardy said. Indonesia also has a chance to grab the men's doubles crown with Ricky Suaga and Rexy Mainaki meeting Malaysia's Cheah Soon Kit and Soo Beng Kiang today.

Indonesian women's singles queen Susi Susanti is also in the race for a title with a final play-off against Sweden's Lim Xiaoping today.

Lim and fellow-Swede Christine Magnusson won the women's doubles title and prize-money of 9,000 dollars Friday after beating Danish pair Lisbet Stuer-Lauridsen and Lottle Olsen 15-12, 18-14.

Michael Soogard of Denmark and Gillian Gowers of England picked up the mixed doubles title and a 6,000 dollar purse after edging Indonesia's Paulis and Herawati 18-13, 15-13.

Name of the game is beating odds

By Susanna Rance

There is an old cliché that soccer is only a game. But is it true? It certainly means much more than that to kids from the backstreets of Bolivia. Gemini News Service meets the remarkable man behind a soccer academy which is an oasis in the midst of social conditions breeding poverty, neglect and violence.

The soccer pitch is a blur of green and white striped shirts as the kids launch enthusiastically into their afternoon training session in the city of Santa Cruz.

But this is no ordinary club — it is the Tahuichi Academy, breeding ground for Bolivia's top juvenile soccer team. And the cream of Tahuichi talent is just the most visible aspect of a novel programme which offers children the chance to flourish through sport.

"I saw the Tahuichis on TV and asked my parents to bring me here," says nine-year-old Justo Flores, the eldest child of a poor family living in a shanty town on the outskirts of Santa Cruz.

After his morning classes in the fourth grade of a local primary school, Justo sets off on the long bus ride to the Academy, where he learns not just soccer but concentration, self-esteem and companionship.

Justo is one of a thousand boys who have won scholarships enabling them to play and learn in a positive environment. The Tahuichi programme provides something of an oasis in the midst of hostile social conditions which breed poverty, neglect and violence, and which have driven many children out onto the streets to fend for themselves.

"Tahuichi is more than just football," insists club president and founder Rolando Aguilera. "Our programme includes nutrition, health, education and, above all, encouragement so that the kids can gain confidence and get ahead on their own merits."

Aguilera, son of an outstanding professional footballer, gestures towards the array of gleaming cups and medals won in 34 international tournaments. "We've always been number one," he says proudly.

But Tahuichi was born out of conflict and it still has to fight to keep going. Aguilera, a cabinet member in the late 1960s, was forced to leave Bolivia in 1971 following a military coup headed by General Hugo Banzer, now the power behind the throne in the present right-wing government.

Throughout seven years' exile in the United States, Aguilera was determined his own sons should learn more than baseball and American football. "I taught them the ABC of soccer in my own back yard," he recalls. "I was their goalie, referee and trainer."

On the family's return to Bolivia in 1978, Aguilera set up a local club, which he named "Tahuichi" — his late father's nickname. It means "big bird" in the Chiriguano language.

To his surprise, 250 kids signed up on the first day. Since then, 10,000 youngsters, aged from five to 19, have passed through what is now the Tahuichi Academy. It has produced 40 professional players and is the cradle of half the present Bolivian national team.

Back in his home town of Santa Cruz, Aguilera found new problems to grapple with. He was disturbed to see how the upsurge of cocaine trafficking had brought increasing corruption and violence, drawing many youngsters from the shanty towns into a downward spiral of peddling and addiction.

Having to confront close relatives in the mafia and seeing two brilliant young players ruined by drugs, Aguilera declared his own personal war on the cocaine trade — and earned himself some powerful enemies in the process.

Tahuichi's shirts, banners and brochures bear the slogan "Sport, yes". But Aguilera has had to contend with raids, death threats and attempts to have the academy closed down.

On the lighter side, Tahuichi continues to bring fun, support and good soccer to thousands of boys from the Santa Cruz area. As well as training world-standard teams, the club organises a yearly neighbourhood championship, involving 8,000 youngsters.

"Some of Bolivia's best professional players have come from poor backgrounds, just like these kids," says Aguilera. "Children don't choose the conditions they are born into. We try to get rid of this losers' mentality, what we call a kind of mental underdevelopment."

"Our kids have gone abroad and shown the world that their sharpness and style can make them champions over bigger players who've grown up on milk and hamburgers and all kinds of social advantages."

To date, Tahuichi teams have played before about 1.5 million spectators in 20 countries, and the Organisation of American States has awarded them the title of Juvenile Sports Ambassadors of the Americas.

The club's international links have won ongoing support as well as trophies. One-third of the Academy's 1,000 trainees receive US\$10 monthly grants through a Christian Children's

Fund sponsorship scheme, while others are supported by Bolivian residents abroad. The Tahuichis reciprocate by passing on their experience to other countries who admire the club's work. "Juvenile football must be about the only area in which Bolivia actually exports knowhow," jokes Aguilera.

The Academy often receives visits from players and trainers from North and South America, eager to learn from the "Tahuichi phenomenon." Some of the club's experts are now in San Jose, California, helping to set up a similar academy.

For many Bolivians, the Tahuichis are a source of pride, since juvenile soccer has proved to be one field in which the country can come out on top against all the odds.

Bolivia's image has suffered from constant allusions in the media to factors which reflect its status as the least developed nation in South America. In 1986, journalist Pavlovich watched his Tahuichi compatriots become South American champions and wrote: "I feel delighted and moved. This is one of the few occasions on which I've been able to write the world 'triumph' next to Bolivia's name."

"We're so used to defeat — it's time we started to take note of these moral victories. Bolivia's soul and body have been marked by so many bruises and wounds. But the Tahuichis are here to show us that Bolivians can be winners, too." — GEMINI NEWS

About the Author: SUSANNA RANCE is a British journalist living in La Paz, Bolivia.

Family is what Bollettieri wants to get back to

BRADENTON, Florida, July 17: Nick Bollettieri has resigned as Andre Agassi's coach — ending their working relationship to spend more time with his family, reports AFP.

"I just want to get back to what makes me comfortable," Bollettieri said. "The role I was playing with Andre was not productive. I just hope he concentrates on what made him reach this level. That is his tennis."

Bollettieri, 61, watched Agassi develop from a 16-year-old with a flair for the game to a Wimbledon champion last year.

Agassi, now ranked 22nd in the world, dedicated the Grand Slam triumph to his father and Bollettieri.

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ATP's top 20

MONACO, July 17: Leading men's rankings issued by the ATP tour on Monday:

Table with 2 columns: Rank and Name (e.g., 1. Pete Sampras, 2. Jim Courier, etc.)

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down words.

Cryptoquip puzzle grid with X and O letters.

CRYPTOQUIP
X AIRSZCN TDAGSS
NUD ZXMG' H GZMXAD;
XN PDCN XC ICD GTXG
GCZ IRN NUD INUdT.
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IN KINDERGARTEN HOPSCOTCH SCHOOL, IT'S REALLY EASY TO SKIP A GRADE.
Today's Cryptoquip clue: A 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.