

## Sport

## Super Sampras' second US Open

NEW YORK, Sept 13: Pete Sampras, the world's No 1 ranking back in his pocket, added a second US Open Championships to his record Sunday with a dominating 6-4, 6-4, 6-3 victory over Cedric Pioline, reports AP.

The victory, in front of more than 19,000 fans at the National Tennis Centre, was worth dls 535,000 for Sampras and capped two weeks in which he played invincible tennis and underscored his claim as best in the world.

A big serve, expert net play and an answer to every challenge, Pioline threw his way gave the 22-year-old American his third Grand Slam title and second US Open championship in four years. Sampras had 12 aces and won 31 of 39 points at the net.

He was helped by big mistakes at key moments by Pioline, whose fourth-round upset of then-No 1 Jim Courier opened the way for Sampras to reclaim the top spot.

Sampras broke Pioline in the first game of all three sets, with the 15th-seeded Frenchman seventh double fault supplying the final point for a 1-0 Sampras lead in the third.

Pioline broke back on Sampras' own double fault, but Sampras regained the advantage for 2-1 a series of Pioline errors.

They stayed on serve, Pioline never getting another break point, until deuce in Game 9, when double faults again did Pioline in. Pioline saved a match point in the ninth game with a lunging backhand volley off a rocket-like crosscourt backhand. A long forehand gave Sampras a second match point and Pioline served his eighth double fault to end the match in 2 hours, 4 minutes.

Sampras, seeking his second US Open triumph in four years to go with his Wimbledon title from this summer, used his big serve to keep the 15th-seeded Frenchman off balance and dominate play.

Pioline converted the first break point Sampras had faced in two matches to take a 2-1 lead in the second set, broke again for a 4-3 lead and served out for a commanding lead.

Pioline ended that break with his fifth double fault and slammed the ball high in to the stands in frustration, drawing a code-of-conduct warning from referee Peter Kasavage.

Sampras' serves were hitting 110-115 mph (177-185 kph) consistently, with a high of 125 mph (201 kph). But it was the movement and spin as much as the speed that befuddled the Frenchman and Sampras seemed to have an answer for whatever Pioline tried — baseline battles or serve-and-volley.

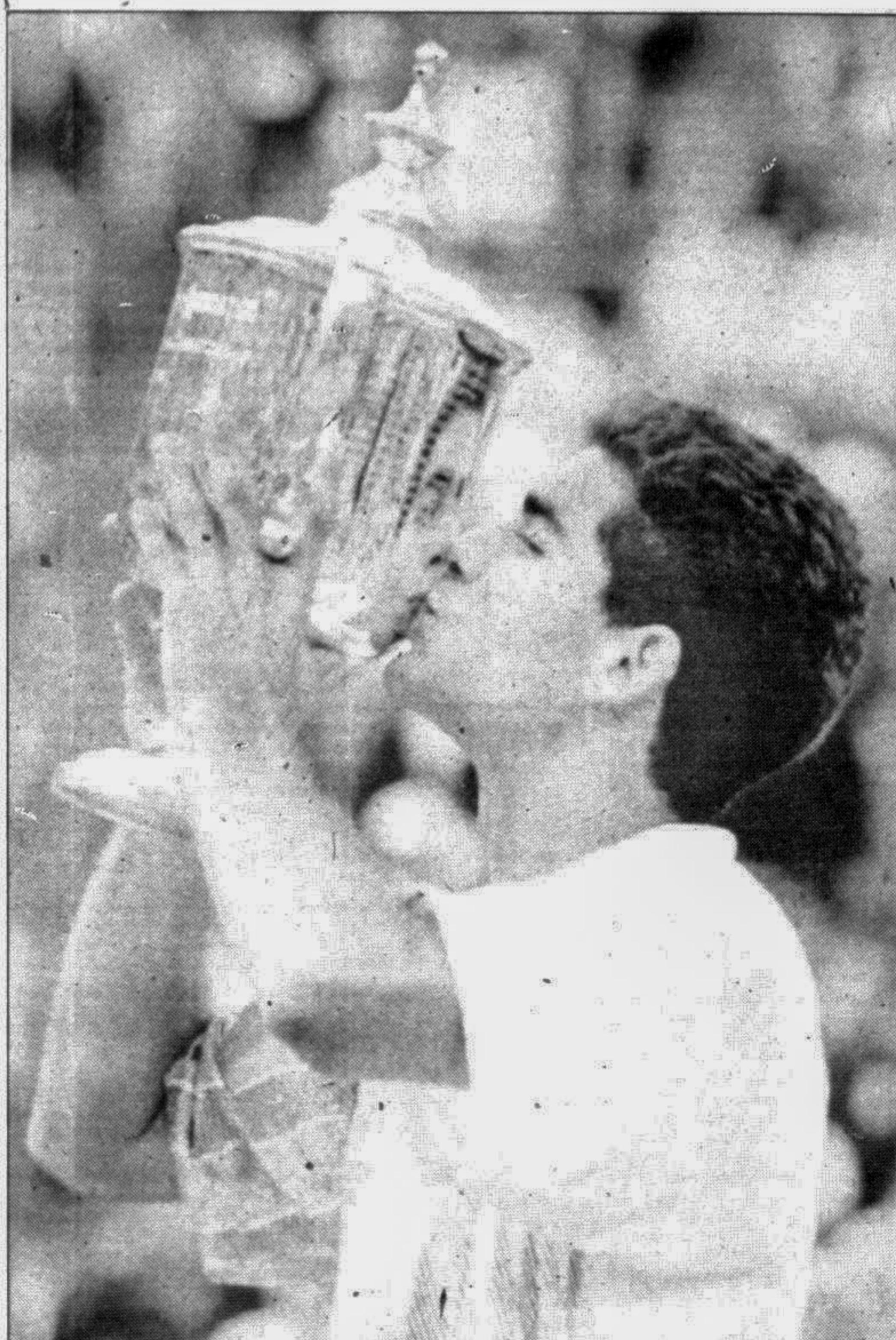
Sampras backed his big serve with few errors and a devastating net game, winning eight out of every 10 times he made an approach. He had 10 aces through two sets.

Sampras broke in the first game of the second set when Pioline's attempt at a slice second serve landed outside the court.

But Pioline grabbed a break point in the next game — the first against Sampras since the second set of his victory over Michael Chang in the quarterfinals — and converted when Sampras slipped as he tried to volley into an open court and pushed the ball in to the net.

Sampras got the decisive break in the seventh game on two errors and two double faults, and served out the set when Pioline netted a forehand approach.

In the first set, Sampras broke Pioline at 15 in the first game and had break points in all but two of the Frenchman's other service games in the set.



American Pete Sampras, who regained world number one slot on Friday, kisses the US open championships trophy after winning the men's singles final against Frenchman Cedric Pioline on Sunday at the National Tennis Centre. —AFP photo

## US Open Notebook

NEW YORK, Sept 13: The victory by Pete Sampras in the men's final at the US Open Sunday gave him the top spot in the dls 6 million Grand Slam Cup, reports AP.

Sampras, who won the first cup in 1990 following his first Open victory, finished the Grand Slam season with 1,650 points, 75 more than Jim Courier and 730 more than third-place Steffan Edberg.

Cedric Pioline, who lost to Sampras 6-4, 6-4, 6-3, also made the field for the cup, which includes the players with the top 16 point totals from the four Grand Slam tournaments — the Australian, French and US opens and Wimbledon. Points are awarded on a sliding scale downward from 600 for a tournament winner.

The cup, with dls 1.5 million to the winner, is scheduled for Munich Dec 7-12.

**NOT BAD FOR OPENERS:** Had Pioline won, he would have become only the third man since the open era began in 1968 to make his first tournament victory a Grand Slam championship. Mats Wilander made such a momentous debut when he won the French Open as a 17-year-old in 1982.

Before that, it was Mark Edmondson, who registered his first tournament title at the Australian Open in 1976.

**WHAT A CROWD:** More people attended this year's Open than any other tennis tournament in history.

A crowd of 19,721 for Sunday's final made total attendance for the two weeks 530,764, breaking the mark of 520,868 set in New York a year ago.

The US Open attendance, with day and night sessions through the first 11 days, is listed as a world record for tennis.

The crowd figures were boosted this year by 500 grounds pass sold daily through the second Tuesday. They allowed holders onto all courts except the stadium, and were offered this year for the first time.

Single-session records were set three times this year, with a high of 22,676 for the day session last Sunday. A daily attendance mark of 43,502 also was set that day.

Despite the attendance record, there were empty seats for Sunday's men's final. The stadium at the National Tennis Center holds 20,000 people.

His own serve was moving, with six aces and a slew of service winners. He did not face a break point and lost just four points on his serve in the set.

Pioline, seeking his first tournament victory in his first Grand Slam final, tried everything, but Sampras, the 1990 Open champ and runner-up to Steffan Edberg last year, always had the answer.

While Sampras was attempting to become the first man since Boris Becker in 1989 and the first American since John McEnroe in 1984 to hold both the Wimbledon and US Open titles at once, Pioline was looking for his first title on the pro tour.

It was long shot for the Frenchman. The last person to make a Grand Slam title their first on the tour was Mats Wilander, when he won the French Open in 1982.

Pioline also was trying to become the first Frenchman to win a Grand Slam tournament since Yannick Noah won the French Open in 1983. And he would become the first French winner of the US championships since Henri Cochet beat Francis Hunter 4-6, 6-4, 3-6, 7-5, 6-3 in 1928.

**Italy win Euro v'ball title**

HELSINKI, Sept 13: World champions Italy beat the Netherlands 3-2 in a hard-fought final to win the men's European volleyball title on Sunday, reports Reuter.

The Italians won all their seven games in the week-long tournament but faced a determined challenge from the Dutch who had upset Russia 3-0 in Saturday's semifinal. Italy had won their semifinal against German 3-0.

In the final the Italians clinched the title 15-6, 15-5, 13-15, 8-15, 15-9.

Russia beat Germany 3-1 in the bronze medal playoff, winning 15-3, 9-15, 15-8, 15-8.

Sukova and Sanchez Vicario decided to team up in doubles 2 years ago, when they bumped into each other in an elevator.

The elevator, Sanchez Vicario said, was going "Up. Always up."

Other champions crowned on the Open's final day included Betsy Nagelsen and Joanne Russell, who defeated Rosie Casals and Billie Jean King 6-3, 6-4 in senior women's doubles. Marty Reissen and Sherwood Stewart beat Bob Lutz and Stan Smith 6-4, 6-4 for the senior men's doubles title.

The junior boys singles championships went to Marcelo Rios of Chile, who beat Steven Downs of New Zealand 7-6 (7-4), 6-3. Sukova beat Sanchez Vicario in the singles semifinals Friday before they teamed for their last two doubles wins, including a semifinal victory over Gigi Fernandez and Natalie Zvereva, that ended the top-seeded pair's 41-match Grand Slam winning streak and hopes of a sweep of the Siam doubles this year.

Against Coetzer, from South Africa, and Gorrochatequ, from Chile, Sukova and Sanchez Vicario attacked constantly. They lost serve just once and put 86 per cent of their service returns in play — including 96 per cent by Sanchez Vicario. They broke for the first set on a double fault by Gorrochatequ.

walked away with a pretty good payday.

The Czech won a total of dls 390,750 — dls 100,000 for winning the women's doubles and a tidy little addition to her bankroll. She said all the money in the world could not compare with being a champion, reports AP.

Sukova, the women's singles runner-up, teamed with Arantxa Sanchez Vicario to win the women's doubles over Amanda Coetzer and Ines Gorrochatequ 6-4, 6-2.

Last Thursday, Sukova and Todd Woodbridge beat Martina Navratilova and Mark Woodforde 6-3, 7-6 (6-6) to claim the mixed doubles title.

"It was a pretty good two weeks," Sukova said. "It was disappointing yesterday, but Steffie just played better and I am happy that we have been able to win this one."

"Two out of three," Sanchez Vicario told her partner. "So what do you want?"

Even though Graf spoiled Sukova's chances of becoming the first player since Navratilova in 1987 to win the triple crown — singles doubles and mixed doubles — with a 6-3, 6-3 victory Saturday, Sukova still

## Graf likes it the hard way

NEW YORK, Sept 13: Steffie Graf would like nothing better than to get some more competition, reports AP.

"It was an incredible year, and I'm very happy about it," Graf said after winning the US Open for the third time and her third consecutive Grand Slam tournament title. "But one player who has not been around for the last three Grand Slams — that's Monica Seles — I hope she'll be back soon."

Graf's only Grand Slam loss this year came in the Australian Open final in January — to Seles. And Seles is the one who has dominated women's tennis since Graf won a Grand Slam in 1988.

But Seles was stabbed in the back by a Graf fan during a tournament in Hamburg, Germany, on April 30 and has yet to heat sufficiently to be able to play again. And since she's been sidelined, Graf has been unstoppable.

Her 6-3, 6-3 victory over Helena Sukova Saturday was the 14th Grand Slam crown of her career.

"I think I am a better player than I have been right now," Graf said.

That's should be enough to send a shiver through the rest of the players on the women's tour.

Graf defeated Mary Joe Fernandez to capture the French Open, Jana Novotna to triumph at Wimbledon, and finally Sukova.

"I think it's a great achievement to have been able to win three Grand Slams and be in the final of the other one," Graf said. "And having the possibility to even have a Grand Slam. I had it once. That is fine."

Graf's French Open victory boosted her back into the No. 1 spot on the Virginia Slims computer ranking, replacing Seles.

"It was an incredible year, and I'm very happy about it," Graf told the crowd of 20,000 after receiving the trophy and dls 535,000 winners check.

With this latest victory, either Graf or Seles has won the last 12 Grand Slams — since Gabriela Sabatini was the surprise winner at the 1990 US Open.

"Sure it helps to have a player who pushes me more," Graf said in acknowledging Seles' absence. "But I'm not necessarily a person who needs it, because I like to push myself. When I realize how well I'm playing, it's really difficult to do something against me."

Her latest title was Graf's eighth of 1993 and ran her US Open match record to 51-7. So far this year, she is 63-5.

**Konishiki exits**

TOKYO, Sept 13: Hawaiian sumo star Konishiki bowed out of the Autumn Grand Sumo tournament here Monday because of an inflammation of his right thigh, the Japan Sumo Association said, reports AP.

Konishiki is under treatment for cellulitis, an inflammation of connective tissue, at Doyukai Memorial Hospital in Tokyo. He went in for treatment after he was upset in his opening-day bout Sunday with No. 2 Maegashira Akinoshima.

Konishiki, whose real name is Salevaa Faau'i Atsuanoe, submitted a doctor's report that said he needed three weeks of treatment, the association said.

Other injuries have been attributed to his weight. Konishiki hurt his right knee in May 1986 and had more knee problems in the summer of 1988, when he reached 252 kilograms (554 pounds).

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## Timman lets go easy chance

ARNHEM, Netherlands, Sept 13: Dutch Grandmaster Jan Timman let slip an outstanding chance

for victory in the fifth game of the FIDE World Chess Championship on Sunday, drawing against Russian ex-world champion Anatoly Karpov, reports Reuter.

Timman had the advantage for most of the game, but cool and accurate play by Karpov when he had under a minute left on his chess clock to play nine moves showed why he is ranked number two in the world.

The series remains even at 2-1/2 points each, and the advantage of the white pieces and the first move goes to Karpov for Tuesday's sixth game.

Commentators at the Electrum Theatre in Arnhem were full of praise for Timman's play early in the game but feared that the Dutchman, ranked 31 in the world, might lack the killer instinct needed to win games at the highest level.

Timman, playing white, surprised Karpov with his first move (C4) which led the game into the English Opening.

"This looks like trouble for Karpov," said Dutch International Master Stefan Loeffler.

"Karpov and Timman are playing for the official World Championships because Garry Kasparov of Russia, the world number one, and Nigel Short, his British challenger, broke away to arrange their own championship, now taking place in London.

Timman's main assistants for the match.

"But Karpov is one of the best defenders in the world and he rocked Timman with a brilliant rook sacrifice on Move 32.

By move 40 Timman's ad-

vantage had disintegrated and Karpov began to play for a win with two good Bishops against a

rook.

After seven hours and 55

moves the players agreed a

draw.

After the game Dutch experts

pointed out many ways in

which Timman could have won,

but consoled themselves with

the knowledge that the higher

rated Karpov had been out-

played in the opening for

four consecutive games by