

Jansher promises revenge

DUBAI, Sept 25: Jansher Khan and Rodney Martin will meet in today's final of the Dubai Classic in a repeat of their semifinal clash in Hong Kong three weeks ago when the Australian scored a shock victory, reports Reuter.

"I was not in top form in Hong Kong, but it will be different here," world number one Jansher promised.

But Martin, who has beaten Jansher seven times, said: "I know how to beat him — it's all up to how I play on the day. I've got to be confident. After all, this is Australia's week and I was born in Sydney."

Certainly, second seed Martin looked in confident mood as he came through 15-5, 15-14, 8-15, 15-12, in his semifinal on Friday against compatriot Rodney Eyles.

After Eyles had taken a 4-2 lead in the opening skirmishes, Martin took the game by the scruff of the neck with a blistering display of attacking squash.

Eyles had no answer and gained just one more point as Martin took the game in 11 minutes.

It was impossible for Martin to maintain that sort of pace and gradually Eyles fought his way back into the match.

There was never more than a couple of points between them in the second, but Martin reached game point at 14-13.

Eyles saved it, but then, his opponent gambled on a sudden-death finish and moved into a two-game lead as he smashed Eyles's service dead into the nick.

But to Eyles's credit, he refused to concede. After trailing 5-4 in the third, he won four points in succession to take a grip on the game.

But in the fourth, Martin showed the quality of a former world champion. He increased the pace at the vital time to win three successive points from 12-12 and clinch his date with Jansher.

The Pakistani had been given more trouble than he must have expected in his semifinal by England's world number 10 Phil Whitchurch.

He came through 15-9, 11-15, 15-4, 15-13 after Whitchurch had threatened to take the match into a deciding fifth game when he led 13-12 in the fourth.

Coincidence or vengeance

BEIJING, Sept 25: China released Friday an 11-year-old statement by Deng Xiaoping in which he warned that Hong Kong would be taken over before 1997 if serious disturbances occurred in the British colony, reports AFP.

The comments by Deng, the paramount Chinese leader, were made during a meeting with then-British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher in 1982, when it was agreed to return Hong Kong to China after 15 years.

"We considered what we should do if serious disturbances occurred in Hong Kong during the transition period of 15 years," Deng said. "The Chinese government would then be compelled to reconsider the timing and manner of the takeover."

The lengthy statement was released just minutes after Beijing lost its bid for the 2000 Olympics.

British Foreign Minister Douglas Hurd had said a week before the vote by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) that Beijing was unfit to host the Games.

At the same time, talks between China and Britain over the transition are deadlocked. The talks focus on Hong Kong governor Chris Patten's plan, rejected by Beijing, to widen democratic representation in the colony before 1997.

China has warned that it will disband the Hong Kong government and legislature if Patten goes ahead with the plan without its approval, as he has said he would do.

"I am worried that there may be major disturbances in this (transition) period, man-made disturbances," Deng said. "These could be created not just by foreigners, chiefly Britons, but also by Chinese."

"This is precisely the problem our consultations will be designed to solve," Deng said, adding that the two countries should refrain from doing anything that would hamper the prosperity of Hong Kong.

Kabaddi league

Mirpur Juba Sangha emerged Group A champions and Daudkandi Bara Goali Juba Sangha became the runner-up in the Dhaka Metropolis Kabaddi league, at the Outer Stadium kabaddi court yesterday, reports UNB.

Mirpur Juba Sangha clinched the top slot beating BRA Recreation Club 56-24 with six bonus points. They led the first half 32-06.

In the other match, Bara Goali Juba Sangha outplayed Fatulah Anbar Sangha 77-13 after dominating the first half 39-06 points.

Jagari Sangha take on Surjor Kamal Club today.

Australia in for aureate age

SYDNEY, Sept 25: Australia is about to embark on a new golden age of sport following Sydney's capture of the 2000 Olympics, top athletes and officials say.

Officials expect a massive increase in participation and media exposure, par-

a powerful motivational tool for young athletes, according to coaches at the Australian Institute of Sport (AIS), the country's elite training centre.

"It will inspire our young people to go after a realistic goal. The talent is, in this country, to have a very big team," said middle distance athletics coach Pat Clohessy.

When Australia staged the

I am thinking about pushing myself a little longer to compete in Sydney," she said.

Perkins, the 1,500 metres free-style world record holder, also laid to rest any thoughts of retirement.

"I know one swimmer who will go around for another seven years," he said after Sydney's winning bid was announced.



Trader Jonathan Cattana poses at the Sydney Futures Exchange in Sydney on Sept 24 as the local market hails the news that Sydney got the right to host the 2000 Olympics with twice as many stocks rising than those falling. The Australian dollar plummeted over a third of a cent while the all ordinary index rose 17.9 points or one percent to close at 1,946.5

— AFP photo

1956 Games in Melbourne, the traditionally sport mad country reaped a record 35 medals — 13 gold, eight silver, and 14 bronze.

With home advantage in 2000, Australia is expected to improve on their haul of 27 medals in Barcelona last year.

"There is no doubt home advantage will be a big boost," Perkins told reporters.

Gymnast Tim Buchanan, 14, summed up the mood amongst the young AIS athletes, desperate to compete in front of family and friends in familiar surroundings.

"It's going to be great — knowing the Games will be in Sydney will add to my training efforts," he said.

Older athletes, such as Commonwealth Games heptathlon gold medalist Jane Flemming, are reconsidering their futures in the wake of the bid decision.

"With the Games coming to Sydney, we instantly gain 10 years in our development," Australian Handball Federation president Alexander Dimitrije said.

"I had intended to retire in 1998 at the age of 33, but now

Australian athletes will probably never again have so many opportunities to represent their country in the Olympics.

Australia's handball, volleyball, and baseball teams, relatively weak in world terms, are guaranteed a berth after failing to qualify for past Games.

"With the Games coming to Sydney, we instantly gain 10 years in our development," Australian Handball Federation president Alexander Dimitrije said.

"I had intended to retire in 1998 at the age of 33, but now

it's going to be great — knowing the Games will be in Sydney will add to my training efforts," he said.

Older athletes, such as

Commonwealth Games heptathlon gold medalist Jane Flemming, are reconsidering their futures in the wake of the bid decision.

"With the Games coming to

Sydney, we instantly gain 10

years in our development,"

Australian Handball Federation president Alexander Dimitrije said.

"I had intended to retire in

1998 at the age of 33, but now

it's going to be great — knowing the Games will be in Sydney will add to my training efforts," he said.

Older athletes, such as

Commonwealth Games heptathlon gold medalist Jane Flemming, are reconsidering their futures in the wake of the bid decision.

"With the Games coming to

Sydney, we instantly gain 10

years in our development,"

Australian Handball Federation president Alexander Dimitrije said.

"I had intended to retire in

1998 at the age of 33, but now

it's going to be great — knowing the Games will be in Sydney will add to my training efforts," he said.

Older athletes, such as

Commonwealth Games heptathlon gold medalist Jane Flemming, are reconsidering their futures in the wake of the bid decision.

"With the Games coming to

Sydney, we instantly gain 10

years in our development,"

Australian Handball Federation president Alexander Dimitrije said.

"I had intended to retire in

1998 at the age of 33, but now

it's going to be great — knowing the Games will be in Sydney will add to my training efforts," he said.

Older athletes, such as

Commonwealth Games heptathlon gold medalist Jane Flemming, are reconsidering their futures in the wake of the bid decision.

"With the Games coming to

Sydney, we instantly gain 10

years in our development,"

Australian Handball Federation president Alexander Dimitrije said.

"I had intended to retire in

1998 at the age of 33, but now

it's going to be great — knowing the Games will be in Sydney will add to my training efforts," he said.

Older athletes, such as

Commonwealth Games heptathlon gold medalist Jane Flemming, are reconsidering their futures in the wake of the bid decision.

"With the Games coming to

Sydney, we instantly gain 10

years in our development,"

Australian Handball Federation president Alexander Dimitrije said.

"I had intended to retire in

1998 at the age of 33, but now

it's going to be great — knowing the Games will be in Sydney will add to my training efforts," he said.

Older athletes, such as

Commonwealth Games heptathlon gold medalist Jane Flemming, are reconsidering their futures in the wake of the bid decision.

"With the Games coming to

Sydney, we instantly gain 10

years in our development,"

Australian Handball Federation president Alexander Dimitrije said.

"I had intended to retire in

1998 at the age of 33, but now

it's going to be great — knowing the Games will be in Sydney will add to my training efforts," he said.

Older athletes, such as

Commonwealth Games heptathlon gold medalist Jane Flemming, are reconsidering their futures in the wake of the bid decision.

"With the Games coming to

Sydney, we instantly gain 10

years in our development,"

Australian Handball Federation president Alexander Dimitrije said.

"I had intended to retire in

1998 at the age of 33, but now

it's going to be great — knowing the Games will be in Sydney will add to my training efforts," he said.

Older athletes, such as

Commonwealth Games heptathlon gold medalist Jane Flemming, are reconsidering their futures in the wake of the bid decision.

"With the Games coming to

Sydney, we instantly gain 10

years in our development,"

Australian Handball Federation president Alexander Dimitrije said.

"I had intended to retire in

1998 at the age of 33, but now

it's going to be great — knowing the Games will be in Sydney will add to my training efforts," he said.

Sport

Distraction!

SYDNEY, Sept 25: Sydney's success in winning the 2000 Olympic Games will fuel Australia's sporting obsession and worsen its social and economic ills, an Australian psychologist said on Friday, reports Reuter.

Psychologist and author Ronald Conway, a rare cautionary voice amid the euphoria, said the Olympics would prove a distraction.

"Sport has got beyond its proper function of encouraging excellence when it tends to block out political, economic and lots of other cultural considerations," Conway told the Australian Associated Press.

"It tends to produce a partisanship which makes for a nation of one-eyed barracks."

"The adversarial system — one side wins and the other side loses — is admirable for winning gold medals, but it's a rotten way to run a country."

Speaking from his Melbourne practice, Conway said: "I have this terrible feeling it's going to be one big distraction. I don't think it's going to add very much to our maturity as a nation," Conway said.

"We are a nation of bad losers... winning is everything."

It's a new flag they want now

SYDNEY, Sept 25: The campaign for a new Australian flag — one not dominated by Britain's Union Jack — has been given a push by Sydney's winning bid for the 2000 Olympics, reports Reuter.

Ausflag, a group of prominent Australians campaigning for a new national flag, announced today a competition to design a new flag in time for the 2000 Games.

Judges include Australian Olympic Committee President John Coates and Olympic gold medalist Kieren Perkins.

Ausflag Executive Director Harold Scruby, announcing the competition, said Australians should be able to stand under their own flag at the 2000 Olympics.

"It is now vital that all Australians realise the importance of having their own flag for this event," Scruby said.

The privately funded group is offering Australian 25,000 dollars (16,250 US dollars) for the best design to replace the current flag which features the Union Jack in the upper left hand corner.