

## Zimbabwe cling to World Cup hopes

HARARE, Zimbabwe, Sept 27: Striker Agent Sawu scored the game's only goal as Zimbabwe stayed in the hunt for a berth in the World Cup finals with a 1-0 win Sunday over Guinea, reports AP.

The victory sets up a showdown between Zimbabwe and Cameroon next month, for first place in Africa's Group C, with the winners advancing to the finals next year in the United States. The teams play in Yaounde, Cameroon, on Oct 10.

Sawu scored in the third minute with a header that rocketed past a wall of defenders and goalkeeper Salito Diallo, eliminating Guinea's chances of going to the finals.

After Zimbabwe's early break, Guinean defenders stubbornly blocked several more runs on the goal in a first half that lacked cohesion.

The southern Africans were without key players Peter Ndlovu, the Coventry City striker who was injured in a training session in Harare on Saturday, and German-based skipper Ephraim Chawanda, also out with injuries.

Guinea fielded seven foreign-based professional players, with Aboubacar Titi Camara of the French First Division team St. Etienne in the forefront of attacking tactics that lost impetus in the second half. Camara scored two goals in Guinea's 3-0 win over Zimbabwe in Conakry on May 2.

Zimbabwe and Cameroon each have four points in three games in the group, with only the match on Oct 10 remaining. Guinea finished with two points in four games.

## Van Basten recuperating

MILAN, Sept 27: The condition of AC Milan striker Marco van Basten is improving but no date has been set for the Dutchman's return to action, the club said on Sunday, reports Reuter.

Italian champions Milan issued a statement after Van Basten visited specialist Marc Martens in Belgium for a check-up on his troublesome ankle.

Martens gave Van Basten a new programme of exercises as he continues his recovery from surgery in June. The European footballer-of-the-year will visit Martens for a fresh examination in three weeks.

The doctor has said on previous occasions that Van Basten, who required two operations on his right ankle in less than six months, is unlikely to play again until around the end of the year.

## Bad heel lets Gazzarini down

ROME, Sept 27: An Achilles tendon injury forced England midfielder Paul Gascoigne out of Italian Club Lazio's match at Cagliari on Sunday. Club officials said, reports Reuter.

Gascoigne is also expected to miss Lazio's midweek UEFA Cup first-round, second-leg tie with Bulgarian club Lokomotiv Plovdiv and is doubtful for the league match away to champions AC Milan next Sunday.

Lazio had more bad news when they learned leading striker Giuseppe Signori would be out of action for up to three weeks with a muscle strain. Signori is likely to miss Italy's vital World Cup qualifier at home to Scotland on October 13.

## Dozzel denies Ipswich

LONDON, Sept 27: Jason Dozzell scored against his old team Ipswich with just three minutes to play to give Tottenham a 2-2 draw in an open, attacking English Premier League match on Sunday, reports Reuter.

A victory for Tottenham, who signed Dozzell for 1.9 million pounds sterling (2.7 million dollars) in the summer, would have taken them to third place in the table behind Manchester United and Arsenal.

Instead, they moved up three places to sixth and in the end they were glad to settle for a point after having Colin Calderwood sent off a minute into the second half for a second bookable offence.

Dozzell, who made his debut for Ipswich as a 16-year-old schoolboy 10 years ago, was booed and jeered by the home fans every time he touched the ball, but was praised by his manager Ossie Ardiles after the game.

"In a way, it is a compliment when you return to your old club and find supporters trying to put you off by booing and jeering. Anyway, he provided the perfect answer with the goal and the way he played," Ardiles said.

Teddy Sheringham, the top scorer in the Premier League, headed Spurs ahead after 28 minutes with his ninth goal of the season, and Simon Milton equalised for the home side 13 minutes after the break when the Tottenham defence failed to clear a cross.

# Stich leads German blitz



PARIS, Sept 27: Michael Stich inspired Germany to a shock 5-0 whitewash of Sweden in the Davis Cup and will now play Australia, who enjoyed a similar victory over India, in the December final, reports AP.

"Stich finished off the weekend on Sunday with a 6-1, 6-1 victory over a subdued former world number one Stefan Edberg. But he also featured in the doubles win and set the route off by winning the first singles match on Friday.

Germany's star player also opened the door for a possible return to Davis Cup duty for Boris Becker.

Stich and Becker, who ruled himself out of the Davis Cup early round matches this year, have often been at loggerheads over sporting and political matters.

But the 1991 Wimbledon champion said about Becker: "If he wants to play in the final, he will be welcome."

Team captain Niki Pilic was not so sure about changing a winning formula for the final Germany will host from December 3 to 5. "We have started without him (Becker) and I think it will stay like that," said Pilic.

After Stich beat Magnus Gustafsson on Friday, Sweden's position as favourites disappeared when Marc Goellner won a four-set encounter against Edberg.

Stich sealed the tie with Patrick Kuehnen, beating Anders Jarryd and Henrik Holm in Saturday's doubles. After inflicted Edberg's second defeat of the weekend, Goellner beat Holm 7-6(7/3), 6-4 to make it 5-0.

Wally Masur and Jason Stoltenberg capped a perfect weekend for Australia with crushing straight-set wins in the reverse singles on another oppressively hot day in the northern Indian city of Chandigarh.

Masur overpowered Leander Paes 6-4, 6-2 in 65 minutes. Stoltenberg cruised to a 6-3, 6-3 win over Zeeshan Ali, who replaced veteran Ramesh Krishnan for the last match.

Krishnan and Paes, India's heroes against France in the quarter-finals, were beaten in all the early singles and doubles.

Australia took an unbeatable 3-0 lead on Saturday. Todd Woodbridge and Mark Woodforde beat Krishnan and Paes 6-2, 7-6(7/3), 6-1.

Australian team captain Neal Fraser was optimistic about travelling to Germany. "Our strength is that we have a versatile team with players capable of playing on any surface."

"We have variety — right-handers and left-handers. We also have a champion doubles pair in Woodbridge and Woodforde. I don't think any time Australia play, it can be counted out."

When Australia last played the final, in 1990, they narrowly lost 2-3 to a star-studded United States.

# Monaghan squeezes home



SAN DIEGO, Sept 27: Kris Monaghan shot a 1-under-par 71 Sunday for a one-stroke victory over Julie Inkster at the Kyocera Inamori Classic, the year's concluding tournament on the LPGA tour, reports AP.

It was the second LPGA victory for Monaghan, who also prevailed at this tournament three years ago at another San Diego site. This year, the event was moved to the Stardust Country Club and shifted from the spring to the fall.

Monaghan, who took a one-stroke lead into the final round, finished at 13-under 275 to win \$63,750.

Inkster, who played in the pairing ahead of Monaghan, began the final round two strokes off the lead. She shot a 70 and could never pull even with the leader.

Monaghan also held off Patty Sheehan, who trailed by one stroke to start and twice tied for the lead early on. Sheehan faded after bogys on Nos. 6 and 9 and shot at 73, three shots behind in third.

Sheehan earned \$18,871 and finished as the tour's leading money winner with \$28,547. Several tournaments remain but Sunday's event was the final one of the year using the standard format.

Dawn Coe-Jones, 10 strokes off the lead to start the day, recorded a 65 for the tournament's best round. She had seven birdies to finish at 279 in fourth place.

Inkster had a chance for a birdie on the 18th hole that would have put her 13-under, but her 18-foot (5.4-metre) putt veered away after touching the edge of the cup.

Sheehan dropped two shots off the lead at the ninth hole when she took her second straight bogey. It came after her approach shot on the par-4 hole bounced into the water near the green, resulting in a

This year, the United States were beaten by Australia and spent the weekend securing a place in next year's World Group against the Bahamas, the tie, Tom Gorman's last as team captain, was wrapped up on Saturday but not without difficulty.

Patrick McEnroe and Riecy Reneberg lost the first set to Roger Smith and Mark Knowles on a tie-break, but fought back 6-7(5/7), 7-5, 6-4, 6-2 to give America an unassailable 3-0 lead. Knowles had led America's Malval Washington in Friday's singles, but he had to drop out with bad cramps.

John McEnroe is a candidate to take over from Gorman, who was in the post for eight years.



MICHAEL STICH

The US Tennis Association has yet to name the new captain, they say McEnroe is a candidate though.

Spain secured a World Group place with a 5-0 victory

## Medvedev in real mess

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 27: Andrei Medvedev, ranked seventh in the world, could be fined 5,000 dollars with a possible drop in ranking for withdrawing late from the Salem Open which began here today, reports Reuter.

Medvedev, who was supposed to have arrived on Saturday for the 300,000 dollar tournament, told organisers that he had injured his shoulder during a practice on Friday and withdrew, tournament officials said.

"As his withdrawal was made after the deadline, he may have to face action from the ATP," said Association of Tennis Professionals (ATP) press supervisor Ed Hardisty. "He's heading for a 5,000 dollar fine and possibly a drop

in ranking unless he can substantiate a real injury," another official said.

The 19-year-old Ukrainian has to fly to Kuala Lumpur by Wednesday to be examined by a tournament doctor.

"The penalty is subject to a medical check-up by our doctors," Hardisty said. "If the doctor confirms he is in capable of competing, he will not be penalised."

ATP tour rules state that a player's best 14 ranking results will be reduced by one for each late withdrawal.

Medvedev's absence makes world number eight Michael Chang the second seed in the tournament behind fellow-American Jim Courier, ranked second in the world.

Henrik Holm of Sweden, ranked 21st, is the fourth seed, followed by Australia's Wally Masur and Brad Gilbert.

Courier faces qualifier Albert Chang in his opening match and will probably face Masur, a US Open semifinalist and world ranked 16th, in the final four.

Michael Chang opens against wildcard entrant Yusufumi Yamamoto of Japan and is likely to meet Holm in the other semifinal.

The Salem Open is part of the ATP world series of four Asian cities, which also takes in Hong Kong, Osaka and Beijing.

Stich to replace Becker

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Becker, the top seed, pulled out on Friday with a leg injury.

Stich, 24, whose all-court capabilities gave him tournament victories on grass, clay and hardcourt in 1991 starting with his Wimbledon triumph over Becker, again showed how versatile he is by sweeping his matches on the indoor clay here.

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quarter-finals at home against the Czech and Slovak Republics on grass in July, is expected to choose indoor clay for the final.

"It might be reddish in colour," Stich said.

Stich, of course, can play on any surface.

"It doesn't really matter," he said. "We'll have to discuss it before a decision is made."

If the Germans decide on clay, Becker may not necessarily improve the team. Becker struggled on clay this year and he has never won a singles title on the slow stuff.

Goellner, meanwhile, won his first clay-court title at Nice, France, in May and he is also unbeaten in Davis Cup singles play. And Stich has won all eight Davis Cup doubles, including three this year with Kuhn.

The German Tennis Federation will announce the site of the final in 10 days. Hannover, Bremen and Dusseldorf are the leading candidates, a federation official said.

## Wilander, next Swedish Davis Cup captain?

STOCKHOLM, Sept 27: Former US Open champion Mats Wilander may replace John-Anders Sjogren as Sweden's Davis Cup captain, a newspaper said Monday, reports AP.

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Before becoming head of the Davis Cup team in 1989, Sjogren coached Wilander, 29. Svenska Dagbladet said that other than Wilander, there were two other candidates: Carl-Axel Hageskog, a coach from Vaxjo in southern Sweden; and Martin Bohm, who coaches Swedish players Magnus Larsson and Nicklas Cull.

In Budapest, Hungary beat Argentina 4-1 in their World Group playoff. Austria edged New Zealand 3-2 Christchurch with Alexander Antonitsch beating Kelly Evernden in an exciting deciding singles 7-6(7/4), 4-6, 6-7(7/2), 7-6(7/5), 6-2.

In Dakar, South Africa took a new step in their climb back up the Davis Cup rankings by completing a 5-0 win over Senegal to get into the Euro-African Zone First Division.

The strong South African men's tennis team will now be competing next year for a place in the World Group.

Victory was secured with Saturday's doubles, but Marcus Ondruska and Wayne Ferreira both won their reverse singles on Sunday to complete the whitewash.

South Africa were promoted from Group Three in their return to the competition last year.

With Ferreira ranked 22nd in the world and Ondruska hovering near the top 30, South Africa will be favourites to be promoted from Group One next year.

## Salem Open result

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 27: Holland's Jacco Eltingh survived a scare as he rallied to defeat Greg Rusedski of Canada Monday to advance to the second round of the \$300,000 Salem Open tennis championship, reports AP.

Eltingh, ranked 75th in the world, came back to win 3-6, 7-5, 7-6(7-4) in a grueling match which lasted two hours, eight minutes, the National News Agency Bernama reported.

Eltingh is expected to face top seed Jim Courier of the United States in the second round.

Courier will face qualifier Albert Chang of Canada in his opening round match on Tuesday.

Eltingh, who made it into the second round at the US Open, said he was prepared to give it his best shot against Courier.

"I've beaten (Pete) Sampras, the current world number one, in a tournament in Atlanta in April, and you never know, I might just beat Courier this time," said Eltingh.

Thirty-two singles players and 16 pairs of doubles players are competing in the tournament, which ends on Oct 3.

Byun regains WBC title

TOKYO, Sept 27: Byun Jung-il of South Korea regained the World Boxing Council bantamweight title Monday as Joishio-Tatsuyoshi of Japan gave up his provisional title after an eye injury, reports AP.

Byun was declared champion by WBC Chairman Jose Sulaiman of Mexico after notification of Tatsuyoshi's action by Akihiko Honda, the Japanese boxer's gym chairman, said Shigeru Kojima, the Japan Boxing Commission secretary-general.

Tatsuyoshi already had cancelled a scheduled title bout against Byun on Nov 25. He underwent surgery last for a detached retina and is still in the hospital. The Japan Boxing Commission's medical committee does not allow boxers who have suffered detached retinas to enter the ring.

Sulaiman is in Japan to attend a two-day meeting of the Orient-Pacific Boxing Federation, which opened Monday.

The 23-year-old Tatsuyoshi became the provisional champion by defeating Victor Rabanal of Mexico by a split decision on July 22 while the champion, Byun, was suffering from a broken right hand.

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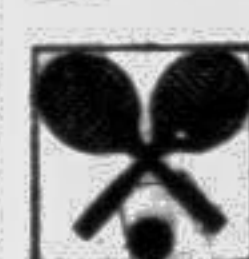
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French Formula One driver Alain Prost holds aloft his trophy after clinching his fourth world title in Estoril, Portugal on Sept 26. Prost, who finished second behind German Michael Schumacher, announced Friday his retirement at the end of the season. —AFP photo

# Pilic in Davis Cup dilemma



BORLANGE, Sweden, Sept 27: Niki Pilic, Germany's Davis Cup captain, faces a tough dilemma.

What if Boris Becker wants to play in the final against Australia?

Becker, who was the hero when Germany won back-to-back Davis Cup titles over Sweden in 1988-89, said in January that he didn't want to play in the prestigious team event this year, reports AP.

But now, with Germany having routed Sweden 5-0 in the semifinals and assured to host the Dec 3-5 final, Becker might want to come back on the team.

"I think we can do well in the final without Becker," Pilic said.

Michael Stich, who became Germany's hero against the Swedes by winning both singles and teaming with Patrik Kuhnen in the doubles, says he doesn't really care.

"If Boris changes his mind, he is welcome to play," Stich said. "We're a stronger team, with him. There's no question about it. But I think it would be kind of disappointing for a guy who's played on the team and might be going out."

Stich said in January when Becker announced he was skipping the Davis Cup this year that Germany would have a better chance with Becker on the team.

So is the satisfaction greater for reaching the final without Becker?

"I want to win the Davis Cup and that's the only thing that counts for me," said Stich, who won last year's Olympic doubles title with Becker.

"I don't care if he plays or not. If we win the Davis Cup without him that's great. If we win with him it's great as well."

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Yawa outpaces Tsebe

BERLIN, Sept 27: South Africa's Xolile Yawa won the Berlin marathon on Sunday, storming from behind to pass compatriot and last year's winner David Tsebe two kilometres before the finish, reports Reuter.

Yawa's time of two hours 10 minutes 57 seconds beat his previous best by nearly five minutes.

A total of 17,285 runners from 70 nations took part, cheered on by a crowd of more than 500,000.

Tsebe, the favourite, had to be satisfied with third place in 2:12:07 after Morocco's Dria Dacha burst through to claim second in 2:11:43.

## CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

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