

BCCB XI's third match rained out

Sports Reporter
The third exhibition match of the touring Bangladesh Cricket Control Board (BCCB) XI against the Hyderabad Cricket Association President's Eleven in Hyderabad fell through yesterday due to heavy downpour. They Bangladesh selection, comprising probabilities for the national squad in the ICC trophy to be held in Kenya early next year, is presently touring the Deccan for match practice and a logical-sieve to sift the indispensables from the dispensables. Visiting India for the second time in the recent times, BCCB XI have so far played two matches, winning one and losing one. They lost their first match to Andhrapradesh Cricket Association President's Eleven by five wickets. The BCCB XI won their second match against another ACA selection by two wickets. Weather permitting, the tourists play their second match today against the Hyderabad Cricket Association at Secunderabad.

A Japanese club may visit Bangladesh

Sports Reporter
Honda Football Club, a team from Japanese Second Division league may tour Bangladesh early next year to play a number of matches here. Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF), now fully preoccupied with the imminent South Asian Federation (SAF) Games scheduled for December 20 to 27 this year, is reportedly considering the proposal forwarded by the Japanese club. Although the Honda have proposed for three matches with the Bangladesh national team, including an additional but vital information of taking care of their lodging and travelling expenses themselves, a BFF official wrinkled a possibility of making it a thoroughly club affair involving some of the popular local clubs with an eye to reap healthy gate-receipts.

Nat'l age-group swimming from today

The 13th national age-group and the second national youth swimming championships, organised by the Bangladesh Swimming Federation, begins today at the Dhaka Stadium swimming pool, reports UNB. Secretary General of the Bangladesh Olympic Association Bashir Ahmed will inaugurate the six-day competition. One hundred and seventy-two swimmers representing 25 teams—137 in the age group and 35 in the youth group—will compete in 45 events. Eleven events will be finalised on the opening day.

Nat'l soccer side to play two friendlies in Ctg

CHITTAGONG, Oct 10: The Bangladesh national football team, now training for the sixth SAF Games, will play two exhibition matches here with the Chittagong league champions and runners-up on October 12 and 13 respectively, reports UNB. They will meet the champions Mohammedan Sporting Club on October 12 (Tuesday) and runners-up Abahani Krira Chakra on the following day (Wednesday). Communication Minister Col (ret'd) Oli Ahmed, who is also the president of the BFF, will attend the first match on Tuesday as chief guest while CMP Commissioner Osman Ali Khan will also be there as a special guest. Chittagong City Corporation Mayor Mir Md Nasiruddin will attend the other match as chief guest and Akmal Hossain, secretary of the BFF, will attend as a special guest. The price of tickets has been fixed at Tk 50 for pavilion and Tk 10 for the gallery. A 32-member team from Dhaka will arrive here Monday to play the preparation matches for the ensuing SAF games.

Cox's Bazar soccer

From Our Correspondent
COX'S BAZAR, Oct 10: Friends Union Club scored all the three goals, including an own goal, to etch a 2-1 victory over Mohammedan Sporting Club at the local stadium today. The winners found themselves one goal down 22 minutes into the game when a deflection off a defender ended up in the net. Kashem eased the pressure off the Friends Union tent when he guided the ball home in the 27th minute of the second half. Three minutes later Hassan sealed the fate of the match. Ramu Brothers Union take on Mohammedan Sporting Club on Tuesday.

293-strong host squad

Hosts Bangladesh will field the second largest squad with 293 members in the seven-nation sixth South Asian Federation (SAF) Games scheduled for December 20-27 in Dhaka, reports UNB. India, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, the Maldives and Bhutan have already sent their entries for the prestigious meet with India and Sri Lanka participating in all the 11 disciplines. Nepal, the other SAARC nation, yet to officially submit their entries, is expected to send a 150 member contingent to Dhaka, which will host the Games for the second time after the second SAF Games in 1985. The Bangladesh contingent comprising 214 sportsmen and 79 officials will compete in all 11 disciplines — athletics, swimming, shooting, kabaddi, football, volleyball, tennis, table tennis, wrestling, boxing and

Judo. The host team has 55 athletes, 28 swimmers, 23 shooters, 20 booters, 12 boxers, nine judokas, 12 kabaddi players, nine paddlers, 12 men and



women tennis players, 12 men and 12 women spikers and 10 wrestlers. India, the leading team of all the previous SAF Games, will send the largest contingent of

306 members comprising of 184 male athletes, 51 female athletes and 70 officials to participate in all 11 disciplines. Sri Lanka, who hosted the fifth SAF Games in 1991, will send a 275-member contingent with 218 sportsmen, including 60 women, and 57 officials, to compete in all disciplines. A 167-member Pakistan team, consisting of 118 male athletes, eight female athletes and 41 officials, will take part in all the events except Judo. The Maldives will send a 67-member contingent comprising of 53 athletes and 14 officials. They will compete in seven disciplines — athletics, football, shooting, swimming, table tennis, lawn tennis and men's volleyball. The 14-member Bhutanese team will compete only in table tennis.

Short loses another one

LONDON, Oct 10: Garri Kasparov defeated Nigel Short in Game 15 of the Professional Chess Association championship match Saturday, and began talking about ending the 24-game match early, report Agencies. "It was a very clean game, probably the cleanest of the match. I made no mistakes at all," Kasparov told reporters. Kasparov, the highest-ranked player in history, leads with 10 1/2 points to Short's 4 1/2. Kasparov who has won six games and needs 1 1/2 points to retain his title. Short has yet to win. Grandmasters at London's Savoy Theatre considered it

Div II hockey now from Tuesday

The Green Delta Metropolitan Second Division hockey league, organised by the Bangladesh Hockey Federation, will begin on Tuesday at the Hockey Stadium, reports UNB. On the opening day, Victoria Sporting Club will take on Muktiyoddha KC at 2.15 pm while Cantonian SC face Rayer Bazar SC at 3.45 pm. Nineteen teams, divided into four groups, will compete in the league basis matches. The teams are: Group A — Victoria SC, Uddy Club, Raktim Sangha, Shantinagar SC and Muktiyoddha KC. Group B — Cantonian SC, Dhaka Young Stars, Tejgaon Agrami, Dilikusha SC and Rayer Bazar SC. Group C — Barnak Samaj, Farashganj SC, Uttara Hockey Club, Dhaka Hockey Club and Combined SC. Group D — Mukta Bihanga, Shishu Kishore Sangha, Agrani Bank Club and East End Club. Two top teams from each of the four groups will qualify for the round-robin league and finally one team will get promotion to the First Division.

Barisal football

Staff Correspondent
BARISAL, Oct 10: Taj Video Club confirmed a place in the final of the Ima Overseas First Division football league when they drew one-all with Saptabarna Sporting Club at the local stadium today. Taj Video, who upped their collection to eight from five encounters, will take on Uddipan Club on October 14 in the final. Uddipan earlier finished their five matches with nine points. Milton gave the Video club side the lead in the 30th minute of the match, but saw it neutralised by a 37th minute goal from Shamim of Saptabarna Club.

Pioline, Boetsch cruise into final

TOULOUSE, France, Oct 10: Cedric Pioline and Arnaud Boetsch — the top two players in France — cruised into the final of the 400,000 dollar Toulouse Indoor Tennis Open on Saturday, reports Reuter. Second seed Pioline, who lost to Pete Sampras in the US Open final last month, needed only 75 minutes to dispose of sixth seed Andrei Chesnokov of Russia 6-4, 6-2. Boetsch, seeded fifth, demolished Christian Bergstrom of Sweden 6-1, 6-2. Pioline, ranked 12th in the world, broke at 4-4 to clinch the first set and won the final set easily after Chesnokov twice lost his service. "I started slowly, but then it turned out well — and faster than I expected," said Pioline. France's number one, who has reached the final of a top-ranked tournament for the fourth time, will be bidding for his first tournament victory. He faces a strong challenge from Boetsch, ranked 24th in the world, who never appeared in any danger against Bergstrom. Boetsch, winner of the Rosmalen tournament last spring, broke in the opening game and took the first set in 29 minutes.

Kasparov's most impressive victory of the match. The Azeri-born champion attributed Short's collapse to being distracted by the fact Kasparov had little time to complete the mandatory 40 moves in his allotted two hours. "He (Short) looked too much at my clock," Kasparov said, but felt that he had built up a winning position in any event. "Short collapsed with surprising speed," said Australian Grandmaster Ian Rogers. "For the first time, he seemed resigned to his fate." Kasparov was in understandably high spirits as he put the match even further from the challenger's reach, speaking with great animation despite his confessed fatigue. Kasparov rocked with laughter and joked with reporters over a newspaper story that he had almost been arrested for being in London's Regents Park after dusk on Friday night. "We saw a gate that was always open, so we walked there every night, even though the sign said the park was closed after dark. The policeman was quite rude... and said I would have to appear in court the next morning," Kasparov said. Kasparov explained that relations improved after a long conversation and that he agreed to end his late-night strolls. Alluding to the rival championship match staged by FIDE, the world chess federation, which is due to restart Saturday in Indonesia, Rogers quipped: "If he (Short) wants to win a World Championship now, he should fly to Jakarta." For the first time, Kasparov told reporters that he and match organisers would consider abandoning plans to play all 24 games should he become

clinch victory. The match rules had called for playing all the games no matter what the score. "I don't think it makes any sense. I would not play at my real strength," Kasparov said. "I would rather do something that would excite myself and the public," he said, suggesting capping the match with 'rapid' or 'blitz' competitions. Kasparov said Short's position began to crumble on move 15, when the 28-year-old challenger moved his rook to take Kasparov's bishop. Short had used his queen instead, Kasparov said. The game began with the queen's gambit declined, in which white offers to sacrifice a pawn but black declines. This opening is one of Short's favourites playing black, but the first time he had employed it in this match. Short, taking the loser's privilege, did not attend the press conference afterwards. The match resumes on Tuesday with Short having the advantage of the white pieces and first move in Game 16. The rival title match, sanctioned by World Chess body FIDE, is scheduled to resume in Indonesia's capital, Jakarta, on October 16. The event has been plagued by financial problems, and had to be suspended last week when second half sponsor in Oman withdrew their support. The Times newspaper of London and Teleworld Holdings, based in Rotterdam, Netherlands, are sponsoring the match, which has a 1.7 million pound (dhs 2.55 million) purse. The players have pledged 10 per cent of the purse to the professional Chess Association, which they formed in February.



Lothar Matthaeus (L), captain of Germany's World Cup winning squad, fights for the ball with Olaf Janssen of Cologne during their Bundesliga tie on October 9. Bayern Munich, who are skippered by Matthaeus, raced to an emphatic four-nil victory. — AFP photo

Maradona has to wait a while

BUENOS AIRES, Oct 10: Diego Maradona will know next Monday or Tuesday whether he can join Argentina's squad for their World Cup qualifier in Australia, national coach Alfio Basile said on Saturday, reports AFP. Basile told the Clarin newspaper that if selected for the first leg on October 31, Maradona could leave with the rest of the squad on the 18th. He makes his league debut today against First Division rivals Independiente.

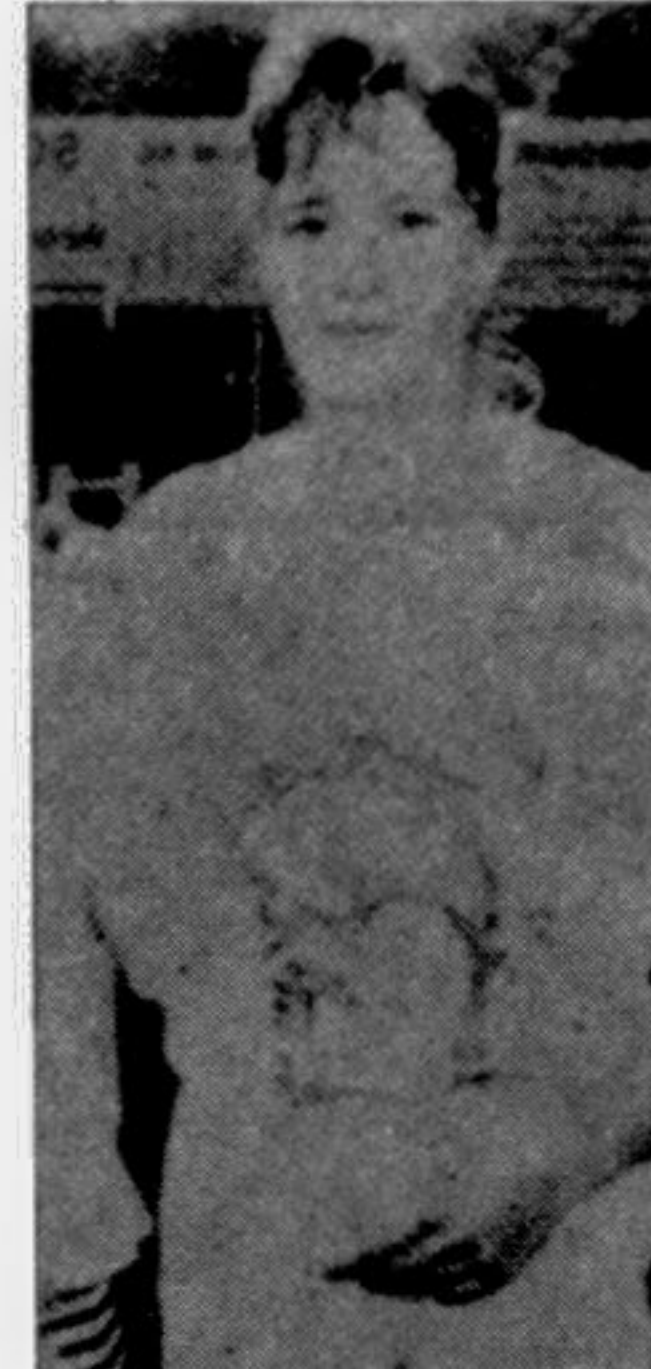
Holland pitted against Germany

BRUSSELS, Oct 10: Title holders Holland have been pitted against Olympic champions Germany in the opening pools for the World Cup in Sydney next month, reports AFP. The International Hockey Federation draw, announced here Saturday, put hosts Australia with Olympic silver medalists Pakistan, plus England and Spain, in the other qualifying group. The World Cup runs from November 23 to December 4.

Manuela's heady last days

ZURICH, Oct 10: Fourth-seeded Manuela Maleeva-Fragniere of Switzerland, who is retiring from professional tennis in February, upset top-seeded Martina Navratilova, 6-3, 7-6 (7-1), Sunday to win the dhs 750,000 European Indoors tournament, reports AP. Bulgarian-born Maleeva-Fragniere, 26, seemed more determined than her US opponent. She had seven aces, including two to take the first set, en route to her 18th career title and the first at Zurich. Navratilova, 36, the winningest player in pro tennis history, was denied her 166th tournament title but said she may make a final try to win the tournament before retiring at the end of next year.

Asked why she had chosen to make her final bow in Japan and not in Europe, her husband, who is also her coach, said: "The Japanese are very fond of her. Manuela is one of their best-loved sport personalities. She has countless fans there and receives thousands of letters from admirers, even some marriage proposals."



MALEEVA-FRAGNIERE

Maleeva-Fragniere, ranked 13th worldwide, trailed 6-5 in the second set. But Navratilova hit a volley into the net wire to set up the tiebreaker, where she never recovered from an unforced error at 1-3. Maleeva-Fragniere converted her first match point to pick up the dhs 150,000 first prize and her second win this year. "I could not have dreamed of a better end to my career," said the eldest of the three tennis-playing Maleeva sisters, who married a Swiss. Earlier a Reuter reports said: Swiss tennis star Manuela Maleeva-Fragniere said on Saturday she would end her 12-year playing career in Osaka, Japan, next February. Born in Sofia, Bulgaria in 1967, she married Swiss juniors' tennis coach Francois Fragniere in 1987. "I have been on the pro tour since 1982. I now want to settle down and start a family," she said.

Arrese defends Athens Cup title

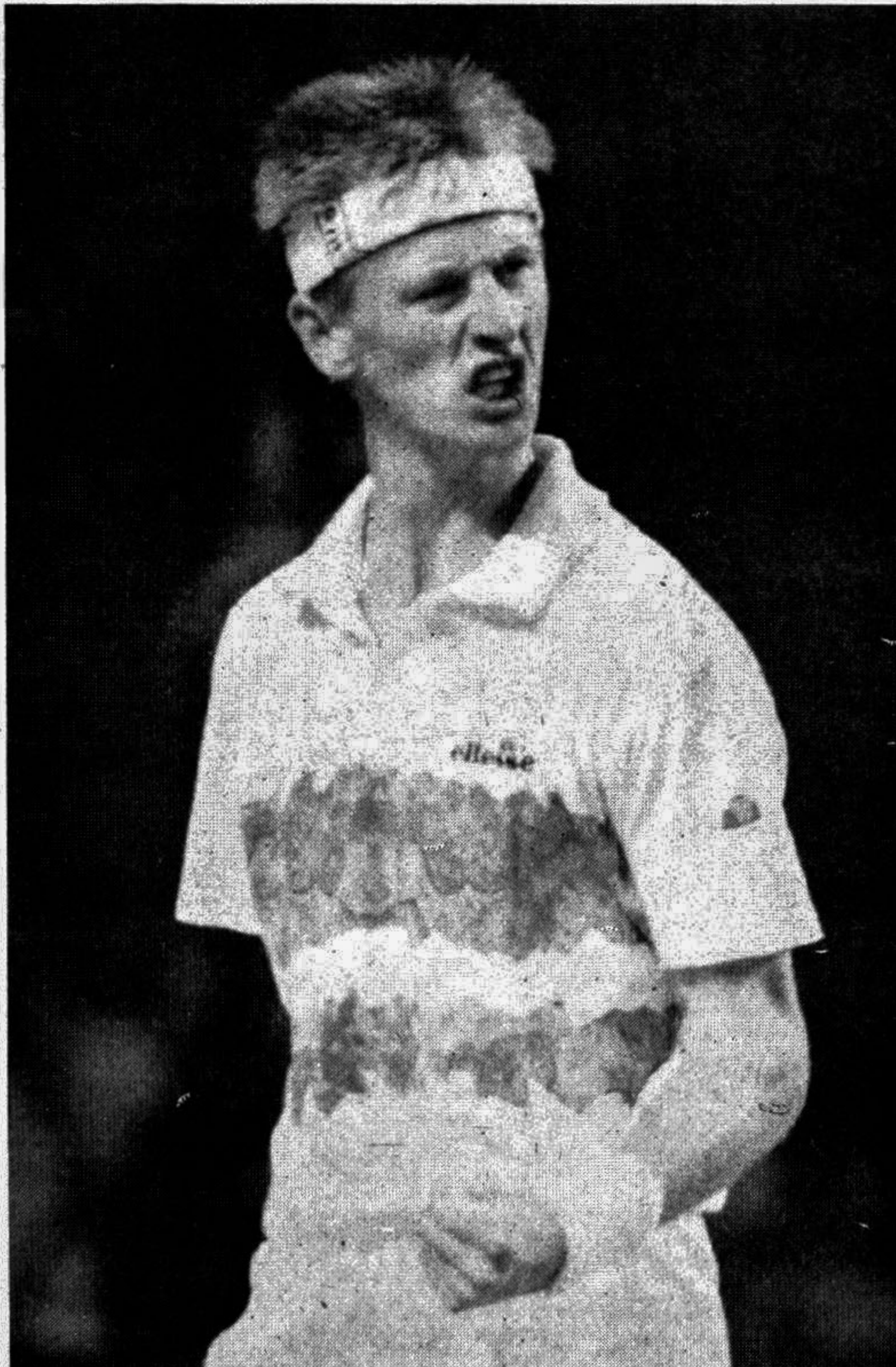
ATHENS, Oct 10: Jordi Arrese of Spain defeated countryman Alberto Berasategui 6-4, 3-6, 6-3 to successfully defend his Kronenbourg Athens Cup title on Saturday, reports AP. Ranked 88th on the ATP tour, Arrese needed two hours and 11 minutes to beat Berasategui who tired in the third set. Arrese fired consistent winners from the baseline past his opponent who was unable to catch up to ball. Arrese broke Berasategui's serve in the sixth game of the final set to lead 4-2 and then served out for the match. "I am playing very well now," said Arrese, who reached a career high ranking of 23 in November 1991. "I think my tennis is better than my ranking. We were both very tired (in the third set) but I think the person who broke first had the most chance to win."

Berasategui clutched his legs after the match in apparent pain. "I think I played very well today but Jordi played a little bit better," Berasategui said. "I think that break in the third set decided the match. I started cramping a bit then and was having difficulty holding my serve." In the doubles final, Horacio de la Pena of Argentina and Jorge Lozano of Mexico overcame a first set loss to overwhelm Royce Deppe of South Africa and John Sullivan of the United States 3-6, 6-1, 6-2. Pena and Lozano were unable to coordinate their play in the opening set but after a conference dominated play, Deppe and Sullivan were unable to successfully block their opposition's powerful strokes at the net and appeared to have tired from week long tournament play. World ranked sixth in 1984 at the age of 17, and now in 13th place, she earned an unbroken nine-year top 10 run until early this year.

Michelle happier than ever

NEW YORK, Oct 10: Michelle Akers-Stahl is feeling lighter these days, since that ton of bricks was removed from her chest. She's also thrilled that the sport she has championed for almost 10 years, women's soccer, is officially part of the Olympics, reports AP. Starting in 1996, women's soccer joins the men's game on the Olympic programme. The United States are the women's world champions, and now Akers-Stahl — the team's star — says it's time for the game to promote itself, just do women's tennis, swimming and basketball, to become a commercial success. "It all has to do with promotion," the 27-year-old from Oveido, Fla., said. "I think worldwide for soccer the World Cup is the big event. But for the United States, the Olympic games is it. So for women's soccer, this brings recognition higher and hopefully bring in sponsors."

Akers-Stahl scored the very first goal in international competition for the US women, in a 2-2 tie with Denmark in August 1985. Since then, the 5-foot-10 (1.78-meter) forward has added 56 more goals in 60 international matches, as well as being named the top women's player in the United States twice and leading all scorers, men and women, in Sweden's pro soccer leagues with 43 goals in 1992. Two years ago, she scored a tournament-high 10 goals — including five in one game — as the US team won the first women's World Cup in China. It was the first world soccer title for any US squad. Much of her time and energy in recent years has been directed at getting women's soccer into the Olympics, and her efforts paid off in September when the International Olympic Committee approved the addition, starting with the 1996 Games in Atlanta. Hearing the news was "like a ton of bricks being lifted off my chest," Akers-Stahl said. "We had been working on it for so long. It was a relief for us." The success of the American women's team contrasts sharply with the US men's squad, which never has made it past the first round of the World Cup and generally is considered a soccer also-ran. It all comes down to timing and culture, Akers-Stahl said. "Soccer has been around for a long time and by the time the United States got interested, we were way behind on the men's side," she said. "So the men had to hit the ground running. But for women, it was more a step right out of the cradle." Despite being ahead on the competitive side, the American public has not embraced women's sports on a spectator level — and with soccer, women's soccer is light year's behind the men. "In China, we had crowds of up to 65,000. The largest crowd in the US has been 6,000," she said. "There is not enough manpower to promote the Women's game. That 6,000 was all word of mouth." With the Olympic berth secured, Akers-Stahl plans to make sure that word gets around. "Now that we have the Olympic participation out of the way, maybe I can have a few more minutes to promote," said Akers-Stahl, who runs a soccer camp in Florida and clinics nationwide with her husband, former pro soccer player Roby Stahl. She'll be 30 in '96, but that won't keep Akers-Stahl from seeking her own Olympic moment. "I plan to be on that team," she said. "They say that (30) is the peak time for a soccer player. I hope to score a ton of goals."



Petr Korda of the Czech Republic can't hide his frustration after losing the third-set tiebreaker to unseeded Peruvian Jaime Yzaga during the final of the Australian Indoors in Sydney yesterday. — AFP photo