

Rough ride for favourites



PARIS, Nov 5: Top-seeded Pete Sampras and three-time champion Boris Becker advanced to the quarterfinals of the dlr 2.1 million Paris Open tennis tournament Thursday with straight set victories in the third round, reports AP.

Sampras outduelled big-serving Marc Rosset of Switzerland, 7-5, 6-3. Becker kept his Paris Open streak alive as he defeated Karel Novacek of the Czech Republic 7-6 (11-9) 6-2.

In a sense, Becker has never lost here. He won in 1986, 1989 and 1992, did not compete in 1987 and 1988, and forfeited in 1990 and 1991 because of injury and illness. He is third seeded this year.

Although Rosset served about 200 kilometers an hour (125 mph) and had 18 aces, Sampras would rely on good returns to put the pressure on Rosset approaching the net. It paid off in the 12th game of the first set when Sampras finally took Rosset's service and the set.

In the fourth game of the second set, after five deuces, Sampras finally converted another break point to go up 3-1 and hold the lead the rest of the way.

Rosset had only one break point on Sampras's service the

entire match and did not take advantage of it. Sampras made two of nine.

Sampras meets the winner of the Goran Ivanisevic-Michael Chang match later Thursday.

Fourth-seeded Michael Stich beat No. 13 Todd Martin, 7-6 (7-3), 6-1, in the first match Thursday afternoon. In Friday's quarterfinals, Stich meets Stefan Edberg who won the night before. Stich beat Edberg in the quarterfinals at the Stockholm tournament last week.

Also eight-seeded Andrei Medvedev of Ukraine outlasted Henri Leconte, 7-5, 6-7, (3-7), 6-3. Medvedev is against Mark Woodforde of Australia in the quarterfinals. Woodforde beat Sweden Magnus Gustafsson, 6-3, 4-6, 6-3 in another third round match.

Becker wasted five set points in the first set — including three at 0-40 in the 12th game — before finally winning in the tiebreaker against Novacek.

Becker thought the set was over when Novacek served one of the points that looked out.

There was one major mistake at 15-40 and his second serve was way out at set point. Becker said, "Everybody in the stands saw it. Karl saw it. Just the man on the chair and the machine didn't see it."

"We were playing 55 minutes until then and a fault like

that can change a whole match around. I was really angry about it."

Becker got a bit of luck in the tiebreaker, similar to his three set victory over Russian Andrei Olhovskiy the round before. With Novacek having a set point at 6-5, Becker's shot hit the top of the net and fell over weakly to even the score.

After that, the two traded points until 10-9 when Becker finished things with a clean ace, his seventh of the set.

After some early service breaks, Becker rolled through the second set in 31 minutes, ending the match with an ace.

In Wednesday's lone third-round match, sixth-seeded Edberg overcame 13 double faults to defeat No. 12 seeded Czech Petr Korda, 4-6, 6-4, 7-5.

Leconte lost the first set and won the second, as he had in his two previous matches giving the French crowd hope. Leconte even jumped to a 2-0 lead in the third set.

Then Medvedev took control of the match, taking advantage of three double faults by Leconte in the fourth game to even it at 2-2. In all Leconte had 10 double faults.

"The match turned when I made two double faults at 40-15 in that game,"

Leconte said, "If I had gone up 3-1 it would have been difficult for Andrei to come back."

Navratilova rallies

OAKLAND, California, Nov 5: Top-seeded Martina Navratilova rallied for a 3-6, 6-3, 6-2 victory over eight-seeded Iva Majoli of Croatia on Thursday to reach the semifinals of the 375,000 dollars Bank of the West Classic, reports Reuter.

Majoli, 16, charged through the first set, hitting 12 winners and breaking Navratilova at love twice. But Navratilova steadied her serve and mixed up her game to pull Majoli off the baseline in the second and third sets.

"She was playing out of her mind in the first set," said Navratilova, a four-time winner at the Oakland tour stop.

"It's hard to keep that up." Navratilova took command of the match with a break at 2-2 in the second set, but admitted that the match was a lot closer than the score indicated.

Majoli, ranked 40th, said she learned that "the match is not over when the first set is over."

The hard-hitting baseliner was the last non-American eliminated from the draw.

In second-round action, second-seeded Mary Joe Fernandez, playing her first match since August's Canadian Open, beat Meredith McGrath 6-1, 6-3.

Seventh-seeded Ann Groszman eliminated Rika Hiraki 6-4, 6-3 and Caroleine Kuhlman beat Kimberly Po 6-2, 7-5.

Cindana makes Mizui bite dust

BANGKOK, Nov 5: Unseeded Cindana of Indonesia scored a big upset over Japan's Hisuko Mizui, seeded No. 3/4, 11-12, 12-11, 12-8 in a thrilling women's singles third round match in the 90,000 US dollar Thailand Open badminton championship here Thursday, reports AP.

Make that four, if you buy Futch's argument that Bowe is a much better fighter than he was when he took the undisputed title from Holyfield nearly a year ago.

"Generally speaking, fighters who win championships are 25 per cent better than before they won the title," said Futch, Bowe's 82-year-old trainer.

"Once they win the title, anything they've been taught before they feel they can do. They have the confidence of a champion."

If Bowe's two brief appearances since beating Holyfield are any indication, Futch appears to be right on the mark.

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Heavyweight champion Riddick Bowe (L) and challenger Evander Holyfield (R) pose for the lensmen. Bowe and Holyfield fight for the title today in Las Vegas. Bowe defeated Holyfield on Nov 13, 1992.

The way Eddie Futch sees it

LAS VEGAS, Nov 5: The way Eddie Futch sees it, Evander Holyfield has three things working against his bid to recapture the heavyweight title Saturday night from Riddick Bowe, reports AP.

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putting them away. "I'm still in the learning process," Bowe said. "I learned a lot in the gym after winning the title. That's why those guys went out so quickly."

Bowe, undefeated in 34 fights, is a 4-1 favourite to beat Holyfield and retain the IBF and WBA titles. Bowe relinquished the WBC title he won from Holyfield rather than fight a mandatory bout against Lennox Lewis.

The odds for the scheduled 12-round fight at Caesars Palace reflect the belief of most boxing observers that Holyfield can do little more than he did in the first fight to beat a champion who is younger, bigger and hits harder.

"Evander can't be a better fighter than last time because he's got three things working against him that he didn't in the first fight," Futch said. "Holyfield's been off seven months he changed trainers and he took a terrific beating the first time."

Futch, who has trained six heavyweight champions in a boxing career that has spanned 60 years, said Holyfield also faces a mental obstacle stemming from his first defeat.

"Mentally he knows what he went through the first time and when he gets hit in this fight it will all go through his mind," he said. "I saw it with (Jersey Joe) Walcott and (Rocky) Marciano. In their second fight, Walcott saw the same thing happening as in the first fight and was knocked out in the first round."

While Holyfield promises to come in the ring about 216 pounds (98 kilograms) — 10 pounds (4.5 kilograms) heavier than the first fight Nov 13 — he will be facing an even bigger man in Bowe.

The champion, who weighed 235 pounds (106 kilograms) when winning the title, figures to be in the high 240s, among the heaviest of the heavyweight champions of modern time.

"He's in shape," Futch said. "He's 6-foot-5 (2 metres). If he was bulging, I'd be concerned. I want him to be strong and able to do the things he knows how to do."

Not only is Bowe big, he can move. The champion possesses rare combinations of size and movement, power and speed.

"He's one of the most complete big men around in some time," Holyfield grudgingly admits.

For ACOG, it's still far off

ATLANTA, Nov 5: Having secured historically rich contracts for US and European television rights, an uncertain economic landscape awaits Atlanta Olympic organizers as they venture overseas for the remaining TV deals, reports AP.

In the next few months, Olympic officials will begin serious negotiations for TV rights in Japan, Canada, Australia and several other countries. The talks are critical to the financial success of the 1996 Olympics, for television rights account for about one-third of the Games' expected revenues.

Even with a dlr 456 million deal with NBC for US rights and a dlr 250 million agreement in hand for Europe, negotiators need to come back with more fat contracts to make the dlr 554.1 million budgeted for TV revenues by the Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games.

ACOG gets 60 per cent of the TV rights fees, which are sold by the International Olympic Committee, so its share of the completed deals is about dlr 424 million.

Olympic leaders say they're confident but they are keeping expectations in check. "Our objective is to break even," ACOG President Billy Payne said. "We dwell on not spending more than we take in, as opposed to the other side of the issue, which is how are we going to spend a surplus."

The greatest stakes are in Japan, whose big state-owned NHK network paid about dlr 62 million for rights to the 1992 Summer Olympics in Barcelona. Olympic negotiators would like to improve on that figure,

but Japan is in the midst of a prolonged economic slump. "The Japanese marketplace is tough right now. There is, however, great interest in the Atlanta Games as a consequence of their award of the 1998 Winter Games in Nagano," Payne said.

Payne also is counting on such enthusiasm in Australia, which paid about dlr 33.7 million for rights to the Barcelona Olympics. In September, Sydney won the 2000 Summer Games.

But Dick Pound, the IOC's chief TV negotiator, said he's not sure the excitement in those countries will outweigh economic realities.

"Japan is still picking the lint out of its recessionary navels," Pound said. "They're still in a state of shock."

The International Amateur Athletic Federation's (IAAF) arbitration panel will review an appeal against the four-year ban from the five times world cross country champion in Monte Carlo this month.

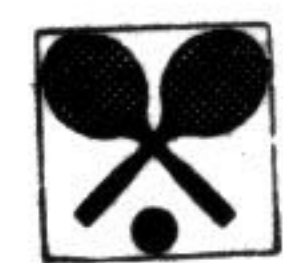
Ngugi, 30, a soldier, says he refused to give a urine sample because there was to military official present as required under Kenyan military sports rules.

Onizuka retains WBA crown

TOKYO, Nov 5: Japanese champion Katsuya Onizuka scored a unanimous decision Friday over Thai challenger Thanomsak Sithboobay and retained his World Boxing Association junior bantamweight title in their second encounter, reports AP.

There were no knockdowns in the 12-round match at the Tokyo Colosseum.

Kelesi, Hy delight fans



QUEBEC CITY, Canada, Nov 5: Canadians scored a couple of upsets at the 150,000 dollars Bell Challenge on Thursday as Patricia Hy defeated top seed Helena Sukova and Helen Kelesi beat Pam Shriver in a classic of bad temper, reports Reuter.

Kelesi, unseeded, called her stormy 3-6, 7-6 (7-3), 6-3 third round victory "the most emotional match I ever played" while the fifth seeded Shriver declared she had never experienced anything like it.

Hy, ranked 48th, beat Sukova 6-4, 5-7, 7-5 in their second-round match by making pinpoint passing shots as the 12th-ranked Czech rushed the net aggressively.

It was Hy's second win over Sukova in three career matches. She also beat Sukova in the fourth round of the 1992 US Open in their first meeting.

"I was very disappointed with the way I played," said Sukova.

The lid came off an already decidedly testy Kelesi-Shriver match in the 11th game of the second set, one game after Shriver had failed to convert three match points.

As Shriver walked back to the baseline after protesting to umpire David Littlefield about Kelesi's continual stalling and

loud grunting, the American heard words being spoken to Kelesi from a court-side box where the Canadian's coach, Eric Hayes of Florida, was seated.

"You shut up," the 35th ranked Shriver shouted as she pointed toward him.

Kelesi, ranked 70th, thought Shriver was addressing her and immediately went to the chair and said to Littlefield: "She told me to shut up, you've got to give her a warning or something."

As she fell behind in the second-set tiebreak, Shriver seemed to lose her taste for a fight and when she walked off to take a break at the end of the set she mouthed the words "I'm quitting. I've had it" to tournament referee Brenda Perry of New Zealand.

She did return for a third set that soon turned into a farce.

At various points Kelesi took several minutes to replace a contact lens, got a warning for smashing a ball into the court backdrop and began to rally over the net with a ballboy while Shriver received court-side treatment for a foot injury.

The post-match handshake took place at the net after the players briefly exchanged words.

"We ended up both apologising at the same time," said Shriver.

"If a match like that can possibly end in any kind of good manner, I suppose both of us saying sorry and shaking hands, although probably not too sincerely, is as good as we could have done."

Kelesi twice burst into tears during all the bickering and complaining.

"She was insulting me when she was screaming at me," said the 24-year-old Canadian. It hurt and it hurt that it was coming from someone who is supposed to be our president of the WTA (Women's Tennis Association).

"I'm hardly as pure as the driven snow when it comes to emotions on the court," admitted Shriver. "But as far as constantly messing with tempo and just making an overall unattractive atmosphere, I've never been through anything like this in 16 years."

Shriver noted that the Canadian fans had been cheering for her over their countrywoman.

"I suppose the final judge," said Shriver, "was the crowd from her home country who frankly would just as soon have seen her lose."

In another third-round match, fourth-seeded Katerina Maleeva of Bulgaria beat American Lisa Raymond 3-6, 6-2, 6-2 to advance to the quarterfinals.

Magee leads

KAPALUA, Hawaii, Nov 5: Andrew Magee, recording a birdie and eagle on consecutive holes, shot a 6-under-par 67 to take the first-round lead at the dlr 1 million Kapalua International, reports AP.

Two strokes back Thursday were Scott Hock, Peter Jacobsen and Noland Henke, on a day marked by sunny skies and stiff trade winds at the Kapalua Resort on the island of Maui.

The 52-man field is split for the first two rounds with half at the par-71 Say Course and the other half at the par-73 Plantation Course. The final 36 holes are played at the Plantation.

Magee, who birdied two of the last three holes, played the more difficult Plantation Course, as did Henke, Jacobsen and Hoch played the Say, where they equaled Magee's 67 but were two fewer strokes under par.

"I'm very happy with my round," Magee said. "If you start off well, it's a golf tournament. I guess I'm in a golf tournament."

Magee birdied the sixth hole and followed with his eagle at the 484-yard par-4 seventh the highlight of the day. He used an 3-iron from 170 yards to hole the shot.

Magee finished his round with birdie putts of 35 and 20 feet (10 and 6 metres) at Nos. 16 and 18. He could have extended his advantage except for missing a 2-foot (60-centimetre) birdie attempt at No. 9.

Magee is finishing his eighth season on the tour. His best finish this year was second at the Phoenix Open, and his earnings of dlr 269,986 put him 62nd on the money list.

Hakkinen having nice time



ADELAIDE, Nov 5: Mika Hakkinen is enjoying success where Michael Andretti endured frustration.

The Finnish driver has starred since replacing Andretti on the McLaren Ford Formula One team, finishing third in the Japanese Grand Prix at Suzuka last month, reports AP.

Hakkinen spent the first 13 races of the season as a test driver for McLaren, which parted company with Andretti after the Italian Grand Prix at Monza.

The American driver earned only seven world championship points and had a string of crashes and mechanical failures before deciding to return to the IndyCar circuit.

"I don't know what the problem was with Michael," Hakkinen said. "It was very difficult for him. He just needed more time to learn and understand Formula One."

"I thought he was a talented driver and he was a nice guy."

Frustrated at not being able to race in the first 13 grands prix of the season, Hakkinen made an immediate impact and was third-fastest qualifier for the Portuguese Grand Prix at Estoril before crashing. He was quicker in qualifying than his teammate Ayrton Senna, the three-time world champion.

The 25-year-old Monte Carlo resident did even better at Suzuka, qualifying third and finishing third after an exciting drive.

Hakkinen said Thursday that he is aiming for another top three finish in Sunday's Australian Grand Prix.

The former Lotus driver, one of the hottest prospects in Formula One, said he was thoroughly enjoying being back behind the wheel.

"It was really, really difficult not racing," he said. "I had been racing since I was six years old and then suddenly I was not racing," Hakkinen said. "I'd always tried to stay positive, feeling I would get my chance, but it was hard to keep

myself motivated. "Now my future is looking very good."

There has been speculation Hakkinen will be the No. 1 driver for McLaren next season after Senna departs to join Williams-Renault.

Hakkinen, however, is taking nothing for granted. "There are a lot of good young drivers coming through," he said. "I have to drive very well just to keep my place."

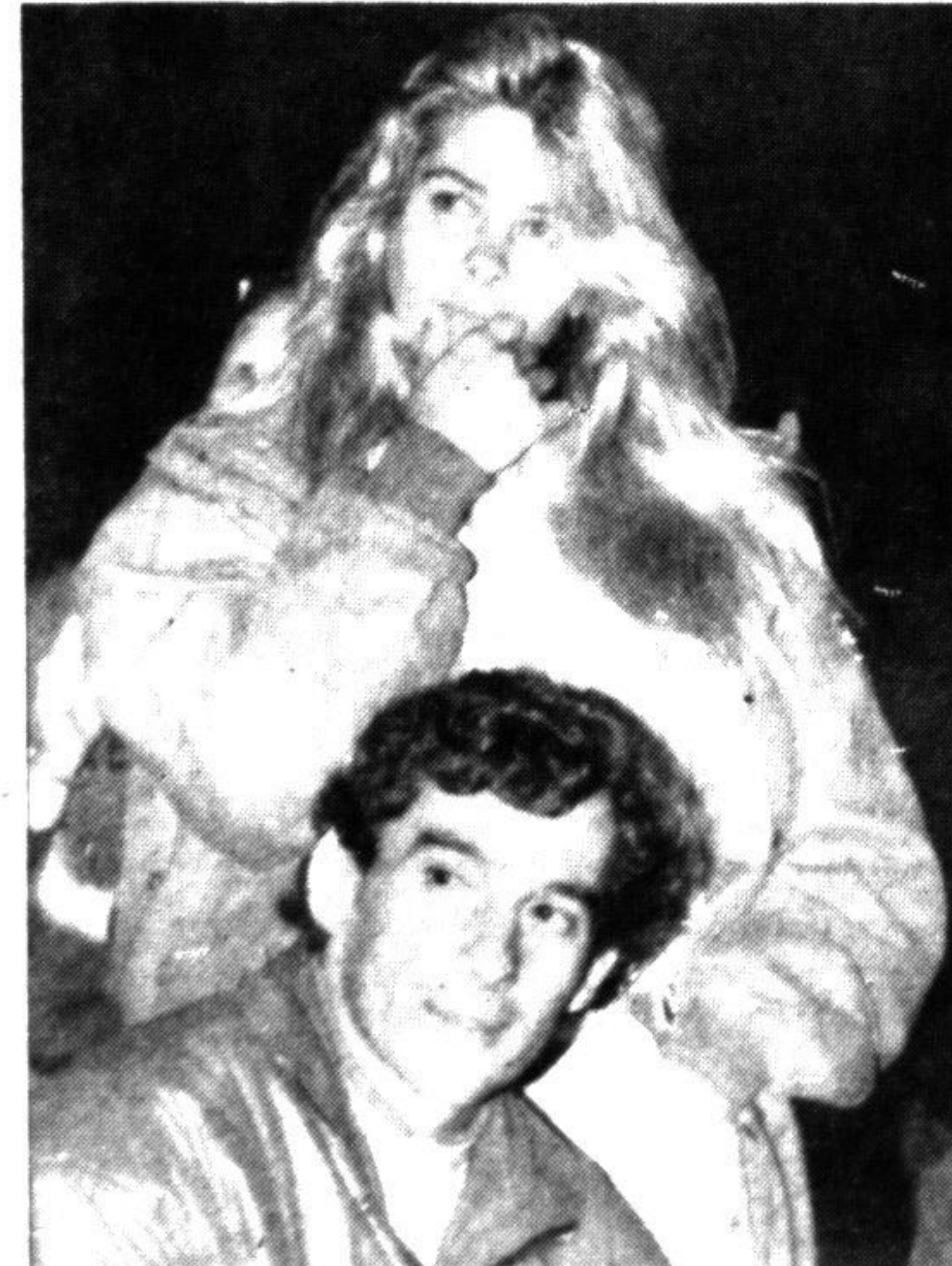
Hakkinen said he had driven cautiously in Japan, but planned to be more aggressive

over 81 laps of the 3.78 kilometer (2.349 miles) Adelaide street circuit.

"I will give maximum in practice, qualifying and the race," Hakkinen said. "I plan to go absolutely as fast as it is possible to go and see what result it will bring."

Hakkinen said he enjoys racing on street circuits, and Adelaide in particular. "I like this track a lot. It's fun to drive," he said.

Official practice for the race starts Friday and continues Saturday



Ayrton Senna of Brazil and his girl-friend, Adriani watch a video during his farewell barbecue on the eve of the qualifying rounds for the Australian Grand Prix in Adelaide Nov 4. The three-time world champion complained about the competitiveness of his McLaren-Ford and said he hoped to be driving with Williams-Renault team before January 1994.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down. Includes a solution for the previous day's puzzle.

Cryptoquip puzzle grid with a 11x11 grid of letters and numbers.

CRYPTOQUIP L C E S J E G N W C G N - G C T T J Y V A H N W H J T C E L K M K A T H N H S V H T M . Yesterday's Cryptoquip: OF ALL THE BEGINNING PUPPETEERS, SHE BELONGS ON OUR FIRST STRING. Today's Cryptoquip clue: T equals L. 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.