

Jansher has a close call

DOHA, Nov 17: World number one Jansher Khan survived a tremendous battle with England's Peter Marshall before reaching the final of the 135,000 dollars Qatar International with a 14-15, 15-12, 15-6, 12-15, 15-4 victory on Tuesday, reports Reuter.

It was easily the match of the tournament with both players having to draw on their last reserves of energy and skill.

They could have it all to do again next week as they are seeded to meet in the World Open Semifinals in Karachi and could clash again the following week in the World Team event when they will be leading their countries.

It had looked easy for 24-year-old Jansher at the start. He slipped into his usual immaculate groove almost immediately and opened up a 6-1

lead with aggressive driving and ambitious drop shots.

But fourth seed Marshall, the world number five, then began to find his range with his unorthodox double fisted style and forced the Pakistani into long, energy-sapping rallies.

The Englishman took seven points in succession and reached game point at 14-11 and although the Pakistani fought back to level the scores, Marshall snatched the opening game.

The second game was equally close and equally ferocious and could have gone either way as the score reached 10-10 before Jansher won it with a perfect length volley.

In the third Jansher was dominant and took the game in 66 minutes but Marshall refused to bow down and stormed quickly into a 5-1 lead in the next with superb driving and perfect lobs into the corners.

Jansher saved two game

points, but the Englishman was not to be denied and levelled the match 2-2 after 84 minutes.

This reverse jolted Jansher into launching an opening assault and he stormed away with the deciding game although he looked a mighty relieved man as his final drop shot sent him into the final.

"He is a very good player and he will get better. He will be a big danger to me. He is very fit and never gives up," said Jansher of the Englishman.

Jansher will meet old rival Rodney Margin of Australia in Wednesday's final.

Martin, the second seed, overcame elder brother Brett 15-8, 11-15, 15-10, 15-10 in 58 minutes in the other semifinal.

Their last clash, in the Hong Kong final, ended in a victory for Brett — but a repeat was rarely on the cards on Tuesday although Rodney let the second game slip as he relaxed too much.

China, S Korea, Taiwan cagers in ABC qtrs

JAKARTA, Nov 17: China, South Korea and Taiwan all moved into the quarter-finals of the 17th men's Asian Basketball Confederation (ABC) championship here Tuesday, reports AFP.

Also through are Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Iran and North Korea.

In Group A China beat Pakistan 112-40 to win one of the groups tickets to the quarter-finals with the other going to group runners-up Saudi Arabia.

Earlier, Jordan beat Thailand 72-45, but it failed to win enough points to dislodge Saudi Arabia.

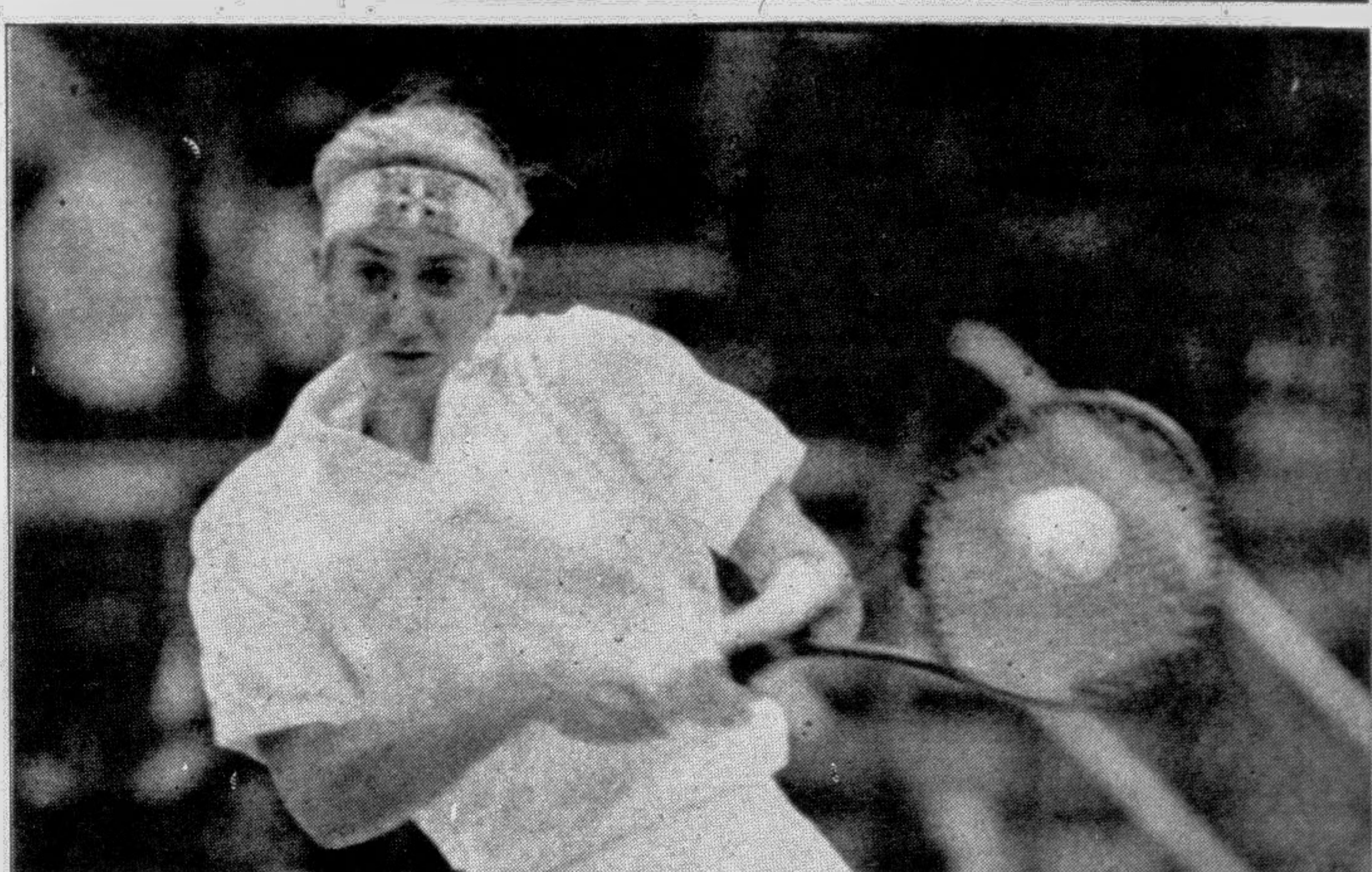
In Group B the Philippines easily outsmarted their Singaporean opponents, who were three ranks below them according to the ABC's 1991 seedings, to take the game 89-62 after leading midway 44-28.

But the effort was not enough for the seventh ranked Philippines to move into quarter-finals, with the two group slots going to South Korea and runners-up the United Arab Emirates.

In the Group D Taiwan and North Korea got the quarter-final tickets.

Earlier, Malaysia beat Bangladesh 144-73 in the same group.

Iran is already through in Group C with the runner-up position to be fought over between Japan and Indonesia later Tuesday.



Mary Pierce of France aggressively hitting a double-fisted backhand return to Argentina's Gabriela Sabatini during their first round match of the Virginia Slims Championships in New York on Nov 16. Pierce won 7-6 (10-8), 6-3. — AFP photo

Trendafilova takes all

MELBOURNE, Nov 17: Milena Trendafilova of Bulgaria swept all three gold medals in the women's 70-kilogram class Wednesday at the World Weightlifting Championships, reports AP.

The 23-year-old former national javelin champion lifted 100 kilograms (220 1/2 pounds) in the snatch and 120 (264 1/2) in the clean-and-jerk for a total of 220 (485).

It was the sixth successive World Championships in which she had won the snatch, but the first time since 1990 she had won the overall title.

Chipping of China, the favourite, did not compete.

Chinese officials said she had not made the weight and would instead compete in the 76-kilogram class on Thursday.

"I came here expecting to win the silver medals, so I was delighted the Chinese girl didn't make the weight," Trendafilova said.

"I don't think I had much chance of beating her, because the Chinese are extremely strong."

Chinese lifters have won all four of the women's divisions they have contested at the

championships.

Kumi Haseba of Japan took the silver medal overall and in the jerk, and the bronze in the snatch, while Kim Dong-hee of South Korea took the silver in the snatch and two bronzes.

Trendafilova, who finished second in the 67.5-kilogram class at last year's World Championships in Varna, was the fourth Bulgarian to win an overall title here.

Trendafilova won the snatch gold medal in her hometown of Varna to become the only non-Chinese gold medalist in women's competition last year.

All three of Trendafilova's winning lifts will be recognised as world records in the new weight category even though they were well below her personal bests.

"My performance wasn't as good as I'd hoped, but my preparation was not very good," she said. "I did what I needed to win."

These championships are the first event in which world records can be officially recognised in new weight classes introduced earlier this year.

Lifting in 10 men's divisions and nine women's divisions at the Royal Exhibition Building continues through Sunday.

Earlier on Tuesday, Li

Hongyun, 17, added her second world title when she won the new 64 kg class with a clear, 17.5 kg margin.

The student, who won the 60 kg class world title last year with a 27.5 kg margin, said: "I would like to win a third world title. After that I shall wait and see, maybe I will become a coach."

Li won in each category, lifting 102.5 kg in the snatch and 117.5 kg in the jerk to give a combined total of 220.0 kg.

South Korean Won Soon-Li won the silver medal with a combined lift of 202.5 kg, lifting 87.5 kg in the snatch and 115.0 kg in the jerk.

Canadian Julie Malenfant picked up the bronze with a combined lift of 195.0 kg, the same as Hungarian Erzebet Markus who weighed in 300 grammes heavier.

Li's compatriots Sun Caiyan, 19, won the 59 kg class on Monday. Chen Xiaomia, 16, won the 54 kg class by a massive 22.5 kg and Liu Xihua, 18 won the 50 kg.

The Chinese women won 26 of the 27 gold medals on offer at last year world titles and are on track to achieve a similar feat at this year's champions.

Palatable plates

OSLO, Nov 17: If spectators at the Lillehammer Winter Olympics are still hungry after a meal, they can always try chewing on the plates, reports Reuter.

Organisers of the Games said on Tuesday they had ordered 900,000 environmentally friendly plates made of potato starch from a firm in neighbouring Sweden.

All knives, forks and spoons — 3.5 million in total — would be made from stiffened maize.

"We wanted to avoid using plastic. For the Olympics, this is the best environmental result we've achieved," said Osmund Ueland, a director with the organising committee.

"But we won't recommend people eat them — stick to the food on the plates," he told Reuters.

At every arena the plates and cutlery will be collected into sacks, also made of potato starch, and recycled as plant fertilizer.

Ueland said more research was needed to find out if the plates and cutlery could be used as food for pigs as organisers had originally hoped. Initial tests on edibility were encouraging.

"I ate two plates today and I feel fine. I also ate two or three some time ago for a group of Japanese reporters," he said. "But the cutlery's too stiff to eat."

He said that a Norwegian firm would also supply about 300-400,000 recyclable plates. The Swedish firm producing the potato starch plates only had capacity to make 900,000 in the three months left before the Games.

Pierce stuns Sabatini

NEW YORK, Nov 17: Mary Pierce of France got her first-ever victory over a top 10 player Tuesday night, beating sixth-ranked Gabriela Sabatini of Argentina 7-6 (10-8), 6-3 to advance to the second round of the Virginia Slims Championships, reports AP.

"Finally, finally," Pierce said. "It feels so good. I always said to myself I think I could beat them. Now I know I can. I've given myself that confidence everytime I play now."

Pierce's power was just too much for fifth-seeded Sabatini, who took the pace off the ball at every opportunity.

Unlike their last meeting, in which Sabatini eliminated Pierce in the quarterfinals of the Australian Open, Pierce didn't make as many mistakes.

"I think this was probably the same match," Pierce said. "It was just as close."

"I kind of sensed she was pushing the ball into play and waiting for me to make mistakes. She wasn't being very aggressive," said, who is unseeded.

The final point came on a backhand that clipped the baseline but that Sabatini

thought was long. The crowd, with a few Argentinian flags being waved, agreed with the loser.

While Pierce stood at the net, a big smile on her face, Sabatini stared at the baseline, then went to umpire Jane Tabor to protest. Only after Tabor refused to change the call did Sabatini shake hands with Pierce as the Madison Square Garden crowd vented its displeasure.

With the biggest victory of her career, Pierce, unseeded and ranked 16th, advanced to a quarter-final meeting with third-seeded Martina Navratilova, who won her first-round match on Monday.

In Tuesday's other matches, seventh-seeded Jana Novotna defeated Zina Garrison Jackson 6-4, 6-7 (5-7), 6-3 and second-seeded Arantxa Sanchez Vicario beat Helena Sukova 7-5, 6-2.

Sabatini broke service in the third game of the opening set, but they traded service breaks in the eighth, ninth and 10th games to level the set at 5-5.

Sabatini dodged three set points in the tiebreaker but could do nothing about the fourth when Pierce's forehand blast bounced off Sabatini's racket.

Pierce, making her debut in the elite 16-player field, con-

trolled the second set as Sabatini tried in vain to plug the leaks.

In the earlier match, Novotna reached match point for the first time in the 11th game of the second set, leading 40-30 on her own serve. Garrison Jackson, angry over several calls, won the next three points to force the tiebreaker.

Novotna, runnerup at Wimbledon in July, zipped to a 5-2 lead and was ready to serve twice. But Garrison Jackson, celebrating her 30th birthday Tuesday, reeled of the next five points to close the tiebreaker with an ace.

In the third set, Novotna, going for broke on every shot, bolted to 4-1 lead before Garrison Jackson returned to her pesky ways. With Novotna serving for the match, Garrison Jackson had six break points. Novotna survived, and this time cashed in when she reached match point.

It was the fourth time the two have met, and the third consecutive time Novotna has won.

The Virginia Slims tournament invites the women Kraft, sponsor of the tour, considers to be the top 16 in the world. The dir\$ 3.5 million purse in the largest in women's tennis.

Pierce, a real cosmopolitan

NEW YORK, Nov 17: In the very international game of tennis, Mary Pierce is particularly worldly, reports AP.

Pierce, 18, lives in Florida but plays Federation Cup for France. She was born in Montreal, and so has a Canadian passport to go with her French and American ones.

After her victory at the Virginia Slims championships over Gabriela Sabatini, Pierce's first over a top 10 player, she will likely move up from her current world ranking of 16.

"Now that I beat a top ten player it just feels really great and now it gives me more confidence," she said in her post-match press conference.

Pierce has gained a lot of attention because of her often disruptive father, Jim Pierce, who was barred from attending Women's Tennis Association events after the French Open in May.

Mary's mother, Yannick, was rooting for Mary on Tuesday at Madison Square Garden and later chatted in French-accented English with Nick Bollettieri, Andre Agassi's former coach, who has been helping Pierce.

Mary's French has a slight American accent and is peppered with small grammatical errors. (She admits: "Francais, c'est mon deuxième langue" — French is my second language. Indeed, "Langue," a feminine word, should take the possessive pronoun "ma".)

Pierce says that for training she prefers America.

"But for living it's hard because I love France so much. I have so much fun. I have my cousins and everybody over there," she told the Associated Press. "France has helped me a lot when I needed help. So, I'm glad to be playing for them."

Pierce, who also represents France in the Olympics, says the fans there "definitely" support her. "Before it was kind of hard. I don't know if they accepted me. But I think now they are pulling for me," she says.

"I think it's going to be a fun match because I like the way she plays. I like playing against people who come to the net a lot," Pierce said.

No Alexeyev to stop him now

MELBOURNE, Nov 17: Rejected from the 1992 Olympics 15 minutes before his competition, Altym Orazdurdiev is set to become a national hero after winning Turkmenistan's first ever gold medal in any sport, reports Reuter.

It came on the fifth day of the World Weightlifting Championships on Tuesday.

Orazdurdiev, 24, turned last year's nightmare into this year's dream when he won the 75 kg class, although he had to rely on his lighter bodyweight to take the gold medal.

Orazdurdiev lifted a combined total of 370 kg, equal with Rouslan Saftchenko, but the Ukrainian is just 30 grammes heavier.

The young weightlifting coach, who is Turkmenistan's only top class athlete in any sport, said: "This win will mean a lot to my country. It will inspire more younger people to take up sport, and maybe in particular weightlifting."

It was a sweet victory for Orazdurdiev, who represented the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) team at the Barcelona Olympics and was favourite for the light-heavyweight final.

But he was pulled out of the contest by coach Vasily Alexeyev 15 minutes before the start, despite having the highest qualifying lift in the division.

Alexeyev, a Russian, said Orazdurdiev would have got in the way of Russian teammate Ibragim Samadov, who ended in

the bronze position. Orazdurdiev, pleaded in vain with Alexeyev, and even promised to let Samadov beat him.

Samadov was later stripped of his medal and banned for life from the sport after he dropped his bronze medal on the podium and stalked out of the award ceremony.

Orazdurdiev is a product of the former Soviet Union's weightlifting infrastructure.

He said after Tuesday's victory his country had no top class sports facilities that his 3.67 million compatriots could use.

"All the best facilities went to Russia after the split up," he explained. "Now in my country there are no good facilities for young people to use, so it is very difficult to encourage people to play sport."

"But maybe my win will change that," said Orazdurdiev, who won the old 75 kg class world title in 1989 and the old 82.5 kg class world title in 1990.

The champion was trailing in third place after the snatch lifting 67.5 kg, but made up for it in the clean and jerk setting a world record in the new weight class with a lift of 202.5 kg.

The sport's governing body, the International Weightlifting Federation (IWF), changed the weight classes at the start of the year in an attempt to clean up the sport as many world records were seen to have been helped by drug use.

Saftchenko, 22, in his first year at the senior level nearly had the gold in his pocket with

last lift of the competition, but failed to push the 205 kg barbell above his head in the jerk.

But the physical education student from Lvov in the west of Ukraine picked up the gold medal in the snatch category with a lift of 170.0 kg, in front of North Korea's Kim Myong-Nam, who lifted 67.5 kg to give him a combined lift of 362.5 kg, enough to give him the overall bronze medal.

Reigning middleweight Olympic champion Todor Kasapu from Moldova lost any chance of getting amongst the medals when he finished 10th in the snatch and then failed to record a clean lift in the jerk.

Kasapu said he had been able to train properly for the World Championships because of food shortages in his homeland.

MEDALS TABLE

The medals table at the end of the fifth day of the 10-day men's and women's World Weightlifting Championships on Tuesday:

	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
China	13	4	3	20
Bulgaria	8	4	1	13
Turkey	3	7	0	10
Taiwan	3	2	3	8
Turkmenistan	2	0	1	3
Ukraine	1	2	0	3
South Korea	0	2	5	7
Greece	0	2	3	5
United States	0	2	0	2
North Korea	0	1	1	2
Germany	0	1	1	2
Canada	0	1	1	2
Hungary	0	1	0	1
Japan	0	0	5	5
Armenia	0	0	2	2
India	0	0	2	2

Cuba still too strong for China

TOKYO, Nov 17: China's challenge to all-conquering Cuba crashed in a straight-sets defeat in the women's competition at the 1.5 million dollar World Grand Champions Cup volleyball tournament here Wednesday, reports AFP.

The Chinese, who reshuffled their team after finishing seventh in the Barcelona Olympics, failed to capitalise on their 11-4 lead in the second set before losing 0-3 (13-15, 13-15, 7-15).

"We had a chance to win the second set when the Cubans made several errors. We took six points on their mistakes, two on our service winners and four on our attacks. But our players lost nerve after that," said Chinese coach Li Xiaofeng.

The Cuban women have a lot of experience and they are able to overcome a deficit. Our team is still young and mentally insecure... there are many ups and downs. We have to improve our vulnerable points to beat Cuba," he added.

China dominated the world in the early 1980s, but Cuba replaced them, winning all the major titles, including the World Cup, the Barcelona Games and this year's World Grand Prix.

Cuba's coach George Eugenio said: "The Chinese team missed chances because they have many young players and they haven't experienced enough, but I think they will be a major threat in the near future, especially Xiao Jianhua is a wonderful player."

Results:
Cuba bt China 3-0 (15-3, 15-13, 15-7)
USA bt Peru 3-2 (5-15, 10-15, 15-12, 15-7, 15-9)

Michaels shine in Frankfurt

FRANKFURT, Nov 17: Michael Stich's serve and volley and Michael Chang's courage dominated the opening day of the ATP World Tennis Championship on Tuesday, reports Reuter.

Former Wimbledon champion Stich used his favourite fast-court tactics to the full on the indoor carpeted surface to beat an off-form Andrei Medvedev 6-3, 6-4 in his opening round-robin group match.

Chang produced a typically spirited performance to end his disastrous losing record at the tournament when he upset Australian Open champion Jim Courier with an impressive 6-4, 6-0 victory.

The tactics of the two Michaels on a tennis court are as far apart as their respective heights.

The towering Stich is powerful yet elegant as he comes in on the net for his crisp volleying. The diminutive Chang hugs the baseline and gets his points by scampering around the court and scavenging for every ball.

But their common denominator on Tuesday was concentration under pressure.

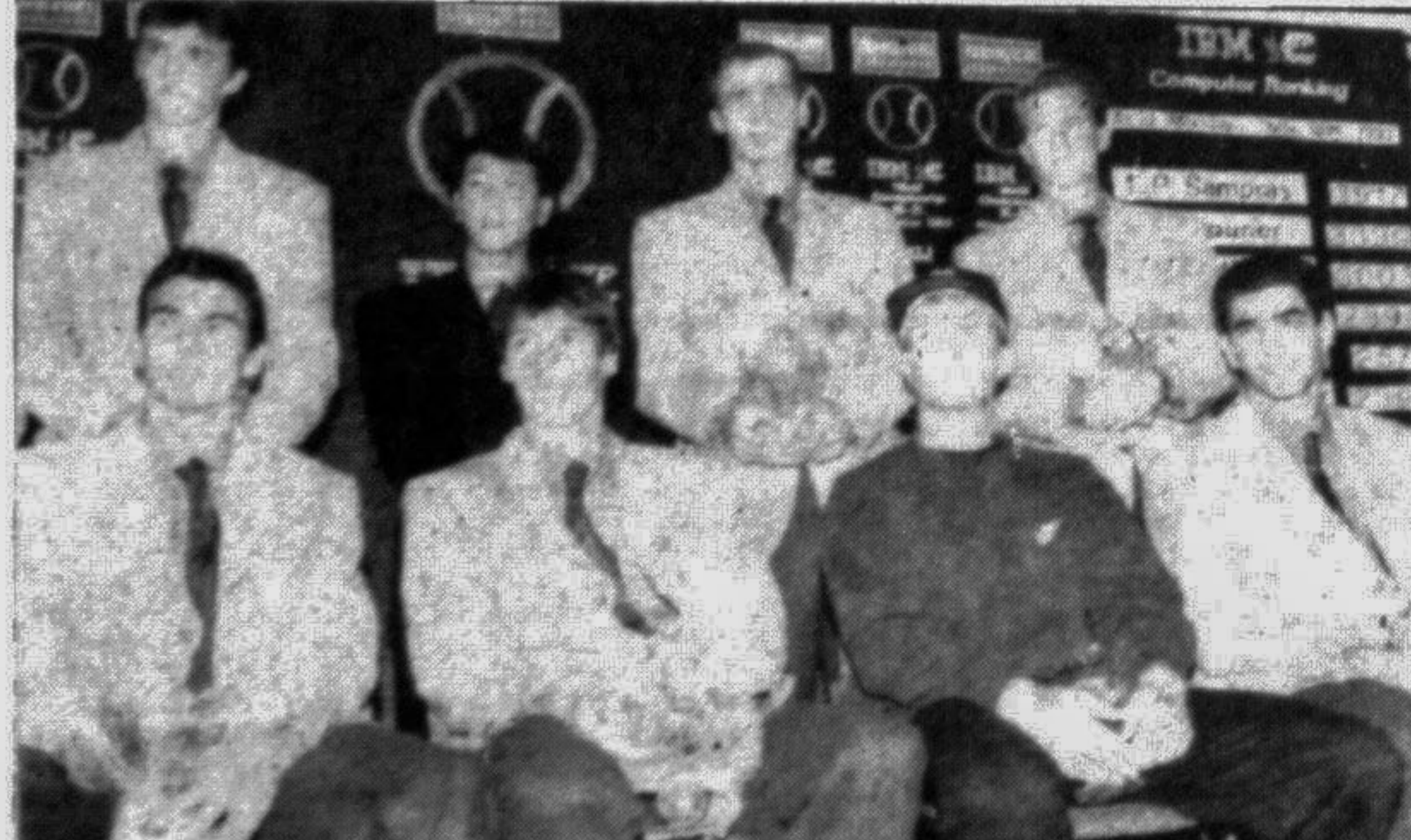
Former French Open champion Chang, who lost all of his six encounters in his two previous appearances at the year-ending tournament in 1988 and 1992, hit some brilliant ground strokes as he clinched a rare victory over Courier in just 89

minutes.

The American world number two, who has struggled with his game in recent months after reaching the final of the French Open and Wimbledon earlier in the year, could find no answer to Chang's industry and determination.

Chang clinched his first victory over Courier, runner-up in the tournament in the last two years, in seven matches.

The world number seven had only managed to win one set in their six previous clashes. A break of service in the ninth game was enough to make sure of the first set in 55 minutes, then Chang blew Courier away in the second in just 36 minutes.



The world's eight top tennis players pose for the photographers at the beginning of the ATP World Championships in Frankfurt. From L to R sitting: Sergi Bruguera, Michael Stich, Jim Courier, Pete Sampras; standing from L to R: Goran Ivanisevic, Michael Chang, Andrei Medvedev and Stefan Edberg. — AFP photo

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Entree on a stick? 37 "Wow!" 38 Gam 40 Queues 42 "— good deed" 44 Tourment type 46 Hard work 50 From birth B-3 52 Grads 54 Director's call 55 Ivana's ex property 56 Commits to memory 57 Crowd-scene participant

DOWN

1 Soprano 2 Gen. Robert — 3 Bugs sergeant's

Solution time: 24 mins.

26 Whom Hip-pomenes defeated 28 Summer treat 30 Martial-arts film star 31 Caustic solution 33 Raw rock 34 Take blades to blades 39 Boarded 41 Dare-devil's presentation 42 One of Murphy Brown's coworkers 43 In a former life 45 Bill-signing mementoes 47 Actor Sharif 48 "To Live and Die —" 49 Top 51 Televis 53 Bagel topping

Yesterday's answer 4-24

CRYPTOQUIP

ODJ UDQRDSR CMD UAXJAU
X SRC VNRA RXFM
QDSVXH, MRJ FXERSVXJ
NU O GEE DO UGSVXRU.
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: DIDN'T THE UNSUCCESSFUL SEER CONSIDER HERSELF NON-PROPHET?
Today's Cryptoquip clue: Q equals M
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.