

Cowan clinches singles crown

RAJSHAHI, Nov 21: Cowan of Great Britain became champion in the men's singles of the third leg ITF Thailand-Bangladesh Satellite Circuit tennis tournament played at the Rajshahi Tennis Complex today, reports BSS.

Cowan beat Beigraven of Holland 6-1, 6-0. The masters leg of the tournament begins in Dhaka tomorrow.

Jute Minister A S M Hannan Shah witnessed the match and distributed prizes among the winners.

ITF master's leg from tomorrow

The masters leg of the Gold Leaf ITF Thailand-Bangladesh Satellite Circuit tennis tournament begins at the National Tennis Complex in Dhaka tomorrow, reports BSS.

Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman will inaugurate the tournament at nine in the morning.

State Minister for Youth and Sports Sadek Hossain will be present as a special guest.

The green courts of the National Tennis Complex have been re-painted and the surroundings have been given a face-lift.

ITF supervisor Peter Malik and chief umpire Laurence de Wals got back from Rajshahi yesterday after completing the third leg of the circuit.

The players, qualified for the masters' tournament from the first two legs in Bangkok and third leg at Rajshahi, are now in Dhaka. They had their practice at the National Tennis Complex yesterday.

One hundred and seventy-five players from 38 countries took part in the three legs of the circuit. Of them, 24 players from 17 countries have qualified for the masters tournament in Dhaka.

The draw for the tournament will be held today.

The qualified players are: Frank Ofori (Ghana), Barry Cowan (Great Britain), Gonzalo Corrales (Spain), Adam Skrypczak (Poland), Narathorn Srichaphan (Thailand), Daiji Morit (Japan), James Fox (Great Britain), Martijn Belgrave (Netherlands), Thomas Anderson (Denmark), Garry Henderson (Great Britain), Cedric Melot (Belgium), Mathias Boeise (Germany), Mark Tjia (USA), Yonathan Rom (Russia), Sebastian Graef (Monaco), Ricardo Rubio (Spain), James Davidson (Great Britain), Vinod Ramachandran (India), Glen Wilson (New Zealand), Tom Spinks (Great Britain), Allan Larsen (Denmark), Hiroki Ishii (Japan), Almos Toth (Hungary) and Richard Nicholls (Australia).

Ghana's Frank Ofori has been seeded top for earning 48 points in the three legs in Bangkok and Rajshahi while Barry Cowan and Gonzalo Corrales are second and third seeds for securing 30 and 28 points respectively.

Wanderers start in style

Pakistani all-rounder Sohail Mehdi's superb show made sure that newcomers Wanderers started their campaign in this year's Milners First Division cricket league in a manner right as rain.

They beat Agrani Bank by 45 runs at the Mirpur Pallabi cricket ground as Mehdi claimed five wickets for 22 runs to skittle Bank out for 128 in 38.3 overs.

Veteran Atiq was the lone ranger for the bankers with an unbeaten 54. Sohail with 16 was the only other batsman to defy Mehdi's guiles.

Earlier, Wanderers sent into bat, collected 173 for nine from the stipulated 45 overs with skipper Jahangir making 46. Sohail Mehdi made 29 while Nahel with an unbeaten 23 and Babu with 19 followed him as other notable scorers.

Al Amin took four for 45 among the beleaguered Bank bowlers. Ripon and Talha captured two wickets each while Atiq took one.

TODAY'S MATCH

City vs Evergreen (Mirpur Pallabi)

Div III soccer

Maghbaraz Ktira Chakra and Gandaria Famous recorded wins in the Pragoti Insurance Third Division football league while the other match of the day ended in a goalless draw at different venues in Dhaka yesterday.

Faisal was on target in the ninth minute while Sabuj in the 41st to pave the way for a 2-0 Maghbaraz win over Rahmatgonj SC.

Gandaria Famous beat Dhaka Sporting Club 2-1.

Raju and Rubel scored once each in the 34th and 45th minutes for the winners. Dhaka Sporting's goal came from Glas in the 63rd minute.

In the other match, Purbachal Parishad drew with Bangladesh Government Printing Press 1-1 at the Mohakhali T & T ground.



GMCC batsman Zakir misses a cut but survives a rather ambitious appeal by Biman keeper Jahangir in yesterday's ding-dong Navana Premier Division encounter at the Dhaka Stadium. Biman won the match by two wickets to hand GMCC their first defeat this session.

GMCC's fall from grace



Title-aspirants Bangladesh Biman became the first team to conquer Greater Mymensingh Cricket Club (GMCC) when they beat the hitherto unbeaten outfit by two wickets in a close finish yesterday in the Navana Premier Division cricket league at the Dhaka Stadium.

Faced with the proposition of getting 159 for their seventh successive victory in 45 overs — a task interpreted as a walkover by many in the morning because of the powerful batting line up, Biman struggled through the afternoon to make a heavy weather of a seemingly feeble GMCC challenge and only lusty hitting by Indian Anil Wilson helped them overcome a scare wave that resulted in three run outs, including those of Indian K P Bhaskar, Biman's mainstay in the middle order and skipper Enamul Huq Moni.

Wilson, the athletic all-rounder who took the key wicket of GMCC skipper Raman Lamba in the morning, remained unbeaten on 20 made off as many balls including a sixer and two fours as bowler Rafiq hung around with him to help take off the airlines team which looked like crashing to its first defeat of the season with the score on 145 for eight in the 44th over. When Wilson hit the winning runs Biman had a tense Azhar padded up in the pavilion and just three balls to go.

On little spiteful wicket that offered slightly uneven bounce for pacemen at the pavilion end, Biman's upper order batsmen were totally bogged down by the GMCC bowlers, who barring one or two exceptions, really rose to the occasion.

Zakir, in particular, bowled superbly, giving away 13 runs from his nine overs with Lamba, the former Indian Test player, judiciously bowling him right through from the Paltan end on a trot.

Zakir's newball partner Anis, who had engineered his side's win against Gulshan in the previous match with a haul of five wickets, bowled nippily and put Biman on the defensive by removing veteran Ahmad Iqbal Bachechu back for no score.

Young left arm spinner Sharfuddin Salkat took the

cue from the pacers and had the Biman batsmen completely knotted as his figures of one for 21 off nine overs would suggest. He bowled opener Jahangir for 42, the top score of a rather low scoring match, to give Biman a double blow as they were smarting under the loss of a patient Zakaria with no addition to their score of 84 for two in the 28th over. The stockily built Zakaria found his favourite off side play curbed by the strong off side cordon.

His tendency to get early on the front foot and a few painful blows on the right thumb because of the sharp lift occasionally gained by Zakir did not help matters and after having laboured to a 82-ball 27 he became Indian R P Singh's one of two victims.

The tall former India international then caught in-form Shanu for 20 off Paltan and Biman fell in panic-pocket.

K P Bhaskar, who played a gem of an innings the other day was run out. Skipper Moni, quite bit of a trouble-shooter these days, followed suit for about the same single digit score and although stayed Jahangir Talukdar Dulu a while before running himself out, Biman appeared to be in real mess. Thanks to Wilson who recovered from a back strain in time to swing the fortune in Biman's favour with a good use of the willow.

Despite all his heroics, this Delhi cricketer may find himself out of the first eleven as the Biman officials are reported to have sent SOS to Pakistani Wasim Haider, their Pakistani signing who served them quite well last year.

Earlier in the morning tight bowling by the pace trio of Mizanur Rahman Babul, Dulu and Wilson never allowed GMCC any leeway on a damp, difficult wicket that retained its wee bit funny character throughout the day.

The fact that life was not easy could be understood from the unnatural way Raman Lamba batted. The seasoned, thoroughly professional took 50 balls to make 21 before airing a Wilson delivery to the deep out of frustration.

Javed Omar Belim Golla, the opener, battled for 76 balls to emerge the topscorer in GMCC's innings with 37, Rudra Pratap

the fourth day last week when Sarfraz withdrew his libel allegations.

But the suggestion that Sarfraz passed on "ball tampering" techniques to the new generation of fast bowlers who have made Pakistan one-day world champions and one of the most feared Test nations has increased ill-feeling against English cricketers, the Telegraph said.

Ehsan Manmi, who represents Pakistan on the International Cricket Council, and who was present at the libel hearings, said Pakistan-England Tests were not threatened.

"We have long cricketering links with England. Pakistan has not invited England — we are busy till 1996 — but if England invite us we would welcome the invitation," he was quoted as saying.

The Telegraph said it thought that no invitation was likely to be made until the ball tampering controversy was settled. It added that this was likely to take "many years".

It has been alleged that deliberately scuffing one side of the ball and polishing the other side with sweat helped Pakistan bowlers obtain an unfair advantage during their 1992 series against England.

The names of current star bowlers Washim Akram, Waqar Younis and Aaqib Javed were all mentioned in the Sarfraz-Lamba libel hearings. Wasim Akram was said to have denied "learning anything" from Sarfraz and felt very angry about the allegations.

No Pak-England Test this century: Imran



LONDON, Nov 21: Pakistan may not play England at cricket this century because of bad feeling runs so deep over ball tampering allegations, according to former Pakistan captain Imran Khan, reports AFP.

The ball tampering libel case between Sarfraz Nawaz and Allan Lamb has driven cricketering relations between the two

countries to an all-time low. The two Test series were due to play two Test series in the next seven years, but the Sunday Telegraph quoted Imran as saying that "Nothing has been organised." Imran said no match was likely "this century".

Sarfraz, a former Pakistani Test fast bowler, sued Lamb after the former England batsman claimed in a newspaper article that Sarfraz had told him about ball tampering techniques.

The court hearing ended on

IMRAN KHAN

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TARUN WIN

A captain's knock by Indian Rajinder Singh revved Tarun up to get Wari down to earth after three matches of uninterrupted success in the days Navana Premier Division cricket league at the Dhanmondhi Cricket Stadium yesterday.

Rajinder made 57 not out with the help of a sixer and three fours as Tarun made 123 for four in 34.4 overs to beat Wari by six wickets.

Earlier Wari batted first and were shot out for 119 in 40.3 overs against a varied Tarun attack. Opi offered some resistance with 28 followed by Halim Shah who hit three fours in his 26. Shri Lankan opener Sharat was the only other batsman to get into the double figures with 18.

Tarun's Indian star Sanjeev Sharma mopped up with the tail with clinical, precise exhibition of medium pace bowling to finish with sterling statistics of four for 14.

Munna backed him well with two for 27 and Rajinder, who made light work of Wari's challenge with the ball later, took two for 16.

TODAY'S MATCHES

MSC vs Brothers (Dhaka Stadium)

Kalabagan vs Victoria (DCS)

Windies qualify for semis in style

NEW DELHI, Nov 21: Favourites West Indies defeated Zimbabwe by 134 runs Sunday, and reached the semi-finals of the 5-nation limited over cricket championship, reports AP.

Desmond Haynes' 75 and Roland Holder's 50 helped the Caribbeans to a total of 233 for 9 wickets in the allotted 50 overs.

But the modest score was enough for the West Indies pace bowlers to claim victory. They restricted Zimbabwe to 99 runs in 36.3 overs.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of the Hero Cup day-night limited-overs international between West Indies and Zimbabwe played here Sunday:

WEST INDIES: Lara c Streak b Brain 4; Haynes run out 75; Simmons lbw b Streak 0; Richardson c A Flower b Streak 5; Holder c Brandes b Peall 50; Arthurton run out 16; Harper b Rennie 26; Cummins c Brain b Rennie 26; W Benjamin run out 8; K Benjamin not out 1; Extras: (b-2; lb-9; w-9; nb-2) 22; Total: (for nine wickets, 50 overs) 233; Fall of wickets: 1-10: 2-24: 3-38; 4-130; 5-156; 6-169; 7-212; 8-213; 9-233.

Did not bat: J R Murray

ZIMBABWE: A Flower c Haynes b K Benjamin 22; G Flower c Simmons b W Benjamin 7; Campbell lbw b W Benjamin 0; Houghton lbw b Simmons 22; Waller b Simmons 9; Whittall c Cummins b Harper 9; Peall b Cummins 10; Brain c Harper b Simmons 1; Streak not out 0; Rennie lbw b Cummins 0; Brandes did not bat (injured); Extras: (lb-9; w-5; nb-5) 19; Total (all out, 36.3 overs): 99; Fall of wickets: 1-23; 2-23; 3-43; 4-67; 5-80; 6-88; 7-91; 8-98; 9-99.

Result: West Indies won by 134 runs

Man-of-the-match: Desmond Haynes.

Div II hockey

Victoria Sporting Club and Farashganj Sporting Club will now have to battle it out in a play-off to decide who win the Green Delta Second Division hockey league and earn promotion in next year's Senior Division.

Both the teams finished on 19 points from seven matches each after completing their league engagements with arithmetic victories.

Farashganj, however, are likely to have the psychological edge for their convincing 4-0 victory in their last match over Agrani Bank.

Jahangir in World Open semis



KARACHI, Nov 21: Jahangir Khar scored one of the most notable victories of his remarkable career when he beat world number four Brett Martin to reach the semi-finals of the World Open on Sunday, reports Reuter.

But even if he goes on to win the world crown for a seventh time, the 29-year-old Pakistani insists that this is his last tournament.

"I have made up my mind," he said after his 17-16, 17-15, 15-11 victory. "I shall play for Pakistan in the team event next week, then it is over."

"I started my career in Karachi and I intend to finish here and give the fans one last chance to see me."

Jahangir's performance against Australian Martin was staggering in that he came into the tournament having played just one event in nine months — and that without much distinction in Qatar last week.

Martin has been playing well on the circuit, winning the Hong Kong Open and reaching the semi-finals in Qatar. But he was visibly shocked as Jahangir took the game to him from the start.

Jahangir moved ahead 8-4 with superb driving to a perfect length. Martin tried to hit back but each time he got close Jahangir produced stunning winners.

At 14-11 Jahangir missed three game points. He missed a further two at 16-14 but finally clinched the first game with a perfect return of service.

Martin led 3-0 in the second, but thoughts of a Jahangir collapse were soon dispelled as he took the next six points. He was

even beating the Australian at his own short game at the front of the court.

Martin led briefly again at 10-8 but Jahangir stormed back to game point at 14-13. He missed that, but finally won 17-15.

Martin again led 3-0 in the third but once more he was helpless as Jahangir hit back with a succession of drop shots. Jahangir's semifinal opponent will be Martin's brother, Roger, or English eighth seed Chris Walker.

England already have one semifinalist in fourth seed Peter Marshall. He beat compatriot Tony Hands 15-8, 15-11, 15-14. Earlier on Saturday Jahangir's compatriot Zarak Jahan Khan screamed that he would not play for his country in next week's World Team Squash championships after a stormy exit.

"I will not play for Pakistan; that's it, that's the end. I refuse to play for them," Zarak shouted as he left the court after a 15-12, 15-8, 15-11 defeat by second-seed Rodney Martin of Australia.

Zarak's extraordinary outburst followed a series of disputes with New Zealand referee Peter Highted during the match.

He came off the court four times to remonstrate with the official and was given a conduct warning for slamming the ball into the crowd.

"That referee is useless," he said afterwards. "I asked him to be changed before the match, but they would not do it. He gave me nothing."

"When I play in England or Australia they pick the referees. Now I am playing in Pakistan and the tournament officials do

nothing to help me. I just wanted a fair referee, not this man."

"Nobody ever listens to me or the other Pakistani players — not even when we are in Pakistan. I have had enough of it." Later, after he had calmed down, Zarak left open the question about next week, when he is listed to play number two behind Jansher Khan in the team event.

"I don't know whether I shall play for Pakistan now. I was angry and out of my mind when I came off court. I have calmed down now, but I am still angry with the referee and Pakistani officials. I shall make up my mind whether to play for Pakistan in the next few days."

"Ironically, Highted is the only world panel referee at the event. Most of the matches are being refereed by present or former players and there has been virtually no trouble."

Zarak, the world number 13, certainly seemed the victim of a couple of harsh decisions, but his anger mostly stemmed from frustration, as after a close first game he had been outplayed by the Australian.

It was sweet revenge for Martin, who had gone down to a shock defeat by Zarak in the first round of the British Open in London earlier this year.

But there was plenty for Pakistani fans to cheer, with top seed Jansher Khan and six times champion Jahangir Khan both reaching the quarter-finals.

Jansher dismissed the challenge of qualifier Peter Nicol of Scotland 15-4, 15-11, 15-5 in 49 minutes and Jahangir overcame old rival Robs Norman of New Zealand 17-5, 15-12, 9-15, 15-12 in 58 minutes.

Kim comes down to earth



HONG KONG, Nov 21: World number one Thomas Stuer-Lauridsen of Denmark ended the dream run of South Korea's Kim Hak Kyun in the semi-finals of the 60,000 US dollar Hong Kong Open, here Saturday, reports AFP.

The tall Dane blitzed the Korean 15-0, 15-6 in a one-sided men's singles semi-final lasting a mere 32 minutes.

Lauridsen, winner of three tournaments this year and top ranked on the International Badminton Federation list, will meet Indonesian Hermawan Susanto in the final today.

Susanto beat compatriot Ardy Wiranata 15-6, 6-15, 15-10 in the other semi-final.

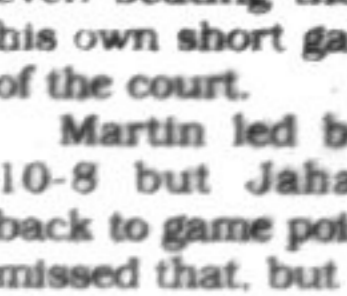
The women's singles final will be an all-Chinese affair with Ye Zhaoying meeting Han Jingna.

Playing in only his second Grand Prix semi-final in his career, Kim looked completely out of place and was unable to respond to Lauridsen's attacking play.

The 6-foot 3-inch (190 centimetres) Dane used his height effectively, jump-smashing superbly to keep the unheralded Korean on the defensive.

The 18-year-old Han, winner of last week's China Open, de-

Honeymoon over Sydney men



SYDNEY, Nov 21: Sydney's stunning victory in the hard-fought contest to host the turn-of-the-century Olympics has turned sour for the people who masterminded it, reports AFP.

Citizens of this sporting city by the harbour are now being treated regularly by the media to the spectacle of an increasingly bitter political brawl between organisers of the successful bid and those who later took charge of organising the Games.

Two months after images of jubilant Australians celebrating victory in Monaco were beamed to the rest of the world, the Olympics "has become a lightning rod for leadership tensions; thwarted ambitions, bitterness and jealousy," one paper said here Sunday.

New South Wales state premier John Fahey was called "a fool" over his handling of the 2000 Olympics victory in a letter to him by the former president of his own Liberal Party, John Valder.

The private letter, in which Valder warned Fahey "will be the real and ultimate loser," was published in full here Sunday.

The row had been brewing since Fahey decided after Monaco to take control of the Olympics himself, isolating the popular minister responsible for the bid, Bruce Baird, and effectively dropping bid committee chairman Rod McGeogh and general manager Bob Elphinstone.

It flared Friday when McGeogh, the man given most credit for bringing the Games back to Sydney, walked out of a 1,000 dollar (670 US) ahead celebration dinner organised by the Australian Olympic Committee, claiming his former bid colleagues had been snubbed.

Speakers at the dinner included Fahey.

A number of guests at the dinner expressed disappointment McGeogh's name was mentioned only once — when he received the biggest cheer from the 1,500 guests — while Baird received no mention at all.

McGeogh, a lawyer, reportedly said he was "extremely disappointed" for members of the

bid board who "had worked for three years for nothing."

They had masterminded the communications strategy, the cultural programme, the financial budgeting and "still haven't got a thank you from anyone."

Baird, whom McGeogh said had taken the political risk "and worked his backside off," had received no mention at all.

"I just find that very ungracious of people," said McGeogh, who added that he had left his invitation on the table and walked out with his wife "into the night."

Baird said McGeogh should have been on stage and invited to make a speech instead of being relegated to the floor.

Valder, who as an unpaid volunteer helped attract corporate sponsorship for the bid, warned Fahey in his letter that his behaviour could threaten his leadership.

"Since you returned from Monte Carlo, you've been seen as nothing more or less than a fool," Valder said in the letter, which he co-confirmed writing.

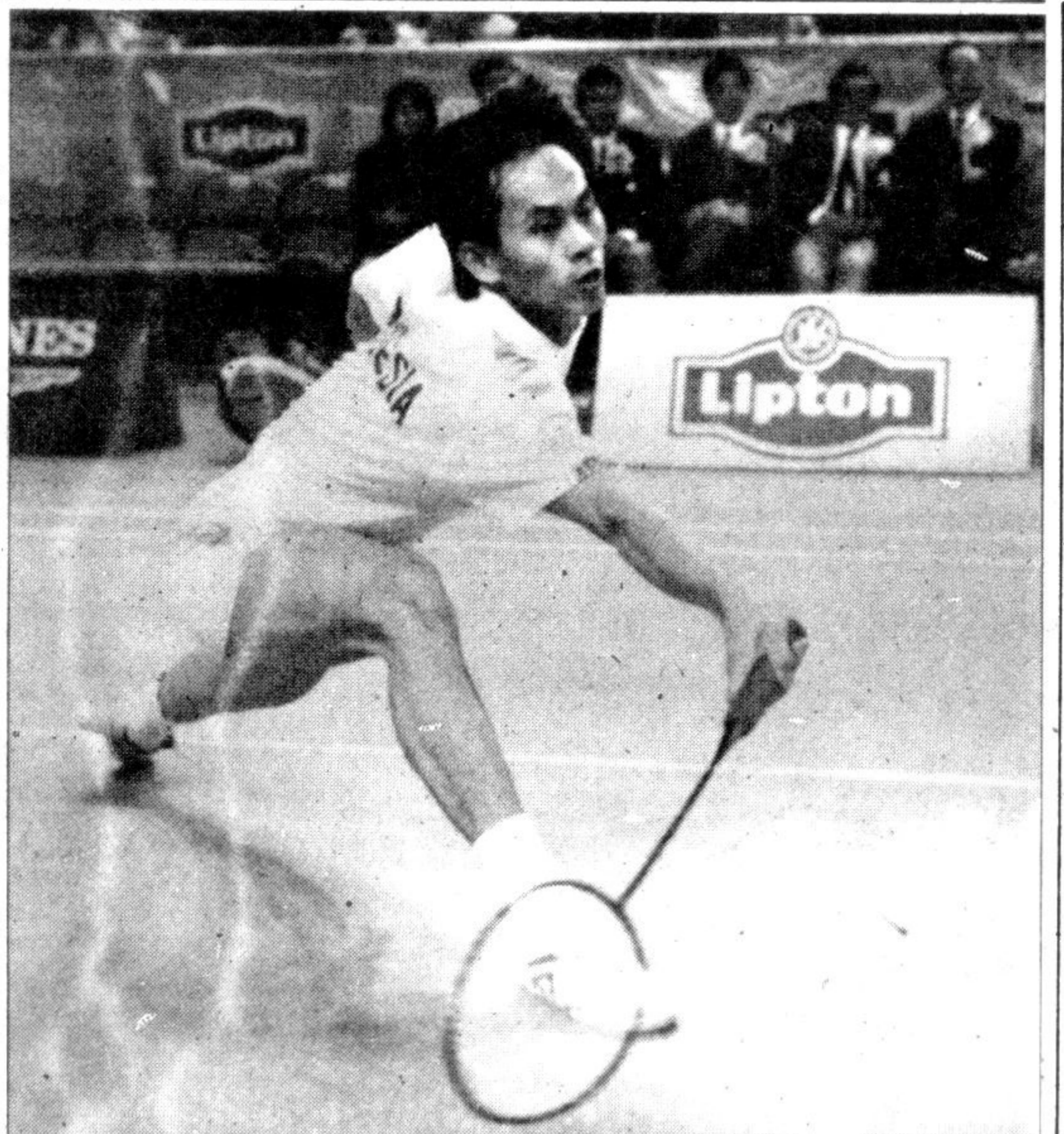
Valder admitted to being angry because Fahey had offered him a position on the games organising committee last August, but later withdrew the offer and gave the position to someone else.

"In my 20 years or so in public life, I have never been treated so shabbily or so publicly humiliated — not even in the days when I was president of the Liberal Party," Valder wrote.

A spokesman for the premier said the government did not comment on any private correspondence it received.

Angel tunes up

STRAVANGER, Norway, Nov 21: Angel Martino, competing in a tuneup meet for next month's inaugural Short Course World Championships, broke one world record and another American mark Saturday, reports AP.



Hermawan Susanto of Indonesia at full stretch in his match against Denmark's Thomas Stuer-Lauridsen at the Hong Kong Open badminton championships yesterday. Susanto was a convincing winner 15-7, 15-4.

— AFP photo