

Wang wins Jesse Owens award

NEW YORK, Jan 14: China's Wang Junxia, who shattered world records at 10,000 and 3,000 metres last September, on Thursday was named winner of the 1994 Jesse Owens International Trophy award, reports Reuter.

Wang is the first Asian to win the honour, presented annually to the athlete who best personifies excellence in athletic performance.

In a span of just six days, in September, Wang broke the 10,000 metres world record, twice set the 3,000 metres world mark and ran the second fastest ever 1,500 metres.

She finished with 134 points in voting by an international panel of electors, beating out American sprinter and hurdler Gail Devers and Algerian middle distance runner Nouredine Morelli.

The announcement of this year's winner was made by 1948 Olympic long jump bronze medalist Herbert Douglas Jr, president of the International Amateur Athletic Association and founder of the award.

Last year the Jesse Owens award went to Olympic champion gymnast Vitaly Scherbo of Ukraine.

Sanders retires

PALO ALTO, California, Jan 14: Double Olympic champion Summer Sanders on Thursday said she is retiring from competitive swimming, reports Reuter.

The 21-year-old Sanders scooped up four medals at the 1992 Olympics in Barcelona, including gold in the 200-metre butterfly and 4x100 medley relay and bronze in the 400 m from Barcelona.

"This was not a spontaneous decision," said Sanders, who also took home silver in the 200-metre individual medley and bronze in the 400 m from Barcelona.

"After taking off last summer I realised that there's life outside of swimming," Sanders said.

"When I returned in the fall, I didn't have the same goals and competitive drive that I've had in the past. I wasn't the same swimmer."

Sanders, a senior at Stanford University, led her school to a US Collegiate Swimming Championship and twice was named NCAA swimmer-of-the-year.

Two-year ban for doping a must

LAUSANNE, Switzerland, Jan 14: All sports will have to operate a two-year ban for drug use if they want to be a part of the Olympic Games, sports chiefs decided here Thursday, reports AFP.

Representatives of 34 Olympics sports — except cycling — agreed to the two-year ban.

Eagles and Lions hobbled by cash problems

Cameroon's spectacular success at Italia '90 ensured that African soccer is longer dismissed as a novelty. But when Cameroon and Nigeria take to the field in the 1994 World Cup in the United States in June, reports Gemini News Service, they may have already faced their toughest battles.

By Phil Minshull

For two of the three African teams which have fought their way into the World Cup soccer contest in the United States in June, the toughest battles may come before a ball has been kicked.

Socrates, the great Brazilian star of a decade ago, once said: "Too many pitches are becoming battlefields." Unfortunately for Africa's top teams, too many battles are still having to be won off the pitch to give them a realistic chance of capturing the ultimate prize.

The biggest battle at the moment is money, or the lack of it.

The Super Eagles of Nigeria are already in disarray, though they are rated Africa's best prospect and must be reasonably happy to find themselves facing Argentina, Bulgaria and Greece in their opening round.

A squad of mainly European-based professionals, Nigeria is one of the tournament's outsiders, while their two European opponents are among the weakest in the final 24 and Argentina is only a shadow of the side that went to the final four years ago in Italy.

But team captain Stephen Keshi has more immediate problems to contend with. "We don't have quality jerseys and track suits. We hardly get boots to wear," he complains.

"We know what other players receive in other countries. Our match bonuses are not paid, some players have to buy their own tickets and refunds are not forthcoming," he moaned to local journalists.

Wealthy businessman and sports philanthropist Moshhood Abiola, widely regarded as the winner of the annulled June presidential election in Nigeria, promised the Super Eagles squad \$100,000, but with the



ROGER MILLA
I can't let them down'

magazine that he profited from transfer deals for members of the team.

Cameroon — the indomitable Lions — were the surprise heroes of Italy but their first-round draw looks tougher than that faced by the Nigerians. Their match against three-time champions Brazil in San Francisco promises to be one of the most colourful of the tournament, pitting two of the world's most popular teams against each other.

The side must first face Sweden in smoggy Los Angeles, and will also have to go up against a tough Russian team. But as with Nigeria, Cameroon's difficulties have begun already. The promised prize for qualifying for the US competition was \$6,000 but privately most players doubt whether they will ever receive it.

Following their success in Italy, Cameroon embarked on a series of lucrative friendly matches but little of the money has been condemned by the sport's world governing body FIFA. Cameroon will not be able to play any home matches in the run-up to the tournament.

England because he was unable to get his cash up front.

Milla is now proving to be the players' champion. He has recently taken over as executive manager and one of his main aims has been to stop the money earned in forthcoming matches being plundered by government and Cameroon Football Federation officials as has sometimes happened in the past. A \$1.5 million licensing deal with the British sportswear maker, Mitre, to sell replicas of the national team's shirts around the world will also provide uniforms and badly needed funds.

"I was tempted to give up my connections with Cameroon football," said Milla. "But I have been with the national team for 19 years. I can't let them down."

Even more amazingly, he may take to the field in USA '94. In October, the country's President, Paul Biya, made a personal appeal to Milla, telling him to get ready in case he was needed. Certainly he would be the people's choice if he was to play, although he may not be able to last for the full '90 minutes.

"Even at the age of 41, for 40 minutes he is worth three attackers," said Michael Ndze, Cameroon's leading television commentator. Milla will be 42 when the finals come around and if he makes an appearance will become the world's oldest international. Close on his heels will be goalkeeper Jean-Antoine Bell, a veteran of the 1982 and 1990 campaigns, who has also turned 40.

An added blow to Cameroon's World Cup preparation is that the national stadium in the capital, Yaounde, has been condemned by the sport's world governing body FIFA. Cameroon will not be able to play any home matches in the run-up to the tournament.

About the Author: Phil Minshull is a British journalist and broadcaster with a special interest in African sport.



Gabriela Sabatini of Argentina serves to Germany's Barbara Rittner during their quarter-final match at the New South Wales Open in Sydney yesterday. Sabatini won 6-1, 6-3. —AFP photo

It's always hard to say 'bye'



SYDNEY, Jan 14: Sport's golden rule is "it ain't over till it's over" and no-one clings to that maxim longer than the modern tennis professional, reports Reuter.

For the stars who travel the globe, inhabit the best hotels and attract worldwide fame there are two words they dare not utter. The bigger the name, the harder it is to say "I quit".

Bjorn Borg's notably unsuccessful comeback, instead of persuading dozens of fading pros to toss their rackets on the fire at Christmas, seems to be having the opposite effect at the age of 29.

"Why did I come back? I was missing playing a little bit.

I also realised I'm not going to be as good at anything else as I am at tennis. The days you perfect the game it's a great

feeling.

"It's the start of my 17th year and although full-time singles is getting very hard, I think I'd find it hard to cut the tour and singles at the same time. It's a dilemma to say when the end will come."

Shriver has yet to sign up for any tournaments beyond Beijing in mid-February but the sight of her contemporary Tracy Austin returning to Grand Slam competition in Melbourne may give her another reason to hang on.

And then there is Lendl, still driven at almost 34 despite being close to dropping out of the world's top 20.

The Czech-born American claims he's still not the oldest guy out there. He is.

Mats Wilander claims he's back, Pat Cash is determined to prove he can win again. Pam Shriver simply can't bring herself to give up and then there's Ivan Lendl who still treats the idea of retirement as if it were a deadly virus.

The quartet between them have won an astonishing 283 singles and doubles titles over the past 15 years. More pertinently, they have raked in almost \$35 million dollars in prize money alone and plenty more in endorsements. Nest-eggs don't come any bigger but life after tennis is still hard to come to terms with.

"When something enters my life that makes me want to stop playing I'll stop," said Wilander this week, reflecting on a dismal 6-2, 6-1 loss to Lendl in the opening round of the New South Wales Open.

"I can see the finish line," admitted the 31-year-old American. "Even when I win these days it's close but I still enjoy a lot of the life and the traveling.

"I will go away eventually but I'm not going to be coming back. If you don't play for two or three years, it's too tough. You're trying to simply get back to where you were, while everyone else has improved. I don't think it's possible to come back," he said.

The 28-year-old Australian insists that "the motivation has to come from the inside" but for Shriver the problem is letting go.

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German Sports Federation (DSV) president Hans Hansen added: "Experience has shown that whenever some sort of attack happens, unfortunately there is someone else who wants to copy... these people are ill. They are confused in their minds."

"There is the danger of copy-cat effect... we have to live with it."

Moeller, 25, was rushed to hospital after the woman thrust a 20-cm knife into his back while he was sitting in the main stand watching a match in the tournament.

After an operation on Wednesday night, hospital officials said the player's life was not in danger but the knife had pierced his diaphragm and scratched his liver.

Ondieki Kenya's sportsman-of-the-year

NAIROBI, Jan 14: Yobes Ondieki, the first man to run 10,000 under 27 minutes, was named as Kenya's sportsman-of-the-year on Thursday at a ceremony shunned by the country's best distance runners, reports Reuter.

Ondieki, who will be 33 next month, won the vote against Ishmael Kirui and his elder brother Richard Chelimo, who were second and third respectively.

Ondieki beat the 27-minute barrier for the 25-lap race when he clocked 26 mins 58.38 seconds at Oslo on July 10 last year. His time was 10 better than the world record set by Chelimo just five days previously.

Sports Journalists and administrators named 15-year-old Selimah Barsosio, who won a bronze medal in the 10,000 metres at the World Championships in Stuttgart last year, as sportswoman-of-the-year.

The winning athletes were not present at the ceremony.

Organisers said they sent out early invitations but Kenya's top sports men and women often ignored such functions because of scant government recognition and the lack of financial rewards for them.

Kenya also launched its sports Hall of Fame for the highest achievement and the legendary Kipkoge Keino was the first inductee.

Keino, who will be 54 on Monday, won the 1500 metres at the 1968 Mexico City Olympics and the 3,000 metres steeplechase at the 1972 Munich Olympics.

He also won Commonwealth and African titles and re-wrote the record books for middle distance running in the 1960s and 1970s.

Fatal imitation

BONN, Jan 14: A deaf and dumb woman thrust a long kitchen knife into a soccer player at a tournament on Wednesday because she wanted to copy the stabbing of tennis star Monica Seles last April, German police said on Thursday.

The 28-year-old woman, who was arrested immediately after the attack on Hamburg player Oliver Moeller at a Stuttgart indoor tournament, wanted to become famous with the copy-cat attack which Germany's top sports official described as the action of a sick person.

"At this stage of the investigation it looks a copy-cat attack," Stuttgart police spokesman Edgar Steinbrenner said.

"She knows about the Seles attack and it seems she wanted to get publicity."

German Sports Federation (DSV) president Hans Hansen added: "Experience has shown that whenever some sort of attack happens, unfortunately there is someone else who wants to copy... these people are ill. They are confused in their minds."

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CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Frequent-ly, in verse

4 Bases on

9 Telly inits.

12 Use 17 Across

13 Expiate

14 Actor Stephen

15 Type of woven carpet

17 Crew need

18 Shell-game cache

19 Sorcerer

21 Caution lights' colors

24 Only slightly

25 Remote

26 Witness

28 Salts city

31 EPA concern

33 Director Peckinpah

35 Father

36 "to please"

38 Laura Petrie's hubby

40 Margery of rhyme

41 Small drink

43 Library offerings

45 Noted jockey

47 Numerical prefix

48 Ms. Farrow

49 Medieval weapons

54 Fool

55 Sill

56 "Rocks"

57 Bottom line

58 One of the Plinys

59 Boston squad, for short

60 Crew

61 Sphere

62 Backing

63 Teeter-

64 Card game

65 1965 song,