

Sport

Edberg picks his way easily

INDIAN WELLS, Calif. Mar 4: Third-seeded Stefan Edberg of Sweden advanced to the quarterfinals of the Champions Cup on Thursday, but No 6 Michael Chang and No 7 Todd Martin were both upset victims, reports AP.

Edberg needed only 68 minutes to eliminate Fabrice Santoro of France 6-2, 6-3. A day earlier, Santoro beat Andre Agassi, who was playing in only his second tournament in the last five months.

Chang lost to No 12 Alexander Volkov of Russia 6-4, 1-6, 6-3. Martin, who reached the finals of the Australian Open in January, was beaten by No 10 Petr Korda of the Czech Republic 6-4, 3-6, 6-2.

In other third-round action, eighth-seeded Thomas Muster of Austria beat Jonathan Stark 6-4, 6-4; Daren Cahill of Australia outlasted No 11 Marc Rosset of Switzerland 6-4, 5-7, 7-6 (7-5); No 16 Carlos Costa of Spain rallied to beat Patrick Rafter of Australia 4-6, 6-4, 7-5, and Aaron Krickstein came back for a 2-6, 6-4, 6-4 victory over Patrick McEnroe.

Top-seeded Pete Sampras was scheduled to face No 15 MaliVai Washington in a night match to complete the third round.

In Friday's quarterfinals, Edberg will play Cahill; Volkov will meet Krickstein; Korda will face Costa, and Muster will meet the winner of the Sampras-Washington match.

When Korda and Martin took the stadium court to play the first match of the day, the temperature was 106 degrees F (41 C). And it got hotter as

the day went on, reaching a peak of 120 degrees F (48 C) on the court.

"I don't think he (Chang) did so well because he was so wet," Volkov said after scoring his upset, referring to the fact that Chang was soaked with sweat.

It won't be easy for Sampras

TOKYO, Mar 4: World number one Pete Sampras will return to the Ariake Coliseum in defence of his singles' title in the star-studded 1.21 million dollar Japan Open Tennis tournament next month, reports AFP.

The 22-year-old American, winner of three consecutive Grand Slam events — Wimbledon, the US Open and the Australian Open, became world number one after winning the Japan Open here last year.

Fifty-six of the world's leading players will take part in the men's hard court singles' competition April 4-10 vying for the top prize of 156,000 dollars and 230 computer points, the organisers said.

Sampras is expected to face threats from Germans Michael Stich and Boris Becker, and compatriots Michael Chang, Brad Gilbert, last year's runner-up, and 1980 champion Ivan Lendl.

Other prominent players include Wally Masur of Australia, Guy Forget of France, Israel's Amos Mansdorf, Americans Jonathan Stark and Patrick McEnroe, and Greg Rusedski of Canada.

Women's domain in doldrums?

sponsor.

What is most troubling for the future of women's tennis, however, is not the unsettling sponsorship void, but a lack of competition.

As the 1994 season gets into full swing, there is little indication of when Monica Seles or Jennifer Capriati will play again and no one seems capable of challenging Steffi Graf. To make matters worse, nine-time Wimbledon champion Martina Navratilova — one of the sport's biggest draws — has announced that this year will be her last.

"We really need to have Monica and Jennifer back," Graf said. "To lose them would be very difficult. There is no doubt that they are two of the biggest personalities and women's tennis misses them."

The plight of the women's tour was painfully evident at the 400,000 dollars Evert Cup, which ended here on Sunday.

Graf rolled through the event without losing a set and the stadium was never more than half full, even for the final.

The men's tour, by contrast, is thriving.

At this week's 1,720,000 dollars Champions Cup, 14 of the top 18-ranked men are competing. The tournament is being televised every day internationally and the same stadium was two-thirds full on opening day.

"The women must act now," said one agent at international management group, which represents several players and owns several tour events.

"If the perception is that the tour is in trouble now, it will probably stay that way for a couple years. They need to turn things around soon, or it will snowball."

Things unravelled in 1993 for the most popular and richest women's sport in the world, offering more than 33 million dollars a year in prize money.

Goycochea palmed an innocuous cross into his own net in a 2-2 draw with Platense on Sunday.

The incident followed a similar mishap in a pre-season match against archrivals Boca Juniors in February when Goycochea let a free kick go under his arm and into the path of Boca forward Alberto Marcio, who scored the game's only goal.

River Plate coach Daniel Passarella announced after a training session Wednesday that Goycochea was dropped for today's crucial championship match with Deportivo Mandiyu. He will be replaced by Javier Sodero.

Passarella, Argentina's 1978 World Cup winning captain, has never had any qualms about dropping top players when they make mistakes.

Batting bothers Rutherford

Volkov had lost his three previous matches with Chang in this tournament.

"I don't think he (Chang) did so well because he was so wet," Volkov said after scoring his upset, referring to the fact that Chang was soaked with sweat.

"I played so well in the first set," Volkov said. "I didn't make any mistakes. Michael did not play very well today. He played defensive, he made too many mistakes. I felt confident. I hit short balls and won a lot of points."

Chang said the two-hour, nine-minute match was "a little strange."

"I was a little bit flat," Chang said. "I made a few unforced errors that really hurt me. I've had success against Alexander in the past. He was not only hitting winners, I was making errors, so it was tough to beat him."

Edberg has been virtually unchallenged in his first two matches at the Hyatt Grand Champions Resort, losing a total of only nine games.

"Overall, I've played solid," he said. "I was not necessarily hitting the ball very hard, but I was coming in. I'm playing well enough to win."

The Cahill-Rosset match, which lasted over two hours, ended on a strange note. Cahill was leading 6-4 in the third-set tiebreaker and was serving for the match when he double-faulted. However, Rosset then double-faulted to end the match. Rosset smashed his racquet on the court in frustration after his double-fault.

"I would have been upset if I would have lost, too," Cahill said. "The difference in the match was a point here or there."

The semifinals in the tournament sponsored by Newsweek will be played Saturday with the finals Sunday.

TEAMS:

NEW ZEALAND: Ken Rutherford (captain), Mark Gretbatch, Bryan Young, Andrew Jones, Shane Thomson, Chris Cairns, Chris Harris, Tony Blain, Matthew Hart, Gavin Larsen, Danny Morrison, Chris Pringle, Richard de Groen (two to be omitted).

PAKISTAN (probable): Salim Malik (captain), Saeed Anwar, Aamir Sohail, Asif Mujtaba, Inzamamul Haq, Basit Ali, Rashid Latif, Wasim Akram, Akram Raza, Waqar Younis, Ataur Rehman.

Pride becomes Atherton's last refuge

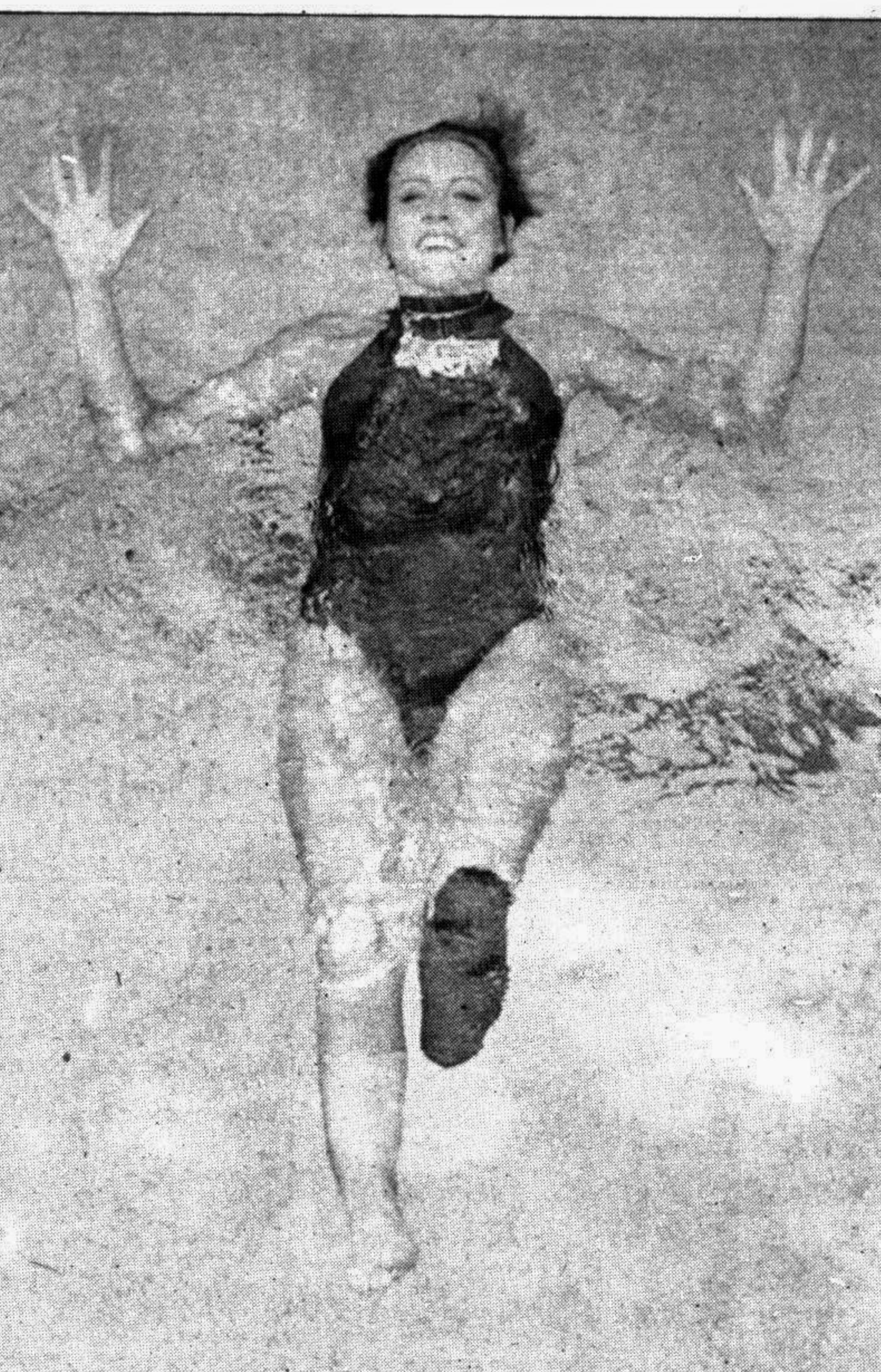
PORT-OF-SPAIN, TRINIDAD: Mar 4: England captain Michael Atherton called on his men to play for pride in the two one-day matches against the West Indies here this weekend after their humiliating defeat in St Vincent on Wednesday, reports AFP.

Atherton's side went down by 165 runs after the West Indies smashed 313 for six in 50 overs, their largest total against England and the most runs England have ever conceded in the limited over format.

Graf, the top seed, continued her season-long rampage with a 6-2, 6-4 victory over Elena Likhovtseva of Kazakhstan. Graf has won the three tournaments she has entered this year and has yet to lose a set in winning all 19 matches. Dating to last year, Graf has won 68 of 69 matches.

"It's not fun to be out there with the wind," Graf said. "It's impossible to play good tennis because you can't control the ball. I didn't like it much to say the least."

Graf was able to control play



British model Heather Mills, who lost a leg last year when she was knocked down by a police motorcycle, swims a 5,000 metre marathon for the BT National Swimathon '94 in London on Thursday. — AFP photo

Graf, Arantxa move into qtrs



DELRAY BEACH, Fla. Mar 4: With 35 mph (56 kph) winds making for chaotic tennis, Steffi Graf and Arantxa Sanchez Vicario won in straight sets Thursday to advance to the quarterfinals of the Virginia Slims of Florida, reports AP.

The No. 3 seed, Amanda Coetzer, was not so fortunate. Chanda Rubin, making the most of a bullet serve, beat the South African 3-6, 6-2, 7-5 in 56-61.

No. 2 Sanchez Vicario plowed through No. 12 Julie Halard of France 6-1, 6-1 in 43 minutes. Sanchez Vicario dropped just 18 points the entire match.

"Sometimes you think the ball is very long and suddenly it's a drop shot," the Spaniard said. "I just have to concentrate more on every point."

Vicario Sanchez will play No. 16 Stephanie Rottier of the Netherlands, who upset No. 6 Judith Wiesner of Austria 6-2, 6-2, 6-4.

No. 5 Helena Suckova of the Czech Republic and No. 9 Natalia Medvedeva of Ukraine advanced to the quarters with victories over Florenica Labat of Argentina and Lori McNeil of the United States.

Coetzer, ranked 14th, was

coming off a final appearance

at Indian Wells, Calif.

last week and had reached the

two semifinals in this event.

when it counted, converting five of six break-point opportunities.

The wind can be an equalizer," the world's No. 1 player said. "In this weather, anything can happen. You've got to watch out."

Graf will play German compatriot Sabine Hack, the seventh seed, on Friday. Hack defeated No. 13 seed Brenda Schultz of the Netherlands 7-5, 6-1.

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