

Hockey deadlock resolved

Sports Reporter

Club is the ultimate factor in any discipline of sports in Bangladesh. The truism surfaced once again yesterday as the country's hockey players decided to shelve all the pompous plans of rebellion and join the camp called in connection with Bangladesh's participation in Hiroshima Asia.

Agitating under the banner of Hockey Players' Association (HPA) with a view to force the Bangladesh Hockey Federation (BHF) into announcing the dates for players' transfers and the First Division league, the players had earlier threatened to boycott the national camp. Things really looked ominous as only seven players turned up for training on the opening day on April 27.

With BHF out of its depths to break in the reezy players, clubs whose want of funds actually brought the whole thing to a pass, were approached to resolve the snowballing crisis.

In a joint petition club supremos recently called for rapprochement among the warring parties.

With the career of the players rather too heavily hinged on the officials, the message or one should say the veiled threat immediately produced its desired effect. The rebels became good boys alluding to promises of transfers by June and of course, the worn out cliché of national interest.

The full-fledged national camp will resume at tomorrow.

TT coaching

Sports Reporter

A month-long table tennis coaching programme for junior paddlers under the auspices of Bangladesh Table Tennis Federation will begin at the Dhanmondi Wooden floor gymnasium at 3.30 pm from May 4.

Yzaga stuns Edberg

MADRID, Apr 30: Peru's Jaime Yzaga stunned top-seeded Stefan Edberg with a straight-set victory Friday in the quarterfinals of the dlr 800,000 Madrid Open, ending the Swede's 15-set win streak in Madrid, reports AP.

The 26-year-old Yzaga, ranked 28th by the ATP Tour and unseeded at Madrid, won 6-4, 6-2.

"The important thing was to keep pressure on him, especially with his return of serve," said Yzaga, whose last ATP Tour title was last fall in Sydney, Australia.

"Nowadays, lots of players are capable of beating the top players," Yzaga added. "The only exception might be (Pete) Sampras."

"It didn't serve well and I didn't return well," Edberg said. "I never did feel the ball. My timing was off — I was trying too much. I knew this would be a tough match, but I didn't expect to play like this."

In other quarterfinals Friday, No. 3 seed Sergi Bruguera of Spain, defeated No. 5 seed Carlos Costa of Spain 3-6, 6-2, 6-4; Spaniard Alex Corretja defeated Jakob Hlasek of Switzerland 6-3, 6-2; No. 4 seed Thomas Muster of Austria defeated No. 6 Ivan Lendl of the United States 2-6, 6-3, 6-0.

Bruguera faces Corretja in Saturday's semifinals and Muster plays Yzaga.

Minnows muddle through

Sports Reporter

In the first match of the day, Shantinagar Club got off to fine start when they beat Sadharan Bima Kira Sangstha 2-1 in a Group C encounter.

Shantinagar, who were promoted to the First Division this year, got an unexpected lead in the first half when Bima captain Ayub-shot into his own net to thwart a

Parashganj Sporting Club registered a convincing 2-0 win over Eskaton Sabuj Sangha in the DMFA Cup football tournament at the floodlit Dhaka Stadium yesterday.

The First Division team playing its first match of the curtain-raising meet scored once in each half to eliminate Eskaton Sabuj Sangha. The winners will now play Premier Division team Agrani Bank in their next Group B match Monday.

Farashganj, who took full control of the match right from the word go, and came close to scoring in the 14th minute when their striker Liton's header came back to play after hitting the cross piece.

Opponents defender Rafiq made a brilliant save six minutes later clearing the ball from goal line before Farashganj finally took the lead in the 23rd minute.

Midfielder Nayan fired the ball home after receiving a pass from captain Ratan in the danger zone.

Zilani sealed the fate of the match when he took full advantage of an Eskaton defence lapse in the 57th minute of the play with a power-packed right-foot shot from inside box 2-0.

Eskaton, who were totally off-colour in the match, got their only real scoring opportunity in the 67th minute but the feeble shot from substitute Rupom was saved by Farashganj custodian Dilu for a corner.

Tajul Islam of Farashganj was cautioned with yellow card for rough play.

SHANTINAGAR WIN

Athletes to train in Cox's Bazar

The first phase residential coaching camp for the national athletes, who will participate in the 12th Asian Games in Hiroshima, begins in Cox's Bazar today, reports UNB.

Twenty-four athletes, including six females, called up initially by Bangladesh Athletics Federation, will participate in the nearly two-month training programme under one Chinese and four local coaches.

The selected men athletes are: Golam Ambia, Azhar Ali, Giasuddin, Farid Khan Chowdhury, Hemaayet Ali, Solaiman Majumder, Nazrul Islam, Bani Amin, Mostafa Talukder (Army), Milzar Hossain, Manzur Morshed, Bimal Chandra Tahir (BJMC), Tawhidur Rahman, Matul Alam (Rajshahi University), Aslam Khan, Mahboob Alam (Ansar & VDP), Abdur Rahim Nayeem (Navy) and Emdadul Haq Ranju (Customs).

The female athletes are: Rehana Parveen (Customs), Nilufar Yasmin, Lubna Mahmud, Lovely Begum, Jyotsna Afroz (BJMC) and Firoza Khatoun (BTMC).

Mortuza Iqbal Nuri was named the camp commander.

TODAY'S MATCHES

Wari Club vs Dhaka Wanderers Club 5 pm (Dhaka Stadium)

Muktijoddha KC vs Dhanmondi Club 7 pm (Dhaka Stadium)

Red-letter day for SA soccer

JOHANNESBURG, Apr 30: Celebrating the key role played by athletes in the demise of apartheid, South Africa's national soccer team will play Zambia on May 10, the day Nelson Mandela is expected to be sworn in as president, reports AP.

"This will, by far, be the biggest match we have staged in South Africa," Solomon Morewa, president of the national soccer association, told a news conference Friday.

"The match is scheduled for 4 pm at Ellis Park in Johannesburg. The giant screen at the stadium will be used to relay live coverage from Pretoria of Mandela's expected inauguration as South Africa's first black president.

"We are very proud to be part of the inauguration ceremony which starts a new era in our history and delighted that our national soccer team was chosen as the sporting highlight," Morewa said.

Back in the heyday of apartheid in the mid-1980s, when South Africa was the target of a comprehensive sports boycott, soccer established itself as a rare example of multiracial harmony and its officials worked in tandem with the anti-apartheid movement.

Though the fans were — and still are — predominantly black, the top pro league included a mix of mostly white and mostly black teams. One of Soweto's top teams, the Kaizer Chiefs, had a popular white goalie.

The tradition has continued. The national team that beat Zimbabwe last Sunday included three whites in the starting lineup.

Sam Ramsamy, head of the National Olympic Committee and one of the organizers of the inauguration, said soccer was chosen for the historic day because it was "more representative of the majority of the people."

He said rugby, the most popular sport among whites, and track-and-field also were considered.

"Cricket was out because their season has ended," he said. "Soccer, therefore, was on the best vehicle and we have laid a bumper programme which includes top music acts, and believe we will attract a huge crowd."

Though the soccer match will be the first major sports event to take place in the new, democratic South Africa, a team from a white-dominated sport will be the first to compete under the country's new flag.

The national surfing team is scheduled to fly to Brazil on Sunday to compete in the World Championships in Rio de Janeiro starting Tuesday.

The announcement of the soccer match came a year and a day after a plane crash that wiped out virtually all of Zambia's national team.

Regrouping after the tragedy, Zambia built a new team that barely missed out on a berth in the World Cup finals and which placed second in the recent African Nations Cup.

Zambian officials promised to bring a full strength squad to Johannesburg, including overseas-based stars such as the Bwalya brothers Kalusha and Johnson, Harrison Choongo and Douglas Mwambwe.

The South African team to play Zambia will be announced on Tuesday, but Morewa said it was likely to be the same squad that beat Zimbabwe 1-0. That squad included three Turkey-based stars, captain Steve Komhela, Fani Madida and John "Shoes" Moshoeu.

Morewa said, "It was Zambia that had historical links with the South African liberation movement in the days of apartheid and was the first country to show a hand of friendship to us when the apartheid barriers were broken down."

Crowded house

Sports Reporter

Fifteen players with full three points were leading table in the qualifying round of the 20th Metropolis chess championship at the end on the third day at the National Sports Council chess room yesterday.

The players were: Abdul Mobin, Abdullah, Mizanur Rahman, Enamul Hossain, Nooruddin, Riaz Ahmed, Mehdi Hasan, Shawkat Hossain, Arman, Moniruzzaman, Enayet Hossain, Mujibur Rahman, Motiur Rahman, Sharifuzzaman and Majid Rana.

Thirteen players with two and a half points were in the second position.

Controversy mars Kiwi start

LONDON, Apr 30: New Zealand skipper Ken Rutherford was hit on the head by a beamer as the Kiwis' summer tour began controversially against the England Amateur XI on Friday, reports Reuter.

Rutherford stormed off the field, clearly upset by the high full toss delivered by former Essex seamer Alan van Lin, and later went to a local hospital for a precautionary X-ray.

New Zealand, who totalled 288 for four, completed a 189-run victory as the England Amateur XI were bowled out for 149.

Rutherford, who made 34 and was batting in a cap, said, "I've got a bad headache, but I'm fully fit and I'll wear a helmet. I don't want to make a big issue of it. The bowler said he'd tried to bowl a yorker, but there's about six feet of difference between that and what I got."

"The incident has not clouded a good day for us, but for me it did bring back memories of the 1990 tour when I was hit in the face by a bouncer from Chris Lewis."

Top batsman Martin Crowe, playing again after a six-month lay-off with a chronic knee injury, made 56 at a run a ball despite having to limp.

But he says he has to accept that his knee trouble will mean he is never 100 per cent or the rest of his career.

"I felt a bit sluggish and I decided to rest the knee after batting. The knee is a bit sore and I can feel it more when I'm pushing off for a run or playing a stroke."

"It's going to be a bit uncomfortable, but I've got to put up with that."

Apart from his bump on the head, Rutherford was pleased with his team's start to what will be a demanding 10-week tour.

Opener Blair Pocock, one of the many young Kiwis trying to establish themselves as an international force during the next couple of months, anchored the innings with 109 from 149 balls. Only Mark Greatbatch failed against an enthusiastic, but toothless, amateur attack.

Ponting in festive mood

CANBERRA, Apr 30: Ricky Ponting scored 71 runs Saturday to lift an Australian invitation cricket team to a six-wicket victory over an Indian XI in the first of three festival matches between the teams at Manuka Oval, reports AP.

Pace bowler Neil Maxwell took five wickets for 16 runs as the inexperienced Australians dismissed the Indians for 166 in the 46-over contest.

The Australians then scored 169 for four in reply, with nine overs to spare.

Ponting, a Tasmanian who is tipped as a future Australian Test player, was supported by fringe Test player Justin Langer, who scored 50.

The Indians, led by veteran Test run record-holder Sunil Gavaskar, were dismissed in just 43.2 overs despite a promising start.

After solid innings from top-scorer Atul Bedkar with 47 and Sachin Tendulkar with 25, only No 5 batsman Sandeep Patil managed a decent score with 27.

Bedkar was by far the best of the Indian batsmen, smashing his 47 from 54 balls including three fours and two massive sixes — one of which cleared the stand and delayed play for several minutes until the ball could be found.

The Indian tail-order then crumbled as Maxwell bowled with both pace and accuracy.

The game was the first of three limited-over fixtures between the Indians and Australians being held as part of a month-long Indian cultural and trade promotion, underway across Australia.

The second match will be played Sunday.

Scores:

Navy tennis

CHITTAGONG, Apr 30: The annual tennis and squash championship of the Bangladesh Navy concluded at the BNS Issa Khan here yesterday, reports BSS.

BN Flotilla became the overall champions and the Dhaka Naval Area finished runners-up in the five-day meet.

Lt Commander S Kabir and Lt Commander Ashraf Haq clinched the tennis doubles title defeating Commodore AKM Azad and Lt MNK Kishu 6-7, 6-3, 7-6 while Lt MNK Kishu became champion in the singles defeating Lt Commander M Ashraf Haq 6-1, 7-6.

In the squash championship, Lt Commander M A Razzak won the trophy defeating Lt Muhammad Nazrul Islam.

Chief of the Naval Staff Rear Admiral Mohammad Mohaiminul Islam witnessed the final matches as the chief guest and distributed prizes among the winners.

Lara sets Edgbaston afire

BIRMINGHAM, England, Apr 30: West Indian batting star Brian Lara followed up his world record Test score of 375 by hitting a masterful century Friday on his debut for Warwickshire in English county cricket, reports AP.

The left-handed Trinidadian, whose last innings was the world record score against England, appeared to carry on at Edgbaston as he had left off at St John's, Antigua, 11 days ago.

Lara, 24, hit five different Glamorgan bowlers for a six and 16 fours as he reached his century in only 104 minutes.

He raised his bat and helmet aloft after powering a ball from seam bowler Roland Leafevre through extra cover for four.

He struck another six off spin bowler Robert Croft and seven more fours before he was out for 147. Going for a drive through the offside field, he thin-edged a catch to slip fielder Matthew Maynard off Croft's bowling.

Lara needed eight balls to score his first runs as a Warwickshire player, punching the ball through the offside field for a four.

He went on to produce his full range of shots, including a pull off his hips similar to the one in Antigua that took him past Sir Garfield Sobers' 36-year-old record of 365. That one went for four, this one went for six.

Three times Lara was close to getting out although he looked totally in control during his 165-minute innings.

Otis Gibson, a Barbadian taken on by Glamorgan this season, beat him outside the off stump with a rising delivery when he had scored 20. Leafevre found the outside



BRIAN LARA ... 147

edge of Lara's bat when he had reached 68, only for the ball to fall just short of slip fielder Maynard.

And, when he went to pull a ball from Croft to the mid-wicket boundary, he missed

under two hours between lunch and tea.

Lara produced a display of exquisite batting stroke to become Warwickshire's first debut century maker since Tom Moody against Cambridge University in 1990.

The 24-year-old went into bat just after lunch and within 104 minutes he reached three figures with a glorious cover drive.

Lara, inspirational from the moment he square-drove the eighth ball he received for his first boundary, said: "I did feel nervous, but that had nothing to do with all the publicity I have had."

"I wasn't particularly tired afterwards because I didn't have to do much running but I was relieved to get it over with."

England batsman Graham Thorpe underlined his class with a magnificent unbeaten century as he hauled Surrey out of deep trouble against Worcestershire at the Oval.

Thorpe finished on 189 not out, having hit 23 boundaries in an eight-hour innings and helping to drag Surrey from 58 for four overnight to 463 for nine in reply to Worcestershire's first innings 205.

It was the 14th first class century of his career.

Gloucestershire's West Indian captain Courtney Walsh was at his most lethal, taking five for 71 to restrict Somerset to a first innings lead of just 26.

Somerset, resuming at 75 for two in reply to Gloucestershire's 203 were dismissed for 229. Gloucestershire were 135 for four in their second innings.

Will Seles ever return?

UNDATED, Apr 30: Is the brilliant tennis career of Monica Seles over, destroyed by one moment of insanity and 12 months of mental anguish in the aftermath?

A year after she was stabbed in the back by an obsessed fan of Steffi Graf, the question of when Seles will return is less discussed among tennis players and officials than the question of whether she ever will, reports AP.

"Nobody really knows," Graf said at the start of this week's tournament in Hamburg, Germany, where Seles was attacked on court last April 30. "I think it is getting more and more unlikely."

"Women Tennis Association executive director Gerard Smith, at the WTA office in Florida, phrased it a little differently."

"I would say the longer she's out, the more difficult it will be for her to return," Smith said.

"I can only imagine that the traumatic impact that the attack must have had on her put everything else into a different perspective," he said.

The WTA, which is seeking new sponsorship for its tour to replace Kraft and Virginia Slims, desperately needs Seles and other marquee players. Jennifer Capriati left the tour to go back to high school and

there are doubts about her motivation to return this summer. Martina Navratilova plans to retire at the end of the year. Gabriela Sabatini hasn't won anything in a couple of years.

Without Seles, women's tennis has virtually turned into the Steffi Graf Tour. She's won every match she's played this year, dropping only one set along the way, and has captured four straight Grand Slam titles. The last Grand Slam event she lost was the Australian in 1993, when Seles beat her in the final for her eighth Grand Slam title in a career in which she has won dlr 7.4 million.

Yet, despite the WTA's desire to have Seles back, relations with her have been strained since it declined to protect her No 1 ranking during her absence.

"I would hope it would not be a factor in her staying away, but at this stage no one rules out anything," said Smith, who hasn't spoken to Seles since the days after the attack.

"We did what we thought was best for women's tennis, and for the tour. We tried to evaluate our decision with regard to her request for a co-ranking at No 1 in the context of how it would affect everyone. We came to the conclusion that providing her with a co-ranking for an unlimited amount of time would be inappropriate. And if anything the

length of time she's been out suggests that decision was correct."

At the US Open last summer, Smith suggested to WTA board of directors that Seles be given special seeding considerations if she returned. He's since changed his mind.

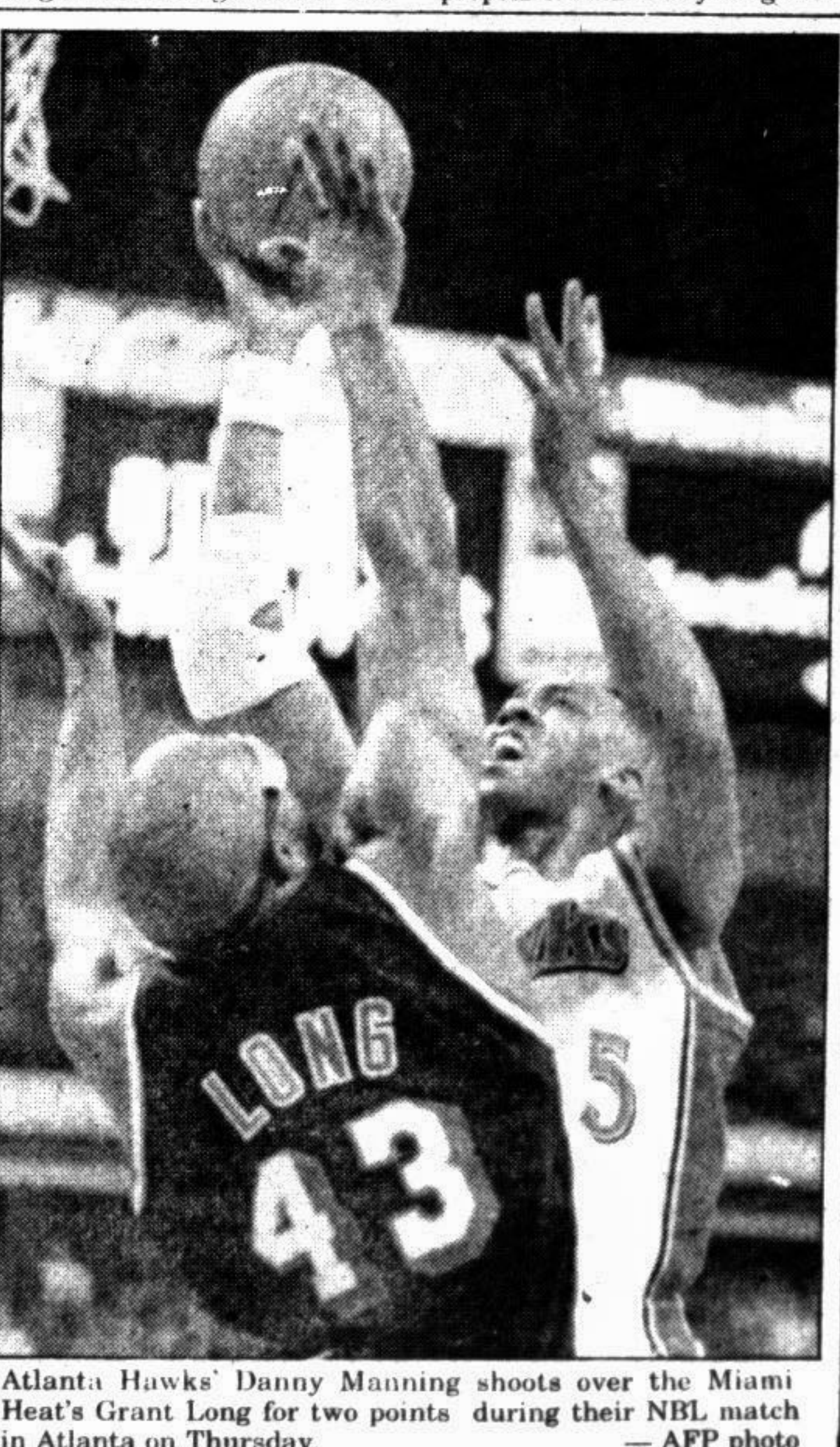
"I now believe that even a special seeding consideration is inappropriate," he said. "As of this week, she's been of the tour for a year, and now she'll have to play her way back, in my view."

Sports psychologist Jim Loehr, who has worked with Seles and know her since her early years in tennis, believes she's feeling uncomfortable with the way entire episode was handled.

"First of all, that a fan could get to her that easy, some nutso, she felt that wasn't right," Loehr said. "Then the WTA didn't protect her ranking the way she felt it should, and then thirdly, the guy that actually committed the diabolical act received a suspended sentence, and she felt almost like three strikes and you're out."

"I think it left a very bitter taste in her mouth, and she already had reached her greatest dreams. The only thing that's left is a Grand Slam. She's reached the No 1 spot in the world, her whole life had been tennis, and this kind of took the joy and fun out of it."

Loehr believes that "the longer she stays out, the greater the risk is that she won't come back."



Washington wears Agassi down

DULUTH, Ga, Apr 30: Malival Washington beat Andre Agassi 6-4, 7-5 Friday night to reach the semifinals of the dlr 300,000 AT and T Challenge, reports AP.

An all-American semifinal round had already been assured earlier Friday when top-seeded Michael Chang, No 2 Todd Martin and qualifier Wade McGuire advanced with victories over Swedish opponents.

Chang defeated qualifier Christian Bergstrom 6-1, 6-3, while Martin topped Mats Wilander 6-3, 7-6 (7-3) and McGuire rolled past Lars Jonsson 6-3, 6-2.

Washington, the fifth seed, relied on strong serves and crisp, attacking ground strokes in the 92-minute match to beat No.3 Agassi for the first time in four meetings.

"I've been disappointed with my entire game all week and my first serve let me down at crucial times," said Agassi, celebrating his 24th birthday. "I've got to get adjusted to clay again. I don't know how long it will take. I hope one week of practice... will get me ready for the French Open."

Although the score was not close, the match between Chang and Bergstrom featured lengthy rallies and numerous break-point opportunities.

"He's definitely known for running down a lot of balls, and he did that today," said Chang who reached his sixth semifinal of the year.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Portent

5 Overseas ally?

8 One type of milk

12 Venetian VIP

13 Solo of "Star Wars"

14 Tower town

15 Liability

17 On the rocks

18 Passover feast

19 DiMaggio or Ruth

21 Lip

24 Symbol of intricacy

25 Credit card user's situation

28 Long-eared lagomorph

30 Fitting

33 Ga. neighbor

34 Off the payroll

35 Columbine comment

36 Private address?

37 — even keel

38 Omit

39 Flightless bird

41 Kachina worshiper

43 Threads of old

46 Old Peruvians

50 Blind as —

51 Rejoinder

54 Big nits

55 Exist

56 Con

57 Sends out invitations

58 Publication, for short

59 Conked out

DOWN

1 Tote-board tally

2 "A Man for All"

3 Isaac's mom

3 "Zounds!"

4 Most improved?

5 "Caught ya!"

6 Singer

7 Black

8 Book part

9 Ex post facto bribe

10 Phrase of understanding

11 Put together

16 Corset-shop buy

20 Dumb-struck

22 Climb a rope

23 "Arabian Nights"

25 — "Kapital"

26 Actor

27 How Godiva rode?

29 Attorney General

31 Luau stuff

32 A-1

34 Lead-in to F or H

38 "Arabian Nights"

40 Apportions

42 Sales pitch?

43 White House pooch

44 Sacred Egyptian bird

45 Con game

47 Sugar source

48 Judicial proceedings

49 Pallet

52 — pro nobis

53 Ryan of "Sleepless in Seattle"

CRYPTOQUIP

J C O L K W X , C X G W R F G Q T J K

L N L J O O A J C G J X J F

N J K Q H T W X R K H I A

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: I GUESS THE MARCHING BANDSMAN TRIPPED, FELL, AND FRACTURED HIS TROMBONE.

Today's Cryptoquip clue: H equals W

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.