



Le Jingyi of China punches the air after winning the women's 50-metre freestyle final in a new world record time of 24.51 seconds at the World Championships in Rome on Sept 11.

Curtain falls on Rome World Championships Smeared Sino supremacy

ROME, Sept 12: She's just set the 50 meters world record to go with her 100 mark and collected her fifth gold medal at the World Swimming Championships.

"I didn't know I could swim this fast," Le Jingyi said.

But she can. So can her countrywomen. And that's something that's worrying other swimmers and coaches.

China's women would up with 12 gold medals from 16 events with Le breaking two

world records and helping the relay team beat another.

Another Chinese, He Cihong, broke the 100 backstroke record and, although other marks were set at the pool — 10 in total — China's domination of the women's events was disconcerting to those who believe they are being powered by drugs.

Shades of East Germany in the 1970s, they say.

Without mentioning China by name, 18 coaches, including US national team director Dennis Pursley, Australia's Don Talbot and Dave Johnson from Canada, signed a declaration to step up the fight against drug abuse.

They described it "the single greatest threat to the progress and integrity of the sport."

"It's not simply a Chinese problem, it's world problem," said Paul Quinlan, an Australian who is vice president of World Swimming Coaches Association.

"People now are having real difficulty accepting that any good performances today aren't achieved without the help of some sort of performance-enhancement."

On the final day of the championships, Le, who broke the 100 freestyle world record on the first day of swimming, swam 24.51 to take 0.28 off the mark set by countrywoman Wenli Yang at the Barcelona Olympics two years ago.

Another world mark was set on the final day when Finland's Jani Sievinen snipped 1.20 off Tamas Darnyi's 200 individual medley mark by swimming 1:58.16.

After two world records in successive events, there was disappointment for the fans when Australia's Kieren Perkins, struggling after an attack of bronchitis, failed to get anywhere near the mark he set only two weeks ago in the 1,500 meters.

Having set the 400 freestyle record on Thursday, Perkins was in the sort of form to break his long-race records again.

"I was feeling really bad because of a wild attack of bronchitis," Perkins said. "It was

Double delight for Sanchez

NEW YORK, Sept 12: Less than 24 hours after claiming her first US Open singles crown, Arantxa Sanchez Vicario of Spain doubled her pleasure on Sunday by teaming with Czech Jana Novotna to win the women's double title, reports Reuter.

The second seeds defeated the unseeded duo of Katrina Maleeva of Bulgaria and American Robin White 6-3, 6-3 in 64 minutes.

"It's been a great tournament, couldn't be better," said the 22-year-old Sanchez at the conclusion of her championship weekend.

It was Maleeva and White who played giant killers in the semifinals when they upset Gigi Fernandez and Natalia Zvereva to end the top-seeded team's bid for a doubles sweep of the four Grand Slam titles.

On Sunday, however, Maleeva lost her serve twice in the first set and White was broken once in each set.

Novotna dropped her serve once in the opening set, but the second seeds did not face a single break point in the second set.

Sanchez, who also won the US Open doubles title last year with Helena Sukova, will split 200,000 dollars with Novotna.

Sanchez walks away from the 1994 Open 650,000 dollar richer after picking up 550,000 dollar for her comeback victory over Steffi Graf on Saturday.

giving me difficulty breathing and I realised after 10 minutes swimming my breathing was causing me problems.

"But my ambition on the day was to win."

In other finals, Chinese women won both the 200 butterfly and 200 backstroke to underline their dominance. Liu Limin collected her third gold of the championships in the butterfly and He Cihong won her third with her success in the backstroke.

Germany's Franziska Van Almsick (200 freestyle), Janet Evans (800 freestyle) and Australia's Samantha Riley (100 and 200 breaststroke) were the only swimmers to beat the Chinese and Van Almsick and Riley had to break world records to do so.

In the final event of the entire competition, the United States 400 medley relay team of Jeff Rouse, Eric Wunderlich, Mark Henderson and Gary Hall won in a championship record time 3:37.74 to give the Americans their fourth gold in the swimming pool.

The American team also won the gold medal in synchronized swimming ahead of Canada and Japan. It meant that Becky Dyroen-Lancer had collected three golds in solo, duet and team events.



Jana Novotna of the Czech Republic (L) and Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario of Spain hold the US Open women's doubles trophy after defeating Katerina Maleeva of Bulgaria and Robin White of the United States 6-3, 6-3 in the final on Sept 11.

Rare accolade for Klinsmann

LONDON, Sept 12: German striker Jurgen Klinsmann has become the first ever winner of the Carling-player-of-the-month award, reports AFP.

Klinsmann, Spurs' shock summer signing from Monaco, has scored five goals in four games since his arrival at White Hart Lane.

His scoring feats have helped Tottenham wipe out their six-point penalty imposed for financial irregularities by the FA.

He receives a Carling-player-of-the-month trophy, a cheque for 750 pounds and a magnum of champagne.

Brazilian eves spike Japan

SHANGHAI, China, Sept 12: Brazil clinched the second women's World volleyball grand prix with a 3-1 (15-9, 11-15, 15-8, 15-7) win over Japan here Sunday, reports AFP.

The Brazilians had only to beat the lowly Japanese to make sure of the title after scoring a shock 3-2 victory on Friday over titleholders Cuba, the reigning world and Olympic champions.

Cuba finished runners-up after beating China 3-0 (15-10, 15-8, 15-9) in the final match on Sunday.

China was third overall with Japan fourth.

The African men won only one event on the final day when Ibrahim Lahlaoui, a training partner of Olympic and

World and Olympic long jump champion Heike Drechsler made an impressive return to the heptathlon with a world's best performance of the year in winning at an international combined meeting on Sunday, reports Reuter.

The German, who abandoned the discipline after setting a world junior record of 5,812 points 13 years ago, finished the two-day meeting with 6,741.

Resuming on Sunday after accumulating 3,964 points in the first four events, she increased her lead with a leap of 6.95 metres in the long jump. The second longest leap in the world at a combined meeting.

Nathalie Tepp of France finished second nearly 400 points behind Drechsler.

American Dan O'Brien failed in his attempt to break his own decathlon 8,891 points world record set in the same stadium two years ago.

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Drechsler back with a bang

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Rookies picked for Wallabies squad

SYDNEY, Australia, Sept 12: Serum-half Sam Payne and hooker Michael Foley were the only players without international experience named Monday to a preliminary 30-man Australian squad to prepare for next year's World Cup rugby union tournament in South Africa, reports AP.

Payne was selected despite missing out on a place on the Emerging Wallabies team to tour Africa next month.

Australian Rugby Football Union chief executive officer Bruce Hayman said the Australian squad eventually is likely to swell to around 45 players.

Barry Lea, Tony Dempsey, Warwick Waugh and Mark Bell are the only other members of the squad not to have played test football, although Lea, Dempsey and Bell have been on tours to Canada and France and Waugh has been on three tours — to South Africa, Ireland and Wales, and Canada.

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Africans retain World Cup



LONDON, Sept 12: Sunday Bada, who clinched Africa's first World Cup men's victory in Havana two

years ago, saw his team safely through to a repeat win at Crystal Palace on Sunday, reports Reuter.

The 25-year-old Nigerian anchored Africa to first place in the 4x400 metres relay in the tropical heat of Cuba in 1992.

On Sunday on a chilly but mercifully dry English autumn afternoon, Bada again ran the final leg for the Africans who this time finished second to the British quartet anchored by former European champion Roger Black.

The result was enough to give the powerful African team victory with 116 points ahead of Britain who finished on 111 with the Americans in third place on 95.

Europe, inspired by Russian Irina Privalova who won the 400 metres as a late replacement for France's Olympic champion Marie-Jose Perec, won the women's cup.

The European women, whose last win was in the inaugural Cup in Dusseldorf 17 years ago, scored 111 points. The Americas were second with 98 followed by Germany with 79.

The African men won only one event on the final day when Ibrahim Lahlaoui, a training partner of Olympic and

World Cup 10,000 champion Khalid Skah, ran away with the men's 5,000.

But the overall strength of their track team, which boasted world champions Noureddine Morcelli, Moses Kiptanui and Frankie Fredericks as well as Skah, proved too much for the other seven teams.

"I think the first time everybody thought it was a bit of a fluke," said African track coach Rotini Obajimi. "This time it's officials."

Morcelli, who made no contest on Saturday's 1,500, added "It's a nice feeling, it was nice to get the top athletes to represent Africa."

The African men faltered slightly in Sunday's first track event when Frankie Fredericks who beat John Regis to the line in both last year's world Championships and this year's Commonwealth Games, finished second to the Briton in the men's 200 metres.

Regis, whose season has been disrupted by injuries to his left leg, was fastest out of the blocks while Fredericks was last and although the Namibian came back strongly over the last 50 metres it was enough to win.

Regis, the 1990 European champion, was less than delighted with drawing lane one while Fredericks was similarly disenchanted with lane eight.

"I wouldn't give it to my mother," Regis snorted.

Fredericks commented:

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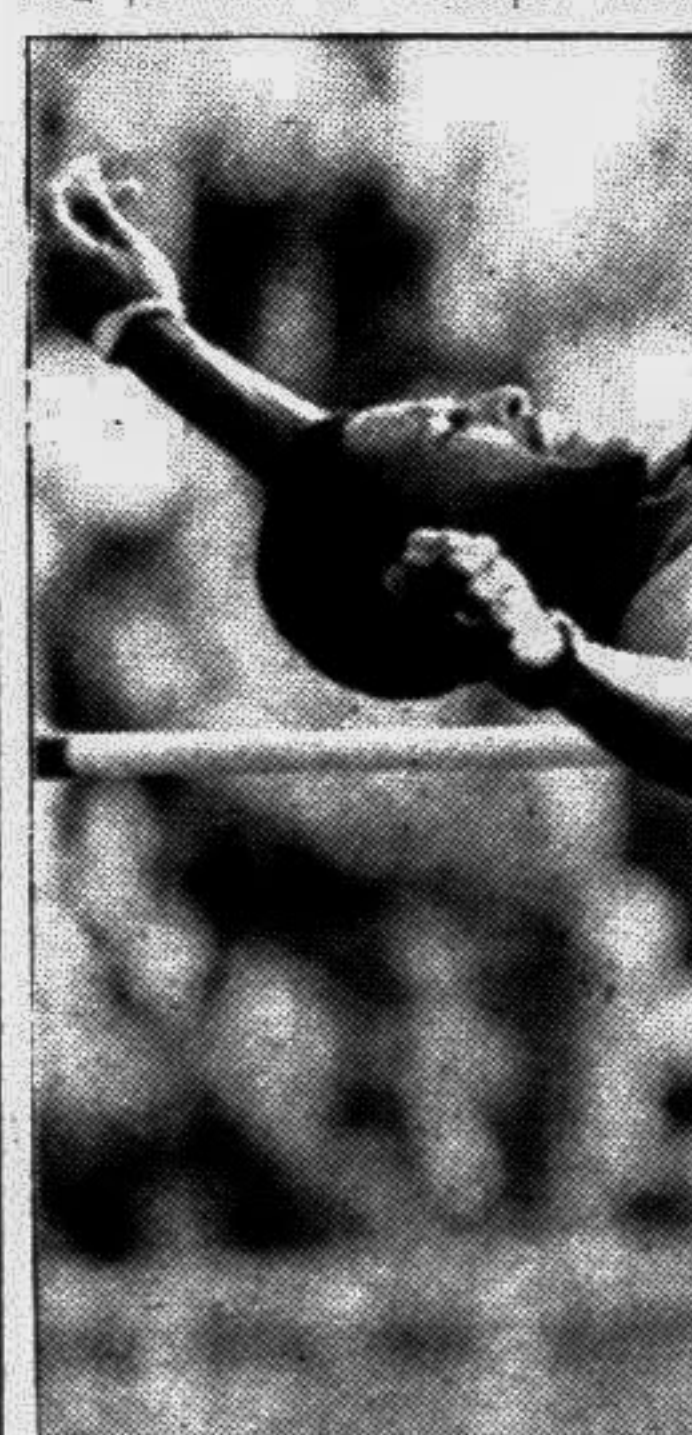
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Cuban high jump world champion Javier Sotomayor sails over the bar during the final day of the Athletics World Cup at Crystal Palace in London on Sept 11. Sotomayor won the event comfortably.

FINA in horns of dilemma



ROME, Sept 12: A world championships that had 10 world records has left the sport of swimming in a

daze. With the specter of doping looming large again, the sport doesn't know whether to celebrate or hide in shame, reports AP.

"I have never before seen a situation where, if you win, you are tarred with doing something crooked," said Australian coach Don Talbot. "If (drug-cheating) is allowed to keep going, then we are not going to have a sport."

Describing performance-enhancing drugs as "the single greatest threat to the progress and integrity of the sport," 18 coaches signed a declaration calling on swimming's governing body, FINA, to act now to clean up the sport.

Although the coaches didn't mention China by name, most

of the doping accusations have been pointed at China's women swimmers, who won 12 of the 16 events and broke five world records at the championships which ended Sunday.

Dennis Pursley, national swimming director of the United States team, was one of the 18 who called on FINA to bring in 24-hour notice testing.

He said there was a danger of clean athletes following the same course as the cheats simply to keep up with them.

"It's a huge concern," Pursley said. "I think the majority of athletes won't be drawn into that. They would rather accept losing or getting out of the sport rather than cheat to win."

"But I am not naive to think that there aren't a few of those who would possibly resort to that," Pursley said.

"At the same time we have seen that clean athletes can

win whether it's a level playing field or not."

German star Franziska Van Almsick (200 freestyle), American swimmer Tom Dolan (400 individual medley), Samantha Riley (100 breaststroke), Kieren Perkins (400 freestyle) and Jani Sievinen (200 medley) were the non-Chinese to break world records.

Of the Chinese, Le Jingyi set marks in the 50 and 100 freestyle. He Cihong broke the 100 backstroke record and the relay teams won the 400 freestyle and medley in world record times. Le Jingyi went home with five gold medals.

The best performance by a Chinese man came from Wang Yiwu, who was sixth in a 200 breaststroke consolation final.

Van Almsick's performance was even more remarkable because she didn't qualify for the final.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

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3 Screw up 4 Capital on the Mississippi 5 Academic 6 Stopover 7 Attempts to do bodily harm 8 Do the Right Thing 9 Unparalleled 10 Temple U. team 11 Crash-diet 13 How clumsy of me! 38 The third man 39 Has no alternative 40 New Haven flora 43 Milne and Fair 44 La-la lead-in 45 Away from SSW 46 Fed. agcy.

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Surrey on a run feast

LONDON, Sept 12: Alistair Brown led the celebrations as Surrey chalked up a Sunday league scoring record yesterday, reports AFP.

They amassed 375 for four to thrash Yorkshire by 205 runs at Scarborough.

Their total was 15 more than the 360 for three made by Somerset against Glamorgan at Neath in 1990.

Brown hit 133 from 84 balls with five sixes and 13 fours before he was bowled by Paul Grayson.

England's Graham Thorpe hit an unbeaten 102 from 81 balls and Adam Holoake raced to 59 from only 19 deliveries.

Kent overwhelmed Somerset by 66 runs at Canterbury and are now the only side who can deny Warwickshire the title.

Worcestershire's defeat against Glamorgan at Cardiff put them out of the race.

Kent visit Surrey next Sunday just two points adrift in second and hoping leaders Warwickshire slip up in their last match against Gloucestershire at Bristol.

Should it rain in the West country, and Warwickshire get two points for a no result, a Kent victory at The Oval would give them the league trophy on a superior run rate.

Kent coach Daryl Foster said: "It will be a great Sunday's cricket next week and it's good for the competition that the winners will not be known until the last day."

Fast bowler Martin McCague destroyed the Somerset middle order with four for 25.

But Glamorgan off-spinner Robert Croft did even better, taking six wickets for 20 runs in eight overs to shatter Worcestershire.

Lancashire paceman Peter Martin burst into the frame for the 3,000 awarded to the league's top wicket-taker when he took his tally to 23 by claiming five for 32 in the five-wicket win over Durham.

Leicestershire off-spinner Adrian Pierson equalled his career-best Sunday league figures by taking three for 21 in the eight run win over Hampshire.

Former England skipper Mike Gatting, batting at seven, was out for one as Middlesex lost by 53 runs to Gloucestershire.

Essex moved a step closer to avoiding the wooden spoon with a two-wicket victory over Derbyshire with four balls to spare.

With 39 needed off the last five overs, Derbyshire were favourites but John Stephenson and Mark Ilett kept their nerve, striking 41 to see Essex home.

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Kent coach Daryl Foster said: "It will be a great Sunday's cricket next week and it's good for the competition that the winners will not be known until the last day."

Fast bowler Martin McCague destroyed the Somerset middle order with four for 25.

But Glamorgan off-spinner Robert Croft did even better, taking six wickets for 20 runs in eight overs to shatter Worcestershire.

Lancashire paceman Peter Martin burst into the frame for the 3,000 awarded to the league's top wicket-taker when he took his tally to 23 by claiming five for 32 in the five-wicket win over Durham.

Leicestershire off-spinner Adrian Pierson equalled his career-best Sunday league figures by taking three for 21 in the eight run win over Hampshire.

Former England skipper Mike Gatting, batting at seven, was out for one as Middlesex lost by 53 runs to Gloucestershire.

Essex moved a step closer to avoiding the wooden spoon with a two-wicket victory over Derbyshire with four balls to spare.

With 39 needed off the last five overs, Derbyshire were favourites but John Stephenson and Mark Ilett kept their nerve, striking 41 to see Essex home.

They amassed 375 for four to thrash Yorkshire by 205 runs at Scarborough.

Their total was 15 more than the 360 for three made by Somerset against Glamorgan at Neath in 1990.

Brown hit 133 from 84 balls with five sixes and 13 fours before he was bowled by Paul Grayson.

England's Graham Thorpe hit an unbeaten 102 from 81 balls and Adam Holoake raced to 59 from only 19 deliveries.

Kent overwhelmed Somerset by 66 runs at Canterbury and are now the only side who can deny Warwickshire the title.

Worcestershire's defeat against Glamorgan at Cardiff put them out of the race.

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