

# Jansher just a match away

**BARCELONA.** Sept 17: Jansher Khan lined up a sixth World Open title here on Saturday, when he comprehensively outplayed Australia's Rodney Eyles in the semifinals, reports AFP.

Jansher was superb in all departments of the game as he dispatched Australia's world number four 15-7, 15-12, 15-13.

Pakistan's defending champion, who will equal the legendary Jahangir Khan's record of six world titles if he wins as expected on Sunday, attacked and defended in style as he ran the Australian around the court with his long and short game.

On more than one occasion in the first game, Eyles was left shaking his head as Jansher's inch-perfect drives to the back court simply kissed the back wall and died, leaving him no chance.

But Eyles was also his own worst enemy, working himself gradually into a position for a winning drop shot — only to land the ball in the tin.

Those mistakes were far fewer in the second game, but at 11-11 Jansher simply moved up a gear in terms of his power and Precision to romp home.

The third saw the closest tussle and at 13-13 it looked as though the Australian might yet haul himself back into the match.

But a winning drop followed by a dazzling cross court backhand flick from the master, which sparked thunderous applause from the crowd, put the tie beyond doubt.

On Friday Jansher Khan struggled to produce his best form, but still crushed into the semifinals with a 15-11, 15-6, 15-10 win over England's

Australian fourth seed Rodney Eyles celebrated his 27th birthday with a 15-6, 15-10, 15-8 victory over compatriot Anthony Hill in just 32 minutes to set up a semifinal with Jansher.

Eyles has only beaten Jansher once since they first met in the 1986 World junior championship — in the semifinal of the 1993 Portuguese Open.

"I guess I just have to hope that is the match he is remembering when we play tomorrow," said Eyles.

Jansher is unlikely to play in the two ranking tournaments in India in October and December because of tensions between the host nation and Pakistan.

"I am entered for the Stroh's Open in New Delhi in October and the Mahindra Challenge in Bangalore in December but, with our ambassador returning home, it seems I would not be wise to play in India at this time," said Jansher.

He has been given approval from the Professional Squash Association (PSA) to miss the events without penalty.

"My line was not good today which gave Chris a chance to play his short game more than

I would have liked," said the 25-year-old after taking 53 minutes to overcome his opponent.

"You cannot play perfectly all the time and it is good to get a bad game out of the way before the semifinal or the final."

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# Cash award for Kutraleeswaran

**MADRAS, Sept 17:** The Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, Jayalalitha, has sanctioned Rs-4.67 lakh to 12-year-old Kutraleeswaran, who recently swam across the English Channel, to fulfil his ambition to create a Guinness record by crossing the five major oceans of the world in a single year, reports PTI.

A cheque for the amount was sent to the young swimmer yesterday, an official press release here said.

Jayalalitha had earlier assured the schoolboy from Madras of necessary financial assistance, when he called on her and conveyed his record creating ambition.

Kutraleeswaran created a record of sorts by first achieving the feat of swimming across the English Channel of the Independence Day. On his way to entering the Guinness Book of World records, he has now planned to swim across straits of Gibraltar — a UK protectorate and Dardenelles in Turkey by October 15.

Jayalalitha also conveyed her heartfelt wishes to the young swimmer in all his attempts, the release said.

Ivanisevic advances

**PARIS, Sept 17:** Top-seed Goran Ivanisevic of Croatia surged into the semifinals of the Bucharest ATP tournament of Friday when he scored a three-set win over Spain's Alex Correja, reports AFP.

Ivanisevic, hoping victory in Romania will help wipe out the memory of his shock first-round loss at the United States Open, scored a 3-6, 6-2 6-2, win.

The Croatian's chances of winning the title were increased when one of his major rivals, Thomas Muster, was forced to withdraw because of illness.

The fifth-seeded Austrian, who played a marathon three-setter against Spain's Francisco Roig in 35 degree centigrade heat on Thursday, was taken to hospital on Friday suffering from dehydration.

His quarter-final opponent Renzo Furlan of Italy had a bye to the semifinals.

The other players to reach the last-four were Argentina's Franco Davin and Alberto Costa of Spain.

While Muster was suffering from the heat, the 400,000 dollar "passing shot" event in Bordeaux had all Friday's scheduled matches rained off leaving surviving players facing a busy weekend.

As rain lashed down, Mats Wilander's second round clash with South Africa's Wayne Ferreira was rescheduled for Saturday morning while Cedric Pioline of France also has an early start when he resumes battle against Italian Gianluca Pozzi. Pioline trailed by one set and is facing a second-set tie-break.

The quarter-finals will then be played this afternoon.

In Bogota, where Americans Aaron Krickstein and Francisco Montana dropped out Thursday because of food poisoning, fifth seed Karel Novacek defeated Daniel Nestor and Venezuela's former junior world champion Nicolas Pereira put out Brazil's eighth-seeded Fernando Meligeni. Nestor dropped a set.

Changing from 25 seconds to 20 seconds means there will be more tennis and less passive waiting time."

Tobin did not expect any major objections to the new rules from the men's ATP Tour or the Women's Tennis Association tour, who will now have to introduce the new rules immediately.

Michael Mueller said that the performance of the lightweight men's double and pair, the men's four without coxswain and the women's eight "were better than expected."

Mueller said the German eight "is a gambler team. Like a poker player, you do not show your face. We'll see."

Mueller predicted his team could win 10 medals. Holtmeyer was more conservative, predicting "five or six."

The Netherlands is also a threat in the men's eight, and Romania, even with half the

boat doubling up in other races, is capable of beating the field. Other men's eight finalists are France and Ukraine.

Twelve hundred athletes from 47 countries are competing in the regatta.

Australia came on strong with 12 boats in the finals. The United States has 10, France nine, Great Britain, Denmark and The Netherlands eight and Canada and Romania seven.

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Britain's Nick Faldo blasts a shot out of a green side bunker on the 5th hole during the second round of the Dunhill Masters golf tournament in Woburn yesterday. — AFP photo

# Taylor eyes redemption

**LAS VEGAS, Sept 17:** Like it or not, Meldrick Taylor's boxing career was defined by the controversial ending of his first fight with Julio Cesar Chavez, reports AP.

He hopes to redefine it Saturday night when he meets the Mexican champion for a second time in a fight for the WBC super lightweight title.

"After this, they'll have to identify me with the second fight instead of the first," Taylor said. "It will be the first, time someone lost to Chavez and comes back and redeems himself."

Saturday will mark exactly 4 1/2 years since Taylor and Chavez, two top boxers in their prime, met in a clash of unbeaten 63.5-kilogram (140-pound) champions.

Taylor appeared ready to hand Chavez his first career loss when the Mexican champion suddenly unleashed a devastating right hand that put Taylor down with seconds left in the 12th and final round.

Referee Richard Steele's fateful decision to wave the fight to an end with only two seconds remaining not only cost Taylor the fight but sent his career into a tailspin.

"It would have been a different destiny for me if I had won that fight," Taylor said. "But my life will be better, now because I came from the lowly depths to the highest heights. I've been through adversity for four years."

The 27-year-old Taylor is a 3-1 underdog in the scheduled 12-round fight at the MGM Grand hotel, part of a marathon card that includes five other title fights.

But the fact that he got the rematch at all is remarkable enough, considering the depths his career sank with successive knockout losses in 1992 to Terry Norris and Chrisanto Espana.

"Losing fights back-to-back made people perceive me differently," Taylor said. "People wrote me off. I lost myself confidence."

Taylor, the 1984 Olympic gold medalist at 56.5 kilograms (125 pounds), ballooned in weight and appeared to have lost his ability. But after swear-

ing off junk food and hiring new handlers he has won three straight fights by knockout and appears more relaxed and fit than he has in years.

"I'm, reincarnated," said Taylor, who is back at 63.5 kilos (140 pounds) after moving up to welterweight, then super

welterweight, following his loss to Chavez. "You're going to see the Meldrick you saw in the Olympics. I have much more balance, much more accuracy. My pace has slowed down. I throw punches with more meaning, not just to be throwing them."

While Taylor (32-3 with one draw) has rebounded from his loss to Chavez in March 1990, Chavez is coming off a series of fights that have some questioning whether he is past his prime.

After gaining a draw in a fight most thought he lost against Pernell Whitaker Chavez suffered the first knockdown and first loss of his career against Frankie Randall on Jan. 29. Chavez got a disputed win over Randall when he was cut by a head butt in the seventh round of their May 7 rematch.

"I recognise I'm older, but I'm still good," the 34-year-old Chavez said. "I feel very good very strong, very young."

Chavez (90-1 with one draw) acknowledges the criticism, which peaked when fans at a pro-American gridiron exhibition football (NFL) game in Mexico City last month booed when he was introduced.

"I know there is a great deal of criticism of my last three fights, but I ask why," Chavez said. "I never said I was a robot, a Superman or a super being. Why is there so much criticism over a loss?"

Randall, who had expected to fight Chavez in a rubber match, had to settle for being on the same card. He will fight Argentina's Juan Coggi for the WBA version of the 63.5-kilo (140-pound) title in one of six title fights.

Other title fights include Puerto Rico's Felix Trinidad defending his IBF welterweight title against Luis Ramon Campas of Mexico, American Jesse James Leija Antonio defending his WBC super featherweight crown against countryman Gabriel Ruelas. Italy's Gianfranco Rosi in an IBF junior middleweight title defence against American Vincent Pettway, and WBC strawweight champion Ricardo Lopez of Mexico against Yodanis Au Saengmorokot of Thailand.

De La Hoya, 14-0, was to face fellow American John Avila, 19-1-1, in Los Angeles. It was not announced when De La Hoya now will fight next.

"He's feeling very weak and has been unable to train for over a week now," De La Hoya's trainer, Robert Alcazar, was quoted as saying in a release from Arum's company, Tap Rank.

"We hope to get clearance from the doctor to begin training again next week, but it is going to take a while for Oscar to regain full strength. It's a nasty bug."

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# Canada to host special Olympics in 1997

**TORONTO, Sept 17:** Toronto and Collingwood, Ontario were chosen Friday as the hosts of the 1997 Special Olympics World Winter Games, reports AP.

The eight-day competition, featuring more than 2,500 athletes from some 80 countries, is scheduled to take place from Feb. 1-8, 1997.

Toronto has become one of the premier sports cities in the world," said Sargent Shriver, chairman and chief executive officer of Special Olympics International, in making the announcement. "That reputation will be cemented in 1997 when it stages, along with Collingwood, the largest winter sports event in the world that year."

Plans call for Toronto to host the floor hockey, figure skating and speed skating events. Nearby Collingwood will stage alpine and nordic skiing.

Founded in 1968 by Eunice Kennedy Shriver, Special Olympics offers training and competition in 23 sports, both summer and winter. Almost 1 million athletes from more than 130 countries take part in Special Olympics programmes.

Atlanta, Sept 17: The site for the first Olympic competition in beach volleyball was moved Friday to an Atlanta suburb after international volleyball officials objected to the original site on an island off the coast of Savannah, Georgia, reports Reuter.

The Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games (ACOG) said it was moving the site for 1996 beach volleyball from Tybee Island, more than 265 miles (427 km) from Atlanta, to suburban Clayton county only a few minutes drive from Atlanta's Hartsfield International Airport.

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