



Co-presidents of the 1998 World Cup football organising committee Michel Platini (L) and Fernand Sastre pose in front of the official logo on yesterday in Paris. The competition is to be held in France. — AFP photo

Star Premier resumes Friday

Sports Reporter
The Star Premier Division football league resumes Friday after a seven-day recess following Muktijoddha's participation in the Independence Cup soccer tournament in the Qatar capital of Doha. Defending champions Mohammedan Sporting Club, who began their return leg campaign on a wrong foot, settling for a one-all draw with Bangladesh Boys, will meet Fakirpool Youngmen's Club at the Dhaka Stadium at 6:30 pm. Meanwhile, Muktijoddha Sangsad Kira Chakra, who returned home yesterday after being eliminated from the six-nation invitational football tournament, will take on Bangladesh Boys on Sunday. Muktijoddha, who had one win against one defeat on completion of their Group B engagements, were left out of the race on goal difference.

Bangladesh to play in Surjit Singh hockey

Sports Reporter
Bangladesh will take part in the 11th Surjit Singh memorial hockey tournament, scheduled to be held in the Indian city of Jullundur from November 8 to 15. The national selection will play under the banner of Dhaka Eleven, marking second Bangladesh participation in the meet since 1992. Bangladesh, who made their tournament debut that year, finished fifth. The team, expected to leave for New Delhi on November 3, will play their first match on the newly-laid astro turf at the Jullundur Stadium on November 9. Their opponents have not been fixed yet. Bangladesh will also feature in a six-nation tournament in Lahore in February next year.

AB Bank TT

Sports Reporter
Four teams registered their second successive victories in the AB Bank Metropolitan table tennis league at the Dhanmondi gymnasium yesterday. Favourites Bima, who started their campaign in a whirlwind fashion on the opening day, collected a similar win when they blanked Bangladesh Biman three sets to love in the day's one of the four engagements. Armanitola JS, another title aspirant, cruised against Purbachal Parishad swimmingly with yet another three-nil victory. Wart Club, who, too, featured in first day's action like the first two outfits, pummeled Mariners 3-0. In the day's last encounter newcomers Inter Sports, leavened with the experience of former national champion Kislu and talented Akhlaq, made short work of Cynthia 3-0.

School, madrassah swimming

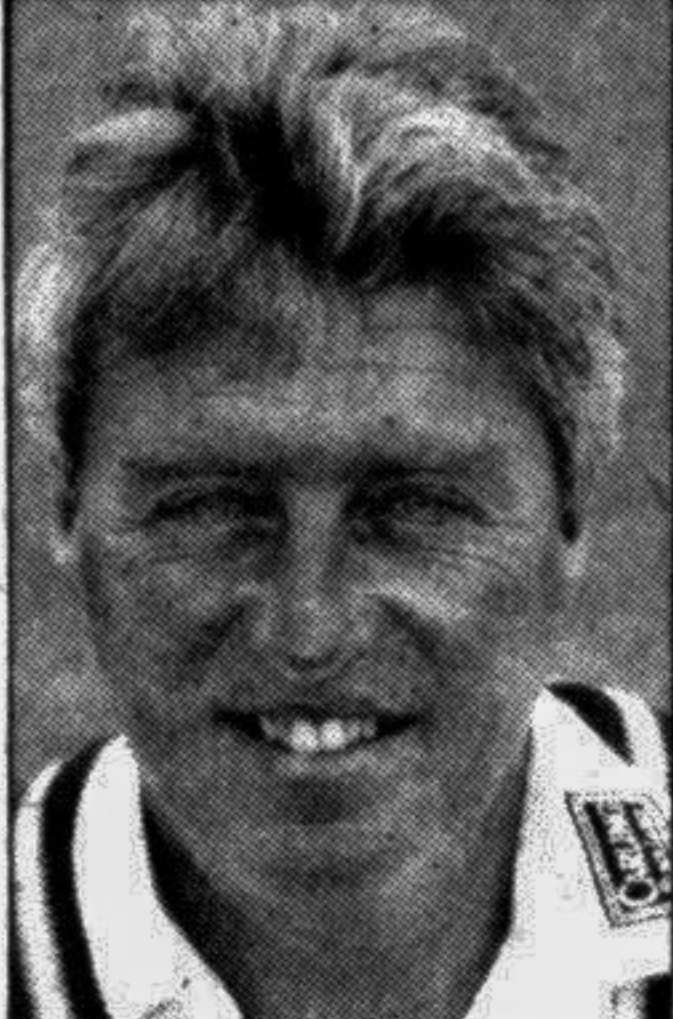
Sports Reporter
The 23rd national school and madrassah swimming championships began yesterday at the Mirpur National Swimming Complex. Minister for Education Barrister Jamiruddin Sircar inaugurated the meet with Professor Eunus Mia, the Secretary General of the Secondary and Higher Secondary Education Board, presiding over the simple opening ceremony. One hundred natants participated in the 11-event meet. Meanwhile, the football and handball championships will begin on September 22 and run through to September 25.

Woolmer, next SA coach?

CAPE TOWN, Sept. 20: Former England batsman and current Warwickshire coach, Bob Woolmer, has emerged as the overwhelming favourite to succeed Mike Procter as South Africa's national cricket coach, reports Reuters. Woolmer is one of three candidates on a short list drawn up by the United Cricket Board of South Africa's executive committee. A final decision will be announced on Saturday after interviews throughout the week. Four names were originally proposed by the committee, which consists of UCB president Krish Mackerdij, vice-president Ray White, selection convenor Peter Pollock and managing director Ali Bacher. But current South African A team coach Stephen Jones asked not to be considered. Woolmer's competition will therefore come from former great south African all-rounder Eddie Barlow and former Zimbabwean captain and current Western Province coach Duncan Fletcher.

With Bacher placing so much emphasis on the committee's desire for "highly qualified technical coach" it seems likely that Barlow, currently without a cricketing job, will find his brand of fire and

brimstone motivational coaching out of favour. Of the two foreigners, both known for their technical expertise, Woolmer is the more experienced at senior provincial level having guided Boland for five seasons. Fletcher has



BOB WOOLMER
coached Western Province for just one season.

Woolmer's outstanding success at English county Warwickshire (they won three out of four domestic competitions) has not gone unnoticed in South Africa and Bacher conceded that the new coach "could well come from outside

South Africa." Woolmer said on Monday "I don't want to pre-empt anything... I may not get the job. It would be a tough wrench to leave Warwickshire after we've achieved so much but I've stated before that my ambition is to coach at the highest level."

"Somehow I would like to, perhaps, combine the two jobs and maybe a deal could be done. I would love to do both... I've started something at Warwickshire that I would like to continue but the SA job is the ultimate goal." Warwickshire chief executive Dennis Amiss confirmed that the county would be very keen for Woolmer to at least see out the remaining year of his contract even if he was offered the South African job. "We wouldn't stand in Bob's way if he was the man the UCB wanted but we certainly hope that an agreement could be reached whereby he was able to fulfill both commitments."

Fletcher and Barlow will be interviewed over the next couple of days while Woolmer, due to arrive back in South Africa on Wednesday, will be interviewed in Johannesburg on Friday. Bacher will then notify the remaining members of the UCB executive on Friday night before announcing the final decision on Saturday morning.

Botham, rodomontade or rebel?

LONDON, Sept. 20: With bat and ball, British cricket legend Ian Botham used to bludgeon the opposition. Now retired, he has taken up a pen dipped in acid to rout his enemies, reports Reuters.

The day they come up with a Nobel Prize for tact, the great all-rounder will not be among the front-runners. A bluntly written autobiography has focused attention on the character of one of England's greatest cricketers with reviewers calling him an embittered genius who cast humility and discretion to the wind.

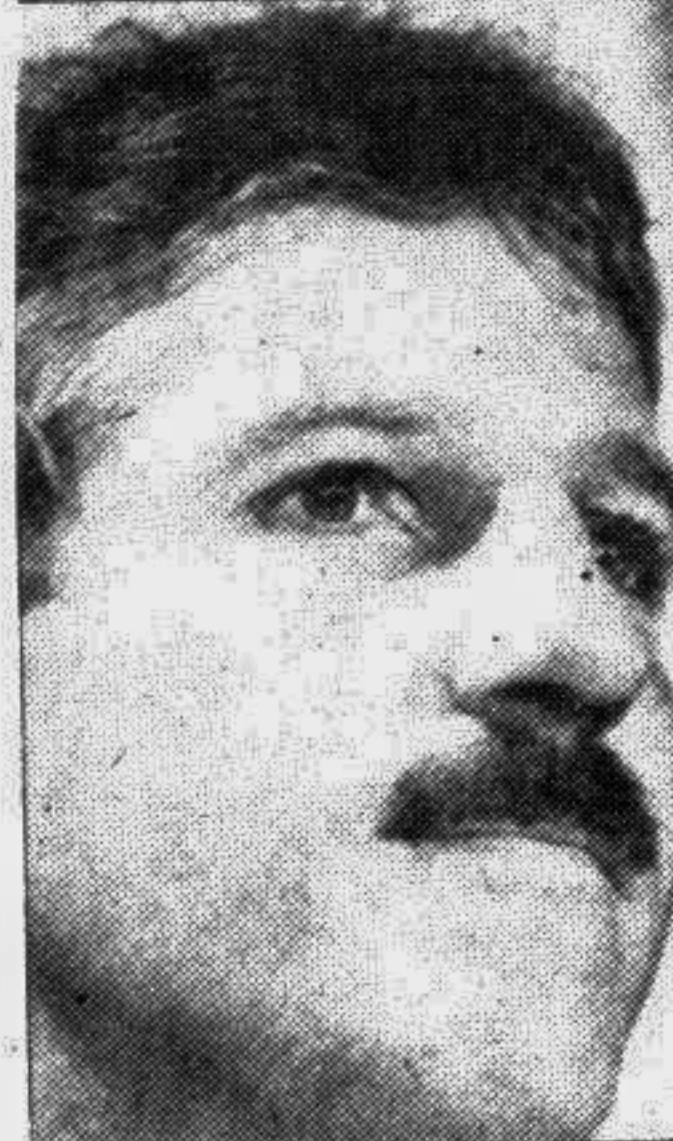
Botham was enraged by tabloids who painted him as an enthusiast of sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll. But he says Britons are too ready to debunk their heroes and he paid the penalty for being larger than life.

In the 400 pages of his autobiography, Botham hones his anger to perfection with some withering judgements. Ted Dexter, former Chairman of England selectors, is eccentric and idiotic, England batsman Geoff Boycott selfish and egotistical, Pakistani captain Imran Khan a ball-tampering cheat and Australian captain Ian Chappell a non-entity.

Botham, who would love to have a hand in selecting England's Test team, does not endear himself to the present hierarchy, writing: "When I look at the state of English cricket I want to weep."

"How could our great game be so poorly run?" asks the man who ended his Test career with 5,200 runs, 383 wickets and 120 catches. Botham is disarmingly frank about his ever-inflated ego: "All my life I have possessed extraordinary self-belief." The man who has raised millions for leukemia research with charity walks and now appears in a television quiz and in theatre road shows has no regrets about the feathers he has ruffled with his single-minded determination. "Off the field as well as on it, I have had a life so full it would take 10 men to live it... I believe in going for it, then going for more," he writes. Motivating teammates was never a strong point for this gregarious extrovert during his

brief captaincy of the England team: "I firmly believed in simply psyching one another up over a beer or two." Confessing his penchant for smoking cannabis and drinking whisky, he offers a public apology to his long-suffering wife Kathy who was tempted to leave him and once threw a glass-topped table at him. But those who nostalgically recall the giant-killing exploits of "Beefy" Botham, the player who trounced the Australians in 1981 with some of the



IAN BOTHAM

finest batting and bowling ever witnessed in the sport, are not so keen on Botham the man.

Times columnist Simon Barnes puts it bluntly: "He comes across as a begrudging, resentful, small-minded person."

Nigerian goalie dies in plane mishap

ALGIERS, Sept. 20: The goalkeeper for one of Nigeria's top soccer clubs died Tuesday from injuries suffered when the plane carrying his team crashed in southern Algeria, reports AP. The death of Marc Ikeogu, 26, raised the toll from the crash to five, including one other player from Iwuanwuwu National, Nigeria's top team last season. The team's plane crashed in the Sahara desert Sunday as it was returning to Nigeria from a 3-0 quarterfinal loss against Esperance of Tunisia in the African Club Championship.

Crowe to miss one-dayers against India

WELLINGTON, New Zealand, Sept. 20: Former New Zealand cricket captain Martin Crowe Tuesday asked to be omitted from the squad to play four one-day internationals in India next month, reports AP.

New Zealand are to play the games en route to South Africa, where they will make a full tour.

Crowe asked to be excused from the Indian games on medical grounds, saying he did not want to put his troublesome right knee at risk.

"Based on my experience on the England tour this year I know that I have to put in the proper work to get match-fit if I am to be able to play," Crowe said.

"There is a Test tour to India next year and I don't want to jeopardise my chances of being on that tour."

Ross Dykes, the chairman of the New Zealand selectors, said Tuesday that he is supportive of Crowe's decision.

"I believe we have to do what is best for New Zealand cricket," Dykes said. "If his advice is that he not go, then we have to be supportive of that."

Greg Chappell's new role

MELBOURNE, Sept. 20: Former Australian cricket captain Greg Chappell was Tuesday named as coach of the second Australian team to compete in an international limited-overs series this season, reports AP.

The team, to be known as Australia A, will play in a four-team series against England, Zimbabwe and the regular Australian team during the coming southern hemisphere summer.

Chappell said he expects the second-string Australian team to be very competitive.

"I would be disappointed if they didn't win a few games," he said. "Quite honestly, there's no reason why the second team shouldn't beat any of the other three, including Australia and England."

The same selection panel will choose both Australian teams. Among those likely to be in contention for places on the Australia A team are batsmen Matthew Hayden, Stuart Law, Ricky Ponting and Damien Martyn.

Bowlers Jo Angel and Gavin Robertson, both of whom are on the current Australian tour of India and Pakistan, and Bruce Reid and Merv Hughes — both of whom are coming back from injury — are also likely to be in contention if not named in the first-choice team.

"There is so much young talent around that will benefit immensely from playing at the top level," Chappell said.

"That's the great thing about the Australia A concept. It recognises the depth of talent and shows that the (Australian Cricket) Board is doing something about catering for it."

As well as appointing Chappell, a veteran of 88 Tests, the ACB also announced the addition of former Test off-spinner Peter Taylor to the national selection panel to replace Bob Simpson, who resigned last month.

FA experiment

LONDON, Sept. 20: The English football league announced plans on Monday to abandon the controversial penalty shoot-out — and it could mean teams ending up with just seven players each on the pitch, reports Reuters.

The league hopes to introduce an experiment in a competition for English Second and Third Division clubs to find an alternative to the agony of the shoot-out, the method which settled July's World Cup final between Brazil and Italy.

The principal idea the league is to submit for approval to the English Football Association (FA) is that, after scores finish level after 90 minutes, teams should withdraw one player every five minutes for the next 20 minutes of extra-time, down to the permitted minimum of seven per side.

If the game has not been settled by then, a further 10 minutes of sudden death extra-time would be played.

League secretary David Dent said: "We would like to think that in a year or two's time we could say that it was this competition which pioneered an alternative method of deciding drawn games than the detestable penalty shoot-out."

"Although we have a specific idea in mind, if the FA, after consultations with UEFA and FIFA (the European and world soccer governing bodies), want us to look at another alternative then we would be happy to consider anything."

Group games in the Auto Windscreens Shield trophy for Second and Third Division clubs start next week and the final is at Wembley on April 23. The league wants to introduce its experiment in the knock-out stages of the competition, which start in November.

Warwick's wonder year

LONDON, Sept. 20: Warwickshire's Brian Lara inspired treble has set a cricket record that may never be equalled, let alone beaten, reports AFP.

No English county had won more than two of domestic cricket's four major prizes in a season.

But in the summer of 1994 Warwickshire achieved the next best thing and there are many who believe they would have taken out the NatWest Trophy final, too, if they'd won the toss.

Which made it especially difficult to understand the near total lack of interest shown by England's selectors.

The exceptions were captain Dermot Reeve, picked for a one-day international against New Zealand, and wicket-keeper Keith Piper who will go on this winter's A tour of India.

Lara's contribution, however, was incalculable.

Signed just before his world record Test score of 375 for the West Indies against England, Lara duly turned up and reeled off six centuries in seven championship innings, including 501 against Durham.

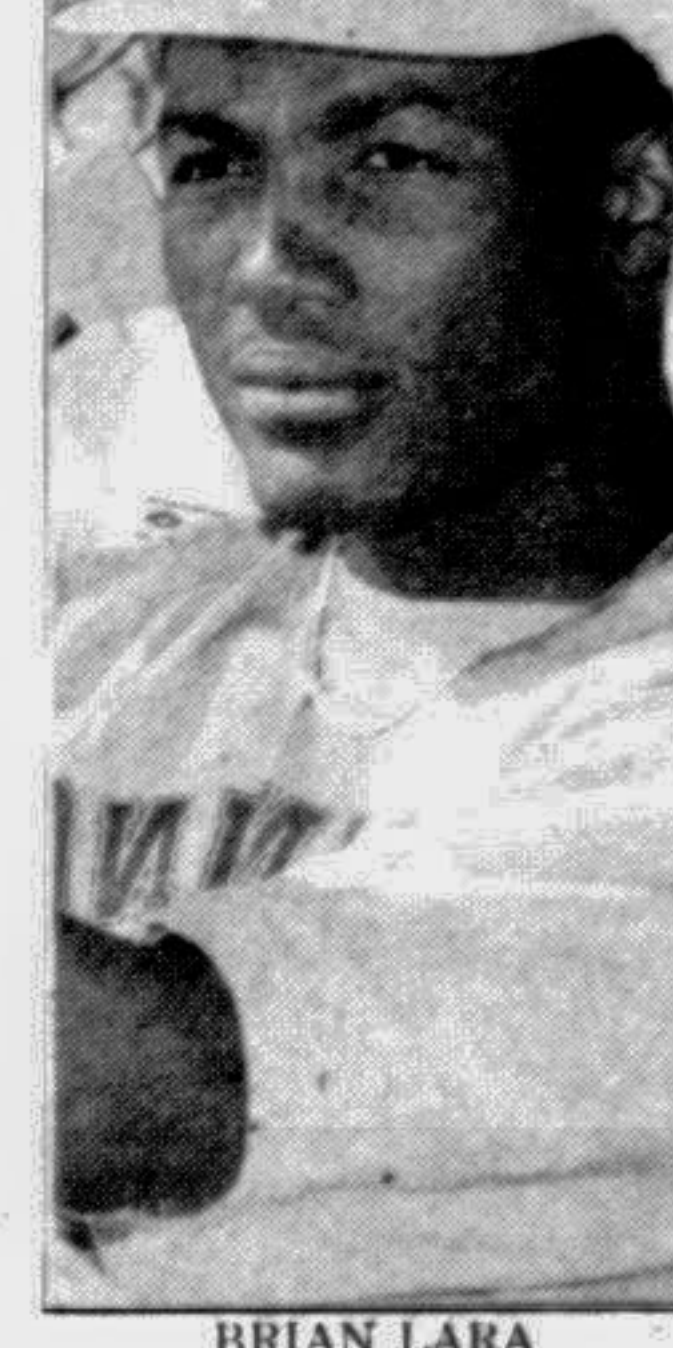
But Warwickshire were not content to leave it all to Lara. Every player revelled in the challenge of trying to match their star's contribution.

And they never knew when they were beaten. On the odd occasion they did finish second best, the next game was invariably won in style.

The Benson and Hedges Cup went into the trophy cabinet, Warwickshire's first county championship title for 22 years followed and the Sunday League trophy was some compensation for losing the NatWest final to Worcestershire.

The other 16 counties left the fight over the scraps. No side disappointed more than

Surrey, who fell away in every competition, though at least by



BRIAN LARA

the end of the summer they had three England Test players in Alec Stewart, Graham Thorpe and Joey Benjamin.

Middlesex, Essex, Kent, Sussex and Notts all promised much more than they delivered, and it was left to unfancied Leicestershire to provide the most determined championship challenge.

Glamorgan sank to bottom place, relieving Durham of the wooden spoon that had marked their first two seasons as a first-class county.

Individually, Lara dominated the headlines, if he scored a century it was news, if he failed it was news. But two men from Middlesex briefly vied with him for domestic cricket's centre stage.

John Carr, boosted by a spectacular late surge that brought 854 runs from seven innings, six of them unbeaten, overhauled Lara in the first-class batting averages.

And, earlier, 19-year-old seamer Richard Johnson, who dismissed Lara twice during 1994, became the first bowler since 1964 to take all 10 wickets in a championship innings — against Derbyshire on July 2.

FINAL STANDINGS

Final English County Championship cricket table after matches ending on Monday (tabulated — played, won, lost, drawn, batting points, bowling points, points):

Warwickshire	17	11	1	5	41	55	272
Leicestershire	17	8	7	2	42	60	230
Nottinghamshire	17	8	5	4	39	51	218
Middlesex	17	7	3	7	43	57	212
Northamptonshire	17	8	4	5	28	53	209
Essex	17	7	5	5	32	63	207
Surrey	17	7	7	3	32	57	201
Sussex	17	7	5	5	28	60	200
Kent	17	6	7	4	44	58	198
Lancashire	17	8	6	3	32	59	194
Somerset	17	7	7	3	32	47	191
Gloucestershire	17	5	8	4	28	56	172
Hampshire	17	4	7	6	32	55	158
Yorkshire	17	4	6	7	38	57	159
Worcestershire	17	4	6	7	42	52	158
Durham	17	4	10	3	32	57	153
Derbyshire	17	4	9	4	25	54	143
Glamorgan	17	2	8	7	29	50	111

ENGLISH COUNTY CRICKET AVG

LONDON, Sept. 20 (Reuters): Leading batting and bowling averages in the 1994 English first-class cricket season that ended on Monday:

Batting: (Tabulated — matches, innings, not outs, runs scored, highest score, average, centuries, fifties):

J Carr	20	27	10	1542	261N	90.70	6	7
B Lara	15	25	2	2066	501N	89.82	9	3
M Gatting	19	27	3	1671	225	69.62	6	6
G Gooch	17	29	2	1747	236	64.70	6	5
C Lewis	12	19	4	881	220N	58.73	2	5
B McMillan	9	11	3	467	132	58.37	1	3
M Moxon	17	30	4	1458	274N	56.07	4	6
S Rhodes	18	27	11	896	100N	56.00	1	5
G Hick	17	29	1	1538	215	54.92	5	5
C Hooper	16	29	0	1579	183	54.44	5	7
R Thorne	18	31	5	1411	277N	54.26	3	6
G Thorpe	16	25	4	1136	190	54.09	2	7
M Ramprakash	18	26	2	1271	135	52.95	4	6
A Hayhurst	18	30	6	1250	121	52.08	2	10
D Bicknell	18	30	4	1354	235N	52.07	3	7
C Hollins	8	10	2	415	131	51.87	1	2
P Cottey	19	33	6	1393	191	51.59	3	6
A Mole	11	20	3	863	203N	50.76	1	5

Bowling: (Tabulated — overs, maidens, runs, wickets, average, five wickets in innings, 10 wickets in match):

K Barnett	54.2	5	173	13	13.30	1	0
C Ambrose	54.0	159	1113	77	14.45	6	2
C Walsh	506.1	119	1535	89	17.24	9	3
M McCague	341.1	67	1084	57	19.01	5	1
D Austin	251.5	72	662	33	20.06	3	1
F Stephenson	480.5	108	1345	67	20.07	6	2
J Benjamin	591.2	130	1658	80	20.72	5	1
T Munton	699.4	181	1748	81	21.58	6	2
M Patel	811.2	202	2058	90	22.86	6	3
C White	235.2	53	761	33	23.06	2	0
S Lampitt	512.4	127	1484	64	23.18	2	0
A Caddick	373.1	73	1186	51	23.25	3	0
G Larsen	226.4	73	494	21	23.52	1	0
C Lewis	345.2	69	1082	46	23.52	2	0
M Iltott	497.5	115	1391	59	23.57	3	1
Wasim Akram	213.2	44	646	27	23.92	2	1
P de Villiers	277.3	59	922	38	24.26	2	0
W Benjamin	281	97	585	24	24.37	2	0
E Giddins	450.4	8	1463	60	24.38	3	0
C Connor	574.4	131	1764	72	24.50	2	2
D Gough	479.2	100	1526	62	24.61	3	0
P DeFreitas	530	108	1621	65	24.93	4	0

What killed Gerulaitis?

SOUTHAMPTON, N.Y., Sept. 20: Former tennis star Vitas Gerulaitis apparently died of accidental carbon monoxide poisoning, police said Monday night, reports AP.

Gerulaitis, 40, appeared to have been overcome by the fumes from a faulty propane heater installation that seeped into the heating and air conditioning system of a friend's home, Southampton Village police said.

Police said they did not know whether Gerulaitis was asleep at the time of the accident. He was the only person in the guest cottage of the oceanfront estate in this affluent Long Island town.

Investigators found "lethal levels" of carbon monoxide inside the entire residence where Gerulaitis' body was found shortly after 3 pm (1900 GMT) Sunday. Police said there was no history of carbon monoxide trouble at the residence.

Gerulaitis' body was found on the bed, fully clothed, police said there were no signs of drugs or crime.

The Suffolk County Medical Examiner's office conducted an autopsy Monday. The examiner said further toxicological tests were being done. Nancy Chaffee Whitaker, a former tennis star married to ABC sportscaster Jack Whitaker, saw Gerulaitis the

day before his body was found. He'd flown in from the West Coast late Friday night and arrived at the Racquet Club of East Hampton early the next morning for a charity tennis clinic.

Despite a sore back, a long trip and little sleep, Gerulaitis was in good spirits, she said. "He looked good. He didn't look like he wasn't feeling well or that something was wrong."

When the clinic ended, she said, "he gave me a hug and said, 'I'll see you at 7', when a dinner at the club was scheduled."

But Gerulaitis did not show up at the dinner, and the following afternoon a servant who went to the guest cottage to make the bed found his body.

Gerulaitis' host was developer Martin Raynes, a friend since both men were fixtures on the Manhattan party circuit in the '70s. Gerulaitis was a frequent guest at the shingle and stone cottage, police said.

Gerulaitis played his last match Wednesday night in Seattle on the Champions Tour, a circuit for men 35 and over. He withdrew from the event the next day because of a bad back.

He injured it at the beginning of a doubles match: Gerulaitis and Jimmy Connors vs Bjorn Borg and John Lloyd. Gerulaitis acknowledged using cocaine during the late 1970s and 80s, and said that drugs and late nights undercut a career that was based on

quickness and endurance. He was treated for substance abuse and was implicated, though never charged, in a cocaine-dealing conspiracy in 1983.

Fred Stolle, Gerulaitis' former coach, said, Gerulaitis had admitted using drugs, but that he'd been off them "at least the last couple of years."

Comedian Alan King, a fixture at the US Open, had known Gerulaitis for more than two decades. He recalled the tennis star's generosity and humour.

After Borg had beaten Gerulaitis 16 consecutive times, an unbowed Gerulaitis proclaimed: "Nobody beats Gerulaitis 17 times in a row." King remembered.

"Although he was a high liver — he went all the way — every year he used to give away hundreds and hundreds of rackets. ... There wasn't a charity event he didn't show up for," King said.

John McEnroe Sr said his son, John, was "terribly distraught by the news" of Gerulaitis' death. McEnroe Sr recalled that Gerulaitis was an inspiration to his son when the two were playing tennis as youngsters in the New York area.

John and Vitas were at the Port Washington Tennis Academy together at the same time. John ... was five years younger than Vitas.