

Ten, Jansher Khan's limit

PARIS, Sept. 20: Six down and four to go. Jansher Khan is making no secret of his ambition to win 10 World Open titles before he hangs up his squash racket, having established himself as the most successful player the sport has ever known, reports AFP.

And yet, the more he strives to reach such an improbable objective, the harder it will be for the hugely talented Pakistani to achieve it.

Physically, and mentally, Jansher will find that the challenges are going to increase rather than diminish.

The 25-year-old from Peshawar captured his sixth world title in Barcelona last Sunday equalling the tournament record set by his more illustrious namesake, Jahangir Khan and setting his personal agenda until the end of the decade.

"If I don't get injured over the next four or five years, I am fully confident that I can win 10 World Opens," he says, and on last week's evidence there appears no-one currently to touch him.

Tactically, the best player on the circuit by far, "The number one in the world" and "brilliant" — these tributes were paid last week to Jansher not by his adoring fans, but by the people he grounded effortlessly into submission.

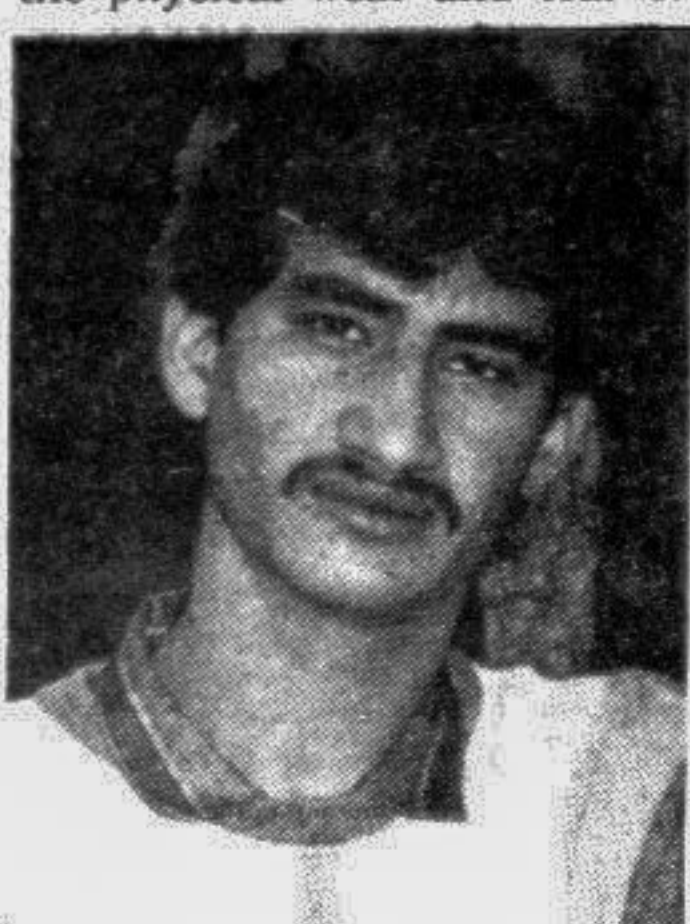
However, he is unlikely to find future successes quite so straightforward.

As Jansher readily admits, he needs to remain injury-free to stay at the top — a feat which is becoming increasingly difficult as the pace and power of squash has increased in recent years.

He blamed a nagging ankle injury for his 3-0 defeat to England's Peter Marshall in

Paris two weeks ago, and claimed it nearly stopped him from competing in Barcelona. Hopefully, it will prove to be a temporary inconvenience, rather than the start of a long-running affliction.

Yet it's highly unlikely that the physical wear and tear of



JANSHER KHAN

such a gruelling sport will not make its presence felt before the end of the decade, as it has done for Jansher's rivals.

Jansher's own reign has been made easier by the injuries which, to varying degrees, have cut short the playing careers of his most dangerous opponents — Jahangir Khan and Australians Chris Dittmar and Chris Robertson.

A hip injury, coupled with personal problems, has also meant a year of defeat and disappointment for Rodney Martin, the 1991 world champion.

The other challenge facing Jansher is a mental one — coping with the burden of people's expectations back in Pakistan.

Like supporters of European football champion AC Milan, Jansher's followers have become so used to success that only continued invincibility will do.

"When you're world one, there's always pressure," he said.

"Sometimes you lose in a tournament. And when I do my family understands me, that I'm playing a lot of tournaments and that it doesn't matter if Jansher loses one. They know he's not a machine. But the country always wants to you win."

Indeed, it was the fear of defeat in the World Open — rather than the fear of exacerbating his injury during the tournament — which drove him to the brink of withdrawal, two hours before his flight to Barcelona.

"I thought, it's the World Open and my country always wants me to win the tournament. And I don't want to go there and lose because I'm not fit. If I go there I must win."

In the end, he went, and he won.

But in the final, the loss of the opening game — his first of the tournament — was put down as much to the overwhelming pressure as Marshall's glorious attacking game, and the fear of his injury returning also haunted him during the 90-minute encounter.

"I thought if I lost, what would happen? Even when I was leading 2-1 I was thinking I must win. I must win."

Inevitably, the pressure which cost Jansher a game in last week's World Open final will only increase rather than recede.

The competition will meanwhile be in an even better position to exploit any such weakness, as the young British players like Marshall and Peter Nicol reach their peak, taking over from the top Australians.

Ironically, Jansher's bold prediction will either be a source of inspiration, or a milestone around his neck.

Under fire before ignition

TOKYO, Sept. 20: Athletes arriving in Hiroshima for next month's Asian Games are comparing the luxury condominiums they have been assigned to a refugee camp, according to a newspaper report today, says Reuters.

The complaints are being directed at 16 brand new apartment blocks in the Games village where bathrooms have been sealed off so as not to put off potential buyers.

Athletes will have to use temporary toilets and baths that have been fitted at a cost of 600 million yen (six million dollars).

"It would be difficult to find buyers if the hygiene facilities such as bathtubs and toilets were used before sale," the Mainichi Daily News quoted a member of the Hiroshima Asian Games Olympic Committee as saying.

The apartments will be put on the market at 30 million to 60 million yen (130,000 dollars to 600,000 dollars), the paper said.

There is also discontent with the size of the flats. Most of the 7,300 athletes and Organising Committee members at the Games will stay in around 1,000 apartments in the complex. The average space for each occupant is 13.5 square metres (145 square feet).

The rooms still have bare concrete walls and floors so they cannot be damaged before sale.

"Some people say the facilities are not too much different from a refugee camp," Yasutaka Matsudaira, the head of the Japanese delegation, told Mainichi.

The village contains banks, pharmacies, medical facilities and restaurants that serve 50 different dishes taking account of food prescriptions in Asia's multiple religions.

For spiritual rejuvenation there are several places of worship as well as discos and karaoke bars.

The two-week Games are scheduled to begin on October 2, and the paper quoted a committee member as saying there was no time to rebuild the complex after the complaints.

Date, Sabatini sail

TOKYO, Sept. 20: Local favourite Kimiko Date eased aside her compatriot Ayako Hirose 6-4, 6-0 here today to join Gabriela Sabatini in the second round of the 400,000 dollar Nishinomiya women's tennis tournament, reports AFP.

The second-seed, who became the first Japanese to break into the top 10, took eight straight games after 4-4 as her hapless opponent struggled with a thigh injury.

"I needed some time to get into my rhythm since I had not played a match for a while," said seventh-ranked Date playing her first match after losing to Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario in the US open quarter-finals.

Fourth-seeded Sabatini, who has yet to win a title since the Italian Open in May 1992, got off to an immaculate start as the Argentine needed only 50 minutes to whitewash Jolene Watanabe of the United States 6-0, 6-0.



1994 Telecom Rally Australia results

PERTH, Sept. 20: Sixty-five cars left Perth last Saturday morning facing a long day on the gravel stages south of the city, where 248 kms of competition lay ahead of them. Clearly the fascinating battles at the head of the field were set to continue as the world's top drivers readied themselves to push their cars to the limit.

Sixteen seconds behind the leader McRae at the start, Juha Kankkunen was fastest on the opening stage, three seconds faster than the Subaru driver.

McRae responded by taking nine seconds off Kankkunen, restoring his lead to 22 seconds. The crowds were then treated to a sustained attack on the Subaru as the new Toyota claimed the next three stage victories — reducing the gap to seven!

The 19th stage presented the drivers with a challenging 45 kms on which the Subaru hit a bank, damaging the right-hand side front wing and the bumper. McRae was at the start of a charge still taking four seconds from the Toyota despite his brush with the scenery. McRae was saving his best — taking a massive 18 seconds from the Toyota on stage 21 — held on the some of the most twisty and demanding roads of Western Australia.



Orlando Magic guard Penny Hardaway (L) and Charlotte Hornets centre Alonzo Mourning (R) joke with a Chinese man dressed in a Ming dynasty warrior outfit during a tour of the Mutianyu section of the Great Wall yesterday. An NBA selection side is touring China.

— AFP photo

Laver's feat untouchable

NEWPORT, RI, Sept. 20 (AP): It was 25 years ago that Rod Laver won the tennis Grand Slam. No

man has done it since and, the way Laver sees it, it's unlikely it will happen again soon.

"I think Pete Sampras is certainly the odds-on choice. He's the one you point to who could do it," Laver said. "It's not to say some other players couldn't hit a bright patch in their careers, but I don't foresee it."

"It's harder to do now. I don't think players put emphasis in their lives on being disappointed if they don't win a Grand Slam. A lot of people are just happy to win a Grand Slam tournament."

Laver, 56, won Wimbledon and the Australian, French and US Opens as an amateur in 1962, then as a professional in 1969, the first full year of tennis' Open era. In Newport last weekend to play in the Legends of Time exhibition, he and several other players from his era reflected on the silver anniversary of Laver's last Grand Slam.

Laver says his toughest test in 1969 came during the Australian Open, when he went five sets with Tony Roche, winning 6-3 in the fifth.

"This was before tiebreakers, and one set was 22-20, another was 11-9 and another was 8-6," he recalls. "It was in the tropical climate and humidity, and on the grass it was even worse."

Laver breezed through the French Open, winning the final in straight sets over Ken Rosewall — "probably the best match I played on clay" — and added the third leg of the Grand Slam by winning Wimbledon in four sets over John Newcombe.

He finished off his second Grand Slam by winning the US Open, with Roche again giving Laver a toughest test, this time in the final.

The final was pushed back a day by rain, and when Laver and Roche took the court at Forest Hills, the grass was still damp. Laver lost the first set, then changed into a pair of blunt tennis spikes in search of more traction.

"I was still slipping in the spikes," Laver remembers, but he overcame Roche to win the match in four sets.

Australian Fred Stolle, who won the US Open in 1966 and toured professionally for three years with Laver, says the man he calls "Rocket" was tough mentally.

"Whenever you broke serve and you went up there to try and consolidate that break, he was the best at breaking back right away. I think that was one of his major strengths," Stolle says. "He was an aggressive player, the first guy that really ripped topspin backhands. There weren't a lot of topspin lobs around, and Rod had that."



ROD LAVER

Both men agree the Grand Slam has become considerably harder to win.

Stolle and Laver point to the fact that the tournaments are now played on four different surfaces — clay, grass, hardcourt and rubberised — instead of just grass and clay, as in Laver's day.

And both say the depth of competition in today's game is greater than anything they faced.

"The composite, wide-body rackets have allowed a lot of players to compete and play very good tennis at a very young age," Laver said. "It's possible to become a very good player at a very young age."

"(There's also) a great deal of pressure on the players to win the matches. It's tougher all the way through the draw."

Stolle agreed.

"There's more depth in the business now than there was then. You have somebody in the top 100 that can surprise somebody in the top 10. We never had that."

Stolle said Sampras, who has often spoken of his admiration for the Australian players of the 1960s, has the best shot among current players of winning the Slam.

But the man who coached Sampras on the 1992 US Davis Cup team disagrees.

Tom Gorman, who reached the semifinals of three Grand Slam events in the early 1970s, says he thinks Andre Agassi is the best candidate among today's players to win a Grand Slam.

"Pete hasn't shown he can win on clay. Agassi can win very easily, as we've seen, at (this year's) US Open. He can win at the Australian, which is a similar surface. Clay, he's been to the finals of the French twice. And then he won Wimbledon (in 1992)," Gorman said.

Ed Moses plans a comeback

INDIANAPOLIS, Indiana, Sept. 20: Double world and Olympic champion hurdler Edwin Moses is considering returning to competition at the age of 39 and after six years in retirement, reports AFP.

"I ran the hurdles recently for a (television) commercial and I felt pretty good," Moses said. "The technique is as good as ever. I think I could still run under 48 seconds in the 400 metres and the way things are in my event, I could still beat a lot of guys."

Moses retired with back pain following the 1988 Seoul Olympics and was frustrated in a bid to qualify for the 1992 US Winter Olympic bobsled team. He said back pain does not hinder him but full training might be too much.

"It's tempting to go back," Moses said. "I haven't trained at all for two years, but if I could find a way to train with no pain, I would do it."

Moses is expected to be named to the US Athletics Hall of Fame when results of voting are revealed later this week.

Gosper advised to take it easy

MELBOURNE, Sept. 20: Former International Olympic Committee vice president Kevin Gosper has been ordered to rest for four weeks after suffering a cranial hemorrhage in Paris earlier this month, officials said Tuesday, reports AP.

Gosper, who is chief commissioner of Melbourne City, was earlier reported suffering from pressure on an artery caused by exhaustion.

Melbourne City released a statement Tuesday night confirming that he had suffered a hemorrhage while he was in Paris attending the IOC's Centennial Congress.

Gosper was admitted to the world-renowned Foch Hospital on Sept 5 ... complaining of severe head pains," the statement said.

Gosper is expected to be discharged from the Foch Hospital on Wednesday and will fly home soon after that, the statement said.

Gosper, 60, recently completed an eight-year term on the IOC Executive Board, the last four of those as vice president.

IOC president Juan Antonio Samaranch has invited Gosper to attend board meetings for the next 12 months, after which he will be eligible for re-election to the board.

Calcutta MSC held

CALCUTTA, Sept. 20: Mohammedan Sporting were held to a goalless draw by a spirited Eastern Railway in their Churns Super Division football league match at their home ground here yesterday, reports PTI.

The city giant had themselves to blame for the draw as they missed chances galore particularly in the opening session after penetrating the rival defence with ease.

Mohammedan Sporting's Abdul Khaleque appeared to be totally off colour yesterday as he missed two absolute sitters from inside the box with the goalkeeper out of position. Forward Amit Das was also guilty of squandering a very easy scoring opportunity early in the second session.

Despite dominating the proceedings, the men in black and white were a pale shadow of themselves as they missed chances with exasperating regularity much to the annoyance of their new Coach Syed Nayeemuddin.

Eastern Railway custodian Debbas Goswami, however, should be given credit for pulling off several brilliant saves despite being under pressure for most part of the game.

With this draw Mohammedan Sporting have secured 22 points from 16 matches and are placed third on the points table after East Bengal and Mohun Bagan.

WTA rankings unchanged

MIAMI, Florida, Sept. 20: WTA rankings released here Monday were unchanged from a week ago after the circuit was idle following the US Open, reports AFP.

Germany's Steffi Graf remains world number one with the woman who beat her in the US Open final, Spain's Arantxa Sanchez Vicario, ranked second and Conchita Martinez third.

The women's circuit returns to action in Tokyo and Moscow this week.

Uncorking genie in bottle

PARIS, Sept. 20: Cities bidding for the 2002 Winter Olympics sit their preliminary exams this week

when the International Olympic Committee's assessors begin their task of selecting four finalists, reports AFP.

But just how do candidates convince the 100 members who now sit on the IOC their city is the right choice?

"If you could put it into a bottle we would sell it," Richard Pound, one of the most influential men on the IOC, told AFP.

"But we'd start selling after June 95," added the Canadian lawyer who sits on the Quebec City Bidding Committee.

June 16 is when the IOC session in Budapest decides on the hosts for the 19th Winter Games.

Pound, who chairs the IOC financial commission, said the most important step was to win the confidence of IOC members.

"IOC members have to be confident the city is ready to do it, is capable of doing it and

that a lot is already in place," he said.

"They have to be confident we are genuinely eager to welcome the world of sport," he added.

The genie in the bottle for Lillehammer was Norway's forceful and widely respected Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland.

"I'd tell bidding cities to get someone like her," said the 1994 Winter Games press chief Tor Aune.

John Coates the Australian National Olympic Committee president recognised as having masterminded Sydney's successful bid for the 2000 Summer Games, says trust is essential.

"A good technical bid is essential but perhaps the most important thing is the IOC has to be satisfied you will do it properly," he said.

"But it's very hard for first-timers," he added. "Sydney's bid was built on attempts by Brisbane and Melbourne to win the Games."

Thomas Bach, who won a gold medal in Germany's 1976 Olympic fencing team in

Montreal, leads an evaluation commission which visits Salt Lake City and Quebec City this week.

"There are two qualifying rounds," said Tom Welch, president of the Salt Lake City Bid Committee which lost out to Nagoya in Japan for the 1998 Games after four rounds of voting in 1991.

"First we have to demonstrate to the evaluation commission we are technically competent, that we do have the necessary infrastructure, transport, telecommunications, management skills."

Then we have to catch the collective mood of the IOC, there are many reasons a city is chosen to host the Olympics — rotation, language, excellence. But basically we have to convince them our team can put on the Games in the way they would want."

The 13-member commission visits Jaca, Spain, Osterund, Sweden, and Sion, Switzerland, from Oct 10-18.

Tarvisio, Italy, Graz, Austria, Poprad-Tatry, Slovakia, and Sochi, Russia are scheduled for Oct 30 to Nov 11.

It's dusk, dumps for Usha

NEW DELHI, Sept. 20: Former Indian track queen P.T. Usha attempted to stage a comeback for the Hiroshima Asian Games ended in tears when she failed to qualify for the 200 metres, reports AFP.

The 30-year-old sprinter walked off the track in Lucknow on Monday in tears after timing 24.33 seconds, well short of the 23.42 secs qualifying standard set for selection. It was another disaster for Indian sport as it braces for another embarrassing Asian Games.

Usha, who narrowly missed an Olympic bronze medal in the 400 metres hurdles in Los Angeles in 1984, ran the trial race alone. Ten other women entered but failed to show up.

"I took part in the race because I wanted to run for my country at Hiroshima," said Usha, who quit athletics four years ago to marry and raise a family.

"I had warmed up and so I wanted to finish the race. I had asked everyone if they were taking part or not, but I did not get an answer. At least they could have told me they would not run."

Chief coach Veda Sagar defended the other women for staying away. "You cannot force people to run a particular race especially when they are geared up for another qualifying event," he said.

Usha, however, could still make the trip to Hiroshima, if she agrees to take part only in the two relays for which has already been selected. She had said that she would only take part in the Asian if she qualifies for an individual race.

Usha's disappointment was a new blow to a squad preparing for an embarrassing debacle in Hiroshima, with medal

expectations at an all-time low. Observers predict no more than 15 medals from the 250-strong contingent at Hiroshima, continuing a gradual decline in India's sporting fortunes.

After securing a record 57



P.T. USHA

medals, including 13 golds, at the New Delhi Games in 1982, they managed just medals with five golds at Seoul, four years later. At Beijing in 1990, there were less than half of the expected 46 medals, the lone gold coming in home-grown kabaddi.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS	37 Stopper of a sort?	57 File DOWN	19 Ron Crocus
1 "on first?"	39 Sartorial woe	1 Pre-Yule buy	22 Patron saint of girls
5 Weaken	41 Penn or Young	2 Target for Nicklaus	24 Stadium cry
8 Tranquillize	42 "Man of 1,000 Faces"	3 Skunk's defense	25 Harvard's rival
12 Emulated Paul	45 "Wild One" singer	4 Vacillate	26 Lowers
13 Teeter-totter quorum	49 Lynn or Vanessa	5 Kitchen gadget	27 Star-related
14 "Zip — Doo-Dah"	51 Medley	6 Idolater's emotion	29 Bat wood
15 Lotion add-in	52 Phrase of under-standing	7 Space-craft compartments	30 A welcome sight?
16 Clara Barton's group	53 Actor Stephen	8 Tends the turkey	33 Dispatch dragons
18 Bygone shahdom	54 Bread spread	9 Festooning	36 Depends (on)
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21 Melody	56 First state: abbr.	11 Private's meal	40 Apiece
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28 Where Anna taught			44 Play area
31 Pub			46 Scat singer of note
32 Dancer Ruth St.			47 Campaign promises?
34 White House org.			48 Area of downtown Chicago
35 Lofty			50 Churchillian gesture

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	MELDO BLAZER
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CRYPTOQUIP

V N H H T P B O Y D D B P A F H
A F N B P F Y F Y E P D V
Y T Y E P B

Saturday's Cryptoquip: AFTER A HARD DAY AT HIS BENCH, THE COBBLER SAID, "THAT'S SHOE BUSINESS FOR YOU."

Today's Cryptoquip clue: Y equals G
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