

# 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.

"Technically, 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.

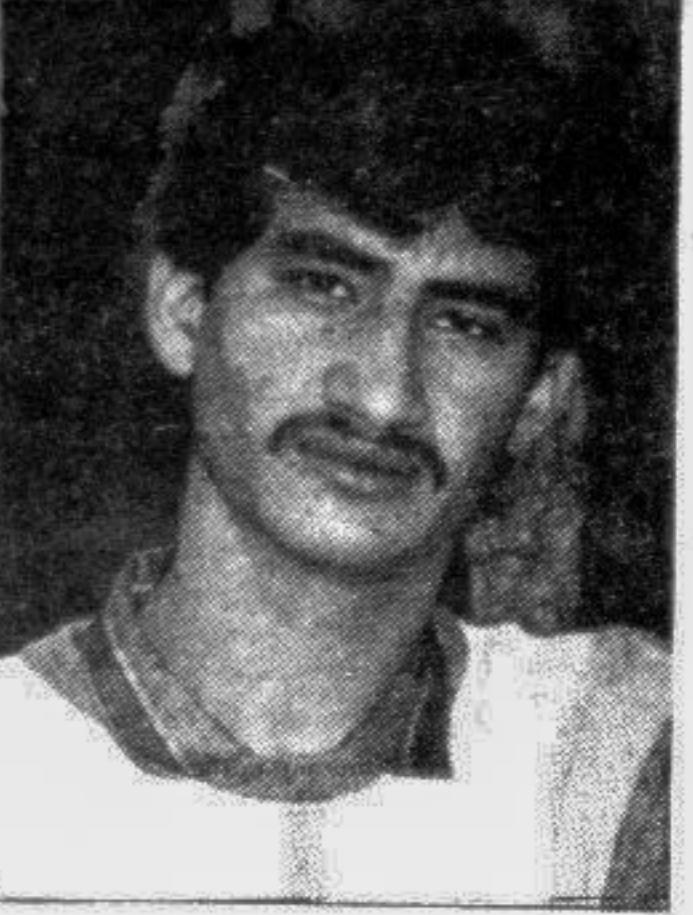
However, he is unlikely to find future successes quite so straightforward.

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 Dittman 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.

# 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 Surfer 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 1978 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, Ostersund, 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.

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

Asian standards have risen much faster than ours and the preparations for Hiroshima have not been well coordinated," said Juliu Sen, a director in the federal Sports Ministry.

Few Indian athletes are close to gold medals at Hiroshima — most will be happy just to make the trip.

Indian hopefuls for top honours at Hiroshima are mid-distance runner Bahadur Prasad, discus thrower Ajit Bhaduria, tennis ace Leander Paes and shooting prodigy Jaspan Rana.

Prasad, 25, won a gold in the 5,000m and a silver in the 1,500m at the Asian Track and Field (ATF) Championships in Manila last year.

But his hopes of securing a double at Hiroshima may have been dashed by Games officials, who have scheduled both events within a space of 20 minutes on the last day of the track and field programme.

"Unless there is a change in the schedule, I may not be able to take part in both races," Prasad said.

Bhaduria won the discus gold in Manila meet and his Russian coach Arnold Stasick believes Bhaduria can repeat the victory.

Paes, 20, who fired India into the Davis Cup semifinals last year, hopes to cement his growing reputation on the international circuit with an Asian medal in the team and individual events.

Rana, 18, goes to Hiroshima buoyant after sharing the gold with veteran compatriot Ashok Pandit in the men's pairs centre-fire pistol event in the Commonwealth Games in Victoria, Canada.

If this young brigade fails to strike form, India will bank on team events like hockey and kabaddi to keep their reputation alive.

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 debut in Hiroshima, with medal



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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.

## 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 Reuter.

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 Nichirei 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-all 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.

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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 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 Laver's day.

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.

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."

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

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

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"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 Kevan 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