

Pocket Hercules at his best

ISTANBUL, Nov 21: Naim Suleymanoglu, the Turkish lifter known as "Pocket Hercules," won three gold medals and set three more world records Sunday at the World Weightlifting Championships, reports AP.

Suleymanoglu, who won the snatch, the clean and jerk and the combined events in the men's 64-kilogram (141-pound) class, twice broke records set only minutes earlier by Valerios Leonidis of Greece.

In the women's 54 kg (119-pound) category, Sheng Wang of China also collected three golds on the third day of the 10-day competition.

Suleymanoglu's victory in the snatch came after former world record-holder Attila Czanka of Hungary, hampered by an ailing right arm, was able to lift only 140 kgs (308 pounds).

Czanka was followed by the previously unknown Leonidis, who lifted 146.5 kgs (322 pounds) on his third attempt, breaking Czanka's record by half a kilo (one pound).

Suleymanoglu then stepped up and lifted 147.5 kilograms (325 pounds) — the 38th time

he has broken a world record — sending the crowd into a frenzy.

In the clean and jerk, Leonidis lifted 180.5 kgs (397 pounds) in his second attempt to break the former record of 180 kgs (396 pounds) held by Suleymanoglu.

Suleymanoglu then ordered 181 kgs (398 pounds) placed on the bar and lifted it, breaking the record again and regaining the title. He used his last attempt to lift 182.5 kgs



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(402 pounds) for a 40th world record. Leonidis tried but failed to

lift 185 kgs (407 pounds) in his final attempt.

The sum of Suleymanoglu's lifts in the snatch and clean and jerk gave him the third gold for best combined total.

A crowd of about 6,000 at the 10,000-seat Abdi Ipekci Sports Palace was warned three times for jeering and booing lifters from Greece and Armenia. As Suleymanoglu won victory after victory, they screamed, shouted, waved flags and danced in celebration.

Suleymanoglu, a national hero in Turkey, defected in 1986 from Bulgaria, where he had been a two-time world champion.

He earned his nickname because he stands only 5 feet (1.52 metres) tall but can lift three times his body weight.

Sheng swept her competition with a combined total of 197.5 kgs (435 pounds) to collect three gold medals.

Wang and India's Karnam Malleswari had identical lifts of 87.5 kgs (193 pounds) and 110 kgs (242 pounds) in the snatch and clean and jerk events, respectively, but Wang was declared the winner of all three events because of her lighter body weight — 0.6 kg (one pound) less than Malleswari.

DU soccer, cricket results

Sports Reporter

Department of Sociology edged past history by the odd goal in three in the Dhaka University inter-department football championship at the university ground yesterday. Zulfiqar struck both the goals, one in each half, for the winners while Farid Ahmed pulled one back for the losers. Meanwhile, in the inter-department cricket championship, Zakir hit a sparkling 71 not out to pave the way for a comfortable four wicket win for Islamic Studies over Chemistry at the Jagannath Hall ground.

Chasing a modest target of 145 runs for victory in the allotted 28 overs, Islamic Studies raced to 148 for six with four balls to spare.

Earlier, batting first, Chemistry scored 144 in 28 overs for the loss of six wickets.

Batistuta's feat

NAPLES, Nov 21: Gabriel Batistuta equalled a 32-year-old Italian record when he scored for Fiorentina against Napoli on Sunday, reports Reuter.

The goal meant the Argentine World Cup player had scored in the first 10 league games of the season, matching the run enjoyed by Ezio Pasciutti for Bologna at the start of the 1962-63 campaign.

Batistuta struck in the 84th minute and added a penalty in the dying seconds to take his tally for the season to 12 and put his team 5-2 ahead on the day.

Batistuta will have a chance to beat the record in the home game against Sampdoria next Sunday.

Maradona still without a win

BUENOS AIRES, Nov 21: Diego Maradona came tantalisingly close to the first win of his coaching career when Deportivo Mandiyu drew 2-2 away to Argentine league leaders River Plate at the weekend, reports Reuter.

Mandiyu, for whom Maradona is assistant coach, led 2-0 before being pegged back to 2-2.

But it was their most convincing result yet under Maradona. Mandiyu are still struggling against relegation and are only one place off the bottom of the table.

Relegation in Argentina is decided on an average taken over the past three years in which the club from Corrientes are also struggling.

The result took River Plate one point clear of nearest rivals Vélez Sarsfield, who won their first six games but have since faded badly.

On Sunday the reigning South American club champions suffered another blow as they went down 3-1 away to Gimnasia Esgrima de la Plata.

Santos take Pele's advice

RIO DE JANEIRO, Nov 21: The manager of the Santos soccer team it involved in a locker room fracas with a reporter — has been fired at the urging of former soccer great Pele, reports AP.

"How can we do away with hooligans when a soccer club manager sets an example of violence?" said Pele, a Santos director.

Santos manager Serginho violently head-butted a reporter on Wednesday following a Santos loss. The incident was televised across Brazil.

Gilvan Ribeiro, of the Sao Paulo daily Diario Popular and the TVA cable channel, received seven stitches on his forehead.

Serginho did not explain why he struck Ribeiro, who was a critic of the manager. Ribeiro has filed a civil lawsuit against the manager.

"I told Serginho there was no other alternative but to fire him," a Santos director, Clodoaldo, said in Sunday's Rio daily Jornal do Brasil.

Joaozinho Rosa was named to manage Santos in their Brazilian league game Sunday against Fluminense.

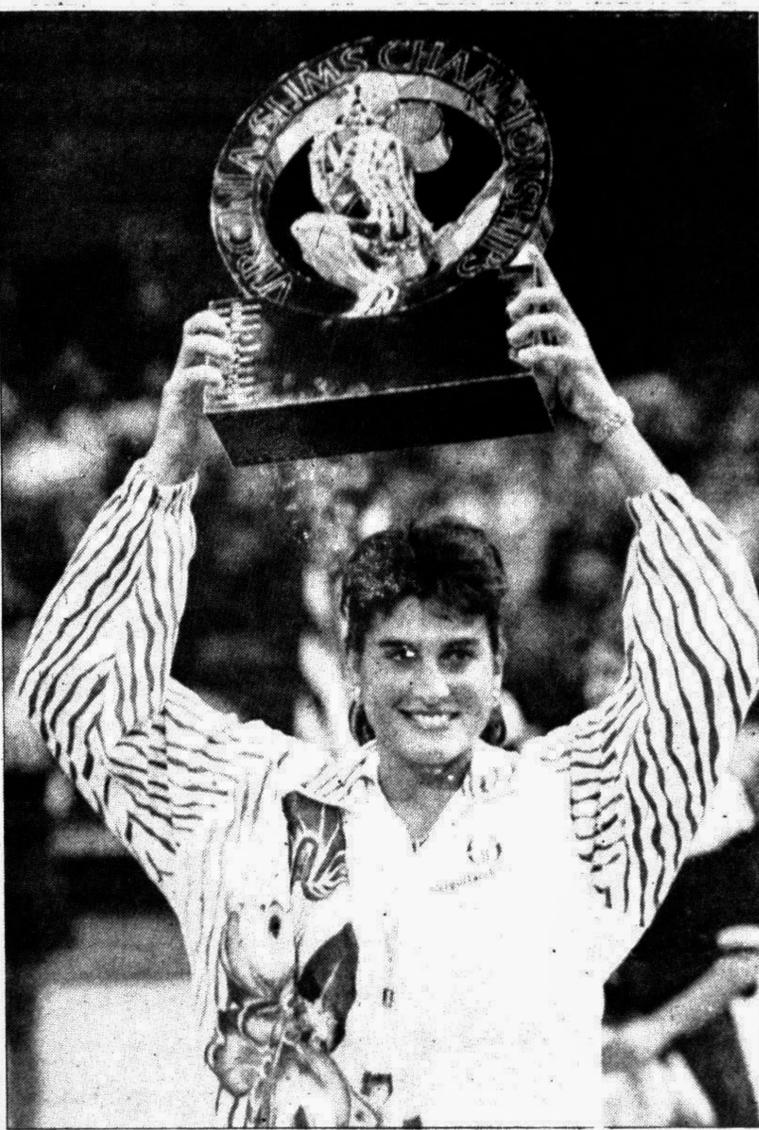
Serginho had a record of violence as a player, once being suspended for a year for deliberately stepping on an opposing player.

Incontrad v'ball results

Tangail DSA entered the final round of the Incontrad inter-district volleyball championship as the winners of Madhupur zone yesterday, reports UNB.

In a Madhupur zonal match at Tangail Stadium, the host team eliminated Narsingdhi DSA 15-3, 15-3 and 15-5.

The ten team final round will begin at the volleyball court from November 26.



Gabriela Sabatini of Argentina displays the Virginia Slims Championship trophy after beating American Lindsay Davenport in the final in New York on Nov 20. Sabatini won 6-3, 6-2, 6-4. — AFP photo

Sabatini's search is over

NEW YORK, Nov 21: After wandering the tennis wastelands for more than 2 1/2 years, Gabriela Sabatini has once again discovered the winning touch. It may have come just in time to save women's tennis, reports AP.

"It's not just winning the title," Sabatini said after taking the season-ending Virginia Slims Championships on Sunday. "It means more the way I won the title, the way I played. I was confident the whole week."

Her return to form was the good news for women's tennis, which has experienced plenty of the other kind.

— This was the week that Martina Navratilova retired.

— Monica Seles is still nowhere to be seen on a tennis court.

— Jennifer Capriati has just begun a comeback after being known in the past year for her escapades with police.

— Steffi Graf, while still No. 1, is reportedly ready to undergo surgery on her bad back.

Just when it looked darkest, Sabatini again became a bright light.

Six years ago, Sabatini won

this unique 16-player tournament. When she followed two years later by winning the US Open, she was considered to be on the verge of stardom.

Instead, she soon became a "whatever happened to..." and fell from third to ninth in the world.

Her last title came in May, 1992, when she won the Italian Open. A year later, she sustained her most shocking loss, bowing in the 1993 French Open quarterfinals to Mary Joe Fernandez after jumping out to what appeared to be an insurmountable 6-1, 5-1 lead.

"That was the toughest one," Sabatini admits. "I was winning that match so easy and playing great that year. I really thought I had a chance to win the tournament."

"After I lost that match, I was so frustrated, so disappointed, that it didn't go my way that it took me actually a few weeks to forget about it. It was really tough, you know, to forget about that and to start playing again, start being focused again."

She solved all those problems Sunday when she beat 18-year-old Lindsay Davenport 6-3, 6-2, 6-4 in the only best-of-5-sets final the women play. On this day at Madison Square

Garden, it was Davenport who was unable to cope with a plethora of unsolvable problems presented by Sabatini.

"I think when I didn't start off that well, I got a little frustrated, but she was part of the reason," Davenport said. "She was chipping balls low and top-spinning them high, and hitting them short, hitting them deep, and I couldn't get a rhythm. So she was definitely one of the major reasons."

It was at times an odd match, one in which Sabatini always seemed to be in control, but one in which neither player was able to consistently hold serve.

Davenport began the match by holding at love. The next time she held her service, she was down a set and trailing 4-1 in the second.

It worked to perfection. One of the biggest hitters in the women's game when her feet are set, Davenport was kept on the move by Sabatini, who kept changing spins, pace and direction.

Davenport began the third set by breaking Sabatini at 15, aided by three double-faults, the Argentine's ninth, 10th and 11th of the match. And when she broke Sabatini again in the seventh game, Davenport put the set back on serve.

Ali, Foreman may visit DPRK

TOKYO, Nov 21: Heavyweight boxing champion George Foreman and former rival Muhammad Ali are slated to appear at a sports and culture festival to be held next year in North Korea, a Japanese sports promoter said on Monday, reports Reuter.

Foreman, 45, who on November 5 surprised the world by recapturing his title from a fighter roughly half his age, will demonstrate his skills in an event in Pyongyang organised jointly by North Korea's communist government and a Japanese professional wrestling group.

"Although Foreman's schedule will now depend on when he must defend his boxing title, he is slated to go to Pyongyang," said a spokesman for new Japan Professional Wrestling Corporation, co-sponsor of the event, to be held in April.

The spokesman said former heavyweight champion Ali, 52, will attend the festival as a special guest.

The two flamboyant fighters will join a delegation of American and Japanese professional wrestlers in the first appearance by such athletes in the secretive communist state.

The event, arranged by former wrestler and now member of Japanese Parliament Kanji Antonio Inoki, will take place on April 28 or April 30, the spokesman said.

North Korea said on Monday it will welcome foreign tourists during the event — a rarity for a country which sharply restricts tourism and closely controls tourists' movements.

Professional wrestling and boxing matches, mass gymnastic displays and art performances are scheduled for the festival, KCNA said.

Italian spikers gain revenge

OSAKA, Japan, Nov 21: World champions Italy avenged their loss in Athens by beating Japan 3-1 here Sunday in the last match of the preliminary round of the World Super Four men's volleyball tournament, reports AP.

The Japanese spikers, the only team who defeated Italy in the World Championships last month in Athens, narrowly took the second set after a deuce to make the match even.

But the Italians tightened themselves in the following two sets to win by 15-7, 15-17, 17-15, 15-10 for their third consecutive win against no losses.

Earlier in the day at the Osaka-Jo Hall, western Japan, the World Championship silver medalists coasted to a 3-0 (15-7), 15-8, (15-7) victory over bronze medalists the United States.

The Netherlands ended the preliminary round with a 2-1 record, Japan at 1-2 and the United States with three losses.

Lombardi's ring sold

NEW YORK, Nov 21: Vince Lombardi's 1965 NFL championship ring was auctioned for 33,000 dollars the highest price ever paid for such a ring, the auctioneers said, reports AP.

Several notable items including a baseball bat owned by the player "Shoelless" Joe Jackson failed to reach the minimum bid and remained unsold at an auction of US sports memorabilia Sunday night, said Michael Puzzo, a spokesman for Leland's auction house.

Sampras saves best for last

FRANKFURT, Nov 21: Two Grand Slams, eight other titles, record earnings, top ranking safe. Not a bad year, but Pete Sampras thinks it could have been better.

Sampras won the Australian Open in January, Wimbledon in the summer, and the IBM/ATP Tour World Championship for the second time Sunday, reports AP.

"This ends the year on a great, great note," Sampras said after beating Boris Becker 4-6, 6-3, 7-5, 6-4.

"It gives me a bit of satisfaction. It's a good win here because the fall hasn't been so great," said Sampras, who also won here in 1991.

The American collected 1.225 million dollars for his victory and brought his 1994 earnings to 3,607,812 dollars an annual record for the tour.

Sampras began the year so strongly that he looked almost invincible. But injuries slowed him after his second Wimbledon title and he was beaten in the Round of 16 at the US Open.

Defeats by Andre Agassi and Becker last month on European indoor courts took some shine off his crown.

Although he lost to Becker at the start of the round-robin portion of the World Championship, Sampras bounced back Sunday with an impressive

performance. And he also beat Agassi in the semifinals.

Agassi is expected to remain No 2 and Becker No 3 when the final rankings for the year come out Monday.

Sampras, 23, is the first player to stay atop for the entire year since Ivan Lendl in 1987.

"It's a great accomplishment. It just proves that I have been really consistent even though I pulled out of six events. Being injured right

ATP tour comes under fire

SYDNEY, Nov 21: The ATP Tour came under fire Monday from one of its own tournament directors, reports AP.

Barry Masters, tournament director of the New South Wales Open, was furious when he found that Goran Ivanisevic of Croatia had been handed an eight-week suspension from the tour but will miss only one tournament — his.

Masters called the suspension imposed on Ivanisevic "a mockery" and said the ATP should act more strongly.

The hot-tempered Ivanisevic was banned from the tour after exceeding the limit of 10,000 dollars in fines for bad behaviour, but the New South Wales Open, scheduled Jan 9-15 in Sydney, is the only event Ivanisevic was slated to play during the suspension time.

"It certainly makes a mockery of the ATP Tour, who allegedly own the players, when they can't put an eight-week ban on that ensures players don't play for eight weeks," Masters said.

Ivanisevic still can play in the rich Grand Slam Cup, run by the International Tennis Federation, as well as the Hopman Cup exhibition in Perth, before tackling the Australian Open on Jan. 16, the week after his suspension ends.

"There are loopholes to get out of suspensions and I believe the ATP Tour has got to act more strongly," Masters said.

"I guess it's too much to ask to beat the No 1 twice in a week."

For a kids fund

FRANKFURT, Nov 21: The world's top tennis players have agreed to donate hundreds of thousands of dollars in prize money to help create a special "kids fund," reports AP.

Altogether one and a half million dollars will be raised from tour and world prize money donated by players.

In addition big name players will appear ten times a year at special clinics, autograph and photo sessions and other promotional events in a bid to attract more young people to the game.

"We want to get out hands on kids and build up an interest in the game. We want to boost enthusiasm in the sport," said tour CEO Mark Miles on Sunday.

Ma aims to patch things up with Liu

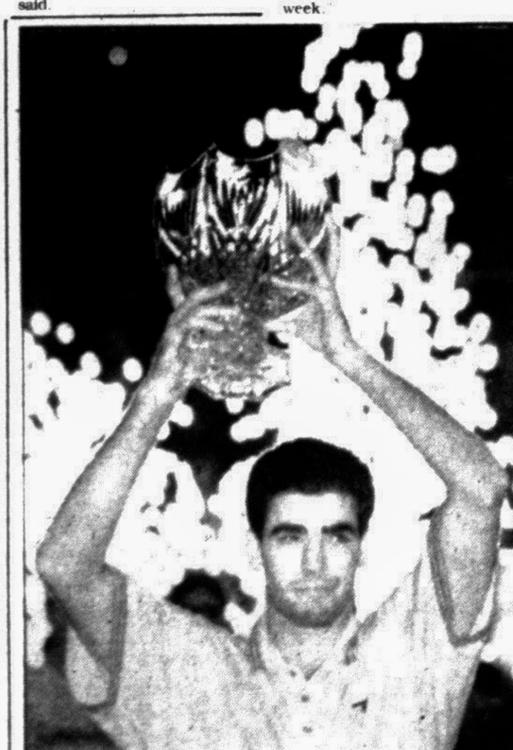
BEIJING, Nov 21: Celebrated Chinese athletics coach Ma Junren is seeking to bring world 1,500 metre champion Liu Dong back into his stable of women runners, more than one year after her love life forced her to quit, a report said Monday, reports AP.

The rift between Liu and her disciplinarian mentor, which centered on Liu's refusal to leave her boyfriend, came to a head just weeks after she won her world title at Stuttgart in August last year, finally leading her to quit the ranks of "Ma's army".

Since then the two have traded insults in the Chinese media, with Ma decrying her "rebellious nature," and Liu accusing the coach of trying to wreck her career.

According to the China Youth Daily, however, unusually penitent Ma went to Liu's home earlier this month and asked her to rejoin his Liaoning-based team of world record holders who have swept all before them since stunning the athletics world at the Stuttgart Championships.

Ma was quoted as telling Liu that he may have been "too extreme" in the past and "made some mistakes."



World number one Pete Sampras of the United States poses with the ATP Tour World Championship trophy after defeating Boris Becker 4-6, 6-3, 7-5, 6-4 in the final in Frankfurt on Nov 20. — AFP photo

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

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CRYPTOQUIP
 JWUP GBSSY UPM NAFP-
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 TM CNNAFMO SY
 GCOOWRZ UPM TWHH.
 Yesterday's Cryptoquip: BRAWNY FELON'S EAST
 FAVORITE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY: THE PARALLEL
 BARS.
 Today's Cryptoquip clue: N equals C
 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 and error.