Just for Maradona

PARIS, Jan 4: Diego Maradona's career was posthumously honoured here Tuesday with a special award from France Football magazine. reports AFP.

The magazine which for 40 years has selected the European player of the year. created a one-off award for Maradona. who played in Europe for Bargelona in 1982-84 and Napoli in 1984-91.

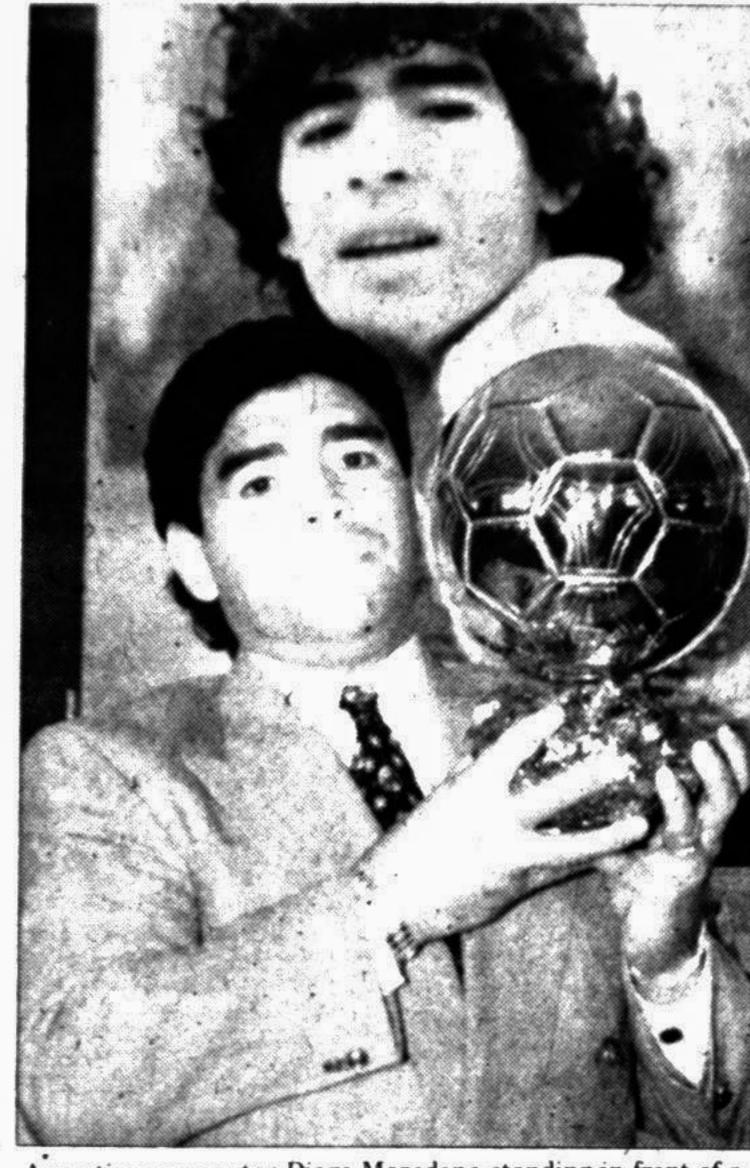
"I'll never play again. I won't come back," said the 34-yearold former Argentinian captain under a 15-month playing ball for taking drugs at the World Cup last June.

Maradona, who won the World Cup for Argentina in 1986 during a decade in which he dominated world football, is now coach of Racing, a top Argentinian club.

He arrived in Paris from Cuba, where he met Fidel Castro, but trouble await him on his return to Argentina.

He cold be jailed for violating a court order not to leave the country without permission. Maradona failed to notify judge Julio Campora that he planned to leave Argentina, as required by his sentence for shooting an air rifle at journalists outside his house last summer.

four years in prison for the shooting, but the sentence was reduced on December 19 to a 20.000-dollar fine and a promise that he would not leave his house for more than 24 hours without notifying the



Argentine soccer star Diego Maradona standing in front of a poster of himself helds the honourary "Ballon D'Or" (Golden Ball) awarded by French Soccer Magazine in Issy-Les Moulineaux on Jan 3.

Asprilla at receiving end



ARMA, Jan 4 Colombian soccer star Faustino Asprilla on Tuesdav denied reports that police

found him drunk in a bar carrying two guns and provoking other customers during a recent trip home, reports

The only guns I've ever had are water pistols," Asprilla told reporters after returning to Italian club Parma.

But Parma president Giorgio Pedraneschi confirmed the player had been reported · by police for the illegal possession of a firearm but gave a version of events which cleared Asprilla of blame.

I spent a quiet new year in Tulua with friends and family. added Asprilla, who trained with Italian league, leaders Parma on Tuesday just hours after flying back from Colombia

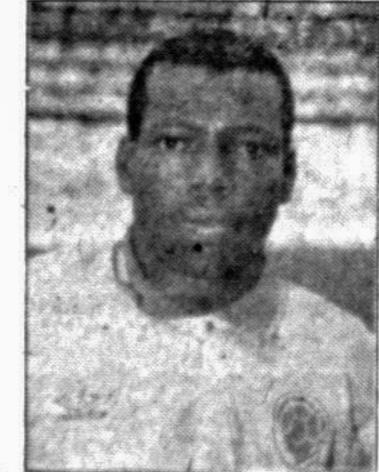
They always write a load of rubbish about me in Colombia and they've done it again this time." he added...

Asprilla was responding to reports of offences alleged to have occurred in his home town of Tulua, near the south western city of Cali.

Faustino Asprilla was found with two firearms, both calibre

7.65 pistols, and we are investigating whether he holds licences. He was in a public establishment, in a state of drunkenness and provoking the other people in the place. a Colombian police spokesman was quoted as saying.

The spokesman said Asprilla had been ordered to present licences for the arms



FAUSTINO ASPRILLA

and could face imprisonment if he failed to comply.

The Bogota reports also suggested Asprilla would not be allowed to leave Colombia until the incident was cleared

up, but an official for the Colombian immigration authorities confirmed he had left the country on Monday.

After talking to Asprilla. Pedraneschi told the Italian news agency Ansa that the player's bodyguard and his brother had both pulled out guns when a drunk demanded money from the player in a bar.

The two hid the guns in Asprilla's car when the police arrived and the weapons were found in a subsequent search. Pedraneschi added. He said the papers for only one of the weapons were in order.

Asprilla, the first Colombian player to be signed by an Italian club, is no stranger to controversy

He missed the 1993 European Cup Winners' Cup final after suffering an injury to his foot on another visit to Tulua. Asprilla said he cut his foot on a broken bottle at home, but it was widely rumoured that he was involved in a traffic argument after his car crashed into a bus.

In the same year, he lashed out at photographers waiting for him at Bogota Airport and stormed out of the Colombian team camp in Barranquilla after being left out of the side for a World Cup qualifying

Coulthard in, Mansell out



DIDCOT. Eng land, Jan 4 The Williams Formula One team named David Coulthard as its No. 2 driver

Tuesday, placing in doubt the racing future of former world champion Nigel Mansell, reports AP.

Williams decision favours youth over experience. Coulthard, 23, is seen as one of the sport's brightest prospects, while the 41-year-old Mansell is a proven champion in both Formula One and Indy car racing

"I am very happy we have now finalized our agreement with David," team director Frank Williams said. "He has proved his worth as a Grand Prix driver and I have no doubts he has a successful future ahead of him."

Damon Hill, runner-up to Michal Schumacher for last season's Formula One title, has already signed as Williams No. 1 driver for 1995.

Coulthard, promoted to the Williams' second spot last season after the death of Ayrton Senna at the San Marino Grand Prix. finished eighth in the drivers' championship standings with 16 points despite competing in only half the races. His best finish was second behind Hill at the Portuguese Grand Prix

Despite his successes, Coulthard was forced to give up his seat when Mansell returned from the indy-car circuit for the French Grand Prix and again for the final three races of the season.

Unsure of his future. Coulthard then signed a deal to drive for McLaren in 1995 Williams, claiming it still had Coulthard under contract. contested the signing and took the matter to the sport s Contract Racognition Board. The board ruled in Williams favour on Dec 14.

According to reports in British newspapers, Coulthard signed a one-year contract with Williams shortly before

Christmas for 500 000 pounds (dirs 775,000) a fraction of the fee that Mansell would expert to command

'I am delighted to have reached a fair agreement to race for Williams Renault Coulthard said 'I look forward to the hard work of the winter testing program and the challenge of my first full Formula One season.

Mansell won the world championship with Williams in 1992, but his relationship with

made the jump across the Atlantic the following year He won the Indy car PPG champi onship with the Newman Haas team, and, for a few weeks became the first driver to hold both major titles at the same

In 1994, however Mansell was unable to win and Indy-car race, and he took up Williams multi-million pound (dollar) offer for a limited return to Formula One Though he struggled initially. Mansell won



Sandra Volker of Germany waves from the podium after setting a world record in the women's 50m backstroke event at the World Cup swimming in Hong Kong on Jan 3 Volker, 20, set the mark with a time of 27.86 sec.

— AFP photo

Pele takes

BRASILIA, Jan 4: Former Brazilian soccer star Pele was sworn in on Tuesday as his country's new Sports Minister.

"As a minister I am surrounded by stars...and our coach has been approved by all of Brazil," he said, referring to new President Fernando Henrique Cardoso, who took office on Sunday.

Pele, who played in Brazil's 1958, 1962 and 1970 World Cup sides and who scored more than 1,200 goals during his playing career, said he wanted to promote sport among young people.

He also wanted to create competitions involving Brazil with African countries and its neighbours in South America and said he would back campaigns to bring the 2004 Olympic Games to Rio de Janeiro and the 2006 World Cup finals to Brazil.

"I came here without any political interest. I came here to pay back what my country has given me." he said.

time as a minister.

ernment said his budget is thought to be only around 23 million dollars a year.

kids off the streets."

by building.

Juventus to miss Baggio, Kohler

TURIN. Jan 4: Juventus will be without international stars Roberto Baggio and Juergen Kohler when they meet Parma in Italy's top-of-the table clash on Sunday, club officials said on Tuesday, reports Reuter.

Baggio, the former Euro-November 27.

He has said he is out of condition too much after the long layoff to play in Parma.

Defender Kohler has returned to his native Germany for treatment on a knee injury sustained in an international match last month.

tern to Turin until Friday and will not be available to play against Parma, the league lead-

Juventus but the Turin club have a game in hand.

Fiorentina say Effenberg not for sale?

BONN Jan 4 Italian club Fiorentina denied on Tuesday that they had agreed to sell midfieler Stefan Effenberg, the bad boy of German sorcer nince he was kicked out of last nummer's World Cup for an obscene gesture to fans reports Heuter

Florentina director Oreste about his future

But he said 'We never tract runs until 1997

Earlier, Effenberg, who is currently on loan to German Bundesliga side Borussia Moeiichengladbach, said his Italian employers had agreed to let him go for about 4.5 million dollars.

He said he was not sure

Werder Bremen and Italy's this season at Borussia

"A proposition from Milan would of course be great," Effenberg said. "But Borussia's chances, if they can find the money aren't bad either."

heinz Drygalsky said the club was not in a position to come up with the transfer fee plus the considerable salary they would have to pay.

with several potential new sponsors and anything was possible. Cinquini told SID that any sale was out of the question

the "right offer". He said that Fiorentina considered 6.5 militon dollars to 7 million dollars a more appropriate fee.

office

reports Reuter.

Pele, who will carry on with his own business interests, is

seen mainly as a figurehead who will not be working full-Sources close to the gov-

He was named as Sports Minister by Cardoso last month and said at the time that his priority would be "to get the

Apart from its beaches. Brazil has few public sporting facilities. In most cities, even spaces for soccer pitches, the national sport, are difficult to find, having been swallowed up

pean-footballer-of-the-year, has ruled himself out of contention for his first league appearance since he injured his knee on

He is not expected to re-

Parma are one point clear of

inquint told farmans & SID sports news agency that the club had spoken to Effenberg

promised to release him from hts contract." Effenberg's con-

Piorentina are willing to let me go." he said. "So no doubt. other clubs will be knocking on my door I know that and Borussia know that I won't rule out any club and I will only make the decision about where to go after talking it over with my family

whether he would be staying with Borussia because it was unlikely they could afford the

At Milan are also reported to be interested in signing Effenberg, who has put up several impressive performances

Borussia president Karl-

But talks were under way

unless a buyer came up with



Frenchman Laurent Boudouani (R) fights and Spannard Javier Castillejo have a go at each other during their European light middleweight championship bout in Epernay, eastern France on Jan 3. Boudouani stopped Castillejo in the ninth round. - AFP photo

Germany gun Austria down



Germany deleated Austria 2-1 and clinched a place in the semifinals of the Hopman Cup teams tennis championship report agencies.

Wiesner 6-1, 6-2 in the opening women's singles and Becker then used his powerful serve to beat Horst Skoff 6-3. 6-4 at the Burswood Dome.

The Austrian pair won a lighthearted and irrelevant mixed doubles by seven points to five in a sudden-death tiebreaker after losing the first set 5-7 and winning the second 6-4. Under a new Hopman Cup format, the third sets of dead matches are replaced by tiebreakers.

Second-seeded Germany will now face either No. 3 seed Spain or No. 6 France. Those teams meet in the last quar ferfinal later Wednesday.

The other semifinals will pit the defending champion Czech Republic against Ukraine

Becker hammered 15 aces

in Taking just 70 minutes to overcome Skiff The Austrian Davis Cup player took and early 2-1 lead with a break of service, but

Becker broke straight back and again for a 5-3 lead The powerful German also broke Skoff's serve in the ninth game of the second set - During which the Austrian double faulted three times and then ended the match

with two trademark aces. The brother sister combination of Andrei Medvedev and Natalia Medvedeva earned

Paes to lead India

BOMBAY Jan 4 Former Wimbledon junior champion Leander Paes will lead India's challenge in the Asia Ocenia Davis Cup tie against Hong Kong in Calcutta next month. it was announced here Tues day reports AFP

Paes, who won two golds and a bronze at the Asian Games in Hiroshima will ream with Gauray Natekar, Maliesh Bhupathy and Asif Ismail in the February 3.5 tie at the South Chib Grass courts in Calcuita.

handles

annoyance

23 Not as

25 Throat

many

26 Ring up

28 Motionless

30 Genetics

27 Alway

Ukrame a slice of tennis history on Tuesday when they beat the United States 2-1 to reach the semifinals.

The American team of Richey Reneberg and Lindsay Davenport had been seeded to face the Czech Republic in the last four but were struggling from the moment Davenport crashed 6.0, 6-4 to Medvedeva Huber defeated Judith in the opening singles.

Reneberg and Medvedev

produced a high-class men's

singles encounter which included two tie-breaks, before the world number 15 finally ensured Ukraine's moment of glory with a 6-7, 7-6, 6-3 vic-It was the first time, any

team from the former Soviet Union had reached the semifinals of the mixed team tournament where Medvedev was keen to do well after defaulting through injury last year.

Reneberg could scarcely believe the outcome after producing what the felt was one of the best performances of his eight year professional career.

But the American cause had already been badly undermined by world number six Davenport's startling defeat to Medevdeva, ranked a modest 57th on the computer.

The towering Davenport appeared leaden-footed and out of sorts as Medvedeva jaced into a 6-0, 5-1 lead and a brief second set rally was never going to save her. Medvedev gave his elder

sister a good chance of beating Jana Novotna in Thursday's semifinal, even though the Czech Republic have a daunting record in the competition.



Boris Becker of Germany plays a forehand return during hi- Hopman Cup quarterfinal match against Horst Skoff of Austria at the Superdome in Perth yesterday Becker won the match 6.3, 6-4 - AFP photo

Benn-McClellan bout on Feb 25 LONDON, Jan 4: World

Boxing Council super-middleweight champion Nigel Benn will defend his title against big-punching American Gerald McClellan at the London Arena on Feb 25, reports AP.

It will be the first fight for McClellan at his new weight. The 27-year-old fighter from Detroit relinquished the WBC middleweight crown after winning consecutive defences in 30, 97 and 83 seconds.

McClellan, 31-2, has won 29 fights by knockout, including 14 in a row. He won the WBC middleweight title from Julian Jackson in May 1993 and earlier held the World Boxing Organization version of the title. Benn, 39-2-1, will be mak-

ing his seventh title defence. On the same bill, Jamaican Mike McCallum will defend his WBC light-heavyweight title against an opponent yet to be named.

Nothing going to stop Ivanisevic

PERTH. Jan 4: Goran Ivanisevic will ignore pain from a torn cartilage in bis right knee and play in this month's Australian Open, he said Wednesday, reports AP.

Ivanisevic, who is ranked No. 5 in the world, hobbled from the court with pain in his knee after playing only three games of an exhibition against Mark Petchey of Britain at the Hopman Cup teams event on Sunday night. X-rays revealed the injury as

a small tear of the posterior meniscus, but the power-serving Croatian said Wednesday that he still aims to play in the first Grand Slam event of the year which begins Jan 16 in Melbourne I had a hit for two hours

Sometimes it is good and other times it is bad I will play at the Australian Open but I will just have to turn up and see how it goes.

Maybe the knee might last five or 10 years, or maybe it might only last five days.

He said there was not in-

flammation of swelling in the

region of the figury

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS 15 Early abbr. 4 Summer 1 Ersatz riser's hour 33 Disobey or Fargo 5 Square one 19 False piggy bank Jean Kerr? 6 "It's Im-4 Mil. award hood? 36 Leather 7 Breaker possible' neck 20 It does the 8 Engine 37 Hut singer hole job 38 Man of La 10 Obscure 21 Carplike 7 Proceed 8 Bumps into 11 Canine Mancha fish 39 Sty cry 9 Job-22 They're coat? 13 Valentine's 40 Longing from the seeker's Day gift 41 22.5 heart history 16 Put 10 Feathery 23 White degrees together House accessory 17 Coup -12 Pariah 1 Blase pooch 18 AP 2 Enthu-14 Letters 24 "Invisible siastic Man* counterfrom 3 Do over author Liverpool? part 25 Doctor's 19 Becomes Solution time: 22 mins. one due 20 NYSE 26 Autumnal counter quaff 28 Polish part 21 Bucket 29 Mortise's

TAP TARA

JEANS BULLINGUN 34 Deuce .

BULLIDOG SMEAR 35 Climb, in

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EAR ALE

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OER SOI

ADELA BULLISH

ULLEFROG

30 Sawyer

32 Grill

31 Make out

beater

a way

or Keaton

CRYPTOQUIP OPDZKCKD r. D J F UBPU ODTGCZM FTG Yesterday's Cryptoquip: MY LAST APTITUDE TEST INDICATED THAT I'M PERFECTLY SUITED FOR RE-TIREMENT.

Today's Cryptoquip clue: O 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 and error.