

# Tucker's moment of truth

**LAS VEGAS, Apr 8:** Hardly a sentence goes by without Tony Tucker talking about his dedication to the Lord and wanting to be a good role model for children, reports Reuter.

But Tucker, who will fight Bruce Seldon for the vacant World Boxing Association (WBA) heavyweight title on Saturday, wants it understood that just because he is a God-fearing man he will not be a wimp in the scheduled 12-round bout.

"In all things I do, I involve Jesus in it," Tucker says. "I'm gonna knock him out in Jesus' name."

Tucker is a 2-1 favourite to win the title that became vacant when the WBA stripped George Foreman because he refused to fight Tucker. Its number-one contender, Seldon is the WBA's number-two contender.

"It's already been prophesied that I'm gonna win this title and after I win the title and make a name for myself I'm gonna take it to the ministry because kids now look at athletes as heroes," said Tucker, who holds the record for the shortest reign as a heavyweight champion.

He stopped James "Buster" Douglas in the 10th round in May 30, 1987 to win the International Boxing Federation title, but I lost it to Tyson.

"I'm using this as a stepping stone for me to get my name out there so I can bring more people to Christ, that's my whole goal right now," Tucker said earlier this week.

Tucker (52-2) was asked if that meant that he thought former heavyweight champion Mike Tyson, just released from

three years in prison for rape, was a negative role model.

"No, no, no," said Tucker. "He spent his time in prison... I think he may have come out more mature. He says he's a Muslim so he got some religion, some spiritualism. Maybe that will make him a better person," Tucker said.

"But Tyson being the person he is, the fighter he is, he's good for boxing and especially good for heavyweight boxing. Everybody in the heavyweight title picture is looking forward to fighting Tyson because Tyson brings bigger gates.

## Greece the favourites

**MONACO, Apr 8:** Greece is a strong candidate to replace Mexico as the venue for the 1997 World Athletics Championships, International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF) President Primo Nebiolo said on Friday, reports Reuter.

An IAAF statement said Nebiolo, who is in Athens for the World Marathon Cup, had praised Greece and called the country "a very strong candidate" to replace Mexico, which pulled out of hosting the championships because of its severe financial crisis.

But the IAAF statement said Nebiolo had also spoken of the great interest from other nations, including Finland, Spain and India, in staging the championships. A bid is also expected from the United States.

The IAAF will decide at a meeting in Gothenburg, Sweden, on May 21 and 22 where the 1997 championships will be held.

more money and more publicity," Tucker said.

"I look forward to fighting Tyson because I fought Tyson in a 12-round decision (1987) and I only had one hand at the time I fought him," Tucker said.

"Two days before the fight, my hand was broke and I did relatively good. I didn't get hurt in the fight. By me winning this title I get a chance to redeem myself to fight Tyson a second time," said Tucker, whose only other loss was to Lennox Lewis in a dismal performance by both fighters in May, 1993.

In 1992, Tucker beat Oliver McCall, who stopped Lewis last September to win the World Boxing Council championship.

McCall is in the Tyson heavyweight lottery too, fighting former champion Larry Holmes on the same card on Saturday.

Seldon, 28, almost quit after losing to Riddick Bowe in 1991, but his managers convinced him to keep going, said Seldon, an excellent athlete, who turned to boxing in prison, where he spent four years for robbery from 15-19 years old.

The soft-spoken Seldon (31-3) says being a parent and getting away from Atlantic city helped him mature.

"Being a young, black, single athlete in Atlantic city it was fun to hang out and go to the clubs and party all night long and what not... just live the life of a cool guy."

"But I'm almost a married man now. I'm a family man now. I have my three children, two I live with," said Seldon, who says that Tucker, is a crafty fighter but he is ageing and his "legs ain't got it any more."

## Tragic

**ALBUQUERQUE, New Mexico, Apr 8:** A 15-year-old high school pole vaulter died after bouncing off the landing mat and striking his head during a practice jump, reports AP.

Colin Larkin-Thomson, a Del Norte High School sophomore honours student, was pronounced dead Wednesday at University Hospital in this southwestern US city.

Albuquerque Public Schools spokesman Rick Murray said the vaulter had made five successful practice vaults during warmups at La Cueva High School on Tuesday before the fatal sixth attempt.

He never regained consciousness, his parents said Thursday night. His heart, liver and kidneys all quickly found transplant recipients.

"To know that his life already has saved four other people's lives — it's a perfect metaphor to me for who he was," said his father Robert Thomson.

His death was the 10th pole-vaulting fatality in the United States since 1983, according to Frank Kavaleski, who keeps statistics for the National High School Sports Federation.

Larkin-Thomson practiced at La Cueva High because Del Norte has no pole vault coach. La Cueva pole vault coach George Provolt said Larkin-Thomson fell backward off the back of the mat and struck his head on the rubber part of the runway. The crossbar was not in place during the final vault.

The boy's best vault ever had been 12 feet, said his uncle, Greg Thomson.

Larkin-Thomson had won the city's freshman championship last spring. He also had been on the swimming, football and wrestling teams in the past two years.

Besides his parents he is survived by his 7-year-old brother, David.



American Oliver McCall (L), the WBC heavyweight champion, casts a challenging look at Larry Holmes on April 7 during the weigh-in for their title bout at Caesars Palace in Las Vegas today. — AFP/UNB photo

# History beckons Holmes

**LAS VEGAS, Apr 8:** It could be four and out for 45-year-old Larry Holmes.

It will be four to go for 32-year-old Julio Cesar Chavez.

They will fight on a card of five World Championships Saturday night at Caesars Palace hotel-casino. One of the spectators is expected to be Mike Tyson, the former undisputed heavyweight champion, reports AP.

Holmes will challenge Oliver McCall for the WBC heavyweight title. It will be Holmes' fourth title bid since he lost the IBF championship to Michael Spinks on Sept 21, 1985.

"If I lose this fight, I'll quit right away," said Holmes, who could become the second-oldest heavyweight champion.

George Foreman, who turned 46 Jan 10, became the oldest when he knocked out Michael Moorer in the 10th round last Nov 5 — two days after Holmes' 45th birthday.

Chavez will be fighting for the 96th time and in his 32nd World Championship match when he defends the WBC super lightweight title against

Giovanni Parisi of Italy. "One hundred fights and I will stop," said the champion from Mexico.

His record is 93-1-1 with 80 knockouts and he also has held pieces of the junior lightweight and lightweight titles.

In the other three matches, Tony Tucker and Bruce Seldon will fight for the vacant WBA heavyweight title; Felix Trinidad will defend the IBF welterweight title against Roger Turner, and Luis Santana will defend the WBC super welterweight title against Terry Norris.

The Santana-Norris bout is to start about 4:30 pm local time (2330 GMT), followed by the rest of the card, which is on pay-per-view television in the United States, to begin about 6:20 pm (0120 GMT Sunday).

On Friday, Holmes weighed in at 236 pounds (106 kilograms), McCall at 231 pounds (104 kilograms), Tucker at 243 pounds (109 kilograms) and Seldon 236 pounds (106 kilograms).

The 29-year-old McCall and the winner of the Tucker-Seldon match would be in line for a lucrative fight against Tyson.

# Ethiopians enraged

**ADDIS ABABA, Apr 8:** Athletes demonstrated outside the Prime Minister's office, demanding the dismissal of senior sports officials and warning that the country might not be represented in future international meets due to mismanagement, it was reported Saturday, reports AP.

The warning was sounded by track stars Friday during a demonstration by an estimated 600 athletes, said the state-controlled Ethiopian radio.

Prime Minister Tamrat Layne promised the government would "take all the necessary measures" to solve the problems facing athletes.

The athletes said their "ill-treatment and mismanagement by the National Athletic Federation and officials of the Sports and Culture Ministry," caused recent poor performance, the radio said.

Among the demonstrators was Deraruto Tulu, the 10,000-metre Olympic champion, who won the women's title at the World Cross Country Championships in Durham, England, March 25.

Tulu told journalists there would be no Ethiopian athletes in international meets "unless the government took urgent action against incompetent and corrupt officials," in the ministry.

Sports officials have come under severe criticism for bungled travel arrangements when the team went to Durham. The runners were forced to spend a night in Athens without money or confirmed onward airline tickets. They also had to take a public bus from London to Durham.

The fiasco was blamed for the poor performance by the normally strong team.

Angered by the fiasco, Tesfaye Fichala, a junior minister for Sports and Culture, dismissed the entire executive of the National Athletics Federation March 28.

A day later, Leule-Selassie Timamo, Culture and Sports Minister, acted without authority and reinstated the committee. But on Friday, the athletes supported Tesfaye.

"We support the measures taken by the vice minister," read a placard carried by one athlete.

# Murdoch reveals his plan

**SYDNEY, Apr 8:** Media magnate Rupert Murdoch's News Limited group Tuesday released plans for an international rugby league super league competition that will initially involve teams from Britain, Australia and New Zealand, reports AP.

Ken Cowley, the chief executive of News Corporation's Australian arm, announced at a news conference that the four top teams from Britain would play the top four teams from an Australia-New Zealand league in a World Club tournament.

Cowley said 12 teams would compete in a new British Summer super league with financial benefits flowing to the

remaining 20 British professional teams.

He said English Rugby League chairman Maurice Lindsay would work with News Corporation to expand rugby league beyond Britain and France into the rest of Europe and that it was also hoped to launch the sport professionally in South Africa.

The super league is planned to start in 1997, but could be brought forward if News Limited's current battle with the Australian Rugby League (ARL) continues.

Cowley said super league officials had reached agreement with authorities in Britain and New Zealand for international matches against the breakaway Australian Super League players.

"It will enable us to not only internationalize the game, but we will be playing highly-competitive representative football," Cowley said.

"Our players will be able to test their skills against the best players from England and New Zealand and fans will continue to enjoy international football."

Cowley said News Limited planned to spend US \$75 million on promoting the Super League in Australia, New Zealand and Britain over the next five years.

Cowley's announcement throws into doubt the future of the Centenary World Cup to be held in Britain in October.

Murdoch's companies have been embroiled in a multi-million dollar bidding war with the ARL, backed by Murdoch's rival Kerry Packer, for control of the 88-year-old Australian

competition.

Murdoch sees rugby league as the cornerstone of his plan to launch a pay television network in Australia and also wants to televise games on his international stations, including Star-TV in Asia and BSKyB in Britain.

There is widespread dissatisfaction with the ARL's current 20-team Winfield Cup competition because it has several weak teams. Leading clubs draw crowds of over 50,000, while smaller teams struggle to attract crowds one-fifth of that size.

Stronger clubs like Brisbane Broncos and Canberra Raiders have said they plan to switch to the Super League and Murdoch has signed 120 leading players for the new competition.

Murdoch's group was given a boost earlier Thursday when Australian scrum-half Ricky Stuart decided to stick with the rebel league after rejecting a counter offer from ARL officials. The ARL also backed down from its threat to kick Canberra, Cronulla-Sutherland and the Sydney Bulldogs out of the 1995 competition.

ARL president Ken Arthurson said fans of those clubs should not be punished by the actions of officials.

Rugby league is followed passionately in many parts of Australia, is the most popular sport in the states of Queensland and New South Wales and is growing in popularity in New Zealand.

It is a 13-man professional sport with different rules to rugby union, which is played by 15 players per team and is nominally amateur.

## Muster meets Costa in final

**LISBON, Apr 8:** Third-seeded Austrian Thomas Muster ousted Spanish veteran Emilio Sanchez 6-2, 6-4 Saturday in the \$75,000 Estoril Open and will face Sanchez's unseeded compatriot Alberto Costa in Sunday's final, reports AP.

Costa, who upset second-seed Ukrainian Andrei Medvedev in Friday's quarterfinals, smashed France's Fabrice Santoro 6-1, 6-0 in Saturday's other match.

Spain's rising star, Costa is ranked 58th in the ATP listings and was European Junior Champion in 1993. He made swift work of Santoro, dispatching the Frenchman ranked 51st in the world, in just 56 minutes.

Muster, 17th in the ATP listings, slugged it out against the 29-year-old Sanchez for one hour and nine minutes under blazing sun on the center court of the National Stadium between Lisbon and the Rivera resort of Estoril.

It was the 27-year-old Austrian's first ever win against Sanchez on clay, although Muster beat the Spaniard once in five sets on a slower surface in a 1990 Davis Cup meet.

Seeded players have fared badly in this year's fifth Estoril Open.

Favourite Alberto Berasategui of Spain bowed out in the first round against unseeded local hero Nuno Marques, as did last year's winner and eighth seed, Spaniard Carlos Costa, who lost to American Bryan Shelton.

All other seeds bar Medvedev bowed out in the second round and Medvedev, 14th in the world, fell 6-3, 6-2 to finalist Costa in Friday's quarterfinals.

## Wakiihuri wants more

**ATHENS, Apr 8:** Kenya's former world champion Douglas Wakiihuri will attempt the course record at the Sixth World Cup Marathon on Sunday over the route used at the first modern Olympics in 1896, reports Reuter.

Wakiihuri, 31, world champion in 1987 and silver medalist at the Seoul Olympics in the following year, races against Spain's Rodrigo Gavela, fifth in the 1993 San Sebastian World Cup. Ethiopian Gamechu Kebede, Japan's Kouzo Akutsu and Russian Sergei Struganov, fifth in last year's Paris Marathon.

The present course record of two hours 11 minutes four seconds was set 26 years ago by Briton Bill Adcock.

In the women's race, Romania field Adriana Barbu, third in last year's European championships. Cristina Pomacu, winner this year at the Marrakesh Marathon and Anuta Catuna who finished fifth in the European championships.

The race is expected to feature a record 156 competitors from 34 countries with the top 25 in each race automatically qualifying for this year's World Championships in Gothenburg, Sweden.

## Martinez, Sabatini in semis

**AMMELIA ISLAND, Florida, Apr 8:** Top seed Conchita Martinez of Spain survived a tough first set Friday before cruising into the semifinals of the Bausch and Lomb championships with a 7-5, 6-0 victory over fifth seed Amanda Coetzer of South Africa, reports Reuter.

Second seed Gabriela Sabatini routed Sixth-seeded fellow Argentine Ines Gorraochategui 6-0, 6-3 in another quarter-final.

In Saturday's semifinals, fourth-ranked Wimbledon champion Martinez will play third seed Magdalena Maleeva of Bulgaria in a rematch of last week's Hilton Head final, won easily by the Spaniard.

Maleeva brushed aside Laurence Courtois of Belgium 6-2, 6-2 to earn her second consecutive final four berth.

Sabatini will square off against eighth-seeded German Sabine Hack, a 6-1, 7-6 conqueror of Katarzyna Nowak of Poland.

Martinez had her hands full with the speedy 19th-ranked Coetzer in the first set as she dropped her serve in the third, fifth and seventh games.

But Martinez bared down when facing triple game point in the 12th game after Coetzer took a 40-0 lead with a chance to force a tie-break.

Squandering four game points appeared to break Coetzer's spirit and she dumped a drop shot from the baseline into the net at break point to give Martinez the set and momentum.

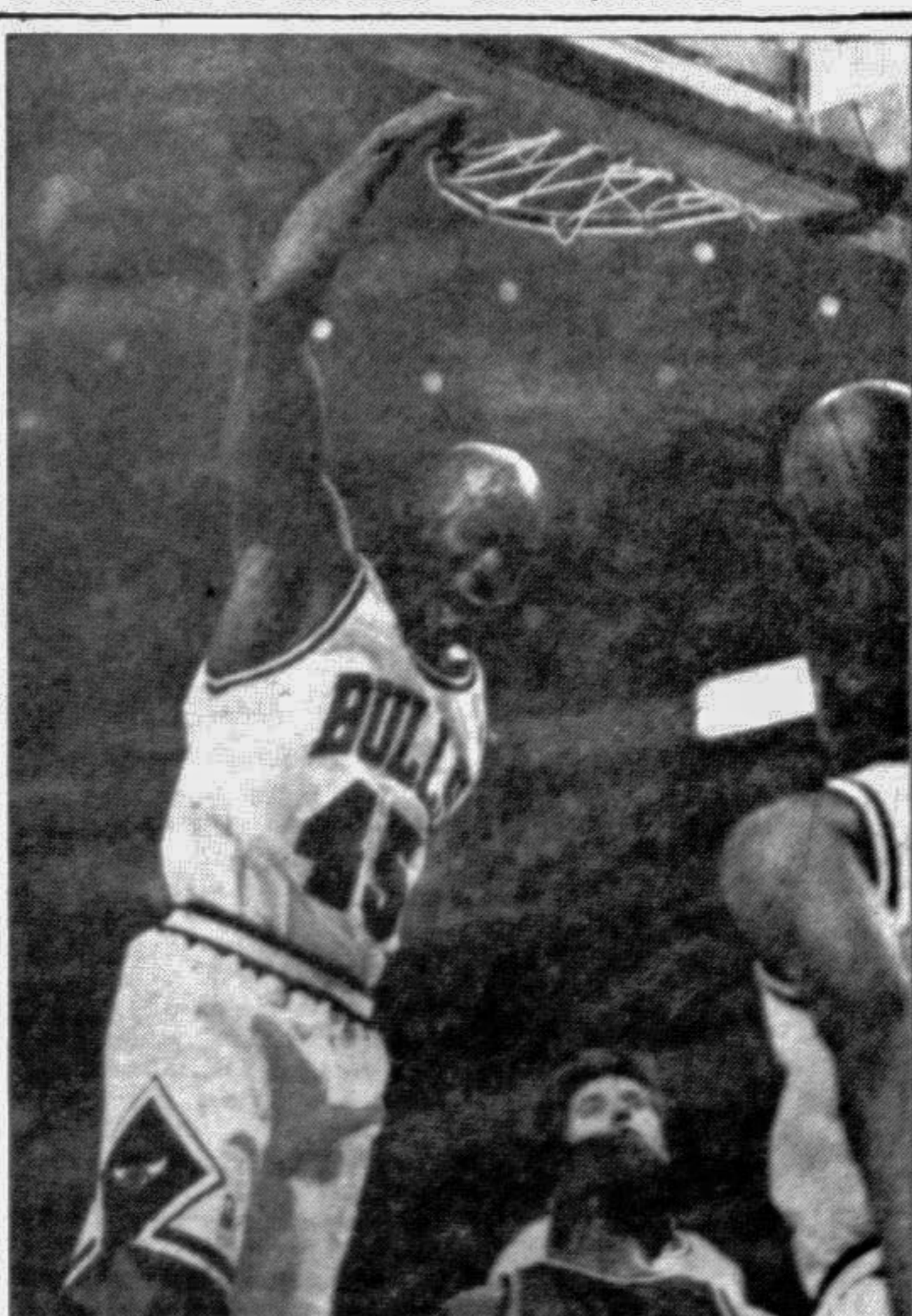
"The first set was so equal and she played so good and consistent. I had to fight hard to win it," said Martinez, who is now 7-0 against Coetzer.

"I think she was disappointed and started to make mistakes," Martinez said of the lop-sided second set in which Coetzer won just four points in three service games.

Sabatini steamrolled her way through her 22-minute first set, dropping a total of just eight points and committing a mere three unforced errors.

Some costly double faults by Sabatini kept Gorraochategui in the second set, but Sabatini rarely looked in real danger.

"In the second set, she started to be more consistent. We were both giving our best, so I enjoyed that," Sabatini said.



Michael Jordan of the Chicago Bulls dunks the ball against the Cleveland Cavaliers during their NBA game at the United Centre in Chicago on April 7. The Bulls won 97-88. — AFP/UNB photo

# An all-Chinese final in Asian badminton

**BEIJING, Apr 8:** Unseeded Yao Yan of China burst into the limelight by beating top seed Bang Soo-Hyun of South Korea in the women's semifinals of the Asian badminton championships in Beijing on Thursday, reports Reuter.

The surprise win by the 21-year-old from south western Guangxi province ensured an all-Chinese final for the women with her confident 5-11, 11-7, 11-3 victory in front of an ecstatic home crowd.

Yan will face compatriot Ye Zhaoying in the final on Saturday. Number-three seed Ye beat 19-year-old Wang Chen of China 11-4, 4-11, 11-7.

In the men's singles semifinals, a disciplines defence by seventh-seeded Park Sung-Woo of South Korea overcame a fierce attack by China's Dong Jiong.

Sixth-seed Dong's powerful smashes became increasingly erratic despite enthusiastic support from the Beijing crowd and Park won 18-16, 15-12.

Park, who sent Indonesia's Olympic champion and top seed Allan Budi Kusuma crashing out of the quarter-finals on Thursday, will face fifth-seeded Sun Jun of China in the final.

Sun beat compatriot Ge Cheng 15-7, 15-6.

Second-seeded Cheah Soon Kit and Yap Kim Hock of Malaysia powered their way to a 15-6, 15-8 victory over Indonesia's Chandra Wijaya and Ade Sutrisna in the men's doubles semifinals.

The match ended the title hopes of the inexperienced Indonesian team weakened by a decision to keep top players at home in preparation for May's World Championships.

Officials of other teams said Indonesia could have dominated the tournament if their top players, now preparing for May's world championship, had taken part.

# Price for a place in record books

**AUGUSTA, Apr 8:** Ben Hogan can rest easy. His distinction as the only person to win three straight major tournaments in the modern era appears safe, reports AP.

Nick Price entered the US Masters' on Thursday looking to join Hogan as the only man to win three majors in a row since the Augusta tournament became part of golfing's Grand Slam in 1934. By the time he finished the first round, an ugly 4-over-par 76 capped off by a double bogey on No. 17 he was brushing off reporters the ultimate sign of frustration for one of the most gentlemanly of golfers.

Price signed his scorecard and hurried to the clubhouse, throwing up his hands when someone commented it must have been a frustrating day.

"The score shows, doesn't it," the two-time PGA player of the year said tartly, knowing he was eight shots behind co-leaders Jose Maria Olazabal, Phil Mickelson and David Frost.

Price retreated to the quiet of the locker room, holing up in a corner to take on a cigarette. "I'm not talking to anybody today," he said when approached again.

And to think, this was the same Nick Price who patiently answered question after question after squandering a seemingly comfortable lead to lose the 1982 British Open.

## CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

**ACROSS**

38 — silly... ments the Rose"  
1 Door question... 2 One author  
support 39 Who (Fr.) 24 Waugh 24 Ot-  
5 Proof 40 Hearty 3 SAT tattooed  
follow-up: laugh section word  
abbr. 42 Send off 4 Zephyr 25 Nest-egg  
8 Sea dog 45 Sparkling 5 Hive head acct.  
12 Winglee 49 Green land 6 Moose's 26 Estival  
13 Diminutive 50 Ostrich's cousin pest  
suffix kin 7 Moose's 28 — pro  
14 Small 52 Heath cousin nobis  
combo 53 B flat, 8 1953 movie, 29 Spotted  
15 Apportion for one — 17" beetles  
16 Supplement, with 54 Hunk of 9 Tropical 30 Diving bird  
"out" firewood swarm 31 Cou-  
17 Bullets Riddick fortune? steau's  
18 Plot 56 Truant Gl 11 Roger Rab- 36 Lincoln,  
20 Trust 57 "Cert" bit, e.g. e.g.  
22 Buddhist 58 Siblingless 19 Yours truly 37 Sot's  
sect DOWN 21 The comment  
23 21st presi- 1 Predica- Name of 38 With hands  
dent's Solution time: 23 mins. on hips  
monogram

**24 Marceau's** forte  
**27 Lunch** meats  
**32 Guadala-** jara gold  
**33 NOW goal**  
**34 Calendar** abbr.  
**35 List of** news staffers

**CIRK INK SCAM**  
**ASIA DUN MEGA**  
**WATSLINE ALES**  
**SKATE WALLET**  
**LEAP FLU**  
**MACE MOOR LUG**  
**IMA HELLO ASA**  
**OIL AXED PRAY**  
**LAM DEAR**  
**SLEEPY LIMIT**  
**LORED AREACODE**  
**OBIE WIG EVER**  
**PODS LOG SEAM**

41 A choice word  
42 Singer Horne  
43 Queued up  
44 Lend a hand  
46 Thug  
47 Bay  
48 Unlikely trick-taker  
51 A stock answer

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12					13			14		
15					16			17		
18					19			20	21	
					22			23		
24	25	26			27	28	29		30	31
					32			33		34
35					36	37		38		
					39			40	41	
42	43				44			45		46
49					50	51		52		
53					54			55		
56					57			58		

**CRYPTOQUIP**  
R L C G J P E Z Y O L U  
U Y O O T L P O U L P G E R C  
I W I F E J H Y J F K E Z W F V  
T R C V C J F W E Y

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: THERE'S A HOLE IN THE MAILMAN'S BAG, BECAUSE THE MAIL MUST GO THROUGH.

Today's Cryptoquip clue: G equals P

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.