

PILCOM to check rowdy crowds

NEW DELHI, May 13: When the World Cup cricket tournament is held in India next year, one important feature will be missing — strict new rules will ensure that spectators cannot flood onto the pitch to disrupt play, tournament organisers said, reports Reuter.

"We will ensure that matches are free of crowd disruptions," a representative of the Pakistan-India Sri Lanka Organising Committee (PILCOM), told Reuters on Thursday.

"The assistance of respective state law-enforcing authorities will be enlisted to ensure a trouble-free World Cup."

The sixth World Cup will be played from February 14 to March 17 next year in India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. It will have the biggest field ever with 12 nations participating.

The competing nations have been divided into two pools and the top four in each will qualify for the quarter-finals.

In Pool A are: India, Australia, Sri Lanka, the West Indies, Zimbabwe and Kenya.

Pool B comprises England, South Africa, New Zealand, Pakistan, the Netherlands and the United Arab Emirates.

India will host 17 matches, including two quarter-finals and both semifinals. Sixteen matches, including two quarter-finals and the final, will be played in Pakistan. The third host nation, Sri Lanka, will be the venue for four preliminary matches.

In the past cricket matches on the subcontinent have often been disrupted by spectators invading the field and pelting

Monsoor SC win

Monsoor Sporting Club beat Sriyani Club by four runs in the cricket tournament organised by the Shekdi Juba Sangha at its ground at Demra on Wednesday, reports UNB.

In a low-scoring 25-over match Monsoor Sporting beat Sriyani by four runs.

In reply, Sriyani could muster 79 runs. Saiful of Monsoor Sporting was adjudged man-of-the-match.

visiting team players with missiles.

Organisers are determined that crowd invasions will not interrupt play next year, the representative said.

"Most venues on the subcontinent already have fencing around the playing arena to separate the players from the spectators," he said.

"But problems occasionally arose when spectators were allowed to cross over the fences or had easy access to objects which could be hurled into the ground."

The PILCOM meeting in the Indian capital on Thursday was to have finalised the match venues, but the decision had to be deferred for a fortnight as facilities at all the venues had not been assessed, the representative said.

The three-nation body will also finalise the venue for the opening ceremony to be staged in India, he said.

Besides Delhi, two of the country's main cricket centres, Bombay and Calcutta, are keen to host the opening ceremony.

NZC turns to Turner

WELLINGTON, May 13: Former Test captain Glenn Turner was appointed New Zealand cricket coach for a one-year term on Friday, the second time he has held the job, reports Reuter.

"We are delighted to have Glenn Turner once more involved at the highest level of cricket as coach," New Zealand cricket chairman Peter McDermott said in a statement.

"We know that he has the qualities we are looking for and that the whole country will now forget the difficulties of last season and get behind Glenn and the national team in their attempt to climb back up the world rankings."

Under Turner's tenure, New Zealand are due to tour Bangladesh and India, the West Indies, and play in the 1996 World Cup tournament in Pakistan and India.

New Zealand also host Zimbabwe and Pakistan at the end of this year.

Turner will also be a member of the Test selection panel — the first time a coach has filled such a role.

The other candidate for the job was widely believed to have been former Australian Test representative Jeff Hammond.

Turner succeeds former Test captain Geoff Howarth, who resigned last year after disastrous tours to England and South Africa. Under temporary coach John Reid, New Zealand then lost home series to West Indies, South Africa and Sri Lanka in a disastrous century season.

Turner coached New Zealand in the late 1980s, forming an effective partnership with then captain Jeremy Coney.

A right-handed opening batsman, Turner scored 2,991 Test runs, including seven centuries. He captained the side between 1975-77.

Turner also scored over 100 first-class centuries, many for English county Worcestershire.

KAAA dismisses Mike Kosgei

NAIROBI, May 13: Chief Kenyan coach Mike Kosgei has been sacked for criticising the management of athletics in the country, officials said on Wednesday, reports Reuter.

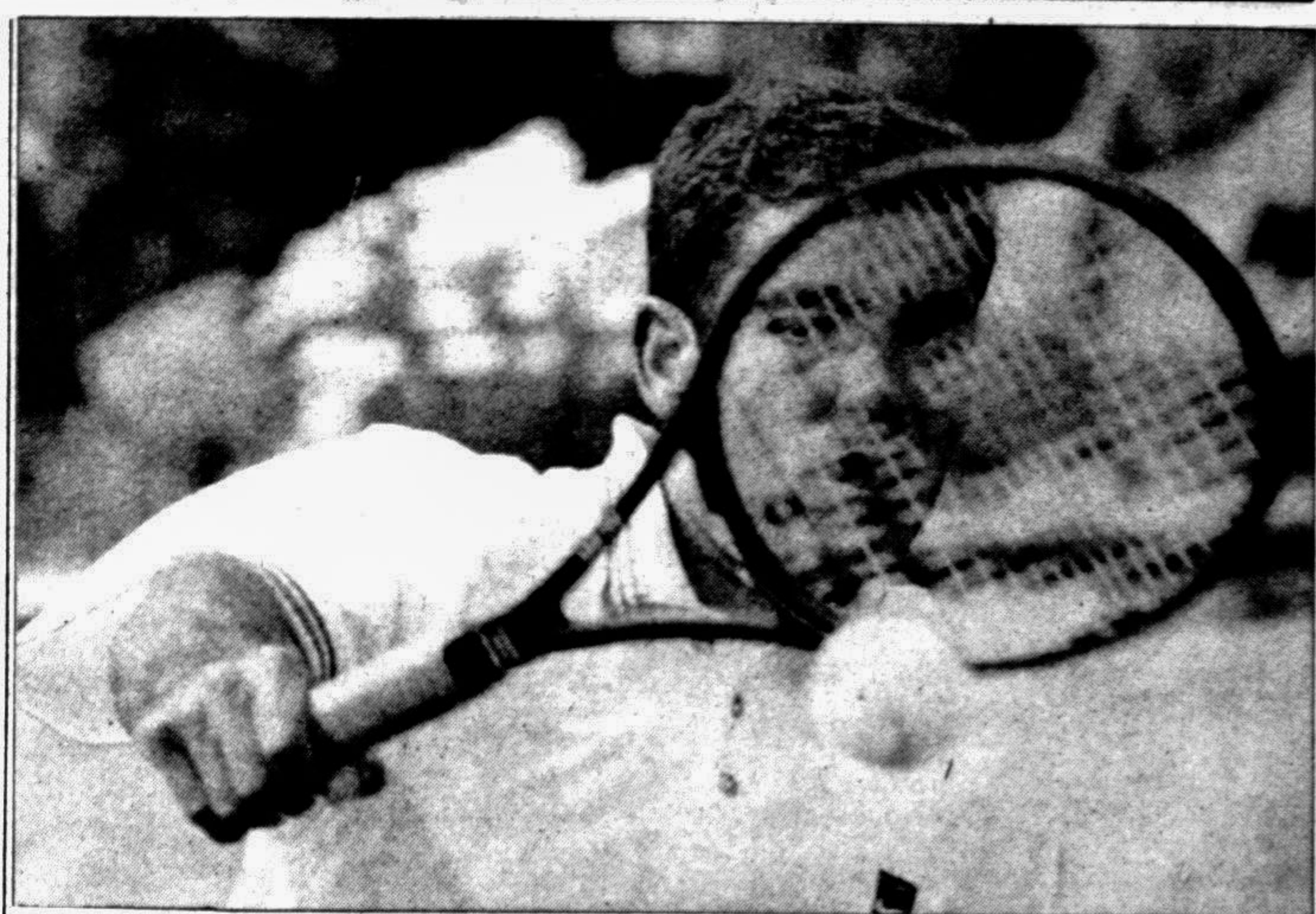
Kenya Amateur Athletic Association (KAAA) chairman Isaiiah Kiplagat told Reuters that Kosgei had helped fuel a rebellion by elite Kenyan runners.

Kiplagat said the KAAA was particularly angry at Kosgei's comments that views of top and emerging athletes had been ignored in management decisions.

"In the recent past, my association has tried to harmonise the relationship between athletes and their officials. But Kosgei's remarks only open a new can of worms," Kiplagat said. Kiplagat said the KAAA had asked the Ministry of Culture and Social Services, which assigned Kosgei to the track and field body, to switch him to another portfolio.

This month Kosgei, aged 43, the architect of Kenya's middle and long distance and cross country successes, said it was unlikely the east African nation would continue its cross country reign because of an athletes' revolt against the KAAA.

Kiplagat said among Kosgei's mistakes was a refusal to give the KAAA the full training programme for Kenyan athletes for the year.



American Pete Sampras returns a backhand to South African Wayne Ferreira during their quarterfinal match at the German Open in Hamburg on May 12. Sampras moved to the semifinals, beating Ferreira 6-2, 6-2. — AFP/UNB photo

Medvedev shocks Sampras

HAMBURG, Germany, May 13: Defending champion Andre Medvedev upset second-ranked Pete Sampras Saturday to reach the final of the German Open for the second year in a row, reports AP.

Medvedev, who has dropped to No 20 in the world, prevailed 6-4, 2-6, 6-2 in a match that began in chilly, windy conditions, and reached his first final of the year.

Sampras spoiled his best clay-court showing of the year with an error-filled performance.

"The conditions were very tough, windy, swirling, both of us had trouble keeping the ball in play," Sampras said.

The American had lost in the first round in Barcelona and injured his ankle in the first round in Monte Carlo before reaching the semifinals here. He will next go to Rome to defend his Italian Open title, before the second Grand Slam event of season, the French Open.

In the second semifinal of the dhrs 1.795-million tournament, Sergi Bruguera played Goran Ivanisevic.

Sampras had only two aces and made 41 unforced errors in the match that lasted one hour, 57 minutes. He failed to

put away many volleys and his shots often went wide or long.

He dropped his serve in the fifth game and lost the first set. He came back in the second, breaking Medvedev twice.

The turning point came in the first game of the third set. Sampras saved five break points but then hit a backhand wide that gave the Ukrainian what turned out to be the decisive break.

"I just never converted on the big points," Sampras said. "Sampras saved one match point in the eighth game and one more in the final game, before Medvedev hit a forehand to the corner that clinched the match."

"It was very hard mentally and physically, the conditions were very tough," said Medvedev, who is seeded 12th.

"It was cold, I wasn't sweating, I couldn't get my muscles warm enough. He wasn't playing his best today, but if you lose just a bit of concentration he'll take advantage of it and he did in the second set."

"But I changed my game in the third set, I became more aggressive. I was lucky to get an early break and that was the turning point," he said.

Medvedev broke his left wrist at the Australian Open and is still looking for his first

tournament win of the year.

In his last two clay-court events, Medvedev lost in the first round.

The exit of Sampras followed the departure Friday of top-ranked Andre Agassi, who made obscene gestures, swore at spectators and got trounced by Sergi Bruguera.

Agassi, who last month ended the 101-week reign of Sampras as the No 1 player in the world, lost 6-3, 6-1 to the Spaniard and then got involved in an ugly exchange with a spectator.

Agassi was packing his bags and getting ready to leave the center court of the Rottenbaum club when a spectator commented loudly on the bad quality of the match.

Agassi cursed the spectator and retorted, "Are you gonna get a knife and (inaudible) me now," before swearing at the man again.

The incident was recorded by television cameras but it's unclear from the tape what verb Agassi used.

Agassi was referring to the April 1993 stabbing of top-ranked Monica Seles by a fan on the same court.

Seles has not played since she was stabbed in the back by a spectator here during a changeover in a match at the women's tournament.

Richardson relieves Lara's burden

LONDON, May 13: Brian Lara may carry the burden of West Indies' batting hopes on their tour of England but captain Richie Richardson is trying to ease the pressure on his world record-breaker, reports Reuter.

Lara holds the Test record score of 375 and returns to England after a brilliant debut county season with Warwickshire last year that included the highest-ever first-class innings of 501 not out.

Richardson, speaking at a Sports Writers' Association lunch in London on Friday said: "We are not going to depend on Brian Lara to score all the runs for us. We are all superstars."

Lara has arrived in England fresh from a relatively moderate four-Test series against Australia in the Caribbean which West Indies lost 2-1 — the first time they had been beaten in a Test series anywhere for 15 years.

The Trinidadian left-hander suffered a measure of misfortune with one or two decisions in that series but it will not deter him from one of the characteristics of his game, according to tour manager Wes Hall.

Hall said at the lunch: "He always walks it. He thinks he has nicked the ball or if he thinks he is out, that's always been his decision."

But against Australia, he made about 60 and walked when that catch by Steve Waugh happened on the first day of the series in Bridgetown.

"The fielder claimed it and Brian went, though television replays showed the catch was not so good. There were a couple of other cases when the umpires might not have given him out but he walked anyway."

Richardson emphasised he would not be telling Lara to change his habit of walking.

"It's a personal thing. Most of us in the team are like that," said the West Indian skipper. "If we are out we will walk. If we are not sure we will wait for the umpire's decision."

West Indies are playing three one-day internationals and six Tests in England, which Hall said they still regarded as the number one tour.

"It is a tour on which we can blood youngsters. There are more games outside the Tests than on other tours in which they can develop and we get different types of wickets here, too. A summer in England is as good a test for them as any other."

Akbar's last time in ring

JAKARTA, May 13: A 23-year-old Indonesian boxer has died after receiving a flurry of blows in a national championship bout, a report said Saturday, reports AP.

Akbar Maulana, 23, died Friday after undergoing surgery to remove a blood clot from his brain, the Jakarta Post reported.

He fell unconscious after receiving a series of powerful blows during a national junior featherweight championship fight against title holder Buglarsio in Jakarta Thursday night, it said.

Dedi Mulyadi, the fighter's coach, said Akbar had never previously suffered a knockout or serious injury in his 15 professional fights.

It was the fifth fatality in Indonesian boxing since 1987. Following Akbar's death, the Indonesian Medical Association called for a ban on boxing in Indonesia.

Cronje's maiden county ton

LONDON, May 13: South African test captain Hansie Cronje hit his first championship century for Leicestershire on Friday to give his new English county the chance of saving their match against Kent, reports Reuter.

Cronje hit an unbeaten 120 as Leicestershire, needing 426 to avoid the follow-on reached 227 for four in reply to Kent's mammoth first innings of 575.

He added an unbroken 70 for the fifth-wicket with Phil Robinson (25 not out) after having put on 108 for the third-wicket with James Whitaker (34).

Earlier, Kent captain Mark Benson fell eight short of the second double hundred of his career, run-out by Cronje as the home side rattled up their highest-ever score at Canterbury thanks to a ninth-wicket stand of 95 between Min Patel (56) and Martin McCague (35).

At Bristol, Gloucestershire openers Tony Wright and Dean Hodgson amassed an opening partnership of 361 to shatter a county record that had stood for 27 years.

Wright hit a career-best 1993 and Hodgson 148, passing Gloucester's previous best county championship first-wicket stand by 46 runs.

Hodgson was first out after hitting 15 fours, while former captain Wright hammered four sixes and 17 fours as Gloucestershire, finished on 388 for three to go some way to making up for the first day wash-out.

A calf strain failed to stop Neil Fairbrother racing to the 32nd century of his career — despite needing to use three runners — as Lancashire moved into a commanding position against champions Warwickshire at Old Trafford.

Fairbrother (129) teamed with new Lancashire skipper Mike Watkinson (91) for a fifth-wicket stand worth 136 as the home side closed on 352 for seven, a lead of 90.

At Chesterfield, Yorkshire were 90 for eight in their second innings after rain ended play for the day after lunch, giving the team a lead of 127 after Derbyshire had added 18 runs to their overnight total to reach 140.

Devon Malcolm picked up three of the Yorkshire wickets as the collapse took the two-

day tally of wickets to 26. At the Oval, England vice-captain Alec Stewart was dropped twice on his way to an unbeaten 147 that steered Surrey to 288 for one, a lead of 17 runs at the close against Durham.

Jason Pooley hit an unbeaten 100 and fellow opener Mike Gatting 70, the pair sharing a stand of 120 as



HANSIE CRONJE

Middlesex reached 230 for four to take control at Worcestershire, who had crashed to 193 all-out.

At Swansea, Sussex pace-man Ed Giddens took five for 71 off 25 overs as Glamorgan struggled to 173 for eight in their first innings in a weather-affected clash.

Earlier on Thursday, Derbyshire's South African Test batsman Daryl Cullinan broke an index finger and Yorkshire captain Martyn Moxon broke his right thumb as fast bowlers wreaked havoc at Chesterfield.

The pair were injured on a pitch of unpredictable bounce as 17 wickets tumbled on the opening day of the four-day county championship match

between Derbyshire and Yorkshire.

Yorkshire subsided from 94 for three to 177 all out but they hit back swiftly to reduce the home side to 122 for seven at the close.

Derbyshire captain Kim Barnett rated the pitch as "awkward". Rather than dangerous, although no batsman was ever settled as the ball lifted sharply from a full length.

Moxon had his thumb broken in the fifth over of the day by a lifting delivery from Devon Malcolm.

Malcolm took three for 69 and fellow England paceman Phillip DeFreitas captured three for 24, while all-rounder Dominic Cork gave effective support with two wickets, including Australian Michael Bevan for nought.

Derbyshire were undermined by England pace bowler Darren Gough (3-30), and all the Yorkshire seamers were backed up by brilliant slip catching from David Byas, who clung onto four chances.

Cullinan, who has been showing impressive early season form, suffered his broken finger when he was struck on the right hand by a Gough delivery.

Injury-hit champions Warwickshire, without five regulars including captain Dermot Reeve and South African fast bowler Allan Donald, stunned Lancashire at Old Trafford.

The title holders, spurred by an opening stand of 96 between Andy Moles (51) and Wasim Akram (38), and later by a hard-hitting 47 from Douglas Brown, fought their way to 262 all-out.

Brown then had England captain Mike Atherton lbw for four and Gladstone Small sent back John Crawley for five to leave Lancashire on 16 for two at the close.

Captain Mark Benson and Neil Taylor both hit centuries as Kent put Leicestershire to the sword at Canterbury.

The home county lost in-form opener Trevor Ward without a run scored, but Benson and Taylor put on 192 for the second-wicket.

Taylor hit 127, in the process becoming the first Kent player to score a century before lunch in 16 years, and Benson went on to an unbeaten 159 as Kent reached 387 for four at the close.

Arantxa, Pierce in semis

ROME, May 13: Arantxa Sanchez Vicario waltzed and Mary Pierce struggled as the top two seeds advanced to the semifinals of the rain-drenched Italian Open on Saturday, reports AP.

After a 1-hour, 30 minute delay due to rain, No 1 seed Sanchez Vicario had no problem with tournament surprise Shaun Stafford of the United States, dismissing the world's No 65, 6-1, 6-3.

The match had been washed out Friday with the Spaniard leading 5-1 in the first set.

Pierce, the second seed at the 800,000-dollar clay court classic, never found her rhythm against No 8 seed Iva Majoli of Croatia. She overcame a match point before winning 6-4, 2-6, 7-6 (7-4) in two hours.

Majoli led 2-1 when rain halted play Friday.

No 13 seed Helena Sukova also advanced, overpowering unseeded South African Joanne Kruger of South Africa 6-0, 6-3 to earn a semifinal appointment with Sanchez Vicario.

Pierce, who holds dual French and American citizenship, will play two-time champion and No 3 seed Conchita Martinez in the other semifinal. Martinez earned her

semifinal spot Friday, before the torrential rains set in.

The semifinals were set for later Saturday.

Majoli, 17, had never taken a set off Pierce in three previous matches, but capably traded stinging groundstrokes with the Australian Open champion.

Neither player served well, and the second set included five consecutive breaks, including one with the teenager serving for the match at 5-4 and again at 6-5. Majoli had a match point in the 11th game, but sent a forehand wide.

Climber killed

KATHMANDU, May 13: One German climber was killed and another missing while scaling the world's seventh tallest Mansalu peak, the tourism ministry said Friday, reports AP.

Jorg Starke, 30, slipped from a height of 7,300 metres (24,090 feet) and died last week, the ministry said.

Michael Zunk, 36, also of Frankfurt, was reported missing since Sunday during descent after reaching the top of the 8,167-metre (26,938 feet).

The other members of 11-man expedition, led by Holger Kloss, are expected to leave the base camp Friday for Kathmandu, the ministry said.

If form holds, the final would pit Sanchez Vicario against Pierce, a possible preview of the French Open final next month. Last year, Sanchez Vicario beat Pierce for the title at Roland Garros.

But Pierce first must get by Martinez, whom she's never faced on clay. Since switching coaches in March, Martinez has been unstoppable, losing just one match — a final — and winning her last three tournaments before coming to Rome.

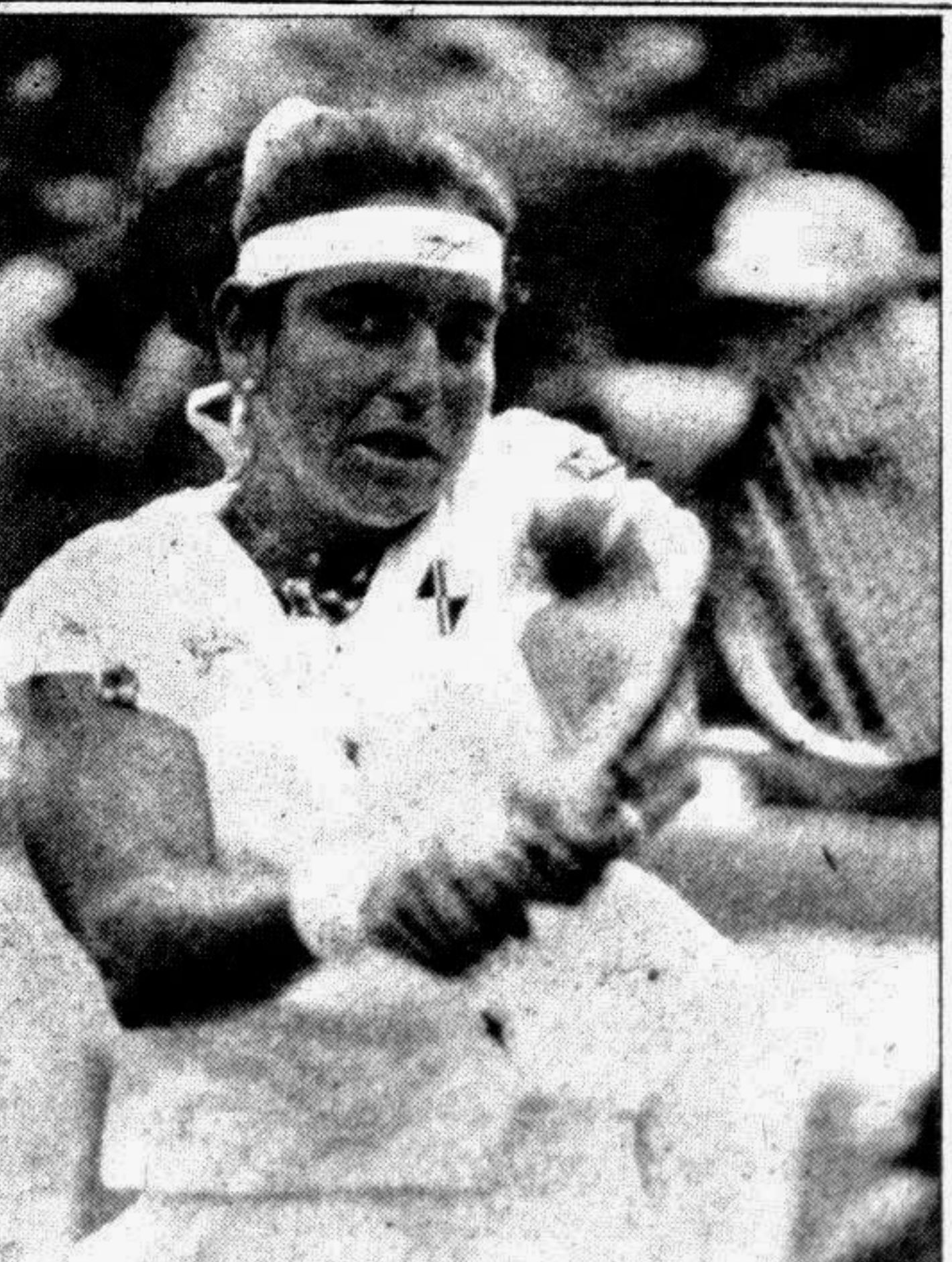
"With my new coach, I'm changing a little bit," Martinez, 23, said Friday. "I'm getting more aggressive, going more to the net and finishing points earlier."

Carlos Kirmayr, a Brazilian who previously worked with Sanchez Vicario and Gabriela Sabatini, deserves much of the credit for her recent streak, Martinez said.

His influence is not enough, though.

"The fact is that you have to continue to work every day," she said, denying any suggestion that she doesn't push herself hard enough to improve her ranking.

The two million dollar men's edition opens Monday with top seed Pete Sampras looking to defend his Italian title and prepare for the French Open, the one Grand Slam he's never won.



Spanish Arantxa Sanchez Vicario makes a backhand return to American Shaun Stafford during their quarterfinal match at the Italian Open in Rome on May 12. Arantxa eventually won the match held over for a day due to rain 6-1, 6-3. — AFP/UNB photo