

# WEEKEND SPORTS WEEKEND

## Khan on a sticky wicket as he bowls a maiden over

by Tariq Butt from Islamabad

**As Pakistan's most eligible bachelor, Imran Khan, left for France with his British fiancée in an attempt to find privacy — denying reports that they had already married in secret — a storm continued to rage around the cricketer's most controversial match. Gemini News Service reports on a partnership that threatens to affect a cricketing hero's political rise.**



Jemima Goldsmith and Imran Khan: 'Property of the nation'

Although publicly Khan has always insisted that he would not enter politics, few doubted he would do so. Since ending his 21-year cricketing career six months after he led Pakistan to World Cup victory in Melbourne in 1992 he has been seen as serving life poor by his charitable work. He built a 550 million rupee cancer hospital through fund-raising campaigns in Pakistan and overseas. In April he launched the National Education Movement, a community-based campaign for mass education. The public has seen the most famous Pakistani as a humanist and reformist, contrasting him favourably with squabbling, self-serving politicians. Politicians were apprehensive by his rising popularity. Even Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto saw him as a potential rival for the top job and banned his hospital fund-raising advertisements from state-run television. But many Pakistanis are shocked at a man they regarded as a great nationalist, reformer and born-again Muslim — a reputation he has encouraged — marrying a woman who, though she has now converted to Islam, was previously Jewish. Said Prof Mohammad Waseem of Quaid-e-Azam University: "By marrying a Jewish girl, Khan has damaged his public role, as he has been presenting himself as a role-model to all and sundry in Pakistan. He will be booted by people when he faces them, and the marriage will prove to be the last flicker of a dying legend. Khan has shattered his anti-feminist approach and his idealism about womanhood as he wanted women to stay inside the home. His marriage with a Westerner reflects a clash of two moral codes, as Khan is marrying a girl brought up in an environment totally different from what he has been preaching." In recent newspaper columns Khan wrote glowingly about "Islamic identity" and "national self-esteem" and criticised the "brown sahibs" (Pakistanis aping European ways), who he said believed in "idol worship." He wrote: "The recent trip of Hillary Clinton saw prostration by some of this country's elite that had not been witnessed since the visits of Jackie Kennedy and Queen Elizabeth. There is a huge difference between Eastern hos-

pitality and shameless boot-licking." In speeches and writings Khan referred to the glory of Islam, of illustrious Muslim poets and saints and often quoted from the Quran to buttress his arguments. All this was music to Pakistanis' ears. Now a whiff of hypocrisy has been detected. Commented a feminist lecturer at the Lahore National College of Fine Arts: "Imran used to preach Islam and nationalism, and sermonise that wives should confine themselves to the house. He has shown gross contradictions in his words and actions." Even General Hamid Gul, former head of intelligence and one of the brains behind Khan's campaigns, reacted cautiously: "Let Imran respond to the anxiety (about his marriage) of the nation. People like him are property of the nation, which has every right to know about him." Questions have now been raised about whether his ambitious welfare programmes will

be affected by 42-year-old Khan's marriage to 21-year-old Gemima. But religious leaders do not oppose it. Commented Maulana Abdul Qadir Ropri: "A Muslim male is allowed to marry with the 'people of the book' — a reference to Muslims, Christians and Jews, all of whom recognise the Bible as holy scripture. Said another religious scholar, Amin Minhas: "It is not a crime to marry a Jewish girl if she converts to Islam, but it is essential that she should become Muslim from the core of her heart." Furthermore, some observers believe that by marrying the daughter of billionaire businessman James Goldsmith, Khan has gained international connections which will pay him at home. Commented a senior journalist: "If he chooses to come in politics or continues his welfare work, he will not be a new face on the international horizon. This will help him and Pakistan. With the passage of time, people may not be

## Gazza keeps Leeds waiting

LEEDS, May 25: Paul Gascoigne postponed a meeting with Leeds United due to have taken place later on Wednesday in order to pursue his claim for compensation with officials from his Italian club Lazio, reports AFP. Leeds, who will compete in the UEFA Cup next season, are prepared to pay 4.5 million pounds (about seven million dollars) to bring the troubled England to Elland Road. Leeds United managing director Bill Fotherby said: "We have had to put the talks on ice until later in the week, but we are still very optimistic about signing him." Leeds had planned to meet the midfielder and his agent at a secret location but instead he will be in London for talks with officials of the Rome club. The former Newcastle and Tottenham player is claiming one million pounds for the remaining two years of his contract. Gascoigne, 27, recalled by England for the forthcoming Umbro Cup tournament, has played just one full match in over a year and has been kicking his heels after Lazio decided to sell him. That has not stopped a string of Premiership clubs, including Chelsea and Aston Villa, tracking him, while Scottish champions Rangers, with whom Gascoigne has already talked, have tabled a 4.4m pound bid. England coach, Terry Venables has consistently denied reports that he has persuaded Gascoigne from joining Rangers. Gascoigne has admitted: "I don't know whether I'll be back in England, in Scotland or still in Italy." Leeds will be hoping that the signing of Gascoigne would persuade their thirteen-goal Ghanaian Tony Yeboah to desist from using his get out clause next January. His former German club, Eintracht Frankfurt are desperate to re-sign him and believe that with the former manager gone there is no reason to stop Yeboah coming back.

## Kriket with a 'K'? Yes, on Star Plus

KONG KONG, May 25: Kriket with a 'K'? That's right. It's Star Plus' new electric-paced, hour-long weekly game show. Kriket, based on the traditional game of cricket, Commissioned by Star Plus in India and co-produced by United Television India (UTV) and Reg Grundy Productions Pte. The show is shot on location on a huge, specially designed set in Bombay. Kriket! launches exclusively on Star Plus on Thursday, June 1 at 8:30 am (BST), with a repeat on Sunday mornings at 11:30 am (BST). Kriket! is hosted by well-known Indian film and television actor Keith Stevenson. The two team captains are world-renowned, former Indian international Test cricketers, Ravi Shastri and Kris Srikkanth. The commentator for the show is Harsha Bhogle, one of the best known cricket commentators in India. Set in a giant open air arena and before a live audience, the show features two teams of four players: each team consists of a captain, and three contestants of club-level standard from across India. Each show consists of a series of game elements which will test each player's cricketing skills in bowling, batting, fielding, wicket-keeping and overall reflexes, and quiz rounds in which contestants will be tested on their knowledge of Indian and international cricket. Most of the games are played against the clock. The key people behind Kriket! are executive producers, Zarina Mehta from UTV, and Tony Skinner from Grundy Worldwide; and producers, Time Osborne and Rakesh Sharma from Star TV. "Kriket! has been a very large undertaking for Grundy, UTV and Star TV and we are all very happy with the results achieved. With a comparatively short pre-production period of around 6 weeks, we have been able to mount a production of mammoth scale, from the cast and crew of over 450 people to the building of a set to replicate a small sports stadium," says Skinner, vice president, production — Asia, Grundy Worldwide, and executive producer of Kriket! "Grundy is delighted to be involved with the local expertise of UTV and is excited at the opportunity to

produce our first production in India for Star TV's family entertainment channel." The series is based over 15 episodes and will see 16 teams from North, South, East and Western India competing, specifically Calcutta, Delhi, Bombay and Madras. There are eight heats, followed by four quarter finals, 2 semifinals and the grand final, just like in a regular sporting tournament. The overall winning team will be awarded top prizes, with consolation prizes for those teams that make it to the quarter, semi and grand finals. "We are proud to be teaming up with such reputable partners as Grundy and UTV," comments Andrew Carnegie, general manager — Star TV India. "It is really exciting to be able to provide our Indian viewers with an athletic, intelligent and fun product that is styled on the nation's most popular sport." "Kriket! is a first in many ways... It is probably the first true co-production seen on television in India and we are delighted to be working with Grundy and Star TV," says Mehta, Director of UTV and exec-

utive producer of Kriket!. "It is the first time a sporting game has been translated into a game show. I think we will now see game shows based on football or golf. It is also probably the BIGGEST show ever to be produced for Indian viewers. We also hope that Kriket! will be the first Indian show to be produced internationally. Kriket! is the second major, pure entertainment, local co-production for Star Plus. Series 2 of Kriket! is planned for later in the year. Star TV is subsidiary of The News Corporation Limited. The Star TV Network reaches more than 220 million people in 53 countries across Asia, India and the Middle East. Star TV's service includes Channel (V), EL-TV, Prime Sports, Star Chinese Channel, Star Plus, BBC World and Zee TV. Star's encrypted Star Movies service is available in Taiwan, the Philippines, Indonesia, India, the Gulf States and Pakistan. Star's encrypted Hindi movie service, Zee Cinema, is available in India and the Gulf States. The multi-channel satellite delivered Star Radio service is available throughout the AsiaSat 1 footprint.

SPORT does not always bring people together: several of Lusaka's rubbish dumps and public lavatories have been nicknamed Gabon, and some Zambians call their dogs Diramba, after a hated Gabonese referee. But thanks to the efforts of Zambian officials, soccer — which divided the two countries — is now healing the wounds. Zambian fans' fierce enmity towards Gabon stems from the 1993 air crash near the Gabonese coast which killed the entire national team, as well as 12 officials, a journalist and the crew. The team was on its way to Senegal for a Africa Cup qualifying game only a few days after beating Mauritius 3-0 in a World Cup qualifier. National sporting hopes went down with the aircraft. Hostility was heightened by a subsequent match against Morocco, which the all-new Zambian team lost, along with the chance to take part in the World Cup finals in the United States. The referee was Jean-Fidel Diramba — from Gabon. The healing process has been hampered by the failure to publish the international investigators' crash report, be-

## Give a footballing dog a bad name...

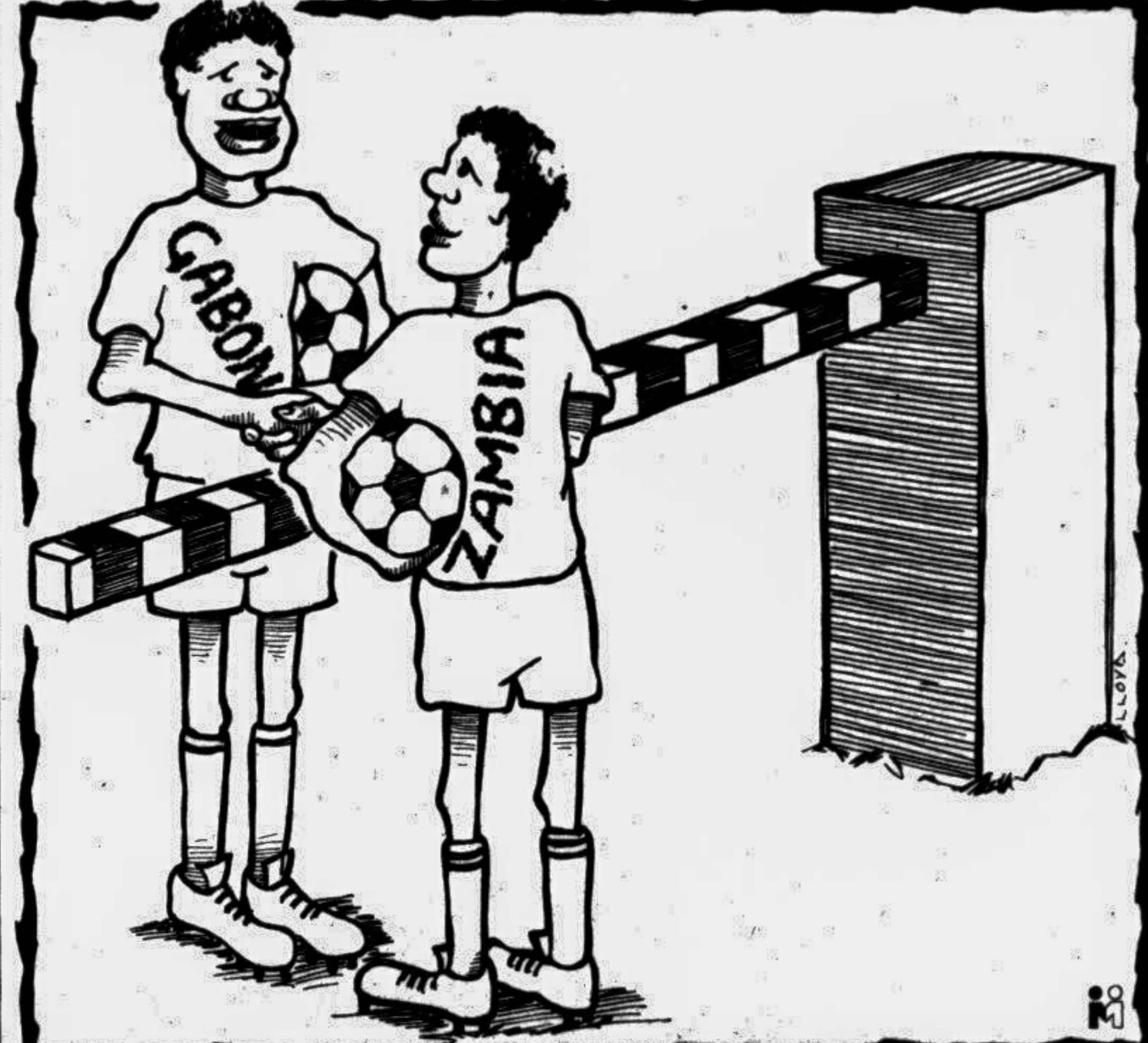
By Beauty Lupiya from Lusaka

**When the Zambian soccer team was killed in air crash off the coast of Gabon, fans were ready to march to West Africa with knobkerries and spears. Now, two years later, thanks to the efforts of Zambian sports officials, reports Gemini News Service, the two teams have played an international without incident on or off the pitch.**

cause the Zambian government says it cannot afford the \$300,000 fee. Former President Kenneth Kaunda, whose birthday falls on the 28 April anniversary of the crash, has been demanding its release: "The government must release the report," says 71-year-old Kaunda. "It is a na-

tional disaster and it is our right to know. Some church leaders have accused me of politicising the Gabon crash, but let the truth be known by the people of Zambia." Relatives of the dead also want publication. Says Innocent Chama Mumba, elder brother of one of the victims, Wisdom Chansa, "It has taken government two years to inform us, and the entire nation, as well as the sporting world, the cause of the plane crash. Why? Officials have worked hard to educate and soothe fans, not least because violence could lead to suspension by the body which supervises soccer in Africa. Earlier this year the team played in Gabon, in a qualifying match for the 1996 Africa Nations Cup, and were warmly received. But for the return match in Lusaka, officials learned of plans to stone the Gabonese players. So awkward was the situation that the parents of some of the Gabonese players did not want their sons to go, and the Gabonese team landed in Lusaka just 50 minutes before kick-off. Tension was high among the 35,000 fans who turned up at the national stadium. In the end the match was played in good humour and no violence was reported. The Gabonese felt at home and stayed on in Lusaka for two days, enjoying the nightclubs and shopping in peace. They even watched local soccer games. Sports Minister Patrick Kafumkache, whose ministry led the peace campaign, says the calm atmosphere in which the game took place, despite the waiting and anxiety, points to the beginning of a good relationship. "Violence does not pay," he says. "I was happy with the calm turn of events and I believe we are getting somewhere." Gabonese Football Federation president Fidele Waura, who accompanied the nervous team, was enchanted by the Zambian response. "War or enmity does not pay. I can now imagine a Gabonese and a Zambian sharing a piece of meat," he said. "It was unfortunate that the plane crashed in our land. We have hearts."

The Zambian government has established the Zambia-Gabon Friendship Association to cement ties. "We have now opened a friendly gate by the good reception we gave each other," says Sports Ministry permanent secretary Webster Mulu-bisha. "The Ministry of Sports believes in friendship and that is the reason why we worked day and night to take security measures during the game. We look forward to a positive future." Zambia won 1-0 — Gemini News



## Heysel disaster revisited

LIVERPOOL, May 25: A decade after one of the worst disasters in sporting history, vivid and gruesome memories of the Heysel Stadium tragedy refuse to fade for the Liverpool players and soccer fans who witnessed it, reports Reuter. Thirty nine people died after rioting by English supporters caused a wall in the Brussels Stadium to collapse on May 29, 1985. It changed many people's lives forever. "It's the worst thing I've ever been associated with in football," said former Liverpool player Mark Lawrenson. The disaster happened just before Liverpool were due to face Juventus in the European Cup final, the highlight of the European soccer calendar. "Our dressing room was virtually underneath where the wall collapsed. At the time, we didn't know exactly what was happening. We'd heard sporadic reports that there'd been some trouble," he told Reuters. "But it was all a bit sketchy." It gradually dawned on the

players that fans had probably been killed. But they were told that in the interest of preventing further rioting the game would have to be played. "It was eerie," Lawrenson said. "We came out and looked immediately for our families, our girlfriends." Lawrenson remembered confusion first and eventually shame. No one wanted to play. For Lawrenson, the game was mercifully short as he dislocated his shoulder 90 seconds after it began. Many people at the game had no idea what had happened, unlike millions of television viewers who had watched the rioting and carnage from close-up. "When they started the game we thought, it can't be that serious. It was only when we got back to the hotel that we saw," said Ted Norris, a Liverpool fan who is now 48. The next morning Brussels was in a state of shock. Liverpool fans, who received the brunt of the blame, got on their buses and went back to England. The tragedy was triggered by scores of English fans, many drunk, charging at Juventus supporters. The pressure from the charge was so great a brick wall collapsed. Geert Linnebank, a Reuter correspondent, remembers the scenes of carnage. "I got there to see complete pandemonium — enormous rows of ambulances and lots of rescue workers," he said. "And the dead were piled into a little spot between the grandstand and this block where the riot had started." The number quickly increased. "Some of them were really maimed beyond recognition. They didn't look like people any more because they had been crushed." He can still see before him one particular corpse — a middle-aged man whose leg was twisted behind his head. "It was like a bag of bones," he said. Liverpool fans were

## No soccer in Croatia, says UEFA

VIENNA, May 25: European soccer's governing body, UEFA, announced on Tuesday that it would not sanction any major matches in Croatia following an escalation of hostilities there, reports Reuter. Gerhard Aigner, UEFA's general secretary said that Tuesday's executive committee meeting had been "pre-occupied" with the situation in Croatia. Croatia's national teams is well placed to reach the European Championship finals in England next year but will now almost certainly have to play the remainder of their home games in a neutral country when their home programme resumes in September.

## WTA's top 30

UNDATED, May 25 (AP): Top 50 women's tennis players according to rankings issued by WTA Tour.

Player	Country	Points
1. Arantxa Sanchez Vicario	Spain	314,4389
2. Steffi Graf	Germany	267,2796
3. Mary Pierce	France	231,7000
4. Conchita Martinez	Spain	219,2555
5. Jana Novotna	Czech Republic	169,7567
6. Magdalena Maleeva	Bulgaria	146,5000
7. Lindsay Davenport	United States	142,6769
8. Gabriela Sabatini	Argentina	135,7688
9. Kimiko Date	Japan	130,9692
10. Natasha Zvereva	Belarus	113,9176
11. Anke Huber	Germany	107,2701
12. Iva Majoli	Croatia	82,1682
13. Mary Joe Fernandez	United States	81,8750
14. Amy Frazier	United States	74,5533
15. Helena Sukova	Czech Republic	72,1250
16. Naoko Sawamatsu	Japan	70,3308
17. Brenda Schultz-McCarthy	Netherlands	70,0763
18. Lori McNeil	United States	65,3000
19. Amanda Coetzer	South Africa	62,7533
20. Julie Halard	France	59,9737
21. Gigi Fernandez	United States	59,5882
22. Judith Wiesner	Austria	57,5882
23. Martina Hingis	Switzerland	55,3333
24. Mirianne Werdel Witmeyer	United States	54,5455
25. Zina Garrison	United States	54,0941
26. Jackson		
27. Yayuk Basuki	Indonesia	53,1250
28. Irina Spirlea	Romania	51,8421
29. Ines Gorrochategui	Argentina	50,0250
30. Lisa Raymond	United States	48,7375
31. Krina Habaudova	Slovakia	48,1786

## Gerulaitis' death Pool-heating company blamed

HAUPPAUGE, New York, May 25: A pool-heating company and its mechanic knew there was a problem with a heater in the Southampton guest cottage where tennis star Vitas Gerulaitis died of carbon monoxide poisoning, but they took no steps to correct it, the Suffolk County prosecutor charged Tuesday, reports AP. The mechanic, Bart Torpey, 33, and his employer, Recreational Concepts, both of Sag Harbor, are charged with criminally negligent homicide. The company was also charged with manslaughter. Torpey pleaded innocent at his arraignment Tuesday in Suffolk County Court in River head and was released. Judge Kenneth Rohl gave him a week to post 5,000 dollars. Attorney David Clayton entered a plea of innocent on behalf of the company. Outside court, Torpey's attorney John O'Brien, said: "The heater was properly installed. That's our defence. We feel this is a civil matter, not criminal."

Violence does not pay," he says. "I was happy with the calm turn of events and I believe we are getting somewhere." Gabonese Football Federation president Fidele Waura, who accompanied the nervous team, was enchanted by the Zambian response. "War or enmity does not pay. I can now imagine a Gabonese and a Zambian sharing a piece of meat," he said. "It was unfortunate that the plane crashed in our land. We have hearts."