

Lady leads Joyce to win

LONDON, July 1: A woman shouting "miss it" as he went for an overhead smash on Friday fired Hollywood kid Michael Joyce into the last 16 at Wimbledon, reports Reuter.

Trailing 0-3 in the second set against the British crowd favourite Chris Wilkinson, he became so fired up that victory was his from then on.

Joyce, a rank outsider in the world's most famous tournament, shook off glandular fever and years of shoulder injuries to fight his way in there to join the elite.

"When someone yells before you make an overhead, that makes me mad," the 22-year-old tennis prince from Bel Air told reporters after his 5-7, 6-4, 7-6, 6-4 win at a heat-baked Wimbledon.

Joyce, whose parents were both in the Hollywood film business, said of the heckler: "She should be a little more respectful to the player in the middle of the match."

He then took the match by the throat: "I used a bit of anger to pump me up."

"I am a fighter. I play my best tennis when my back is against the wall."

But he stressed: "I would rather play in front of 50,000 people cheering against me than in my back garden with four people."

He has three pins in his left shoulder after two operations but he is not complaining.

"It helps me now because any time I feel down or if I have a bad run, I look back and say I could be in bed or something, like I was with my shoulder. So I think it gives you a lot of character."

His biggest worry was fitness as he started the month in bed with an attack of glandular fever: "They call it the kissing disease even though I never kissed anyone before I got mononucleosis."

Reporters eager for a new personality to write about at the tournament asked: "Could we call you a kid from Hollywood?"

"I would say so. I grew up there. Okay, my dad [a director of photography] did a lot of series - 'How the West was Won' and a lot of TV shows like 'Simon and Simon.'"

Tyson on TV

NEW YORK, July 1: Mike Tyson's comeback fight on August 19 could be bought by more than one million households and challenge the pay-per-view television record set by the Evander Holyfield George Foreman fight, reports AFP.

Showtime entertainment Television said Friday it had signed distribution agreements with the United States' two largest pay-per-view networks, Viewer's Choice and Request.

They are in addition to a previous agreement with TOI, the country's largest cable television operator.

"The top performing boxing matches all had more than one million homes purchase them," said set executive vice president Mac Lipscomb.

Right now, it's tough to know based on where we are with the pricing schedule, but I think a million homes is not unreasonable. Who knows?" Holyfield Foreman in April 1991 was bought by 1.36 million households at an average price of 35.95 dollars and grossed 48.9 million dollars.

Tyson's fight with Peter McNeeley at Las Vegas, the former world champion's first fight since serving a prison sentence for rape, will cost from 39.95-95 dollars, depending on when it is purchased.

Viewers who wait will have to pay more to see the bout.

"We did extensive research in four areas before setting the pricing guidelines," Lipscomb said. "First, we went back to boxing fans who had purchased before and asked them what they would pay. Then we went to sports fans in general."

Nice start for Navratilova

LONDON, July 1: Nine-time singles champion Martina Navratilova was given a standing ovation when she made a winning return to the Wimbledon Centre-Court late Friday - in the mixed doubles, reports AFP.

Navratilova lined up alongside Jonathan Stark to beat fellow-Americans Matt Lucena and Tami Whittinger-Jones 6-4, 7-6 (7-1) in a first-round clash.

Navratilova, who retired from singles play last year, was forced out of forming the "Dream Team" in the women's doubles when Steffi Graf pulled out of the event earlier this week.

The former champion is bidding for a 19th Wimbledon crown. The all-time record of 20 titles was set by Billie Jean King in 1979.

An impressive immigrant



LONDON, July 1: Five weeks ago, most people considered Greg Rusedski about as British as maple syrup, but an entire nation suffered collective memory loss at a sweltering Wimbledon on Friday, reports Reuter.

Even those in the shade suspected a Mirage as they watched a 21-year-old from Montreal in a Union Jack headband fire 36 aces past a Frenchman in temperatures of more than 41 degrees Celsius to reach the last 16 of the men's singles.

Rusedski's 6-7, 6-4, 6-4, 7-6 victory over Frenchman Olivier Delaitre merely confirmed his status as heir-apparent to the vacant role of clean-cut British hero, conveniently tossed away this week by actor Hugh Grant.

It also encouraged a further grilling about his controversial decision to turn his back on his native Canada in favour of the British Davis Cup team, although for Rusedski the matter is already spiralling out of his control.

"The way the crowd reacted today was phenomenal. I've never had such crowd support in my life," said the winner of six Canadian junior titles, pondering his fourth-round match with defending champion Pete Sampras.

"I thought it would take a little time for the public to warm to me but they've just been wonderful. I mean, if I have those 13,000 people doing what they did when I played Guy Forget, who knows what can happen."

The 1.90-metre left-hander, who has been based in Southern England for three years and qualifies for Britain because his mother was born in Yorkshire, did admit he had received some less complimentary messages amongst a bulging post-bag.

"One said I should go back to Canada and I had one telling me I was a disgrace on Centre Court when I walked off without Guy. But I've had 45 letters so far, so I can't complain. You're going to have some funny ones."

"I can understand the hostility. But other athletes have changed and gone where their heart's been. I think my situation might have been blown out of proportion."

"I just feel this is home, this is where I want to play and this is where my heart is."

Rusedski's two visits to Wimbledon produced just one solitary win but his growing profile has already forced a readjustment of one of Wimbledon's longest-running

jokes. Until last month a Briton winning the men's title was officially rated more ludicrous by the bookmakers than finding Elvis Presley queuing for a ticket outside, but Rusedski's rise has forced a can Mark Joyce on Friday it was nothing personal.

"I don't have a problem with Greg Rusedski," claimed Wilkinson, whose anger at the policy was a factor in his advance to the third round. "I shook hands with him today. He's a very good player and



Canadian-born Briton Greg Rusedski in action during his match against Frenchman Guy Forget at Wimbledon on July 1. Rusedski won the match. — AFP/UNB photo

seems a very nice guy. It's just a matter of principle."

One British coach Alan Jones nevertheless chose Friday to slam the structure of British tennis, claiming it prevented the country digging up unusual talent.

"Andre Agassi, the most marketable and charismatic figure in the game, would not be allowed to play at virtually any club in the land," Jones said.

"It is not because of the way he plays, but what he wears. The kinds want to put on the same clothes as him but they would be kicked off court if they wore what he did when he won the Australian Open."

"How are we going to get our kids playing if they can't emulate their hero?"

Those same British kids may already have a new hero, even if he is a Canadian native of Polish-Ukrainian descent.

What is not in dispute is the power of his serve, the fastest in the world today.

He served aces on the first and last points against Delaitre and could not remember ever serving 36 in a single encounter. Sampras could be a different ballgame, but the American world number two is already well aware of his new position.

"I've been getting a bit of a rough time in the locker-room," admitted Rusedski. "Pete's telling me he's never walking off a practice court for me because he never gets off a practice court for a British player. It'll pass in due time." However, not everyone has been so good-humoured, notably fellow British player Chris Wilkinson.

Wilkinson has declined to play for his country in protest at the selection of overseas-born players but stressed after his four-set defeat to Ameri-

can, so used to tennis failures, has taken the Montrealer to his heart.

Few if any spectators will be rooting for Sampras. He promised that will not fade him one iota.

Sun suits big blasters

LONDON, July 1: Scorching heat has played into the hands of the power hitters of Wimbledon this week and made a nonsense of attempts to slow the grass-court game down, reports Reuter.

As temperatures exceeded the Wimbledon record of 106 Fahrenheit (41 Celsius) on Centre Court, the master blasters were in their element.

Goran Ivanisevic thundered down 22 aces in a 6-4, 6-4, 6-4 third round Centre Court Triumph over Frenchman Arnaud Boetsch, taking his total for three matches to more than 70.

Greg Rusedski, the Canadian who has transferred his allegiance to Britain, belted 36 on Court One in his four-set victory over Olivier Delaitre of France while Todd Martin fired 21 on an outside court as he beat fellow American Derrick Rostango in five.

Martin believes that not only are the balls no slower, the courts are getting quicker and the game faster.

"Whoever tried to do something to the balls didn't do a good job because it's no slower," Martin, a semifinalist last year, said.

"And until they stop cutting the grass shorter and shorter, it's always going to be fast, like Goran said the other day, with waterfalls or whatever."

He felt the court on Friday was 20-25 per cent faster than just two days ago and the grass is dying quickly because of the sun, the abuse it's getting and because they're cutting it shorter.

"In my little lawn-mowing experience, the shorter you cut it, the easier it dies, the quicker it gets," he said.

Rusedski agreed the balls had not changed much, because of the heat. "But if and when it's colder, the balls will be much slower," he said.

Ivanisevic revelled in the conditions. "It was a nice court to serve, Centre Court," he said. "It's very hot and the balls are flying and it's good for serving today."

"I mean, everybody is talking about balls but when you have weather like this ..."

Graf marches on

From Tawfiq Aziz Khan WIMBLEDON, July 1: Steffi Graf looking for her sixth title made short work of Kristie Boogert of the Netherlands on Court No. 1 before a packedhouse 6-1, 6-0. The straight set win takes Graf to the third round where she will meet Natalia Zvereva who got better of Gorrochategui in the Centre Court. The Graf-Boogert match lasted only 43 minutes in which Graf served only 2 aces but moved around the court with ease and grace.

Though 22-year-old Boogert had a bandage around her right thigh, Graf did not give any impression that she had back problems for which she had earlier withdrawn from the ladies' doubles event. This match was no contest for a third round tie at the Wimbledon.

Becker, who first won this title as an unseeded 17-year-old in 1985, would match the record of American Bill Tilden, the only man to date to win titles 10 years apart in 1920 and 1930, if he won the crown for a fourth time next week.

One thing that wasn't cool

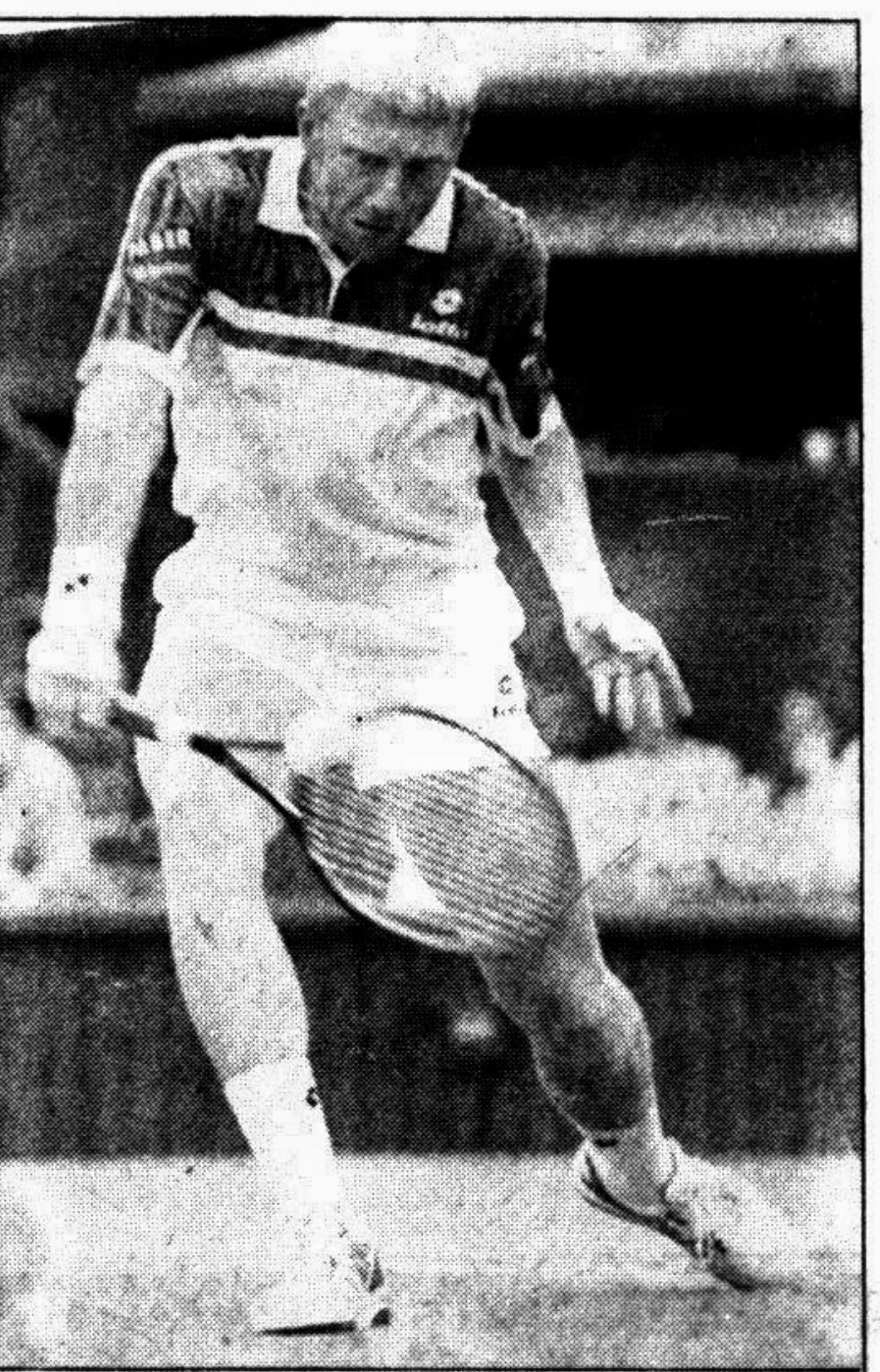
Becker's bold fightback



LONDON, July 1: Three-time champion Boris Becker recovered from a shaky start to overcome Dutchman Jan Siemerink 2-6, 6-2, 6-4 and

was the temperament of American Jeff Tarango, who defaulted his match against Alexander Mronz after unleashing a series of temper tantrums at chair umpire Bruno Rebeuh.

"You are the most cor-



Boris Becker of Germany makes a return close from his body during his third round match against Jan Siemerink of Holland in the All-England Championships at Wimbledon on July 1. Becker came from behind to beat Siemerink 2-6, 6-2, 6-2, 6-4. — AFP/UNB photo

clinch a place in the last 16 of the men's singles at Wimbledon on Saturday, report agencies.

The 27-year-old German, bidding to become only the second man in the tournament's 11-year history to win singles championships 10 years apart, finally proved too strong for the 25-year-old left-hander who broke the German's service twice in the opening set but was too often beaten by Becker's powerful and accurately hit ground strokes as the match progressed.

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rupt official in the game and you can't do that," said Tarango, prompting a code violation.

Tarango then screamed, "No way. That's it," picked up his bag and marched off the court.

Tarango had earlier been issued a code violation for telling the crowd to "Shut up." The fans had turned against Tarango after he delayed the game by taking his seat while protesting a line call on his serve.

Tarango's wife, Benedicte, slapped Rebeuh after Tarango left the court.

With four slashing backhand returns, title-holder Pete Sampras transformed an awkward third round encounter into a run-away victory.

For almost two sets, Sampras had been out-manoeuvred by a ferociously deter-

mined Jared Palmer fully intent on avenging three previous straight-set defeats by his fellow American.

But after failing vainly to string even two returns together, Sampras swooped in the 10th game of the second set, broke, Palmer to love and steamrollered to victory 4-6, 6-4, 6-1, 6-2.

Lindsay Davenport, on an outside court, wrapped herself in a coat during changeovers during the 6-7 (10-8), 6-3, 6-2 victory over Christian Singer.

On Centre Court, where the temperature was in the 70s (low 20s C) after Friday's all-time high of 106.5 (41.38 C), three-time champion Becker's first serve was returned repeatedly with interest in the first set by the 52nd-ranked Siemerink.

In Monday's fourth round, Becker will play either Todd Woodbridge or 6-foot-8 (2.04-metre) lucky loser Dick Norman, who played later Saturday.

Davenport, the seventh seed, will face No 13 Mary Joe Fernandez, who defeated Miriam Oremans 6-1, 6-2.

In other early matches, seventh-seeded Wayne Ferreira defeated Mark Woodforde 6-1, 1-6, 6-4, 6-7 (5-7), 6-2. Unseeded Frenchman Cedric Pioline, a quarterfinalist here two years ago, rolled past Germany's Patrick Baur 6-4, 6-4, 6-3.

In women's play, No 10 Natasha Zvereva was ousted 2-6, 6-4, 6-4 by 56th-ranked Ines Gorrochategui of Argentina. Australian veteran Nicole Bradtke beat Mexico's Angelica Gavaldon, 6-2, 6-1.

The weather was a refreshing change on many fronts. The luscious green Centre Court christened by Pete Sampras on Monday is already scarred with brown dead patches and four growing bald spots along both service lines because of the heat.

The stifling heat combined with a lack of rain, dictated a blistering pace of play during Wimbledon's first five days, negating the effects of the new balls.

Goran Ivanisevic, Todd Martin and new local favourite Greg Rusedski all swept into the fourth round Friday on a tide of aces, service winners and three-stroke rallies.

IBF wants an Axel-Botha bout

EAST ORANGE, New Jersey, July 1: The International Boxing Federation has notified the promoters of South African Francois Botha and German Axel Schulz to begin negotiations for a heavy-weight title fight to fill the crown relinquished by George Foreman, reports Reuter.

Foreman, 46, relinquished his title rather than submit to a mandated rematch against Schulz, who lost a controversial decision to Foreman in their April 22 bout in Las Vegas.

IBF president Robert Lee said Friday that Don King, who represents number one contender Botha, and Cedric Kushner, who represents Schulz, will have 30 days to reach an agreement.

Lee said the fight must take place within the next 120 days.

"I am disappointed in the tacky way in which George gave up his title," Lee said in a statement. "He didn't even bother to call us. We had to read it in the newspapers."

Lee pointed out that the IBF had been instrumental in Foreman's climb back to the top in becoming the oldest ever heavyweight champion.

"If you remember, we were the only one of the major sanctioning bodies to rate Foreman in 1994," Lee said. "This enabled George to get the match with Michael Moorer and earn somewhere between 20-30 million dollars in his bouts with Moorer and Schulz."

Foreman won the World Boxing Association and IBF belts by knocking out Moorer last November. He was stripped of the WBA title when he refused to make a mandatory defence against its top contender, Tony Tucker.

Herrlich takes em to court

MOENCHENGLADBACH, Germany, July 1: Germany's most promising young striker Heiko Herrlich has taken his club Borussia Moenchengladbach to court in order to gain permission to join German champions Borussia Dortmund, reports Reuter.

Herrlich, who has broken into the national team and was last season's joint top scorer in the Bundesliga with 20 goals, has been offered an annual salary of 1.2 million marks (860,000 dollars), by Dortmund.

But German Cup winners Moenchengladbach are unwilling to let him end his contract early. It terminates in June 1997.

Pete: Man on a mission



LONDON, July 1: Pete Sampras wants to win Wimbledon for the third time to help his coach and close confidant Tim Gullikson recover from a brain tumour.

And the perfect way to do that would be to beat Las Vegas showman Andre Agassi in a dream-final to boost the international image of Wimbledon, reports Reuter.

Sampras has been condemned as a faceless automaton but the public mask fell dramatically away at the Australian Open in January when he wept openly on court when a fan shouted "win this one for Tim."

After he defeated his compatriot Jared Palmer 4-6, 6-4, 6-1, 6-2 as the sun set over Wimbledon on Friday, Sampras confessed that Gullikson was constantly in his thoughts.

"I call him just about every day. He is on my mind every day. I can do my share and go on winning and help him recover," said the player with the impeccably polite facade that hides more turbulent depths.

Halfway through the tournament, the 23-year-old from Tampa, Florida, was quick to trot out the old sporting cliché about "taking it one match at a time."

But he would dearly love to meet Agassi in the final. The best of friends off court, they would be the best of enemies across the net.

Sampras is still smarting after last year's final when he and Croatian Goran Ivanisevic were accused of putting on a dull display of "thud and blunder" big serving rallies were a rarity.

A Sampras-Agassi final would be the dream ticket for Wimbledon and Sampras agreed: "That would be great for the game."

For Agassi is a true entertainer with flashes of brilliance that light up the court while Sampras ranks as one of the finest serve-and-volleyers in the history of the game.

"With our different games and personalities, it would be a great match-up. We have

mutual respect for each other," Sampras said. But first he has on Monday to face the wrath of a nation: big server Greg Rusedski has switched his nationality from Canadian to British. Bri-

WIMBLEDON DIARY

LONDON, July 1 (AFP): Saturday's Wimbledon Diary:

MOVING BALLS
Pete Sampras, striving to win a third consecutive men's singles title has earned the nickname of the poor man's John Daly.

Sampras, who likes to relax on a golf course when he is off the tennis court, claims his drives "hit around 300 yards" but, unlike Daly, who is acclaimed as the longest hitter on the US golf tour, Sampras admits most of his efforts finish up in the trees.

The American says, "Golf should be easy, after all the ball never moves."

The long line of Sampras' Wimbledon victims are already convinced he has mastered the art of hitting balls that are on the move.

RUSEDSKI CALL-UP EXPECTED
Greg Rusedski, Britain's latest import from Canada, is expected to make his Davis Cup debut for his new country against Monaco at Eastbourne next month and it will be a major surprise if he does not finish on the winning side.

One of the main reasons why Rusedski was allowed to change nationality was because he had lived in Britain for three years. If Monaco adopted the same rules he could turn out quite a team from the long-list of tennis tax exiles living in the principality.

For the singles they could pick Boris Becker and Goran Ivanisevic and for doubles, the world No 1 pair, Paul Haarhuis and Jacco Eltingh.

And standing by, just in case of injuries, could be Marc Rosset, Richard Krajicek, Thomas Enqvist, Andrea Gaudenzi, Jonas Bjorkman, Karel Novacek, Renzo Furlan, Jan Siemerink, Martin Damm, and Petr Korda.

KNOWING YOUR LEFT FROM YOUR RIGHT
American doubles specialist Luke Jensen is still in the mixed doubles and that spells good news for all those Wimbledon fans who like to see something different. Jensen, known as "dual hand Luke", can play almost as well left-handed as right, and he often disconcerts opponents by changing his racket hand during rallies.

MARTIN'S MASTER
Tennis coaches are not supposed to beat their pupils so it was a bit surprising when Todd Martin, Wimbledon semifinalist last year, admitted that coach Robert Van't Hof soundly thrashed him every night.

But the bearded American was not talking about tennis, but about his latest craze, bridge.

"I play with Dean Goldfine, Patrick Galbraith's coach, against Robert and Patrick, and they beat us every time," says Martin.

"But Robert can't play cards very long against me. He says he sees too much of me as it is."

RUSEDSKI TOP 'ACEMAN'
Britain's Canadian-born Greg Rusedski, with 77 aces from three matches, tops the big-serving charts at Wimbledon. Goran Ivanisevic of Croatia, twice a finalist, is in second produced the tastiest serve of the championships so far with a 134 miles per hour (215 kph) effort - off a second serve.

WINDOW ON WIMBLEDON

From Tawfiq Aziz Khan

LONDON, July 1: Britain's new lad Greg Rusedski kept the British flag flying at Wimbledon Friday before a capacity crowd. The 21-year-old Canadian-born left-hander won a close third round victory over Olivier Delaitre of France, a demerit 5ft 7 in right-hander in the Court Number 1. One set down, Rusedski came strong with his tremendous serves to take the next three sets in a row, the last set in a tie-break. The final score was 6-7, 6-4, 6-4, 7-6. Incidentally this was the hottest June day in England for the last 19 years. The mercury rose up to 110 degrees Fahrenheit. Wearing a Union Jack bandana Rusedski fired 36 aces in that scorching heat amongst jubilation from the crowd, many of whom had their reservation about Rusedski taking British citizenship. But yesterday's enthusiasm drowned everything. Even a sign in the gallery read "Greg Rusedski for PM." Rusedski's next meeting has been set up against the defending champion and world number two Pete Sampras of the United States.

SPORTING SABATINI

Gabriela Sabatini, a favourite of the crowd everywhere, made her supporters happy as she won her match against little-known Belgian teenager Nancy Feber 7-5, 6-1 in a packed Court Number 13. Sabatini made her winning debut at the Wimbledon 10 years ago, herself as a 15-year-old, was asked in the post-match interview whether she was sorry for Nancy. Sabatini replied, "She has still so many years ahead, so, you know, she has to be happy to get where she got and I think she can get even better. She is going to have a lot of years to learn and hopefully, you know, to meet good players and play better tennis." She spoke both in English and Spanish in her interview and in fact surprised many when she claimed that she had proved that her game could take her to the final and the Number One spot in her 11th successive Wimbledon. She was runner up to Steffi Graf in 1991 and was semifinalist on three other occasions.

IVANISEVIC THE ACE

Goran Ivanisevic has a natural flare for serving aces even in critical moments. On Friday he blasted a 129mph second serve against Frenchman Arnaud Boetsch which was even a mile faster than his first serve. He told reporters after the match "If I don't do it with the first serve, I'll try and get you with the second." Boetsch was very sporting about the whole thing. "It's a joke, I was playing a giant. It's like he is not playing the same game," he told his interviewers after the match. Ivanisevic was in the final twice before - in 1992 and 1994 - but lost to Andre Agassi and Pete Sampras respectively. Commenting on his prospects the 24-year-old Croat was sarcastic about his aces. He remarked, "I would prefer to hit just one ace and win the tournament. In 1992 I served 209 aces and I lost in the final, so, it don't do any good. If I play like this I'm not scared of anybody." This rings a warning for Martin, Agassi and Sampras.

SUNNY FRIDAY

Friday was hottest in Britain since 1976. The temperature hit 110 F. Weather has been very bright and warm since Monday when the tournament started and it is expected to remain so. The continuous warm weather has caused St John Ambulance to repeat advice to tennis fans: Ensure cover up with sunblock; Drink plenty of non-alcoholic drinks and take some on to the court with you and Wear loose fitting cotton clothes and a hat. But what will protect the players?

Uruguay are desperate to wipe out memories of their failure to qualify for the 1994 World Cup, when they lost out to Bolivia.