

# Andre amazing, Steffi striving

**NEW YORK, Aug 30:** Top seeds Andre Agassi and Steffi Graf both did what they were supposed to do — advance to the second round of the US Open Tuesday. They did it in dramatically different fashion, report agencies.

Agassi carved up Bryan Shelton 6-2, 6-2, 6-2, while Graf struggled mightily before getting by Amanda Coetzer 6-7 (1-7), 6-1, 6-4.

There are two ways to look at their contrasting matches. Graf liked the idea of an early struggle. Agassi will take a cake-walk whenever he can get one.

"Having to play a tough player in the first round and to have been in opposition to have to play key points and to have that behind me, will definitely help me," Graf said.

Agassi was asked about the ideal first-round opponent. "Somebody that is just going to let me get on with the tournament," he said. "I don't want to play my best tennis in the first week, in the first match."

Graf certainly didn't do that.

Agassi, who began a meteoric rise to the top of the rankings after winning the Open last year as an unseeded player, showed he is still riding high by trouncing hard-serving Bryan Shelton in a mere 81 minutes on the Stadium Court.

"I am executing with total confidence," said Agassi. "I would have to say that at this stage, I am playing my best tennis ever on hard-court."

Agassi was ranked 20th entering last year's tournament as he battled back from wrist surgery and made the adjustment to his new coach, Brad Gilbert.

Since then, the flamboyant American has posted an awesome 88-10 match record, including 20 wins in a row.

"To be back out where it all started for me, it was a great feeling," said world number one Agassi, who is unbeaten on hard-courts this summer with four tournament titles in his credit.

Graf, the French and Wimbledon champion who has lost only once this year, avenged her long 1995 defeat by beating South African Amanda Coetzer, but the sea-saw victory was a struggle.

She was pleased at the idea of a quick rematch with Coetzer, who knocked her off in her first match at the Canadian Open two weeks ago.

"I don't particularly like losing, and I definitely wanted to play her as soon as I could," Graf said. "I knew it was not going to be easy because I haven't had a lot of matches, but I definitely was looking forward on it."

Then they started playing, and it might not have seemed such a good idea.

Coetzer had Graf down 5-2

in the first set and almost let her off the hook. Graf rallied to force the tie-breaker, avoiding eight set points along the way. She lost the set, but had shaken Coetzer and recovered to win the next two. The victory was hardly a confidence-builder for Graf, though, especially when Coetzer came back from 1-5 to 4-5 before losing the last set and the match.

Graf looked shaky, just as she had in Toronto, and distracted. She remains troubled by her father's tax problems, a cranky back and an inconsistent game.

"Obviously, at certain times I have difficulty concentrating out there," she said. "I haven't really played a lot. So I definitely lack confidence."

Shelton, whose resume includes some impressive upsets, including No 2 Michael Stich at Wimbledon a year ago and No 12 Richard Krajicek there earlier this summer.

"I have concluded that the thing you want to do, you want to get through each match however you need to get through it," Agassi explained. "As long as you're still in the event, good things can happen."

"When you get to the players where you know you need to play your best, you want to raise to that level and hope it is there. But to get through them is the most important thing."

The statistics of the opening matches played by the two top seeds are revealing.

**of them in the set she lost. Agassi had 14 unforced errors. Graf committed five double faults in the first set. Agassi had six in his entire match. Graf converted only nine of 24 break point opportunities, just 38 per cent. Agassi had 10 break chances and cashed in on six of them for 60 per cent.**

The other difference was the way they had won. Graf with difficulty and Agassi on cruise control. It could be a tip off to the rest of the tournament.

**The tormented Jeff Tarango, who sleep-walked his way to a 6-0, 6-4, 7-5 first-round defeat to seventh-seeded Russian Yevgeny Kafelnikov, was in even worse shape than Graf.**

Tarango, who was fined more than 60,000 dollars stemming from his infamous Wimbledon tirade against an umpire and subsequent walk-off, said he was so disturbed by the punishments following that incident he was considering quitting the circuit.

"I am taking two sleeping pills every night and I still am not getting any sleep, so I don't know what to do," Tarango said after fizzling in his 85-minute Grandstand Court match.

"I go to the chiropractor three times a week and he says I am so stressed out, he can't even turn my neck."

Tarango said he was "a victim, used and abused," and could not go on playing with that kind of mental attitude.

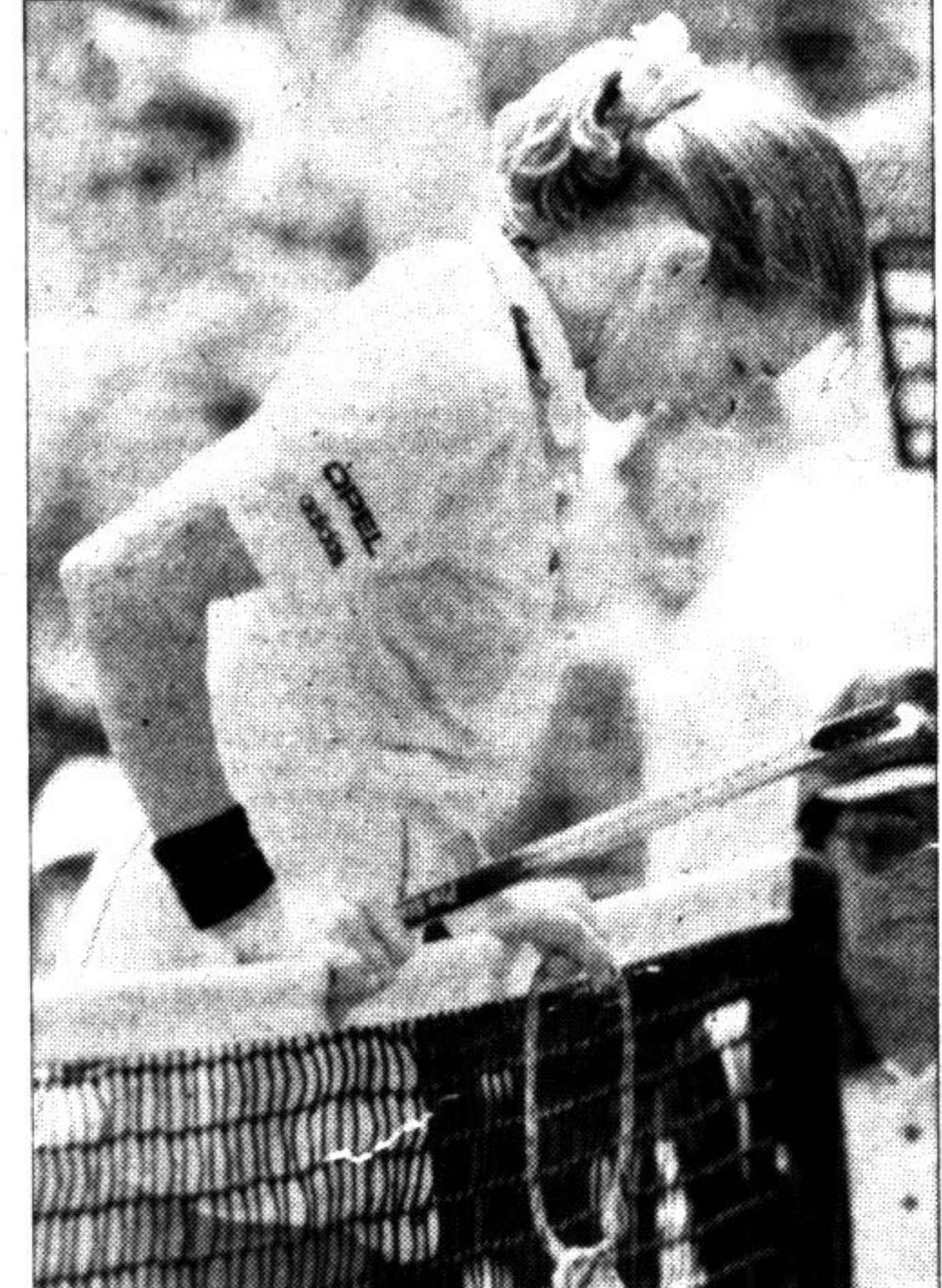
"I love tennis, so maybe I will play in my backyard. I know (Jim) Courier and Pete (Sampras) and Patrick (McEnroe) and all my friends will come and play with me in my backyard."

Among those still playing their trade at the National Tennis Centre were second-seeded Wimbledon champion Pete Sampras, who nearly matched Agassi in efficiency by smashing Fernando Meligeni of Brazil 6-0, 6-3, 6-4.

Others joining Sampras and Agassi into the second round included 13th seed Marc Rosset of Switzerland, a 6-7, 6-3, 6-1, 6-0 winner over Italian Andrea Gaudenzi; 1993 Open runner-up Cedric Pioline of France, who beat Dutchman Sjeng Schalken 6-4, 7-5, 6-1, and Swiss veteran Jakob Hlasek, a 6-3, 4-6, 6-4, 6-2 victor over Germany's Alexander Mronz.

Iva Majoli, the 13th seed from Croatia, became the first women's seed to fall, losing to Austrian Barbara Paulus 6-4, 6-4 to mar an otherwise orderly procession into the second round.

Seeds advancing included Czech Jana Novotna, seeded fifth, Kimiko Date of Japan (7), American Lindsay Davenport (10), Germany's Anke Huber (11), Natasha Zvereva of Belarus (12), American Mary Joe Fernandez (14) and Brenda Schultz-McCarthy of the Netherlands (16).

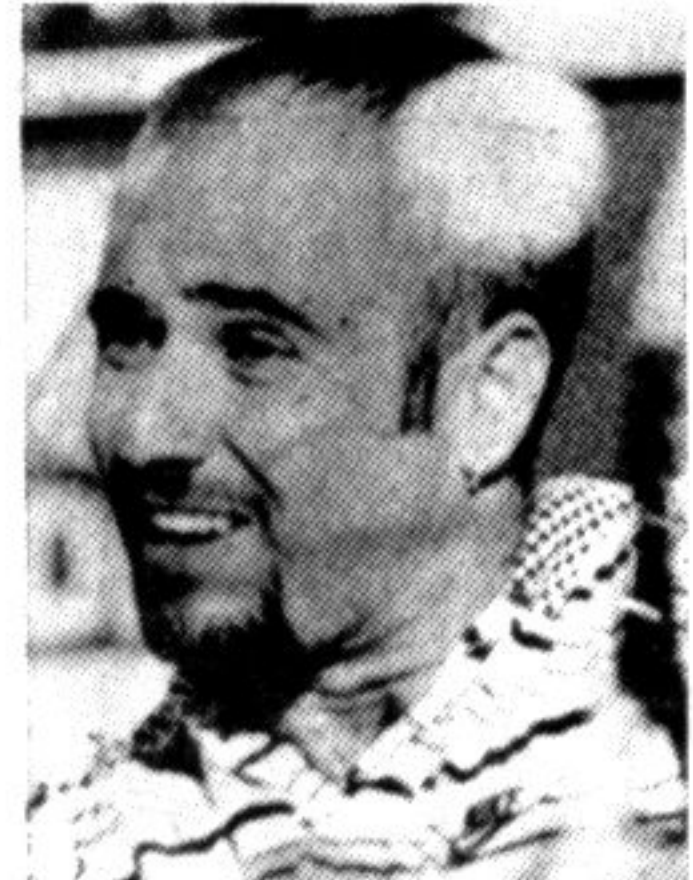


A visibly subdued world number one Steffi Graf waits for South Africa's Amanda Coetzer after the end of first round encounter of the US Open at Flushing Meadow, New York on Aug 29. A struggling Steffi came through 6-7 (1-7), 6-1, 6-4.

"I haven't been able to practice that much because of my back," said Graf, who took two hours and 15 minutes to beat the pesky opponent who ruined her perfect 32-0 record this year.

Already burdened by the highly-publicised tax evasion scandal that has landed her father in jail, Graf admitted she has also been bothered by reporters staking out her apartment in the Soho district of Manhattan following a report she was being stalked by a middle-aged woman.

Still, she won, and that was the most important part of the equation. The same applied to Agassi. He never had any problems with



Andre Agassi. Both went three sets. Graf made 56 unforced errors, 30

## China on a crusade

**BEIJING, Aug 30:** Supplying banned drugs to athletes became a criminal offence in China on Tuesday, reports Reuter.

Anyone supplying banned drugs could face criminal prosecution under the new Physical Culture Law passed by the National People's Congress, Xinhua news agency said.

Sportsmen and women found guilty of doping could face a ban from competition of up to four years, it said.

The law also banned gambling and made bribery and fraud at sports events criminal offences.

A sports commission officials said that, while punishments had been imposed in the past on those who took banned substances, the new law set out such punishments in law.

## FA affirm

**LONDON, Aug 30:** The Football Association (FA) said on Tuesday England will not allow the kidnapping of a British diplomat by Colombian terrorists to jeopardise next week's Wembley friendly against the South American side, reports AFP.

David Davies, the FA's director of public affairs, expressed his sympathy for the family of staff sergeant Timothy Cowley.

But he insisted that circumstances did not bear comparison with the Balkan situation which forced the postponement of the original September 6 fixture against Croatia.

"There is no debate about the relationship between the British and Colombian governments. This is more of a personal, private problem," said Davies.

"Our concern is for Sgt Cowley's family, but there is no international or political dispute which affects the game," he added.

# McCall, Bruno limber up

**LONDON, Aug 30:** World Boxing Council (WBC) heavyweight champion Oliver McCall walked out of a news conference with British challenger Frank Bruno on Tuesday after a bitter verbal exchange, reports agencies.

Bruno was incensed when McCall referred to his mother, wife and children during the build up to Saturday's title clash at Wembley arena.

To bring my wife, my mother and my kids into it is not right. He is a disgrace as champion, he's a demon," Bruno said. "I can't wait to fight. I can't wait to put my fist in his face and shove all those words down his throat," he said.

The champion from Chicago, said to say "I'm going to beat him like my father used to" makes my father sound like a child abuser."

If he has his way and makes me like bad, losing to someone with no fighting skills winning is not going to make him look any better because he'll be knocked down in his first defence."

Bruno lost his previous three world title fights, in 11 rounds to Tim Witherspoon in 1986, in five to Mike Tyson in 89 and in seven to Lennox Lewis in 93.

He's the dreamland champion. That's all Bruno is. He's been dreaming that's what he wants to be, champion. Believe me," McCall told Bruno, "before the night's over you will be literally fighting for your life."

Fight promoter Don King asked Bruno if he had a different game plan this time.

"Quite simply, Don, knock

him out. I'm the new champion. I'm grateful to you for giving me the opportunity and grateful to Oliver McCall, but I'm the new champion."

McCall noted that Saturday's fight was being called the Empire Strikes Back, because he had taken the title from another British fighter, Lewis. The champion, who outshone even promoter Don King in verbosity at the head-to-head news conference, said that title couldn't be right.

"Star wars is Tim Witherspoon, Bruno gets knocked out. In the Empire Strikes Back, he's knocked out by Tyson. Return of the Jedi, he gets knocked out right in his own country by Lennox Lewis. So this is the wrong title for the fight," the 30-year-old champion said.

"You've got to bring in something new because he's been knocked out so many times."

McCall doesn't see that this fight, before Bruno's fans at Wembley Stadium, will be any different. He's not even worried about the 33-year-old Briton's punching power that has knocked out 38 opponents on a 39-4-0 record.

"All of my natural skills and talents will overcome whatever he brings to the table. That's my least worry, his punch," McCall, 26-5-0, said.

"You will see who it is who takes the first step back and I'm saying it won't be me."

The American, who took the title from Lewis last September stepped back 57 years when he likened Saturday's fight to the Joe Louis-Max Schmeling rematch in 1938.

Louis, knocked out in 12 rounds by the German two

## SL 252 for 5

**KARACHI, Aug 30:** Sri Lanka were 252 for five at the close of the first day of their three-day match against a Pakistan Cricket Board XI today, reports Reuter.

## Moody extends stay at Worcester

**LONDON, Aug 30:** Worcestershire captain Tom Moody agreed a new three-year contract with the club today, reports Reuter.

Moody, who took over as captain in June from Tim Curtis, announced his decision before the start of play in the county championship match with Somerset at New Road.

"It was a big decision because of family and business reasons but I just felt you are a long time retired from cricket," he said.

Moody also intends to continue playing for Western Australia during their season "fitness permitting."

He has been troubled by a back injury and has bowled only a limited number of overs this season, although he is Worcestershire's leading scorer with almost 1,400 first-class runs.

## Bailey boasts Northants' hopes

**LONDON, Aug 30:** Northamptonshire were indebted to top-order batsman Rob Bailey's timely return to form on Tuesday in a match that could have a significant bearing on the battle for the English County Championship, reports Reuter.

Bailey hit a chanceless, uncut 98 to give third-placed Northants a solid opening-day score of 237 for three against leaders Middlesex at Uxbridge.

Northants, seeking to win the championship for the first time were 11 points behind Middlesex at the start of the current round of matches—the 15th out of 17.

Second-placed defending champions Warwickshire, five points behind the leaders, endured a frustrating day at Edgbaston where rain prevented any play against Gloucestershire.

Hezekiel Speng, fifth at the 1993 World Champio-



Gerhardus Liebenberg of South Africa sweeps during his devastating unbeaten innings of 170 against Sri Lanka in the first of the two under-24 one-day internationals at Colombo on August 29.

# Americans stay on top

**FUKUOKA, Japan, Aug 30:** With four days remaining, the United States leads the World Student Games medals race today with 19 gold while Japan has 18. China stood with ten and Russia and South Korea had nine each, report agencies.

Anthuan Maybank led a US one-two photo finish in the men's 200-meter dash and Wang Shi-tung powered Taiwan to their first gold medal in the tennis mixed doubles.

**South Korea and Japan, rival candidates to play host to the 2002 World Cup, moved into a football gold-medal showdown.**

**In the semi-finals, South Korea, bidding to regain the title they lost to the Czech Republic at the 1993 Games, beat Ukraine 3-1 while Japan scored in the 89th minute to down Russia 1-0.**

At the track, Maybank won the 200m in 20.46sec, a hundredth of a second faster than teammate David Dopek, with Thomas Smpokos of Greece third in 20.75.

In the women's 200m, Du Xujie beat Russian Oxana Diatchenko to give China their first gold in two days of athletic competition.

Hezekiel Speng, fifth at the 1993 World Champio-

nships, shrugged off a knee injury to win the 800m for South Africa's third gold medal at the 12-day Games. Breaststroker Penelope Heyns won the other two.

Australia and Belgium each won their first gold medals with Australian Jane Jamieson finishing first in the women's heptathlon and Lulangu Nsenga of Belgium taking the men's 110m hurdles.

Russia's Andrei Kournoi triple-jumped 17.30m to beat Armenia's Armen Martirosyan by 0.48m.

In the tennis mixed doubles final, Wang, ranked 48th in the world, combined with Chen Chih-Jung to beat the British pair of Paul Robinson and Samantha Smith 7-6 (7-5), 4-6, 6-4.

Wang, who skipped the US Open to compete here, also won a silver medal in women's doubles and a bronze in women's singles.

"I chose this rather than the US Open to fight for our country," said Wang, 21.

Kaoru Shibata, silver medalist at the 1993 Student Games in Buffalo, New York, beat fellow Japanese Rika Hiraki 6-2, 6-2 in the women's singles final.

The men's singles title went to Yoon Yong-Il, as he whipped top-seeded Lee

Hyung Taik 6-4, 6-4.

In an all South Korean final Yoon played patiently and retrieved well.

Both two sets followed identical patterns — Yoon broke serve in the first game each time and then, serving at 5-4, fell behind 15-40 before pulling out the set and then the match in the one-hour, 23-minute battle on a artificial grass.

The only difference was that each player had one additional break in the second set, and Yoon, the No 2 seed, led 4-1 before the top-seeded Lee broke back.

With South Korea already certain of the men's singles gold, Yoon said "There was no pressure. We know each other very well."

## MEDALS TABLE

Medals standings after Wednesday's events at the 18th World Student Games:

	G	S	B
USA	19	22	15
Japan	18	13	20
China	10	6	14
Russia	9	9	16
South Korea	9	5	8
Bulgaria	5	4	2
Hungary	4	3	1
Germany	3	3	4
Cuba	3	3	3
South Africa	3	0	0
Brazil	2	5	2
Belarus	2	2	2

# St Germain serve notice

**PARIS, Aug 30:** Paris St Germain led by Latin American pair Rai and Dely Valdes confirmed they would be the team to beat in the French League this season with a 2-0 win at Cannes which left them alone at the top of the standings, reports Reuter.

Metz the only other team left unbeaten after seven rounds in the league, were held to a 1-1 draw by Lyon and now trail the Parisians, champions in 1994, by two points on 15.

Panama's Julio Cesar Dely Valdes recruited to replace Liberia's George Weah who left to join AC Milan this season, proved he was worth the investment. He scored Paris' first goal on the hour, his fifth this season.

Rai came back from suspension to seal PSG's victory with a decisive goal five minutes from the finish. The Brazilian playmaker, who is having by far his best season with Paris, remained the leading scorer in the league on six goals.

With Metz looking less of a threat, the Parisians should beware of Monaco, who shot to third place on 13 points with a 2-1 victory over bottom of the table Lille.

The team from the prin-

cipality, who won 4-2 in Bordeaux on Saturday, had to wait until the final 20 minutes to see Thierry Henry and Brazil's Sonny Anderson score.

Reigning champions Nantes, who overshadowed PSG last season, were disappointing again, drawing 2-2 with St Etienne.

The Brittany team opened the scoring thanks to a penalty in the ninth minute by Chad's Japhet N'Doram, his sixth goal this season.

Poland's Roman Kosecki, signed from Atletico Madrid

at the start of the season, made it two for Nantes in the 57th, scoring his first goal in the French League.

The Canaries, who suffered their only defeat of the season to PSG at home last month, are now six points adrift of the Parisians.

But there was bad news too in Cannes for Paris St Germain when central defender Stephane Mahe was injured. PSG are already having to do without international sweeper Alain Roche, who will not resume playing before next January.

# Romario's rebuttal

**RIO DE JANEIRO, Aug 30:** Soccer star Romario said Tuesday he does not believe accusations by a woman charged with kidnapping his father last year that his brother planned the entire abduction, reports AP.

During a break in a morning practice with his Flamengo club, Romario told the CBN radio network that his brother, Ronaldo, and his bodyguard, Wilson Mussauer, had nothing to do with the crime.

"I am certain that my brother is totally innocent," Romario said in a televised interview. "My brother was the one who most suffered from this kidnapping."

The centreforward denied reports of a sour relationship between his father, Edevaldo de Souza, and his brother, although he said Ronaldo had always been a "worry" for the family.

Ronaldo de Souza also denied taking part in the abduction. "This is a complete circus," he told the Globo TV network.

Marlucia Gomes, jailed and awaiting trial for allegedly kidnapping Souza on May 2, 1994, outside a bar he owned on Rio's poor north side, said Monday in a televised interview that the crime was a "farce" planned by Ronaldo.

She said Ronaldo and Mussauer thought the Brazilian Soccer Confederation would pay the ransom to appease its star player on the eve of the 1994 World Cup. The kidnappers had demanded a 7 million dollars ransom.

Romario, then playing for Spain's Barcelona club, appealed to the kidnappers to

release his father and even asked Rio drug lords to use their influence.

Six days later, state police raided a house in Nova Iguaçu, a working class city north of Rio, and found Souza, Gomes, who was there taking care of him, was arrested.

Police have opened an inquiry into the accusations.

## New Nigerian soccer manager

**LAGOS, Aug 30:** Nigeria have named Dutchman Jo Bonfrere as their new team manager, national football association chairman Emeka Omeruah said on Tuesday, reports Reuter.

Bonfrere replaced Brazilian Carlos Alberto Torres, who did not resume duties after going on a two-week holiday in July when he was appointed.

The association had given Torres a deadline of this week to return to start work. But Omeruah said that at their meeting on Monday it was decided it would be a waste of time to wait for the deadline to expire.

## Other side of the coin!

**FUKUOKA, Japan, Aug 30:** A Tanzanian competitor at the World Student Games caused surprise at an exchange centre here when he walked in and enquired about a job in language teaching, the centre manager said today, reports AFP.

"We didn't expect such a cause," said Shigetō Miyamoto, manager of the city-run "Rainbow Plaza" center for international exchanges.

According to Miyamoto, the unidentified African said he had a friend living in Fukuoka who could accommodate him after the Games and expressed particular interest in a language teacher's job advertised on the bulletin board.

His interest dwindled when he was told he would have to obtain a working visa at home for a job in Japan and he left, Miyamoto added.

At the Asian Games in the nearby Japanese city of Hiroshima last year, 15 competitors absconded from the athletes village to join the swelling ranks of illegal foreign workers in this country.

## Charity soccer

**TOKYO, Aug 30:** Mexican striker Carlos Hermosillo scored a hatrick helping the Pan-American All Stars crush the Rest of the World team 5-1 in an international charity soccer match today, reports Reuter.



A AFP file photo shows Tottenham Hotspur chairman Alan Sugar (L) with team manager Trevor Francis on the day Francis officially took over the job. Sugar is reported to be contemplating the sale of the London club.