



German captain Juergen Klinsmann (L) dribbles past Moldovan defenders Vitali Culibaba(R) and Sergei Seku during their European Championship qualifier in Leverkusen, Germany on October 8. The Germans drubbed the Moldovans 6-1. —AFP/UNB photo

Vogts' boys play havoc

LEVERKUSEN, Germany, Oct 9: Midfielder Andy Moeller and libero Matthias Sammer both scored twice as Germany took a confident stride towards next year's European Championship finals with a 6-1 mauling of Moldova on Sunday, reports Reuter.

After Moldova had given away a soft own goal in the 16th minute of the Group Seven qualifier, the 1990 World Cup winners built up a comfortable 3-0 halftime lead with strikes from Thomas Helmer and Sammer in the 18th and 24th minutes.

The Germans were given the space to play some entertaining football on a beautiful, autumnal evening and Moeller took his chances well with a long-range shot two minutes into the second half and a fierce volley in the 61st minute.

Berti Vogts' team finished off the rout in the 72nd minute with a second goal for Sammer before Radu Rebeja scored a consolation goal for Moldova in the 81st minute.

The victory was Germany's best result at home in a competitive match since they smashed Finland by the same score in a World Cup qualifier in October 1989.

It kept Germany in second place in the group, three points behind leaders Bulgaria who kept up their unbeaten record with a 3-0 defeat of Albania in Sofia on Saturday.

But, with 19 points, the Germans now have a seven-point advantage over third-placed Georgia and look almost certain to qualify. Victory over Wales in Cardiff next Wednesday would effectively ensure their ticket to the finals in England. Moldova stayed bottom of the group with just six points from their nine games.

The Moldova defence looked hesitant from the start. Although the Germans took the lead through an own goal, it resulted from a clever move down the right flank.

Defender Markus Babbel played a long ball from deep in his own half to striker Heiko Herrlich who headed it perfectly into the path of Moeller.

After Moldova keeper Yevgeny Ivanov failed to hold the midfielder's fierce shot

from the right side of the box, captain Sergei Stroenko hooked the ball into his own net as he tried to clear the ball under pressure from Juergen Klinsmann.

Just two minutes later, Bayern Munich defender Helmer fired in a brilliant shot from the edge of the penalty area to stretch the Germans' lead.

The game was effectively over as a contest when Sammer, the newly-crowned German footballer-of-the-year, hammered in the third after Moldova had given away a foolish free-kick for a back pass six metres from goal.

The second half was less than two minutes old when Moeller struck a crisp left-foot shot from the edge of the area into the goal off the right-hand post.

Ironically Klinsmann, Germany's most prolific marksman in recent years, failed to get on the score sheet after an unlucky match. He even missed a penalty later in the second half.

It was irrelevant, however, Vogts' team should face a much tougher test in Cardiff against a better-organised team.

Here comes Juninho!

MIDDLESBROUGH, England, Oct 9: "Juninho mania has arrived." That's how Middlesbrough spokesman Dave Allan described the scene Monday as fans formed long lines outside Riverside stadium to buy season tickets following the signing of the Brazilian star, reports AP.

"We had achieved a club record of 18,000 season ticket-holders before Juninho was signed," Allan said. "Our target now is a season ticket sell-out."

The stadium holds 30,000 people. Middlesbrough landed the 21-year-old midfielder from the Sao Paulo club last Friday for a reported transfer fee of 4.75-million pounds (7.98 million dollars).

Juninho is expected to arrive next Monday to complete the deal.

Manager Bryan Robson had originally hoped Juninho could be available for Sunday's Premier League match at Sheffield Wednesday.

But Middlesbrough now expect he will return to Brazil after the official signing while awaiting a work permit.

Majoli comes of age

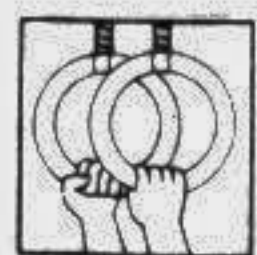
ZURICH, Oct 9: Croatia's Iva Majoli won her first Tour title when she upset Australian Open champion Mary Pierce 6-4, 6-4 in the European Women's Indoor tournament final on Sunday, reports Reuter.

Seventh seed Majoli, who defeated Pierce in this year's French Open, repeated the trick against the Canadian-born French player, the second seed, to win the 148,500 dollar first prize in the 806,000 dollar event.

It was the first victory in five Tour finals for the 18-year-old from Zagreb, who had accounted for Czech top seed Jana Novotna in the quarterfinals.

Majoli dropped her opening service game but broke back in the seventh game with a scorching service return on her first break point.

Chorkina rouses Russia



SABAE (Japan), Oct 9: Russia's Svetlana Chorkina outdid two already spectacular performances with a dazzling, twisting show Monday and won the gold medal on the uneven bars at the World Gymnastics Championships, reports AP.

Ukraine's Lilia Podkopyayeva, the women's individual all-round gold medalist here, gained another gold in the vault but shared it with Romania's Simona Amanar.

Podkopyayeva also was one of Chorkina's victims. She and China's Mo Huilan had tied with 9.837 marks before Chorkina pirouetted her way atop the bars to a 9.900.

It was another blow for Mo, the high scorer of the team competition, who missed the women's all-round gold with a fall after a flawless balance beam routine Sunday.

China, first here in the men's team event and second in the women's settled for silvers Monday by Mo, all-round men's champion Li Xiaoshuang in the floor exercises and Huang Huadong, who shared his with Japan's Yoshiaki Hatakeda on the pommel horse.

But Li Donghua, who moved to Switzerland in 1989 after being thrown off the Chinese team for marrying a Swiss woman, won gold for his adopted nation on the pommel horse.

Vitaly Scherbo of Belarus, the 1993 world champion and winner of six gold medals at the 1992 Olympics, won in the floor exercises.

Italian strongman Yuri Chechi won his third consecutive rings title.

Five more specialty gold medals were to be decided Tuesday, final day of the championships.

Chorkina's gold was the first here for the Russians. They were shut entirely out of the team medals, breaking a streak by the Soviet Union and its Russian successors that went back to 1954, when the Soviets won both the men's and women's team golds.

American Shannon Miller, the 1993 and 1994 women's all-round champion and 1994 gold medalist on the balance beam, has been plagued by a foot injury. After ignoring the

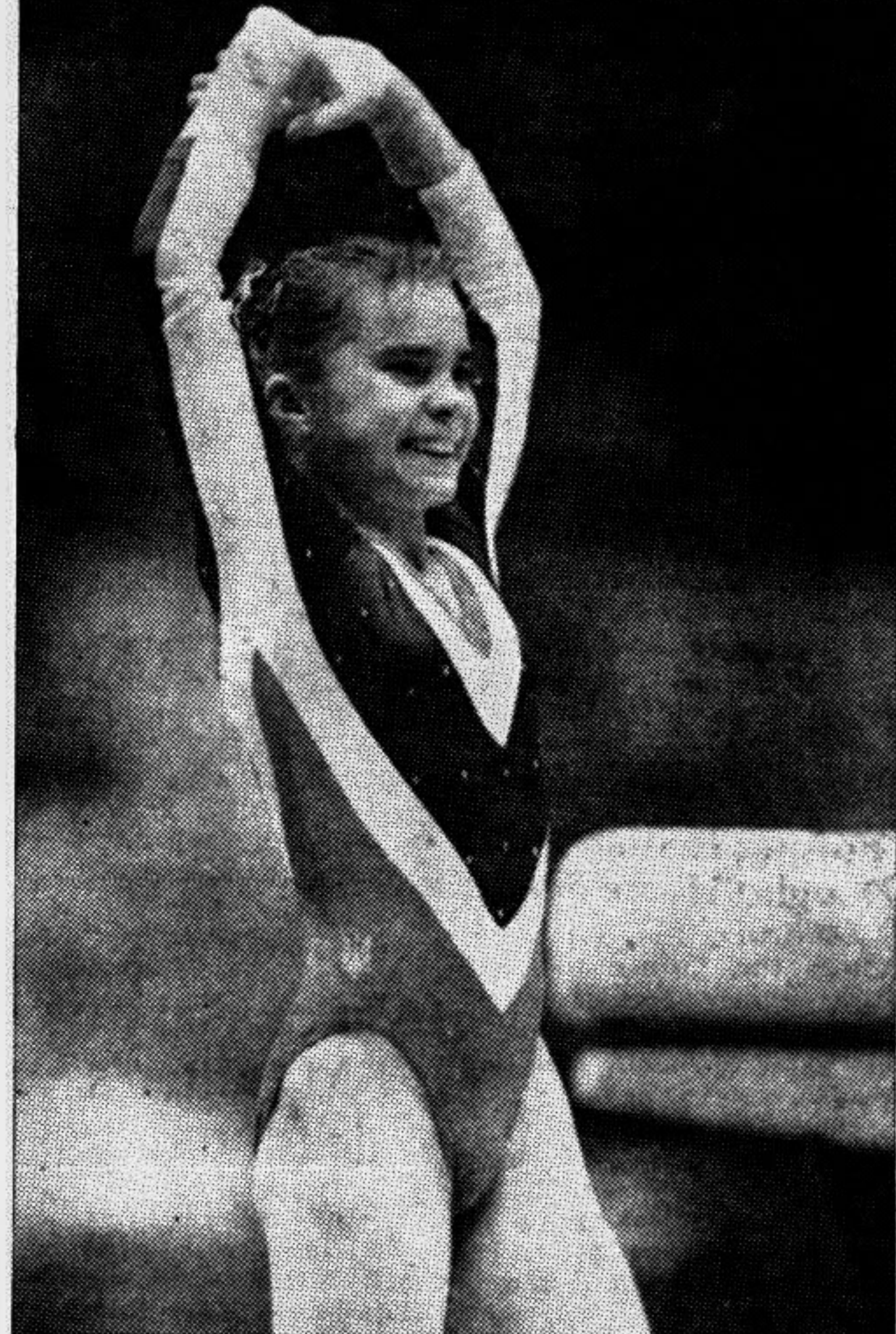
injury to help the Americans win the women's team bronze medal, she finished 12th in the all-round Sunday and seventh on the uneven bars Monday. She and Kerri Strug both pulled out of the vault with injuries, and Jaycie Phelps was eights and last on the bars.

In the vault, Amanar gave Romania another gold to go

scoring 9.812 to Li's 9.775. Grigory Misutin of Ukraine was third with 9.762.

Scherbo, the all-round silver medalist here, thus gained his 13th World Championships gold medal.

In a trio of near flawless routines on the horse, Switzerland's Li scored 9.762, while Huang and Hatakeda



Lilia Podkopyayeva of Ukraine delights at the crowd's applause after her last apparatus in the women's all-around competition at the 1995 World Gymnastics Championships in Sabae, Japan on October 8. Podkopyayeva won the event ahead of Russia's Svetlana Chorkina.

with its women's team championship. She tried a slightly more complex vault than Podkopyayeva, but Podkopyayeva was more solid and the marks came out even at 9.781. Romania's Gina Gogean, the 1994 champion, was third with 9.706.

In the men's floor exercises, Scherbo bounced from somersault to somersault as if he were made of rubber,

each had 9.737. Hatakeda gave the host nation its second silver, after a second place in the men's team event.

Italy's Chechi barely let the rings ripple through his series of handstands and strength holds, scoring 9.850. Romania's Dan Burina was second with 9.762 and Bulgaria's Jordan Jovtchev third with 9.750.

Asian shooting China emerge as Asia's best

JAKARTA, Oct 9: South Korea dominated Monday's competition by claiming five golds while China claimed one gold to wind up the 8th Asian Shooting Championships as the overwhelming champion with 21 golds, 21 silver and 7 bronzes, reports AP.

In the last day of the seven-day competition, Al Rashid of Kuwait helped his country claim its first golds by winning both the individual's and team's titles of the men's Skeet 50 Targets.

The Korean shooters controlled the women's events as Kim Seung Hee, Park Jung Yun and Kim Moon Sun won individual's gold, silver and bronze while pairing to claim the team's title.

Kazakhstan and Indonesia, the host, ended up with silver and bronze.

In the Smallbore Standard Rifle 3 Positions, Kong Hyun-ah and Weon Gyung Sook won the gold and bronze, leaving the silver to China's Zhang Qiuping. Along with teammate Cho Eung Young, Kong and Weon also won the team's title. The silver went to Zhang and teammates while the bronze was claimed by Thais Dangpram Jarintorn, Siththipong Kunwadee and Krittakorn Kanokwan.

The remaining gold for Korea came from the men's Center Fire Pistol as Park Byung Taek, Lee Ki Choon and Lee Sang Hak won the team's title. Meng Gang of China won his second gold in the event, China's only for the day, by claiming the individual's gold. The silver went to Volkhanin Vladimir of Kazakhstan and the bronze went to Korea's Park.

The victories improved South Korea's position to become second in medal standing with 10 golds, seven silvers and 12 bronzes, followed by Japan, with 2-4-5 and Kuwait, 2-0-0.

A field of 488 athletes, including 51 shooters from 28 Asian countries, took part in the championship. It was opened last Monday by Indonesia's Defense Minister Edi Sudrajat, who also is president of the Asian Shooting Federation.

First dope case in hockey

BRUSSELS, Oct 9: A German player has tested positive for cocaine in field hockey's first drugs case, the International Hockey Federation (FIH) said today, reports AP.

Oliver Kurtz tested positive for benzoyllecgonine, a metabolic of cocaine, at a pre-Olympic tournament in the United States, the Atlanta Challenge Cup on Aug 29 and was suspended from all international hockey until Aug 30, 1997.

He was suspended from club hockey until April 30, 1996.

FIH, which has run drug tests since 1968, said in a statement it did not consider the drug as a performance-enhancing substance.

Spies the doper

JOHANNESBURG, Oct 9: Javelin thrower Philip Spies was named by Athletics South Africa (ASA) today as the athlete who tested positive for banned substances last month, reports Reuter.

Spies, 25, failed a drug test after competing in the All-African invitation meeting in Johannesburg on September 23 and 24.

ASA, which reported last week and unnamed athlete had failed a dope test, said in a statement today: "Spies... has been suspended from further competition until such time as a hearing is held by ASA."

It said he had foregone the right to have the B sample tested.

Spies, who tested positive for three banned stimulants — ephedrine, methylephedrine and pseudoephedrine — told ASA he had been taking a food supplement manufactured in America.

FIFA's rebuttal

ZURICH, Oct 9: World soccer body FIFA today denied reports that it is to tighten restrictions on back-passes to the goalkeeper or chesting the ball backwards and wasting time, reports Reuter.

"There will be no rule changes before the 1998 World Cup finals," FIFA secretary-general Sepp Blatter told a news conference.

Officials said the rule-change had been discussed at a FIFA technical meeting last week.

But there were no plans to put it before FIFA's rule-making international board when it meets in Rio de Janeiro next March.

Italy's great escape act

SPLIT, Croatia, Oct 9: Italy had stand-in goalkeeper Luca Bucci sent off after just nine minutes in their European Championship Group Four qualifier against Croatia on Sunday but held on for a 1-1 draw, reports Reuter.

Bucci, called up after first choice goalkeeper Angelo Peruzzi was injured in training on Saturday, was sent off after he handled the ball at full stretch outside the area in a desperate bid to stop a bouncing shot.

Grim-faced Italy coach Arrigo Sacchi pulled off attacker Gianfranco Zola to make way for third-choice keeper Francesco Toldo, who was called up in a hurry on Saturday.

Despite the setback, the Italians took the lead in the 29th minute through midfielder Demetrio Albertini.

But Toldo completed a disastrous night for Italian goalkeepers by conceding a penalty in the 47th minute, bringing down Alen Boksic with a lunging dive with the ball beyond his grasp. Davor Suker converted the shot from the spot.

The draw meant both countries are almost certain to qualify for the Championship in England next year.

Croatia are top with 20 points with one game remaining while Italy are second on 17 points with two games left.

Italy's goal, from a thundering free-kick, was Albertini's first for his country and it hushed the crowded stadium.

But Croatia, watched by President Franjo Tudjman, came back strongly after the break.

"It was a good raw. I'm happy, they played well," Sacchi said. "Now we must

beat Lithuania or Ukraine. Otherwise we will not have a good points tally. But it's a good result."

Italy had hoped to avenge a humiliating 2-1 defeat by Croatia, many of whose star players are regulars in Italy's Serie A in Palermo earlier in the campaign.

But in the end, the draw was reward enough.

Peruzzi, watching the match from the stands, was quick to come to the defence of the hapless Bucci.

"The pitch looks in good shape but there was definitely an irregular bounce, maybe because of the wind," he said.

Florentina keeper Toldo, who became the 82nd player capped by Italy since Sacchi took over as coach, redeemed his second-half mishap with an otherwise confident performance in marshalling the Italian defence.

Americans ride on Roy

WASHINGTON, Oct 9: Roy Lassiter put aside his legal troubles and scored the winning goal Sunday as the United States rallied from a three-goal deficit to defeat Saudi Arabia 4-3 in an exhibition match, reports AP.

Lassiter, who faces a court date Monday to answer 3-year-old charges of breaking and entering and forgery, headed in Tab Ramos cross from close range in the 67th minute.

"I don't know what the outcome is going to be," the 26-year-old forward said of his court date early Monday morning in Raleigh, North Carolina. I have faith and confidence in the Lord that he'll take care of what might happen to me. I just want to go and tell my side of the story to the judge."

Lassiter, who came on as a substitute in the first half to make only his third appearance with the US team, also had the assist when he passed to Ramos for the ty-

ing goal in the 63rd minute. Defender Alexi Lalas (36th minute) and striker Joe-Max Moore (49th) also scored for the Americans, who fell behind 3-0 before the game was 30 minutes old.

US Soccer Federation officials said they believed it was the first time the US national team has rallied from three goals down to win a full international. They victory was also the latest triumph for first-year coach Steve Sampson, who earlier this year led the team to a surprising fourth place in the Copa America.

The Saudis played with more aggression than we did in the first half," Sampson said. "You can't, at this level, take that amount of time to get into a game."

The last time Lassiter scored for the United States — in a 2-1 victory over Benfica of Portugal in the Parmalat Cup in August — it caught the attention of a Raleigh police detective, who remembered the outstanding warrants against the former North Carolina State star.

Lassiter, who has spent most of the last three years playing for a First Division team in Costa Rica, was arrested and freed on \$15,000 bond, and is likely to get probation when he appears before a judge in Raleigh on Monday.

Returning to the site of their biggest World Cup victory — a 1-0 upset of Belgium — the Saudis used crisp passing around a lethargic US defence to build a 3-0 lead.

The goals came from three members of that World Cup squad — Sami Al-Jaber (8th), Fahad Mahelel (11th) and Saeed Owairan (29th). Owairan, who netted the game-winner in the Belgium game, converted a penalty after Al-Jaber was brought down by goalkeeper Brad Friedel.

The match, attended by 10,216 fans was the first on a Saudi world tour that includes a match against Mexico in Los Angeles on Wednesday, followed by two games in Japan and one in South Korea.



Australian Open champion Mary Pierce(L) and Croatian youngster Iva Majoli engage in a friendly conversation after their title-deciding match at the European indoor tennis championships in Zurich on October 8. Majoli triumphed over her illustrious opponent 6-4, 6-4, to win her first major title. — AFP/UNB photo