

Hopman Cup souped up

PERTH, Dec 29 The Hopman Cup mixed team tennis event, which starts on Sunday, has been boosted by the late inclusion of France and the United States after the withdrawal of Sweden and Ukraine, tournament organisers said today, reports Reuter.

The annual event at Perth's Burswood Resort opens with hosts Australia taking on 1992 champions Switzerland.

The American pair of Richey Reneberg and Chanda Rubin, who were only drafted into the tournament on Wednesday, open the US campaign on Monday against South Africa, while Croatia take on the French pair, Arnaud Boetsch and Catherine Tanvier.

Sweden pulled out earlier this week after former world number one Mats Wilander suffered a back injury.

Tournament director Paul McNamee said the withdrawal of Sweden and Ukraine would not lower the standard of the eight-team event.

The inclusion of the Americans and the French lifted the number of top 20 players in the tournament from 10 to 11, he added.

"It's never easy when you lose players so close to the tournament," McNamee said.

"The USA will be very competitive and Rubin is on the threshold of a great career. The Americans have very high hopes for her," according to McNamee.

The US and France have filled the last two places in Group A behind a strong Croatian team of Goran Ivanisevic and Iva Majoli and the South African pair of Wayne Ferreira and Amanda Coetzer.

Group B appears the stronger of the two groups and has three of the biggest servers in men's tennis — Richard Krajicek of the Netherlands, Switzerland's Marc Rosset and Mark Philippoussis of Australia.

Krajicek and partner Brenda Schultz-McCarthy are seeded at the top of the group, ahead of Rosset and teenage prodigy Martina Hingis.

Philippoussis and Nicole Bradtke are next in the group, ahead of defending champions Germany.

Germany earlier this year won their second Hopman Cup title in three years, although their team has now been weakened by the unavailability of world number four Boris Becker. Anke Huber will this time be joined by the lesser-known Martin Sinner.

Esiason to part ways with Jets

NEW YORK, Dec 29: Bomber Esiason said Thursday that while he would like to play "a couple more years" in the American National Football League, he doesn't want to do it with the New York Jets, reports AP.

Esiason, who has been with the Jets three seasons, said on a conference called for the CBS television network — who he works part-time as an analyst, "I just feel I have enough left to give to a team that will be competing next year, wherever that might be, and hopefully I can take them to that next level."

The 34-year-old Esiason is a free agent, and he said he doesn't want to hang around New York — fifth highest in the league — in compiling the NFL's worst record at 3-13. "I'm hoping that's not going to happen to me again, that I'll be able to pick a team that will protect me a little better," Esiason said.

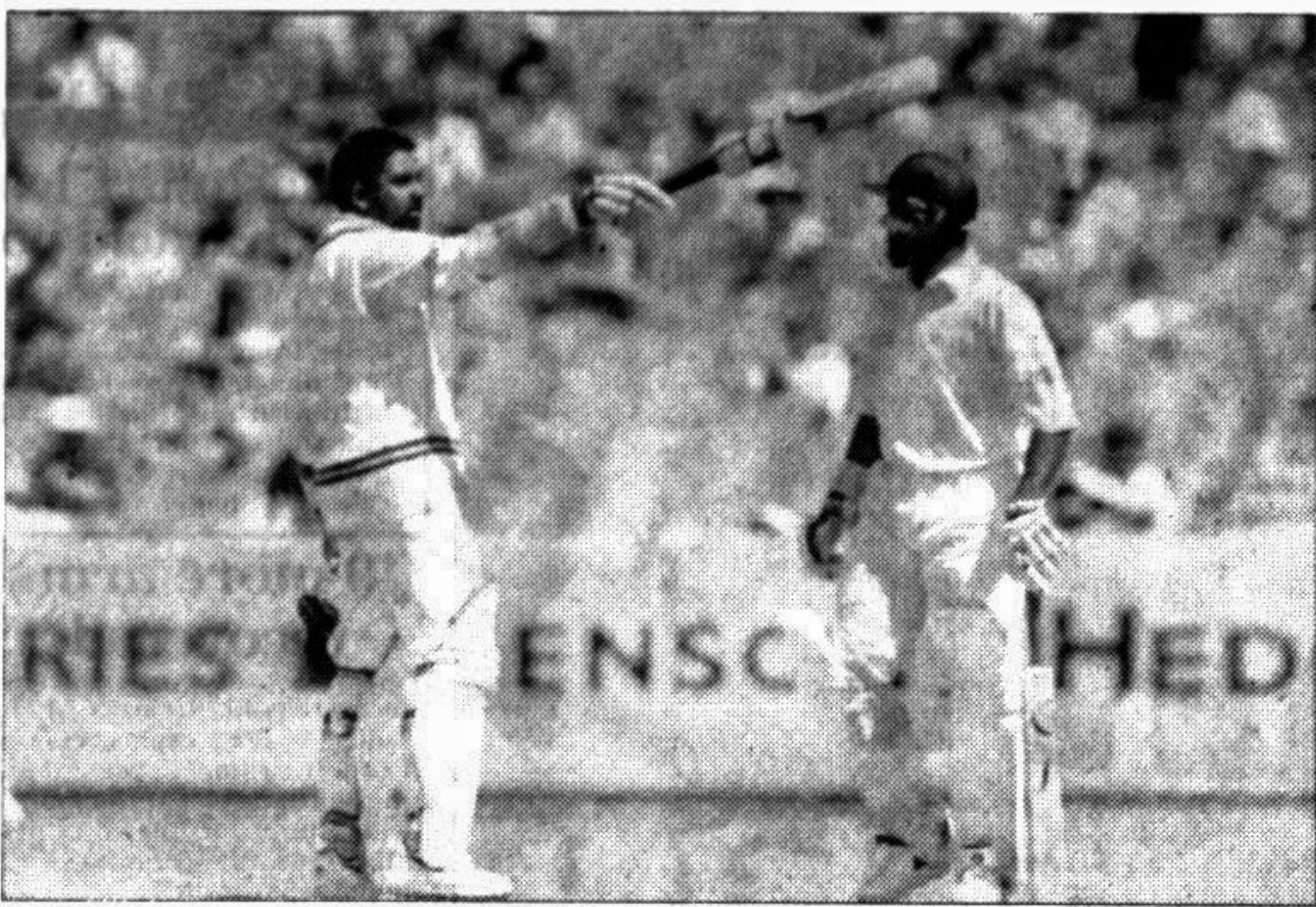
Esiason will be a roving analyst for CBS college game coverage, beginning with the Sun Bowl on Friday between Washington and Iowa. He has been projected as the next hot analyst coming out of the NFL and already has done brief stints with both the ABC and NBC television networks.

Fariello no more

NEW YORK, Dec 29: Joey Fariello, who trained several boxing champions and earlier this month sent Buster Mathis Jr in against Mike Tyson, died on Wednesday after suffering a stroke on Christmas Eve, Fariello was 58, reports Reuter.

In recent years, Fariello worked the corners of former champions Mark Breland and Junior Jones and current International Boxing Federation featherweight champion Tom Johnson.

Fariello got his start as a trainer as an assistant to the legendary Cus D'Amato — Tyson's early trainer and father figure — and helped in bouts involving former world heavyweight champion Floyd Patterson and light heavyweight title holder Jose Torres.



THE CELEBRANT: The bearded Sri Lankan batsman Asanka Gurusinha, who took his courage in both hands to bring his team out innings defeat threat against a mighty Australian, acknowledges crowds' applause after reaching the triple figures on the fourth day of the second Test at the MCG on Dec 28.

SL delay the inevitable



MELBOURNE, Dec 29: Australia gradually wore down Sri Lanka's spirited resistance today to move within sight of victory in the second Test, despite a tenacious century by Asanka Gurusinha, report agencies.

The left-handed number three frustrated Australia for seven minutes short of six hours in compiling his highest Test score of 143 to save Sri Lanka from the humiliation of a second successive innings defeat against Australia.

But with only four wickets in hand and a lead of just 17 runs, the tourists' fate appears certain on the fifth and final day tomorrow.

At the close of play at the Melbourne Cricket Ground Sri Lanka were 284 for six from 103 overs, with captain Arjuna Ranatunga, their last recognised batsman, on six alongside pace bowler Chaminda Vaas on five.

Resuming on 33 for one, Sri Lanka battled with determination to ensure Australia must at least bat again to take a winning 2-0 lead in the three-Test series.

Australian skipper Mark Taylor enforced the follow-on Thursday after paceman Glenn McGrath wrecked the visitors' first innings, bowling the Sri Lankans out for 233 with figures of 5-40.

When Gurusinha (143) was adjudged leg before wicket by New Zealand umpire Steve Dunne — his second controversial decision of the innings — Sri Lanka needed a further 12 runs to make Australia bat again.

Even a painful blow on the groin off the bowling of paceman Craig McDermott failed to unsettle the 29-year-old Gurusinha, who played a most courageous innings.

him out of the match. McDermott earlier gained some reward for an accurate spell when Aravinda de Silva edged a catch to Healy with his score on 28.

Paceman Glenn McGrath failed to add to his tally on a wicket that has gradually offered less assistance to the quick bowlers.

Australia, who scored 500 for six in their first innings, relied instead on Warne and Reiffel, who took two wickets each.

McDermott and makeshift medium-pace Mark Waugh shared the other two wickets to fall.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard on the fourth day of the second Test between Australia and Sri Lanka at the Melbourne Cricket Ground Friday:

AUSTRALIA: First innings 500 for six declared (Steve Waugh 131 not out, David Boon 110).

SRI LANKA: First innings 233 (Arjuna Ranatunga 51, Romesh Kaluwitharana 50; Glenn McGrath five for 40)

SRI LANKA: Second innings (overnight 33 for one) Mahanama c Warne b Reiffel 3; Hathurusingha lbw b Warne 39; Gurusinha lbw b Reiffel 143; De Silva c Healy b McDermott 28; Kaluwitharana st Healy b Warne 2; Tillekeratne c Ponting 38; M Waugh 38; Ranatunga not out 6; Vaas not out 5

Extras: (b-7, lb-5, nb-8) 20 Total: (for 6 wickets, 103 overs) 284

Fall of wickets: 1-11: 2-97; 2-168; 4-172; 5-255; 6-273.

To bat: Wickremasinghe, Muralitharan, S Silva.

Bowling: O M R W McDermott 17 1 54 1 McGrath 27 5 73 0 Reiffel 20 7 59 2 Warne 30 6 67 2 M Waugh 9 1 19 1

Islanders in indignation



MELBOURNE, Dec 29: Sri Lanka cricket officials are to formally request that umpire Darrell Hair does not control any of their remaining Australian tour matches after he controversially no-balled spinner Muttiah Muralitharan for allegedly throwing, the Australian newspaper reported today, reports Reuter.

Board of Control for Cricket in Sri Lanka (BCCSL) vice-president Thilanga Sumathipala was quoted as saying he would make the request to the Australian Cricket Board for Hair to be excused.

"We feel very uncomfortable with this umpire," Sumathipala told the paper.

"He is the only umpire ever to have called Muralitharan and they way it has happened makes us all very uncomfortable. I can see any reason why other umpires cannot be appointed," he was

quoted as saying. Hair, one of Australia's two representatives on the International Cricket Council's (ICC) international umpires panel, no-balled Muralitharan seven times for throwing on the first day of the second Test against Australia on Tuesday.

The 23-year-old off-spinner had never been called for unlawfully straightening his arm in the motion of bowling in his 22 previous Test appearances and 58 first-class matches.

"We feel it is only umpire Hair who has a problem with him. Muralitharan will definitely be here to the end (of the tour)," Sumathipala said.

The ICC has urged Muralitharan to take whatever corrective action is necessary to guarantee his future as a Test bowler.

But the Sri Lankans want cricket's ruling body to intervene directly to resolve once and for all the legitimacy and otherwise of his action.

"We want the ICC to em-

power a panel to make a decision on his action. If there are any areas to improve, he will improve. Otherwise we will get back to the game," he said.

"In my opinion, being the head umpire, he can't judge his hand, his foot, then the ball... unless he's a computer," Sumathipala added.

The Sri Lankans were particularly aggrieved that Hair made his ruling at the start of a Test match in front of more than 50,000 spectators at the Melbourne Cricket Ground. The Australian reported.

"If he (Hair) was so sure there was some problem then he should have let us know personally before the match," Sumathipala said.

"We will stand by the umpire's decision. That is absolutely no problem. We will not contest his decision," Sumathipala said.

"But the way he (Hair) has conducted himself is wrong. That is our feeling," he added.

New coaches for Ukrainian soccer teams

KIEV, Dec 29: The Ukrainian Football Federation has appointed new coaches for the national and Olympic soccer teams, a federation spokesman said on Thursday.

Dynamo Kiev coach Joze Sabo was named chief coach to the national side and Olexander Ishchenko from Zirka Kirovohrad will train the Olympic side, Petro Lavrynenko told Reuters.

The federation decided to replace the coaches earlier this month after the teams failed to qualify for the European and Olympic championships.

"The federation agreed on Dynamo Kiev's top coach because we've abandoned the idea of an exclusive coach for the national team," Lavrynenko said.

"It makes sense because virtually the entire national side is made up of Dynamo players."

Benfica's perfect pair

LISBON, Dec 29: After months of arduous searching and negotiations, Benfica announced Thursday they had convinced a dynamic coaching duo to get the Lisbon club back on top of Portugal's First Division, reports AP.

Brazilian Paulo Autuori, who led Botafogo to Brazil's national championship last week, will take over as coach for the 1996-97 season, while Antonio "Toni" Oliveira comes back to Benfica's Luz Stadium as sports director starting immediately.

"In this new page that opens for Benfica and for me, I will give it my all, with a fervent will to win this new challenge," Toni told a news conference after president Manuel Damasio announced his three-year contract.

It was under Toni's coaching that Benfica saw its last glory — the 1993-94 Portuguese league title.

Despite his achievement, Toni was replaced by Artur Jorge before last season in the name of "revolution" for Portugal's all-time winningest club.

Since then, Benfica has been surpassed by northern powerhouse FC Porto and cross-town rival Sporting.

But not only has Benfica been unable to impress rival clubs, they also have angered their fans with a young squad that has struggled to get coordinated.

After a disappointing three weeks early this season, angry fans surrounded club president Manuel Damasio in mid-September and asked him to sack Jorge.

Two days later, Damasio said Jorge had agreed to leave Benfica on amicable terms and veteran coach Mario Wilson was named as his replacement.

Under Wilson's unending optimism, Benfica managed league victories to keep Porto and Sporting within striking distance. After 15 rounds, Benfica are 10-3-2 with 33 points, eight off Porto and five behind Sporting.

They also made it to the third round of the UEFA Cup, where Bayern Munich eliminated the Lisbon team by an aggregate 7-2 scoreline.

And in the last few weeks, the Reds have managed to put on a show of brave and technically attractive soccer.

But the lineup is still not living up to expectations of what in theory is Portugal's biggest club — with the most fans, the largest stadium and the most league titles.

The 30 First Division crowns are nearly double the next closest club — Sporting (16).

Autuori, who announced Wednesday he was leaving Botafogo for Benfica, is expected to begin planning for the 1996-97 with Toni next month before entering the transfer market.

Even before being formally hired as sports director, Toni had travelled to Brazil to convince Autuori to take the Benfica job.

"In this moment for Benfica, I thought it was important to have someone who knows Portuguese soccer," Toni told reporters.

Autuori moved to Botafogo last summer from Portuguese club Maritimo, where he built a strong team with limited resources.

A bizarre allegation!

ABIDJAN, Dec 29: An Ivory Coast court on Thursday sentenced two journalists to two years in prison for an article suggesting that the presence of President Konan Bedie at a football match could have caused the national team to lose a key encounter, reports AFP.

In a report headlined: "He should have stayed at home" the pro-opposition daily La Voie had linked the defeat of Ivory Coast football club champions in the African Champions Cup final to Bedie's presence at the ground.

Publisher Abou Drahtine Sangare and Emmanuel Kore, a journalist, were sentenced by a court here to two years jail and fined three million CFA francs (around 6,000 dollars).

The court also closed down the paper, which is close to the opposition Ivorian Popular Front party, for three months.

'95 tells a tale of two S's



UNDATED, Dec 29: By the time his body finally gave out at the Davis Cup final in Moscow, cramped and fatigued and sore all over, Pete Sampras had put the last touches on an amazing year, reports AP.

An American championship. A third straight Wimbledon. A third US Open title. A third consecutive No. 1 ranking at year's end.

He became the first player to earn 5 million dollars in a year, the biggest money winner in tennis history with dollars 21.7 million.

Beyond all those achievements, though, Sampras revealed a depth of character perhaps more important than any of his considerable skills

tournaments, watching him go through radiation treatment. But Sampras handled the strain maturely, winning Wimbledon again at 23 and dedicating the victory to Gullikson, who watched from home.

As Sampras steered himself, so too did Steffi Graf show remarkable strength in a year she called the best of her career.

Graf didn't complete a Grand Slam, as she did in 1988. But she won every major event she played — the French, Wimbledon and the US Open — plus the WTA Tour Championship. She won 47 of 49 matches and banked 2.5 million dollars.

As dominant as she was, Graf suffered mightily all year with back and foot injuries and with a tax investigation in Germany that sent her father-manager, Peter, to jail.

"It's an incredible end to an unbelievable year," Graf said after taking the WTA title in five sets over fellow German Anke Huber. "I've definitely passed a few barriers that I didn't think I could... I went to the French and US Opens not very well prepared, not playing very many tournaments. Physically, because I haven't been able to train, I haven't been really ready."

She was as ready as she had to be to claw back from near defeat in the US Open against Monica Seles, who played brilliantly in only her second tournament since being stabbed 2 and a half years earlier by a fan of Graf.

Seles, co-ranked No. 1 with Graf, surprised herself and everyone else by winning her first event, the Canadian Open, and came within one dubious call on a serve of beating Graf in straight sets in New York. Seles served a ball she thought was an ace on set point in their first-set tie-breaker, and skipped to-

ward the sideline as if she'd won. But a linesman called it wide, and a rattled and tiring Seles wound up dropping the set and match.

The dominance of Sampras and Graf throughout the year overshadowed superb years by other players, especially Agassi and Thomas Muster.

Agassi held the ATP Tour's No. 1 spot for 30 weeks after gaining it for the first time in April. He was the tour's most consistent player until his chest injury late in the year, winning a career-high seven titles in 11 finals and finishing No. 2 for the second year in a row.

The Agassi-Sampras shuffle in the No. 1 and No. 2 spots marked the first time in the history of the ATP

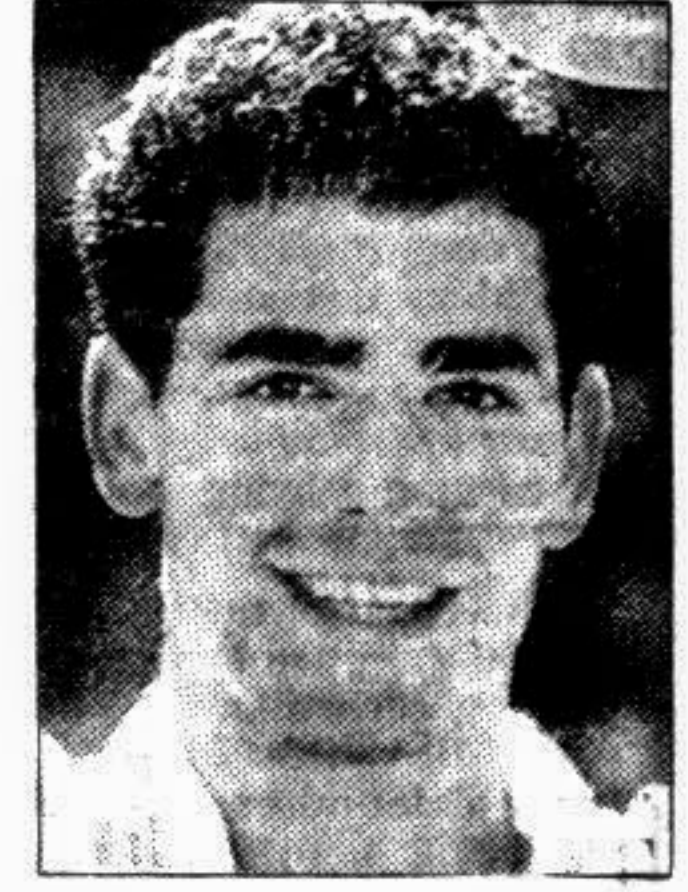


STEFFI GRAF

on court.

His year began with the devastating diagnosis in Australia that his coach and good friend, Tim Gullikson, had inoperable brain tumours. Sampras played through his tears in an emotionally wrenching match against Jim Courier and reached the final before a falling to a near-perfect Andre Agassi.

Throughout the year, Sampras shuttled to Gullikson's home in the midwestern, United States between



PETE SAMPRAS

rankings, which go back to 1973, that the top two positions were occupied by the same two players every week of the year.

On clay, no one could rival the indefatigable Muster, who notched a 40-match winning streak and moved up from No. 15 in the rankings in 1994 to No. 3 this year. Muster won a career-high 12 titles in 14 finals, highlighted by his first Grand Slam title at the French Open.

Vinnie the old villain



LONDON, Dec 29: Wimbledon midfielder Vinnie Jones, was charged by the Football Association on Thursday with bringing the game into disrepute over disparaging remarks he made about foreign players in a national newspaper, reports Reuter.

Jones, who was sent off on Tuesday, for the 11th time in his turbulent career, after a foul on Chelsea's Ruud Gullit, said in Thursday's Daily Mirror the Dutchman squealed more than two pot-bellied pigs he owns.

Jones, a Welsh international who has been criticised for his fierce tackling style, earlier accused Gullit of taking a dive so that he would get sent off during Wimbledon's 2-1 victory at

Chelsea Tuesday. "The beautiful games? What's beautiful about lying in mud and acting like a cockroach on its back. How does it feel, Ruud?"

Before his foul on Gullit, Jones had already been booked for a heavy challenge on Chelsea's Romanian right-back, Dan Petrescu.

Jones was quoted as saying in the Mirror: "There is a new noise in football — it is called the foreign squeal."

And he added during a 44-paragraph diatribe: "With the exception of Juninho and one or two others, we've been getting (foreign) players who are over the hill. Those who have arrived have come here to kill our grafters, skilled blokes who pump the heart of football."

Jones's dismissal at Stamford Bridge was his third sending-off this season.

FA spokesman Steve Double said: "All decent fans will acknowledge that overseas players have been a great benefit to the British game and generated a huge amount of interest.

"The quality of the Premier League has been enhanced by players like Dennis Bergkamp, Jurgen Klinsmann, and Ruud Gullit who have added a great deal to the game in general."

Jones, a regular Mirror columnist, has 14 days to answer the charge, which comes under the FA's rule dealing with the image of football and the conduct of players and officials, and to request a personal hearing.

If found guilty, he faces the possibility of a heavy fine and suspension on top of the automatic one-match ban he will receive for two yellow cards in the same match.

VOA VOICE OF AMERICA কুইজ প্রতিযোগিতা কুপন ১। ডয়েস অব আমেরিকা'র সদর দপ্তর কোথায়? ২। যুক্তরাষ্ট্রে মোট অর্থবাহ্যের সংখ্যা কত? ৩। ডয়েস অব আমেরিকা'র বাংলা বিভাগ কোন অনুষ্ঠানে শ্রোতাদের চিঠিপত্রের জবাব দেয়? ৪। বিল ক্লিনটন যুক্তরাষ্ট্রের কততম প্রেসিডেন্ট? ৫। ডয়েস অব আমেরিকা'র বাংলা বিভাগের সাত্ম অধিবেশন প্রতিদিন কখন আরম্ভ হয়? প্রতিযোগীর নাম: পিতার নাম: বর্তমান ঠিকানা:



Prof. M. Shahjahan, Vice-Chancellor, BUET, witnessing the march past of the BUET, annual sports competition '95 on Friday at the university's play ground. — Star photo