

**Div II cricket**  
Uttara, East End  
Udayachal win

Sports Reporter  
Uttara Sporting Club, East End Club and Udayachal Club won their respective Acme Second Division cricket league matches on Saturday.

Uttara registered a convincing seven-wicket victory over Western Cricket Club at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium while East End handed Lalbagh Union Sporting Club a six-wicket defeat at the Dhanmondi Club ground.

In the day's other match at the Mirpur Stadium, Udayachal beat Nabin Sangha by four wickets.

**BRIEFS SCORES**

**WESTERN CC:** 128 in 38 overs (Rabhu 21, Palash 19)  
**UTTARA CC:** 131 for three in 26 overs (Shafiq 45, Mridul 31)  
Result: Uttara won by seven wickets.

**LALBAGH USC:** 129 in 34.5 overs (Sumon 30, Kabir 25, Lenin 3/20)  
**EAST END CLUB:** 130 for four in 29.5 overs (Dipu 39, Nipu 20 n.o.)  
Result: East End won by six wickets.

**NABIN SANGHA:** 225 for six in 40 overs (Rupok 55, Habib 47, Rusko 42, Extras 42, Naimul 3/31)  
**UDAYACHAL CLUB:** 226 for six in 36.1 overs (Naimul 54, Sagar 53, Shanawaz 38, Shamim 31 n.o.)  
Result: Udayachal won by four wickets.

**Div II soccer**  
BRTC overcome  
Adamjee 1-0

Sports Reporter  
BRTC Sporting Club earned full points in the ongoing Sonali Bank Second Division football league when they recorded a solitary goal win over Adamjee Sporting Club at the Mirpur Stadium yesterday.

Striker Wahiduzzaman netted the all-important match winner 24 minutes into the second half.

The win raised BRTC's tally to 17 points from nine matches while Adamjee remained with 6 points from as many outings.

In the second match, Mahakkhal Eleven defeated Rayer Bazar Sporting Club 2-0.

Bibhash Barua and Maibubur Rahman scored one goal apiece for the winners which raised their points to 13 from nine matches. On the other hand, it was the seventh defeat for Rayer Bazar in nine matches which kept them on only two points.

The day's other encounter between Dhaka Wanderers and Bashabo Tarun Sangha ended in a 1-1 draw.

Alim Al-Razi put Wanderers ahead in the 6th minute while Mahmud Hossain equalised for Bashabo in the 30th minute.

This was the tenth league match for both teams from which wanderers earned 14 points while Bashabo earned 8 points.

# Boonie : Reverence for a dead-set legend



ADELAIDE, Jan 27: For a man who once interrupted an innings to have stitches inserted in his face without anaesthetic rescuing Australia again was a relatively tame experience for David Boon on Thursday, reports Reuter.

The sturdy and fiercely patriotic number three batsman has steeled Australia's top order for 12 years through a combination of raw, unflinching courage and a technique gradually shorn of unnecessary flamboyance.

In his 107th and final Test match, the 35-year-old veteran strode to the wicket at Adelaide Oval in familiar circumstances. Australia were in trouble: first wicket down and only one run on the board.

Fittingly — and as so often in the past — Boon answered the call. Thirty-eight overs after taking guard, he departed with 43 valuable runs against his name. Another crisis averted.

Former captain Allan Border, whom Boon served with such selfless loyalty for a decade, lauded his former teammate on Wednesday after hearing of his decision to retire from the international game at the end of the current Test.

"He is truly one of the great Australian players... an absolutely champion bloke. A great man to have in the dressing room and a great player to have in the middle," Border said.

"If he fired, we did well, and if he missed out, we struggled — that's how important he's been to Australia," Border added.

At Sabina Park, Kingston, five years ago, Boon's bravery defied a ferocious West

Indies attack, cementing his fearless reputation with a gutsy century.

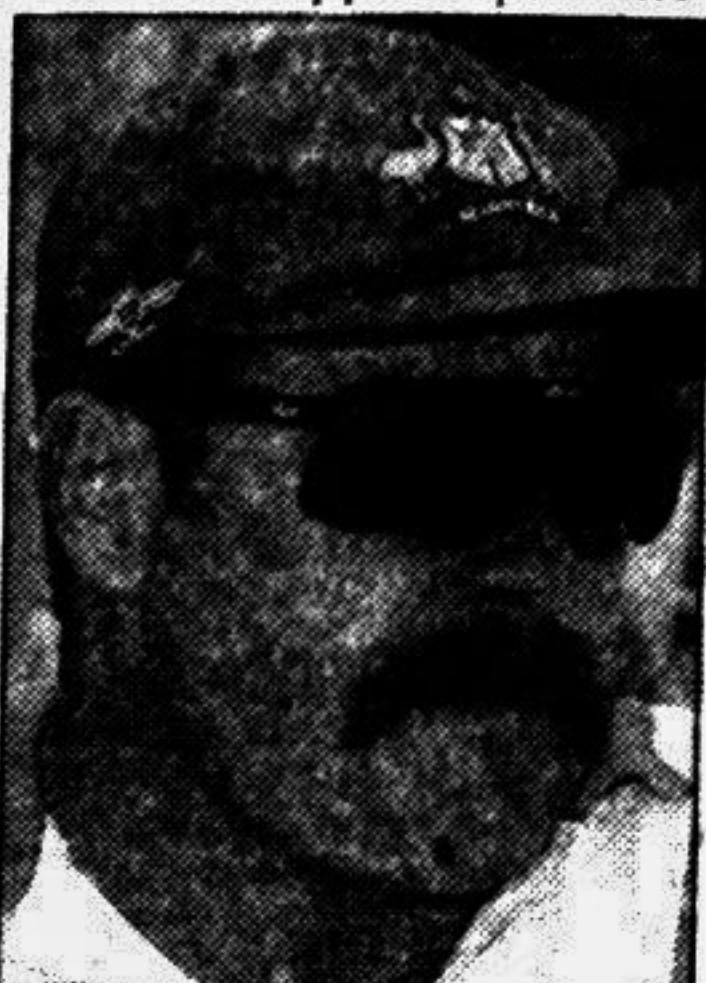
Struck in the face by a bouncer from Patrick Patterson that ripped open his chin, Boon simply refused to let pain or intimidation, blunting the West Indies threat with an inspirational innings of 109.

"He got a hundred against a pretty hostile attack and copped one on the chin but didn't even flinch," Border recalled.

"He just got some butterfly stitches put in without a painkiller and carried on batting. That showed just how tough he was — nothing ever fazed him," Border said.

During another intimidating assault in the home series against West Indies in 1992-93, Boon once returned to the crease at Adelaide Oval with his arm so badly bruised he lost feeling in his hand.

Such feats earned the chunky Tasmanian the respect and deep admiration of the Australian public, who idolised "Boonie" as a true "Aussie battler."



Former teammate and current Victoria captain Dean Jones described Boon, or "Stumpy" as he was known in the dressing room, as "one of the toughest cricketers over to pull on a baggy green cap."

Going into his farewell Test, Boon had scored 7,344 Test runs at an average of 43.71, including 21 hundreds. Only Border has scored more Test runs for Australia and only three of his compatriots have recorded more Test centuries.

Boon entered Test cricket in the 1984-85 series against West Indies with Australia's fortunes at a low ebb. Before the end of the rubber, the then captain Kim Hughes had resigned in tears after yet another defeat.

Boon, an opener for much of his Test career, provided the necessary resilience at the top of the order as Australia gradually restored their standing in world cricket.

Off the field, the seemingly shy and reserved Boon gleefully played the leading role in team celebrations. With a can of beer in hand, his voice was invariably the first to break into song.

Indeed, his exploits as a drinker came to earn him a most as much esteem among Australia's male population as his ability with the bat. He was said to have once consumed 58 cans of beer on a flight from Australia to England.

Throughout his Test career, Boon has done his job with little fanfare or fuss. So much so, Border believes, that his contribution has often been underestimated.

"They are not going to see the true value of David Boon until he's not there," Border declared.

# Cash crisis Kenya's curse

NAIROBI, Jan 27: Kenya's preparations for the cricket World Cup are in disarray because of a lack of training facilities and continuing financial disagreements, leading players said on Friday, reports Reuter.

They claimed morale in the squad was low as a result of the cash disagreements which led to a one-day walk-out on Wednesday in protest at the size of the daily allowance offered by the Kenya Cricket Association (KCA).

The players had wanted an 80, dollars allowance per day in addition to a still not agreed match fee, but KCA vice-chairman Harilal Shah said on Friday the team had finally accepted a 50 dollars daily allowance.

In addition, for every match won in the group stages, each player would be paid 10,000 shillings (172) dollars, he added.

Kenyan cricket officials have insisted they could not

pay match fees because their team was composed of amateurs, but the dispute has brought other complaints to the surface.

A top player has alleged that at least three squad members are overweight and have been included in the team purely because they are of Indian extraction.

The squad consists of eight black Kenyans and six of Indian ancestry. Team sources said the black Kenyans were threatened with "expulsion from their clubs and replacement in the national team if they did not agree to KCA terms."

"They (Kenyans of Indian extract) own our clubs. You think you will lose your livelihood if you do not agree. So, many players have signed an undertaking to play at the World Cup," said a leading team figure, who decline to be named.

Last week, team members complained about selection and said it was based on religious and racial reasons rather than form. Cricket officials denied such charges and team captain Maurice Odumbi issued a statement saying he had faith in the players.

Shah said the players agreed to KCA terms without conditions but a player said: "We were not given even a single minute to consult with one another. We were put in a 'no or yes' situation. At the end of the day we were coerced to sign the contracts."

Another player said that when the team asked for white balls which will be used at the World Cup, they were offered red balls painted white.

"The team management painted the red cricket balls white. Now, if that is not joking with our preparation, then I do not know what is," the player said.

"We have also asked for a bowling machine, which they have refused to purchase."

Kenya is in the same World Cup group as India, West Indies, Australia, Zimbabwe and Sri Lanka.

# Aussies delay departure

ADELAIDE, Jan 27: The Australian cricket team have delayed by four days their departure for the Indian sub-continent to take part in the World Cup one-day contest, reports AFP.

The delay, announced here Saturday by the Australian Cricket Board (ACB) comes in the wake of fears by players over security arrangements.

The fears have been sparked by a series of bitter incidents involving Australian and Sri Lankan players during Sri Lanka's Australian tour, now near its end.

ACB chief executive Graham Halbhush said the Australian team will now leave on February 9, instead of the

previously planned departure date of February 5.

Halbhush said ACB chairman Denis Rogers had extensive discussions with the president of the Board of Control for Cricket in Sri Lanka, ANA Panchihewa, during which the two countries had agreed to arrange a longer rest period for both teams before an arduous World Cup campaign.

Rogers said Australia and Sri Lanka agreed much progress had been made "in affirming good relations between the two countries through the willingness of both parties to talk through any issues of concern that may have arisen."

Relations reached flash-point a week ago during the second World series one-day final in Sydney.

Some Australian players were so concerned about risks of visiting Sri Lanka they spoke openly of boycotting the cup.

It was only on Tuesday, after assurances had been given by the Sri Lankan authorities, that players voted to go-provided there were not further major incidents in the current third Test being played here.

So far the Test has been conducted in a friendly spirit. The ACB said under the new itinerary, the Australian team will leave for India on February 9, arriving in Calcutta on February 10 for the opening ceremony.

The team will then travel to Colombo on February 12 to play a practice match the next day before their opening World Cup match against Sri Lanka on February 17.



Chanda Rubin of the USA (L) and Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario of Spain hold trophy after beating US pair Lindsay Davenport and Mary Joe Fernandez in the women's doubles final of the Aussie open in Melbourne yesterday. Rubin-Arantxa pair won 7-5, 2-6, 6-4. — AFP/UNB photo

# Lara ill at ease

POINTE-A-PIERRE, TRINIDAD, Jan 27: Brian Lara looked in ominous form on his return to first-class cricket on Friday, despite being upstaged initially by Barbados batsmen Philo Wallace and Roland Holder, reports Reuter.

Lara, playing his first match since his controversial decision not to tour Australia with the West Indies, gave Trinidad and Tobago a flying start in their Red Stripes Cup match against Barbados after watching the visitors reach 337 all out.

The world-record individual run-scorer had raced to 45 not out by the close, sharing a rapid unbroken second wicket stand of 79 with Phil Simmons as Trinidad finished on 130 for one.

Earlier, Wallace overlooked for the West Indies 14-man World Cup squad, had struck a century before lunch off just 91 balls with 13 fours and five sixes.

He was soon out for 108 but Roland Holder joined in the run with 138, including 23 fours and one six.

Another West Indian Test player Shivnarine Chanderpaul hit 180 not out as Guyana reached 315 for three against Jamaica in Kingston.

National skipper Richie Richardson was also in the runs with 82 for the Leeward Islands against the Windward islands.

World footballer-of-the-year George Weah has vowed to continue his international career and lead Liberia to a possible place in the 1998 World Cup finals, reports Reuter.

The Liberian captain said on Friday, the day after his team were knocked out of the African Nations Cup, he had had change of heart and would continue his career with the lone stars.

"I have changed my mind and decided to go on with the team to help them qualify for the next World Cup and the next Nations' Cup finals," he told reporters.

Earlier in the week, the AC Milan striker lashed out at his football association and government for their lack of financial support for the team.

He said he would not play international soccer again unless more support was forthcoming for the team.

Weah was philosophical about Liberia's elimination after being beaten 2-0 by Zaire in Johannesburg on Thursday.

"We are a young team and we came here to learn. Liberia is not just George Weah but a team of 11 players and we showed our inexperience."

# Weah lets things lie

JOHANNESBURG, Jan 27: World footballer-of-the-year George Weah has vowed to continue his international career and lead Liberia to a possible place in the 1998 World Cup finals, reports Reuter.

The Liberian captain said on Friday, the day after his team were knocked out of the African Nations Cup, he had had change of heart and would continue his career with the lone stars.

"I have changed my mind and decided to go on with the team to help them qualify for the next World Cup and the next Nations' Cup finals," he told reporters.

Earlier in the week, the AC Milan striker lashed out at his football association and government for their lack of financial support for the team.

He said he would not play international soccer again unless more support was forthcoming for the team.

Weah was philosophical about Liberia's elimination after being beaten 2-0 by Zaire in Johannesburg on Thursday.

"We are a young team and we came here to learn. Liberia is not just George Weah but a team of 11 players and we showed our inexperience."

# Some solace for Rubin, Arantxa

MELBOURNE, Jan 27: The two women who fought out the longest women's singles match yet seen in the Australian Open teamed up here Saturday to grab the women's doubles title, reports AFP.

Unseeded Chanda Rubin of the US and Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario of Spain beat the third seeded US pair Lindsay Davenport and Mary Joe Fernandez 7-5, 2-6, 6-4 in an exciting 2-hour 17-minute final.

On Tuesday, the two had fought out a 3-hour 33-minute singles quarterfinals which the 19-year-old Rubin won 6-4, 2-6, 16-14.

The pair embraced warmly after their victory over the fancied American team.

They came from behind to take the first set and seized the second set easily with Davenport's first serve going wild.

In the third set, Rubin's forehands and volleys broke Davenport in the fifth to give the unseeded pair a 4-1 lead.

But the experienced Davenport and Fernandez reeled off the next three games, breaking both Sanchez Vicario and Rubin, only to see Davenport lose her service when Fernandez volleyed into the net.

Leading 5-4, Sanchez Vicario served for title, but the American pair held two break points before they lost when both Fernandez and Davenport netted their shots.

The marathon clash has made the pair two of the most popular players at the Open and the Centre Court crowd cheered their win.

# Stefan's fitting farewell in Melbourne

MELBOURNE, Jan 27: Gracious as ever, Stefan Edberg bid farewell to his fans Saturday after he and Petr Korda won the Australian Open doubles championship — Edberg's ninth Grand Slam title, and Korda's first, reports AP.

They defeated Sebastien Lareau of Canada and Alex O'Brien of the United States 7-5, 7-5, 4-6, 6-1 in a thrilling 2 hours 23 minutes final at the Australian Open.

The Australian Open, which he won in 1985 and 1987, was the start of his long goodbye. He has won six Grand Slam singles titles and two doubles titles in his career.

# Monica fetches the 4th



MELBOURNE, Jan 27: All smiles on Monday, crying the next, a still-fragile Monica Seles broke down after winning her fourth Australian Open as she thought back to the stabbing that nearly ended her career, report agencies.

Three years after she won her last Grand Slam title on the same Center Court, Seles claimed her ninth major championship Saturday, 6-4, 6-1 over Germany's Anke Huber.

Seles had to overcome a plethora of recent injuries and illnesses as well as the physical and psychological scars left from the knife attack in Hamburg, Germany on April 30, 1993 — a few months after taking her third straight Australian Open.

"In 1993, I left this tournament with such a special memory," the 22-year-old Seles said, recalling a time when she played her finest tennis. "Coming back here in 1996 and doing so well in this first try has been very emotional for me."

When she held the trophy three years ago, she thought, "I'm going to hold it in '94". But that year and the next passed in therapy, and now in '96 holding it again is very special."

Seles, who won 380,000 dollars, giggled and laughed as she always did — until she was asked about returning to Hamburg. Then the memories flooded back, along with the tears, and she had trouble going on talking.

"It's very hard to go back and feel safe again," she said.

Her performance justified her status as co-No 1 with Steffi Graf, absent while she recovers from foot surgery. Seles' only loss since lurching her comeback last August came against Graf in a three-set, US Open final.

"I think right now, Steffi is the best," Seles said. "I would definitely have liked Steffi to be here, but then Steffi played a lot of Grand Slams when I wasn't there."

Seles and Huber fought hard to take control of the match early in the first set, punctuating each shot with agonised grunts as they battled it out from the baseline in sustained high-quality tennis.

Seles was the first to give Huber the first break and a 3-2 lead.

But Seles the champion bounced back in the very next game, which lasted 14 minutes, going to deuce nine times before Huber netted a forehand on her third break point.

"I was thinking this is the longest game I have ever played... I knew this game would decide a lot," Seles told reporters.

Seles was soon dominant, winning five straight games to take the first set and set up an irresistible 3-0 lead in the second to shut an in-form Huber out of the match.

Seles spotted Huber's weakness — forehands that she kept slugging long or into the net — and attacked it. Huber contributed to her won downfall, double-faulting for the third time to start the 10th game of the set, clubbing a forehand wide to go to a second break-point, and missing an easy forehand when she had an open court.

That last shot of the set by Huber clipped the net cord, popped up and fell back, and the 21-year-old German stared at it in disgust as she dropped her racket.

Seles cruised as easily through the second set as she had in nearly all her matches. The only set she lost in the tournament was in the semifinals against Chanda Rubin, a match that was more worthy of a final than this one.

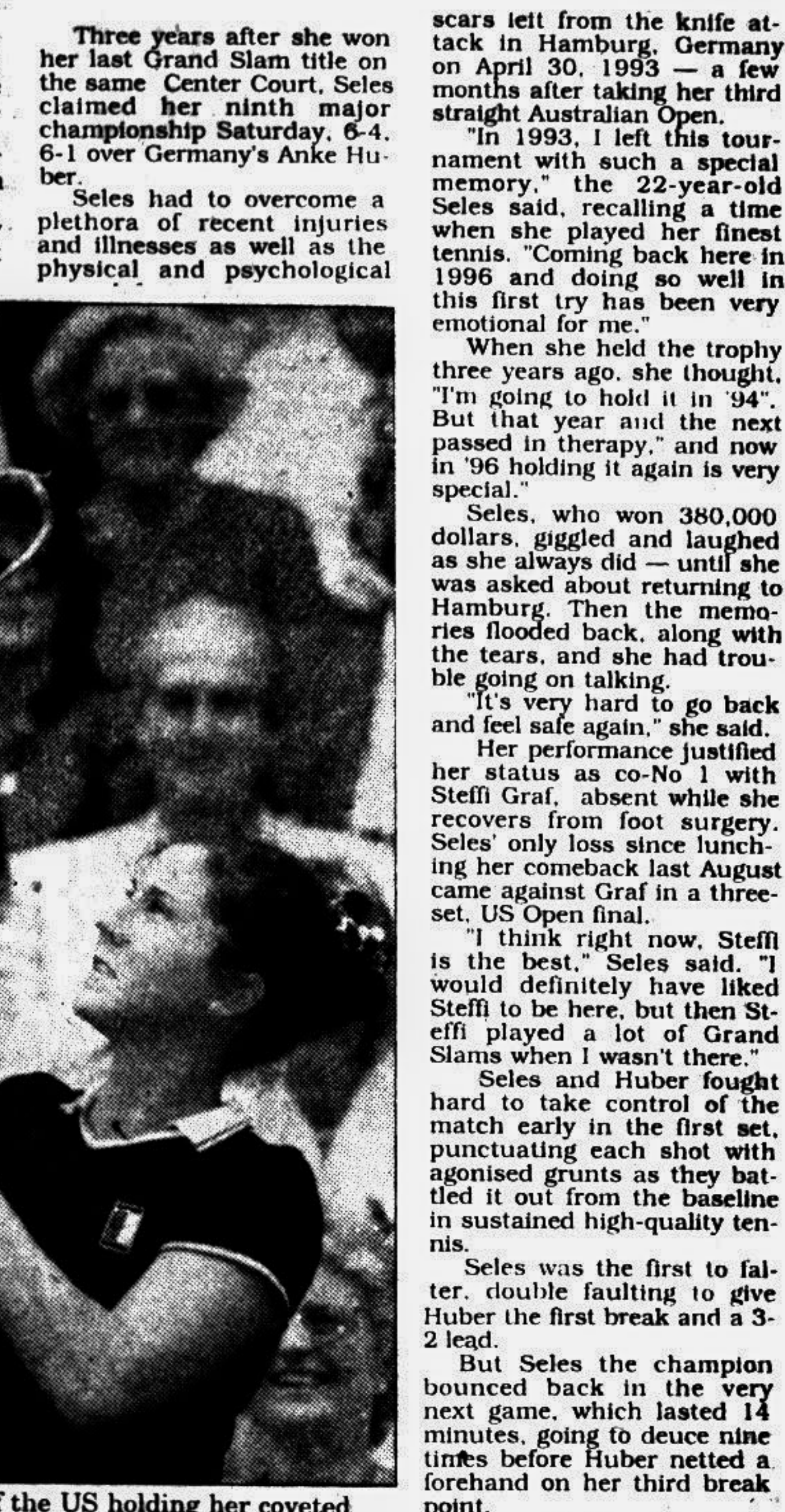
"After the first set," Huber said, "she played very, very well and just didn't miss anything anymore. I was trying, but everything went too quick."

Seles' victory over Huber, her seventh without a loss against her going back to the 1991 Australian, was more predictable than the weather. Rain threatened as gray clouds hovered above the stadium, but held off long enough to complete the match outdoors.

A giant picture of Seles covered a wall across the Yarra River from the National Tennis Center, and the message it carried was "Two Streaks Are Better Than One."

Seles had a brilliant streak going when she left tennis, and she started one again with a title in Sydney and one more Australian championship.

"In the US Open, I came close," Seles said. "It's very good to know I can still do it."



A beaming Monica Seles of the US holding her coveted trophy aloft after crushing her unseeded German counterpart Anke Huber in straight sets in the women's final of the Australian Open in Melbourne on Jan 27. Seles won her fourth title Under in Down 6-4, 6-1. — AFP/UNB photo

# Seles tames Huber

By Tawfiq Aziz Khan

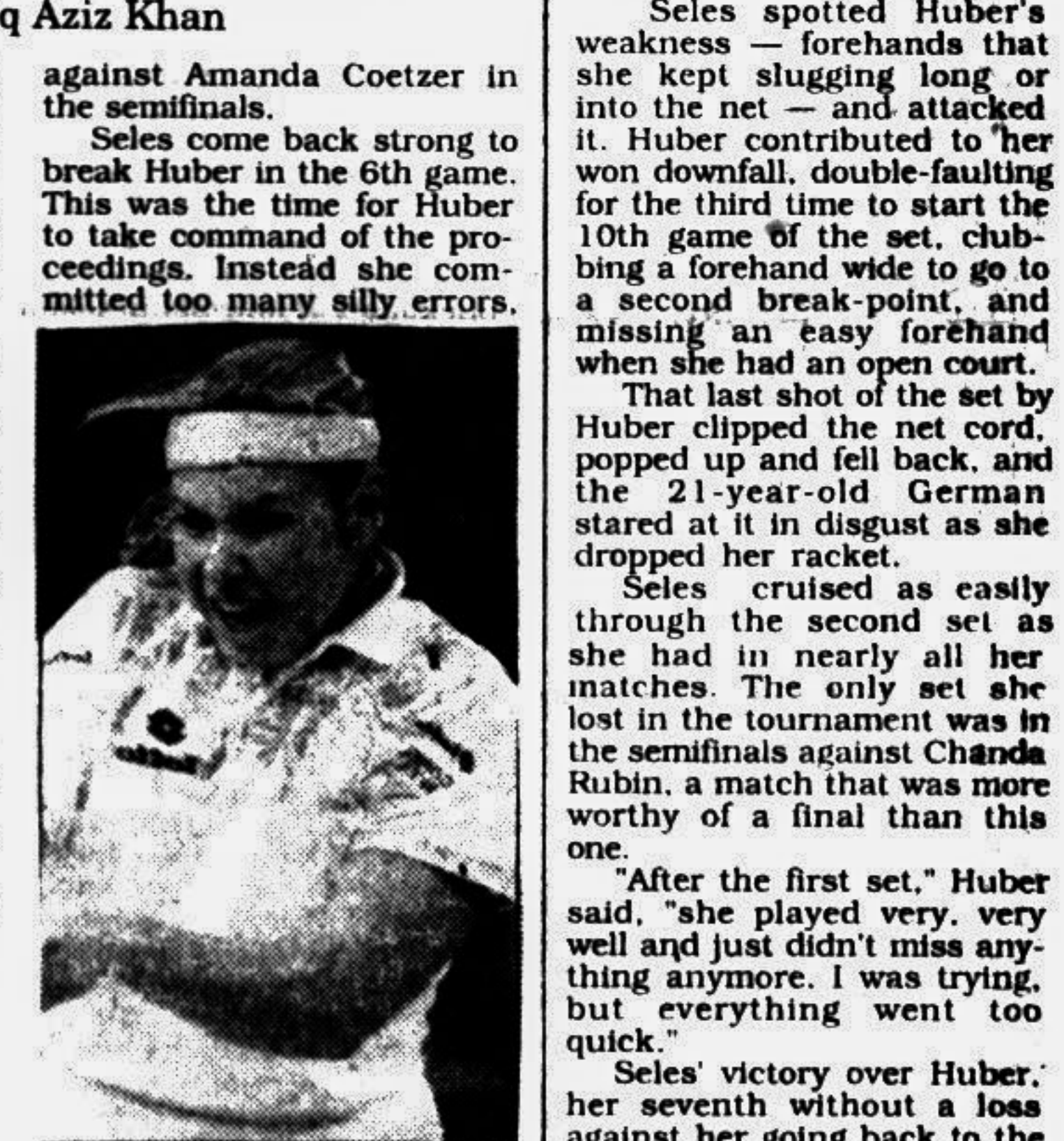
Melbourne, Jan 27: Monica Seles picked up her game from where she had left it in 1993. And with it the title for the 4th time in as many outings.

Saturday she performed amazingly to return on perfect 28 out of 28 matches in the four tournament as Nadia Comaneci scored a perfect 10 out of 10 in gymnastics at the Montreal Olympics in 1976 — the first woman to do so.

In the entire tournament Seles dropped only one set against Chanda Rubin in the semifinals. That was the match when the number one in the world had to bring out the best in her to retrieve herself for a place in the final. Despite small but nagging injuries Seles lifted her game to newer heights at moments of crisis. And as she wriggled out of the desperate situation, she proceeded to exert tremendous pressure on her less experienced opponent and successfully drove her to sheer desperation.

Anke Huber, the German challenger, playing her first Grand Slam final was visibly a little nervous, especially against an opponent like Monica Seles. In their six previous encounters Seles had a winning ratio of 6-0 and last year Seles beat her in the Canadian Open in her come-back match and then in the fourth round at the US Open.

But Huber who served sometimes at 150 km/h, faster than Seles, had the first break of serve in the 5th game. Huber had also dropped only two sets in the entire tournament — one against Conchita Martinez in the quarterfinals and another



ANKE HUBER specially with her forehand and she also started dropping her first service which was so vital in shaping the course of a game. Seles took the cue and broke Huber again the 10th game to take the set 6-4.

The second set was hardly any match. The two grunting girls were locked in fierce battles which was won by Seles 6-1 with comparative ease but not before both girls were given a "harrowing time" by — guess who, obviously the line judges with no remedy coming from the chair.

With the winners cheque, Monica was also richer by another Grand Slam title, her ninth, in 7 years.

# Clash of starving stars

MELBOURNE, Jan 27: The Australian Open men's final on Sunday will be as much a test of appetite as tennis prowess with Boris Becker and Michael Chang both hungry to taste Grand Slam success for the first time in years, reports Reuter.

Germany's Becker, the world number four, has not won a Grand Slam since his victory at Flinders Park in 1991. But Chang's drought has been even longer, with the world number five starved of a Grand Slam title for almost seven years.

Through the devoutly Christian Chang would rank God as his chief inspiration come Sunday afternoon, 28-year-old Becker made clear this week his motivation sprang mainly from a sharp desire to again savour victory at the sport's highest level.

Asked how hungry he was for his sixth Grand Slam title, the three-time Wimbledon champion and former US and Australian Open title-holder replied, "Since I haven't been eating the last couple of years, it's quite hungry."

Becker, beaten in four sets in last year's Wimbledon final

by then world number one Pete Sampras, is now playing his 12th year on the professional circuit, after finishing in the top five rankings at the end of all but two of the previous 11.

Since the birth of his son Noah in early 1994, Becker admits his lust for the game has waned as his family life has grown. But five years without a Grand Slam, and even some fatherly desire to please his son, has taken his mind back on the court.

"You cannot really play consistently over 12 years. You have some years (when) your main priority is tennis tournaments and winning them, and the other years (when) your main priority is your private life," he said after demolishing unseeded Australian Mark Woodforde in three sets in Friday's semifinals.

"In order to have a long career you have to balance them both and I did, but I knew that two-and-a-half years ago... in order to get back to my top level I had to work much harder."

Becker, his serve as lethal as ever in the year's first Grand Slam event, will have to work extremely hard to beat Chang on the diminutive American's current form.

Becker has the edge over Chang, having beaten him three times in their four previous encounters, but the fifth seed has swept all before him at Flinders Park this year, including Andre Agassi in the semifinals, without dropping a set.

The 1.73 metre (5ft 8 in) American who now sports a longer racket to enable him to better match his bigger opponents for power and reach, has evinced a quiet unshakable confidence to reach his first Grand Slam title on a non Clay surface.

# Head-on results

- MELBOURNE, Jan 27: (AFP) Head-to-head record of Australian Open men's finalists. Boris Becker and Michael Chang, to play here Sunday. Becker leads 3-1.
- 1991: Brussels (QF) Becker (7-5, 6-1)
  - 1991: French Open (QF) Becker (6-4, 6-4, 6-2)
  - 1994: Tokyo (SF) Chang (7-6, 6-2)
  - 1995: ATP Finals (F) Becker (7-6, 6-0, 7-6)