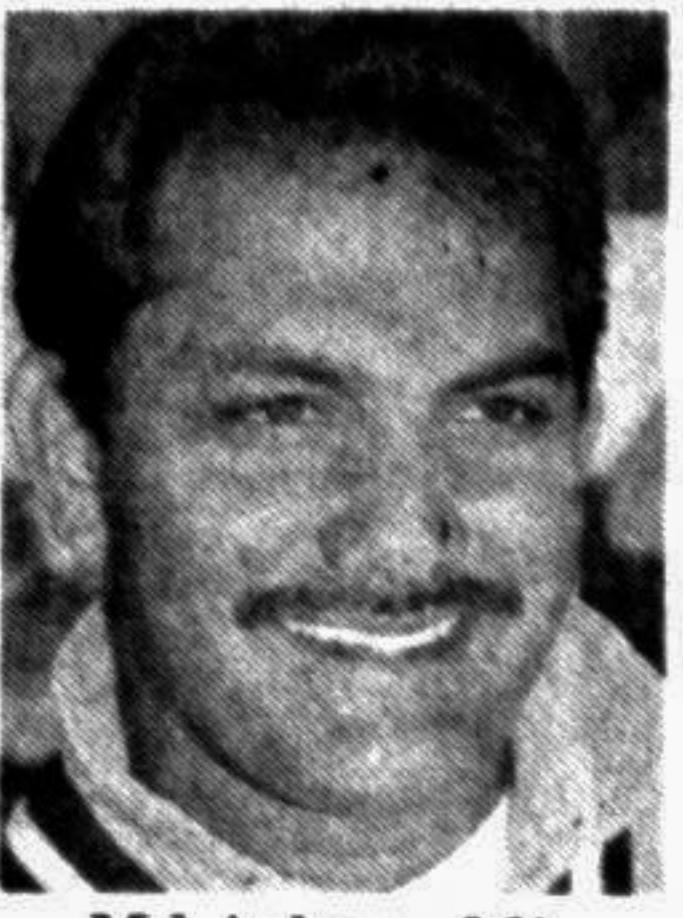


## Column One

## SPORTS TALK



Md Azharuddin

(Indian Test captain)  
They (the South Africans) were the best team on view here in Sharjah. Both the Indian and Pakistani teams can learn a lot from their dedication towards the job at hand.

While paying tribute to South Africa after losing in the Pepsi Cup final.

## DID U' KNOW?

(The Professor does)

**T**HAT because sportsmen have to do a lot of travelling to venues hosting international competitions, particularly after the advent of commercial air travel, there have been major tragedies that have evoked numbed public grief.

On February 6, 1958 the famous Manchester United football team was returning home from a European Cup tie in Yugoslavia. After a stopover in Munich their plane tried to take off in snowy conditions but plunged into fields surrounding the airport, killing forty-four people, including seven of the team. Another player died shortly after from injuries received in the crash.

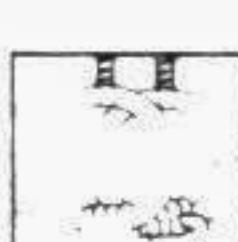
Nine years earlier, the entire Italian national football squad plus most of the famous Torino team died in an air crash. In 1961, the entire US ice skating team was killed in an air crash en route to Czechoslovakia.

Twenty years later, the entire US boxing team died in an air crash in Warsaw. Teams travelling together can get engrossed in revelry. So, one has to be extra careful, always.

## Sports

## WHIZZ KID

COMPETITION FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN



Sports WHIZZ KID competition-35

✓ Tick the Correct Answers

(Competition closes: 8 p.m. April 26, 1996)		
1	Who won the Pepsi Cup at Sharjah in 1996?	Pakistan India South Africa
2	Bayern	Match
3	Which of these is most modern?	Football Cricket Basketball
4	The swimming event combining all strokes is?	Medley Freestyle Composite
5	A healthy diet means more	Vegetarian Sweets Cereals

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: \_\_\_\_\_ Roll No: \_\_\_\_\_

School Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (if any) \_\_\_\_\_

## Zolkin Bowe's next foe

NEW ORLEANS, Louisiana, Apr 20: Riddick Bowe has come here to begin preparations for a fight within the next three months even as the jumbled heavyweight boxing world title picture becomes clearer, reports AFP.

Bowe plans to fight Russia's Alexander Zolkin in June or July. He has come here to work with nutrition expert Mackie Shilstone, who will keep the overweight fighter on a strict vegetarian diet.

Bowe has not fought since knocking out Evander Holyfield last November.

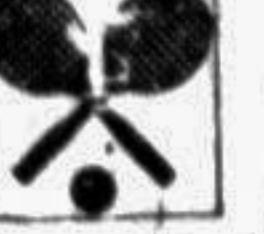
A Bowe-Zolkin bout could be on the card with World Boxing Council champion Mike Tyson's planned title fight July 13 against World Boxing Association champion Bruce Seldon in Las Vegas.

Tyson might not be able to put the WBC crown up for grabs because Britain's Lennox Lewis has won a court judgement saying he must be the next to fight for that crown.

A court has also ruled against South Africa's Farms Botha in his bid to block the International Boxing Federation from staging a title bout without him. He was stripped of the IBF title after testing positive for steroids.

The vacant IBF crown will go to the winner of a June 22 fight in Berlin between Germany's Axel Schultz and American veteran Michael Moorer, who was champion until being knocked out by George Foreman.

## Sampras survives toughie



TOKYO, Apr 20: Pete Sampras defended his world number one ranking by fending off the challenge from Mark Woodforde of Australia today to reach the final of the Japan Open, reports AFP.

The American, who regained the top spot by winning at Hong Kong last weekend, stood firm in his service games to take a 7-6(7/5), 6-4 victory over the doubles specialist.

Clay court specialist Thomas Muster of Austria, who is playing in Barcelona, would have had a chance to regain the number one ranking if Sampras had lost the semifinal.

"Each time I played him; he does give me problems, especially his change of pace from his heavy top spin forehand to hit a very low slice," Sampras said of his match against Woodforde.

"He doesn't have a big weapon, but he does everything really well, he's a crafty, good solid player, he doesn't give you a rhythm out there."

## Bad news for Pankratov

LONDON, Apr 20: World swimming times swum by European champion Denis Pankratov cannot be recognised as records because no doping controls were carried out, the International Amateur Swimming Federation (FINA) said on Wednesday, reports Reuters.

Pankratov eclipsed the short-course world marks in the 100 and 200 metres butterfly at a World Cup meeting in Paris, clocking one minute 52.34 seconds in the 200 on February 3 and 51.94 seconds in the 100 the following day.

But a FINA official, speaking by telephone from the federation's headquarters in Lausanne, said the Russian's times could not be recognised as world records because no doping controls had been carried out.

FINA decided last November in a package of anti-doping measures that doping controls should be carried out within 24 hours for a world record to be officially recognised.

Pankratov broke the long-course 100 and 200 metres butterfly records last year and is strong favourite to win both events at the Atlanta Olympics in July.

The short-course 100 butterfly world record remains with Canada's Marcel Gery (52.07) and the 200 butterfly with Frenchman Franck Esposito (1:53.05).

Woodforde won two points on Sampras' serve in the crucial tie-breaker to lead 5-4, but the American broke back on the following two points and took the set with a free point on his serve.

"It was a big moment in the match," Sampras said of the tie-breaker. "The big point was the first point. He hit a couple of overheads that he could have got up an early mini-break, and he did give me a gift on the set point. He missed an easy return."

The Australian tenaciously staved off five break points throughout the match, but Sampras used his hard-hit forehand to force Woodforde a backhand error to score the only break in the seventh game and held onto the victory.

Richey Reneberg, who upset fellow American Michael Chang in the quarter-finals Friday, made it an all-American final beating Hendrik Dreekmann of Germany 6-3, 6-4, 7-6(7/9), 6-1.

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World No 1 Pete Sampras of the United States stretches for the ball during his quarterfinal match against Frenchman Guy Forget in the Japan Open in Tokyo on April 19. Sampras won 3-6, 6-3, 6-4.

## Malivai makes the big league

HAMILTON, Bermuda, Apr 20: Top-seeded Malivai Washington reached his first ATP semi-final of the year when he beat qualifier Bill Behrens 6-3, 6-4 here Friday in an all-American showdown at the ATP Bermuda Open, reports AFP.

Behrens, rated 707th in the world, rallied in three qualifying matches and survived cramps just to make the main draw. He then ousted eighth-seeded Scott Draper of Australia and Swedish Davis Cup player Jan Apell in his first ever ATP Tour triumphs.

Washington now faces another newcomer and qualifier — Mariano Zabaleta, the world's top-ranked junior player last year.

Zabaleta of Argentina beat Germany's Dirk Dier 7-6(7/4), 6-2 to reach the semifinal.

Zabaleta, 18 and the youngest player at the event, has yet to drop a set in the 305,000-dollar event, which plays the champion 43,000 dollars.

Uruguay's Marcelo Philippini also advanced to the last four when he ousted sixth-seeded Vincent Spadea of the United States 6-4, 3-6, 6-4. He is now one match away from an eighth career final — the first since last May in Bologna.

ATLANTA, Apr 20: The Olympic torch relay will bypass a suburban county that adopted an anti-gay resolution three years ago, organisers announced Friday, reports AP.

Gay rights activists had threatened demonstrations if Cobb County was included in the torch relay, which begins in Los Angeles on April 27 and concludes in Atlanta on July 19.

"It is our goal to make the torch relay an exciting and memorable experience. We want to focus on the excitement of the event and not be distracted by other issues," the Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games said in a statement.

In 1994, ACOG pulled Olympic volleyball competition out of Cobb County because of a furor over the resolution.

Cobb commissioners have refused to rescind the 1993 resolution, which says "lifestyles advocated by the gay community ... are incompatible with the standards to which this community subscribes."

Bill Byrne, chairman of the country commission, did not immediately return a telephone call seeking comment Friday.

John-Ivan Weaver, co-chairman of the activist group Olympic Out of Cobb, said, "We have worked hard to make sure they uphold the Olympic ideals. Cobb County is not a place that deserves the Olympics."

Most of the torch's route has been announced over the past few months, but the final leg in metropolitan Atlanta was not mapped out in Friday's announcement.

On Thursday, Portuondo qualified second for Friday's vault finals behind reigning world champion Simona Amanar of Romania. Portuondo's teammate, Yureidis Bermudez Leyva, finished in eighth place on Friday.

Portuondo, a silver medalist in the balance beam and a bronze medalist in the vault

to Atlanta," Sanson said. "Forget about Anita. What if a gymnast was injured? What if there was any situation that came up? I don't think the system is very fair."

On Thursday, Portuondo qualified second for Friday's vault finals behind reigning world champion Simona Amanar of Romania. Portuondo's teammate, Yureidis Bermudez Leyva, finished in eighth place on Friday.

In a way, Portuondo, like the rest of Cuba's women's team, feels cheated — like an innocent victim of her country's political and economic situation.

"We didn't have enough money to send her to the 1995 World Championships, hence, should couldn't qualify for the Olympics," her coach Rene Sanson said as he consoled his student. "We don't have a lot of money for a lot things so when it came to choose who was going to go to Japan, two gymnasts from the men's team went."

Date, unseeded with fellow Japanese Ai Sugiyama, defeated the second-seeded American pair of Frazier and Kimberly Po 7-6 (8/6), 6-7 (6/8), 6-3, to win the 9,000-dollar first prize.

In a country where sports is a priority, gymnastics in general — let alone women's gymnastics — has had to take a back seat to baseball, volleyball and boxing.

The Cuban Ministry of Sports has slashed its operating budget each year since that country hosted the 1991 Pan American Games. Jose Fernandez, Cuba's Minister of Sports, said in a recent visit to Puerto Rico.

Earlier in the day, Frazier defeated Japan's Naoko Kijimuta 6-3, 6-7 (7/9), 6-1 in the semifinals.

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