

Column One

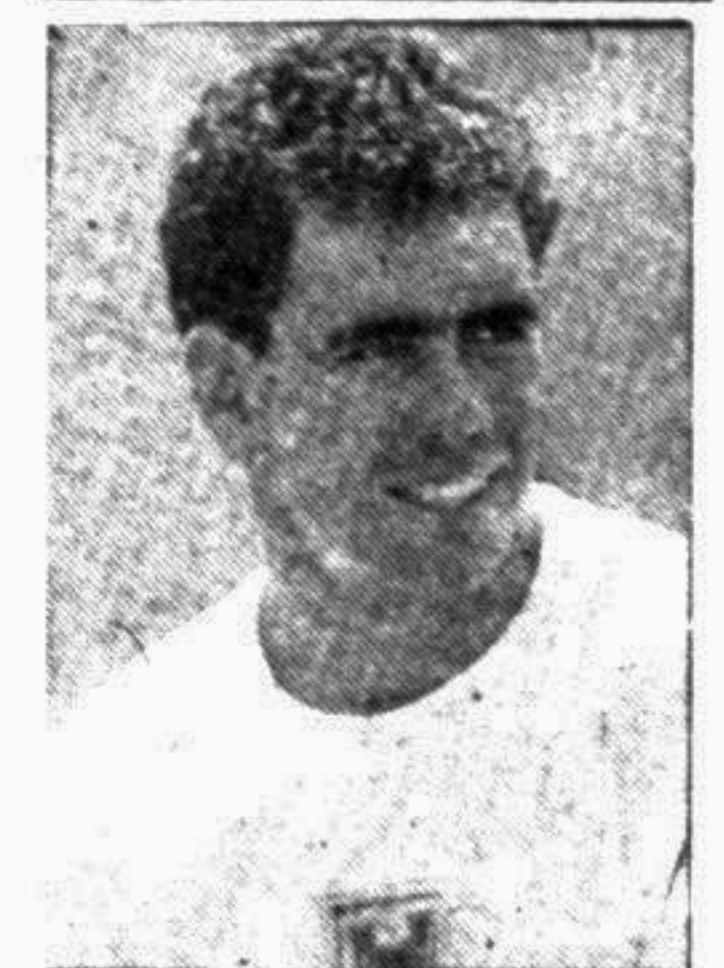
DID U' KNOW?

(The Professor does)

THAT when I think of the gate rush at any big match anywhere, I feel like being a Cuban. I can't believe it but, in Cuba, all entrance charges to sporting events were abolished in 1967. Even the football cup final is free to everyone, with spectators being allocated tickets purely on a 'first come, first served' basis.

Now, let's see, what is that much free in Bangladesh? Ah! got it! Tattoo show. Don't miss it.

SPORTS TALK



Hansie Cronje
(South African captain)
It's nice to win a tournament in our first appearance at Sharjah. The mistake of being a bit complacent in the World Cup was learnt well.

After winning the Pepsi Cup tournament in Sharjah

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--	Hibernia	Munich	Fine
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	vegetables	meats	cereals

Name: _____
Class: _____ Roll No: _____
School Address: _____
Phone: (if any) _____

Bosnia to get a taste of int'l soccer

TIRANA, Apr 24: Albania's national soccer team headed for Bosnia on Tuesday for the first international match to be staged in the former Yugoslav republic, reports Reuters.

The Albanian team were scheduled to play a visit to Sarajevo before playing the friendly in the mainly Muslim town of Zenica, northwest of the Bosnian capital, on Wednesday.

"It's a pleasure for us to go there at a time when calmness seems to have been established in this war-torn country," Albanian soccer official Gjergj Thaka said.

Thaka said the Bosnian government had given guarantees for the security of the 18 players and accompanying Albanian soccer association officials.

"At the moment we have nothing to fear by going to Bosnia," he added.

The two teams first met in November last year in a friendly in Tirana when Albania won 2-0.

The return match is being held in Zenica as conditions in the stadium in Sarajevo were not considered up to scratch after more than three years of shelling by separatist Bosnian Serbs.

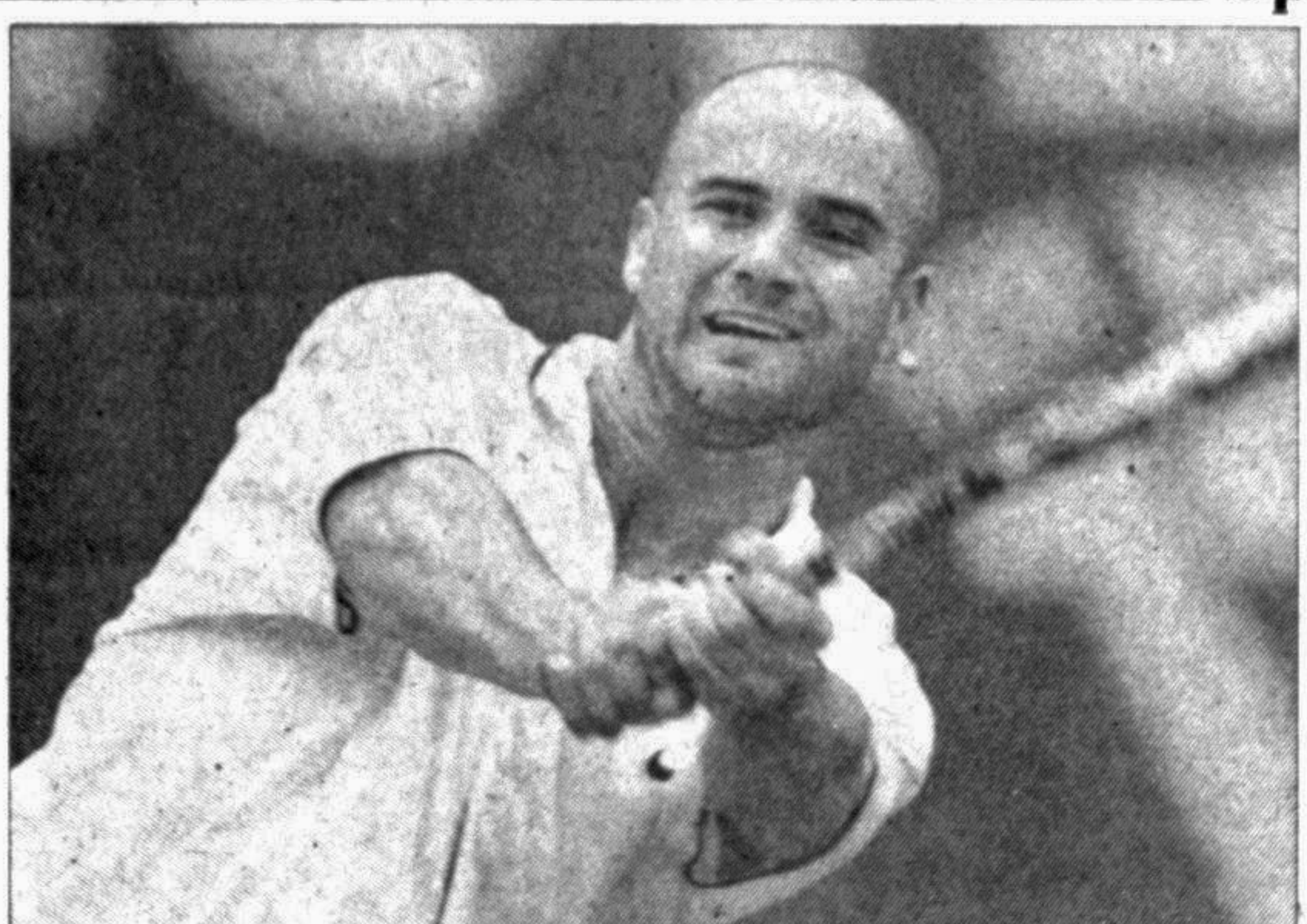
The match is a further sign that life is slowly beginning to return to normal following a Bosnia peace deal signed by Balkan leaders last year.

It is also considered a good test for Albania ahead of World Cup qualifying matches later this year. They are in European Group Nine with Germany, Portugal, Northern Ireland, Ukraine and Armenia.

Bosnia are preparing for their first international soccer competition. They will be vying for a place in the 1998 World Cup finals in European Group One with Denmark, Greece and fellow former Yugoslav republic Croatia and Slovenia.

Army basketball

Savar Area became champions in the annual Bangladesh Army basketball championship which concluded at the Mirpur Cantonment yesterday, reports BSS.



World No-3 Andre Agassi of USA executes a backhand against Dutchman Jan Siemerink during their second round encounter of the Monte Carlo Open in Monaco on Apr 23. Agassi won the rain interrupted match 6-2, 6-3. —AFP/UNB photo

Top seeds in topsyturvy

MONTE CARLO, Monaco, Apr 24: Thomas Muster opened defense of his Monte Carlo Open title with a 7-5, 6-4 victory over Tomas Carbonell in the 2.2 million dollars tournament but four seeded players were eliminated in early second-round matches Wednesday, report agencies.

It was musters 31st consecutive win on clay. He has won six tournaments on clay in a row, three this year.

After the rains of Tuesday, Wednesday started out sunny enabling the organisers to catch up with 15 second-round matches set.

Later Wednesday, Boris Becker is scheduled to meet David Rikl and Michael Chang is against Carlos Costa.

Four seeded players were knocked out of the tournament early Wednesday.

Magnus Gustafsson of Sweden defeated fifth-seeded Goran Ivanisevic 6-2, 6-2. Ivanisevic had just played one match since having to drop out of the Lipton final against Andre Agassi with a neck injury last month.

Cedric Pioline of France beat sixth-seeded Yevgeny Kafelnikov of Russia, 6-4, 6-3. It was Kafelnikov's third straight loss on clay after getting into two indoor finals in March.

Fabrice Santoro, once a rising French prospect and now 117th in the rankings, upset the top-ranked French player, Arnaud Boetsch, 11th-seeded and 12th-ranked, 7-5, 1-6, 7-6, (7-3) after wasting a 5-1 lead in the third set.

Sjeng Schalken of the Netherlands also ousted seventh-seeded Thomas Enqvist of Sweden, 3-6, 6-3, 6-3.

Muster meets the winner of the match between Herman Gumeny of Argentina and Alberto Costa of Spain next.

Muster was happy to get some play in against Carbonell. "I had two days off. I just came from Barcelona and the first day was awful windy, which is very hard to practice

normal and get a feel for the ball. Yesterday we had mud all day," Muster said. "I was happy to play on centre court and get used to it."

While Andre Agassi adapted his game to clay and rainy conditions to win his first ever singles match at the Monte Carlo tennis tournament at the expense of Dutchman Jan Siemerink 6-2, 6-3.

The American world number three, playing his first match of the season on clay, was far too consistent for Siemerink, whose powerful serve was not an efficient weapon on a surface made heavier and slower by rain.

Although Siemerink was ranked 24th in the world, he did not give Agassi much of a contest on the wet clay. Agassi was hammering back returns and kept him guessing when Siemerink charged to the net.

Agassi knew how to handle the rain delays.

"You have to stay focused and maintain your concentration," he said. "It's very difficult because (the conditions) are very heavy and I think that helped me a little bit today."

Agassi, seeded second, had a first-round bye. In Agassi's other two outings at Monte Carlo, he lost in his first match to Horst Skoff in 1991 and Yevgeny Kafelnikov in 1994.

It took the balding American just over an hour and two breaks in each set to finish off the Dutchman, who saved a match point on a dropshot before losing with an unforced error.

The win also boosted his hopes on clay this season, looking forward to the French Open.

"I did a lot better than in the past here and now I hope to get the win I deserve. To come up with a win would be ideal for Roland Garros," he said.

Agassi, who was ill after Key Biscayne and had to withdraw from the Barcelona tournament last week, will be especially eager to settle scores with Austria's Thomas Muster, the top seed the title holder here.

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Jennifer to join US Fed Cup squad

WHITE PLAINS, New York, Apr 24: Jennifer Capriati, on the comeback trail after a two-year absence from the tour, was named Tuesday to replace Lindsay Davenport on the US team for this week's Fed Cup tie against Austria, reports Reuters.

Davenport was sidelined by a left wrist injury. In addition, Chanda Rubin also was forced to withdraw from the US team due to a right wrist injury.

Capriati joins Mary Joe Fernandez and Gigi Fernandez on the US team that plays Austria on Saturday and Sunday in Salzburg.

The 20-year-old Capriati, who ran a foul of the law and spent time in drug rehabilitation programmes during her absence from competitive tennis, played Fed Cup in 1990 and 1991, compiling a 9-1 singles record.

Capriati won the 1992 Olympic gold by defeating St. effi Graf in the final and ranked in the top 10 in the world from 1990-1993.

Tyson being wise guy

COLUMBUS, Ohio, Apr 24: Boxer Mike Tyson has agreed to abide by new orders from probation authorities to stay out of bars and nightclubs, his probation officers said on Tuesday, reports Reuters.

Tyson was told to stay away from establishments that serve alcohol or feature erotic entertainment such as his visit to a Chicago dance club two weeks ago that resulted in allegations he sexually molested a beautiful woman.

Tyson is awaiting word at his Southfield, Ohio home from Chicago authorities on possible charges related to the encounter on April 8 in which Ladonna August, 25, charged that Tyson touched and fondled her and "sucked" her cheek when she was jailed to a private room at the club.

Tyson aides and managers at the club, the Clique, have denied anything untoward happened to the Gary, Indiana, woman.

The World Boxing Council heavyweight champion, who is on probation from a 1992 rape conviction in Indiana, is under tight travel restrictions pending the outcome of the case.

He can leave Ohio only to attend family emergencies or approved business affairs, which could include a prize fight.

Spurs join the new trend

LONDON, Apr 24: English Premier league club Tottenham has slashed the valuation of its own players by a third in the wake of the Bosman ruling over transfers, reports Reuters.

The club said in its balance sheet published today it had cut 6.8 million pounds (10.3 million dollars) from the previous 20.3 million pounds (30.7 million dollars) valuation.

In a case brought by Belgian soccer player Jean-Marc Bosman last year, the European Court of Justice ruled that at the end of his contract a player could move to a new club without his current club being able to demand a transfer fee.

"In the board's view, the Bosman ruling impacts upon the existing carry value of the players," the club said.

"This adjustment reflects the board's assessment of the permanent diminution in value that the ruling potentially causes and would be dealt with as a one-off exceptional charge to the current year's profit and loss account," it added.

Tottenham said that as a consequence of the Bosman ruling, the balance sheet values of players would be written off fully over the remaining period of their contracts.

The 28 members of its playing staff of 45 who have been developed through the club's youth policy would continue to be carried at zero value for accounts purposes, it said.

Romania preening for princess



BUCHAREST, Apr 24 (Reuters): Twenty years since she dazzled the world as a tiny teenage gymnast with the first Olympic 'perfect 10' Nadia Comaneci still has star quality.

Her return to Romania this week to marry American double Olympic gold medalist Baret Conner is just about the biggest events the country has seen since the 1989 revolution.

The 34-year-old bride will wear a flowing white gown, appliqued with real pearls. Its 21-foot (six-metre) train will be carried by seven tiny modern-day Romanian gymnasts.

"It's going to be just like Ol' gushed one of her publicists, comparing the wedding to that of Britain's Prince and Princess of Wales.

In Romania Comaneci is the next best thing to royalty. In a country short on glamour and even shorter on contemporary heroes, Nadia, as she is universally known, is adored.

She is also appreciated, as in the past, by the country's ruling elite. President Ion Iliescu will host her wedding reception at his palace. She is staying at the hotel of one of the country's most powerful business families.

Like a child movie star remembered only for one film, Nadia has managed to turn a moment of brilliance at the 1976 Montreal Olympics into a profitable international career.

"She took her opportunity and she made it golden. From that moment nobody could beat her," her mentor and coach Bela Karolyi writes in his memoir "Feel no fear."

But it has been achieved at great personal cost.

She became the plaything of the Ceausescu regime, linked to his philanthropic son Nicu and trotted out for command performances whenever the communist party needed her.

Comaneci's defection in 1989 just days before communist dictator Nicolae Ceausescu was toppled was badly timed and led her into years of misery from which she is only now emerging.

She says her lover-manager Constantin Panait with whom she escaped to Hungary treated her badly.

In what sounds like a script for a television soap opera but for her is real life, she says 38-year-old Conner rescued her, giving her the confidence to leave an abusive relationship, lose weight and get herself on her feet again, confidants and purposeful.

Unlike the other men in her life, "Bart didn't want anything in exchange for helping me," she said in an interview. They met at the 1976

olympics.

An expert at self-promotion, Comaneci knows how to touch the heart strings of nationalistic and conservative Romanians. In a recent interview she spoke of keeping on a strict diet herself, but of cooking Romania's stodgy staples for Conner. "I cook, but not for me," for Bart who loves the Romanian dishes like the sarmale filled with Turkey and Zacusca. In abstain."

Comaneci, who says she now weighs 51 kg (112 lb), can still cut a dash on the gymnastics arena.

When she came home in 1994 for the first time since she defected, she enthralled an audience of 5,000 at a Bucharest stadium. Wearing a high-cut crimson crushed velvet deeply scalloped and sequined at the cleavage, Comaneci swapped sprightliness for sultriness in a slow floor exercise.

She won huge applause for exercises less strenuous than the warm-up of the child gymnasts who preceded her and finished with the same up-toed, cheeky pose which charmed audiences in 1977.

It will always be those moments in Montreal, where she netted three golds, that define the world's image of her.

"That's when Nadia stepped up to the bars and changed history," Karolyi writes. "She flew between the bars, literally sailed through the air, with a flair and extension that had never before been seen. When she executed her dismount she landed like a stone. All hell broke loose in that arena."

The Montreal scoreboard was not designed to register a 10 and her score came up as a 10. Nadia had to ask Karolyi: "Sri, is that really a 10?" "You bet it is, Nadia," answered. "Oh, my god," she whispered.

Even at 14 she led the rest of the child gymnasts created from Karolyi's hot-house clinic, still the backbone of modern Romanian gymnastics and still producing world champions.

"The big responsibility always fell on Nadia," Karolyi writes of a harrowing including in the 1979 World Champi-

stereotyped image of the country.

In a continent where soccer competitions often have been widely complicated rules, the format is simple: The nine countries meet each other home and away with the top four qualifying for the finals in France and the five others facing the vitriolic criticism, often bordering on hatred, which awaits soccer players when they fall in South America.

With so much at stake things can boil over. South American qualifiers tended to be violent, crowds are hostile, the pressures on referees are enormous and emotions can go well beyond the confines of the stadium.

So much bad feeling was created by a Chile-Brazil game in 1989 that when Chile came to Rio de Janeiro for the return, most hotel owners refused to accommodate them.

During the match itself a firework was thrown from the crowd and landed near Chile goalkeeper Roberto Rojas. He collapsed and was carried off on a stretcher while his teammates, 1-0 down, abandoned the pitch.

FIFA, soccer's governing body, later judged that Rojas had been playing-acting, banned him for life and Chile from the 1994 qualifiers.

The entire Bolivian nation is currently indignant about a possible ban on matches in La Paz because of its high altitude. The city stands 3,600 metres above sea level in the Andes mountains.

FIFA is due to decide La Paz's fate on May 31. The country's president Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada has joined the campaign to keep the capital as a venue.

Bolivia coach Dusan Draskovic has more immediate

onships in Texas when he drove her to perform despite stitches in a cut in her hand, blood clearly visible through a bandage.

Comaneci apparently still has that kind of determination, the will power which enabled her to turn her life around.

She and Conner have built a substantial promotional and gymnastics business at their home in Oklahoma and are cranking up sponsorship deals and work for the Atlanta Olympics.

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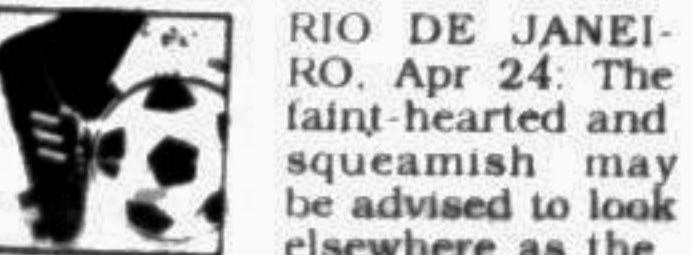
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S American ogres lock horns



RIO DE JANEIRO, Apr 24: The faint-hearted and squeamish may be advised to look elsewhere as the South American World Cup qualifying competition gets under way Wednesday, reports Reuters.

Nine South American nations are fighting for a place at the 1998 World Cup finals in a long contest in which national hero status awaits the teams that succeed while ignominy and disgrace are the price for those that fail.

On the day Europe's World Cup campaign kicks off with games in Athens (Greece v Slovenia), Belgrade (Yugoslavia v Faroe Islands) and Skopje (Macedonia v Liechtenstein), the South American battle commences with four fixtures.

Argentina, twice world champions, are at home to Bolivia, 1994 flops Colombia entertain Paraguay, the hard men of Uruguay visit minnows Venezuela while Ecuador and Peru, who fought a war last year, meet in Guayaquil. Chile have the night off an mighty Brazil qualify automatically as holders.

Qualification for the World Cup is desperately important in South America.

For many players it offers the only real chance to perform on a worldwide stage while for their countries, who complain that most of the little publicity they get is negative, the World Cup is also a rare opportunity to appear in the spotlight.

Colombia coach Francisco Maturana, now in charge of Ecuador, said before the 1994 World Cup finals that it was a chance to show the world that Colombia had more to offer than just drug traffickers and guerrillas, who constitute the

worries for Wednesday's tough opener in the River Plate stadium.

Oraskovic says his top player Marco Etcheverry is not match-fit while striker Erwin Sanchez, who plays for Portuguese club Boavista, has been banned from playing until a doping case is cleared up.

Sanchez tested positive for caffeine in January but argued it was because of Cola he drank after the game. He is suspended until the case is cleared up.

Argentina coach Daniel Passarella has recalled striker Claudio Caniggia, who has not played for his country since the 1994 World Cup, but has overlooked his old foe Diego Maradona.

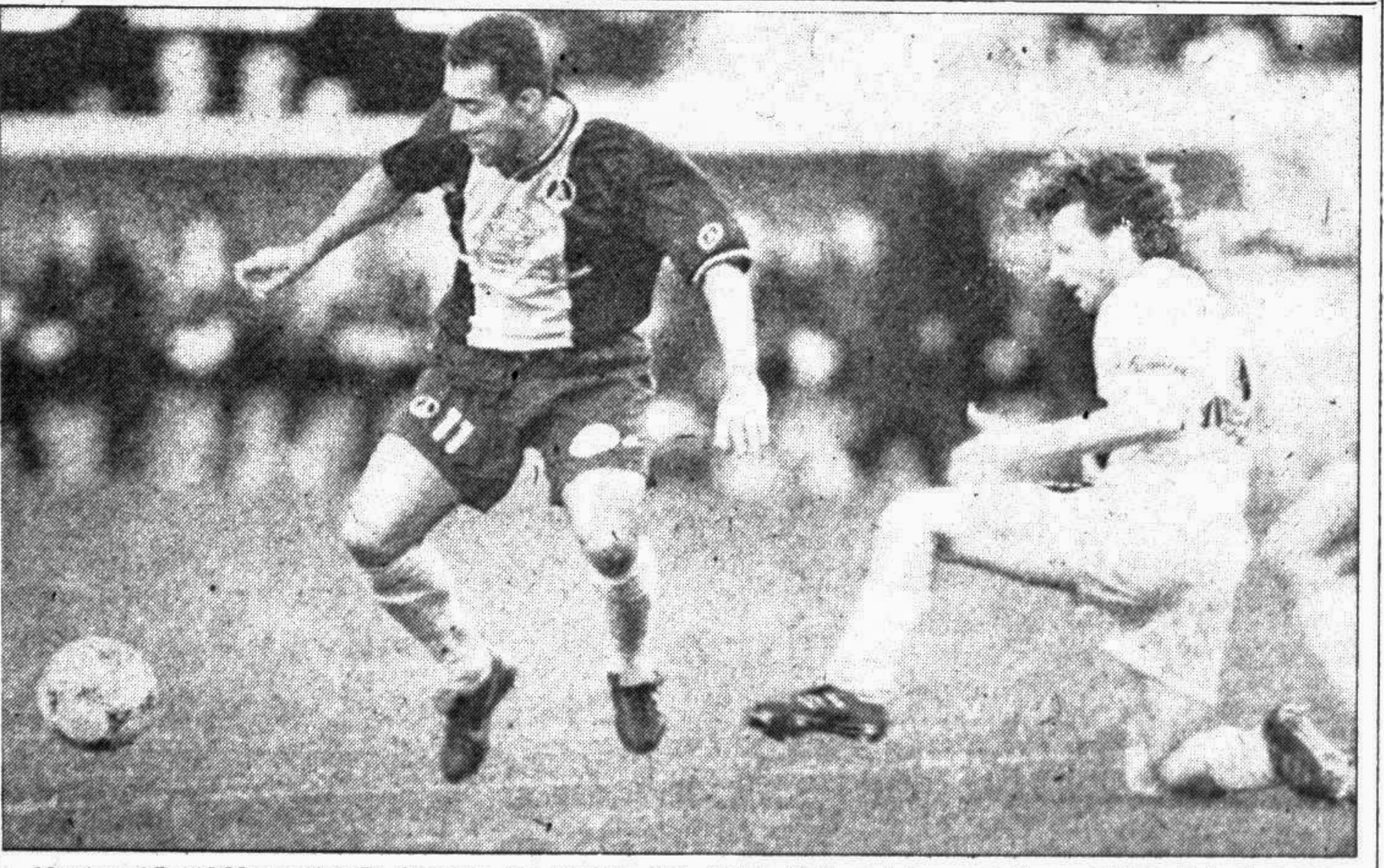
Real Madrid's Fernando Redondo, who differs from Passarella on the midfield role he should play, is also missing.

Ecuador, who have never qualified, are involved in the most sensitive game in Guayaquil. A border skirmish between them and Peru at the start of last year killed dozens of people, although the teams met in the Copa America in July without incident and Ecuador won 2-1.

Colombia are expected to field a side which bears a remarkable resemblance to the one that failed in the 1994 World Cup finals in the United States.

Veteran captain Carlos Valderrama, 34, has been named in the squad along with other old favourites such as Freddy Rincon, Leonel Alvarez and Adolfo Valencia.

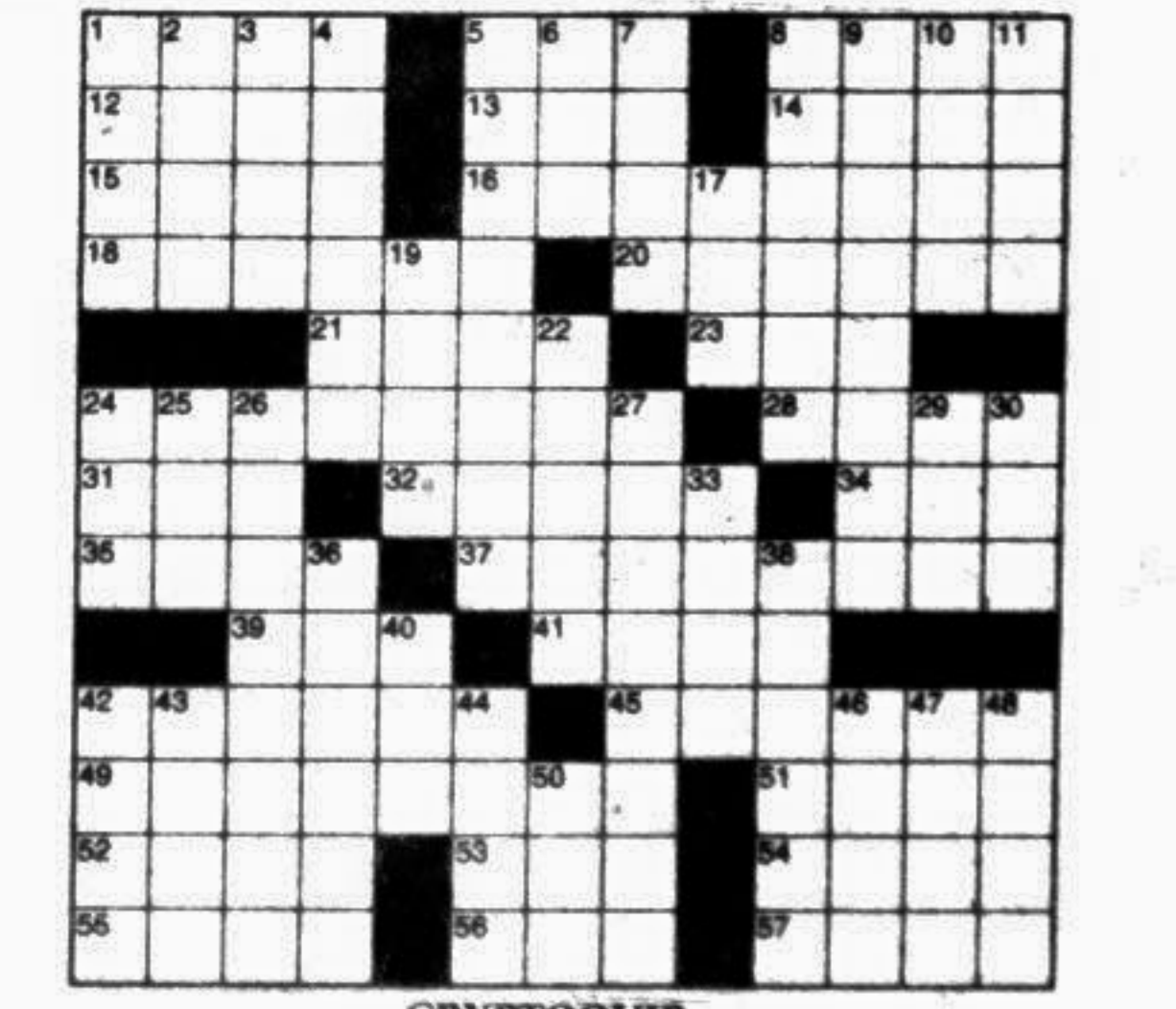
Jose Luis Chilavert, one of the world's best and most explosive goalkeepers, has ended his feud with Paraguayan soccer directors and is in the squad for the match in Barranquilla.



Martigues' David Mazzoncini (R) clears the ball from the feet of Paris St Germain's ace marksman Patrice Loko during a French First Division tie in Paris on Apr 23. —AFP/UNB photo

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS	DOWN
1 Dressed (in)	1 Mountain-er's foothold
5 "Groovy"	2 Bit of Italian bread?
8 "G.W.T.W."	3 Some-where out there
12 Wide-spread	4 Go ashore
13 George's brother	5 Quintupled
14 Responsi-bility	6 "Exodus" name
15 Spirited steed	7 "Art of the Fugue" writer
16 Provisions of peace	8 False hood?
18 Sale venue, perhaps	9 Big boa
20 One who's with it	10 Actress Lanika
21 Lake swimmer's resting spot	11 Staffer, abbr.
22 Author Buscaglia	12 Lawyer's due
24 Low-nutrition fare	13 "Shane" star
28 Make-meet	14 Lotion additive
31 Freudian concept	15 Conde-scending sort
32 Lindbergh or Earhart	16 Broad bean
34 "Cook-a-doodle"	17 Guitars' kin
35 Pitch	18 Philo's choice
37 Sampling of haute	19 Teeter-totter quorum



CRYPTOQUIP

P H Y Q D R Z M G T N F K Z
N D M R Q D Z B F K N P R W D F
N E Q B R Q H C E W N X R
M D M T Z T C K E W Y T F R

Saturday's Cryptogram: AFTER HANGING WALL-PAPER IN YOUR FABULOUS NEW HOME ALL DAY, WE WERE LULAM TIED.

Today's Cryptogram clue: M equals D
The Cryptogram is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that X equals Q, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.