

## Steffi knew nothing

FRANKFURT, Apr 25: A prosecutor on Wednesday rejected a report that tennis star Steffi Graf knew what happened to her earnings, allegedly funnelled out of Germany for years by her father to avoid paying taxes, reports AP.

Asked about the report on the World No. 1 player that is to appear in the weekly Stern magazine Thursday, prosecutor Peter Wechsung in Mannheim said that based on the status of his office's investigation, "we disagree with its conclusions."

Stern said that the Graf family tax advisor, Joachim Eckhardt, who is jailed and charged in the case, had provided prosecutors information that Steffi Graf knew the details of what was happening to her money.

The magazine also said that former Graf family confidant, Horst Schmitt, informed her about where her money was deposited in 1991, although Steffi Graf has told prosecutors she paid little attention to her financial affairs to concentrate on tennis.

Wechsung said that Eckhardt had never been able to incriminate the tennis player in repeated questioning, and in one session he declined to discuss Steffi Graf's role in the case.

Prosecutors a week ago charged Eckhardt and Graf's father Peter Graf with failing to report 42 million marks (28 million dollars) of his daughter's earnings to evade 19.8 million marks (13.3 million dollars) in taxes between 1987 and 1993. Both are jailed in Mannheim.

Wechsung also said Wednesday that former family confidant Schmitt did not incriminate Steffi Graf during questioning, but rather told investigators that she was unaware of details on her financial situation, which were managed by her father.

Despite disagreement with the Stern report, Wechsung said the nearly year-long investigation of the 26-year-old tennis star continues.

The trial of Peter Graf and Eckhardt is expected to begin in late summer or early autumn, which could prevent the reigning and four-time US Open champion from taking part in that tournament this year.

## Bosnia, Albania share delight

ZENICA, Bosnia, Apr 25: Bosnia and Albania drew 0-0 a soccer friendly on Tuesday, the first international played on Bosnia soil since the former Yugoslav Republic gained independence in 1992 and plunged into war, reports Reuter.

More than 15,000 spectators attended the game, including Bosnian army and NATO peacekeeping troops.

The match was held in the central Bosnian industrial city of Zenica because the stadium in the capital Sarajevo has not yet recovered from the effects of 43 months of siege warfare.

Most of the game was played in midfield but Bosnia failed to capitalise on several good chances in the first half.

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

The Bosnian eleven was made up entirely of players with foreign clubs including Barcelona striker Mehdi Kodro, a former Yugoslav international.

The match was viewed as a further sign that life is slowly beginning to return to normal in Bosnia following a peace deal signed by the country's leaders in Paris in December.

## Dreary draw in Oslo

OSLO, Apr 25: Spain were held to a scoreless draw by Norway on Wednesday in their final warm up for the European Championships finals, reports Reuter.

The Spanish, one of four seeded finalists, dominated the first half of an offensive match with many scoring opportunities and good defences on both sides.

One of the best chances was Juan Antonio Pizzi's close range left-foot shot in the 25th minute that Norwegian keeper Frode Grodaas managed to get his hands on.

Norway, who failed to qualify for the finals, fought back to take over the game in the second half after Spain had substituted four players in the 53rd minute.

Ole Gunnar Solskjaer challenged Valencia goalkeeper Andoni Zubizarreta several times and in the 59th minute the World Cup veteran tipped a header by the Norwegian striker over the bar.

Spain were playing Norway again in only the second and last warm-up they have managed to arrange in a long Spanish league season. They beat the Norwegians 1-0 in Las Palmas in February.

## Romania rout Georgia

BUCHAREST, Apr 25: A spectacular hattrick by striker Iorel Moldovan in a 13-minute rush in the first half helped European Championship finalists Romania to crush Georgia 5-0 in a soccer friendly on Wednesday, reports Reuter.

Moldovan, who plays for Neuchatel Xamax and is the leading goal scorer in Switzerland, scored in the 26th, 30th and 39th minutes from the same position on the six-metre



German bomber Boris Becker is absorbed in deep concentration while executing a backhand during his second round encounter against Czech Republic's David Pihl at the Monte Carlo Open on Apr 24. Becker won 6-4, 4-6, 6-3.

— AFP/UNB photo

## Big guns ride bareback



MONTE CARLO, Monaco, Apr 25: Michael Chang perhaps said it best. "It was just one of those days. Everyone will have those days where things go well and things don't go well." Chang said. "Obviously it was one of those days that didn't go very well for top seeds."

He could say that eight times as weight seeded players exited the Monte Carlo Open Wednesday. More than half of the 15 second-round matches had seeded players losing, reports AP.

Among the ones who escaped that fate were last year's finalists, Thomas Muster and Boris Becker.

Muster opened defence of his title with a 7-5, 6-4 victory over Tomas Carbonell in the 2.2 million dollars tournament. It was the 31st consecutive win on clay for the No. 1 seeded Muster, stretching back to last August. He has won six tournaments on clay in a row, three this year.

Fourth-seeded Boris Becker, playing his first tournament in six weeks, topped Czech David Rikl 6-4, 4-6, 6-3.

Last year's final loss against Muster is still a bitter memory for Becker, who was two sets up against Muster and had two match points but lost.

"It took me a while to get over it and I don't like to bring it up again," Becker said.

Becker had a lingering bronchitis that kept him out of action but says he feels fine now.

Others like third-seeded Chang and Goran Ivanisevic, Yevgeny Kafelnikov, Thomas Enqvist, Jim Courier and two-time Monte Carlo champion Sergi Bruguera, seeded fifth through ninth, don't feel so good after losing.

Chang and Courier went out against Spaniards. Carlos Costa beat Chang 6-7 (6-10), 6-2, 6-4 and Javier Sanchez stopped Courier 6-3, 6-3.

Spanish qualifier Felix Manilla downed Bruguera, 7-5, 6-2 and 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, his seventh final of the year.

Agassi, seeded second, played on Tuesday and now has a third-round match on Thursday against Alberto Costa.

Cedric Pioline of France beat Kafelnikov 6-4, 6-3. It was Kafelnikov's third straight loss on clay and Sjeng Schalken of the Netherlands ousted Enqvist of Sweden 3-6, 6-3, 6-3.

Also Fabrice Santoro of France upset the top-ranked French player, Arnaud Boetsch, seeded 11th, 7-5, 1-6, 7-

6 (7-3). Also, 15th seeded Renzo Furlan had to withdraw with an injured hand, allowing Carlos Moya of Spain to advance.

Andrei Medvedev of Ukraine, the 1994 winner here, routed Mark Philippoussis of Australia 6-0, 6-2 and Richard Krajicek dropped the first eight games then turned around to beat Stefan Edberg 6-0, 6-4, 6-2.

Czech Petr Korda, Marcelo Rios of Chile and Alberto Costa of Spain also advanced.



World no. 2 Thomas Muster of Austria seen during his match against Thomas Carbonell of Spain in the Monte Carlo Open in Monaco on Apr 24. Muster won 7-5, 6-4.

— AFP/UNB photo

## Of nobles & Test cricket



KZ Islam

True, in the early stages of Test cricket, there was a sprinkle of titled cricketers.

Lord Harris, the gentleman who became the captain of England was followed by Ivo Bligh, later to become Earl of Darnley.

Lord Darnley has become part of cricket history, as following 1882-83 series of Test matches in Australia (won by England) some Melbourne ladies burnt a ball, sealed the ashes in an urn and presented it to the England captain. Ivo Bligh married one of the ladies. Lord Darnley on his death in 1927 bequeathed the ashes to MCC.

A few other titled gentleman followed namely Hon F S Jackson, Lord Tennyson, Hon F S G Calthorpe, Sir T C O'Brien, Lord Hawke, all of whom captained England. Diverting from England let us take a look at the Maharajas of India who promoted cricket.

The most outstanding name is that of K S Ranjitsinhji, the Jamsaheb of Nawangar (Ranji).

Undoubtedly, he was one of the greatest batsman of all times. For an Indian to play for England against Australia in 1986 must make him a person of extra-

ordinary distinction. Many of the rulers of Indian states patronised cricket in a big way.

We next see the appearance of K S Duleep Singhji (nephew of Ranji).

Wisden records that in the third Test was played between New Zealand and England in 1929 in Australia when Duleep Singhji scored 117 the crowd were treated to a dazzling exhibition of stroke play from Duleep Singhji.

In the first and only Test match played between India and England at Lord's in June 1932, India was cap-

tained by Maharaja of Porbandar but as he could not play the side was led by C K Nayudu. We next see the appearance of Nawab of Pataudi in 1932 playing in his first Test match against Australia in the famous Bodyline series.

It is well known that since Pataudi refused to cooperate with captain D R Jardine in his leg theory bowling, Pataudi was dropped from the Test side despite having scored a century on his debut. Maharaja of Patiala played one Test match, with some distinction, for India against England. The Maharaja of Vizianagram became captain of India in its tour of England in 1936. Later he was to become the very popular cricket running commentator known as "Vizzy". Nawab of Pataudi who played for England also had the distinction of captaining India in the 1946 tour of England. We see proba-

bly the last appearance of aristocracy in Test cricket when Nawab of Pataudi Jr (Mansur Ali Khan) made his debut for India in 1961. He was subse-

quently the captain of India. A few words must be mentioned about "Tiger" Pataudi whose career is a history of triumph over adversity. Despite the fact that he lost the sight of his right eye as a result of a motor

accident, he went on to have a very outstanding Test career. I distinctly remember this incident, as I was a student in England in those days. Prior to the accident as the captain of the Oxford University team playing county matches we used to see his name in the newspapers very frequently scoring centuries in every other match.

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