

Karpov one point away

ELISTA, Russia, July 7: US challenger Gata Kamsky won the 16th game of the World Chess Championship on Saturday, narrowing the lead of Russian Grand-Master Anatoly Karpov to three points, reports Reuters.

But Karpov, 45, is just one point away from retaining his World Chess Federation (FIDE) title. The next game is scheduled for Monday.

Karpov has 9.5 points in the 20-game series versus 6.5 for Kamsky, a 22-year-old who left the Soviet Union for the United States in 1988.

The championship is taking place in Elista, capital of Russia's semi-autonomous Kalmyk Republic, near the Caspian Sea. World number one Gata Kamsky is not challenging for the title because of a dispute with FIDE.

ATLANTA BRIEFS

ATLANTA, July 7 (AP): Georgia National Guardsmen might be asked to wear bullet-proof vests while on patrol at the Olympic Village after a sergeant was wounded by gunfire July 4, officials said.

Thomas Bentley, 43, was hit by a bullet fired from an AK-47 assault weapons late Thursday, officials said. He was at his post with two other guardsmen at the time, and authorities think the bullet was fired into the air about a half-mile away. National Guard Adjutant General Bill Bland said.

Bentley was treated and released at Georgia Baptist Medical Center. His chest was badly bruised, but he was expected to recover and return to duty shortly, Bland said Friday.

The Guardsmen on patrol have been issued body armor and a decision whether they will be required to wear it will be made before the games begin July 19, according to Bland.

Since Monday when authorities began securing the village in preparation for the athletes arrival, armed guards dressed in berets and camouflage outfits have patrolled the grounds.

Most Americans plan to watch the Atlanta Olympics on television this summer, but many feel the event is too commercialised, according to a survey released on Friday.

In a survey of 1,002 adults conducted last month, about one in four said they felt the Olympics were staged for rich corporations and VIPs, but more than half could name the big firms sponsoring the event.

More than four out of five Americans said they would watch the Games on television, but almost as many — 67 per cent — said there were too many commercials in the broadcast.

People in the west and northeast were more likely to tune in than southerners, according to the telephone survey conducted from June 13 to 16 by Marketing Research Services, Inc for the Atlanta Journal-Constitution newspaper.

Atlanta's preparations were ranked excellent or good by 76 per cent of those surveyed, up from 45 per cent of those questioned for a similar poll in 1993.

Atlanta yet a barren city

ATLANTA, July 7 (AP): The Olympic city opened its doors to the world Saturday — and hardly anyone came.

The Olympic Village on the campus of Georgia Tech University was officially launched with a ribbon-cutting ceremony. But most of the world's athletic federations chose to help their budgets and wait a few more days before sending their athletes to Atlanta.

"Where is everybody?" asked a worker at the village department store.

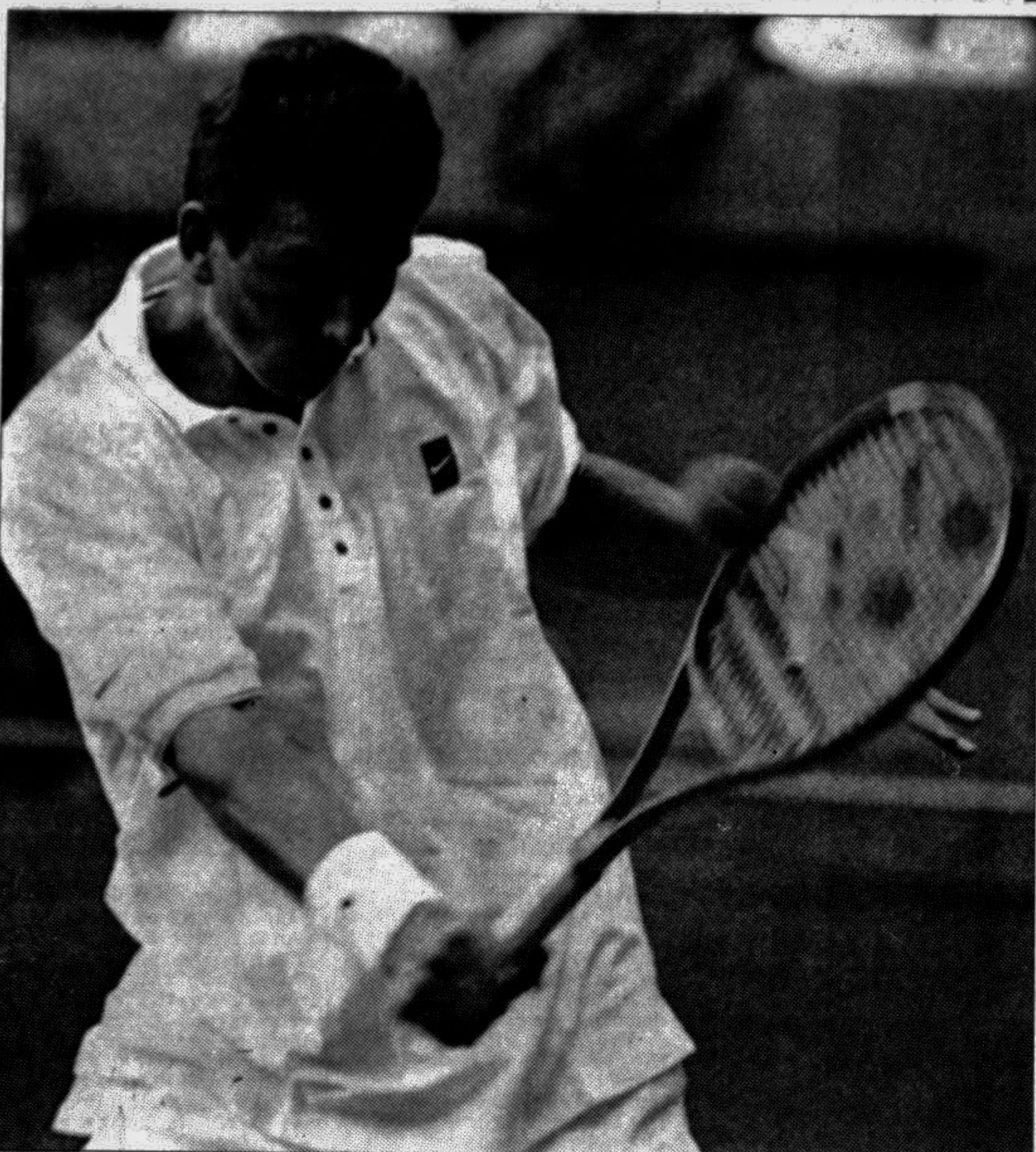
For the most part, the athletes were back in their home countries. The daily rate to stay in the Village is 100 dollars per person until July 15, when the athletes can start moving in for free.

"That's important to many countries," said Carol Milliron, the Village's press officer. Unlike the rest of Atlanta, which still resembles one big construction site, the village appeared to be largely up and running though there were a few workers hammering nails, drilling walls and planting flowers.

There are bowling alleys, pool rooms, video games and even an Internet "Surf Shack" to keep the athletes occupied between events. And there are plenty of reminders that these are the most-commercialized Olympic Games.

One building contains a hair salon, florist, a department store that sells 90 dollars beer mugs, and a bank which advertised cash cards in denominations of 20 dollars, 50 dollars and dollars 100.

The village will be home to most of the 15,000 Olympic officials and athletes when the Games begin July 19.



Dutch Richard Krajicek plays a backhand slice during yesterday's Wimbledon men's singles final against American Malivai Washington. The Dutch won by 6-3, 6-4, 6-3. — AFP/UNB photo

Epic crown for Krajicek

LONDON, July 7: Richard Krajicek became the first Dutch player ever to win a Grand Slam title here today when he won the men's singles crown at Wimbledon by beating Malivai Washington of the United States 6-3, 6-4, 6-3 in a final constantly interrupted by rain, report agencies.

Krajicek, who put defending champion Pete Sampras out of the tournament in the quarterfinals, dropped his huge service only once in the 1 hr 33 min match — in the sixth game of the third set. But it was not enough to shake the Dutchman's confidence.

It was the first-ever Wimbledon final between two unseeded players.

Earlier, Richard Krajicek won 12 of the first 14 points and led Malivai Washington 6-3, 1-2 when rain suspended play for a second time Sunday

in the final between two unseeded players.

The second set was following the same pattern as the first — Krajicek holding serve easily. Washington struggling — when the sunshine faded and light rain began to fall. Both players held to tie the set at 1-1, and the third game was at deuce on Washington's serve when referee Alan Mills ordered the court covered.

The shower was brief, but a steady drizzle began to fall again as play resumed after a half-hour delay. Four minutes later, after Washington had held serve, the match was suspended a second time.

In the first set, Krajicek used his dominating serve — he had served 133 aces in the tournament going into the match — to win the opening game to love and the third game to 15. His only hiccup was a double fault at the start of the third game.

In between, Krajicek easily broke Washington with a blistering backhand pass, an easy overhead volley after the American could manage only a weak lob deep in the corner, and a volley from Washington that sailed long.

Down 0-3, Washington finally held serve in a game that included four deuces and three break points. Krajicek held the next game to go up 4-1, finishing with a disputed ace that Washington argued should have been called wide.

Both players held serve the rest of the 33-minute set, with Washington struggling to do so more than Krajicek. Krajicek allowed only three points off his serve the entire set, and two of those were double faults. He also hit five aces.

Meanwhile, Washington kept volleying toward Krajicek's lethal forehand, and frequently paid the price as the Dutchman hit one forward pass winner after another.

The match began on a light-hearted note when a streaker ran onto the court, perhaps precipitated by the fact that a London bookmaker published odds on such an event happening.

Krajicek because Wimbledon's first unseeded champion since Boris Becker in 1985. Washington is also the first black American male to contest a Grand Slam final since Arthur Ashe defeat Jimmy Connors at Wimbledon in 1975.

Age no bar for Bugner

GOLD COAST, Australia, July 7: Veteran former European, Commonwealth and British heavyweight boxing champion Joe Bugner got back on the winning track on Friday night at the age of 46, reports AFP.

Bugner, now based in Australia, scored a fifth-round knock-out over Tongan-born New Zealand champion Young Haumono.

The Australian champion's left hook to Haumono's chin ended the 12-round fight at the Carrara Entertainment Centre and gave Bugner the lightly-regarded Pan Asian boxing association heavyweight title.

Bugner had announced his retirement after a recent loss to British champion Scott Welch, but then changed his mind.

Apart from winning gold, one of the other ways Fernandez won over her people was with her commitment to charity. She holds an annual fund-raising tennis match and is involved in other fund-raising activities after starting her own foundation in 1992.

"Instead of being it randomly, I decided to have my own foundation," she said.

Players like Martina Navratilova, Chris Evert and Natasha Zvereva have played in Puerto Rico and Fernandez has done most of the work, raising around 300,000 dollars in the process.



Chile's Ivan Zamorano (L) celebrates the first goal against Ecuador in Santiago on July 6. Chile defeated Ecuador 4-1. — AFP/UNB photo

Wasim the wrecker

NORTHAMPTON, England, July 7: Pakistan strike bowler Wasim Akram tore the heart out of Northamptonshire's batting with a devastating five-wicket burst on the first day of their three-day match on Saturday, reports Reuters.

The tourists' captain finished with five for 58, claiming all his victims in the space of 40 balls to help dismiss Northants for 152.

All five were given out lbw by umpire Peter Willey who would be officiating in the first of the three-Test series against England at Lord's starting on July 25.

Seamer Shahid Nazir finished with four for 43 while Mohammad Akram, the highly promising 21-year-old, claimed one wicket from two lively spells.

Pakistan were left with 15 overs to bat at the end of the day and closed on 79 for one.

Navratilova's dream dashed

WIMBLEDON, July 7: Martina Navratilova failed Sunday in her bid to equal Billie Jean King's record of 20 Wimbledon titles, reports AP.

Navratilova and Jonathan Stark lost in the quarterfinals of the mixed doubles to Lindsay Davenport and Grant Connell, 7-6 (7-5), 7-6 (7-2).

Navratilova and Stark, who won the mixed doubles title last year, lost six straight points to drop the first-set tiebreaker.

They saved a match point at 5-6 in the second set, but Connell and Davenport went up 4-0 in the tiebreaker and closed out the match on the ninth point when Navratilova hit a serve return out.

Navratilova, 39, plucked a piece of grass from the lawn as she left Court 1, which is being torn down after the tournament and being replaced by a new court next year.

Navratilova said the gesture was intended to say good-bye to Court 1 and not necessarily to Wimbledon. She has won a record nine Wimbledon women's titles, two ahead of this year's champion Steffi Graf.

Asked if she would be back playing next year, she said, "I have no idea. You're asking way too soon. At the moment, I have no idea, I really don't."

Navratilova said her decision would depend on "desire, health, good partner." She also said tying King's record was not important.

"If it did (matter), I would be playing doubles also," she added. "Actually, I would probably have a better shot at it in women's doubles than mixed doubles."

Boxer's bizarre let-down

MANCHESTER, England, July 7: Steve Collins held on to his WBO super-middleweight title in Bizarre circumstances Saturday when challenger Nigel Benn twisted his ankle throwing a big, fourth-round punch and couldn't continue, reports AP.

Benn tried to fight on but was virtually immobilized by the injured ankle and turned away with Collins throwing punches at his head with getting any in reply.

It was let-down finish to a fight that was building up to a thriller at Manchester's 21,000-capacity Nynex Center.

Benn had caught the 31-year-old Irishman repeatedly with hooks and right hands while the champion was countering well to the head and body.

A half minute from the end of round four, Benn threw an over-hand right with such power that he lost his balance, twisted his ankle and landed on the floor under the ropes.

After he got to his feet, Puerto Rican referee Gino Rodriguez asked Benn if he could carry on and the 32-year-old British fighter replied that he could.

But the fight lasted only a few more seconds as Collins found he faced a target who couldn't move. He landed three big punches to the head and Benn turned away in defeat.

After losing the WBC title to South Africa's Thulane "Sugar Boy" Malinga in March, Benn announced his retirement but changed his mind 26 days later to challenge Collins.

England stage fightback

NOTTINGHAM (England), July 7: Unbeaten centuries by Mike Atherton and Nasser Hussain on Saturday secured England to safety on the third day of the Trent Test against India at Trent Bridge and within sight of a 1-0 series victory, reports Reuters.

Atherton, with 145, and Hussain, 107, combined in a 192-run second wicket stand as England moved to 322 for one, passing the follow-on mark of 321 just before stumps.

The England skipper, averaging just 28 runs in the nine innings since his epic 195 not out against South Africa in Johannesburg last December, reached his 10th Test century from 223 balls with his 14th boundary.

Hussain's second hundred of the three-Test series came from only 165 balls, including 12 fours.

A draw would wrap up the series for England who won the opening Test at Edgbaston by eight wickets.

Atherton, who was dropped in the slips by Rahul Dravid on Friday evening before he had opened his account and survived a handful of scares early in the innings, grew in confidence as the day went on.

Starting on 21, he survived two lbw appeals and was fumbled at third slip by Mohammad Azharuddin off a vicious rising ball from Javagal Srinath on his way to 50.

But after lunch the England skipper took control on a benign Trent Bridge wicket and was given a big ovation when he turned Anil Kumble to the boundary for his fourth Test hundred at Nottingham, the ground where he began his England career with a duck back in 1989.

Hussain raced to his century in 207 minutes, needing one hour less than his captain to reach the milestone.

His first 25 runs took only 16 balls and, although he slowed as he completed an 82-ball half-century, England were in complete control of their destiny at 238 for one at tea.

While Atherton was struggling to find his touch early in

the day, Alec Stewart (50) was confidently piling on the runs.

But the Surrey opener, who won back his Test place when Warwickshire's Nick Knight was ruled out with a cracked knuckle, edged a ball from Srinath to Nayan Mongia behind the stumps in the first over after lunch.

India suffered in the field. Azharuddin, in what is likely to

and Sachin Tendulkar failed to reap wickets.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard on the third day of the third and final Test between England and India at Trent Bridge on Saturday:

INDIA: First innings 521 (S Tendulkar 177, S Ganguly 136, R Dravid 84, S Manjrekar 53).

ENGLAND: First innings (overnight 32-0)

M Atherton not out 145
A Stewart c Mongia b Srinath 50
N Hussain not out 107
Extras: (lb-3, lb-9, nb-8) 20
Total: (for one wicket) 322
Fall of wicket: 1-130
To bat: G Thorpe, G Hick, C Lewis, J Russell, M Ealham, D Cork, M Patel, A Mullally.

Bowling (to date): O M R W
Srinath 27 7 82 1
Prasad 24 6 78 0
Kumble 18 3 62 0
Ganguly 22 4 45 0
Tendulkar 6 0 24 0
(Incomplete)

Dominguez retains WBC CROWN

HYERES, France, July 7: Marcelo Dominguez of Argentina retained his World Boxing Council cruiserweight title as challenger Patrice Aouissi of France could not answer the bell for the 10th round, reports AP.

Dominguez, who won the title in July 1995, raised his record to 20-1-1. Aouissi, a former French and European champion but ranked No. 9 in the WBC, is now 16-2.

Dominguez dominated the fight from the start and put Aouissi in trouble in the fourth, fifth and sixth rounds.

However from the seventh, Aouissi began to come back and connected with a number of body blows to slow the champion.

But the French fighter used too much of his forces to make the comeback amicably in the ninth round.

He was unable to come out of his corner for the 10th round and Dominguez conserved his title.



Golden girl Steffi Graf shows the Wimbledon trophy with a humble smile after beating Spaniard Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario in the women's singles final on Saturday. Graf won 6-3, 7-5. — AFP/UNB photo

Graf's icing on the cake

LONDON, July 7: Steffi Graf moved a step closer to former Australian champion Margaret Court's 24

Grand Slam singles titles on Saturday with a seventh Wimbledon triumph which surprised even herself, reports Reuters.

"It's simply unbelievable. It's been like a dream because I didn't expect it to be possible," Graf said after maintaining her dominance over Spaniard Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario 6-3, 7-5 in Saturday's final.

The 27-year-old top seed and joint world number one, suffering from a heavy cold during her semifinal win on Saturday, entered this year's Wimbledon hindered by a knee injury which limited her grass court preparation.

There has also been the emotional distress of her father's arrest. He is currently in prison in Germany facing charges he evaded paying tax on millions of dollars of his daughter's earnings.

After winning her French Open last month, Graf thanked her father in her victory speech. On Saturday she was unsure when she would next talk to him.

But Graf admitted the win — her 20th Grand Slam singles success and 100th tournament title — was special.

"It feels pretty awesome right now," said Graf, whose victory lifted her into clear second place on the all-time Grand Slam singles list behind Court, who notched her wins between 1960 and 1975.

"Right now I can't really put it into words. It's just incredible to me how the last few years have been going, how I've always been able to rise to the occasion."

"But to see myself in a place in history... that's a little too early for me to do. It's just remarkable."

Asked about her father, she said: "I don't think I can add anything more about how special it is to me. Knowing the situation I was in two weeks ago, physically, it just seems amazing to me to come through. I don't know how I do it."

But if her father Peter is convicted of misleading the German tax authorities, his daughter seems bent on single-handedly paying them back in the shortest possible time.

She has now won the last five Grand Slam events she has entered to push her career prize money towards 19 million dollars and seems capable of ignoring any distraction in her path.

Only Martina Navratilova (167) and Chris Evert (157) have now won more career singles titles than Graf.

Graf still insists history is not her priority, but Sanchez Vicario believes she is capable of outstripping Court as the most successful women's singles champion of all.

"She's still going and she can continue to make history," said the Spaniard, who play-

fully borrowed Graf's winner's saviour during the prize-giving ceremony. It's great for her.

"I think she played really very well. She played very deep today and made it very hard for me to get into the net."

Rain had forced the two players off court before they had time to hit a shot in anger, but organisers' prayers were answered when they were able to return and play an uninterrupted final in bright sunshine.

The first set was a comparative disappointment after the excitement of their last two final meetings, the powerful Graf taking it in just 34 minutes.

When she opened her 4-0 lead in the second, the only question was whether she would wrap things up inside an hour, but the best passages of play were still to come.

The Centre Court crowd has seen some extraordinary shots over the years, but the one Graf played at break point against her in the sixth game was right up in the top bracket of embarrassing ones.

She stood underneath a simple lob from Sanchez Vicario in mid-court, only to miss it entirely and lose the vital point when she finally did scrape it back over the net.

She hastened to her chair to blow her nose and compose herself, but the incident lent Sanchez Vicario some momentum which briefly threatened a major turnaround.

It never happened and Graf's statistics are now among the most impressive of any modern sportswomen.

"You've got to hold on to the moment," it goes pretty quickly," she said, explaining why she choose to sit in her chair for several moments after the final point.

"It didn't hit me until I got to the locker-room winning seven Wimbledon is something I'd never imagined I'd do."

GRAF'S WIMBLEDON WINS AT A GLANCE

- 1988: Beat Martina Navratilova (USA) 5-7, 6-2, 6-1
- 1989: Beat Martina Navratilova (USA) 6-2, 6-7, (1/7), 6-1
- 1991: Beat Gabriela Sabatini (ARG) 6-4, 3-6, 8-6
- 1992: Beat Monica Seles (USA) 6-2, 6-1
- 1993: Beat Jana Novotna (CZE) 7-6 (8/8), 1-6, 6-4
- 1995: Beat Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario (SPA) 4-6, 6-1, 7-5
- 1996: Beat Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario (SPA) 6-3, 7-5.