

Column One

Sports
WHIZZ KID

COMPETITION FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN

Sports WHIZZ KID competition-45
Tick the Correct Answers

(Competition closes: 8 p.m. July 12, 1996)

1. Andre Agassi won his only Wimbledon in

1990	1991	1994
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2. The highest scorer of Euro 96 was

Shuster	Klusanov	Stankovic
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3. The 1997 ICC Trophy will be held in

Singapore	Canada	Malaysia
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4. The present football coach of the Czech Republic is

Ullrich	Venables	Prevez
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5. The first SAF Games was held in

Nepal	Sri Lanka	Pakistan
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Name: _____
 Class: _____ Roll No: _____
 School Address: _____
 Phone: (if any) _____

SPORTS TALK



Saurav Ganguly
 (Indian Test cricketer)
"I must perform and that is what I aim at everytime I walk to the crease. I can only try and be consistent and I assure you I shall try my best to keep improving and not disappoint my well wishers."
About his aim in the future.



Olympic champion 100m Briton Linford Christie and French 200m sprinter Marie-Jose Perec smile at one another during an evening presentation of champions on the eve of the Nice athletics meet on July 10. — AFP/UNB photo

Linford's last major lost

NICE, France, July 11: Olympic sprint champion Linford Christie lost his final major test before the Atlanta Games by a whisker on Wednesday, playing second fiddle to world champion Donovan Bailey in a photo finish, reports Reuter.

The 36-year-old Briton seemed to have the better of Bailey halfway through their 100 metres clash at the Nice Grand Prix meeting. But the towering Canadian came back strongly and the two sprinters crossed the line neck-and-neck.

Slow motion television pictures shown in the stadium could not shed any light on who had won the race. After the photo of the finish was analysed, Bailey was given the victory with both men recording the time of 10.17 seconds.

Christie is due to run in London on Friday before heading for the United States. But the field is not expected to be strong and he should win easily.

The veteran sprinter has been suffering from a slight hamstring injury since being outclassed by training partner Frankie Fredericks in Lausanne last week when the Namibian went within one hundredth of a second of the world record.

But Christie was not disappointed to be heading to the US without a major victory under his belt in the south of France.

"I've not trained since Lausanne and I'm pretty happy running 10.17 tonight," he said.

Neither Christie nor Bailey has been able to stamp his authority on the Grand Prix circuit in the build-up to Atlanta.

Fredericks will travel to the Games as favourite for the 100 with the fastest time of the year of 9.86 in Lausanne.

Fredericks, silver medalist over 200 at last year's World Championships, has not yet said whether he will compete in the 100 as well as the longer sprint in Atlanta.

But he has also clocked 9.87 this season and looks to have the mental edge over Christie and Bailey at the moment.

The Canadian, however, was clearly happy to have got the advantage over Christie in Nice although he was suffering from slight cramp afterwards.

The dramatic finish was one of the highlights of the meeting which also saw some good middle-distance performances as the athletes move towards the final week before the Games open.

Algeria's Nouredine Morceli failed in this attempt to break his own 2,000 metres world record. But Ireland's 5,000 metres world champion Sonia O'Sullivan clocked the fastest women's 3,000 metres in the world this year with a time of 8:35.42.

"Everything's going well for Atlanta. It's good to get a good result in the medium distance," O'Sullivan said.

O'Sullivan had run the previous best for the season of 8:39.33 in Eugene at the end of May.

Former Kenyan Wilson Kipketer, who now competes for Denmark, ran the fastest 800 metres in the last 11 seasons with a time of 1:42.51.

For a moment in the middle of the race Sebastian Coe's 15-year-old world record of 1:41.73 looked in danger. But Kipketer could not keep up his blistering pace through the later part of the race as Britain's world record holder Sebastian Coe did in Florence in 1981.

The performance, came just a few days after Kipketer clocked 1:42.76 in Oslo, his fastest time of the 1990s.

Kipketer will miss Atlanta because Kenyan officials have not given him permission to compete for his new country.

The meeting also saw a defeat for Algeria's world and Olympic 1,500 metres champion Hassiba Boulmerka in her first major outing of the season.

After going into the bell in the lead, Boulmerka was destroyed by the pace on the last lap as Portugal's Carla Sacramento continued her superb season with another victory in four minutes, 2.64 seconds.

In the hammer Hungary's Balazs Kiss produced the best performance in the world this year with a throw of 81.76 metres.

ATLANTA SNIPPETS

UNFAIR TAXI FARE
 ATLANTA, July 11 (Reuters): Taxi drivers raised their fares by as much as 40 per cent on Wednesday under city-approved legislation that allows them to charge higher rates during the Olympic Games.

The fare for one person from the airport to downtown increased from 18 to 22 dollars under legislation approved by the city council.

The flat rate for a taxi ride within the downtown district rose from 5 to 7 dollars — a 40 per cent increase. The surcharge for additional passengers has been doubled.

The fare increases will remain in effect until August 30, more than three weeks after the Olympic Games end August 4.

Olympics officials have said they oppose price-gouging. A Georgia law limits the rates hoteliers can charge during the Games.

BATH-BOOSTER
 A cold bath would help endurance athletes at the Atlanta Olympics perform better, Australian researchers claim.

Scientists at Charles Stuart University in New South Wales asked runners to sit in a bath of lukewarm water and then lowered its temperature over the next hour.

When the athletes ran on a treadmill for 30 minutes they performed better than those who had not taken a bath, the researchers told the New Scientist magazine today.

When the roles were reversed the "chilled" athletes again performed better.

"They almost ran another lap of an athletics track," said the university's Frank Marino. "We couldn't find a difference between the two in oxygen consumption terms."

Sustained activity generates heat in the muscles which is carried away in the blood to the skin and then cooled by sweating.

Marino believes that pre-cooling allows more blood to stay in the muscles and deliver glucose and oxygen.

Wimbledon still crowd-puller

LONDON, July 11: This year's Wimbledon tennis championships attracted the highest number of spectators for three years — but only thanks to an extra day play — officials said on Wednesday, reports Reuter.

The total attendance of 385,042 was an increase of 160 on 1995 but the figure was significantly boosted by the spillover day on Monday when the rain-delayed closing rounds of the doubles were played and 13,518 people were left in free.

The early exits of crowd favourites such as Andre Agassi and Boris Becker, strikes on the London underground railway and a clash with the European soccer championship all hit the attendance at Wimbledon but Christopher Gorringe, chief executive of the All-England Club, was happy with the figures.

"Considering we were badly affected by the weather on no fewer than five days, suffered three tube (underground) strikes, had to contend with Euro '96 and lost a good few of our star players in the early stages, I am more than pleased with the final crowd figures," he said.

Seldon's blessing in disguise

NEW YORK, July 11: Heavyweight champions don't weep.

Bruce Seldon, however, says he "could have cried" when he was told last week that his WBA title defence against Mike Tyson was being postponed because Tyson had bronchitis, reports AP.

"I was 10 days away from the biggest fight in my career," Seldon said. "I was upset a little bit, but the man was sick."

The fight, originally set for Saturday night in Las Vegas, is expected to be rescheduled for Sept. 7. Mike Marley of Don King Productions said an announcement should be made in a few days.

Meanwhile, Seldon is doing the only thing he can do — giving the setback a positive twist.

"This doesn't bother me," he said Wednesday in a conference call. "I've had setbacks in the past — 1991 was a bad year for us."

Seldon won his first 18 fights, but five years ago his career suddenly hit bottom when in consecutive fights he was stopped in the ninth round by Oliver McCall and knocked out in the first round by Riddick Bowe.

He regrouped and won the WBA title in 1995 to position himself for a lucrative match against Tyson, the WBC champion.

"I turned a negative think into a positive thing," Seldon said.

So Seldon chooses to see the postponement as a blessing in disguise, promising that although he was in peak condition he'll be even sharper when the fight does occur.

"Ok, it gives me a little more time," he said. "It's as if my mother (Joan who died in 1993) was looking down on me and saying 'Bruce, maybe there's a few more things you could have done.' I'll just ease back for a couple of weeks."

As for staying focused, Seldon said, "Iron Mike — I won't ever get down getting ready to fight him."

Would Kong be 'King'?

ATLANTA, July 11 (AFP): Can King Kong climb the skyscrapers of Atlanta? has become one of the Olympic Games most evocative questions following the teenage giant's escalation of the heights in the Chinese city of Tianjin last year.

There Kong Linghui broke a six-year European stranglehold on the men's game by winning the world men's singles title.

Now the leader of the Chinese table tennis renaissance will be trying to create a similar success without the advantage of a home venue.

This may be difficult. The defending Olympic champion Jan-Ove Waldner is nearing the end of an exceptional career at 31 and would like nothing better than to grab one more big title before departing the scene.

The uniquely gifted Waldner made the ambition clear at a press conference in Bratislava in May after winning the only major title to have eluded him — the European Championship.

Waldner achieved this by beating both France's Jean-Philippe Gatien, the 1993 world champion, and his Swedish compatriot Jorgen Persson, the 1991 world champion.

He also played as well as at any time since beating Gatien in straight games in the Barcelona Olympics final.

Kong, by contrast, briefly lost his world number one ranking to Belgium's Jean-Michel Saive after being beaten in the Qatar international. Although he regained it by coming from two games down to beat his compatriot Wang Tao, the world number two, in the English Open final in April, Kong's performances in kettering were not among his most impressive.

However, he is the youngest man in the world's leading group and therefore despite already being at the top of the

pile, Kong is perhaps the one likely to improve the most.

His ability to cope with the pressure of a big occasion when the crowd is not on his side may decide whether he can hold off challenges from leading Europeans which will come from several directions.

Among them will be not only Waldner, but Persson, who has made a good recovery from a neck and back injury from a car crash two years ago, and French favourite Gatien.

Gatien held five match-points against Waldner in the European team final and looks as quick as ever with his counter-hitting and is far more consistently dangerous on the backhand side than he was when he lost in the Barcelona final.

Saive's chances of winning the Atlanta gold with his muscular aggressive forehand topspins may depend on him riding himself of back problems which appeared to hinder him when he failed to live up to his top seeding in the English

Open and when he lost his European title.

Other medal candidates are the former European champion from Germany Jorg Rosskopf and the Korean Kim Taek Soo — but bet on a Chinese player winning the women's singles.

This nation has six of the top 10 women, and the other four are all former Chinese now representing adopted countries.

They are Taipei's Chen Jing, the 1988 Olympic gold medalist, Hong Kong's Chai Powa, the Commonwealth champion, Canada's Geng Lijuan, the former world number one, and Japan's Chire Koyama who won the 1987 world title.

But despite the proliferating emigrant opposition the odds are on the women nicknamed 'pocket rocket' and 'mighty midget', the four-foot 11-inch Deng Yaping, successfully defending the Olympic title with her bouncing all-action style, and perhaps again playing the world number two Gao Hong in the final.

However one to beware of may be Yang Ying, the teenage Chinese with the name of philosophical opposites, who has risen quickly to become world number five.

Deng and Gao stand a fair chance of winning the women's doubles title again, to, but the men's doubles holders Wang Tao and Lu Lin should find it more difficult, with strong opposition from a wide variety of sources — from Sweden, Austria, Korea, Germany, France and also from compatriots Kong and Liu Qiangling.

Expect therefore the Chinese are to make their most successful table tennis country at the Olympics.

But don't bet on them repeating their achievement in Tianjin last year when for only the second time in the Game's history, they won every world title on offer.



KONG LINGHUI

Rosset takes a U-turn

GSTAAD, Switzerland, July 11: Olympic champion Marc Rosset said he might not defend his title in Atlanta after crashing out in the first round of the Swiss Open tennis tournament on Wednesday, reports Reuter.

The third-seeded Swiss made the announcement after he was upset 3-6, 6-3, 6-2 by German qualifier Oliver Gross in a match that was twice disrupted by rain.

There was defeat too for Wimbledon finalist Malvay Washington, who found the transition from grass to clay difficult and lost 7-6, 6-1 to Spain's Francisco Clavet.

Rosset, a French Open semifinalist last month, said: "I know it will make people scream but if it were up to me today I wouldn't go to the Olympics. I'm losing sleep over this."

"It's a difficult decision because I announced a long time ago I would go to the Olympics but I realise more and more

that it's not a good thing for me," said Rosset.

"For some people the Olympics mean everything but for me Wimbledon and Roland Garros mean more. I've won an Olympic medal, I know what it is."

Only two weeks ago Rosset said at Wimbledon that his countrymen would never forgive him if he did not go to Atlanta to defend the title he won in Barcelona.

"I'll play in the Olympics or otherwise they'll kill me," Rosset said then. "I'm a dead man in Switzerland if I don't go."

But like several other players who have turned down the opportunity to represent their country in Atlanta, including Austria's Thomas Muster and Germany's Boris Becker, Rosset is concerned about dropping down the ATP rankings if he takes time off the tour to go to the Games.

"I'm ranked 16 in the world and my goal is to be in the top 10. My career rating right now is my priority," said Rosset.

"I'll lose four or five weeks going to the Olympics."

"I wish I had won Wimbledon or Roland Garros and had the 1,500 points so I wouldn't have to make this choice."

Rosset was leading Gross 1-0 in the decisive third set when rain stopped play for a second time.

When the players returned 30 minutes later Gross, ranked a lowly 210th in the world, broke to go ahead 2-1.

Rosset, urged on by the crowd, immediately broke back for 2-2 but Gross took the next four games to win the match.

Washington, the seventh seed who lost to Richard Krajicek in the Wimbledon final on Sunday, became the fourth seed to go out in the first round, following Rosset and Tuesday's losers Marcelo Rios of Chile, the number two, and Frenchman Arnaud Boetsch, who was seeded fourth.

Smith sizzles, Hick fizzles

LONDON, July 11: Robin Smith stepped up his claim for an England recall with a whirlwind 158, while his main rival Graeme Hick again failed as Hampshire thrashed Worcestershire by 125 runs in the second round of the NatWest Trophy on Wednesday, reports Reuter.

Smith smashed 21 fours and two sixes in his 151-ball innings as Hampshire raced to 328 for six in their 60 overs at New Road.

Then Hick, who averaged just 8.75 in the three-Test series against India, lasted only six balls and failed to score before being trapped lbw by Kevan James.

But even if Hick earns a reprieve for the three one-dayers and three Tests against Pakistan, Smith could still come into the frame should Nasser Hussain fail to recover from a broken finger.

Warwickshire, finalists for the last three years, surrendered their hold on the trophy when they suffered an 88-run defeat against Surrey at Edgbaston.

Surrey booked a quarter-final berth after making 291 for

seven and then dismissing the home side for 203.

England left-hander Graham Thorpe set up the victory with 96 from 139 balls and all-rounder Adam Hoolioake also made a major contribution with 57 runs, two wickets and a catch.

Lancashire completed the first half of a one-day double over Northamptonshire at Old Trafford.

The Benson and Hedges Cup holders, who will attempt to retain the trophy against Northants in Saturday's Lord's final, claimed a psychological advantage ahead of their second meeting in the space of three days by recording a one-wicket victory.

Tony Penberthy top-scored with 79 in Northants' 223 all out, but Lancashire brought up the winning runs with eight balls to spare.

Somerset paceman Andy Caddick claimed a hatrick as his side romped to a five-wicket victory over Gloucestershire.

The visitors were dismissed before lunch for 118 despite putting on 74 runs from the first 11 overs.

Somerset were never in danger and reached their victory target in the 22nd over.

David Byas hit an unbeaten 73 to lead Yorkshire to a comfortable seven-wicket victory over Middlesex at Headingley.

Byas and Australian Michael Bevan shared in a decisive 91-run third-wicket partnership from 17 overs as Yorkshire cruised past their 200 target with 16 overs to spare.

Stuart Law of Australia and Ronnie Irani powered their way to centuries as Essex beat Durham by 67 runs at Chelmsford.

Law struck 100 from 114 balls and Irani 124 from 99 deliveries in a total of 361 for seven. Essex's highest against a first-class county in the competition.

Law's century, which included 10 fours and two sixes, was his ninth in all competitions this summer.

That proved well beyond Durham's capabilities, despite a fighting 100 from captain Mike Roseberry. The visitors' challenge ended in the 57th over when their final wicket fell with the total on 294.

Sussex advanced to the quarterfinals with a 32-run victory over Leicestershire at Grace Road, while Derbyshire registered a two-wicket victory over Kent.



Athletes leap over the water jump during the 3000 metres steeplechase at Nice athletics meeting on July 10. — AFP/UNB photo

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ON STAR SPORTS

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555 SAFARI RALLY	FRIDAY JULY 19	10.30 PM (B.S.T)
ACROPOLIS RALLY	FRIDAY JULY 26	10.30 PM (B.S.T)

555 SUBARU WORLD RALLY TEAM.
ABOVE ALL ELSE.