

Akram Khan, skipper of the ACC champions Bangladesh cricket team, is felicitated by the Sports and Youth State Minister Obaidul Quader, at ZIA yesterday as teammates look on. — Star photo

Sahara Cup yet to take off

TORONTO, Sept 16: A wet outfield, rendered unfit for play by rain for the past three days, delayed start of the first one-day international between India and Pakistan Monday in Toronto, reports AP.

The umpires inspected the ground in the morning and decided against starting play until the outfield improved. Further inspections were to take place every half-hour until they considered the ground fit to begin what would be Canada's maiden one-day international.

The India-Pakistan five-match series will make Canada the third off-shore venue to have hosted one-day internationals, after the Emirate of Sharjah and Singapore.

Graf's living on their nerves

MANNHEIM, Germany, Sept 16: An appeals court will decide next week whether to free Steffi Graf's father, Peter Graf, on bail after more than 13 months in prison on charges of tax evasion, a court spokesman said Monday, reports AP.

Graf, 58, has been jailed since Aug 2, 1995. He is on trial in Mannheim for allegedly not paying some 19.9 million marks (13.3 million dollars) in taxes on 42 million marks (28 million dollars) of his daughter's earnings between 1989 and 1993.

The chief judge at Graf's trial announced Friday that he could be freed on 3 million marks (2 million dollars) bond. Graf's former tax adviser, Joachim Eckardt, who is also jailed and on trial, could go free after posting 300,000 marks (200,000 dollars) bond, the judge said.

Prosecutors filed an appeal against the judge's ruling with the Baden-Wuerttemberg high state court in Karlsruhe. Prosecutors have contended Graf and Eckardt might try to flee or destroy evidence if they are let out of prison.

Court officials said initially a decision on the appeal could come in a few days, possibly as early as Monday.

The trial began Sept 5 and resumes Tuesday.

Happy day for hosts

CAIRO, Sept 16: Former world junior champion Ahmed Barada defeated eighth seed Anthony Hill on a good day for the Egyptian hosts in the first round of the Gezira Open squash championship on Sunday, reports Reuter.

Barada beat the Australian 15-6, 9-15, 15-8, 15-10 in 46 minutes to set up a second-round clash with compatriot Amir Wahab which will guarantee Egypt at least one quarter-finalist in the 70,000 dollars tournament.

Wahab beat Ireland's Derek Ryan 8-15, 17-15, 15-9, 17-15 in his first-round encounter.

Fellow Egyptian Omar El Borolossy also reached the second round, thanks to a 17-16, 10-15, 15-5, 15-5 victory over Scotland's Martin Heath, and next faces second seed Rodney Eyles of Australia.

Eyles dropped a set before overcoming Dutch qualifier Lucas Buit 15-12, 11-15, 15-9, 15-11.

BKSP camp ends

Sports Reporter
A month-long training course for the young (under-16) athletes, hockey players and boxers concluded at the Bangladesh Krira Shikkha Prothasthan yesterday.

In all 147 trainees including 66 athletes, 18 boxers and 63 hockey players took part in the course held under the talent searching programme of the BKSP.

Obaidul Quader, State Minister for Youth and Sports, distributed certificates among the participants at the end of the course.

A similar course for the footballers and gymnasts will be held from October 20.

Euro football landscape

MADRID, Sept 16: Barcelona's close-season spending spree continued to pay dividends on Sunday when 20 million-dollar striker Ronaldo scored a spectacular individual goal at Racing Santander, reports agencies.

But even heroics from another new signing, goalkeeper Vitor Baia, were not enough to keep Barcelona ahead, a defensive mistake costing Bobby Robson's side two points and with it the undisputed lead in the Spanish First Division.

With seven points from three games, Barcelona lead the table on goal difference from Racing and Real Sociedad, who could only manage a 1-1 draw at home to Sporting Gijon, which early leaders Tenerife fell 2-0 at home to Sevilla.

With reigning champions Atletico Madrid going down by the same score at home to Deportivo Coruna, Real Betis need only draw in today's home clash with Real Madrid to go top.

Barcelona started strongly and seemed on the way to beating Racing for the first time in 14 years after Ronaldo picked up the ball and beat three defenders before scoring from a tight angle.

Baia made several superb saves as Racing fought back in the second half, but the Por-

three points in the home clash with Valladolid, while Valencia had to be content with one after Saturday night's 1-1 draw at Zaragoza.

In Germany, the top three all drew, leaving Bayern Munich, who drew at Schalke, a point ahead of VfB Stuttgart and Borussia Dortmund, who parted 1-1 at Dortmund.

Bayern lead the Bundesliga with 14 points to 13 for Stuttgart and Dortmund.

Bayern, beaten 3-0 by Valencia in the UEFA Cup in midweek, needed a 70th minute equaliser from Thomas Strunz ahead of striker Martin Max had given Schalke a 36th minute lead.

Stuttgart, boasting both the league's stingiest defence and most prolific offense, yielded only a 66th-minute shot from Heiko Herrlich. Stuttgart's got their goal amid controversy in the 31st minute when Brazil's Giovane Elber appeared to foul Dortmund's Stefan Klos on a corner, prompting the goalie to drop the ball for an own goal.

Elsewhere, Cologne, lying fifth, won 4-0 against Borussia Muenchengladbach, midweek victors over Arsenal in the UEFA Cup, with Romanian duo Dorinel Munteanu and Ion Vladutu scoring one apiece.

Werder Bremen's 30-year-old striker Bruno Labbadia, for-

sumed, was injured in the process and had to be carried off.

Brazil's Rai scored the game's only goal from a counter-attack in the 71st minute, allowing his side to move two points clear of Bordeaux on 17 points.

Among other title challengers, Monaco could only draw 0-0 at home to Lille, although Brazilian striker Sonny Anderson had a goal disallowed.

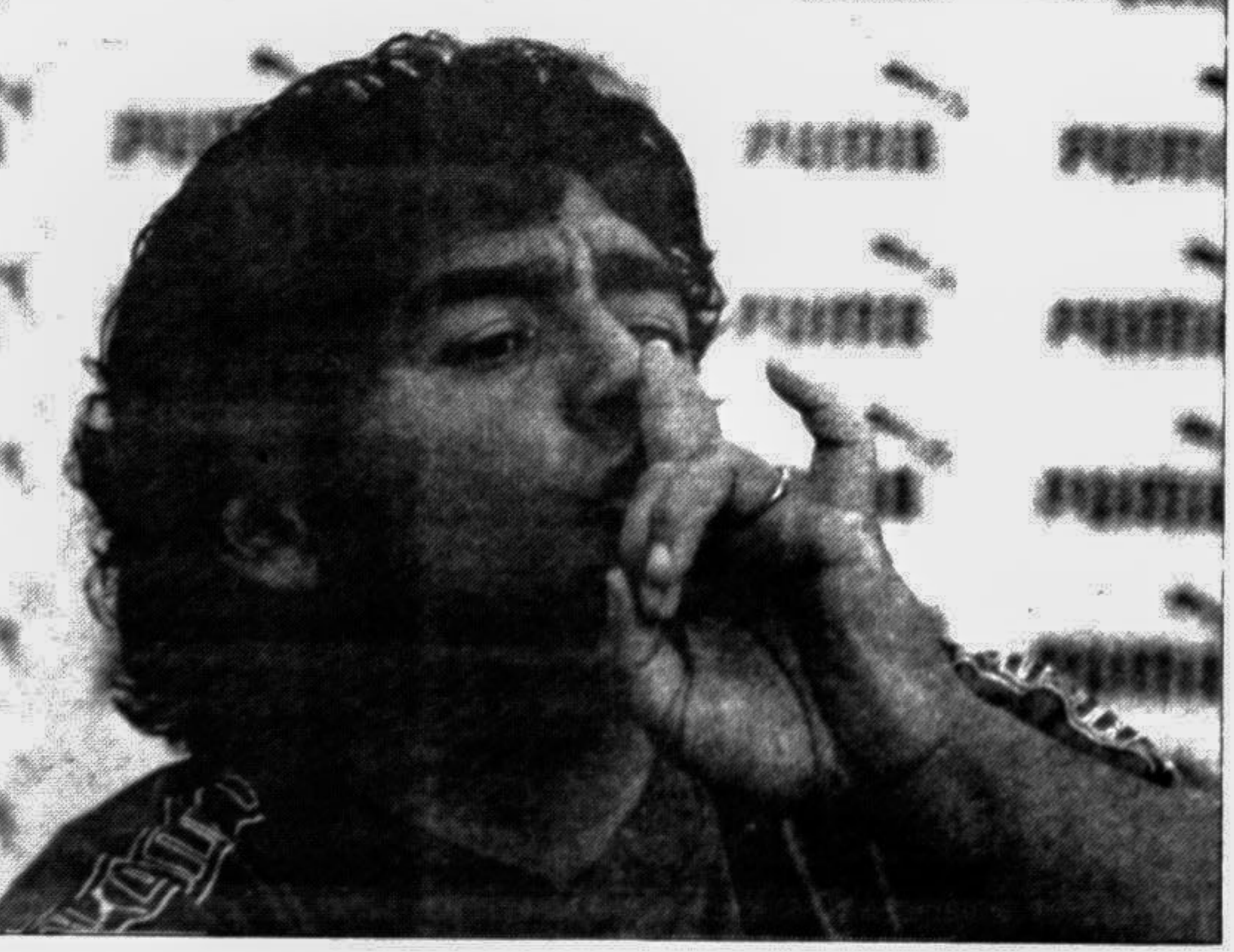
Lens, second at the start of play, failed to win for the fourth straight game losing 1-0 at Guingamp. Liberator international Christophe Wreh hit the decisive goal.

Bastia kept in touch as top-scoring marksman Anton Drobnyak hit a brace in a 3-1 win at Strasbourg which put them third on goal difference ahead of Metz, 1-0 winners at struggling Nantes.

Bordeaux, the only other unbeaten team in the First Division, crushed Lille 3-0 on Saturday thanks to goals from Didier Tholot (2) and the in-form Jean-pierre Papin.

In the Dutch league, Feyenoord Rotterdam beat Twente Eindhoven 1-0 to go top as previous leaders PSV Eindhoven lost for the first time this season — 2-0 at Graaafschap Doetinchem.

Midfielder Jean Paul van Gastel scored the vital goal for



Former Argentine soccer star Diego Maradona gestures during a press conference at Battersea Park, London on Sept 15. —AFP/UNB photo

tuguese international could do nothing after Fernando Correa pounced on a mistake by Luis Enrique Martinez to make it 1-1.

Another Brazilian forward Deportivo's Rivaldo, scored in his side's win at Atletico, who looked tired after their midweek Champions League win over Steaua Bucharest.

But two more of last year's success stories, UEFA Cup qualifiers Valencia and Espanyol, picked up their first points of the season.

A solitary Miguel Angel Benitez goal gave Espanyol

merly with Cologne, blasted a hat-trick in Werder's 5-1 home win over VfL Bochum.

In France, Paris St Germain recaptured the lead with a 1-0 victory at Cannes despite losing inspirational goalkeeper Bernard Lama with a knee injury.

Lama was the star of the match, saving his team several times notably in the 84th minute when he stopped a penalty kicked by Cannes' Laurent Charvet.

But the international goalkeeper, yet to concede a goal in seven matches since the re-

Feyenoord, fooling Twente goalkeeper Sander Boschker with a shot from a tight angle which found the net at the near post.

PSV, who appeared jaded after their midweek trip to Georgia for a Cup Winners' Cup clash, badly missed strikers Rene Eydellkamp and Luc Nilis, both sidelined through injury.

They managed to pull a goal back through Brazilian striker Marcelo but, despite increasing pressure, failed to find an equaliser.

Feyenoord now head the table on 16 points from PSV on 15. Amsterdam Ajax continued their mini-revival by beating Sparta Rotterdam 2-0 thanks to goals from Tijani Babangida and Finnish Striker Jari Litmanen.

The win took the Amsterdam team from ninth to seventh in the table, five points behind PSV.

Reigning champions Porto struggled to secure their 2-0 win over northern side Chaves.

In Portugal, Benfica crushed newly-promoted Setubal 5-1 to lead the First Division championship on goal difference ahead of familiar rivals Porto and Sporting Lisbon after three games.

Benfica, who overwhelmed Polish side Ruch Chorzow 5-1 in the Cup Winners' Cup on Thursday, opened the scoring with a goal by midfielder Bruno Caires after a pass from captain Joao Pinto in the 28th minute.

Sporting were in action of Saturday, scoring a 4-3 win at Rio Ave, and now also have seven points from three games. Braga can boast a similar record after a 4-1 win over CUF Vicente.

Sun rises in Surrey

LONDON, Sept 16: Surrey put 14 years of frustration behind them by capturing the Sunday League title with a convincing seven-wicket win over Glamorgan in the season's final round of matches, reports Reuter.

Led by England opener Alec Stewart, who had never previously won a trophy during his long career at The Oval, Surrey have been one of county cricket's major under-achievers since their last domestic triumph, the Nat West Trophy in 1982.

But the arrival of Australian coach Dave Gilbert this season has brought about a change of attitude and their new-found sense of purpose was evident in the way Glamorgan were swept aside after totalling only 159 runs in their 40 overs.

Stewart was at the crease on 41 not out when the winning runs arrived with 7.1 overs remaining, and his side still have a chance of the championship title if they can win the first class game against the same opponents today.

"We have always had a talented side but I think it's fair to say we have been a bit immature until this summer," said Stewart. "I believe now we have one trophy we can go on and win more."

The result made the game between chasing rivals Nottinghamshire and Yorkshire irrelevant, although Notts 24-run victory ensured they finished second in the table behind Surrey on run rate.

Records tumbled at Chester-Le-Street as Leicestershire piled up 344 for four, the second highest total in the history of the 40-over competition, on their way to a 13-run victory over Durham.

Their 344 for four was 19 short of Somerset's total at Neath six years ago and included the fastest Sunday century of the season, Darren Maddy reaching the target off 54 balls.

West Indian Phil Simmons set the tempo with 115 off 95 balls.

Coetzer gets into gear

TOKYO, Sept 16: Amanda Coetzer pounded out a 6-1, 6-2 victory over Kerry-Anne Guse, and another seed, Naoko Sawamatsu, cruised past Ann Grossman 6-1, 6-3, Monday in the first round of the Nihonri Ladies tennis tournament, reports AP.

No. 5 seed Coetzer dominated throughout a match without any service aces and with only one deuce, in the third game of the first set, in which the South African broke her Australian opponent's serve.

Coetzer is currently ranked 15th on the Corel WTA Tour rankings, while Guse is 124th.

No. 7 Sawamatsu of Japan suffered one service break, in the next to last game, against Grossman, an American ranked 75th.

"It was a little windy out there, but I was serving better than I thought I would," said Sawamatsu, who is ranked 31st.

Other seeds were idle Monday. They include top seed Monica Seles of the United States, who shares the world No. 1 ranking with German Steffi Graf, second-seeded Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario of Spain, third seed Kimiko Date of Japan, defending champion and No. 4 seed Mary Pierce of France, sixth-seeded Ai Sugiyama of Japan and eighth seed Wang Shi-ting of Taiwan.

ATP rankings

PARIS, Sept 16 (AFP): ATP men's tennis rankings issued on Monday:

1	Pete Sampras (USA)	4,543	pts
2	Michael Chang (USA)	4,010	
3	Thomas Muster (AUS)	3,612	
4	Goran Ivanisevic (CRO)	3,161	
5	Yevgeny Kafelnikov (RUS)	3,059	
6	Boris Becker (GER)	2,785	
7	Wayne Ferreira (RSA)	2,701	
8	Richard Krajcek (NED)	2,434	
9	Andre Agassi (USA)	2,292	
10	Marcelo Rios (CHI)	2,101	
11	Jim Courier (USA)	2,001	
12	Mahvil Washington (USA)	1,891	
13	Todd Martin (USA)	1,805	
14	Thomas Enqvist (SWE)	1,786	
15	Alberto Costa (SPA)	1,758	
16	Felix Mantilla (SPA)	1,578	
17	Cedric Pioline (FRA)	1,557	
18	Alberto Berasategui (SPA)	1,479	
19	Stefan Edberg (SWE)	1,449	
20	Mark Philippoussis (AUS)	1,448	

Berger baffles Leicester



LONDON, Sept 16: Czech international Patrick Berger scored his first two goals for Liverpool on Sunday in a 3-0 win at newly-promoted Leicester which took the Merseysiders to the top of the Premier League, reports Reuter.

Ruud Gullit's Chelsea, level on points with Liverpool before the start of play, were held 1-1 at home by League Cup holders Aston Villa in the day's other match.

Berger, who came on at half-time for out-of-sorts Liverpool striker Stan Collymore, blasted the ball home from the edge of the box just before the hour mark after a neat exchange of passes with England forward Steve McManaman.

Nineteen minutes later the Czech picked up the ball in

midfield, danced through the Leicester defence and slammed the ball home, again with his favoured left foot.

In between, Michael Thomas scored with a half-hit volley which Leicester's American goalkeeper Kasey Keller fumbled into his own net.

Berger, who supported Liverpool from a distance as a body, joined the club last month from German champions Borussia Dortmund for 3.0 million pounds (4.65 million dollars).

The result took Liverpool, who have won a record 18 English leagues titles, two points clear of overnight leaders and arch-rivals Manchester United at the top of the league.

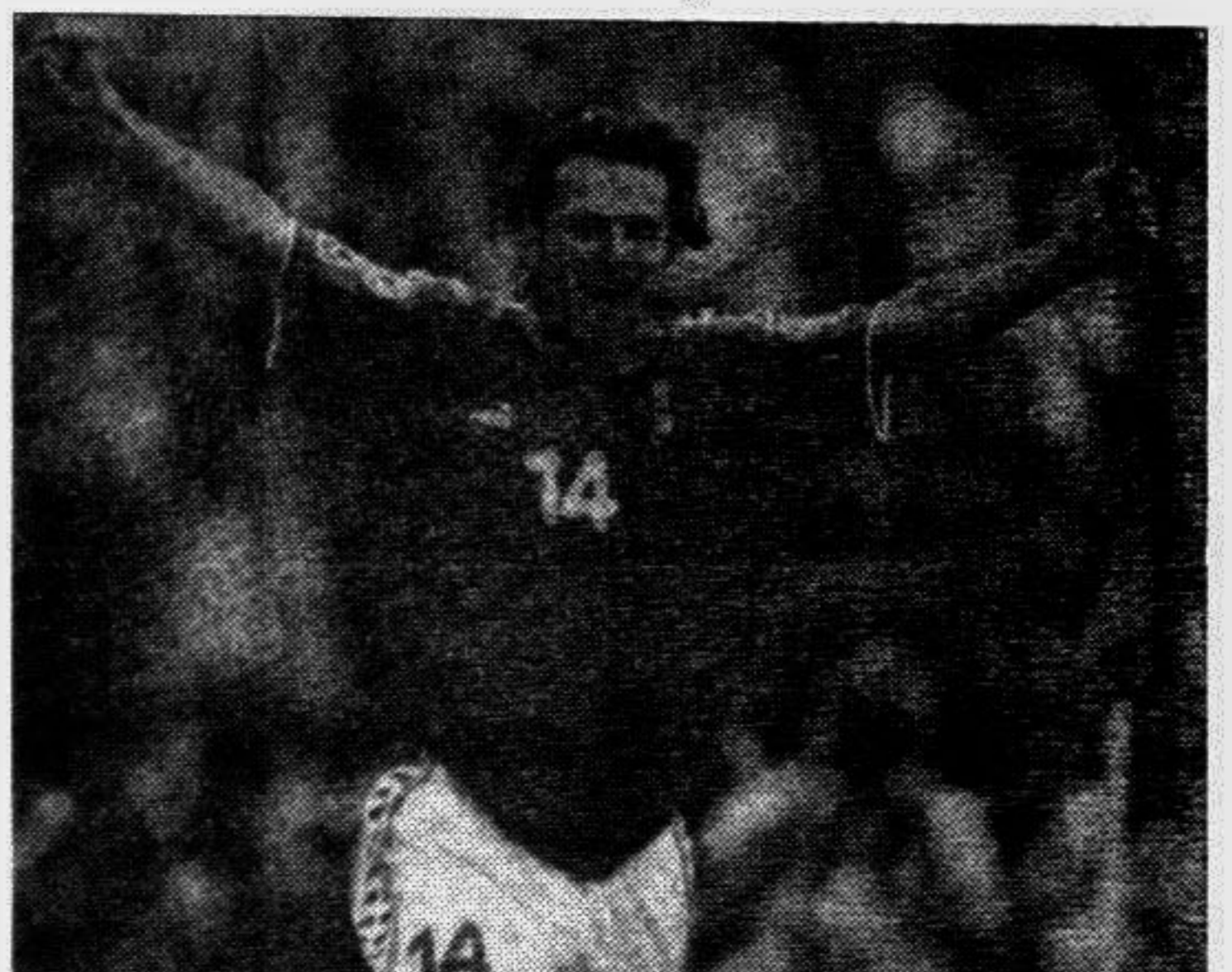
But they could be overtaken by early pace-setters Sheffield Wednesday, who travel to crisis-ridden Arsenal tonight.

At Stamford Bridge, Ireland international Andy Townsend, facing his former club, scored against the run of play from a 18th-minute free-kick to give Villa the lead.

The Villa captain positioned himself in a three-man wall in front of the ball, 25 metres from goal.

Dwight Yorke, standing next to him, flicked the ball to one side allowing Townsend to spin and crack a dipping left-foot shot past Chelsea goalkeeper Kevin Hitchcock.

Chelsea pulled level on the stroke of halftime through French international defender Frank Leboeuf, whose third goal of the season makes him the club's top scorer.



PATRICK BERGER

Arsenal to assist Adams



LONDON, Sept 16: Arsenal pledged their support for club skipper Tony Adams on Sunday following the player's public admission he was an alcoholic, reports Reuter.

Adams, who will be 30 next month, told the club of his

problems on Friday and was allowed to take time off from training on Sunday to spend time with his family. He has not played this season because of a knee injury.

He told of the extent of his problem to teammates and after training with the Arsenal players over the weekend he faced the media to explain he was "on the road to recovery".

While the other Arsenal players were training in preparation for today's Premier league game with Sheffield Wednesday Adams was an absentee from the club's training ground.

Pat Rice, in charge of the club after caretaker boss Stewart Houston quit on Friday, insisted there was nothing to be read into Adams' absence.

Tony has worked hard in the past two days and we've let him spend today with his family, said Rice. "We hope to arrange a friendly match for him to play in during the early part of next week."

What Tony has given to this club is unbelievable and there were never any reservations in

Wenger new Arsenal boss

LONDON, Sept 16: Frenchman Arsene Wenger was confirmed as the new manager of Arsenal in succession to Bruce Rioch on Monday, reports AFP.

The appointment of the 47-year-old Wenger, who leaves Japanese club Grampus Eight to take over at the troubled London club, ends weeks of speculation following the dismissal of Rioch five days before the start of the season.

Former Monaco coach Wenger, who becomes the first Frenchman to manage an English club, will take over at Highbury on September 30.

He will take the helm at a club facing a multitude of problems.

Caretaker manager Stewart Houston departed under a cloud on Friday after six years as assistant at the club, only adding to the chaos which has beset the Gunners since Rioch's shock sacking.

The squad is in desperate need of fresh blood and several key players are reported to be unsettled.

The 1994 European Cup Winners Cup winners are also on the verge of elimination from Europe after last week's 3-2 defeat at home in the UEFA Cup first round, first leg by German side Borussia Muenchengladbach.

FA's rude awakening

LONDON, Sept 16: Professional English soccer players will face random breath tests after matches and training sessions, the Football Association (FA) said on Monday, reports Reuter.

"We will be testing players at every professional league club this season, either after matches or at the end of training sessions," FA spokesman Steve Double said.

"If a player is drinking enough to produce a positive test after a game it would indicate a serious drink problem."

Leboeuf sporting a stylish pair of royal blue boots to match his kit, stole in at the back post to squeeze home an aimless cross from Italian defender Roberto Matteo.

Chelsea took control in the second half but failed to find the winner which would have kept them in touch with Liverpool, their next opponents in the Premier league.

Muster pockets the seventh

BOGOTA, Colombia, Sept 16: Thomas Muster won his seventh ATP Tour title this year by beating defending champion Nicolas Pietrangeli of Ecuador 6-7 (6/8), 6-2, 6-3 in the final of the Colombian World Series here on Sunday, reports AFP.

The 28-year-old Austrian, who has won 40 of his 42 titles on clay courts, has now won one more tournament than world number one Pete Sampras this year to tie the American for the number of career victories.

The two men were second behind Boris Becker for the number of career titles among active players. The German has won 46 tournaments.

Muster, third in the men's world rankings, qualified for the ATP Tour World Championships in Hannover in November.

Muster has now won 40 out of 44 claycourt finals — all his seven finals this year were on clay.

giving something back to him when he needs it.

"The best result we could ever hope for is to see him out on the pitch playing for the first team again. Hopefully that will not be too long."

The English FA also offered sympathy at the news of Adams' demise and their spokesman David Davies said: "Tony Adams can be assured of our total support in sorting out any problems he has."

His role as England captain during Euro '96 has been widely and rightly recognised as considerable.

Gordon Taylor, chief executive of the players' union — the Professional Footballers' Association also pledged his backing for Adams.

"I will be making contact with Tony this week and offering the support of the PFA and any help we can provide," said Taylor. "I have the greatest admiration for him as a person, a captain and a player."

"Our position with Tony is the same as it was for Paul Merson when he confessed his problems with drink, drugs and gambling, and just as it would be written any of our members."

This is a very personal situation, and the decision to want help has to come from the player himself."

Tragic!
LONDON, Sept 16: Police reported that two people died in the Great North Run on Sunday, reports AFP.

The male runners were among more than 30,000 people taking part in the famous half-marathon from Newcastle to South Shields sea front in the north of England.

A police spokesman said: "This is one of the biggest races of its kind in the world and it's not rare for someone to die, but two deaths are unusual."



Aston Villa custodian Michael Oakes dives after Chelsea's Frank Leboeuf's placing shot went past him during their Premier league match at Stamford Bridge on Sept 15. —AFP/UNB photo