



The Malaysian team who won the Bangabandhu Cup beating PSM Ujung Pandang of Indonesia in the final.

—Star photo

Drena delays NZ Open qtrs

AUCKLAND, Jan 10: Wind and rain, courtesy of cyclone Drena forced the quarterfinals of the New Zealand Open tennis tournament to be abandoned here today, reports AFP.

Play did manage to get under way in the early afternoon, and American Jan Michael Gambill took a 2-1 lead, with serve, over Sweden's Jonas Bjorkman before worsening conditions forced them from the court.

Organisers hope to play the quarterfinals and semifinals Saturday with the final on

Yevgeny joins absentees



MELBOURNE, Jan 10: World tennis number four Yevgeny Kafelnikov today joined a growing casualty list as injury field before the Australian Open.

Kafelnikov was forced to pull out of the year's first Grand Slam with a broken hand, while doubts surrounded the fitness of fellow seeds Jim Courier and Thomas Enqvist.

The French Open champion

on's withdrawal removed one potential threat to Pete Sampras, the world number one and top seed, before the tournament starts on Monday.

Sampras, who won in Melbourne three years ago and is chasing his second successive Grand Slam title after his US Open triumph last year, will play a qualifier after the first round draw was made today.

Defending Australian Open champion Boris Becker was handed a tougher assignment when the computer paired him with improving young Spa-

niard Carlos Moya, ranked 28 in the world.

Becker, the sixth seed here and a six-time Grand Slam winner, lost in three sets against Moya at last year's Paris Open, their only previous meeting.

"Carlos is not a typical Spanish clay court player because he is able to play on quicker surfaces, which is going to make it more dangerous," Becker told reporters.

In the women's draw, world number one top seed and overwhelming favourite Steffi Graf will play Janette Husarova of Slovakia in the first round.

Swiss teenager Martina Hingis, seeded four and regarded as the biggest threat to stop the German winning her fifth Australian Open, was drawn in the opposite half of the draw, clearing the way for a possible final showdown.

In a further boost for tournament officials Sampras and Becker, whose rivalry last season enlivened the sport in the wake of Andre Agassi's decline, were also kept apart in the draw and can only meet here in the final on January 26.

If Sampras beats the qualifier and the next two matches go his way as expected, his first seeded opponent should be number 16 Alberto Barasategui of Spain in the fourth round.

Kafelnikov, who was competing this week at the Colonial Classic warm-up exhibition event, suffered the fracture in an accident while training in the gymnasium on Thursday. Classic organiser Colin Stubbs

said.

Former world number one Courier, the Australian Open champion in 1992 and 1993 and seeded 14 this year, pulled out of his game at the Classic today because of hamstring strain. Stubbs said.

Judge S. Thyagarajan said he took into account the letters of support, but also had to consider the size of the sum involved, according to the newspaper The New Paper.

Lim, who joined the Singapore national team in 1977 and was voted footballer of the year in 1980, pleaded guilty to taking the money from an account holding US currency in 1991.

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