

Nigerian FA in disarray

LAGOS, Feb 1: More than half of the Nigerian Football Association's technical committee resigned here on Friday, reports AFP.

Injury sidelines Radulescu

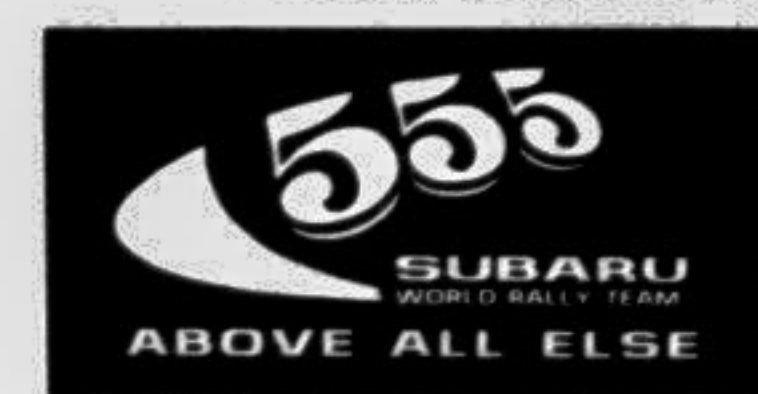
ZAGREB, Feb 1: German Alex Radulescu was forced to quit his Croatian indoor quarter-final against title-holder Goran Ivanisevic on Friday because of a back injury, reports Reuter.

Rally of Sweden Feb 7

Piero Latti and the 555 Subaru World Rally Team began the 1997 season with an outstanding victory, decisively winning the Rally of Monte Carlo on the debut outing of the Subaru Impreza 555 WRC97. The team now have the resolve to build on their early lead in the Championship with a strong campaign on the second round, the Rally of Sweden (7-10 February), says a press release.

Colin McRae and Kenneth Eriksson will take on driving duties for this specialist event which is the only true snow rally in the calendar. Colin has a particularly convincing record on this rally, which has historically been dominated by Scandinavian drivers — three podium placings since 1992 and, allied with Kenneth's local knowledge and his two wins in recent years, the pairing should prove to be a formidable force.

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knowledge in the preparation process is invaluable. The entire event through the Varmland and Dalarna regions of the country is 1,614 kms long, with 24 special stages covering 413 kms. And, new to the route this year is a super special stage in the centre of the host town, Karlstad, along the frozen river.

The 555 Subaru World Rally Team drivers have a particular passion for this event, enjoying the courage it demands, and Kenneth of course reveling in the support he enjoys from his home crowd. United by a common desire to win both the Drivers' and Manufacturers' Championships, the team will be eager to build on their early lead over Ford and Mitsubishi.

WACA feels Curtly wrath



PERTH, Feb 1: Curtly Ambrose reminded the form of his match-winning performance here four years ago with a hostile spell of fast bowling as Australia slumped to be all out for 243 on the first day of the fifth Test against the West Indies at the WACA Ground, reports AP.

Ambrose — playing possibly his last Test on Australian soil — began the rout of the home team in the first over of the match and finished the day with five for 43 after 18 menacing overs on a searing hot summer day.

The West Indies faced eight torrid overs to score 25 without losing a wicket in reply, with Sherwin Campbell on 20 not out and Robert Samuels yet to score.

Ambrose's bowling upstaged another fighting innings from left-hander Michael Bevan, who once again dropped anchor to provide the backbone of the Australian innings.

Australia collapsed on either side of a 120-run fifth-wicket stand between Mark Waugh and Bevan as temperatures reached 46 degrees (115F).

Ambrose who missed the West Indies' fourth Test defeat in Adelaide because of a groin injury, destroyed the Australian top and middle order in two fiery spells in the morning and evening sessions.

He began the day by removing opener Matthew Hayden for a third ball duck and later removed Steve Waugh (1) as Australia slumped to 49 for four before lunch.

Ambrose, who took 7-25 and inspired an innings defeat which gave the West Indies the series 2-1 at the WACA four years ago, was once again unplayable.

A pitch producing disconcerting bounce helped Ambrose in his cause as four batsmen fell to viciously bounced deliveries, while Ian Healy was beaten for pace.

The giant fast bowler removed Healy and Paul Reiffel (0) with successive deliveries in the last session, but Shane Warne thwarted his ambitions of completing a hat-trick.

Two in-form Australian batsmen — Mark Waugh and

Bevan — continued from where they left off in Adelaide during their respective half-centuries and stood between the West Indies pacemen and another Australian collapse for just over two hours.

The pair battled through the post-lunch session, adding 110 runs in 30 overs as the West Indies lost skipper Courtney Walsh and then Ambrose to niggling injuries.

Walsh pulled up after the last delivery of his 19th over with a hamstring injury and handed the skipper's duties to Brian Lara.

Ambrose finally provided the visitors with the much-



AMBROSE ... 5 for 43

awaited breakthrough in the final session — Sherwin Campbell holding on to a brilliant catch at third slip to end Mark Waugh's innings.

Waugh followed his innings of 82 in Adelaide with a 181-

ball 79 that included eight boundaries and an imperiously driven six off the bowling of Carl Hooper.

When he reached 45, Waugh completed 4,000 Test runs in his 60th Test.

Bevan received limited support from the tail — Warne (9) and Andrew Bichel (15) adding 30 and 27 runs for the eighth and ninth wickets — but his teammates didn't hang long enough to give the left-hander his maiden Test century.

Bevan, who was unbeaten on 85 in Adelaide, was 87 not out when Glenn McGrath gloved a catch to Ambrose off Ian Bishop as Australia hit six for 74 after tea. Bevan hit 12 fours off 164 balls in his determined knock.

Bishop finished with 3-54 as the tourists kept alive their hopes of winning the Test and ending a five-match series they already have lost on a winning note.

SCOREBOARD Scoreboard on the first day of the fifth and final Test between Australia and West Indies at the WACA Ground on Saturday.

Table with columns: AUSTRALIA: First innings, Player, Runs, Wickets.

Table with columns: WEST INDIES: First innings, Player, Runs, Wickets.

Table with columns: Bowling, Player, O, M, R, W.

Triangular tourney India-S Africa tie today

Sports Reporter Inform South Africa will be aiming to extend their all-win record in the triangular limited overs tournament when they take on India at Port Elizabeth today.

Star Sports will cover the match from 2 pm (BST) onwards.

Gooch has a rival

LONDON, Feb 1: Former Gloucestershire and Durham captain David Graveney is set to compete against Graham Gooch for the job as chairman of England's cricket selectors, reports Reuter.

The way was cleared for Graveney to enter the race after conflicting interests were resolved between his post as general secretary of the English Professional Cricketers' Association and the role he is seeking as chairman of selectors.

Talks between the Association and the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) led to an agreement to amend the chairman's so he would not be involved in disciplinary measures against his members.

Shanghai Open Krosnak, Volkov in final

BEIJING, Feb 1: Seventh-seeded Jan Krosnak defeated qualifier Leander Paes Saturday and eighth-seeded Alexander Volkov edged past Brett Steven to advance to the final of the 303,000 dollars Shanghai Open, reports AP.

Krosnak of Sweden handily downed Paes 6-2, 6-4, ending the Indian's three-round string of victories.

Volkov of Russia battled Steven, an unseeded New Zealand, 7-6 (7-5), 7-5 for the win.

Krosnak and Volkov will play the last match on Sunday.

Boris' business aide under scrutiny

MUNICH, Feb 1: The business adviser to tennis star Boris Becker is being investigated for tax fraud it was revealed here on Friday, reports AFP.

But magistrate Manfred Wick declined to say if the action against Axel Meyer-Woelden was linked to a search carried out in Becker's house by tax inspectors shortly before Christmas.

Last December the mass circulation Bild Zeitung revealed that tax inspectors had searched Becker's home as part of a probe into his tax situation for 1990 to 1993, when the former world number one lived in the tax haven of Monaco.

Bild said four inspectors left his house armed with several dossiers although a spokesman for Munich's tax authorities refused to confirm or deny the story.

Becker himself was not at home at the time of the inspectors' visit.

Earlier this month a German court jailed Peter Graf, father of women's world tennis champion Steffi Graf, for three years for tax evasion on his daughter's earnings.

The 58-year-old Graf was found guilty of avoiding tax of over about 12 million dollars by failing to declare earnings of some 26 million dollars which was disguised through front companies.

Linford loves to linger

LONDON, Feb 1: Linford Christie appeared dressed as a spaceman at a London nightclub on Friday but insisted he has completed his final mission as a major championship sprinter, reports Reuter.

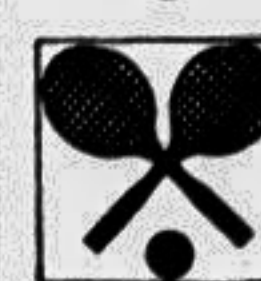
The former Olympic champion, now 36, was in typically spiky form as he helped launch his sponsors' new training shoe before flying to Australia on Monday for warm weather training and coaching.

He did not rule out trying to win a place in the British team at the European Cup in Munich in June, even though team coach Malcolm Arnold has indicated there are a number of promising young candidates, but said he wanted to concentrate on helping other sprinters.

"I'm going to run for my club a lot, but no majors," said Christie. "I'm just having fun now. Athletics isn't my life. I've got other things. I've achieved all my goals and now I'm out there trying to help other athletes achieve theirs."

His public relations advisors had promised that Christie would be providing "earthlings" with "information gleaned from alien life forms." As it turned out, those present at the "Ministry of Sound" in Elephant and Castle, South London were merely shown his latest advertisement and given an opportunity to watch Christie act the role of a "nutty professor" in a hastily-erected laboratory on the dance-floor.

Queen versus princess



TOKYO, Feb 1: Steffi Graf and Martina Hingis, the world's top two players, advanced to the final Saturday in the Toray Pan Pacific Open women's tennis tournament, reports agencies.

That set up a showdown between the longtime queen of women's tennis and the 16-year-old Swiss phenomenon who is fresh from capturing the Australian Open a week ago.

"It's not going to be an easy match tomorrow. She has been playing really well in the last few weeks," said Graf, 27, the winner of 102 singles tournaments. "I have to serve well, move around faster and make her run."

Graf was ousted in the fourth round of the Australian Open by Brenda Schultz-McCarthy of the Netherlands, but gained revenge Saturday by downing Schultz-McCarthy, the No 8 seed, 6-1, 7-5.

In addition to the injured knee, Schultz-McCarthy's power serves also troubled Graf in the second set.

Hingis was leading held two match points at 5-3 in the second set when she suffered a form reversal and lost four consecutive games as Huber staged a remarkable comeback.

The 926,250 dollars Toray Open, being held at the 8,800-seat Tokyo Metropolitan Gymnasium, is one of the biggest Women's Tennis Association tournaments outside of the Grand Slam series.

Graf raised her personal record against Hingis to 5-1 in the championships final in New York in November with a full-set victory of 6-3, 4-6, 6-0, 4-6, 6-0. They first met in a Paris tournament in February 1995 in which Graf won 6-2, 6-3.

Hingis knows it won't be easy to beat the veteran Graf, but she isn't giving in just yet.

Going into Sunday's final, Hingis has won 13 straight matches so far this year in Sydney, Melbourne and Tokyo.

In the doubles semifinals later in the day, No 1 seed Hingis and her American partner Gigi Fernandez beat Kristie Boogert of the Netherlands and Irina Spirlea of Romania 6-1, 6-1.

In the doubles final Sunday, Hingis and Fernandez take on the second-seeded pair of American Lindsay Davenport and Natasha Zvereva of Belarus, who advanced by defeating Spain's Conchita Martinez and Patricia Tarabini of Argentina 6-2, 6-3.

The doubles event offers a first prize of 45,000 dollars compared with 150,000 dollars for the singles.

Hings, whose victory at Melbourne made her the youngest Grand Slam winner this century, ousted fourth seed Anke Huber of Germany 6-1, 5-7, 6-2.

But both had problems in the semifinal matches Hingis with form and Graf with injury.

Hingis squandered six match points in the second set against battling Huber before winning, while Graf had a recurrence of a knee injury.

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World number two Swiss Martina Hingis breathes a sigh of relief after winning a hard-fought point against Anke Huber of Germany in their semifinal clash of the Toray Pan Pacific Open in Tokyo yesterday. Hingis entered the final with a 6-1, 5-7, 6-2 win.

Nagano in line of fire



TOKYO, Feb 1: The head of the Japan Olympic Committee (JOC) has slammed organisers of the 1998 Winter Olympics in Nagano, saying the Games won't be a success unless they do a better job, reports AP.

Hironoshin Furuhashi complained that he hears "nothing but bad news" about the preparations, the Kyodo news agency reported Saturday.

Furuhashi's comments come on the heels of several disputes between Nagano organizers and officials of international sports federations, which have affected some of the Games' premier events.

The international figure skating federation, for instance, has threatened to pull its competition out of the Nagano region unless its leaders are provided with better hotel accommodations during the Games.

Hockey officials, expecting high interest because NHL stars will be making their Olympic debut, complained the new hockey arena wasn't big enough and temporary seating had to be added. And the international alpine skiing federation says the downhill course is too short.

Furuhashi urged organisers to adopt a more "positive approach" toward participating sports federations, Kyodo said.

"I'm asked by a lot of people whether the Nagano Olympics will turn out OK," the former Olympic swimmer said. "If the committee does not show a more enthusiastic attitude, a good mood surrounding the Games will not emerge."

He added: "If it continues like this, I think the Nagano Games will not be successful."

Furuhashi could be not reached at his home Saturday night for comment.

The Games open on the slopes of the Japan Alps on Feb. 7, 1998, just over a year from now. But preparations have been plagued by cost overruns and a variety of disputes.

Most recently, Nagano Gov. Goro Yoshimura called speed skating uninteresting and compared the event to "water beetles on a whirligig." After an outraged protest by the skating federation, the governor apologized.

Ironically, Furuhashi, 68, also holds the title of vice president of the Nagano Olympic organising committee. But unlike Furuhashi, a longtime sports official, most committee staff members are dispatched from the Nagano prefectural government and local governments.

The biggest concern is the ever-swelling cost of the Games. The latest cost estimate put the bill at dhs 800 million, up from the initial estimate of 644 million dollars made when Nagano was picked as host in 1991.

Capobianco case put on hold

MONTE CARLO, Feb 1: The arbitration panel of the International Amateur Athletic Federation which was to review the doping case of Australian sprinter Dean Capobianco next month has been postponed until March, the IAAF said on Thursday, reports Reuter.

The IAAF said in a statement it had agreed to a request by Capobianco's lawyers for a postponement and the panel would now meet on March 15-16 instead of February 8-9.

It is the second time this month that Capobianco's case has been postponed.

The IAAF asked earlier in January for more time to examine the Australian's claims that a positive dope test in Hengelo, Netherlands in May last year could have been caused by eating contaminated meat.

Advertisement for Rajshahi City Corporation. Includes logo, title 'রাজশাহী সিটি কর্পোরেশন', and a table of projects with columns for project name, budget, and completion date.