

Sport



Boxing promoter Don King (C) holds up Evander Holyfield (R) and Mike Tyson's hands after a press conference in New York on Feb 3. —AFP/UNB photo

Holyfield, a hopeful hulk

NEW YORK, Feb 4 (AP) — Same name, different fighter, same result. That's how Evander Holyfield views his May 3 rematch against Mike Tyson.

"I don't look for the Tyson I fought Nov. 9," Holyfield said Monday. "But don't look for the same Holyfield either. I'll be better. I'm confident that I can go out and do the same thing."

"I hope to do better next time ... I promise," Tyson said in a seven-second address at a news conference that formally announced the rematch at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas.

During a question-and-answer session later, however, Tyson said, "I'm going to win the title for a third time. I just had a bad night. I'm the best fighter in the world. If he beats me this time, he'll beat me at the best I've ever been. I'm looking for a knockout."

Tyson was a 3-1 favorite at the MGM Grand sports book to regain the WBA heavyweight title. He was a 7-1 choice when he was stopped in the 10th round by Holyfield at the Grand in November.

One of Tyson's problems in

preparing for the first fight, co-manager John Horne said, was that most saw Holyfield "as no real threat to Mike Tyson. Nobody took him seriously."

Richie Giachetti has since replaced Jay Bright as Tyson's trainer.

There was a lot of trash talk by the Tyson camp at a New York news conference before the first fight. Everyone was respectful Monday.

"This is the type of atmosphere a Tyson-Holyfield fight is supposed to bring," promoter Don King said.

Tyson thanked Holyfield for giving him the chance. Holyfield thanked Tyson for having given him a chance so that he could give Tyson a chance.

"The Sound and the Fury" is what King is calling the rematch. At times Monday, it seemed a better name might be "Hearts and Flowers."

Whatever anyone chooses to call it, it's a major fight. The 34-year-old Holyfield, who got 11 million dollars in November, will get at least 35 million in May. Tyson, who made 30 million dollars in the first fight, will get at least 20 million for the rematch.



An unidentified employee of the Sporting Goods and Fashion Fair poses with a new 'Big Cat' off-road inline skate in Munich on Feb 3. —AFP/UNB photo

Maldini's chosen ones

ROME, Feb 4: Italy will rely on three stars of the English Premier League for the vital World Cup Group Two qualifying match that the "Azzurri" will play against England at Wembley Feb. 12, reports AP.

Gianfranco Zola and Roberto Di Matteo, teammates at Chelsea, and Fabrizio Ravanelli, of Middlesbrough, were named by newly-appointed coach Cesare Maldini in a list of 21 players for the match featuring the two undefeated group powerhouses.

England enter the match with three wins in as many games and nine points in the group standings. Italy have six points from two wins in two matches.

Maldini, who succeeded Arrigo Sacchi on the national team bench in December, was conservative in his choices, naming mostly players who were part of Sacchi's team.

However, Maldini's tactic will be different as he showed in the recent friendly against Northern Ireland in Palermo, a 2-0 victory in which he tested a tight defence using a sweeper.

Sacchi centred his defence on midfield pressing and the off-side tactics.

The side also included a fourth expatriate, Christian Panucci, who plays in Spain with Real Madrid.

Defending league champions AC Milan who is going through a serious crisis in this season, contributed defenders Alessandro Costacurta and Paolo Maldini and midfielder Demetrio Albertini.

Paolo Maldini, son of the national team coach, was re-

ported fit, dispelling fears he would not play. He left the field during last Sunday's league match that Milan lost 3-2 at home to Sampdoria.

League leaders Juventus have four players on the roster — goalie Angelo Peruzzi, defender Ciro Ferrara, midfielder Angelo Di Livio and imaginative forward Alessandro Del Piero.

Parma also have four including defender Antonio Benarrivo and striker Enrico Chiesa. Both are returning to the national side after a brief absence.

As expected, Maldini did not name two of the leading First Division scorers — Sampdoria teammates Roberto Mancini and Vincenzo Montella. Both have been consistently left off despite their offensive skills.

The veteran Mancini has 13 goals this season and Montella, a rookie, has 12. Their goals have vaulted Sampdoria to second place in the overall league standings.

Also missing was AC Milan's virtuoso Roberto Baggio, off the national since his heroics in the 1994 World Cup.

After England, Italy take on Moldova at home on March 13. Other Group Two teams are Georgia and Poland.

Livio: Roberto Di Matteo; Demetrio Albertini; Dino Baggio; Diego Fuser; Amedeo Carbone.

FORWARDS: Pierluigi Casiraghi; Fabrizio Ravanelli; Gianfranco Zola; Alessandro Del Piero; Enrico Chiesa.

Roche sidelined

PARIS, Feb 4: Paris St Germain's central defender Alain Roche will miss the remainder of the soccer season because of a badly injured knee, his club said today, reports Reuter.

Roche, 29, will undergo surgery for torn ligaments on his right knee next week and will be out of action for five to six months, PSG said.

Roche, who had only recently returned after a two-month injury break, hurt the knee he had been nursing in a fall during Saturday's 1-1 draw at home to Cannes.

Walter hopeful

GLASGOW, Feb 4: Key midfielder Paul Gascoigne is likely to be fit for England's crucial World Cup qualifying match against Italy on Wednesday February 12, Rangers manager Walter Smith said on Monday, reports AFP.

The 29-year-old had his left ankle put in plaster last week after being injured in a collision playing for Rangers in a six-a-side tournament in Amsterdam, in which they finished third.

But Smith said he believes the former Newcastle, Tottenham and Lazio star will prove his fitness when England gather later this week to start their build-up.

King to be retried

NEW YORK, Feb 4: A federal judge on Monday refused to toss out insurance fraud charges against boxing promoter Don King, clearing the way for a second trial after a jury in the case could not reach a verdict more than a year ago, reports AP.

US District Judge Lawrence McKenna said in a written ruling that there was sufficient evidence to permit a retrial, although he did not immediately set a date.

King was accused of faking a contract with Lloyd's of London to collect 350,000 dollars in nonexistent training expenses for a cancelled bout. If convicted of nine counts of wire fraud, the 65-year-old promoter would face up to 45 years in federal prison and a 2,250,000-dollar fine.

King's lawyer, Peter Fleming Jr., did not immediately return a telephone call Monday but has said in the past that King was ready for the next legal round.

In his 45-page ruling Monday, McKenna noted that he was required by law to take as true the testimony of all government witnesses for the purposes of deciding whether a trial should take place.

King was indicted after his company submitted an insurance claim asking Lloyd's of London for 350,000 dollars in non-refundable training fees paid to Julio Cesar Chavez for a 1991 cancelled bout with Harold Brazier.

Chavez, former World Boxing Council super lightweight champion, testified that King paid him only 80,000 dollars to train and never told him about an insurance claim.

A decade ago, King was acquitted of skimming 1 million dollars from Don King Productions.

Swedish ban on boxing stays

STOCKHOLM, Feb 4: The Swedish parliament maintained its 27-year ban on boxing here on Monday despite a three party alliance that wanted the embargo lifted, reports AFP.

The legislature decided to prolong the ban despite the objections of the tripartite alliance, conservatives, former Communists and Christian Democrats, relying on medical advice which stated that the injuries sustained by fighters were too serious and boxing remained a dangerous sport.

Long slide for Agassi, Becker

PARIS, Feb 4 (AFP) — Revised ATP men's tennis rankings issued Monday after wrong amount of points were attributed after Zagreb Open:

1. Sampras	5774 (Pts)
2. Ivanisevic	3572
3. Muster	3492
4. Chang	3417
5. Kafelnikov	3367
6. Krajicek	2371
7. Rios	2329
8. Ferreira	2221
9. Moya	2171
10. Enqvist	2109
11. Costa	2036
12. Agassi	1948
13. Becker	1931
14. Martin	1840
15. Mantilla	1688
16. Edberg	1581
17. Henman	1540
18. Gustafsson	1537
19. Stich	1516
20. Berasategui	1477

Sampras tops earners' list

MONACO, Feb 4 (Reuter): Leading prize-money winners issued by the ATP Tour on Monday (in US dollars):

1. Sampras	457,178
2. Moya	253,889
3. Woodbridge	167,668
4. Ivanisevic	143,145
5. Muster	131,254
6. Woodforde	127,668
7. Henman	117,182
8. Courier	115,810
9. Chang	114,099
10. Bjorkman	93,221
11. O'Brien	75,010
12. Haarhuis	70,329
13. Rios	67,963
14. Krosjak	61,911
15. Mantilla	61,613
16. Costa	58,613
17. Sanchez	58,085
18. Enqvist	56,210
19. Eltingh	55,927
20. Tarango	55,372

Bangabandhu Smriti cricket

CHAPAINAWABGANJ, Feb 4: Ranghanu Cricket Club became champions defeating Bandhan Kriya Angan by three wickets in the final of the fourth Bangabandhu Smriti cricket tournament played at local stadium here today, reports BSS.

Allies buck up Brit bid

LONDON, Feb 4: Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland entered the war of words ranging over England's showdown with UEFA over the bid to stage the 2006 World Cup on Monday, reports AFP.

The other three home nations told the Football Association (FA) that they had no knowledge of UEFA's endorsement of Germany's bid for the competition until the "killer fax" from Switzerland arrived last week.

And at a hastily-arranged meeting at a hotel in London's Heathrow Airport, they gave FA chief executive Graham Kelly their unanimous backing to bring football's premier event back to Britain for the first time since 1966.

"We certainly knew nothing about UEFA making a decision two years ago, and if they did then it's news to us," said Irish FA secretary David Bowen.

Bowen added that the minutes of the meeting supposed to have decided in Germany's favour showed no such decision.

David Collins, secretary of the FA of Wales, added: "I was at these meetings and have no memory of such a decision being taken."

Kelly said that confirmation from the three other home nations of the FA's version of events — flatly contradicted by UEFA president Lennart Johansson — was accurate.

"All three associations have confirmed they were equally unaware of any decision being

taken by the executive committee in support of Germany's candidacy," said Kelly, who also received the full support of Prime Minister John Major.

The support of the home nations is no surprise, as it is possible that both Scotland and Wales could be involved in staging games if the FA bid is successful.

Johansson said on Sunday that he would be sending a delegation to London to "clarify" the issue but Kelly said the FA were in no mood to back down to UEFA.

"I don't think it will do our cause any good to start trading insults with UEFA, but we have made it clear that we are astonished that they should send us the fax they did," he added.

"Now we are determined to press ahead with our bid. We know we have an excellent case and it is one that has to be heard."

"This is a bizarre situation," he said. "I'm sure they will ask us to step down and withdraw our bid but our position is clear."

"As soon as we received the fax from UEFA headquarters last week, we asked UEFA for an explanation, but none of the questions we asked have received anything near one."

"In fact the answers we have received have been totally unclear, and with the support we've had from many quarters we have no qualms at all in continuing to insist that our case is fully and properly heard."

Kelly dismissed the notion of a joint Anglo-German bid and also denied that the FA had

opened its campaign too late.

Germany's intention to bid for the tournament they last staged in 1974 was known as early as 1993, while the FA only announced its bid last summer.

But Kelly countered: "It was impossible for us to put in our bid or announce our intention before the end of EURO '96."

"That passed off very very well and we announced our intention to bid the day after the tournament finished."

"We have been talking about our bid for seven months often in the presence of senior UEFA officials but the idea that Germany had been given UEFA's full endorsement was not even remotely suggested."

"With EURO '96 we proved that we can stage a successful tournament, one that raised an awful lot of revenue and was played in trouble-free stadiums with a great atmosphere," Kelly added.

Earlier Prime Minister Major told reporters outside Downing Street, that he would be giving the FA's bid his full backing.

"The last time we played Germany, we lost on penalties," said Major in a reference to the European Championship semifinal in June.

"It was an extremely good game. We were very unlucky to lose. Whether we will lose as far as 2006 is concerned is a long way away."

"We think that the United Kingdom could stage the World Cup with skill and style and the Football Association will have the government's full support in its bid to do so."

Terry to go for talent-spotting

ADELAIDE, Feb 4: New Australian soccer coach Terry Venables, appointed to take charge for the 1998 World Cup, is to inspect overseas-based Australian players for friendly matches in Macedonia and Hungary, reports Reuter.

Britain Venables, who guided his country to the semifinals of the 1996 European Championship, said today a four-day training camp in either Britain or Holland would replace a proposed match against Croatia scheduled for February 25.

Soccer Australia chairman David Hill said because of time constraints the Croatian match had been scrapped out of fairness to Venables and players who had responsibilities to their clubs.

While country has not made a world cup finals appearance since 1974, about 75 Australian players are currently signed up to teams in 20 countries in Europe, Asia and South America.

Venables told a news conference roughly 22 players would be selected for the European camp. He had the names he had "more or less" already in mind, though he had yet to make formal offers.

Squads would be chosen to play Macedonia on March 12 and Hungary on April 2, he said.

Hardy defends Euro belt

SUNDERLAND, England, Feb 4: England's Billy Hardy retained his European featherweight title here in his home town on Monday beating Steve Robinson of Wales on points, reports AFP.

Hardy, 32, overcame a fearful battering from Robinson, a former World Boxing Organisation (WBO) champion, but his greater mobility and his overall supremacy won him a unanimous verdict from the three judges.

Hardy, who was beaten twice by American featherweight great Orlando Canizales for the world title in 1990 and 1991, wants a crack at present WBO title-holder Prince Naseem Hamed — he is nominally the WBO's number one ranked challenger.

Hamed, who beat Robinson last year, defends his title against American Tom Johnson, the International Boxing Federation holder, on Saturday.

Hardy's win takes his record to 36 wins, seven defeats and two ties.

Agassi misses Davis Cup tie

WHITE PLAINS, New York, Feb 4: Malival Washington, ranked No. 24 in the world will replace injured Andre Agassi on the US team that will play at Brazil from Feb 7-9 in the first round of the Davis Cup, reports AP.

US captain Tom Gullikson said Agassi was injured during a team practice last week at Key Biscayne, Florida.

"He sustained a minor injury that prevented him from being in top form," Gullikson said Monday. "He and I agreed that it would be better for him and the team if he stepped aside ..."

Agassi was disappointed at having to withdraw.

"I regret that I will not be able to compete for the United States Davis Cup team," he said. "Unfortunately ... I will not be able to recover in time to compete at the level that will be required."

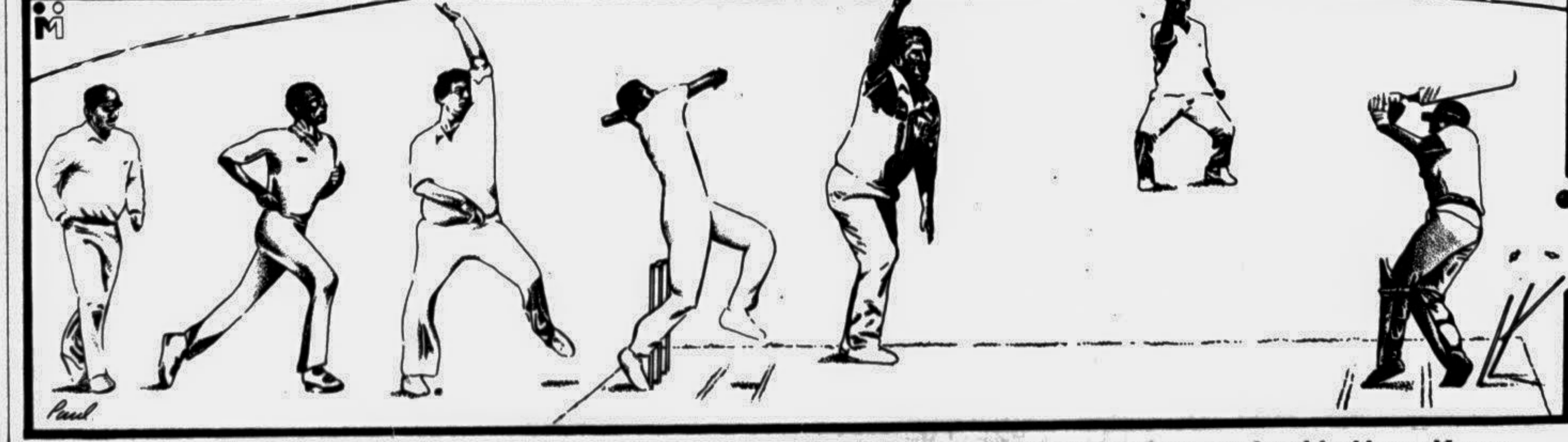
Washington has a 2-2 Davis Cup singles record. He last represented the United States in their 3-2 quarterfinal loss to the Czech Republic last April.

The other members of the US team are Jim Courier, Alex O'Brien and Richey Reneberg.

WTA Tour's top twenty

NEW YORK, Feb 4 (Reuter): Top 20 women's tennis players as ranked by the Corel WTA Tour:

1. Graf	5028,000 (Pts)
2. Hings	3995,500
3. Arantxa	3202,6871
4. Novotna	3087,9412
5. Conchita	3010,6710
6. Seles	2931,8083
7. Huber	2487,0388
8. Davenport	2243,5667
9. Majoli	2126,2820
10. Spirlea	1906,7950
11. Habsudova	1775,7182
12. Coetzer	1731,2009
13. Schultz-McCarthy	1560,8799
14. Fernandez	1542,5113
15. Pierce	1530,8195
16. Wiesner	1481,5810
17. Paulus	1370,2813
18. Appelmans	1310,6050
19. Kimberly Po	1260,0647
20. Likhovtseva	1197,2240



Pace attack: Batsmen face a barrage of bowlers in the rapid-fire Sixes cricket that has evolved in Hong Kong