

## Haile honoured

HENGLO, Netherlands, June 2: Haile Gebrselassie of Ethiopia has been made an honorary citizen of the Dutch town of Hengelo following his new world best for two miles here on Saturday, reports Reuters.

Gebrselassie has been nicknamed 'Mr Hengelo' by the local population because of his annual attempts to set world best times at the Fanny Blankers Koen Stadium in the town.

In 1995 he set a world best for 10,000 metres at the Grand Prix meeting there.

However he dismissed suggestions that he would be following in the footsteps of his elder brother Tekeye, who has been given political asylum in the Netherlands and is considering seeking Dutch citizenship.

"I will always run for Ethiopia," said Gebrselassie in Hengelo on Sunday.

## US beat ROK in eves' hockey

BERLIN, June 2: A second half goal by substitute Carla Tagliente carried the United States to a 1-0 victory over Olympic silver medalists South Korea in the opening match of the Women's Champions' Trophy hockey tournament on Sunday, reports Reuters.

Just as they did at the Atlanta Olympics last year when they won 3-2, the Americans upstaged their more fancied rivals thanks to Tagliente's goal four minutes into the second half.

Kelly James fed a free-hit to Tara Maguire who pulled the ball back for Tagliente to score.

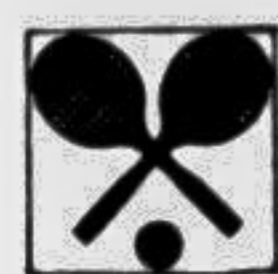
A few minutes later Korea's Eun-Yong Lee was carried off and taken to hospital after the ball hit her in the neck.

The United States defended superbly, holding out the Koreans who had seven clear chances from corners.

Britta Becker's penalty conversion five minutes from time earned Germany a 1-1 draw with Olympic champions Australia.

The Australians had taken the lead in the 29th minute when Alyson Annan, top scorer at the Atlanta Games, scored with a corner shot.

## Steffi set for a toughie



STEFFI GRAF

PARIS, June 2: Steffi Graf and South Africa's Amanda Coetzer — the player, the defending champion — reached a potentially explosive women's

encounter with Lisa Raymond 6-7 (4/7), 6-2, 6-2.

Alex Corretja, the eighth-seeded Spaniard had been considered a favourite to win the men's title, was swept away by the qualifier Filip Dewulf on a windy Centre Court.

Dewulf became the first Belgian to move into a quarter final of a Grand Slam tournament with a 5-7, 6-1, 6-4, 7-5 over one of the most consistent clay-court players this season.

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But he made an unusual number of mistakes against the steady Belgian.

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He will play Magnus Norman, the Swede who stunned top-ranked Sampras in the third round. Norman staged another upset Sunday when he ousted 15th-seeded Marc Rosset of Switzerland 4-6, 6-3, 7-6 (7-3), 6-3.

Elsewhere, the defending champion Yevgeny Kafelnikov, who has been playing better and better every time he has come on court, survived a barrage of 15 aces to beat Australian Mark Philippoussis 6-2, 6-3, 7-5.

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Canadian Olympic 100-metre champion Donovan Bailey talks to reporters after winning the showdown against American double Olympic champion Michael Johnson in Toronto on June 1. Bailey won the 150-metre race clocking an unofficial time of 14.99 seconds to claim the one million dollar prize when Johnson was forced to quit with the Canadian leading around the curve.

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## Poll upstages

## Pankratov

CANET, France, June 2: Costa Rica's Claudia Poll stole the show from Russian Denis Pankratov at the Canet International Swimming meeting on Sunday, reports Reuters.

The Olympic 200 metres freestyle champion clocked two world bests of the season over the weekend, 1:58.18 in her favourite event and 4:10.56 in the 400-metre.

The results were all the more impressive as Poll had only trained for four weeks in 50-metre pools after dominating the short-course season.

After badly missing an attempt at his own 200 metres butterfly world mark on Saturday, Pankratov decided not to take part in Sunday's 100 metres in order to return to Russia to prepare for the European championships in Seville in August.

The proximity of the championships hampered the meeting as most European swimmers seemed to be concentrating on the big event and had low-par performances.

## Nike offers to defuse Ronaldo, Barca row

BARCELONA, June 2: American sportswear firm Nike may act as intermediary in a bid to keep Brazilian striker Ronaldo at Barcelona, reports Reuters.

"Nike is going to try to stop Ronaldo leaving Barcelona and to this end we are going to act as mediators between the club and his representatives," Nike spokeswoman Laura Alsina said.

Alsina said Nike would shortly be speaking to Ronaldo's agents, who pulled out of negotiations to renew the striker's contract last Tuesday.

Inter Milan, the Italian club thought most likely to sign Ronaldo, are sponsored by British company Umbro.

Barcelona president Jose Luis Nunez said that Nike managers would travel to France to talk to Ronaldo, who is with the Brazilian national side.

Nunez also recognised that Nike had made an offer to make the team kit, a deal that could be worth 18 billion pesetas (124 million dollars) over 10 years.

## Boxing result

UNCASVILLE, Connecticut, June 2: International Boxing Federation flyweight champion Mark Johnson knocked out fellow-American Cecilio Espino in the second round on Sunday to retain his title, reports Reuters.

Johnson, who made the third defence of his title, won his 31st consecutive bout and now has a record of 32-1.

— AFP/UNB photo

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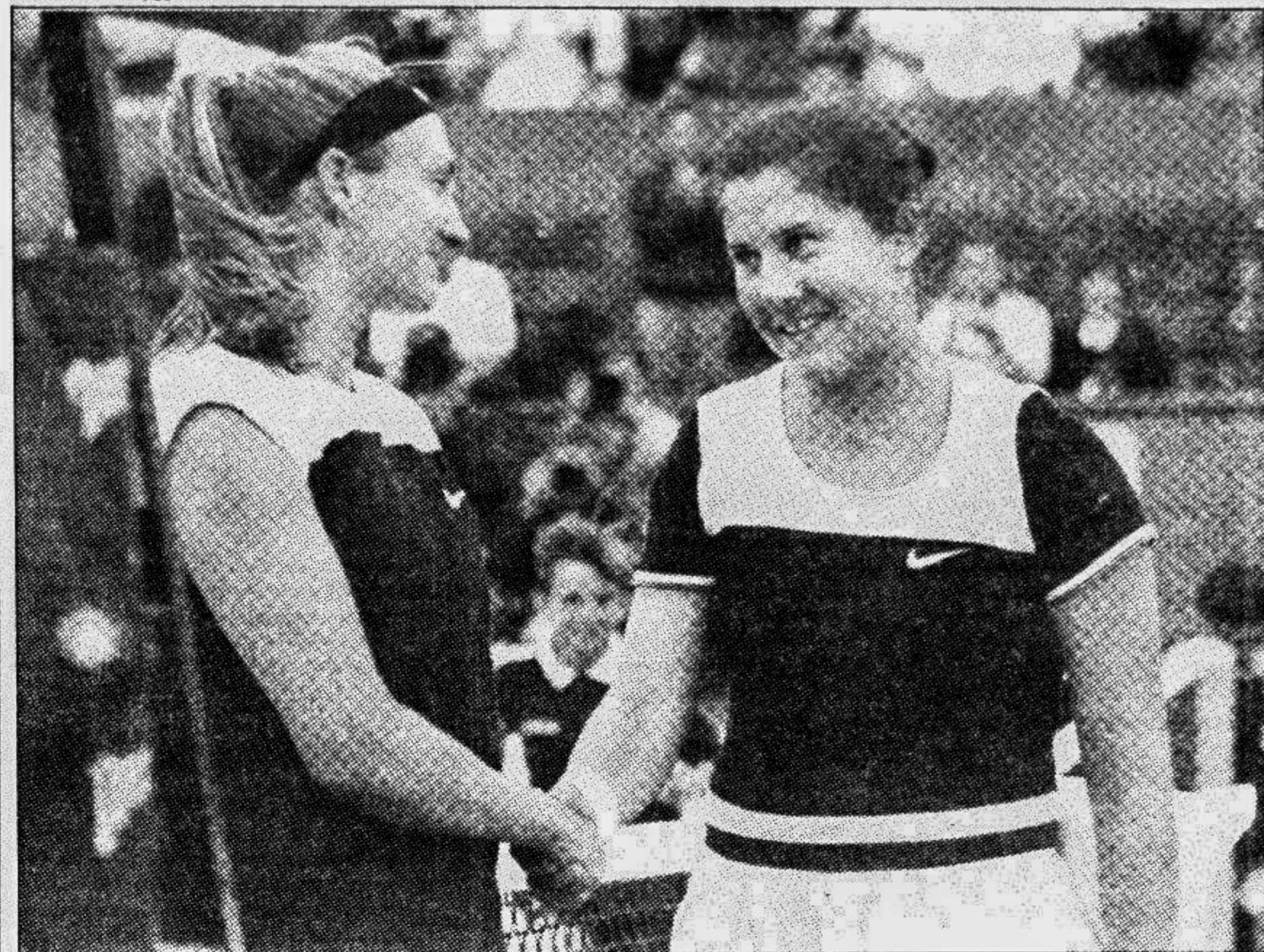
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American Monica Seles (R) and Mary Pierce of France shake hands after their fourth round match of the French Open on June 1. Seles won 6-4, 7-5. — AFP/UNB photo

## A dress rehearsal for France

LYON, France, June 2: Brazil's pride hurt by ending 43-game unbeaten streak, will be looking to recapture that winning touch against France on Tuesday in the opener of the Tournoi de France World Cup preparation tournament, reports AP.

For the hosts, it's as close as France will get to tough competition in a tournament format ahead of the magical June 10, 1998 World Cup kickoff date.

Defending champions Brazil and France qualified automatically but for the two other teams in the four-nation event it will be the perfect opportunity to wet the appetite.