

Pan-Arab Games Egypt topples Qatar

BEIRUT, July 16: Egypt's cycling team won the 60-kilometre (37-mile) road race Wednesday, widening the country's lead at the top of the Pan-Arab Games medal tally...

Egypt's four-man team defeated six other national teams to finish in 1 hour, 15.01 seconds, followed by Algeria and Syria.

With the racing medal, Egypt is leading the medal tally with 10 golds and seven silvers, boosted by its weight lifters who took five of the six golds awarded Tuesday in the 54-kilogram (119-pound) and 59-kilogram (130-pound) categories.

Algeria is second with eight gold medals and six silvers while Morocco is third with six gold medals and nine silvers.

Fifteen track-and-field finals will be decided Wednesday, the fourth day of the Pan-Arab sporting event. The games end July 27.

The men's cycling race began in Khalde outside Beirut with teams from Libya, Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Algeria and the Palestinian territories leaving at four-minute intervals.

The cyclists travelled south up to the entrance of the port city of Sidon before returning to Khalde.

Jansher skips Aussie Open

KARACHI, July 16: World number one Jansher Khan said Tuesday he would miss the Australian Open because his wife was sick.

"She is pregnant and having problems. I cannot leave her when she needs me," Jansher told AFP.

But the squash superstar hit out at suggestions that he was deliberately avoiding the event because of past rivalry with Australians.

"I am a professional squash player and want to perform my skill before my fans all over the world. I am still available for the tournament if the organisers can delay the tournament for another two weeks," he said.

"I have withdrawn for personal reasons and it is not that I have some jealousy or enmity with anybody."

Jansher said he would play in the World Games in Finland starting August 11. "I am going there because of my country. I will play there for free, there is no money involved."

"I have agreed to play to promote squash as I can see that squash will be included in the Olympics, if not in 2000 then in 2004."

FIFA TOP THIRTY

ZURICH, July 16 (AFP): FIFA world football rankings issued today (rankings end of 1996 in brackets):

Table with 2 columns: Country, Points. Brazil (1) 71.85, Spain (2) 63.38, Denmark (3) 62.35, Romania (4) 60.90, Germany (5) 60.74, Netherlands (6) 60.54, Russia (7) 60.51, England (12) 59.99, Italy (10) 59.66, Mexico (11) 59.11, France (3) 58.75, Colombia (4) 57.69, Argentina (22) 57.34, Czech Republic (5) 56.65, Morocco (27) 56.52, Norway (14) 55.83, Japan (21) 55.75, Bolivia (30) 54.54, Zambia (20) 54.54, Bulgaria (15) 53.59, Slovakia (30) 53.59, South Africa (19) 52.80, Paraguay (38) 52.80, Scotland (29) 52.77, Sweden (17) 52.46, USA (18) 52.14, Chile (26) 52.06, Tunisia (23) 51.86, Portugal (13) 51.66, Ecuador (33) 50.72

Weird!

ARLINGTON, Virginia, July 16: Prosecutors are asking for dental imprints from NBC sportscaster Marv Albert, who is accused of biting a woman acquaintance and forcing her to perform oral sex on him, reports AP.

The court filing Monday said Albert had the impressions made in New York but his new attorney, Roy Black, told the dentist not to hand them over.

Albert, 53, was indicted May 9 on one count of forcible sodomy and one count of assault and battery. He has not yet entered a plea but has denied any wrongdoing.

Strejlau new Shenhua coach

SHANGHAI, July 16: Andrej Strejlau, the former manager of the Polish national team, has been appointed head coach of top-flight Chinese side, Shanghai Shenhua, reports AFP.

Strejlau, 57, coached the Polish side for 54 international matches from 1989 to 1993.

World Living: Airport 7:00 BBC World News Inc. World Business Report/Asia Today/24 Hours 10:30 BBC World News 10:30 World Focus: Reporters 11:30 BBC Newsdesk 12:00 BBC Newsdesk 12:30 Hard Talk 1:00 BBC World News 1:30 World Focus: Reporters 2:00 BBC World News 2:25 50 Years Of Independence 2:30 World Living: Tomorrow's World 3:00 BBC World News 3:30 Hard Talk 4:00 BBC World News 4:30 World Living: Airport 5:00 BBC Newsdesk 6:00pm BBC Newsdesk 6:30 World Focus: Reporters 7:00 BBC World News 7:15 World Business Report 7:30 BBC Newsdesk Asia & Pacific 8:25 50 Years Of Independence 8:30 World Living: Building Signs 9:00 BBC World News 9:30 Hard Talk 9:55 50 Years Of Independence 10:00 BBC World News 10:30 World Living: Holiday 11:00 The World Today 12:00am The World Today 12:30 Hard Talk 1:00 BBC World News 1:30 World Focus:

Chang rediscovers his form

WASHINGTON, July 16: World number two Michael Chang was pushed to the brink of elimination in his opener at the Legg Mason Classic before rallying to capture a second-round match he nearly won with ease, reports AFP.

Defending champion Chang beat 155th-ranked Mexican qualifier Luis Herrera 6-7, 6-7 (9-11), 7-6, (7-5) here Tuesday.

Chang squandered four match points in the second-set tie-breaker then had to deny two match points for Herrera trailing 5-2 in the third before finally subduing him with a forehand smash on his 10th match point.

"He just played unbelievable tennis, the American said. 'He seemed to know where I was going to hit a lot of the time. I got a little frustrated seeing so many balls come back. 'I'm not used to that."

Herrera was pleased to be competitive after struggling with injuries in recent years, but disappointed he could not complete the upset in the two-hour and 27-minute thriller.

"I should have won this match," Herrera said. "That's maybe as close as I will come to beating him. It was just a shame I couldn't close it out."

Chang advanced to a third-round match Thursday against 163rd-ranked fellow-American Michael Joyce, who ousted South Africa's Neville Godwin 7-6 (7-4), 7-6 (8-6) at the 675,000-dollar event.

"A match like this gets you into a tournament quickly," Chang said. "Matches like this make you tougher as you go along. It was a fight. He covered the net well. I thought I would have an easier time breaking him. But he served well. I was fortunate to win."

Chang barely averted a fifth first-match loss in his past seven events, which included a June 24 loss to Australia's Todd Woodbridge in the first round at Wimbledon.

Chang is only 7-6 since winning at Orlando in April but is now back on his beloved hardcourts here at the first tune-up for the US Open.

After losing in the first round at Wimbledon last year, Chang went 22-3 during the subsequent US hardcourt season, winning here and in Los Angeles and culminating with a US Open final loss to Pete Sampras.

Chang, seeking his fifth title of the year, won the first set in 31 minutes and took a 5-3 lead in the second. But Chang was

broken in the 10th game, lost four match points in the tie-breaker and forced a third set when the American sent a baseline forehand into the net.

Herrera and Chang traded breaks in the first three games of the final set but Herrera broke Chang in four points in the seventh game for a 5-2 lead.

"At that point you start thinking the match could be over," Chang said. "You go back and forth as far as what to think out there. I had to concentrate on each point and not being changed broke back in the eighth, hitting a forehand winner and being helped by a Herrera double fault to save two match points.

Chang went on to break Herrera in the eighth and 10th games and had two match points in the 12th game before Herrera rallied to force a tie-breaker.

"It's easy to give up. It can be disheartening sometimes," Chang said. "But you have to fight that and stay positive out



Michael Chang of the United States plays forehand against Luis Herrera of Mexico at the Legg Mason classic tennis tournament in Washington DC on July 15. Chang won 6-3, 6-7, 7-6. — AFP/UNB photo

Ginola joins Tottenham

LONDON, July 16: French winger David Ginola completed an estimated two million pounds (3.4 million dollars) move from Newcastle to Tottenham on Tuesday and hoped the transfer will boost his chance of playing in next year's World Cup finals, reports Reuter.

After the London Premier league club announced he had signed a four-year contract, Ginola said he still wanted to try to regain the national squad.

"My choice this season was a little bit based on the World Cup next season," he said. "Signing for Tottenham, I really think that it is a great chance for me. If I have a good season next year I could be involved (in the World Cup)."

"I think it is very important for me to play well all next season. My big aim is to win something with the club this season and to be involved in Europe the season after. I haven't played for the French team for a while."

Ginola, who joined Newcastle from Paris St German two years ago, had been unable to hold down a regular first team place since Kenny Dalglish took over as manager from Kevin Keegan last season.

He will fill the gap left at Tottenham by the departure of England striker Teddy Sheringham to Manchester United last month.

Tottenham manager Gerry Francis made it clear that Ginola was not his last signing before the start of the new season next month.

"David has always caused us problems and I am delighted we have him here as he has proved himself in English football," explained Francis. "And I will be adding to the squad with at least another two players."

Special delivery for Tyson

PHOENIX, July 16: Neither rain nor snow nor smell will keep 12 little pig ears from being delivered to ear-biting boxer Mike Tyson, reports AP.

The Postal Service said it received the 13-cm (5-inch), dried and hairy ears last Wednesday. They were properly stamped and Tyson's address was written in felt-tip pen on their bare hides.

"They were the weirdest things I've ever seen," Postal Service spokeswoman Yolanda Stenson said Monday.

The ears were apparently dropped on a mail box and postal workers processed them just like other packages.

"As long as it's not over 108 inches in length and girth and under 70 pounds and the postage is good, we'll try to deliver it," postal worker Tony Gervasio said.

They appear to be a job at Tyson, who was disqualified after his June 26 heavyweight bout against Evander Holyfield for biting the champion's ears.

Gervasio recalled other odd packages he's handled, including a tumbleweed he once helped ship to the Midwest, and he has carefully affixed stamps to everything from tree limbs to basketballs.

"The only things we won't mail for you are cats, dogs and kids, no matter how much you'd like to send them," he said.

Elite eight minus Boris

STUTTGART, Germany, July 16: Boris Becker, the 1996 runner-up, trails well out of the chase at the halfway point of the ATP Tour World Championships, reports AFP.

The elite eight-man event, to be played in Hanover, northern Germany, November 11-16, could easily feature a radically different line-up from the 1996 edition based on player results so far this year.

One constant, though, will be world No. 1 Pete Sampras. This year's Wimbledon and Australian Open champion holds a runaway lead in the chase, with 2,698 computer points earned during 1997.

Spain's Sergi Bruguera stands a distant second at the halfway point, with 1,975 points. The Spaniard has improved his ranking from 82 at the start of the year to a current 9.

The event could easily be missing its drawcard — Becker, who has earned a mere 562 points after playing just eight events prior to this week's Mercedes Cup.

The event will be held in a new 15,000-seat purpose-built hall at the Expo 2000 exposition centre, but a tournament in Germany minus Becker could possibly run into problems in pulling crowds.

Strejlau new Shenhua coach

SHANGHAI, July 16: Andrej Strejlau, the former manager of the Polish national team, has been appointed head coach of top-flight Chinese side, Shanghai Shenhua, reports AFP.

Strejlau, 57, coached the Polish side for 54 international matches from 1989 to 1993.

American world No 2 Michael Chang stands third in the race to Hanover (1,895 points), ahead of Thomas Muster, and Marcelo Rios of Chile.

In addition to Bruguera, Spaniards Carlos Moya and Alex Corretja feature in the chase for the elite eight. Brazilian French Open holder Gustavo Kuerten stands eighth.

Hovering on ninth and tenth are Goran Ivanisevic and Patrick Rafter, who reached the fourth round of Wimbledon and

the French Open semifinals. He is the only Australian currently in the ranks of possible contenders.

PROVISIONAL RANKINGS

Table with 2 columns: Player, Points. 1. Sampras 2,698, 2. Bruguera 1,975, 3. Chang 1,895, 4. Muster 1,757, 5. Rios 1,695, 6. Moya 1,629, 7. Corretja 1,627, 8. Kuerten 1,623



Disneylanders Mickey and Goofy pose with Brazilian star striker Ronaldo and his fiancée Susana at the Disney-MGM Studios in New York on July 15. — AFP/UNB photo



French soccer star David Ginola shows off the number 14 shirt which he will don at his new club Tottenham Hotspur in London on July 15. — AFP/UNB photo

Hosts' disappointing day

STUTTGART, July 16: French Open champion Gustavo Kuerten dived some of the day's German tennis enthusiasm, fighting back to reach the third round of the one-million-dollar Mercedes Cup Tuesday with a 6-7 (4/7), 6-4, 6-4 victory over crowd favourite Jens Knippschild, reports AFP.

The victory by the smiling Brazilian Grand Slam holder left Germany nursing its sixth loss on the day after defeats suffered by Nicolas Kiefer, Daniel Elsner, Alex Radulescu, qualifier Martin Sinner and Karol Kuerten.

Wimbledon quarterfinalist Kiefer, showcase member of Boris Becker's Mercedes junior team, fell while chasing a volley at the start of the fourth game of his opening set with Karol Kucera of Slovakia, twisted his right ankle and could not continue.

Kucera advanced to the second round while Kiefer and seventh seed Becker, who begins today against Morocco's Karim Alami, rushed to Munich to have the injury looked at by Becker's doctor.

Radulescu was beaten 6-1, 6-3 by Brazilian Fernando Clavet, junior Wimbledon finalist

Elsner went out 6-3, 6-4 to Swede Magnus Larsson. Second seed Alex Corretja dispatched Goellner 7-5, 6-1 and Wayne Ferreira, the South African 14th seed, defeated Sinner 3-6, 6-0, 6-4.

LATEST

STUTTGART, July 16: Top-seed Thomas Muster was upset Wednesday in the second round of the Mercedes Cup by Albert Portas, who beat the two-time defending champion 6-4, 7-5, reports AP.

Muster, who dominated the clay-court circuit for two years until falling into a bad slump this year, had not played a tournament match since mid-June.

Another Spaniard advanced when 10th-seeded Felix Mantilla, the Swiss Open Champion last week, ousted Fernando Meligeni of Brazil 6-4, 6-4.

Greg Rusedski, the 13th-seeded Wimbledon quarterfinalist, lost to Magnus Larsson of Sweden. Larsson overcame the big-serving Rusedski 7-6, 6-7, 6-4 to move into the third round of the 1.04-million-dollar clay court tournament.

Another seeded player tumbled out when No. 16 Marc Rosset lost to Francisco Clavet of Spain 7-5, 6-1.

Blanco eliminated Hicham Arazi of Morocco 7-5, 7-6 (7-4) in a battle of French Open quarterfinalists, while Albert Portas handed Norway's Christian Ruud a 5-7, 6-0, 7-6 (7-2) defeat.

Troussier Nigeria's nursemaid

ANOTHER foreigner is in the hot seat as boss of Nigeria's national soccer team in the wake of the controversial resignations of three expatriate managers in as many years.

A leading British sports journalist, Phil Minshull, argues that the recent incidents highlight the contrast between the shoddy way the sport is organised and the skills and international experience of the players.

"Nigerian soccer is a confused and volatile world," agrees Peter Law, another foreign sports writer specialising in African soccer.

Before Troussier was hired, Danladi Bako, an assistant director in the sports ministry, commented, "The man to fill the vacancy must be able to fit into and operate within the Nigerian situation. It will be criminal if we fail to qualify for the 1998 World Cup."

Bako told journalists, "We need a high-profile man."

His ministry was considering top names such as '70s Dutch legend and former Barcelona manager Johann Cruyff, Ajax supremo Louis van Gaal, former Newcastle manager Kevin Keegan or former Leeds manager Howard Wilkinson.

Then his boss, Nwobodo, told the Nigerian Football Association that if it failed to announce a new foreign coach by the end of January, he would make the decision himself.

But when the deadline expired and was extended, it became obvious that none of the contacted "high-profile coaches" was interested, despite the attraction of working with a pool of talented players with experience of major European leagues. — Gemini

About the Author: Dulse Mbachu is a Nigerian freelance journalist.

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The Daily Star Entertainment Guide. Thursday 17th July. (All programmes are in local time. There may be changes in the programme). BTU: 3:00 Opening announcement, programme summary 3:12 Reaction from the Goats 3:15 Patriotic songs 3:20 Special programme for children: Sshahate Phutrore Phool 4:00 News in Bangla 4:25 Islamic architecture in Bangladesh 5:00 Documentary film on the occasion of Iraqis National Day 5:40 A special discussion programme 6:25 Re-membering Syed Imami Hassan Strajac: A special programme 7:00 The News 7:05 A session of Poetry recitation 8:00 News in Bangla 8:25 Manuhas: year 10:00 The News 10:30 Millid Mahfil 11:30 News in Bangla 11:35 Phool 11:40 Close down. BBC: 6:00am BBC World News 6:30