

Adams' timely reminder

LONDON, Aug 1: Derbyshire's Chris Adams smashed a county cricket championship century at Durham on Thursday, boosting his chances of an England call-up, reports Reuter.

The 107 saw Derbyshire finish the first day well on top, the Midlands side made 254 before reducing the home team to just 109 for six at the close.

Australian Stuart Law's unbeaten 124 helped Essex to 204 for two against champions Leicestershire at Colchester.

After a disastrous start which saw Essex on nine for two, Law and England batsman Nasser Hussain put together an unbeaten third-wicket stand of 195.

Former England bowler Paul Taylor took five for 42 to leave Yorkshire in trouble on 163 for nine off 51 overs against Northamptonshire at Headingley.

Warwickshire reached 50 without loss off 16 overs, before rain brought play to a premature close against Sussex at Edgbaston.

Worcestershire made 58 for none against visitors Kent at New Road where, again, only 16 overs were possible, while no play was possible at Colwyn Bay, where Glamorgan play Nottinghamshire.

Berry's fall from grace
SAN JOSE, Costa Rica, Aug 1: Costa Rican international defender Austin Berry was Thursday dropped from his country's World Cup squad after failing a drugs test, reports AFP.

Berry tested positive for the pain killer xilocaïne, which he said was in a prescription medicine he took. The player was omitted from the Costa Rican squad to play El Salvador in a World Cup qualifying match on August 10.

Costa Rican officials said they planned to investigate the offence over the next two weeks, Berry, who also failed a drug test last year, could face a suspension of up to one or two years and a fine of up to 1,000 dollars.

Coetzer keeps going on
CARLSBAD, California, Aug 1: In her own quiet and steady way, Amanda Coetzer just keeps moving up into tennis' elite class.

Coetzer continued her most successful season ever as she overcame a tough challenge by Indonesia's Ysuk Basuki to score a 6-3, 6-4 win in the quarterfinals at the 450,000 dollars Toshiba Classic on Thursday, reports AP.

Coetzer, the No 3 seed, moved into Saturday's semifinals against second-seeded Monica Seles, a 6-1, 6-3 winner over Natasha Zvereva of Belarus on Thursday night.

Seles had her consistent ground strokes working against Zvereva, who hit more winners (29-21), but also committed more unforced errors (33-13).

Seles broke Zvereva's serve twice in the first set to take a 5-1 lead. Seles closed out the set with a backhand passing shot. Seles was up a break in the second set and was ahead 5-3 before she closed out the match with another backhand winner.

Coetzer reached the semifinals for the ninth time this season, with her lone title coming at Budapest. "It was a big test," Coetzer

said. "It's one of those matches that I wanted to get over with. In a second-round match, No 7 Conchita Martinez of Spain rolled to a 6-1, 6-0 victory over Helena Sukova of the Czech Republic.

The victory advanced Martinez into the quarterfinals where she'll meet No 1-ranked Martina Hingis of Switzerland on Friday. The pairing will be a rematch of last week's final at the Bank of the West Classic where Hingis took just 53 minutes to rout Martinez 6-0, 6-2.

For Coetzer, the victory is just another step during her best year on the WTA Tour. Coetzer, who reached the semifinals of both the Australian and French Opens this year, has moved up in the rankings to a career-best No 6. She finished last season ranked 17th.

That will soon change. Coetzer, 25, will replace the injured Steffi Graf at No 5 when the new rankings are released Monday. "I'm not really looking at that now," Coetzer said. "I'm focusing on what I'm doing."

Coetzer certainly had to be focused against Basuki, unseeded and ranked 22nd. Basuki pushed her South African opponent, but was held back by 33 unforced errors, many coming on critical points.

A second-set service break by Basuki in the ninth game got her back into the match trailing 5-4. But Basuki failed to hold her serve and force a tiebreak when she double-faulted to end the match.

Martinez breezed through her match in only 46 minutes as she hit 23 winners to only six for Sukova. Sukova beat Martinez in their last meeting, a 6-4, 6-2 win at Wimbledon. Martinez will now get another shot at Hingis after facing adverse conditions at the Bank of the West Classic.

All roads lead to Athens



ATHENS, Aug 1: The sixth World Athletics Championships will receive the greatest television coverage of any sports event ever with 212 countries and regions getting images from the festival scheduled to be held here from August 1 to 10, reports Xinhua.

According to the latest news, a total of 170 countries and regions have paid for the TV rights. A total of 137 countries will be broadcasting the competition live.

Following the recent agreement with Colombia, Brazil and Mexico, it is estimated that more than 3.3 billion people will watch the championships on TV. The African continent will also receive three hours of action every day, free of charge.

A total of 200 countries and regions have sent teams to the event, making it the best attended sports competition in history. Last year's Olympics had 197 participating teams and the 1995 World Championships had 191.

A new record total of 1,957 athletes will take part, 1,225 men and 732 women. The previous record was 1,804.

Ticket sales have been even better than expected. The opening ceremony at the Panathinaikon Stadium tomorrow is sold out and all tickets have been sold for August 3, the day of the 100 metres finals for men and women.

All these statistics demonstrate the great strength of the IAAF World Championships. The event brings together, without exception, the best athletes on earth after International Amateur Athletics Federation issued the wild cards to the defending champions.

According to the organising committee, the IAAF has issued a special invitation to the mayors of cities bidding for the 2004 Summer Olympics to attend the championships.

Mayors of Athens, Buenos Aires, Cape Town, Rome and Stockholm are expected to be present at this most important single sports event.

For the first time at the championships, awards will be available for the medalists with winners taking 60,000 dollars. Silver winners getting 30,000 dollars and bronze medalists taking 20,000, the world record breakers will win 100,000 dollars.

Menem to attend Sept 5 meeting

BUENOS AIRES, Aug 1: Argentine President Carlos Menem will attend the ceremony to be held in Lausanne, Switzerland on September 5 where the International Olympic Committee (IOC) will select the city that will host the 2004 Olympic Games, reports Xinhua.

It was announced by Tourism Minister Francisco Mayorga on Wednesday. Mayorga explained that President Menem will be accompanied by Fernando de la Rúa, head of the Buenos Aires municipal government and Sports Minister Hugo Porta.

Former Argentine tennis star Gabriela Sabatini will also attend the gathering as a member of the IOC's Athlete's Commission.

Johnson on wild card

ATHENS, Aug 1: Michael Johnson made his first public appearance at the World Championships at a sweltering nightclub on Thursday and defended the wild card invitation which gave him a backdoor entry, reports Reuter.

Johnson, the Olympic 200 and 400 metres champion, looked set to miss the event after injury forced him out of the United States trials in June.

That cost him his place in the team, but the International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF), eager to have as many of elite athletes competing as possible, controversially instigated a late rule change earlier this month, giving defending champions the automatic right to defend their titles.

Johnson, who has the highest profile of any of the wild card entrants, said he was delighted to take part. "It's good for me as I didn't think I was going to be here after missing the trials because I was injured but now I am healthy," he said.

Johnson, speaking during a brief stage-managed news conference organised by his shoe sponsors, also said he had recovered from the quadriceps injury he suffered during his head-to-head 150 metres race against Donovan Bailey in Toronto two months ago.

Venuste pulls out

ATHENS, Aug 1: Burundi's Olympic 5,000 metres champion Venuste Niyongabo has pulled out of the sixth World Championships starting on Saturday, reports Reuter.

A spokesman for the International Amateur Athletic Federation said Niyongabo had been struggling recently with a leg injury.

IAAF relaxes doping ban

ATHENS, Aug 1: The International Amateur Athletics Federation has decided to reduce the doping ban from four years to two after two hours of discussion at the 41st IAAF congress which closed here yesterday, reports Xinhua.

The congress voted to reduce the sanction for a first doping offence for prohibited substances (like anabolic agents, amphetamines, peptide hormones, cocaine etc) from four years to a minimum of two years. The sanction for a second offence shall be life.

Athletes who are currently suspended for four years may apply to the IAAF council for reinstatement after they have served two years. They must supply evidence that they have undergone three out-of-competition tests (at least four months apart) during the final year of their suspension.

The IAAF congress also voted to change the current 3-month sanction for using substances (stimulant, narcotic analgesics etc) to a public warning. The sanction for a second offence shall be two years, performances obtained by an athlete in a competition in which he, or she, tests positive will be declared invalid.

As a consequence of this decision, the Jamaican long jumper James Beckford, 1996 Olympic silver medalist, will be allowed to take part in the 6th World Athletics Championships here.

Beckford tested positive for a stimulant at the IAAF Grand Prix meeting in Paris on June 25.

Zelezny upbeat

ATHENS, Aug 1: Jan Zelezny of the Czech Republic, two times Olympic and world champion in the men's javelin, is determined to defend his world title at the World Athletics Championships starting here tomorrow, reports Xinhua.

With a big aim in mind, the 31-year-old said he is ready, but added that strong winds could produce either a world record throw or a fatal failure.

"I came to Athens to win, I have finished my training well, of course, I love to win, but in athletics everything may happen. I believe that a medal will go to the athlete who throws the javelin further than 87 metres. A throw of around 90 metres will probably win the gold medal," said Zelezny, who is holding the world record of 98.48 metres.

"It is a big stadium that allows for strong winds and very easily a good throw can break the world record or fail completely," added the Czech who won the golds in the 1992 and 1996 Olympics plus world titles in 1993 and 1995.

Zelezny flagged the year's best mark of 94.02 metres last March. The first three best throws this season were produced by him. The only person who beat the 90-metre barrier this year is Boris Henry of Germany, who managed a 90.44m performance early this month.

Concerning the Greek champion Kostas Gatsioudis, who ranks third best on the season's list with a 89.22m effort, Zelezny commented: "He is a young and strong athlete, but he is only one of the opponents I have to face. Sergej Makarov of Russia and Steve Backley of Britain are the most dangerous threats."

Sasaku! retains WBC belt

BANGKOK, Aug 1: Chatchai Sasakul of Thailand retained his World Boxing Council flyweight title with an eighth-round TKO of Argentine challenger Juan Domingo Cordoba in Bangkok on Friday, reports AP.

Cordoba refused to rise from his stool and leave his corner at the start of the eighth round, claiming body pains had immobilized him.

Chatchai, who dominated the fight, was unscathed at the end of the bout while Cordoba's face was black and blue beneath the eyes.

The Thai floored the challenger twice, once in the third round, and another time in the sixth, with powerful right crosses. Chatchai, who had a significant reach advantage over Cordoba, scored frequently with well-timed jabs and crosses, pinning the challenger to the ropes.

Ottey, the golden oldie

ATHENS, Aug 1: The roving Jamaican ambassador, who once said she would retire at the same time as training partner Christie, competes in both the 100 and the 200 metres here.

The 37-year-old Briton has decided he will not appear in onships, reports Reuter.

Merlene Ottey will be at the World Championships, reports Reuter.

Merlene Ottey will be at the World Championships, reports Reuter.

Merlene Ottey will be at the World Championships, reports Reuter.

Merlene Ottey will be at the World Championships, reports Reuter.

Marion waiting in wings

LONDON, Aug 1: Under pelt rain in Lausanne last month, Marion Jones temporarily mislaid her technique and her speed.

Now she faces her biggest test since opting to switch from basketball to track and field when she steps on to the track at the sixth World Championships starting in Athens next week.

Two days later in Oslo, with the sun shining for the first time on this year's European Grand Prix circuit, Jones decisively reversed the result.

During the intervening evening, at the traditional strawberry party on the eve of Oslo's Biilet Games meeting, the new American champion admitted she had made technical mistakes in Lausanne.

"I learned a lot last night," she said. "I went back to the drawing board. Right after the race I knew I hadn't done what I should have done, everybody has a race like that."

Jones, a 21-year-old native of North Carolina, is the most exciting sprinter-long jumper to emerge from the United States since Carl Lewis a generation ago, and as she showed in Norway, is evidently a quick learner.

Grote sets his goal

NASHVILLE, Tennessee, Aug 1: Kurt Grote recorded the world's fastest 200-metre breaststroke of the year at the US swimming nationals Wednesday, then became the first US Olympian to declare he will go for gold at the 2000 Games in Sydney, reports Reuter.

The 23-year-old Grote completed a sweep of the meet's two breaststroke events Wednesday night with a career-best of two minutes 12.35 seconds in the 200 metres.

Grote, who won the 100 breaststroke earlier this week, dropped nearly four seconds off his morning qualifying time in the 200 final by an American in the event and eight fastest ever in the world.

Marion waiting in wings

exciting sprinter-long jumper to emerge from the United States since Carl Lewis a generation ago, and as she showed in Norway, is evidently a quick learner.

Now she faces her biggest test since opting to switch from basketball to track and field when she steps on to the track at the sixth World Championships starting in Athens next week.

Two days later in Oslo, with the sun shining for the first time on this year's European Grand Prix circuit, Jones decisively reversed the result.

During the intervening evening, at the traditional strawberry party on the eve of Oslo's Biilet Games meeting, the new American champion admitted she had made technical mistakes in Lausanne.

"I learned a lot last night," she said. "I went back to the drawing board. Right after the race I knew I hadn't done what I should have done, everybody has a race like that."

Jones, a 21-year-old native of North Carolina, is the most exciting sprinter-long jumper to emerge from the United States since Carl Lewis a generation ago, and as she showed in Norway, is evidently a quick learner.

Bureaucracy bogs Bangkok down

BANGKOK, Aug 1: Thailand's education minister failed to show up to sign a major sponsorship contract for the 1998 Asian Games, but the company said Friday it hoped to wrap up the deal next week, reports AP.

Sukhavich Rangsitpol's no-show for the meeting with Acer Group of Taiwan agreed Santiparb Tejavanjaja, the Games' marketing director, so much that he resigned.

But Santiparb decided to stay on in his post after president of the Olympic Council of Asia, Sheikh Ahmad Al-Sabah Al-Fahd of Kuwait, appealed to Santiparb to reconsider, saying his efforts were crucial to the success of the Games.

Acer Chairman Stan Shih and other dignitaries were left waiting and perplexed at a Bangkok convention hall when Sukhavich didn't show up at the meeting Thursday morning.

An aide to Sukhavich said the minister did not attend the meeting because a clause detailing what type of software would be supplied by the company was missing from the contract. He offered no other explanation for the minister's behaviour.

Marion waiting in wings

exciting sprinter-long jumper to emerge from the United States since Carl Lewis a generation ago, and as she showed in Norway, is evidently a quick learner.

Now she faces her biggest test since opting to switch from basketball to track and field when she steps on to the track at the sixth World Championships starting in Athens next week.

Two days later in Oslo, with the sun shining for the first time on this year's European Grand Prix circuit, Jones decisively reversed the result.

During the intervening evening, at the traditional strawberry party on the eve of Oslo's Biilet Games meeting, the new American champion admitted she had made technical mistakes in Lausanne.

"I learned a lot last night," she said. "I went back to the drawing board. Right after the race I knew I hadn't done what I should have done, everybody has a race like that."

Jones, a 21-year-old native of North Carolina, is the most exciting sprinter-long jumper to emerge from the United States since Carl Lewis a generation ago, and as she showed in Norway, is evidently a quick learner.

Bureaucracy bogs Bangkok down

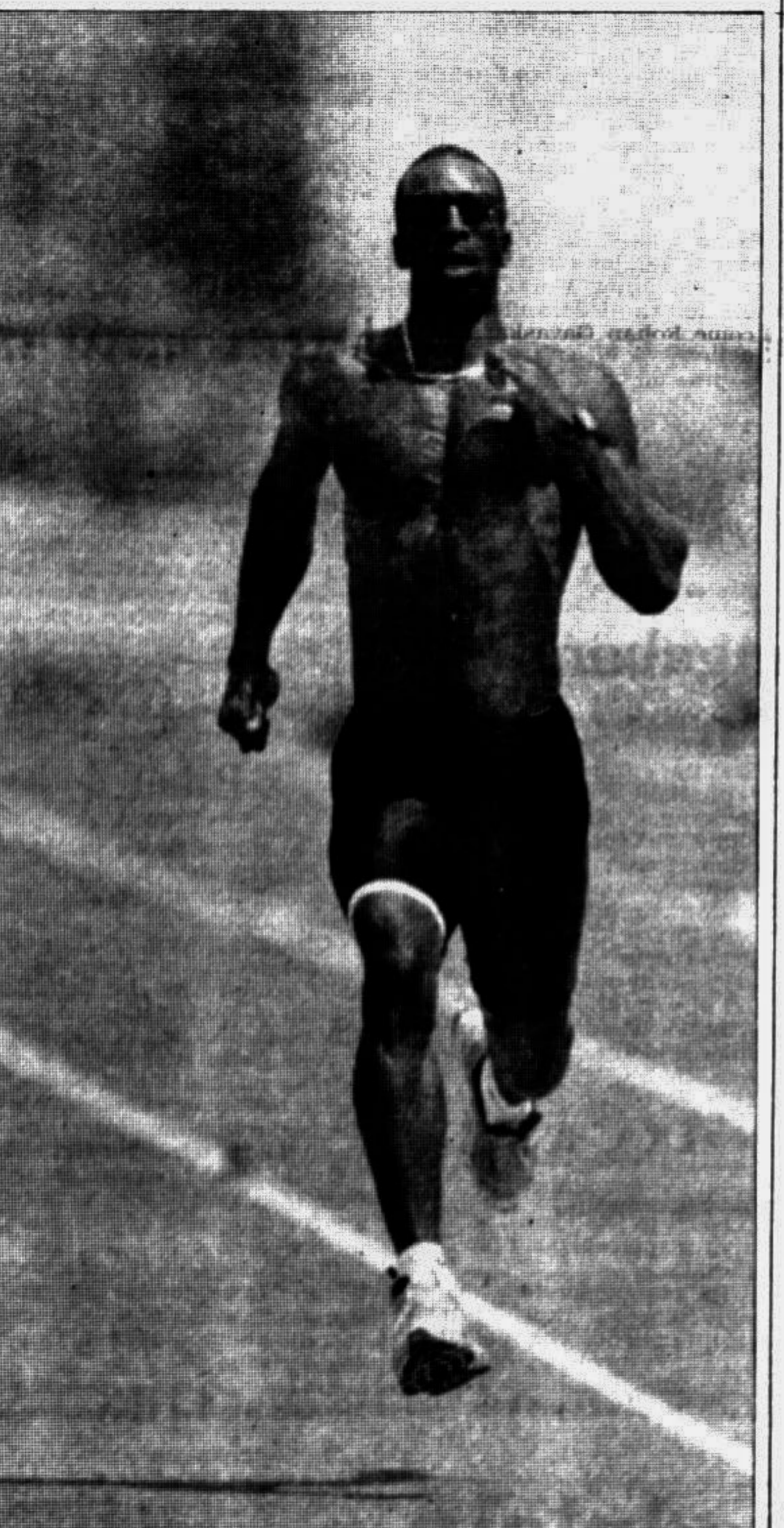
BANGKOK, Aug 1: Thailand's education minister failed to show up to sign a major sponsorship contract for the 1998 Asian Games, but the company said Friday it hoped to wrap up the deal next week, reports AP.

Sukhavich Rangsitpol's no-show for the meeting with Acer Group of Taiwan agreed Santiparb Tejavanjaja, the Games' marketing director, so much that he resigned.

But Santiparb decided to stay on in his post after president of the Olympic Council of Asia, Sheikh Ahmad Al-Sabah Al-Fahd of Kuwait, appealed to Santiparb to reconsider, saying his efforts were crucial to the success of the Games.

Acer Chairman Stan Shih and other dignitaries were left waiting and perplexed at a Bangkok convention hall when Sukhavich didn't show up at the meeting Thursday morning.

An aide to Sukhavich said the minister did not attend the meeting because a clause detailing what type of software would be supplied by the company was missing from the contract. He offered no other explanation for the minister's behaviour.



American 200 and 400 metres Olympic gold medalist Michael Johnson practises during a training session in Athens yesterday. —AFP/UNB photo



Jamaican veteran sprinter Merlene Ottey (L) and German long jumper Heike Drechsler applaud at the end of a sport's designer fashion show in Athens on Thursday. —AP/UNB photo

Coetzer keeps going on

score a 6-3, 6-4 win in the quarterfinals at the 450,000 dollars Toshiba Classic on Thursday, reports AP.

Coetzer, the No 3 seed, moved into Saturday's semifinals against second-seeded Monica Seles, a 6-1, 6-3 winner over Natasha Zvereva of Belarus on Thursday night.

Seles had her consistent ground strokes working against Zvereva, who hit more winners (29-21), but also committed more unforced errors (33-13).

Seles broke Zvereva's serve twice in the first set to take a 5-1 lead. Seles closed out the set with a backhand passing shot. Seles was up a break in the second set and was ahead 5-3 before she closed out the match with another backhand winner.

Coetzer reached the semifinals for the ninth time this season, with her lone title coming at Budapest. "It was a big test," Coetzer

said. "It's one of those matches that I wanted to get over with. In a second-round match, No 7 Conchita Martinez of Spain rolled to a 6-1, 6-0 victory over Helena Sukova of the Czech Republic.

The victory advanced Martinez into the quarterfinals where she'll meet No 1-ranked Martina Hingis of Switzerland on Friday. The pairing will be a rematch of last week's final at the Bank of the West Classic where Hingis took just 53 minutes to rout Martinez 6-0, 6-2.

For Coetzer, the victory is just another step during her best year on the WTA Tour. Coetzer, who reached the semifinals of both the Australian and French Opens this year, has moved up in the rankings to a career-best No 6. She finished last season ranked 17th.

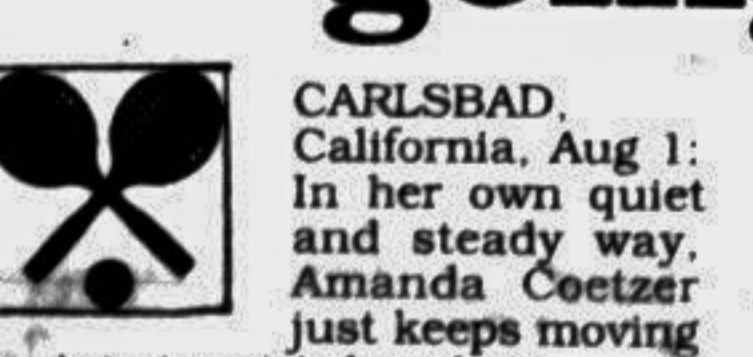
That will soon change. Coetzer, 25, will replace the injured Steffi Graf at No 5 when the new rankings are released Monday. "I'm not really looking at that now," Coetzer said. "I'm focusing on what I'm doing."

Coetzer certainly had to be focused against Basuki, unseeded and ranked 22nd. Basuki pushed her South African opponent, but was held back by 33 unforced errors, many coming on critical points.

A second-set service break by Basuki in the ninth game got her back into the match trailing 5-4. But Basuki failed to hold her serve and force a tiebreak when she double-faulted to end the match.

Martinez breezed through her match in only 46 minutes as she hit 23 winners to only six for Sukova. Sukova beat Martinez in their last meeting, a 6-4, 6-2 win at Wimbledon. Martinez will now get another shot at Hingis after facing adverse conditions at the Bank of the West Classic.

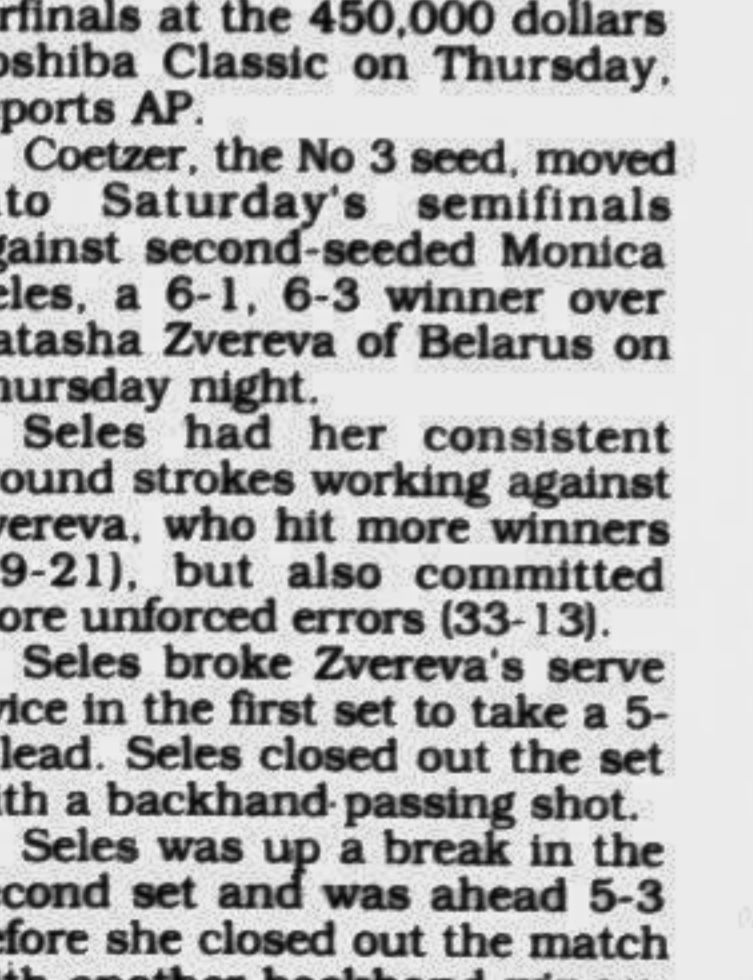
Martinez will now get another shot at Hingis after facing adverse conditions at the Bank of the West Classic.



AMANDA COETZER



AMANDA COETZER



AMANDA COETZER



AMANDA COETZER



AMANDA COETZER

The Daily Star Entertainment Guide

Entertainment guide listing TV shows, movies, and sports events across various channels like STAR MOVIES, STAR PLUS, CHANNEL V, PTV, EL TV, DD 7, ZEE TV, and SONY ET.