

Lindsay's timely tonic

STONE MOUNTAIN, Georgia, Aug 24: Lindsay Davenport finished off one of the best weeks of her career Saturday, using only 58 minutes to beat Frenchwoman Sandrine Testud 6-4, 6-1, and win the 450,000 dollars US Women's hardcourt championships, reports AP.

Davenport, who has never gotten past the quarterfinals in a major, heads to New York on perhaps the best roll of her career.

The fourth-seeded American didn't lose a set in four matches during the week-long event at Stone Mountain Park, where she captured a gold medal last summer in the Atlanta Olympics.

"I think this whole hardcourt season I've played extremely well," said Davenport, who left Saturday evening for New York, where she is seeded sixth in the US Open. "Especially this week, I was really focused. ... I was able to play well in every match."

Testud tried to play the same baseline power game as Davenport shots.

Testud likes Davenport's chances in the Open — if she continues to play like she did in the final tuneup event.

"But this is a very risky game," Testud added.

Davenport has now won 10 straight matches at Stone Mountain, where the Olympic victory still ranks as the highlight of her career. Maybe that will change over the next two weeks in New York.

Davenport received 79,000 dollars for her victory. Testud collected 36,000 dollars as runner-up.

Aussies want to take Ashes urn home



SYDNEY, Aug 24: The Australian Cricket Board (ACB) is to ask England to hand over the historic Ashes trophy, Australian media reported today, says Reuters.

The Sun-Herald said an ACB meeting in Melbourne on Friday resolved to write to English officials requesting that the tiny urn be handed over.

Although Australia have held the Ashes for the past eight years, the trophy has always remained in London.

The Sunday Telegraph said ACB chairman Denis Rogers decided to present the issue to his board after wicketkeeper Ian Healy said Australia should be allowed to take the trophy home after winning the Ashes series for a record fifth successive time.

"We respect that ownership is ownership and we would never argue that it belonged to us," Rogers said.

"But it's the 1990s and we're writing to the MCC to ask whether they would consider allowing the Ashes to come to Australia."

"It might add a new dimension to the Ashes series by having the urn move back and forth when it changes hands."

The legend of the Ashes began in 1882 when the sporting times ran a mock obituary to English cricket after the national team had been beaten by a team from Australia.

Later that year Ivo Bligh took a team to Australia, promising to bring back the 'Ashes of English cricket.'

He fulfilled his goal and was later presented with a small pottery urn — about 10 centimetres in height — containing the Ashes of a wooden cricket ball.

The urn remained in Bligh's keeping until his death in 1927 when his widow presented it to the MCC. It has since remained in the memorial gallery at Lord's.

The only time the Ashes were released was for a brief



visit to the bicentennial Test at Sydney in 1988. Even then they were flown aboard Queen Elizabeth's private plane.

Wilson betters own mark

COLOGNE, Germany, Aug 24: Denmark's Wilson Kipketer broke his own 800m world record when he clocked 1min 41.11 secs here today, reports AFP.

The Kenyan born Kipketer set his previous record earlier this month in Zurich when he ran 1:42.24.

Johnson skips 'festival of sprint'

SICILY, Aug 24: Double Olympic champion Michael Johnson will not run in a 'festival of sprint' at the World Student Games because of his continuing injury problems, world athletics chief Primo Nebiolo said on Saturday, reports Reuters.

Johnson had said he was keen to race in the festival, scheduled for the last weekend of the Games on August 30-31, but Nebiolo said the American's lingering thigh injury would prevent him from running.

"It's truly sad but there's no use pretending that he'll run," said Nebiolo, adding he had nevertheless asked Johnson to come to Sicily as a guest.

"We've asked him to come anyway to show his affection for the Sicilian people. If he did one lap of the track it could have more significance than a race."

Johnson pulled out of Friday's Grand Prix in Brussels and was expected to cut short his season because of disappointing recent form and return to the United States.

Organisers are hoping world class sprinters Frankie Fredericks, Ato Boldon, Bruny Surin, Gail Devers and Merlene Ottey will compete in the festival which will bring the two-week games to a close.

None of the athletes, however, have confirmed participation.

Malaysian Open TT

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 24: Chinese top seed Kong Linghui easily beat Saive Jean-Michel of Belgium 21-11, 21-15, 21-15 in 28 minutes to win the Malaysian Open table tennis championship today, reports AFP.

The women's singles title was won by favourite and three-time world champion, China's Deng Yaping, who beat compatriot Yang Ying 21-14, 15-21, 21-14, 21-19.

In the men's doubles final, Chinese pair Ma Lin and Yan Sen pushed aside compatriots Kong Linghui and Liu Gao 21-17, 21-17.

But in the women's doubles final, South Korean pair, Park Hae-Jung and Kim Moo-Kyo beat Chinese pair Deng Yaping and Yang Yang 21-21, 21-13, 21-14.

Happy-go-lucky Hingis

NEW YORK, Aug 24: Martina Hingis is having too much fun to change anything right now as she sets her sights on a third Grand Slam title this year at the US Open starting on Monday, reports Reuters.

"I've just been relaxing for two weeks at home, now I'm ready for the big one here at the US Open," the 16-year-old Swiss sensation said Saturday before heading out to practice at the renovated US National Tennis Centre complex.

World number one Hingis sidelined for a month earlier this year after hurting her knee in a fall from a horse, said she is enjoying her riding — and winning — more than ever.

"I had a new horse to try at home, I've been riding two horses now every day," she said. "I had a lot of fun there, yeah."

"I've been jumping as high as never before."

Hingis has been riding high on the tennis courts this season as well.

She carries a 56-2 match record this year into the Open having become the youngest player ever to hold the top ranking and the youngest Australian Open and Wimbledon champion this century.

Hingis is seeded number one for the season's final Grand Slam event — the youngest player ever to hold that honour at the US Open.

"It's not the first time I'm seeded number one at a Grand Slam tournament," Hingis said, denying that her ranking puts added pressure on her.

"I won Wimbledon," she noted, where she was top-seeded.

"That was one of the greatest moments in my life, especially in my tennis career. So it's not the first time, so there's no pressure."

The first blemish on Hingis' 1997 match record came in the French Open final to Croatian Iva Majoli. Her only other defeat came two weeks ago to American Lindsay Davenport in a semifinal in Los Angeles.

That was when Hingis headed home for a little rest and relaxation.

Hingis' rivals will include second seed Monica Seles, Jana Novotna of the Czech Republic, Majoli and the infuriatingly-in-

consistent French player Mary Pierce. "I feel fit and ready for this tournament," she announced.

Hingis, who fell in a dramatic semifinal to eventual champion Steffi Graf at last year's Open at the tender age of

Moya-Rafter Hamlet finale

COMMACK, New York, Aug 24: Fifth-seeded Carlos Moya of Spain beat countryman Julian Alonso 6-2, 6-3 on Saturday to reach the final of the Hamlet Cup, reports AP.

Moya, 20, ranked eighth in the world, will face eighth-seeded Patrick Rafter of Australia. Rafter followed his quarterfinal victory over Michael Chang with a 6-4, 6-4 decision over sixth-seeded Thomas Enqvist of Sweden.

Moya, winless in four previous finals appearances this year, needed only 21 minutes to take the first set against Alonso.

"I'm getting back to where I was in Australia and I feel very confident going into the US Open," said Moya, who lost the Australian Open final to top-ranked Pete Sampras. "After Australia, everyone expected that I would win every time. That's impossible."

Alonso, in only his second tour semifinal, lost six of the final seven games after taking the first two games in the second set.

Moya closed out the match with his sixth break.

Marcelo, Sjeng fight for title

BROOKLINE, Massachusetts, Aug 24: Second-seeded Marcelo Rios of Chile and unseeded Sjeng Schalken of the Netherlands won semifinal matches Saturday to move into the singles final of the MES Pro Championships at the Longwood Cricket Club, reports AP.

Schalken continued his string of upsets by defeating fifth-seeded Albert Costa of Spain 6-4, 5-7, 6-3 and Rios beat unseeded Jeff Tarango 6-4, 6-3.

Schalken broke for a 5-3 lead in the third set, then held serve at 40-30, forcing Costa to return a volley wide down the right sideline.



Mary Pierce of France (L) and Anke Huber of Germany smile before their benefit doubles match against Mary Jo Fernandez of America and Mirjana Lucic of Croatia at the Arthur Ashe Stadium in Flushing Meadows, New York.

— AFP/UNB photo



Frank Esposito (C) may be short in stature, but the Frenchman stood taller than the others at the European Swimming Championships by winning the men's 200m freestyle gold in Sevilla on Aug 23. A beaming Esposito on the winners' podium along with Denis Silantiev of Ukraine (L) and Stephen Parry of Britain, who clinched the silver and bronze respectively.

— AFP/UNB photo

Alexander 'the great' Popov



SEVILLE, Spain, Aug 24: Alexander Popov, invincible in the past six years, scooped his third gold medal of the European Swimming Championships with a typically smooth victory in the men's 50 metres freestyle on Saturday, reports Reuters.

One year on from the night he was stabbed by a watermelon seller on a Moscow street, Popov serenely maintained his record of winning all his major championship freestyle races since his debut in 1991.

Popov, who has also won his fourth European 100 freestyle title and led Russia to victory in the 4x100 freestyle relay, swung clear in the second half of the one-length sprint to win in 22.30 seconds, the best time in the world this year.

"It's not the fastest time I've ever done — just a training time, but competition is the best source of training," the 25-year-old Australian-based Russian said.

Britain's Mark Foster, world short-course 50 freestyle champion in 1993, took the silver in 22.53 and Frenchman Julien Sicot the bronze in 22.78.

It was a great day for the older generation, with three swimmers more venerable than the seasoned Popov claiming gold in the San Pablo Pool.

The most loudly acclaimed winner was Spain's Martin Lopez Zubero, born and based in the US but a Spanish national hero since his Olympic 200 backstroke victory at the 1992 Barcelona Games.

The 28-year-old, clinched his fourth European 100 metres backstroke title to the noisy delight of the home fans who chanted his name and sang 'viva Espana' to celebrate Spain's first gold medal on the penultimate day of the 12-day championships.

Trailing seventh at the turn, he accelerated on the second length to win in a modest 55.71 from Eithan Urbach, who clinched Israel's first-ever European championship medal with a silver in 55.88, and Russia's 200 backstroke gold medalist Vladimir Selkov (55.97).

"I'm very happy. It's my fourth European 100 title. It's very important to have won across eight years," world champion Lopez Zubero said.

Frank Esposito recaptured the 200 metres butterfly crown he won in 1991, surging through on the last half-length to overtake Ukraine's Denis Silantiev for the gold.

The 26-year-old Frenchman, bronze medalist to Silantiev's silver in Wednesday's 100 butterfly, won by the handsome margin of 1.24 seconds in 1:57.24 to consign the Ukrainian to his second silver.

"I know he (Silantiev) goes out very fast. It appeared to me that I had to stay with him and come back," Esposito, 1992 Olympic bronze medalist, said.

"I had to do a hell of a last 50... in the last 15 metres I breathed only once, technically I didn't feel so good but I had a lot of energy."

Olympic and world champion Denis Pankratov, who had won the European crown in 1993 and 1995, failed to make the final, finishing 11th overall in the heats, nearly two seconds behind Esposito.

The fourth vintage winner was 27-year-old Kerstin Kielgass, who gained compensation for the loss of her 200 freestyle crown to Ireland's Michelle de Bruin by winning the women's 800 freestyle.

Kielgass overtook Dutch pace-setter Carla Geurts in the second half of the race to win in 8:34.41 from Geurts (8:36.14) and fellow former East German Jana Henke (8:39.93).

Oxana Verevka, at 20 the youngest of the day's individual champions, won the women's 200 individual medley in the absence of Olympic champion De Bruin, who decided not to defend her European crown because she was tired out after winning two golds and a silver in three days.

Verevka, born in Ukraine but now competing for Russia, took the lead from Martina Moravcova on the second length — the backstroke leg — and built a big enough lead to resist a storming freestyle finish from the Slovak swimmer, who had to settle for her third silver medal of the championships.

But on an afternoon for "golden oldies," European junior champion Yana Klochkova of Ukraine served a reminder that youth will have its day.

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Boldon gets hero's welcome

PORT-OF-SPAIN, Trinidad, Aug 24: Two weeks after winning a gold medal at the World Championships, sprinter Ato Boldon returned to a hero's welcome in Trinidad and the promise of financial support in his pursuit of Olympic gold.

"God is great," Ato exclaimed as he waved his gold medal for the thousands of fans who gathered to greet him at an open-air ceremony Saturday evening at Piarco International Airport, reports AP.

"I feel a sense of joy the likes of which I never felt before," Boldon said, near tears.

Boldon, who won the gold medal in the 200 metres at the World Championships in Athens, was greeted by Prime Minister Basdeo Pandey. The 23-year-old sprinter will be awarded a 42,000 dollars annual grant until 2000 to "ensure that you return from the Sydney Olympics with gold," Pandey said.

In addition to the grant, Boldon will be given two first-class airline tickets each year to return to his home Caribbean nation from his training base in Los Angeles.

Also receiving a rousing welcome was Boldon's American coach, John Smith, who characterized the sprinter's victory as a true comeback after he performed disappointingly in the 100 metre sprint at Athens.

Boldon, said Smith, "went to the 200-metre start in deep despair with nothing in his tank. It was God and his roots in Trinidad which took him through."

The win was an important one for Boldon, who had predicted great success for himself at the Atlanta Olympics, but came away with two bronzes, not the golds he had expected.

He said his World Championships gold medal would remain in his home country, alongside his Olympic bronze medals, "to inspire some young person because that's what I am about — winning gold medals and bringing them back home."

University Games

Ukrainian rules the day

SICILY, Aug 24: Ukraine's Elena Vitrichenko picked up three golds and a bronze medal Sunday in the rhythmic gymnastic discipline competitions at the World University Games, adding to her title from the all-around event, reports AP.

By midday Sunday, the fourth day of competition, no country had garnered more gold medals than the four captured by the Ukrainian.

Vitrichenko, a bronze medalist in the all-around at the Atlanta Olympics, won the hoop and ribbon outright, shared the hoop gold with France's Eva Serrano, and took bronze in the clubs.

Unlike the traditional form, artistic gymnastics, where athletes do aerial moves and handstands, rhythmic gymnastics is based more on dance. The competitors perform a series of floor exercises with a ribbon, a hoop, a rope, and clubs.

Later Sunday, Olympic rings champion Yuri Chechil was to make what's likely his final appearance in competition. The Italian had to contend with the Chinese who've dominated the men's artistic gymnastics here, taking the team title and sweeping the medals in the individual all-around.

The women, including 16-time Olympic and world medalist Shannon Miller of the United States, were also in action for the apparatus medals.

MEDALS TABLE

The medals table at the 19th World University Games, through Saturday:

Country	C	S	B	T
China	2	1	2	5
Ukraine	2	1	1	4
United States	1	2	0	3
Russia	1	1	3	5
Cuba	1	0	0	1
Hungary	1	0	0	1
Japan	0	1	2	3
Belarus	0	1	1	2
Italy	0	1	0	1
Romania	0	0	1	1
Poland	0	0	1	1

Roggiero registers first pole position

MOSCOW, Aug 24: "Feeling confident and comfortable," drove Massimo Roggero back to his favoured DAC powerboat in Italy a month ago, and on Saturday his comfort zone and the DAC drove him to the pole position for Sunday's Grand Prix of Russia, says a press release.

The Italian scorched the Volga River course in a lap of 42.19 seconds, edging out American Scott Gillman who clocked 42.30.

It was the Gold Leaf F1 Racing team's first pole of the 1997 UIM Formula 1 powerboat season. Better still, teammate Jonathan Jones also made it to Saturday's top-six shootout qualifier and will start fifth, after turning in a best lap of 43.39 seconds.

Pertti Leppala of Finland was third (42.63), 1996 defending champion Guido Cappellini of Italy qualified fourth (42.68) and Germany's Mikael Werner rounded out the super-six with a time of 43.68.

Brilliant sunshine, 30° Celsius temperatures and a serene Volga River greeted the Formula 1 powerboat circus on Saturday, and the top boats made the most of the ideal conditions.

However, Humaid Bakhtit of the United Arab Emirates team barrel-rolled in qualifying, crashing and partially sinking before being rescued by the special Osprey emergency team.

Bakhtit was taken to local hospital where he was being kept under observation for the night. UIM officials reported that his condition was described as

"good" by doctors.

In all, 23 drivers qualified for the Grand Prix of Russia, including two Russian competitors, Victor Kunich, 13th, and Sergei Girov, 23rd.



JOHN PLAYER

11 RACING TEAM

The Daily Star Entertainment Guide

Monday 25th August (All programmes are in local time. There may be changes in the programme) BTV 3:00 pm Opening announcement: Al Quran Programme summary 3:10 Recitation from the Bible 3:15 Patriotic Songs 3:20 Musical Programme: The Album Show 3:45 Sports Programme 4:00 News 4:45 Desh O Bighyan 5:15 Open University 6:00 Dolon Chapa 6:30 Bidyadgaon 7:00 The News 7:10 Health Programme 7:25 Banishori 8:00 News in Bangla 8:45 Package Drama 10:00 News at Ten 10:30 A Special Programme: Jamnastami 11:30 News in Bangla 11:35 Tuesday's programme summary 11:40 Close down BBC 6:00am BBC World News 6:30 World Living: Jeremy Clarkson's Motorworld 7:00 BBC World News Asia 7:25 News 7:30 BBC World News 7:45 Desh O Bighyan 8:00 News 8:15 Desh O Bighyan 8:30 Bidyadgaon 9:00 News 9:15 Desh O Bighyan 9:30 Bidyadgaon 9:45 Desh O Bighyan 10:00 News 10:15 Desh O Bighyan 10:30 Bidyadgaon 10:45 Desh O Bighyan 11:00 News 11:15 Desh O Bighyan 11:30 Bidyadgaon 11:45 Desh O Bighyan 12:00 News 12:15 Desh O Bighyan 12:30 Bidyadgaon 12:45 Desh O Bighyan 1:00 News 1:15 Desh O Bighyan 1:30 Bidyadgaon 1:45 Desh O Bighyan 2:00 News 2:15 Desh O Bighyan 2:30 Bidyadgaon 2:45 Desh O Bighyan 3:00 News 3:15 Desh O Bighyan 3:30 Bidyadgaon 3:45 Desh O Bighyan 4:00 News 4:15 Desh O Bighyan 4:30 Bidyadgaon 4:45 Desh O Bighyan 5:00 News 5:15 Desh O Bighyan 5:30 Bidyadgaon 5:45 Desh O Bighyan 6:00 News 6:15 Desh O Bighyan 6:30 Bidyadgaon 6:45 Desh O Bighyan 7:00 News 7:15 Desh O Bighyan 7:30 Bidyadgaon 7:45 Desh O Bighyan 8:00 News 8:15 Desh O Bighyan 8:30 Bidyadgaon 8:45 Desh O Bighyan 9:00 News 9:15 Desh O Bighyan 9:30 Bidyadgaon 9:45 Desh O Bighyan 10:00 News 10:15 Desh O Bighyan 10:30 Bidyadgaon 10:45 Desh O Bighyan 11:00 News 11:15 Desh O Bighyan 11:30 Bidyadgaon 11:45 Desh O Bighyan 12:00 News 12:15 Desh O Bighyan 12:30 Bidyadgaon 12:45 Desh O Bighyan 1:00 News 1:15 Desh O Bighyan 1:30 Bidyadgaon 1:45 Desh O Bighyan 2:00 News 2:15 Desh O Bighyan 2:30 Bidyadgaon 2:45 Desh O Bighyan 3:00 News 3:15 Desh O Bighyan 3:30 Bidyadgaon 3:45 Desh O Bighyan 4:00 News 4:15 Desh O Bighyan 4:30 Bidyadgaon 4:45 Desh O Bighyan 5:00 News 5:15 Desh O Bighyan 5:30 Bidyadgaon 5:45 Desh O Bighyan 6:00 News 6:15 Desh O Bighyan 6:
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