

Sport

Suhrawardy Cup Jessore-BKSP final today

Jessore will take on BKSP in the final of the Keya Cosmetics Suhrawardy Cup under-19 national football championship at the Rangpur Stadium today at 2:45 pm, reports UNB.

State Minister for Youth and Sports Obaidul Quader will witness the final match as chief guest.



Bangladesh Betar will relay the match live.

Jessore moved into the final outplaying Chittagong 3-0 while BKSP by defeating holders Tangail 2-0.

The first phase of the championship was held in eight different regions across the country while the final round began at Rangpur on February 8.

Square Cup golf held

The Square Cup golf tournament was held yesterday at Kurmitola Golf Club, says a press release.

The tournament was inaugurated and prizes were distributed by the club president Lt Gen Muhammad Mustafizur Rahman BB.

List of the winners:

Winner men's: Brig Ahmed Imrul Kayes

Ladies' winner: Mrs Jin Sook Yoon

Senior winner: Maj Gen M Hasan

Junior winner: Ezuan Zulkifly

Best Gross: Sadiq Qudus

Ladies' Best Gross: Mrs Negumi Koreeda

Second Best Gross: Rahib Bashir

Men's Runner-up: Faisal Khan

Ladies' Runner-up: Mrs Moon Sun Cho

Junior Runner-up: Nafiz Farid

Second Runner-up: Brig Abdul Mannan Miah

Front Nine Winner: Syed Emdad Ali

Back Nine Winner: Bong Chan Lee

Nearest to Pin: Iqbal Mahmood

Longest Drive: Sadiq Qudus

Most Pars: M Saber Afzal

Murali to join Lancashire after WC

LONDON, Feb 26: English county Lancashire have been given the go-ahead to use spinner Muttiah Muralitharan as their overseas player this coming season, reports AFP.

The Sri Lankan cricket board has faxed Lancashire to say they have no objections to Muralitharan playing county cricket after their World Cup bid is over.

However, they want Muralitharan back in Sri Lanka in time for their Test series against Australia in early September.

Lancashire signed him last September after his 16-wicket haul against England at The Oval, but had to wait for Sri Lanka's consent.

McMillan apologises publicly

CAPE TOWN, Feb 26 (Reuters/Internet): Former South African Test all-rounder Brian McMillan made a public apology on Thursday for racially offensive "sledging" during a match.

McMillan had been severely reprimanded by a United Cricket Board of South Africa (UCB) disciplinary committee for advising a Western Province team mate to deliver a "coolie creper" to a non-white KwaZulu Natal batsman in a first-class game earlier this month.

The phrase is South African cricketing jargon for a ball that shoots along the ground after pitching. "Coolie" is an apartheid era term for a labourer of Indian descent.

McMillan was initially unrepentant. He told reporters on Wednesday that he would not apologise and that the issue was "crap".

In a prepared statement read out in front of television cameras after the first day of a four-day match at Newlands on Thursday he said: "I would like to reiterate that the term 'coolie creper' in my cricketing terminology means a ball keeping low."

"However, I now believe that such a term may be interpreted to be offensive in the South African environment. If I have offended anybody by using this term, I wish to apologise."

McMillan declined to be questioned on his change of heart.

Western Province chief executive Arthur Turner said: "The UCB (United Cricket Board of South Africa) has sent out a fax saying it will be review all cricketers' terms such as coolie creper, chinaman and the like so that they will be politically correct in the wider terms of the new South Africa."

In a separate incident, a provincial second XI player was banned until January 1, 2001 after he was found guilty of using crude and abusive language.

Eastern Province's Alan Badenhorst called an opponent from Griqualand West a "half-bred kaffir".

"Kaffir" is one of the most offensive words a white South African can use to address a non-white countryman.

Mauresmo-Hingis qtrs showdown

PARIS, Feb 26: Australian Open runner-up Amelie Mauresmo set up a revenge match with Swiss Martina Hingis when she qualified for the Paris Open quarterfinals on Thursday, reports Reuters.

The strongly-built French player named Slovakia's Karina Habsudova 6-2, 6-1 in the second round and appeared confident before facing Hingis who had called her "half a man" ahead of the Melbourne final.

"I was easier today and I think I'm really into the tournament now. This was my second game since the Australian Open and my stamina is improving every day," the 19-year-old Mauresmo said.

"Playing Martina Hingis is obviously going to be a tough task. We know each other and I'm expecting a physical challenge," she said.

Mauresmo bowed to world number one Hingis in straight sets in Australia.

"In Melbourne it was a very peculiar match. I did everything too fast," Mauresmo said. "Of course, I want to take revenge but not for what she said. It now belongs to the past."

Top seed Hingis showed touches of her best form when she dismissed Yugoslav qualifier Sandra Nacuk 6-1, 6-1 in the second round on Wednesday.

In other action on Thursday, France's Julie Halard-Decugis and Nathalie Dechy also reached the last eight.

Seventh-seed Halard-Decugis trounced compatriot Anne Gaele Sidot 6-1, 6-2 while Dechy overcame strong opposition from Croatia's Iva Majoli to win 6-2, 2-6, 6-2.

Halard-Decugis now meets American teenager Serena Williams, sister of Venus.



Sabrina Sultana of Metropolitan Shooting Club poses after clinching gold in the Sports Rifle Three-Position event yesterday. — Star photo

Nat'l Shooting concludes

Sports Reporter

The 16th National Shooting Championships concluded at the Gulshan Shooting Range in the city yesterday.

Three events were decided on the last day of the meet.

Sabrina Sultana of Metropolitan Shooting Club bagged the gold in the Sports Rifle Three-Position women's event with 553 points. The silver went to Shahana Parveen of Chittagong Rifles Club, who was a point short. Shahnaz Parveen of Ansars and VDP with 525 points took the bronze.

Men's Free Rifle Three-Position Chittagong Rifle Club's Nasiruddin Johnny took the gold with 1119 points. Saiful Alam Chowdhury Rinki of Gulshan Shooting Club was just three points less and had to be content with the silver. Kamrul Islam of Rajdhani Shooting Club took the bronze in the event.

The Free Rifle gold went to Nazrul Islam of Kushtia Rifle Club, who secured 524 points. Asif Hossain of Gulshan took the silver and M A Gaffar of Ansars and VDP ran away with the bronze.

Int'l Jr tennis

MacDade, Wang in boys' final

Andrew MacDade of South Africa takes on Wang Yen Tzuoo of Chinese Taipei in the final of the boys' singles of the Bangladesh International Junior Tennis Championship today at 2 pm, reports UNB.

MacDade beat Mark Weaver of England 6-1, 6-1 in the semi-final while Tzuoo beat Y Egawa of Japan 7-6 (7-4), 6-2 in the Other semi at the Ramna National Tennis Complex yesterday.

In the girls' singles, Rencken Nicole of South Africa faces Virat Prasert of Thailand in the final at 9:15 in the morning.

In the semi-finals Nicole beat G Sheetal of India 6-2, 6-3 while Prasert beat R Tulpule of India 6-2, 6-2.

Boys' doubles semi-final results: Andrew MacDade and BW Smith pair beat Chao H Yung and CC Wei 6-2, 6-2 while W Mark and W Ahmed pair beat LN Lian and WY La Lai 6-4, 6-4.

The final of the boys' doubles will be held today at 3:30 pm.

The day's girls' doubles semis results: Lai Yi Ying and Lu Yen Hua pair beat C Y Han and C Hsin Chien pair 6-3, 7-5 while N Radhika and Yang Fe Ili beat G Sheetal and Nida Waseem 6-3, 3-6, 6-4.

The final will also be held today at 2:45 pm.

Water Resources Minister Abdur Razzak will be the chief guest at the prize distribution ceremony.

Johansson offended

EINDHOVEN, Netherlands, Feb 26: UEFA president Lennart Johansson on Thursday described FIFA President Sepp Blatter's plan to stage the World Cup every two years as an insult and said it undermined the future of European soccer, reports Reuters.

Blatter backed down on his controversial idea on Wednesday after a meeting with Johansson, one of the harshest critics of the plan.

"Common sense talked louder than anything else," Johansson told a symposium on next year's Euro 2000 Championship.

"I told him that what happened was nothing but an insult against UEFA and its member associations, and also perhaps to me ... I'm vice-president of FIFA and chairman of the organising committee," he said.

Johansson, who had urged Blatter to come to UEFA's headquarters in Geneva for Wednesday's meeting, said Blatter admitted "he had handled this in the incorrect way."

Johansson said he rejected the World Cup plan because no research had been done about the reaction of media, public, clubs, players and medical experts.

Hunt for Deportivo Cali boss

CALI, Colombia, Feb 26: The security forces on Thursday launched a search for Deportivo Cali chairman Humberto Arias, who was kidnapped as he arrived for the Colombian champions Copa Libertadores match with once Caldas, won 1-0 by Deportivo, reports AFP.

An armed gang kidnapped Arias, 73, as the left his private office to attend the match. Three men bearing pistols and machine guns intercepted him and bundled him into a waiting car, according to police sources. Elite police and secret service agents were leading the hunt and were concentrating their search in the city of Cali.

There is no confirmation of the identity of the kidnappers but police are working along the theory that it was carried out by local delinquents rather than left wing guerrillas, who operate in the city.

Arias has owned Deportivo Cali since 1963 and became president in 1993. During his tenure as president the club has twice won the Colombian title.

The club's coach Jose Hernandez informed the players of the kidnapping after the match and said the players were very upset by his kidnapping because Arias was like a father to them.

Arias also promoted several top Colombian players such as Victor Bonilla, Arley Betancourt and Middlebrough striker Hamilton Ricard.

United hope to bury the curse



LONDON, Feb 26 (Reuters/Internet): Manchester United should end the jinx Southampton appear to hold over them and pick up three more points in their push for the English premier league title on Saturday.

United, who have won 10 of the 11 league and cup matches they have played this year, have lost games against second-from-bottom Southampton in the past few seasons.

But it is difficult to see anything other than a United home win on Saturday. Southampton have won just once in their last 25 league visits to Old Trafford.

United boss Alex Ferguson may rest some of his key players before next Wednesday's European Champions' League quarter-final first leg against Inter Milan.

Southampton, who are involved in their usual battle against relegation, have improved in recent weeks, winning four of their last five home matches.

But they were outclassed 3-0 by United at The Dell in October and it would be a major upset if they won on Saturday.

United, 1-0 winners at Coventry last week thanks to a goal from in-form Ryan Giggs, have played 27 matches and lead the standings by four points from Chelsea (50 points) and by five from Arsenal.

Both London sides have played one match fewer than United.

Aston Villa, who led the table from the middle of September to the end of Decem-

ber, are now on the fringes of the title chase in fourth place on 44 points after losing three and drawing one of their last four matches.

Chelsea, who play Valerenga of Norway in the quarter-final

King's Cup soccer

Brazil, DPRK in final

BANGKOK, Feb 26: Brazil will meet North Korea in the final of the 30th King's Cup football tournament on Saturday after the round-robin first round was completed Thursday, reports AFP.

In the first match Thailand drew with Hungary 3-3 after leading 2-1 at half time.

Thai scorers were Klattisak Senamuang (14th minute), Thongchai Akkarapong (20th) and Thawchai Damrong-Ongrak (58th).

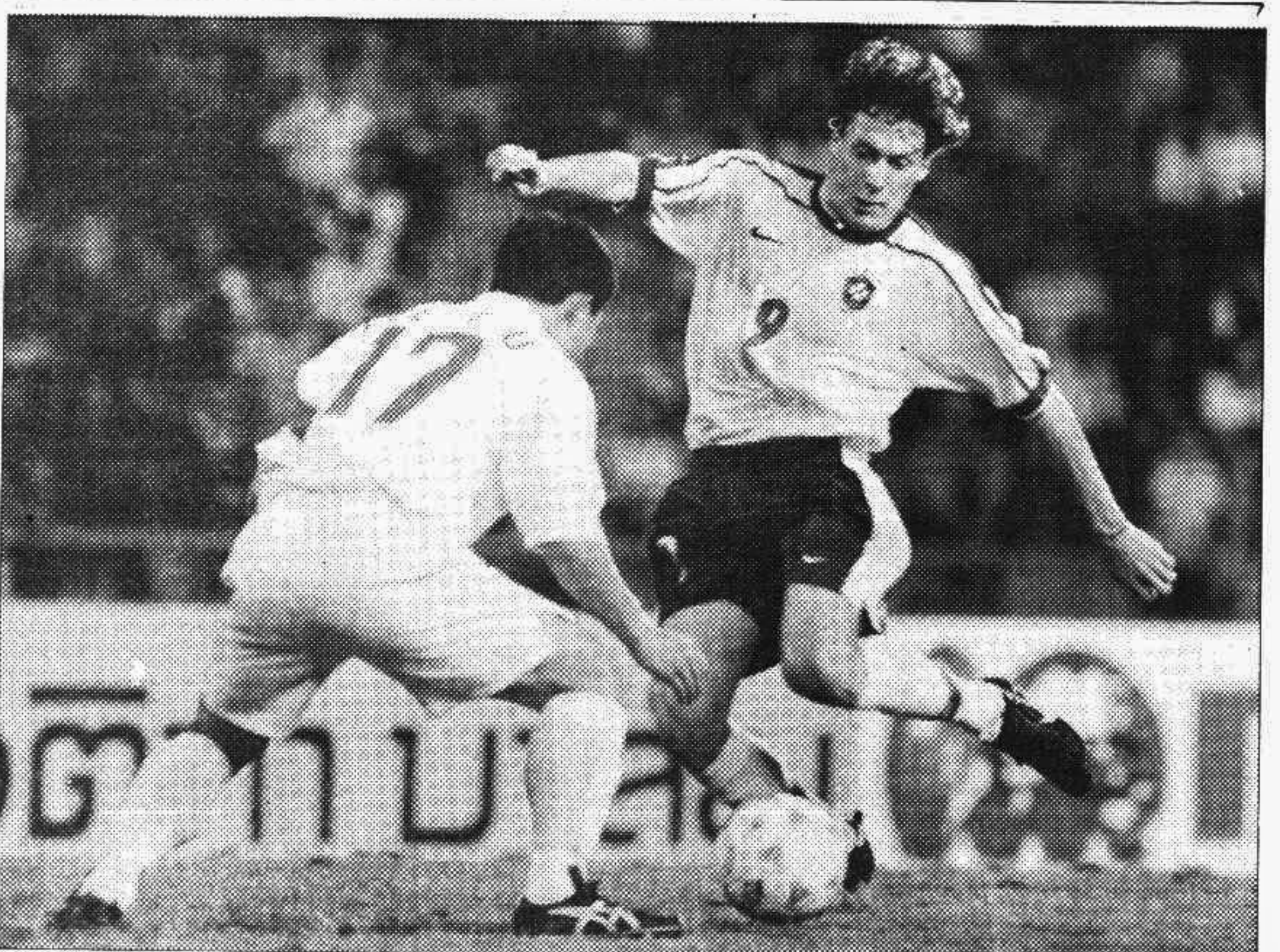
Hungary scored from Sandor Kovacs (34th), Szerjan Kosztics (48th) and Andras Hokvat (90th).

The second match saw North Korea drew with Brazil 1-1 after the goalless first half time.

North Korea scored from Ri Kyong-Min (74th). Brazil scored from Juan Silveira (90th).

Thailand and Hungary will meet in the match for third place also on Saturday.

STANDINGS									
Team	P	W	D	L	Gf	Ga	Pts		
Brazil	3	2	1	0	11	2	7		
N Korea	3	0	3	0	5	3	3		
Thailand	3	0	2	1	6	9	2		
Hungary	3	0	2	1	5	11	2		



Brazilian Rodrigo Graf (R) tries to go past his North Korean marker during the four-nation King's Cup tournament in Bangkok. — AFP photo

Marseille gain slender lead



PARIS, Feb 26: Olympique Marseille went back to the top of the French First Division on Thursday with a 1-0 win over 10-man Strasbourg at the Stade Velodrome, reports Reuters.

Midfielder Robert Pires blasted the winner a minute after half-time to hand his side their first victory in their last three matches.

Strasbourg were down to 10 men for the last hour after defender Habib Beye was shown a red card for a tackle from behind on striker Christophe Dugarry.

Marseille now have 54 points, one ahead of second-placed Girondins Bordeaux, who drew 0-0 at in-form Nantes. Bordeaux were without suspended playmaker Ali Benarbia and captain Michel Pavon.

In-form Olympique Lyon sunk troubled Paris St Germain with an 81st minute penalty by captain Alain Cavaglia after playmaker Vikash Dhorasse was fouled by PSG goalkeeper Dominique Casagrande.

Lyon are third on 44 points, while Monaco proved they are firmly back on course by beating Montpellier 3-2 away for their fourth consecutive league victory.

Marseille coach, Roland Courbis said his team's win enabled them "to celebrate one year without a defeat at home".

"We needed to regain the confidence we had lost since the winter break," he said.

Courbis emphasised the victory was the best way to prepare for their UEFA Cup quarter-final against Spanish side Celta Vigo on Tuesday at the Stade Velodrome.

"Tonight we lifted our level and we produced our best performance for the last two months. It is going to be a great help mentally for our next game," he said.

Courbis received a boost from Marseille chairman Robert Louis-Dreyfus, who confirmed the coach's contract is extended to 2002.

Bordeaux coach Elie Baup said: "We have not conceded a goal tonight and we proved that we still have the best defence of the French league."

Nantes, who dominated throughout the first half, created their best opportunity when midfielder Olivier Monterrubio forced goalkeeper Ulrich Rame to a dramatic save in the 30th minutes.

Lyon coach Bernard Lacombe said he has given up all ambitions in the title race.

"We must be realistic. With 10 matches to go it's impossible to close the gap on Marseille and Bordeaux. But we will be happy to finish third."

Asian Club soccer scores

ABU DHABI, Feb 26: Following are the results of Western Group quarterfinal of the Asian Club Football Championship in Al Ain, the United Arab Emirates, on Thursday, reports Xinhua.

Al Ain (United Arab Emirates) beat Kopetdag (Turkmenistan) 6-1 (halftime 3-1).

Esteghla (Iran) beat Al-Hilal (Saudi Arabia) 2-1 (2-0).

STANDINGS: Tabulated under games played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, against and points:

Al-Ain 1 1 0 0 6 1 3
Esteghla 1 1 0 0 2 1 3
Al-Hilal 1 0 0 1 1 2 0
Kopetdag 1 0 0 1 1 6 0

Note: The group winners and runners-up qualify for the semifinals, with winners meeting Japan's Jubilo Iwata and the runners-up facing Dalian Wanda of China.

Inter-Juve clash of the night



MILAN, Feb 26 (AFP/AP): Top of the bill in Italy is the San Siro clash between Champions' League hopefuls Inter Milan and Juventus.

Meanwhile, Fiorentina face a stormy trip to Salernitana and Lazio will be battling to stay top when they face Vicenza.

Inter, 11 points behind Lazio, face Manchester United next Wednesday, and will use their likely attacking line-up at Old Trafford in Chilean Ivan Zamorano and Roberto Baggio, supported by French World Cup winner Youri Djorkaeff.

Though Ronaldo's fitness remains a mystery all eyes will be on the subs' bench. If Ronaldo comes on at the end, alarm bells should start ringing in Manchester.

Djorkaeff said: "We've got to think about them after this match. I don't want Inter v Juve reduced to a mere rehearsal."

"The stadium is going to be packed and despite our positions in the table, this is going to be a special match."

Juventus, home to Greek club Olympiakos on Wednesday, will be playing their third match under new coach Carlo Ancelotti after consecutive wins. They trail Inter by a single point.

Filippo Inzaghi starts alongside Nicola Amoroso, before making way for either Argentinian Juan Esnaider of France's Thierry Henry.

Saturday night's other match features Parma at home to Perugia.

Lazio visit Vicenza who are fighting to avoid relegation and should be easy prey for Sven Goran Eriksson's men.

Every time Lazio strikers Christian Vieri and Marcelo Salas score winning goals, the Roman club finds themselves richer in points and cash.

The only Italian club quoted on the Milan stock market, Lazio have been capitalising on the team surge to first place in the Serie A standings and financier Sergio Cragnotti — the owner-president — is hoping that the upward trend of the company shares can continue through the end of the soccer season.

Cragnotti, who carried out one of the most expensive transfer campaigns in Italy's soccer history to sign Salas, Vieri, Sergio Conceicao, Sinisa Mihajlovic and Dejan Stankovic, said in a recent interview that the first league title for Lazio since 1974 was in sight.

The costly transfers have paid off in terms of goals as Lazio have the best league of fence with 44 goals in 22 matches. Salas, the Chilean striker nicknamed "El matorador," has contributed 11 goals, Mihajlovic and Vieri added six goals each and Stankovic four.

Frankie better all-comers' mark

MELBOURNE, Feb 26: Namibia's quadruple Olympic silver medalist Frankie Fredericks set another national all-comers record time in a scorching 200 metres win at a Grand Prix athletics meet here on Thursday, reports AFP.

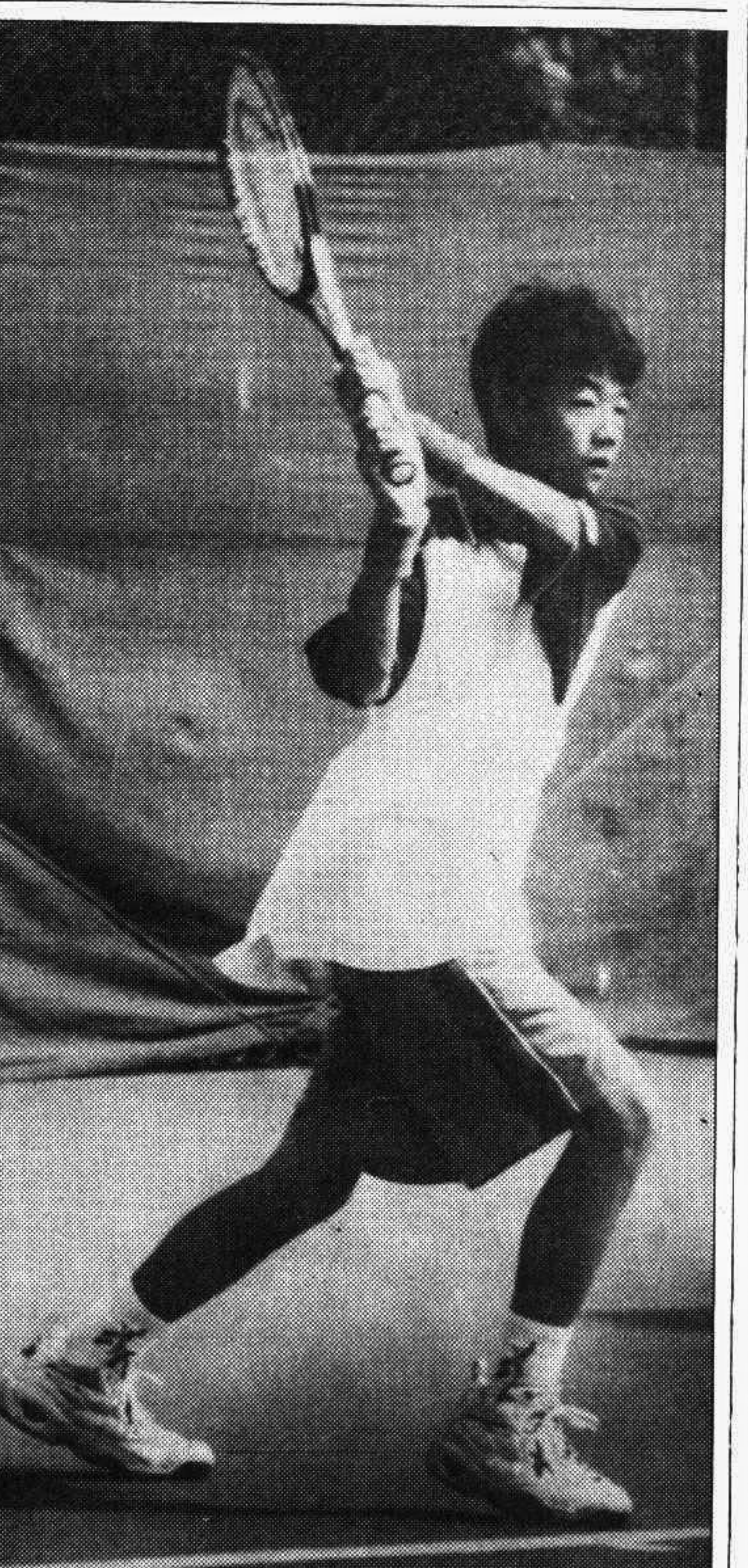
The 31-year-old, who shattered American 100 metres world champion Maurice Greene's all-comers' 100m record at last weekend's Sydney meet, was ecstatic after winning his event in 19.99 seconds.

Fredericks, who is the second-fastest man ever over 200m, was given a standing ovation after his blistering run, which destroyed the national record of 20.06s.

"I'm just happy to come here and run fast — that's the important thing," he said.

Australia's world champion Cathy Freeman made light of a virus to win the 400m race.

Freeman said the pain of nagging foot and hamstring injuries were gone, but the race drained her.

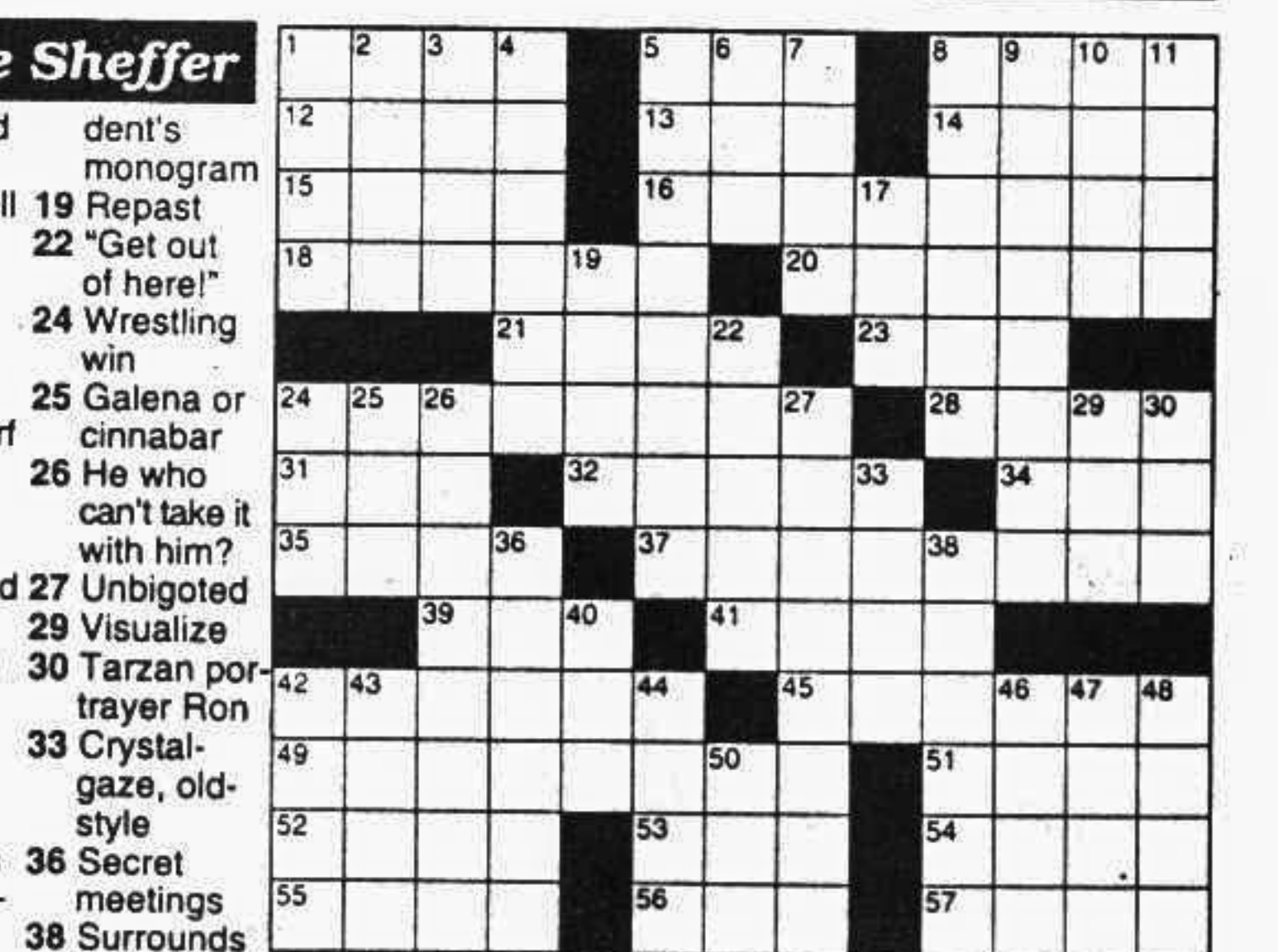


Wang Yen Tzuoo of Chinese Taipei playing against Japanese Y Egawa at the 13th Bangladesh international junior tennis championships yesterday. — Star photo

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 Help a hood
5 Succumb to gravity
8 Dutch treat
12 Slam-dance
13 What 9 Down checks
14 Missile shelter
15 Bakery employee
16 Slow cooker
18 Cotto or Genoa
20 Hula Hoops' locales
21 Bruce and Spike
23 Qity
24 Party, in the Pacific Northwest
28 Seine feeder
31 "Mad About You" role
32 "— Theme"
34 Animation frame
35 Barber-shop call
37 Home-

DOWN
2 — do-well
3 Writer
4 Kingsley
6 — Raton, Fla.
7 Dusseldorf donkey
9 Santa's laundry woe
10 Calendar pp., often
11 Inuit
12 Cookbook author
13 Rombauer
14 Oodles
15 Rocky pinnacles
17 21st president
19 Repeat
20 "Get out of here!"
21 Wrestling win
22 Galena or cinnabar
23 He who can't take it with him?
24 Unbigoted
25 Visualize
26 Lyon port-trader
27 Crystal-gaze, old-style
28 Secret meetings
29 Surrounds
30 Nevertheless
31 Revue segment
32 "— My Heart"
33 Capitol cap
34 Hole in the head?
35 Base-runner
36 Lyon
37 Wooden-shoe passenger



CRYPTOQUIP
Q Z V M R D E I M F T Q M R
V F U R Q I F D Q Q Z G Q G
N G B U R G Q U F R U I G R
D B Z F T V E M N M R Q U F R
Saturday's Cryptogram: OF COURSE I PRESUME A
REPTILE'S FAVORITE MOVIE IS "TURTLE RECALL."
Today's Cryptogram clue: N equals V
The Cryptogram is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Yesterday's answer
TALES AGASSIS
CORONA GRIPES
ARISEN RAMONA
DOZE DRAM ODS
RABE MAN
EWIE NISA IFSO
COMING UNGLUED
DOES SITE LAD
YALTA N
AAR SIGN LAHR
GREATS YOREA
ENAMEL MADAME
SENORA STEPS