

## Onus on Blewett

PORT OF SPAIN, Trinidad, Feb. 27/Reuters/Internet: Greg Blewett appears to have won the battle against Ricky Ponting for the last batting position in Australia's Test team.

Blewett has been preferred to Ponting for the final warm-up match, a four-day game in San Fernando, Trinidad, against a West Indian Cricket Board President's XI beginning on Saturday.

This makes Blewett favourite to claim the number six spot in the first Test, beginning in Port of Spain, Trinidad, on March five.

Pace bowlers Glenn McGrath and Jason Gillespie have been included for their first match on tour while leg-spinners Shane Warne and Stuart MacGill will play in their second successive game.

Asked if this side was a pointer to the Test team Marshall replied: "Not necessarily given the conditions here. The ground is saturated. We've had a lot of rain."

If the wicket at Queens Park Oval in Port of Spain remains moist for the test then medium pacer Adam Dale would almost certainly be chosen ahead of MacGill.

Dale took a first-class career-best of 7-24 against a board XI during Australia's first warm up match in Antigua recently.

### TEAMS

**Australia:** Matthew Elliott, Michael Slater, Justin Langer, Mark Waugh, Steve Waugh (captain), Greg Blewett, Ian Healy, Jason Gillespie, Shane Warne, Stuart MacGill, Glenn McGrath.

**The President's XI (from):** Keith Arthurton (captain), Suruj Ragoonath, Darren Ganga, Dave Joseph, Lincoln Roberts, Dennis Ramersar, Wayne Phillip, Rawl Lewis, Nixon McLean, Reon King, Marlon Black, Mukesh Persad, Ramnareesh Sarwan.

## Quebec mayor's revelation

QUEBEC CITY, Feb. 27: Quebec's mayor on Friday said the city's organising committee for the 2002 Winter Olympics had satisfied "several whims" of International Olympic Committee (IOC) members, reports AFP.

Mayor Jean-Paul L'Allier conceded that there may have been "debatable moves" by Olympic organisers following particular requests by some IOC members.

But the mayor said these moves should not raise any questions about the "integrity" of Quebec's failed effort to bring the Games to this provincial capital.

"Quebec has bought no one," L'Allier said.

The mayor did not address reports in Le Soleil newspaper that IOC members had approached the city's organisers with requests that were unrelated to sports, and that the committee had tried to respond.

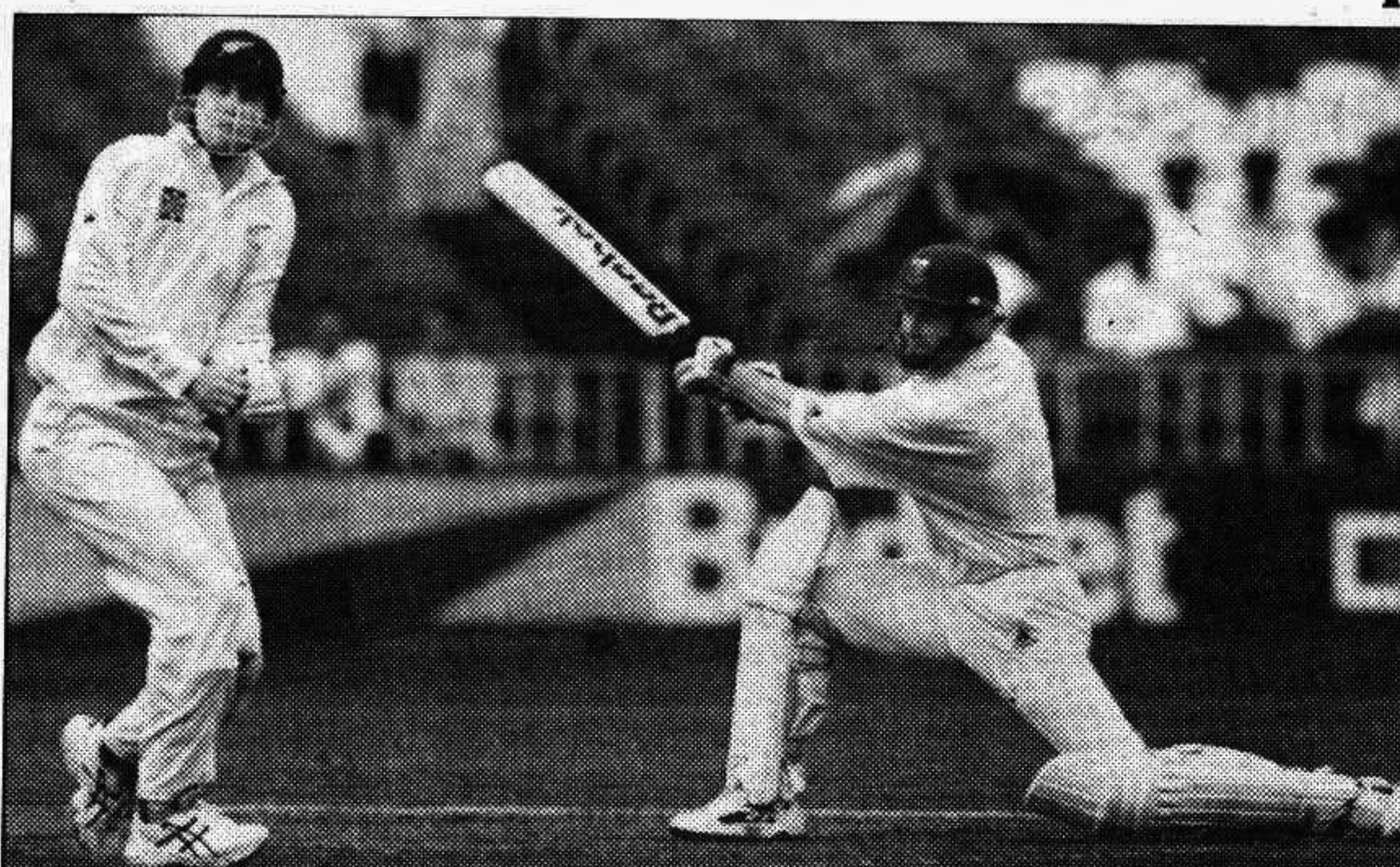
Le Soleil cited the case of Congolese Jean-Claude Ganga, who reportedly sought and got help in obtaining, among other things, an extended Canadian visa for himself and permanent residency status for his daughter.

It also said Tunisian Mohamed Mzali allegedly turned to organisers for help in getting his son permanent residency status in Canada.

Additionally, it said several unidentified IOC members asked the Quebec organisers to develop business contacts for them.

In a letter earlier this week, L'Allier said Quebec's organisers had conducted an inquiry into possible unethical acts by IOC members, that no case had been brought to their attention, and that the organising committee had "respected the spirit and the letter of the rules" of the IOC.

Quebec seeks 12 million dollars (eight million US) as compensation in connection with the scandal surrounding the selection of Salt Lake City, Utah, as the site for the 2002 Games.



South Africa opener Gary Kirsten drives through the covers during the opening day's play of the first Test against New Zealand in Auckland yesterday.

## Kirsten carves a century

AUCKLAND, Feb. 27: Gary Kirsten hit the gloom out of rain affected first day with a century to put South Africa in control of the first cricket Test against New Zealand at Eden Park Saturday, reports AFP.

Kirsten's unbeaten 109 and Daryll Cullinan's attractive 95 not out propelled South Africa to 245 for two at stumps after four rain stoppages marred the opening day of the three-match series.

Skipper Dion Nash's bold decision to put South Africa in a badly backfired on the home side after a sluggish wicket lacking sideways movement failed to assist the three-pronged seam attack.

A record third wicket stand dominated by Cullinan left the New Zealand attack in total disarray and made Nash's captaincy debut a nightmare.

Kirsten and Cullinan hammered 148 runs in 175 minutes after coming together at 97 for two, 44 minutes before the tea break.

Despite the odd ball bouncing disconcertingly and the annoying interruptions, the South Africa batsmen were equal to the task as they set about battling themselves to a strong position.

Kirsten, whose highest score on tour was an unbeaten 81 in the second one-day international, played one of his better innings to reach his second century in as many innings in 309 minutes with 11 fours.

It followed his 134 against West Indies during the 5-0

thrashing last month. Kirsten and fellow opener Herschelle Gibbs (34) set the tone of the day with a forceful 76-run stand for the first wicket before left-arm spinner Daniel Vettori drew first blood for New Zealand.

Resuming after lunch following a 30-minute stoppage for rain, Gibbs was bowled after adding just one run to his score. Gibbs, left a Vettori arm-ball that swung in late and hit the right hander's off-stump.

New Zealand struck twice in the post lunch session grabbing Gibbs and then the in-form Jacques Kallis (seven) in the space of eight overs.

But Cullinan fresh from a century in his last first-class outing against Northern Districts in Hamilton, ended any hopes New Zealand had of making further inroad to the Proteas batting with forceful innings.

In the defining moment of the day, Cullinan hit Vettori out of the attack just when the lone spinner looked like checking South Africa's progress.

He hit five of his 11 boundaries off Vettori in addition to a six over long on.

**The Kirsten-Cullinan stand improved on the 112 shared between Jackie McGlew and Roy McLean against New Zealand at the Wanderers Stadium in 1961/62.**

Cullinan raced to his 16th half century off 79 balls with eight boundaries and set eyes on a Test century that eluded him four years ago.

Cullinan was dismissed for 97 in South Africa's 93-run win here in the one off Test win in

1994/95. The gifted No 4 outscored the veteran Kirsten as he contributed 63 of the 100 stand in 112 minutes.

Kirsten's hundred, his ninth, put him on par with Dudley Nourse for the most individual hundreds by a South African batsman.

He is the only South African to score a century against six different Test opponents.

The South African batsmen were particularly severe on left-arm seamer Geoff Allott, hitting him for 64 runs in 13 overs including 10 boundaries.

### SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at stumps on the opening day of the first Test between New Zealand and South Africa on Saturday:

**SOUTH AFRICA:** First innings: Kirsten not out 109, Gibbs b Vettori 34, Kallis lbw b Doull 7, Cullinan not out 95. Extras: 1, lb-5, nb-1. Total: (for two wickets in 80 overs) 245.

Fall of wickets: 1-76, 2-97. To bat: Hansie Cronje, Jonty Rhodes, Shaun Pollock, Mark Boucher, Lance Klusener, Allan Donald, Paul Adams.

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Doull	18	4	40	1
Allott	13	1	64	0
Nash	13	4	43	0
Vettori	24	5	58	1
Harris	9	3	12	0
McMillan	3	0	19	0

**NEW ZEALAND:** Matthew Bell, Matthew Horne, Roger Tose, Nathan Astle, Craig McMillan, Chris Harris, Adam Parore, Dion Nash (cap), Daniel Vettori, Simon Doull, Geoff Allott.

## Becker set to wave his final goodbye

BONN, Feb. 27 (Reuters/Internet): Boris Becker plans to retire completely from tennis by the summer, a magazine quoted him as saying on Saturday.

News magazine Spiegel said the former Wimbledon champion, who gave up Grand Slam events in 1997, had realised now was the time to give up the professional game completely.

"I'll stop this summer," the 31-year-old German said in an interview.

"I've realised over the past few months that to maintain the level needed I have to devote myself entirely to tennis. I'll somehow manage that until the summer but, after that, that's enough."

He said he expected his last event to be the Weissenhof tournament in Stuttgart in July.

Becker, who won Wimbledon three times, the Australian Open twice and the U.S. Open once, vowed after his withdrawal from grand slam competition he would continue playing Davis Cup and ATP Tour events.

This year, however, he has played just one singles game and annoyed organisers of a tournament in London this week by withdrawing after being diagnosed as having gastroenteritis.

## Money sending fans away?

GENEVA, Feb. 27 (Reuters): Bosses at many of Europe's top soccer clubs fear they are losing contact with the fans as the sport grows into a multi-million dollar industry.

Their concerns were addressed at a workshop of the leading 50 European clubs here on Friday.

Bombarded daily by talk of superleagues, battles over television rights, bickering over a biennial World Cup, stock floatations and doping scandals, the business of soccer has recently overshadowed the playing of soccer, leaving many supporters disinterested and disillusioned.

"Money talks and the money that is being put into football and the changes of clubs into capital companies is difficult for the real fans to digest," acknowledged Gerhard Aigner, the general secretary of European soccer's governing body (UEFA), who chaired the two-day workshop.

"The real fan likes a simple identification," he said. "Most fans don't even know what the stock exchange is."

"The business of soccer is something that is strange to them, it's thing they can't comprehend and identify with."

"There we have a real problem."

# Sampras: Numero uno and counting

LONDON, Feb. 27 (AP/Internet): Pete Sampras is still No. 1.

Yevgeny Kafelnikov, the latest threat to Sampras' dominance over men's tennis, failed in his bid Friday to wrest the No. 1 spot from Sampras.

Needing a victory in the quarterfinals of the Guardian Direct indoor in central London to dislodge the 27-year-old American, Kafelnikov instead was beaten by Sweden's Thomas Johansson 6-2, 7-6 (7-5).

Kafelnikov, the 25-year-old Russian who won the Australian Open four weeks ago - his second Grand Slam title - will stay at No. 2 and rest next week as Sampras returns after being off with a leg injury. Sampras had a 58-point edge on Kafelnikov entering this tournament.

That means Sampras - winner of 11 Slams and chasing Roy Emerson's record of 12 - is guaranteed to remain No. 1 in the next two weekly rankings, which will bring his total to 262 weeks as No. 1 as he tries to top Ivan Lendl's record of 270. The weeks are not consecutive.

Kafelnikov, who suggested earlier in the week that Sampras' "time is running out," was overcome by pressure and an old nemesis, Johansson.

Six months ago, the slight Swede kept Kafelnikov from reaching the quarterfinals of the U.S. Open. On Friday, he ruined his bid for No. 1.

"It was the same old story again," said Kafelnikov, who leads Johansson 4-3 in career matches, but has lost the last

two. Johansson, ranked No. 19 and seeded eighth, broke serve twice in the first set, with a nervous Kafelnikov double-faulting to lose the first game. They held serve in the second set, but Johansson jumped to a 6-2 lead in the tiebreaker and then fought off Kafelnikov's brief comeback.

"I think Yevgeny was a little bit nervous," said Johansson, who had 14 aces and hit 90 per cent of his first serves. "I saw

Stefanki also coached John McEnroe at the end of his career.

Sampras could face Kafelnikov in the Newsweek Champions Cup beginning March 8 in Indian Wells, Calif. Sampras holds a 10-2 edge on Kafelnikov, with the Russian's two wins coming on clay.

"Maybe we could play in the final (in Indian Wells)," Kafelnikov said. "That would be great."

In the three other quarterfinal matches Friday, former Wimbledon champion Richard Krajicek, hometown favorite Greg Rusedski and Morocco's Hicham Arazi all won.

No. 4 Krajicek ousted No. 5 Karol Kucera of Slovakia 6-1, 6-3 and No. 3 Rusedski, the Canadian-born Briton who lives a five-minute walk from the tournament site in West London, defeated No. 6 Thomas Enqvist of Sweden 7-5, 4-6, 6-3.

In a quarterfinal between unseeded players, Arazi defeated Dominik Hrbaty of Slovakia 6-4, 6-2.

Arazi faced Rusedski in today's semifinals and Johansson played Krajicek.

PETE SAMPRAS

that from the beginning, he didn't move as well as he usually does and - of course - that's normal in a match like this.

"I knew it was a big match, no question about it," said Kafelnikov, who will stay at No. 2 and has been the dominant player in the early season. "It was probably the same as I felt before the final match of the Australian Open ... the same kind of pressure."

## Lewis back with a bang

ATLANTA, Georgia, Feb. 27: Steve Lewis, who went from Olympic gold in 1988 to fearing he might

never walk again, made an impressive return here Friday at the United States Indoor Athletics Championships, reports AFP.

The Seoul Olympics 400-metre champion and Barcelona silver medalist won his 400m qualifying heat in 46.38 seconds, giving the medical miracle who refused to retire a chance to reach next week's World Championships.

"I'm not finished making history yet," Lewis said. "I don't feel in any way I reached my potential, there's a lot more in me. I just feel I still have it. When you're a runner, it's hard to walk away from it."

Lewis, who turns 30 in May,

began feeling weak in 1993. Doctors were stumped until 1996 when they found a fist sized cyst on his lower back that was twisting the nerves leading to his legs.

"I was weak all the time. I couldn't train," Lewis said. "I thought I was just sick, had the cyst been discovered later, I would not have been able to walk."

Properly frightened by the medical report, Lewis had the cyst removed in April of 1996, took a year off to recover and began serious training little more than a year ago.

"Before the surgery, I didn't think I would ever run again," Lewis said. "I had problems jogging a mile. My legs were that infected. So running out here means a lot."

Asked if it seemed like 11 years had passed since his Seoul triumph, Lewis replied,

"Yeah it does. Long road. I was younger. It came a lot easier. Now I'm going through. What everybody else does to get to that point."

Lewis, who ran on gold-medal Olympic 4x400m relays in 1988 and 1992, looks forward to facing Michael Johnson on the way to his long-term goal of the Sydney Olympics, at which he would be 31. Age does not worry him.

The majority of guys in my event are my age or older. I don't feel I'm too old the accomplish great things in my event," Lewis said. "I'm mentally tougher, more aggressive all the time. My goal now is to find that old Steve Lewis, that will save the day. He is still there."

But here in today's finals, the star attractions will be Gail Devers, the two-time reigning 100m Olympic champion, and Maurice Greene, the world 100m outdoor champion and 60m indoor world record holder.

Devers confirmed Friday she will try to win her third US indoor 60m title and qualify for the chance to defend her world indoor sprint title in Japan.

Devers, who missed the 1998 outdoor season with a strained Achilles tendon, ran a 1999 60m world-best 6.98 seconds to win last Sunday in France and won again Thursday in 7.03 at Stockholm.

Greene has dominated world sprinters the past two years and has his eyes on Sydney Olympic gold after being ousted in the 1996 US Olympic trials quarterfinals.

But first comes a run at his world indoor record of 6.39 seconds, set last year in Madrid.

"The track is so fast, I'm liable to go low 6.30," he said. "If it comes out, it's going to be a beautiful thing. Then again, I'm not caring about the world record. I can't run after the world record anymore."

Reigning World Indoor champions Kevin Little and Jearl Miles-Clark easily advanced to today's finals, Lewis capturing his 200m heat in 20.59 seconds and Miles-Clark winning her 400 heat in 53.12 seconds.

"My ultimate goal is to repeat as world champion," Miles-Clark said.



Frenchwoman Amelie Mauresmo in action against Martina Hingis at the Gaz de France on February 26.

## Mauresmo silences Hingis

PARIS, Feb. 27: France's Amelie Mauresmo upset world number one Martina Hingis 2-6, 6-1, 6-3 in a tense encounter on Friday to reach the Paris Open semifinals, reports Reuters.

The muscular Mauresmo relished her victory after losing to Hingis in straight sets in last month's Australian Open final in Melbourne.

Mauresmo took less than 90 minutes to silence her Swiss quarterfinal opponent, who had called the French player "half a man" before their Australian clash.

"Today I beat the world number one and this is something very special to me," the 19-year-old Mauresmo said. "In Australia, I had beaten Lindsay Davenport who was in the top spot then. Today I beat the other one, and this is super."

"I knew I had made several mistakes during the final in Australia and I told myself I couldn't afford to miss the opportunity to beat her one more time."

"I had nothing to lose I took risks and this time it worked," she said.

The Frenchwoman had a poor start, losing her serve in

the third game, and had no answer to the gifted Hingis, who showed touches of her best from to take the first set.

"I had pressure on my shoulders in the beginning because I wanted to do well. Especially with fans who came here in

Lorient pip Le Havre

PARIS, Feb. 27: Lorient gave themselves a survival lifeline with a crucial 1-0 win at fellow strugglers Le Havre in the French First Division on Friday, reports AFP.

Former Paris Saint-Germain striker Patrice Loko grabbed the vital goal in the 54th minutes.

The win means that the minnows jump above Le Havre, though they remain in the relegation zone.

Bottom club Sochaux went ahead at Metz with a 40th minute Bernard Bouger goal, but Sebastian Schemmel equalised for the home team two minutes later.

Toulouse continued their improving form with a 1-1 draw at Bastia.

Dave Prince opened the scoring for Bastia, but Andrade Oceano nicked a point for Toulouse.

back me up," Mauresmo said. "I felt more confident in the second set. My serve improved a little and I played my forehand every time I could. I saw she was physically tired and she was getting nervous. And I realised I could make it."

Mauresmo broke Hingis' serve in the first game and stepped up a gear to take the second set emphatically.

Knocked out of her stride, Hingis tried to react in the decider but the Swiss top seed could not avoid another break on her serve to give Mauresmo a 5-3 lead.

On the first match point, Hingis hit a shot wide, leaving the 4,500 crowd to acclaim Mauresmo's victory.

"I could imagine what it must have been like to be at the France-Brazil (soccer) final," Hingis said. "The atmosphere was incredible. I usually like this kind of match in such and environment. Today I enjoyed the atmosphere but not the result."

Today, sixth seed Mauresmo faces Belgium's Dominique van Roost, who ousted Russian Elena Likhovtseva 7-5, 6-0.

"Van Roost and I know each other. It's not going to be an easy ride but I think I can do it," Mauresmo said.

## The Daily Star Entertainment Guide

Sunday 28th February

(All programmes are in local time. The Daily Star will not be responsible for any change in the programme)

BBC

6:00 BBC World News Headlines 6:30 World Living: Talking Movies 7:00 BBC World News 7:30 World Focus: Correspondent 8:00 BBC World News 8:30 World Focus: Simpson's World 9:00 BBC World News 9:30 Hard Talk 10:00 BBC World News 10:30 This Week 11:00 BBC World News 11:30 World Business Report 12:00 BBC World News 12:30 World Living: The Travel Show 1:00 BBC World News 1:30 Hard Talk 2:00 BBC World News 2:30 World Focus: Simpson's World 3:00 BBC World News 3:30 World Living: The Travel Show 4:00 BBC World News 4:30 Hard Talk 5:00 BBC World News 5:30 World Focus: Simpson's World 6:00 BBC World News 6:30 World Living: The Travel Show 7:00 BBC World News 7:30 World Focus: Correspondent 8:00 BBC World News 8:30 World Focus: Simpson's World 9:00 BBC World News 9:30 Hard Talk 10:00 BBC World News 10:30 This Week 11:00 BBC World News 11:30 World Business Report 12:00 BBC World News 12:30 World Living: The Travel Show 1:00 BBC World News 1:30 Hard Talk 2:00 BBC World News 2:30 World Focus: 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