

France to bid Papin farewell

PARIS, Mar 2 (Reuters/Internet): World champions France will play a charity match against a World XI for the first time to honour former European footballer-of-the-year Jean-Pierre Papin, who retired earlier this season.

The match will be played on May 30 at Marseille's Stade Velodrome. Players such as Paolo Maldini, Roberto Baggio, David Beckham, Lothar Matthaeus, Aron Winter and George Weah have been approached to play for the World XI.

Frenchman David Ginola could also play against his home country which has ignored his talents for many years.

"It's the first time France are playing a charity match but France had to honour such an exceptional figure of French soccer," said French federation president Claude Simonet.

"I always said I would end my career in Marseille, where I have my fondest memories," said Papin, who won four French league titles with Marseille from 1988 to 1992.

Papin, who scored 30 goals in his 54 matches for France, also played for Club Brugge, AC Milan, Bayern Munich, Girondins Bordeaux and En Avant Guingamp.

Venables not interested in England job

LONDON, Mar 2 (Reuters/Internet): Former England manager Terry Venables has ruled himself out of taking over the national team again after Kevin Keegan's short term appointment.

"It's too late now. I am no longer interested in the job," Venables told the Daily Mail newspaper.

"If I was going to be the next manager it would have happened by now... Now I have my own plans. Of course it is disappointing but that's the way it is."

Venables was manager between 1994 to 1996, taking England to the semifinals of the 1996 European championship, before resigning to concentrate on legal cases against him.

He later coached Australia and Crystal Palace. Venables told the newspaper he had not spoken to anyone at the Football Association about the job.

Ravelli to hang up his boots

STOCKHOLM, Mar 2 (Reuters/Internet): Goalkeeper Thomas Ravelli, who earned a world record 143 caps for Sweden, said on Tuesday he had decided to retire after 22 years in professional soccer.

Ravelli, 39, has been considering his future since he left U.S. Major League Soccer club Tampa Bay Mutiny last November after a year with the club.

Ravelli's goalkeeping heroics helped Sweden reach the semifinals of the 1994 World Cup in the United States and earned the player a place on the short list for FIFA's All Stars selection from the tournament.

He made his senior international debut in 1981 and played his last match for Sweden in a 1-0 win over Estonia in October 1997.

"I've decided that I no longer have the inner motivation to continue," Ravelli told Swedish SVT television.

"Since I came home from the U.S. three months ago I've been thinking about what to do with my future."

Ravelli said he had been approached by several Swedish clubs to be a stand-by goalkeeper. He said he was considering a possible television career.

He was first signed up by Osters IF when he was only 10 years old and developed through their schoolboy and youth ranks before making his senior debut at 17.

He played with Osters for 19 years, winning Swedish championship medals in 1980 and 1981, and moved to IFK Gothenburg in 1989, winning further championship titles in 1990 and 1991.



Michael Adams of Britain ponders over his next move while Indian GM Viswanathan Anand looks on during their Linares City Trophy seventh round fixture on March 1. — AFP photo

Rafter sails, Muster fails

SCOTTSDALE, Arizona, Mar 2: Patrick Rafter tuned up for a possible title match with Pete Sampras.

Rafter, winner of the last two US Opens and No 2 in this tournament, was the first seeded player to survive the first round. Playing for the first time in a month, he broke O'Brien, a former NCAA singles champion at Stanford, once in the first set, then in the first and third games of the second.

But by the end of the match, Rafter was worn down and double-faulted twice in his last service game. He won with the last of his seven aces and a crossing shot off O'Brien's high return of the next service.

"It's very, very difficult to close out a match," said Rafter, who came in ranked fifth in the world despite a 3-3 record in 1999.

"At least, I find it that way. I didn't take advantage of my chances early, and I got tighter and tighter as the match went on. It was just a big relief at the end."

Rafter hadn't played since reaching the third round of the Australian Open, where he teamed with Jonas Bjorkman to win the doubles.

No 7 Thomas Muster of Austria and No 8 Gustavo Kuerten of Brazil were upset during the afternoon. They were the only former French Open champions in the Scottsdale field, the strongest in tournament history.

Justin Gimelstob defeated Muster, who won the 1995 French Open, 6-4, 7-5, and Jerome Golmard of France ousted Kuerten, the 1997 champion, 6-3, 3-6, 6-3.

Gimelstob went into the match ranked 68th in the world, the highest of his career, to Muster's 22nd. But he broke Muster once in each set — forging ahead in the next-to-last game of the second set by winning the third break point.

Gimelstob, who won 77 per cent of his service points, finished the match by winning the last game on four straight serves.

He said he has grown enough on tour to be confident facing an opponent like Muster.

"Before, if the guy had a big name and I had seen him on TV a lot, I would have more of an intimidation factor," Gimelstob said. "Now it's like playing another pro. I think, 'This is what I need to do to win.'"

In another surprise, Spaniard Fernando Vicente defeated unseeded Jason Stoltenberg of Australia 7-6 (7-3), 7-5. Stoltenberg, ranked 27th to Vicente's 62nd, reached the Scottsdale final last year before losing to Andre Agassi.

Mariano Zabaleta of Argentina beat Czech Slava Dosedel 5-7, 6-2, 6-2, and Jan-Michael Gambill, the only other top 100 American player younger than Gimelstob, beat Franco Squillari of Argentina 3-6, 6-3, 6-4.

Francisco Clavet of Spain was leading 4-2 in the third set when his match with Nicolas Escude was halted by darkness.

1999. "At least, I find it that way. I didn't take advantage of my chances early, and I got tighter and tighter as the match went on. It was just a big relief at the end."

Rafter hadn't played since reaching the third round of the Australian Open, where he teamed with Jonas Bjorkman to win the doubles.

No 7 Thomas Muster of Austria and No 8 Gustavo Kuerten of Brazil were upset during the afternoon. They were the only former French Open champions in the Scottsdale field, the strongest in tournament history.

Justin Gimelstob defeated Muster, who won the 1995 French Open, 6-4, 7-5, and Jerome Golmard of France ousted Kuerten, the 1997 champion, 6-3, 3-6, 6-3.

Gimelstob went into the match ranked 68th in the world, the highest of his career, to Muster's 22nd. But he broke Muster once in each set — forging ahead in the next-to-last game of the second set by winning the third break point.

Gimelstob, who won 77 per cent of his service points, finished the match by winning the last game on four straight serves.

He said he has grown enough on tour to be confident facing an opponent like Muster.

"Before, if the guy had a big name and I had seen him on TV a lot, I would have more of an intimidation factor," Gimelstob said. "Now it's like playing another pro. I think, 'This is what I need to do to win.'"

In another surprise, Spaniard Fernando Vicente defeated unseeded Jason Stoltenberg of Australia 7-6 (7-3), 7-5. Stoltenberg, ranked 27th to Vicente's 62nd, reached the Scottsdale final last year before losing to Andre Agassi.

Mariano Zabaleta of Argentina beat Czech Slava Dosedel 5-7, 6-2, 6-2, and Jan-Michael Gambill, the only other top 100 American player younger than Gimelstob, beat Franco Squillari of Argentina 3-6, 6-3, 6-4.

Francisco Clavet of Spain was leading 4-2 in the third set when his match with Nicolas Escude was halted by darkness.

1999. "At least, I find it that way. I didn't take advantage of my chances early, and I got tighter and tighter as the match went on. It was just a big relief at the end."

Rafter hadn't played since reaching the third round of the Australian Open, where he teamed with Jonas Bjorkman to win the doubles.

No 7 Thomas Muster of Austria and No 8 Gustavo Kuerten of Brazil were upset during the afternoon. They were the only former French Open champions in the Scottsdale field, the strongest in tournament history.

Justin Gimelstob defeated Muster, who won the 1995 French Open, 6-4, 7-5, and Jerome Golmard of France ousted Kuerten, the 1997 champion, 6-3, 3-6, 6-3.

Gimelstob went into the match ranked 68th in the world, the highest of his career, to Muster's 22nd. But he broke Muster once in each set — forging ahead in the next-to-last game of the second set by winning the third break point.

Gimelstob, who won 77 per cent of his service points, finished the match by winning the last game on four straight serves.

He said he has grown enough on tour to be confident facing an opponent like Muster.

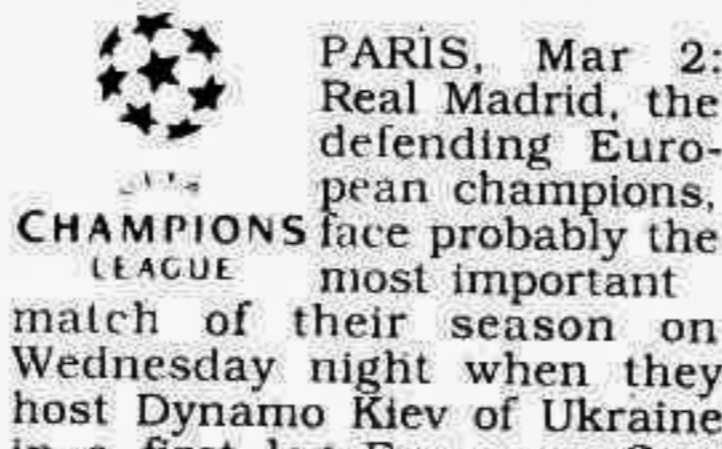
"Before, if the guy had a big name and I had seen him on TV a lot, I would have more of an intimidation factor," Gimelstob said. "Now it's like playing another pro. I think, 'This is what I need to do to win.'"

In another surprise, Spaniard Fernando Vicente defeated unseeded Jason Stoltenberg of Australia 7-6 (7-3), 7-5. Stoltenberg, ranked 27th to Vicente's 62nd, reached the Scottsdale final last year before losing to Andre Agassi.

Mariano Zabaleta of Argentina beat Czech Slava Dosedel 5-7, 6-2, 6-2, and Jan-Michael Gambill, the only other top 100 American player younger than Gimelstob, beat Franco Squillari of Argentina 3-6, 6-3, 6-4.

Francisco Clavet of Spain was leading 4-2 in the third set when his match with Nicolas Escude was halted by darkness.

Europe's eight best renew rivalry



PARIS, Mar 2: Real Madrid, the defending European champions, face probably the most important match of their season on Wednesday night when they host Dynamo Kiev of Ukraine in a first leg European Cup quarter-final, reports AFP.

Real, who sacked coach Guus Hiddink last week and replaced him with Welshman John Toshack, may need to retain their title to have a chance of a place in the rich new-look competition next season.

Real are currently in seventh place — seven points behind Spanish league leaders Barcelona — meaning they have an uphill climb to seal a top two finish and ensure their participation.

The other quarter-final first-leg matches on Wednesday night feature the mouth-watering Manchester United-Inter Milan clash at Old Trafford, the all-German meeting between Bayern Munich and Kaiserslautern and struggling Juventus' match against Olympiakos, Spanish giants Real, who

have one of the worst defences in Spain, will need to find a way to stop one of the most devastating strike-forces in Europe.

The Kiev duo of Serhi Rebrov and Andri Shevchenko have shared seven goals thus far in the competition.

Shevchenko, who has been labelled the 'Ronaldo of the east', and Rebrov scored 41 goals between them in last year's Ukrainian Champions League while they also scored seven goals apiece as Kiev, twice European Cup Winners' Cup champions, reached last year's European Cup quarter-finals.

Real will be without two veteran defenders: the outstanding Fernando Hierro and Manuel Sanchis and Shevchenko and Rebrov will be licking their lips at tracking on the less experienced duo of Ivan Campo and Fernando Sanz.

Kiev are not the only team with a potent strike force, however. Real can boast the likes of the league's leading scorer in Raul, last year's European Cup goalscorer hero Predrag Mijatovic and Spanish international Fernando Morientes, who looks like playing a lone role up front.

This trio will have been boosted by the news that two of Kiev's first-choice defenders, Yuri Dmytrulin and Oleh Luzhnyi will be absent through injury and suspension respectively.

The United-Inter-match could be a classic, with the English club convinced they are finally ready to regain a trophy they last won back in 1968.

"It took us a while to get the right blend in the Premiership and then we won it, then we came to dominate it," said Welsh wing wizard Ryan Giggs.

"I think we can do the same in Europe."

Manager Alex Ferguson believes his side now has the maturity to compete with the best clubs in the world after previous abortive assaults on the Champions League.

"You hope the players have learned all the little lessons of Europe," said Ferguson. "There is no question that in terms of ability we have an outstanding chance."

Fired by goal gluttons Dwight Yorke and Andy Cole, who shared nine goals between them in the Champions' League before Christmas and have scored a total of 41 goals this season, United have roared four points clear at the top of the English Premiership and play host to Chelsea in the FA Cup quarterfinals on Sunday.

United's chances are boosted by the fact that Inter — European champions in 1964 and 1965 — are currently floundering in the middle of an indifferent run that has seen them slip to sixth in Serie A and with ace Brazilian striker Ronaldo a shadow of his former self.

Ronaldo, who has been struggling with knee injuries and an alarming lack of form since the World Cup, is rated by Inter officials as '99 per cent certain' not to be fit for Wednesday's clash.

But in Chilean Ivan Zamorano, Frenchman Youri Djorkaeff and Italian veteran Roberto Baggio, coach Mircea Lucescu is hardly short of attacking options.

"We've got to score a goal at Old Trafford," goalkeeper Gianluca Pagliuca said. "If we can do that, we'll have a great chance of going through."

Bayern have been so dominant in Germany this season that Kaiserslautern's veteran trainer Otto Rehhagel knows he must pull a rabbit out of the hat if his side are to cause an upset.

Rehhagel has likened Bayern to a luxury Mercedes car — while the rest of Germany's Bundesliga clubs are limping along in Volkswagens.

Kaiserslautern face a Bayern team in such scintillating form that they have a realistic shot at pulling off a rare triple: winning the European Champions' trophy, the Bundesliga crown and the German Cup.

Kaiserslautern's problems are multiplied by the absence of their injured leading striker Olaf Marschall.

Rehhagel says Bayern are simply too rich for the other German clubs to keep up with, but Bayern will not be suckered into taking Kaiserslautern lightly — they remember well the provincial club won the Bundesliga last season.

"Otto is trying to whip up everyone against us, that's how he does things," said Bayern manager Uli Hoenes. "But we are not going to fall for it and let ourselves be caught napping."

In Turin, Juventus coach Carlo Ancelotti will open his bid to lift the European Cup for the third time in 10 years.

Ancelotti, who won Europe's most coveted club trophy as an AC Milan midfielder in 1989 and 1990, took charge of Juventus barely a month ago after the resignation of coach Marcello Lippi.

Lippi's is a tough act to follow in the Champions League, having guided the Turin team to three consecutive finals — winning in 1996 but losing in 1997 and 1998.

The baptism of fire will be even harder without Juventus' top scorer ever in the tournament, Alessandro del Piero, whose season ended last November with an injury at Udine and surgery in Vail, Colorado.

"The striking responsibility will be shouldered instead by striker Filippo Inzaghi and creative French star Zinedine Zidane as Juventus seek a win, however narrow, without giving the Greeks an away goal."

French man Thierry Henry is cup-hungry, having already played for Monaco in the UEFA Cup this season while Uruguayan Daniel Fonseca is set for the subs' bench and Argentine Juan Esnaider is fit but hasn't looked dangerous.

Asian Club soccer Al Ain ride on Daoudi

AL AIN, United Arab Emirates, Mar 2: Moroccan international Rachid Daoudi inspired hosts Al Ain to a famous 1-0 victory over former champions Al Hilal in the last round of quarterfinal matches in the Asian Club Championship on Monday, reports Reuters.

Their success gave Al Ain their first-ever semifinal place against Japan's Jubilo Iwata on April 28.

Daoudi, who signed for Al Ain in the summer along with former African player-of-the-year Abedi Pele, hit the woodwork twice with long-range free-kicks before setting up substitute Garib Harib for a near-post header in the 68th minute.

Daoudi first troubled the Saudi team's defence with a curling free-kick that ricocheted off the crossbar in the 25th minute.

His second effort, two minutes later, was even more spectacular when he found the woodwork again, only this time from over 35 yards with another left-footed effort.

Al Ain had to wait until the second half for the goal that finally killed off Al Hilal's hopes, Harib's header coming as he beat the Saudi defence to meet Daoudi's vicious free-kick.

Al Ain's win was sweet revenge for Romanian coach Ili Blacci, who was sacked by Al Hilal after guiding them to the semifinals of this competition last year.

Jubilo Iwata finished second in the group in mid-February. Meanwhile, Iranian champions Esteghal, who had already qualified for the semifinals by their opening two wins over Al Ain and Al Hilal, were humbled by the group's whipping boys, Kopetdag from Turkmenistan.

A solitary goal by Vladimir Khalikov in the 72nd minute was enough for the team that had conceded 10 goals in their two previous matches to win their first points and deprive Esteghal of top spot in the group and a show-down against Jubilo Iwata.

Instead Esteghal will meet Chinese champions Dalian Wanda in the semifinals.

Recent international meetings between the two countries have seen Iran emerge victorious four times in a row, a statistic that haunts the Chinese.

Leeds edge Leicester

LONDON, Mar 2: Leeds United enhanced their prospects of a place in Europe next season with a 2-1 win at Leicester City in the English Premier League on Monday, reports Reuters.

Kewell and a goal midway through the second half by Alan Smith, Leeds moved up one place to fourth.

Simeone not sorry at all

MILAN, Mar 2 (Reuters/Internet): Argentina captain Diego Simeone has admitted he took a fall to fool the referee when he was kicked by David Beckham in last year's World Cup and the England player was sent off.

Beckham and Simeone come face to face again on Wednesday when Manchester United take on Inter Milan in the European Cup quarter-finals at Old Trafford and the Argentine said he expected to be heckled by the English crowd.

The World Cup incident occurred two minutes into the second half of the second round clash in St Etienne on June 30, with the score at 2-2. Argentina went on to win on penalties after extra-time.

"Clearly I was clever because by falling I led the referee to pull out the red card," midfielder Simeone said in an interview with Gazzetta dello Sport published on Tuesday.

"In reality the foul was not violent, just a little kick without any force and probably instinctive. But the referee was right there and probably punished the intention to react which the English player showed."

The referee fell into a trap but it was also hard to avoid because I fell well and those are tense moments. You could say that my fall transformed a yellow card into a red one: a simple booking was the more appropriate punishment."

Simeone said he expected "to get whistled like mad" at Old Trafford on Wednesday but added: "The English fans will only be doing me a favour: I love them."

Beckham and Simeone come face to face again on Wednesday when Manchester United take on Inter Milan in the European Cup quarter-finals at Old Trafford and the Argentine said he expected to be heckled by the English crowd.

The World Cup incident occurred two minutes into the second half of the second round clash in St Etienne on June 30, with the score at 2-2. Argentina went on to win on penalties after extra-time.

"Clearly I was clever because by falling I led the referee to pull out the red card," midfielder Simeone said in an interview with Gazzetta dello Sport published on Tuesday.

"In reality the foul was not violent, just a little kick without any force and probably instinctive. But the referee was right there and probably punished the intention to react which the English player showed."

The referee fell into a trap but it was also hard to avoid because I fell well and those are tense moments. You could say that my fall transformed a yellow card into a red one: a simple booking was the more appropriate punishment."

Simeone said he expected "to get whistled like mad" at Old Trafford on Wednesday but added: "The English fans will only be doing me a favour: I love them."

Diego Simone



DIEGO SIMONE

to get heckled, it really gets me revved up."

Asked what he would do when he encountered Beckham, Simeone said: "I'm not the kind of guy that usually shakes hands with his opponents. But, after the match, we'll see."

Bill Talbert passes away

NEW YORK, Mar 2: Bill Talbert, a star player who later became tournament director of the US Open, is dead at age 80, reports AP.

A 1967 inductee of the International Tennis Hall of Fame in Newport, Rhode Island, Talbert died Sunday in his Manhattan home.

He was diagnosed at age 10 with diabetes. He was recognised as the first diabetic to compete in athletics at the highest international level.

He reached the singles finals at the US Championships — later known as the US Open — in 1944 and 1945 and the US Indoor Championships in 1948-51. He was ranked among the top 10 in the United States from

1941 through 1955, and was a stalwart of the American Davis Cup team.

As a player, he starred in doubles, teaming with Gardnar Mulloy to reach the US doubles final six times, winning in 1942, '45, '46 and '48. He also captured the US Championship mixed doubles with Margaret Osborne four straight years — 1943-46.

Talbert teamed with Tony Trabert, another Hall of Famer, to win both the French and Italian doubles titles in 1950, and was US Davis Cup captain from 1953-57, defeating Australia to win the Cup in 1954.

Known as "Mr Tennis," Talbert was named director of the US Open Championships at Forest Hills and served as chairman and director of the Open from 1971-75. When the Grand Slam tournament moved to Flushing Meadows.

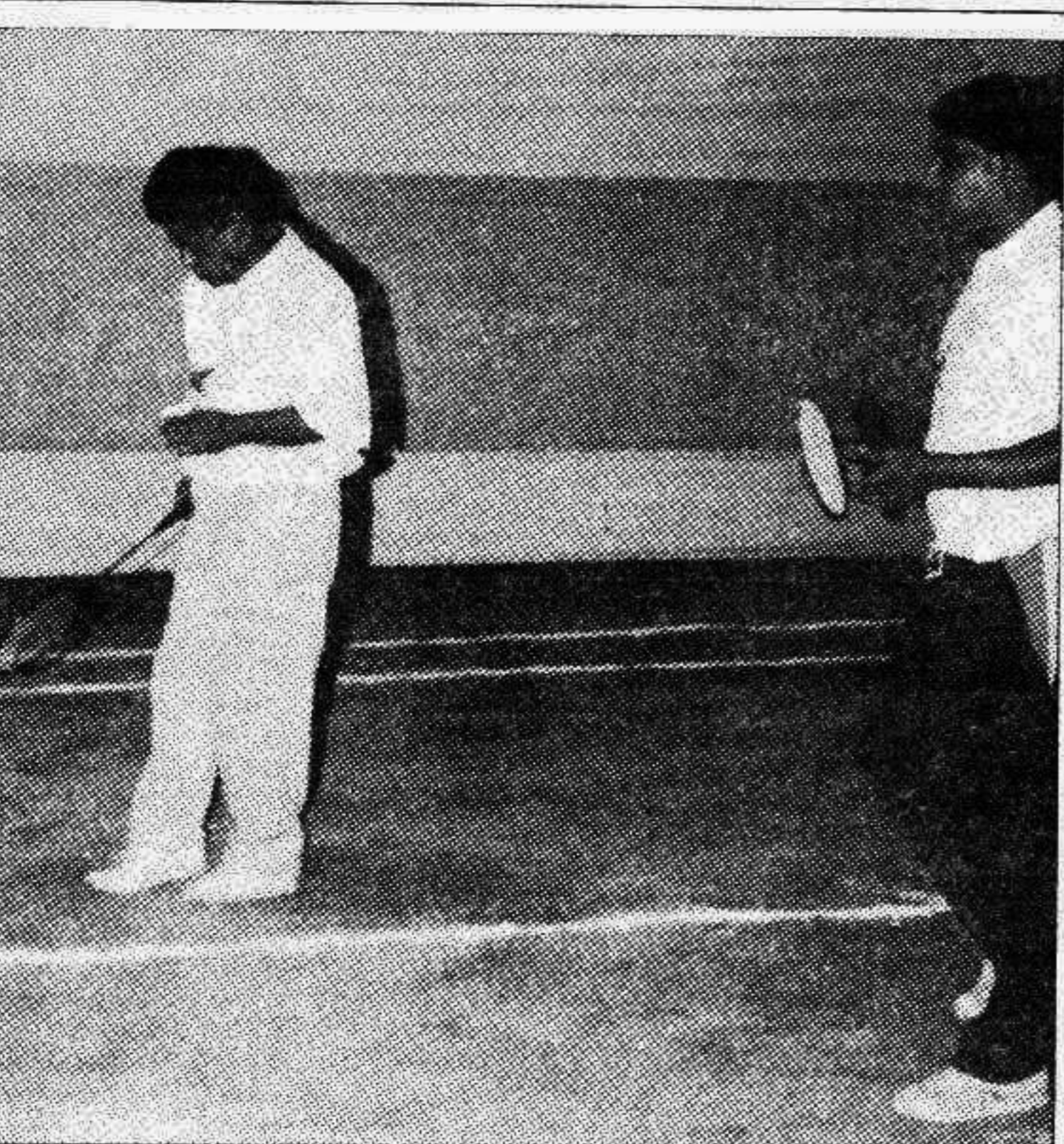
Talbert teamed with Tony Trabert, another Hall of Famer, to win both the French and Italian doubles titles in 1950, and was US Davis Cup captain from 1953-57, defeating Australia to win the Cup in 1954.

Known as "Mr Tennis," Talbert was named director of the US Open Championships at Forest Hills and served as chairman and director of the Open from 1971-75. When the Grand Slam tournament moved to Flushing Meadows.

JPC badminton Mukherjee & Mahmud doubles champs

B D Mukherjee and Showkat Mahmud became champions in the doubles of the Jatiya Press Club badminton tournament, beating Bakhtiar Rana and Lutfur Rahman Binu 15-8, 15-6 in the final at the club court here Monday night, reports BSS.

Golam Mohiuddin Khan and Shamsuddin Ahmed Charu finished third. Mukherjee moved into the singles final outplaying Mahmud Hossain Khan Dulal 15-3, 15-6 in the semifinals. Dulal, earlier, qualified for the last four eliminating Shamsuddin Ahmed Charu 15-7, 15-12.



Shawkat Mahmood (L) and BD Mukherjee, who won the doubles' title of the Jatiya Press Club badminton tournament. They beat Bakhtiar Rana and Lutfur Rahman Binu pair.

The Daily Star Entertainment Guide

Table with columns for Channel/V, Star Plus, PTV-2, Star World, Star Movies, and Zee India TV, listing various programs and their times.

Table with columns for Music Asia, DD Channel-1, DD Metro, and Zee TV, listing various programs and their times.

Table with columns for Entertainment, DD Inlt, and Cartoon Network, listing various programs and their times.