

### Beckham not loved enough?

LONDON, Mar 10: David Beckham believes he will never be popular with English soccer fans, reports Reuters. Beckham, lambasted by both fans and the media after being sent off for kicking Argentine captain Diego Simeone during the World Cup in France, said he would like to be "really popular."



Argentine President Carlos Menem (2nd from R) presenting two national football team shirts to Prince Charles during a ceremony at the Casa Rosanda Palace in Buenos Aires on March 9. Prince Charles is on a two-day tour of Argentina. —AFP photo

### Liverpool set for clear-out

LIVERPOOL, Mar 10 (Reuters/Internet): Liverpool manager Gerard Houllier is planning a summer clear-out with up to 12 players likely to leave the club, British newspapers said on Wednesday. The Daily Mirror said Houllier believed that only Robbie Fowler, Michael Owen, Jamie Redknapp and Vegard Heggem were good enough to take Liverpool to their first league title since 1990.

### Elber's tips for Ribbeck

BONN, Mar 10 (Reuters/Internet): Bayern Munich's Brazilian striker Elber has advised German coach Erich Ribbeck to call up young players rather than relying on his old guard. "What the German team lacks is young players," Elber told weekly Stern in an interview released on Wednesday.

### SEA Games

### Vietnam to start work on stadium next year

HANOI, Mar 10: Work on a new stadium near Hanoi is expected to start in the second quarter next year in preparation for Vietnam's bid to host the Southeast Asian Games in 2003, a government official said Wednesday, reports AP.

Dinh Cam of the National Sports and Physical Culture Committee, said his organization is working on a partial feasibility study for a 40,000 to 60,000-seat stadium as the first stage of a sports complex.

## English football: Dancing to the African beat

LONDON, Mar 10 (AFP): English football first sat up and took notice of African football nine years ago when Cameroon took Bobby Robson's national team to the brink of defeat at the 1990 World Cup in Italy.

no-one was more relieved than him when he scored Saturday's late, late clincher against Derby county. It came as no surprise to Wenger, who believes Kanu's sense of adventure will prove a vital trump card as Arsenal bid to repeat last year's league and FA Cup double.



NWANKWO KANU transformed by the influx of foreign players and nobility is further removed from the old drinking, gambling stereotype

Last Saturday the 22-year-old former Inter Milan and Ajax Amsterdam star lashed in the goal which sent Arsenal into the semifinals of the FA Cup, the competition they won last year. Then, of course, Arsenal reached the final by beating Wolverhampton Wanderers in the last four, thanks to a goal by another African, Liberian international Christophe Wreh.

Saturday's heroics were in stark contrast to the uproar Kanu caused when, 11 minutes into his debut at Highbury on February 13, he prompted a bad sportsmanship rumpus by failing to observe accepted football etiquette in the fifth round match against Sheffield United.

United kicked the ball out to allow an Arsenal player to be treated but when play resumed and Arsenal threw it back to United, Kanu broke the convention of fair-play by intercepting the ball and crossing for Marc Overmars to score what proved the winning goal.

The rest is history, literally, with Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger offering to replay the tie, which they eventually won fair and square.

The unprecedented episode left Kanu a shell-shocked, so

encouraged by some home-based Arsenal squad members in recent seasons than Kanu. "Some players get really worked up before games," said Kanu.

And Arsenal aren't the only English team benefiting from a bit of African spirituality. Chelsea's athletic full-back Celestine Babayaro is a Nigerian international team mate of Kanu's.

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But not every nation was quite so keen on the idea. Belgian soccer union chairman Michel D'Hooghe said he had reservations and was more interested in developing technology to help referees.

German soccer federation (DFB) spokesman Wolfgang Niersbach distanced himself from Ribbeck's glowing praise for the idea and said: "Our position is to wait and see what FIFA will decide.

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### German Cup Bayern in final

GELSENKIRCHEN, Germany, Mar 10: Bayern Munich fanned Second Division Rot-Weiss Oberhausen 3-1 on Tuesday to cruise into the German Cup final, reports Reuters. Holders Bayern moved ahead when Carsten Jancker, set up by midfielder Jens Jeremies, struck from close range in the 24th minute.

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### Call to end poaching of young guns

BONN, Mar 10 (Reuters/Internet): The European Union and FIFA must take steps to prevent big clubs systematically poaching gifted young players nurtured by smaller clubs, said Juergen Friedrich, chairman of German champions Kaiserslautern.

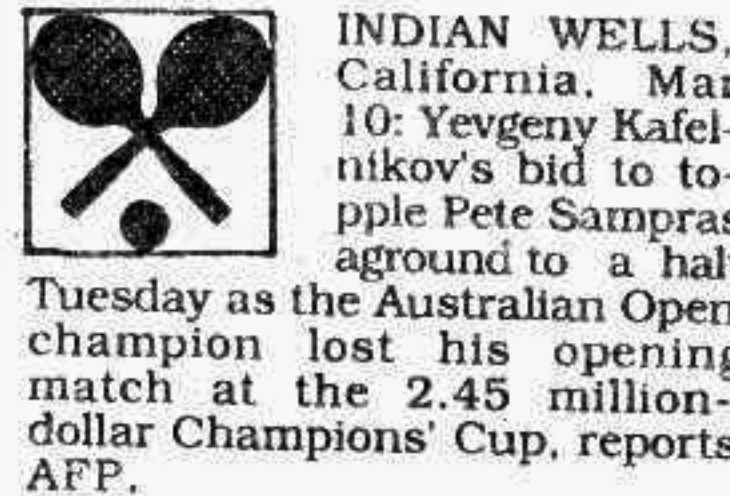
### African cups lose 3 clubs

JOHANNESBURG, Mar 10 (Reuters/Internet): Three clubs have withdrawn from this year's African club competitions which kick off this weekend, the Confederation of African Football (CAF) said on Wednesday.

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## Yevgeny, Pat out of race

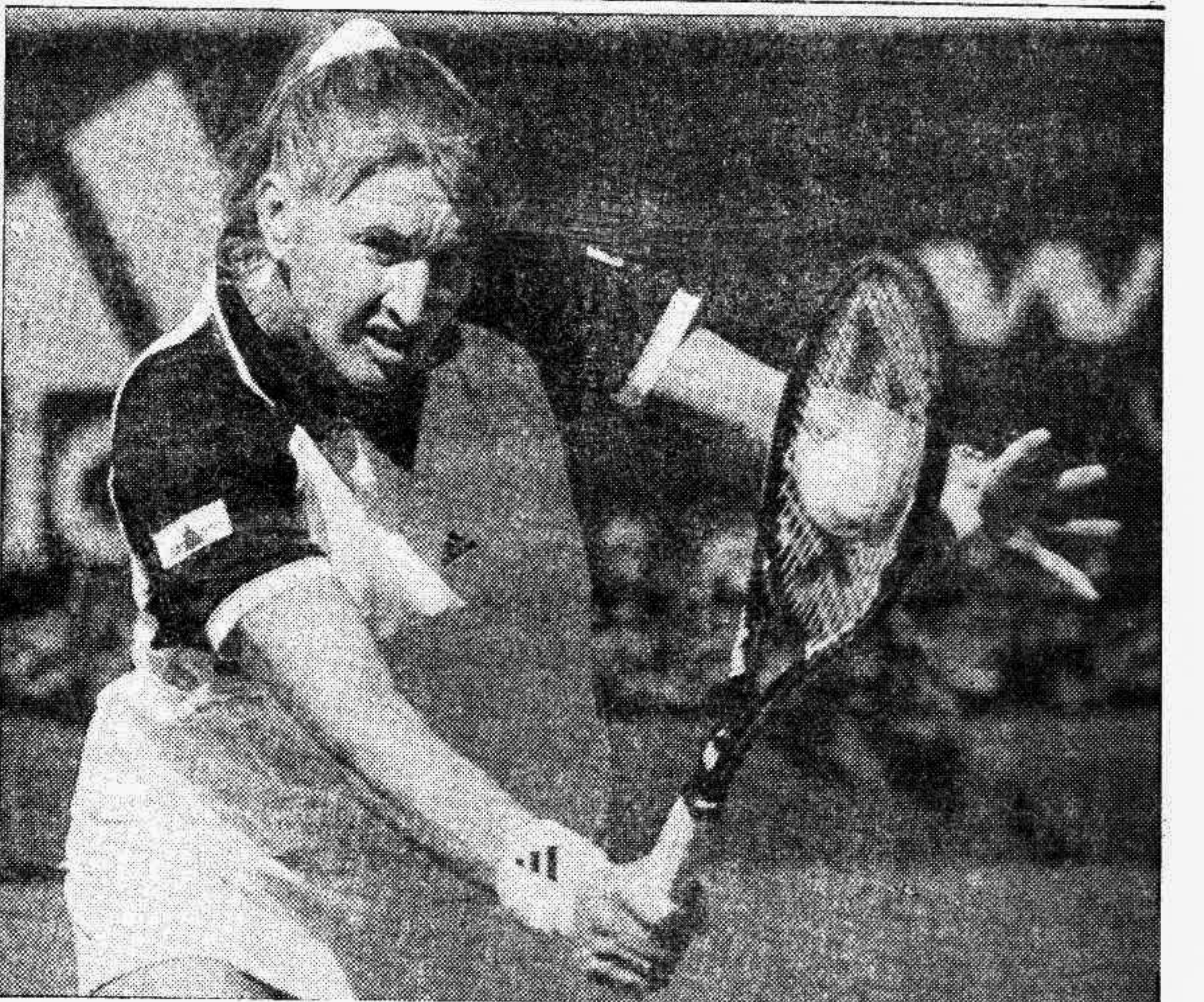


INDIAN WELLS, California, Mar 10: Yevgeny Kafelnikov's bid to topple Pete Sampras agreed to a halt Tuesday as the Australian Open champion lost his opening match at the 2.45 million-dollar Champions' Cup, reports AFP.

"I can't really explain what happened," a dejected Kafelnikov said. "I just lost the focus for a little while.

Kafelnikov, who also had a chance to grab the top spot in London last month, said he was more disappointed to make such an early exit from the first of the ATP Tour's prestigious Super Nine events of the year.

He took off the time between the Australian Open and the tournament last week in Scottsdale, Arizona, rehabilitating a sore knee. "I think it's just a matter of not doing the hard work so far," said the Aussie, who double-faulted on match point.



Steffi Graf plays a sliced backhand during her Evert Cup fixture against Ai Sugiyama of Japan at Indian Wells, California on March 9. Graf won 6-0, 6-1. —AFP photo

## Safe day for seeds



INDIAN WELLS, California, Mar 10 (Reuters/Internet): Four-time seeded Martina Hingis of the United States, Novotna against Graf, 12th-seeded Sandrine Testud of France against unseeded Henrieta Nagyova of Slovakia, and Pierce against Williams.

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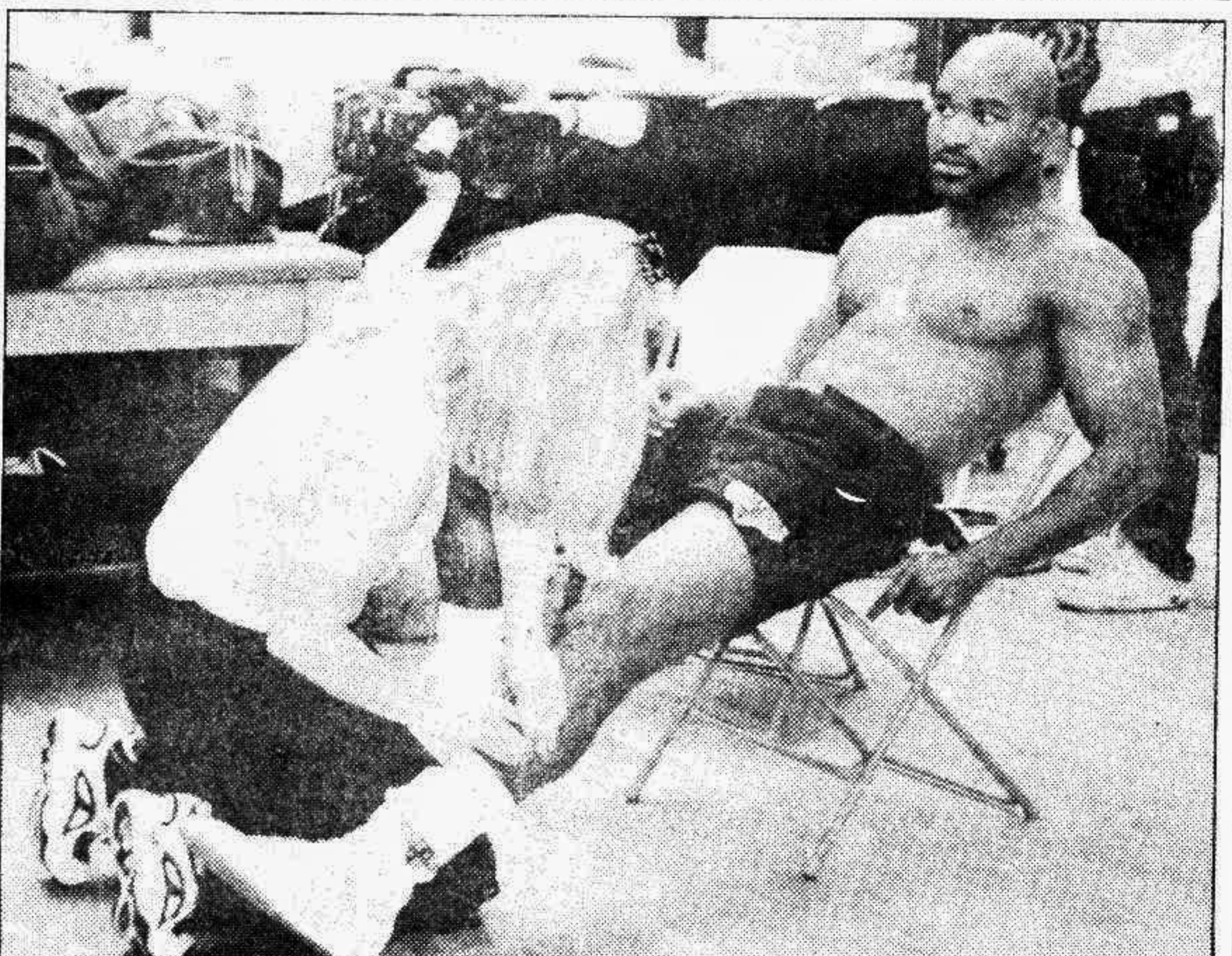
## DiMaggio's death lamented

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Attesting to DiMaggio's stature as an international icon, tributes to him were heard everywhere from soccer-happy Italy to Australia, where cricket is king and baseball almost unknown. In Italy, which considered Joltin' Joe one of its own, the news topped TV sportscasts.



An attendant massages the left shin of depending World Boxing Association heavyweight champion Evandar Holyfield before a training session at the Church Street Gymnasium in New York on March 9. —AFP photo

### Rouse dead

HELENA, Mar 10: Roger Rouse, a former light heavyweight boxer who fought on the US Olympic team, is dead of Alzheimer's at the age of 64, reports AP.