

Fresh injury setback for Atherton

LONDON, June 29 (Internet report): Mike Atherton's career-threatening back complaint has provided fresh consternation for the ex-England captain and ruled him out of Lancashire's County Championship match against Essex at Old Trafford on Tuesday.

Atherton needed more treatment for the recurrent condition that forced him out of England's World Cup squad and has allowed him to play in just two matches - including a 2nd XI fixture - this summer.

Lancashire, meanwhile, desperately need to beat Essex to pull themselves up the championship table and out of the reckoning to play Second Division cricket next season.

Chairman Jack Simmons was most concerned about Atherton, though, and said: "We feel for him because we know how determined he is to continue playing."

"He has had a setback, but we are leaving it to him to tell us when he is fit - only he will know."

SA downgrade Scots tour

LONDON, June 29 (Internet report): South Africa's proposed A team tour of Scotland next month has been downgraded.

Instead a South African Cricket Academy will fulfil two three-day and four one-day fixtures against the Scots, who felt a full A tour would have been too one-sided.

Scotland are looking to increase the number of international fixtures they are exposed to and are hoping to persuade the touring West Indies and Zimbabwe squads to come north next year.

Astle, Cairns carry New Zealand

LONDON, June 29: New Zealand gained a confidence boosting six-wicket win before their first Test against England when Nathan Astle and Chris Cairns linked up for a match-winning partnership against Somerset at Taunton on Monday, reports AFP.

The New Zealand pair came together with their side 134 for four against injury-hit Somerset and still far from certain of achieving their 281 victory target.

But some flourishing strokeplay enabled Astle, who finished unbeaten on 88, and Cairns, not far behind on 74 not out to put on 148 in 23 overs and send the Kiwis into the Test series in confident mood.

It was a remarkable victory considering Somerset had posted 554 in their first innings. But the county were lacking six first-choice players, and their stretched bowling resources were finally exploited.

Medium-pacer Keith Parsons had kept pacers in the balance by removing Roger Twose, Stephen Fleming, Matt Horne and Craig McMillan, taking three for 10 in the space of 4.2 overs at one stage.

Twose was dropped twice in making 26, having scored only four in the first innings. But in general the New Zealand batsmen came out of the game with valuable preparation for Edgbaston.

Astle faced 102 deliveries and the destructive Cairns only 75, both players hitting 11 fours and a six while scoring runs all round the wicket and never looking in the slightest trouble. In truth it was a friendly-looking Somerset bowling attack without Andy Caddick, Matt Bullock and Graham Rose.

But Ian Jones and Jason Kerr produced lively early spells, and Parsons swung the ball in overcast conditions for his four for 61.

It was in the spin department that Somerset really struggled. Adrian Pierson was well below his best in conceding 47 from eight overs, while debutant leg-spinner Saqib Mahmood was handed only the final over after giving away 34 runs in his two in the first innings.

There was some consolation for Gregor Kennis, who picked up the 500 man-of-the-match award for his 175 in Somerset's mammoth first-innings total.

SCOREBOARD
Scoreboard on the final day of the four-day tour match between Somerset and New Zealand on Monday:

SOMERSET: First innings 554 (G Kennis 175, P Jones 105, A Pierson 66, R Turner 59; N Astle 3-22)

NEW ZEALAND: First innings 420 (C McMillan 121, M Horne 91, A Parore 80; J Kerr 3-65)

SOMERSET: Second innings 146 (G Allott 3-22, D Nash 3-32)

NEW ZEALAND: Second innings (overnight 22-0)

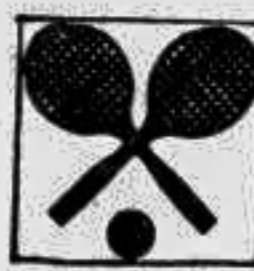
R Twose b Parsons 26
M Horne c Pierson b Parsons 44
S Fleming c Trescott b Parsons 0
N Astle not out 88
C McMillan c Turner b Parsons 28
C Cairns not out 74
Extras: (b-1, lb-11, nb-10) 22
Total: (For four wickets) 282

Fall of wickets: 1-65; 2-67; 3-92; 4-134

Bowler O M R W
Kerr 13 3 51 0
I Jones 11 3 40 0
P Jones 11 2 34 0
Parsons 12 2 61 4
Pierson 8 0 47 0
Burns 3 0 28 0
Mahmood 1 0 9 0

Result: New Zealand won by six wickets.

Leading veterans' charge



LONDON, June 29 (AFP): Unlike the fresh faces who have piled into the last 16 of the women's singles at Wimbledon, seven-time champion Steffi Graf has seen it all before - ever since she was their tender age.

Graf and defending champion Jana Novotna - as well as American former world number one Lindsay Davenport - have been quietly going about their business happy to leave all the screaming headlines about the teenage revolution which is supposedly about to break over their heads.

Graf, at 30 the third oldest woman left in the event, is still moving around the court like a foal - and has the energy in abundance to play for fun alongside John McEnroe in the mixed doubles to keep her on her toes.

Only 31-year-old Novotna and last year's finalist Nathalie Tauziat of France, beat Graf for age.

But their age and the glamour of the teenage brigade mean they have not raised much interest so far - and that's the way the trio like it.

Despite Graf's early problems in the second round when she lost a set to South Africa's Mariaan De Swardt, neither she nor anybody else look like beating the German second seed.

Graf, who faces the youngest of them all - Belgian Kim Clijsters - in the fourth round, is enjoying a new lease of life after two injury-ravaged years, and her French Open triumph at Martina Hingis' expense made a nonsense of the Swiss teen's earlier assertion that the veteran was finished.

Graf joked after beating De Swardt that she'd really rather prefer to "win easy," although that match gave her the wake-up call she needed if she is to claim a 23rd Grand Slam singles title.

"I'm not having an easy road. Every match is tough - Kim won't be any different. But I feel good about the way I'm playing," says Graf, who spent a record 377 weeks ranked number one but is now number three in the world.

Graf cannot avoid hogging the headlines given the constant speculation over whether this will be her last Wimbledon.

The teenage army is represented in abundance and just keeps on growing.

Even if their leader Martina Hingis went home early, there are plenty more where she came from, with Clijsters having been assigned the hardest job of all in the fourth round.

Hingis' conqueror Jelena Dokic has found herself on the back - and front pages of the media ever since ousting Hingis in the opening round - and has become as much a target of the paparazzi as Russian glamour girl Anna Kournikova.

Kournikova, 18 and still chasing a belated first Tour title, has what ought to be a classic match-up with muscular sixth-seeded American Venus Williams.

The 19-year-old Williams, winner of four titles this year, will be a totally different

proposition from anyone else Kournikova has faced so far.

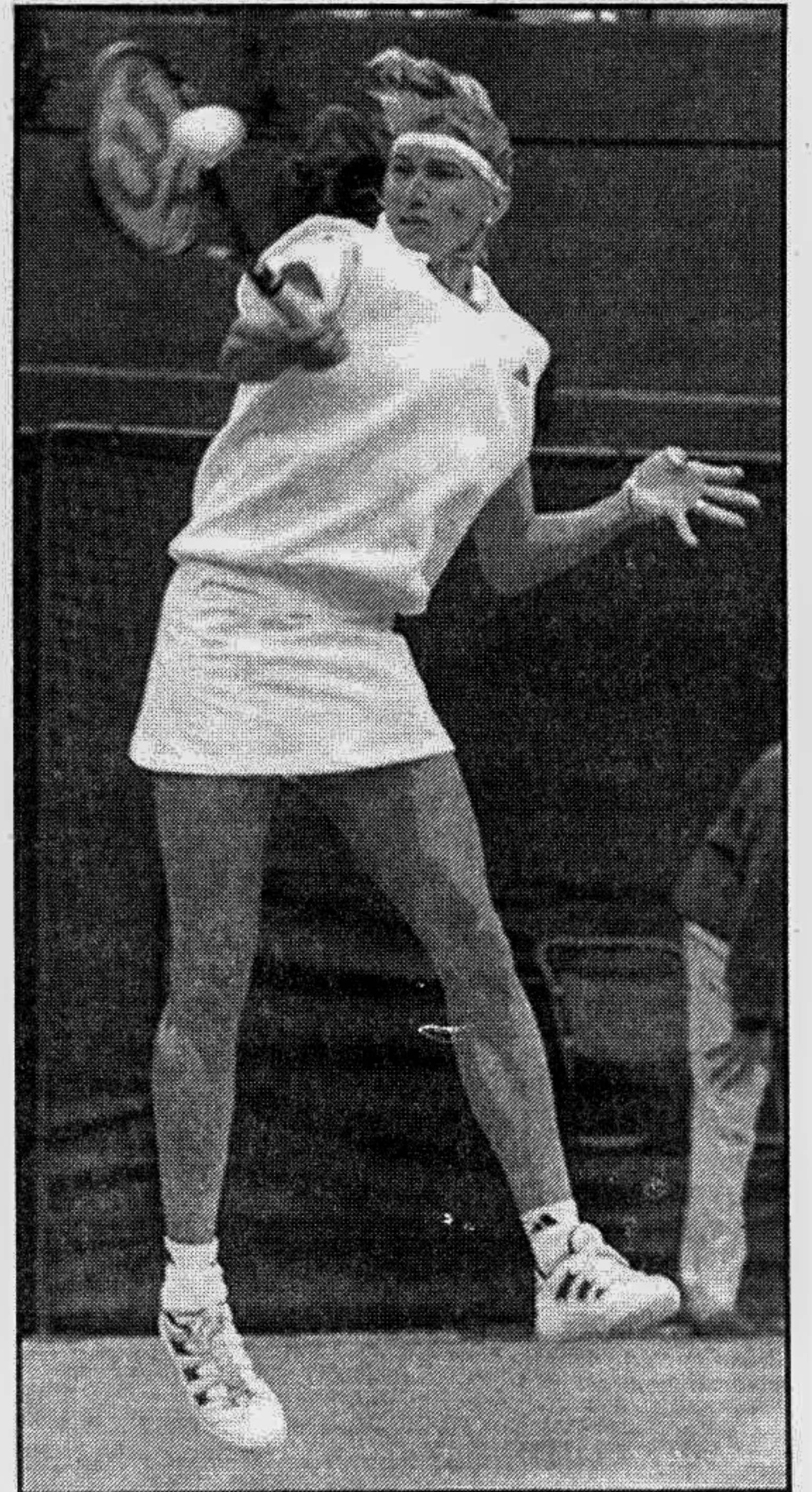
Another teen who can hit the ball as hard as Williams is Croatian 17-year-old Mirjana Lucic, who having knocked out former finalist Monica Seles now faces Tamarine Tanasugarn of Thailand, a comparative veteran at 22 and who ended the hopes of French 13th seed Sandrine Testud.

baston - but at least they're still on speaking terms.

Not so Lucic with her father, whom she admits she hasn't seen him for a year.

Asked where her father was following the greatest victory in her young career, Lucic shrugged and said: "Nowhere. I haven't had any contact with him in about a year."

"These kinds of things make



German tennis legend Steffi Graf executes a forehand during her rain interrupted match against Kim Clijsters of Belgium on June 28.

—AFP photo

The miserable times are well behind Lucic, who was tipped for stardom by Graf two years ago after reaching the final of the Strasbourg Open before she even had a ranking.

Like Dokic, Lucic has bounced into the limelight burdened by controversy surrounding her difficult relationship with her father Marinco.

He was also her coach but Lucic claims he mentally and physically abused her for almost a decade.

Dokic's father has been dubbed the 'Dad from Hell' after being thrown out of the Wimbledon tournament at Edg-

you tougher and I feel I am tougher now," said Lucic.

Another intriguing match-up sees US discovery Alexandra Stevenson, who shocked French 11th seed Julie Halard-Decugis, take on compatriot Lisa Raymond, who thumped ex-champion Conchita Martinez in the previous round.

French eighth seed Tauziat takes on 15th seed Dominique Van Roost of Belgium.

Tauziat shows no signs of fatigue despite playing virtually non-stop for the last three weeks. "My objective is to win as many games as possible in two sets," she said.

41-year-old man starting Monday. But he postponed the trial until December because he had tickets for Wimbledon on Friday.

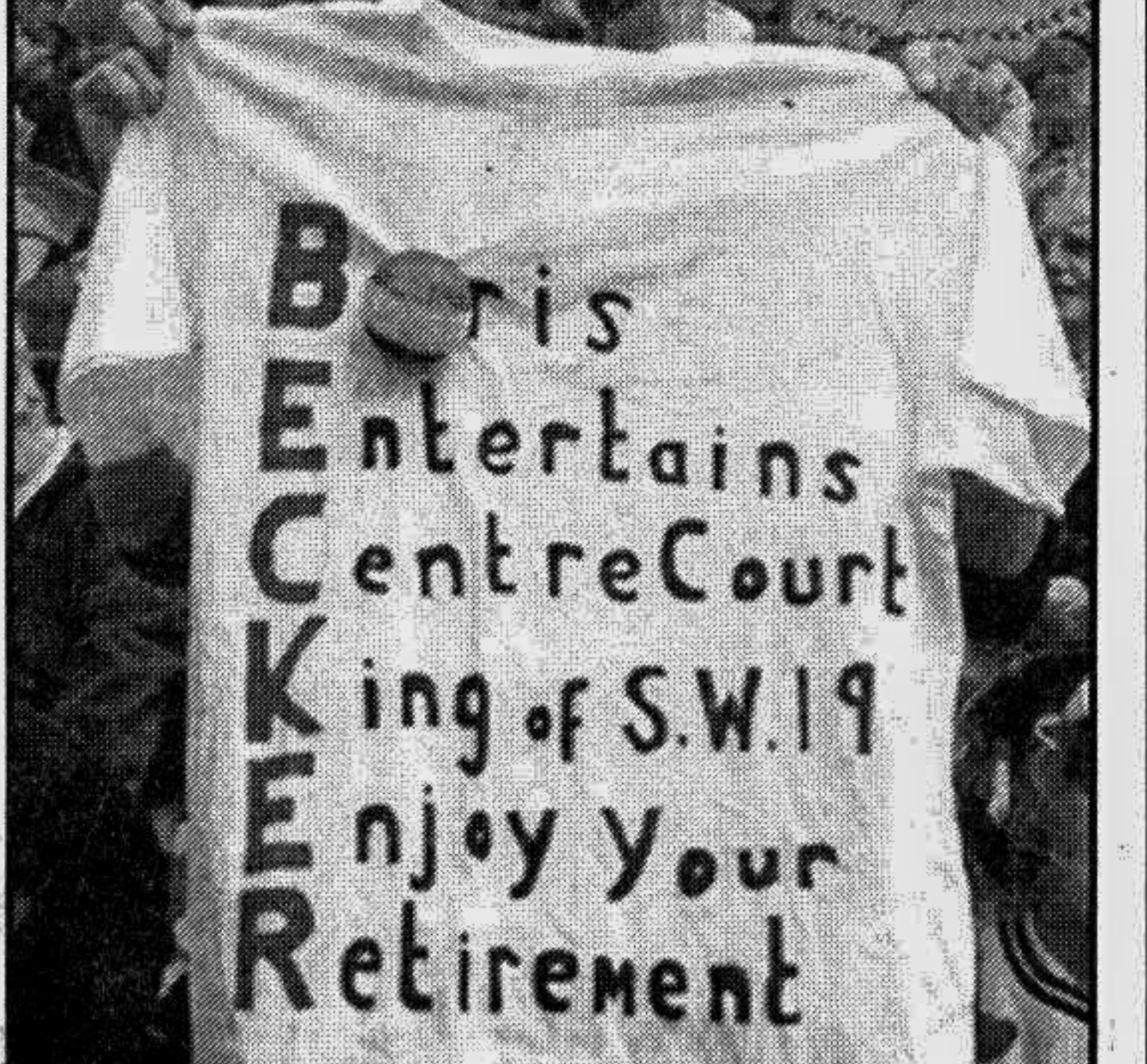
"Some time ago I managed to get hold of two tickets for the men's semifinal at Wimbledon on Friday," the judge told startled lawyers at Winchester Crown Court.

He played in the men's and mixed doubles in 1964 at the age of 65 years and 10 months to become the oldest player in the history of Wimbledon.

Borotra, known as the Bounding Basque, was one of the world's finest players in the 1920s.

But romance would sometimes blunt his challenge - he often lost sets to inferior opponents because he was too busy trying to spot the pretty women in the crowd.

TENNIS CRAZY JUDGE
A British judge is ditching his court room for Centre Court. Judge Patrick Hooton was due to preside over a four-day sexual indecency case against a



BORIS AT HEART: A Boris Becker devotee shows her appreciation for the German tennis legend from the stands on June 28.

—AFP photo

Howard hails Jelena

SYDNEY, June 29: Prime Minister John Howard, still savouring Australia's World Cup cricket success, today joined the growing chorus of praise for teenager Jelena Dokic's remarkable run at Wimbledon, reports Reuters.

Dokic, 16, grabbed headlines when she stunned world number one Martina Hingis in straight sets in the first round and Howard said she had now proved her win over top seed Hingis was no fluke.

"She proved that first round win was no flash in the pan," he told a Canberra radio station.

Dokic's successful run at Wimbledon has created a stir in Australia, particularly in Fairfield, the unfashionable suburb in Sydney's west where she has lived since she and her family emigrated from Yugoslavia in 1994.

The Australian media has embraced Dokic, with her progress capturing front page headlines.

"Wonder Girl," said Sydney's tabloid Daily Telegraph in a frontpage banner headline on Tuesday.

Howard, an avowed cricket fan, on Monday hosted a Parliament House reception for Australia's one-day squad, who have been feted with ticker tape parades in Melbourne and Sydney since returning from their World Cup final triumph over Pakistan.

Stevenson will get prize money

WIMBLEDON, June 29: Alexandra Stevenson will get her Wimbledon prize money after all, reports AP.

The WTA Tour had ruled the 18-year-old American entered as an amateur and was ineligible for prize money. But Wimbledon officials stepped in Monday and overruled, saying Stevenson had professional status and was entitled to her winnings.

The player's mother, Samantha Stevenson, had threatened to take legal action to obtain the prize money.

WTA Tour rules and Grand Slam rules state that a player who begins the "first match as an amateur may not receive prize money during that tournament."

However, Wimbledon officials said their guidelines assume all players are professionals unless they are notified otherwise.

Stevenson is guaranteed of 26,280 pounds (42,340 dollars) for reaching a fourth-round match with fellow American Lisa Raymond. That match was rained out Monday.

Schools h'ball

Agrani Girls' High School and Adarsha Girls' School won their respective matches in the 10th Bata schools' handball tournament at the Sultana Kamal Women's Sports Complex yesterday, reports UNB.

Agrani Girls' High beat Mirpur Girls' Ideal Institute 7-2 after leading the first half 3-1.

Faria netted highest 4 for the winners while Lima and Sumi scored one goal each for the losers.

Adarsha Girls' School defeated Mohammadpur Preparatory School 6-2 after dominating the first half 4-1. Rashida netted three goals for the winners.

The day's first match between Scholastica School and Dhanmndi Government Girls' High ended in a 1-1 draw. The first half was also locked 5-5.

All-Africa Games

Algeria take Tunisia's place

JOHANNESBURG, June 29: Algeria became the first side to qualify for the All-Africa Games soccer tournament on Monday after Tunisia withdrew from the preliminary competition, reports Reuters.

The Confederation of African Football (CAF) said Algeria would join hosts South Africa in the line-up for the eight-nation under-23 level tournament, which will be a centrepiece of the Games in Johannesburg on September 1.

Tunisia, who had been due to play Algeria in a qualifying match next month, pulled out due to fixture congestion.

The six other finalists will be decided in July and August in the last round of qualifying matches.

New Polish soccer chief

WARSAW, June 29: Michal Listkiewicz, the new head of Poland's soccer federation (PZPN), has pledged to restore the credibility of his country's football industry by reforming its practices and structures, reports Reuters.

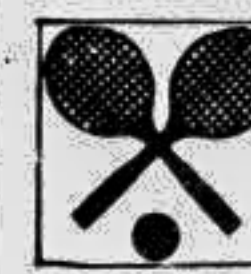
"Some PZPN people still have something to offer but there is no hiding the fact that many activists will have to seek jobs elsewhere," Listkiewicz told reporters two hours after being elected.

Listkiewicz defeated controversial former boss Marian Dziurowicz by 99 votes to 57 in a secret ballot carried out at the insistence of world governing body FIFA.

Dziurowicz had been accused by the government of corruption, cronyism and autocratic rule, and international soccer authorities had threatened to bar Poland from the 2000 European championship unless a leadership vote was held.

Polish soccer is a shadow of what it was at its peak in the communist era when the national team finished third in the 1974 World Cup.

Dokic does it again!



LONDON, June 29: Australian qualifier Jelena Dokic dodged the show-ers to produce another stunning upset at Wimbledon on Monday when she dumped ninth seed Mary Pierce out of the women's singles in the fourth round, reports AFP.

The Belgrade-born 16-year-old, who beat Swiss top seed

Martina Hingis in the first round, won 6-4, 6-3 against Pierce on Court Two having trailed 3-0 at the start of the match.

Dokic now has a strong chance of reaching the semifinals in her first appearance at Wimbledon with either fellow qualifier Alexandra Stevenson of the United States or American Lisa Raymond, who is unseeded, awaiting her in the last

eight.

"It's a bit hard to believe coming from the qualifiers," the disbelieving teenager said afterwards.

"If you'd told me two weeks ago in qualifying that I'd get into the quarterfinals I wouldn't have believed you."

"This was a big match for me," Dokic added. "Beating Hingis is still in my head, I'm thinking did it really happen? Beating another seed shows I can still do it."

Dokic's triumph lit up a disappointing day at the championships which suffered their first delayed start due to rain and were abandoned with only five of the scheduled 16 men's and women's fourth round singles matches completed.

American fourth seed Andre Agassi and Brazilian number 11 Gustavo Kuerten will face each other in the quarterfinals after beating the last two qualifiers in the men's draw in their fourth round clashes.

In the women's singles Czech holder Jana Novotna and American third seed Lindsay Davenport were the only winners, and they too will face each other in the last eight.

Minutes after Dokic's win the heavens opened for the fourth time in the day and play was eventually called off for the day.

Women's favourite Steffi Graf was on the verge of victory against Belgian qualifier Kim Clijsters, leading 6-2, 4-2 when the skies opened.

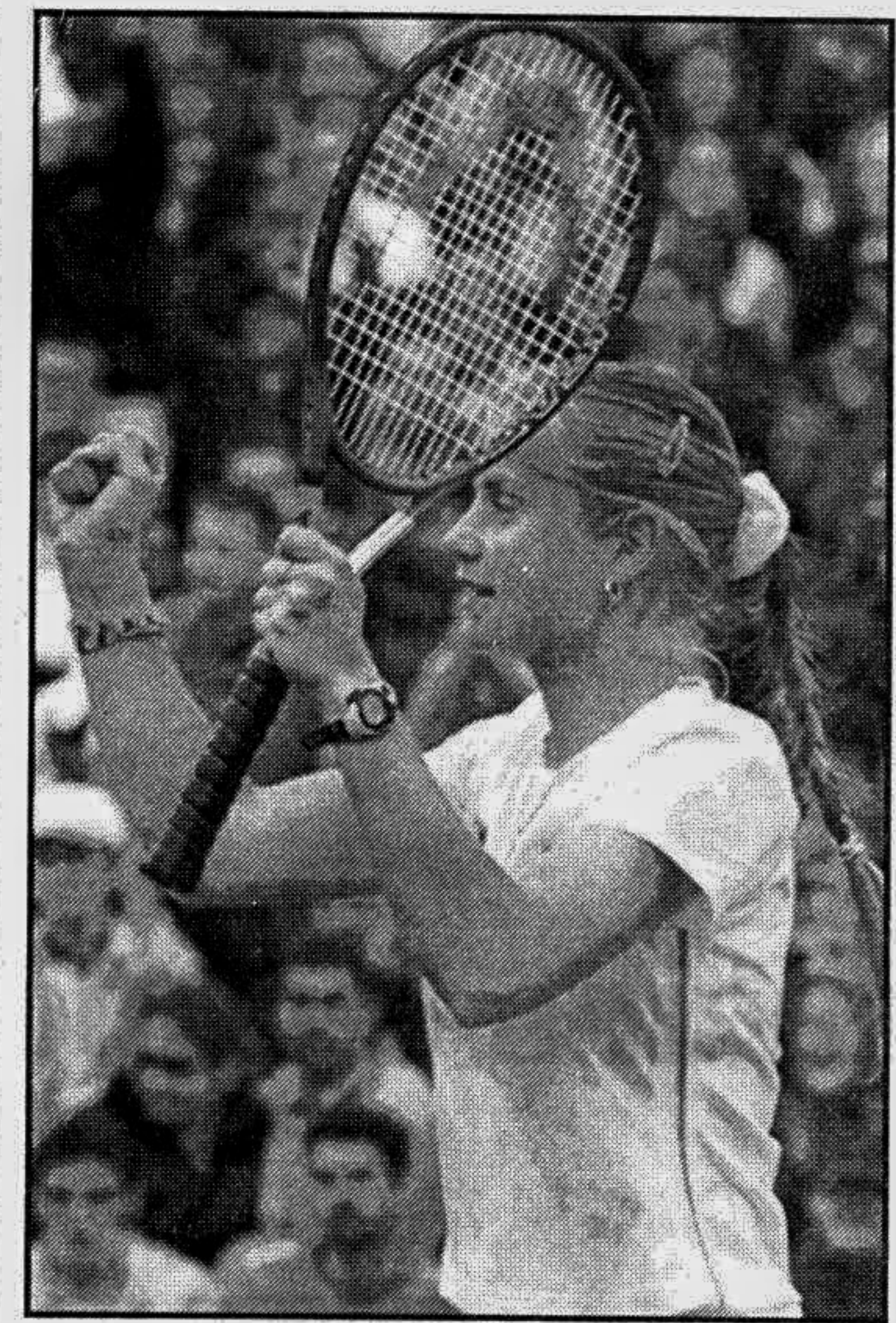
British sixth seed Tim Henman was 4-6, 7-5, 7-5, 4-3 up in his Centre Court clash with American Jim Courier.

Frenchman Cedric Pioline led 6-4, 5-7, 7-6, 1-0 in his fourth round match with Slovak Karol Kucera.

Thailand's Tamarine Tanasugarn was 5-5 in the first set with Croatian teenager Mirjana Lucic, conqueror of Monica Seles in the last round.

Last year's finalist, French eighth seed Nathalie Tauziat led Belgian Dominique Van Roost, the 15th seed, 6-3, 0-1.

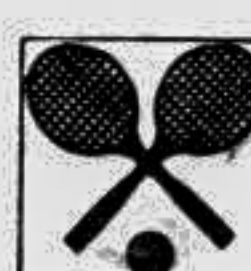
In the men's doubles third round Indian top seeds Mahesh Bhupathi and Leander Paes won 6-4, 4-6, 6-4, 6-4 against 16th seeds Patrick Galbraith and Justin Gimelstob of the United States.



GOING FROM STRENGTH TO STRENGTH: Australian teenage sensation Jelena Dokic exults after her Wimbledon fourth round triumph over Mary Pierce of France on June 28. Dokic won 6-4, 6-3.

—AFP photo

Novotna no more edgy



LONDON, June 29 (Reuters/Internet): There is something calm and philosophical about Jana Novotna this year.

Perhaps the 31-year-old Wimbledon champion feels she has little left to prove after finally winning the title she chased so fiercely for so long.

Maybe she feels she is lucky just to have the chance to defend her title after badly spraining her ankle playing doubles at the French Open earlier this month.

Whatever the reason Novotna has lost her urgent, brittle edge and looks relaxed and at home in southwest London.

After beating French baseliner Nathalie Dechy in a rain-interrupted match on Monday to reach the quarterfinals, the Czech said she felt she had not played a good match but was helped through by a new confidence.

"Because you have done well here before and you're looking forward to it, you enjoy the whole atmosphere and you don't care if it's a first round match or a second round match, you just go out and enjoy yourself on a daily basis," she said.

Novotna won the coveted title at her 13th attempt last year, beating France's Nathalie Tauziat in the final after twice reaching the final and losing, to Steffi Graf in 1993 and Martina Hingis in 1997.

Wimbledon crowds took her to their hearts after the 1993 debacle when she was 4-1 up in the final set, but lost her nerve and the match as Graf's mental toughness won through.

As she picked up her runners-up trophy she wept tears of fatigue and frustration on the Duchess of Kent's shoulder. The Duchess told Novotna her time would come.

After so many years of disappointment, stepping on to

Centre Court as defending champion last week was a highlight of her tennis life.

"It was very special...when you walk on centre court again and the Duchess of Kent is there and everyone reminds you of last year," Novotna said.

Other big tournaments do not have the same allure. Though she reached the final of the Australian in 1991, she has



JANA NOVOTNA

made only the semis of the other Grand Slams and was defeated in the third round at Melbourne and fourth round at Paris this year.

"There are other Grand Slam tournaments that I am not necessarily looking forward to go and play," she said. "I'm sure it's the same for other players who enjoy playing on grass."

Novotna's aggressive and athletic style, so well suited to fast lawn surfaces, takes its toll on the body and as she gets older injuries take longer to heal.

But the fifth seed does not fret about her fitness as she might have done before.

"Now I'm in the quarter-finals and a couple of weeks ago I wasn't even sure if I would be playing at this time of year, so it's a miracle," she said.

"But I'm here and I just have to take it one match at a time."

Olympic soccer

Japan reach final qualifying round

TOKYO, June 29: Japan earned a berth in the last qualifying round for the Sydney Olympic Games when they defeated Malaysia 4-0 to secure top place in the Asian Group Six preliminary tournament on Monday, reports AFP.

A lacklustre beginning frustrated a partisan crowd, but after Shunsuke Nakamura was brought down by Khairun Haled Masrom in the area giving him a penalty goal in the 28th minute, they stormed into top gear.

Tomoyuki Hirase, Masashi Motoyama and Yoshiteru Yamashita added three more in the 32nd, 40th and 44th minutes to end the first-half 4-0.

But without top goal scorer Kota Yoshihara, who played only the last 10 minutes, and ace striker Atsushi Yanagisawa, who was dropped from the squad for breaking team rules, the home side was unable to make anything of the match in the second-half, the first time in six games they have failed to score after the interval.

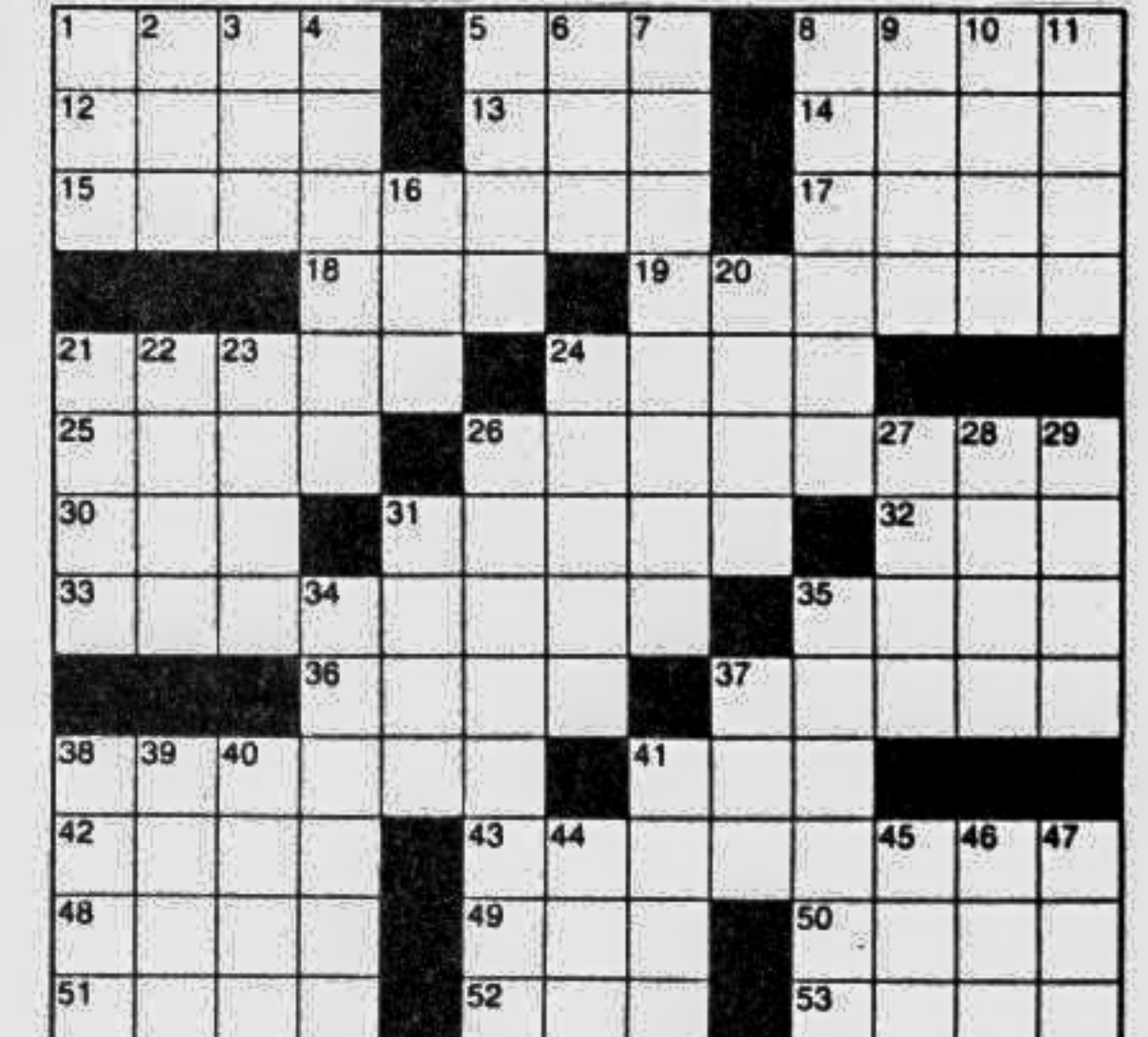
It was their sixth straight win with no defeats in the five-nation round robin to collect a full 18 points leaving them in an unbeatable position.

"I had expected a tough match, because it was the first match for Malaysia here after a week of rest. They are fresh and in good form," said Japanese coach Masakuni Yamamoto.

Japan's victory secured a place in the final round of qualifying for the Sydney Olympic Games.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS	37 Some statutory	2 Part of a Latin 101	20 Reed instrument
1 One of Henry's Catharines	38 Large beaked bird	21 Whodunit basis	
5 Binge	41 Solid for	3 Computer acronym	22 Chic beach resort
8 Pitkin	42 Librarian's acronim	4 Acts follow-up	23 Denizen of LOVE
9 Dennis' auntie	43 Axlike weapon	5 Tents	24 Memory methods
12 "Types" sequel	48 Noble Italian name	6 Where someone's always knocking?	26 Able
13 Sapporo sash	49 Epoch	8 Constant sufferer	27 Edges
14 Not up yet	50 Kentucky border	9 Somewhat	28 Skip
15 45-caliber weapon	51 Contemptible	10 Apportion	29 Bankrolls
17 Ceremony	52 Hideaway	11 Unimprovable setting	31 Big name in cat
18 DDE's rival	53 Alger's "before"	12 Feather	34 German cathedral city
21 Factory	DOWN	16 Nevertheless	35 Book-maker?
24 July stone	1 Cauldron		37 Feathery accessory
25 They're the tops	Solution time: 24 mins.		
26 Annie's song			
30 Harlem room			
31 Sign on a Wonder-land cake			
32 --Yanke			
Doodle			
Dandy			
33 Lobster liver			
35 Surround by			
36 Pub orders			



CRYPTOQUIP

DGLNOIUZD IO YIDWLO-
YIFF EIALD ATERO YL
FTWLFC OU DNZLIA,
"RUUG, RUUG, RUUZIC!"
Yesterday's Cryptquip: I'D SUPPOSE A BOWLER'S PET WOULD CERTAINLY BE AN ALLEY CAT.

Today's Cryptquip clue: Y equals B
The Cryptquip 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.