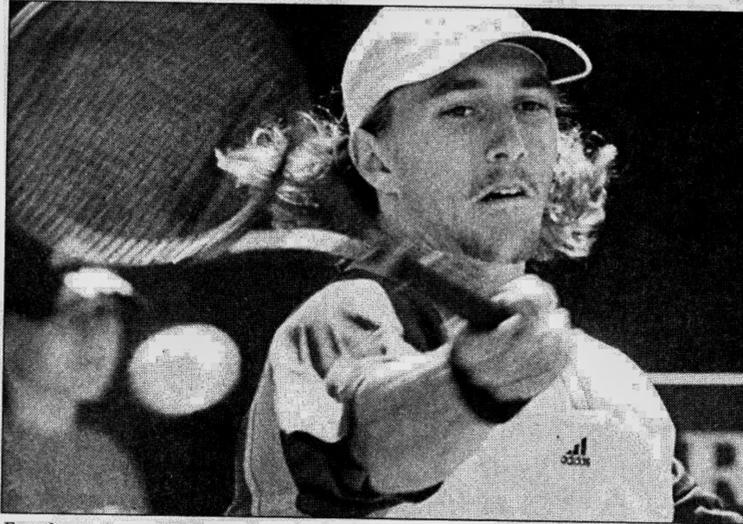


Bitti named New ITF chief

NOORDWIJK, July 9: The International Tennis Federation has appointed Italian Francesco Ricci Bitti as its new president...

Sampras will play in Davis Cup

BROOKLINE, July 9 (AP): Back in January, in the dead of winter, Tom Gullikson hopped on a plane for what might have been the most important mission of his tenure as US Davis Cup captain...



Frenchman Arnaud Di Pasquale makes a forehand against his Swiss opponent Marc Rosset during their second round engagement at the Swiss Open on July 8. Di Pasquale won 7-5, 7-6. —AFP photo

Costa storms into semis

GSTAAD, Switzerland, July 9: Spain's Albert Costa reinforced his title as King of the Mountains...

Costa, seeded eighth, has done well at high-altitude events like Gstaad, winning the title here in 1996, and twice taking the trophy at Kitzbühel, Austria...

Costa, ranked 29th, is the sole member of the Top 30 not to have won a tournament title. His chances against the experienced Spaniard were bleak on the day, with Costa hitting top form in cloudy, somewhat chilly conditions...

Costa, seeded eighth, has done well at high-altitude events like Gstaad, winning the title here in 1996, and twice taking the trophy at Kitzbühel, Austria, the other summer Alpine event on the ATP Tour.

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Bosnian International Elvir Bilic (R) being presented to the media by Real Madrid President Lorenzo Sanz at Madrid on July 7. Bilic joined the Spanish giants for a sum of 20 million dollars. —AFP photo

RE warns Beckham, Ferguson

SYDNEY, July 9: European football club champions Manchester United will face a squad of apprentice Olympians in a two-match series against Australia in a tour already marred by legal threats, reports AFP.

shorten his honeymoon with Victoria. Posh Spice Adams. But Soccer Australia's threat to invoke FIFA bans on European clubs withholding players carried little weight in their pre-season, as most of the big Australian names are missing.

Manchester City midfielder Danny Tiatto was called up after returning to Australia for a holiday, while the Petkovic boys Jason and Michael will battle with Olympic hopefuls Joe Didulica and Danny Milosevic for the custodian's spot.



Players — (backrow L-R) Mofazzal Hussain and SM Sajjad — and officials of the Bangkok-bound Bangladesh snooker team, which will take part in 16th Asian Snooker Championship. The week-long tournament will begin in the Thai capital from tomorrow.

RE managing director Dominic Galati confirmed the company would sue if that happened. "Our solicitors sent them letters this morning and we have given them 24 hours to reply," Galati said Friday.

World Student Games Jay captures athletics gold

PALMA DE MALLORCA, Spain, July 9: Cuba's Yuhisleidis Cumba Jay won the first athletics gold of the World Student Games when she took the shot put on Thursday, reports Reuters.

Cumba Jay dominated the competition from the first round when she launched her best effort of 18.70 metres. No one else could get near.

China's Song Feina took the silver medal with 18.28. "It was reasonably easy. There was not much difficulty for me. After the first round I knew there would be no real challengers," Cumba Jay, a 23-year-old physical culture student, said.

Cumba Jay is used to success and failure in almost equal measure. She won the 1993 Pan-American junior title and last year took the Caribbean and Central American crown, her first major senior title, but failed to qualify for the finals of the 1995 world championships and the 1996 Olympics.

The United States achieved their first medal outside the swimming pool when Leigh Daniel conquered her pre-race nerves and won the women's 10,000 metres in 32 minutes 58.80 seconds.

Japan's Yuri Kano led for almost the entire race, regularly signalling for the chasing group to help with the pace, until Daniel kicked for home with four laps to go.

Japan's Tomokio Hagiwara collected two gold medals in the swimming pool. Hagiwara, who won the women's 100 metres butterfly on Sunday and took the silver in the 200 backstroke on Tuesday, picked up the 200 metres individual medley gold and swam an outstanding butterfly leg to help guide Japan to victory in the 4x100 metres medley relay.

She clocked two minutes 16.21 seconds to win the 200 individual medley by more than a second from Germany's Sabine Klenz (2:17.54) and Canada's Elizabeth Warden (2:18.06). She then helped Japan achieve the third Games record of the meeting as they won the medley relay in 4:09.90 to slice just over half a second from the mark set by the United States four years ago.

The US were second in 4:11.82 and Ukraine third in 4:15.06. "To be honest we did not expect to do so well, although we have a lot of fast people. I'd call it almost a perfect team. We are really looking forward to the Pan-Pacs now," Naoko Imoto, who swam the anchor freestyle leg, said.

United States-based Imoto, who studies at Southern Methodist University, said that Japan had felt confident from the outset that they could win and had not seen any credible challengers in the field.

American Cara Lane, who won the first swimming gold of the Games on Sunday in the 800 metres freestyle, completed a distance double in the 1,500.

Williams to make Fed Cup debut

WHITE PLAINS, New York, July 9: Venus and Serena Williams will make their US Fed Cup debut this month, joining Monica Seles and Mary Joe Fernandez on the team that will play Italy on July 24-25, reports Reuters.

Italy, first-round winners against 1998 champions Spain, will host the US team in Ancona. The United States beat Croatia 5-0 in the first round. "It's great to have a team composed of veterans and rookies," said US captain Billie Jean King in a statement issued by the United States Tennis Association.

"Our Fed Cup veterans, Monica and Mary Joe, have been loyal to Fed Cup and have provided much glory for the United States. I couldn't ask for better rookies than Venus and Serena and I am glad that they are playing Fed Cup for the United States.

Venus Williams is ranked fourth in the world. Seles is ranked fifth, Serena Williams is ranked 12th and Fernandez ranks 33rd.

Dokic disagrees

SYDNEY, July 9: Australian tennis player Jelena Dokic has dismissed a claim by John McEnroe that Martina Hingis tanked her first round match at Wimbledon, reports AP.

Dokic, 16, beat the then No 1 Hingis 6-2, 6-0. While Dokic was reaching the quarterfinals, where she lost to American Alexandra Stevenson, Hingis was sunning herself in Cyprus with boyfriend Ivo Heuberger.

Dokic insists Hingis, who later lost the top ranking to Wimbledon winner Lindsay Davenport, was trying her hardest. "I think she played really well in that match," Dokic said. "I've played with her a few times and practiced with her and I know what she's like and what she plays like."

"From my point of view I played quite well and so did she and I think it was one of the really good matches of the tournament."

The Yugoslav-born Dokic was signed up Thursday to help promote tickets for next year's Sydney Olympics.

"Tennis players look at grand slams as the top things to play in but I also think things like Fed Cup and the Olympics are just as important," said Dokic.

"Especially having the Olympics in Australia, it'll be a great thing having the crowd on your side and everyone behind you."



American Nanceen Perry (R) sprints ahead of the pack during the 200 metres final of the World University Games at Mallorca on July 8. Perry won the gold. —AFP photo

ATP reserves the right

GSTAAD, Switzerland, July 9: The ATP refused to allow the Swiss Olympic Committee (SOC) to conduct surprise dope tests on Swiss players, saying on Wednesday they alone were responsible for testing, reports Reuters.

and the SOC had no right to conduct tests at such events. "The tournament is sanctioned by the ATP and subject to ATP rules and testing," said Zeljko Franulovic, ATP executive vice-president of Europe. "There's no need to have tests done by other agencies."

The incident, which occurred after first-round play at the Swiss Open on Tuesday, has sparked a bitter argument between the two sports bodies, both claiming the right to test players.

You could have local clubs coming down and testing. You can't let anyone just test whenever they want. "One programme is enough and we think our testing is the best in the world."

In a press statement the SOC said it believed the position of the Gstaad organisers and the ATP was wrong legally and politically in the current doping climate.

"There was just one gentleman and a bag," said Hermetjat. "When we test on the Tour we make sure the proper facilities are in place, that there is proper security and escorts for the players."

"It's our law, our position and our right to be able to control every Swiss athlete whenever and wherever we want," said Fred Ernst, chief of doping controls for the SOC. "The position of Gstaad and the ATP is that it isn't our right."

Hermetjat said an agreement might have been reached if the SOC had informed Gstaad organisers of their plans. But the SOC said it did not inform federations it was coming, believing such notice would defeat the purpose of unannounced tests.

A controller from the SOC arrived at the ritzy Swiss resort on Tuesday evening and told tournament organisers he was there to conduct unannounced tests on Swiss players, including 1992 Olympic champion Marc Rosset, Roger Federer, Lorenzo Mantia and George Bastl.

"We don't give warnings, we do all our testing by surprise," said Ernst. "If you announce you're coming what's the use?"

He was denied access to the players by tournament director Jacques Hermetjat, on the grounds that it was an ATP (Association of Tennis Professionals) tournament. Organisers said the ATP which runs the men's tour, had its own testing

Now we will have to take measures to make sure this does not happen again.

They say they have the best testing? Every federation says they have the best testing in the world but if so then why do we have so many problems?

Tszyu-Gonzalez bout Aug 21

SYDNEY, July 9: Kostya Tszyu will make the first defence of his World Boxing Council super lightweight title against Mexican Miguel Angel Gonzalez at the Las Vegas Hilton on Aug 21, reports AP.

The card will be co-promoted by Don King and Tszyu's manager and promoter Vlad Warton. A win in Las Vegas would pitch Tszyu into mandatory defence against another Mexican, Julio Cesar Chavez.



US sprinting ace Maurice Greene (R) winning the men's 100 metres of the Golden League meet at Rome on July 7. —AFP photo

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS 1 One may get the picture 2 Shouted 12 Wedding-related 13 Branching 14 Emissary 15 Bakery 16 Squad 17 Passport endorsement 18 Diving bird 19 Make like an eagle 20 Make like an eagle 21 - Francis 22 - Cisco 24 Bases: abbr. 27 Fermi's bit 29 Particular nuts 35 Knuckle-head 36 Storm 37 DJ's stack 38 Spy novel grp. 40 Philistine city 42 Part of two state abbrs. 44 Caudron contents

Cryptogram puzzle grid with letters and numbers. Includes a solution key at the bottom: H A B R A X D L Q V W Q O A W R Y C Y L J B H W H W Q R B H W X Q W D H C Y X T C V O J R T, "C R H B T J L J D" Yesterday's Cryptogram: AT CHRISTMAS, AN ACCOUNTANT MIGHT ASK FOR FIGURE SKATES. Today's Cryptogram clue: L equals G