

Penn-Vettori show

LONDON, July 31 (AFP/Reuters): New Zealand came out on top after a topsy-turvy day against Leicestershire at Grace Road Friday.

They bowled out the hapless hosts for just 125, second-string medium-pacer Andrew Penn finishing with figures of six for 51.

Then the Kiwis were soon struggling with the bat themselves, and their reply stuttered to 75 for five at tea, until Daniel Vettori and Penn turned things round.

Spinner Vettori showed he is no mug with the bat by making 112 while Penn remained intact at the close on 62 -- the pair adding 91 for the eighth wicket as the Kiwis ended on 250 for eight.

SCOREBOARD

LEICESTERSHIRE: First innings				
V Wells lbw b Allott	4			
D Maddy c McMillan b O'Connor	7			
I Sutcliffe lbw b Penn	18			
B Smith c Croy b Penn	17			
A Habib b Penn	5			
D Stevens c Vettori b Penn	0			
P Nixon b Allott	19			
J Dakin c Astle b O'Connor	10			
S Boswell c Harris b Penn	15			
M Brimston not out	5			
J Ormond b Penn	5			
Extras: (b-3, lb-5, nb-12)	20			
Total:	125			
Fall of wickets: 1-4; 2-18; 3-49; 4-64; 5-64; 6-73; 7-90; 8-105; 9-111.				
Bowler:				
Allott	12	3	37	2
O'Connor	11	2	23	2
Penn	12.3	3	51	6
Vettori	2	1	6	0
NEW ZEALAND: First innings				
M Bell c Wells b Ormond	0			
S Fleming c Brimston b Boswell	12			
C McMillan lbw b Dakin	22			
N Astle lbw b Boswell	0			
C Harris c Sutcliffe b Boswell	4			
D Vettori b Brimston	112			
M Croy b Ormond	0			
B Walker c Nixon b Ormond	5			
A Penn not out	62			
S O'Connor not out	12			
Extras: (b-8, lb-5, nb-8)	21			
Total: (for eight wickets)	250			
Fall of wickets: 1-12; 2-14; 3-14; 4-26; 5-53; 6-76; 7-116; 8-207.				
To bat: G Allott.				
Bowler: (to date)				
Ormond	18	5	63	3
Boswell	13	4	61	3
Wells	6	0	35	0
Dakin	12	5	37	1
Brimston	13	5	23	1
Maddy	2	0	18	0

Sales' superb double

LONDON, July 31: David Sales led a remarkable Northamptonshire recovery with a career-best 218 not out on the opening day of the County Championship game against Essex at Northampton on Friday, reports Reuters.

The home side were in dire straits early in their innings before Sales and David Ripley (94) put together a record seventh-wicket stand of 293.

That beat the 73-year-old previous best partnership of 229 compiled by Wilf Timms and Fanny Walden against Warwickshire in 1926.

Earlier, Essex paceman David Thompson took three wickets in 16 balls on his Championship debut to leave Northants languishing at 58 for six.

Sales, who hit a double century on his Championship debut against Worcestershire two years ago, struck one six and 34 fours off 264 balls as Northants cruised to 458 for seven off 104 overs.

At Cardiff, Durham, who had won their three previous games, dominated the day against bottom club Glamorgan in posting 275 for five.

Nick Speak led the way with 103, his second century in consecutive Championship innings.

Lee likes NSW job

NEW SOUTH WALES, July 31 (Internet report): Australian World Cup all-rounder Shane Lee last night put forward reasons he should be named NSW captain this season.

It would appear Lee, Michael Bevan and Michael Slater will vie for the Blues' top job following Mark Taylor's retirement.

Steve Waugh is state captain but will miss almost the entire domestic season because of his Australian commitments.

The NSW Cricket Association board will elect a captain to replace the absent Waugh during October.

It is understood the three candidates will captain NSW during trial matches in Queensland during September.

"I've put my hand up -- I've told that to Steve Small and to the NSW Cricket Association," Lee said.

"I'm keen on the job but I guess it will come down to availability."

"I've been with the Australian team for the past few months and have seen how Steve (Waugh) ran things and how Mark (Taylor) previously ran things."

"You could say I'm a good people person and am a man manager."

"I also think I've got the respect of players more senior than myself."

Lee said he gleaned captaincy skills while leading club side Mosman.

"I've captained grade teams since I was 19 so I think I've had plenty of experience," Lee said.

"Being captain would bring out the best in me and hopefully the best in others."

"Having said that, if Michael Bevan or Michael Slater are chosen I'll be behind them 100 per cent. And I'm sure they'd back me if chosen."

"It has been one of my major goals. I'm 26 this year and that may be an advantage."



BEING BRAZILIAN! New Zealand players wearing the famous yellow shirts go on an 'unofficial' lap of honour after losing 2-0 to their mighty opponents in the Confederations Cup. — AFP photo

French season kicks off

PARIS, July 31: Two goals in the last 10 minutes saw reigning champions Bordeaux open their defence with a thrilling 3-2 home victory over Bastia while newly-promoted St Etienne twice came from behind to earn a 2-2 draw at Monaco as the French First Division season got underway Friday, reports AFP.

St Etienne trailed to goals first from Monaco's Marco Simone and then David Trezeguet, but strikes from Stephane Pedron and Brazilian striker Aloisio ensured the well-supported 'Greens' returned from the principality with a point.

Late goals from Lilian Laslandes and Johan Micoud had earlier ensured a good start for Bordeaux who had led with a first half goal from Herve Aicarte only for Frederic Nee and a Dan Petersen penalty to put Bastia in charge after the break.

St Etienne initially looked overawed on their return to the elite after a three-year absence and it was no surprise when Italian striker Simone put Monaco ahead after 11 minutes after good work from Francisco Da Costa.

It was an encouraging start for Simone, signed from Paris St Germain during the close season. The former AC Milan star was an underachiever at PSG and was frequently blamed for dressing room tensions within the capital club.

But midway through the first half St Etienne hit back through midfielder Stephane Pedron.

Pedron, signed from relegated Lorient, let fly with a dipping left-foot shot from the left side of the penalty area, giving the diving Fabien Barthez no chance.

But before the break Monaco went 2-1 ahead. It was Barthez's French World Cup winning teammate Trezeguet, who made the breakthrough.

St Etienne keeper Jerome Alonzo came rushing out of his area and kicked the ball straight at Trezeguet. The ball went spinning into the penalty area and Trezeguet was first to the loose ball, firing into the

empty net.

Alonzo made a brilliant save from Simone on the stroke of half-time to keep St Etienne in the match.

It was Barthez who was embarrassed for St Etienne's second equaliser after 52 minutes.

However, it was still a brilliant piece of finishing from Aloisio. With Barthez coming off his line there seemed little danger with the ball going out towards the corner flag.

But running away from goal Aloisio left Barthez stranded with a delicate left-foot lob.

It was an embarrassing moment for Barthez, who was persuaded to reject overtures from AC Milan and Manchester United over the summer to stay with Monaco with a hugely-improved contract.

Minutes later he redeemed himself by making a good block from Pedron.

St Etienne defender Patrick Guillou then tried to catch out Barthez with a 45-yard lob from the touchline but the extrovert goalkeeper just got back to tip the ball over the bar.

Neither side could find the winner but St Etienne's large travelling support seemed delighted with the point.

Meanwhile, Bordeaux, who needed a last-minute goal to edge Marseille to the crown on the last day of last season, showed the same never-say-die spirit that in May secured their first title since their glory days in the 1980s when France's future World Cup winning coach Aime Jacquet was in charge.

The first half was one way traffic with Bordeaux dominating and the Corsicans not creating a single chance.

The first real opportunity fell to Bordeaux's French international striker Sylvain Wilford.

Wilford, with 22 goals, was top scorer in the French First Division last season but with the goal begging he completely missed the ball which ran on to his teammate Stephane Ziani who fired wide.

Wilford then set up his strike partner Laslandes who failed to hit the target.

After 33 minutes it was defender Aicarte who scored the opening goal of the French season.

son.

Aicarte rose unchallenged to head his side on front from a corner.

Ziani, recruited from Spanish first division side Deportivo La Coruna during the summer, made an impressive debut and filled in well for last year's hero Ali Benarbia, who joined Paris St Germain just hours after Bordeaux won the title.

But out of the blue the Corsicans equalised after the interval.

A long ball appeared to present little difficulty but Frederic Nee showed a killer instinct to get in and force the ball past Bordeaux keeper Ulrich Rame.

That seemed to encourage Bastia and in particular Pierre-Yves Andre.

First Andre saw his cross deflected beyond the reach of Rame but the ball came back off a post and was scrambled to safety.

But Bordeaux were beginning to panic and after 69 minutes they gave away a foolish - even comical - penalty.

Andre outfoxed Aicarte and the defender tugged blatantly at the Bastia player's shorts. If Andre was embarrassed by having his backside briefly put on public display he could not have felt more ashamed than Aicarte, who had committed his foul right under the eyes of the referee.

Bastia's Danish star Petersen made no mistake from the penalty spot.

Bordeaux, so impressive in the first half, suddenly had lost their way and as they pursued an equaliser it was Bastia who looked more likely to score on the breakaway.

But with nine minutes remaining the Girondins conjured up the leveller. Bastia failed on several occasions to clear the ball and Laslandes headed the ball against the bar before reacting quicker than any of the defenders to lash the rebound into the roof of the net with his left foot.

Just four minutes later they made it 3-2. Attacking midfielder Micoud scored the winner, curling a freekick into the far corner.

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Lindsay, Venus in semis

STANFORD, July 31: Second-seeded Venus Williams overpowered sixth-seeded Anna Kournikova 6-1, 6-3 in the quarterfinals of the Bank of the West Classic on Friday night, reports AP.

Williams, ranked fourth in the world, used a powerful serve and hard ground strokes to beat Kournikova, ranked 13th in the world, for the fourth straight time.

"I believe when anyone tries to hit with me, that's when you're going to lose," Williams said.

Williams, 36-6 in matches this year, came out swinging, breaking serve twice in the first set.

"I played well consistently today," Williams said. "I was serving better, I have a lot of power and a lot of speed and when I'm on the run, I'm able to generate a good shot."

After Kournikova broke serve to tie the second set at 3-3, Williams returned the favour and went on to win the final three games. Match point was a hard shot that Kournikova couldn't return. The match took 67 minutes.

Williams plays fourth-seeded Amanda Coetzer, who rallied for a 2-6, 7-5, 6-2 victory over eighth-seeded Sandrine Testud.

In the second set, the normally calm Coetzer lost her head at 4-5, deuce, just before Testud's match point, cracking her racket on a court-side chair and earning a warning from the umpire. But Coetzer smacked a

forehand volley winner to save the match point, and ground down Testud from there on out.

"It was just building up," Coetzer said of her outburst. "I was on the defensive the whole time. I wasn't penetrating her. I was competing hard, but I was running around sort of lost. If there is a positive way to break a racket, that was it. It woke me up and I was able to move on and play aggressive."

Lindsay Davenport recorded yet another remarkable feat during a 6-3, 6-3 victory over Cornia Morariu in another quarterfinal match. In the semifinals, she will play Amy Frazier, who advanced with a 7-5, 6-0 victory over Luxembourg's Anne Kremer.

Davenport, the world's top-ranked player, recorded four aces in the same game.

"I guess I would have remembered something like that if it happened before," said Davenport, who took just over an hour to beat her doubles partner. "That's a milestone, I guess."

The four consecutive aces -- Morariu didn't win a point in the game -- occurred in the third game of the second set and gave Davenport a 2-1 edge. She went on to break Morariu's serve and never looked back.

"I served better and made more first serves," said Davenport, who won her first two Grand Slam events after winning the Bank of the West Classic last year. "I felt a lot more in the flow of things, more in control of my shots."

"When I was here last year, I had no idea I'd win my first two Grand Slam events and be No 1 in the world," she said. "To come back here where it all began, I can only look back in amazement and with such happiness."

Davenport also took a quick lead in the first set, going up 3-0.

"Stroke for stroke, she's just so solid," Morariu said. "There's no breathing room with Lindsay. She hits the ball so big on both sides that you're constantly on the run. She pins you to the baseline."

As for Frazier, "I never take anyone for granted," said Davenport, who has won their five

matches. "She returns very well, so holding serve will be very important."

Frazier gained the semis for the first time in the 10 years she's entered the Classic.

"I'm happy with the way I'm playing and I'm happy to be in the semis," Frazier said. "In the second set I was lucky to sneak out a couple (of games) at the beginning. I kind of had the momentum, but it wasn't easy."

It doesn't get any easier for Frazier.

"Obviously she's great at everything," Frazier said of Davenport. "I just have to worry about being consistent. She can hit winners from anywhere."



Russian Yevgeny Kafelnikov hits a forehand return during his quarterfinal against Australia's Richard Fromberg at the Generali Open on July 30. — AFP photo

Ricky not keen on Lanka tour

MELBOURNE, July 31: Australian Test cricketer Ricky Ponting said Friday that he is uneasy about next month's tour of Sri Lanka, reports AFP.

Ponting was interviewed on television and was asked what he thought about the tour, given the continuing security concerns.

A leader of a moderate Tamil movement was killed Thursday by a suicide bomb.

"I just wish I had a few more friends over in Sri Lanka so I could ring up and tell them to set a few more bombs off, so we don't have to go there," Ponting said.

The Australian team will be surrounded by tight security during the tour.

Australia refused to play their group matches in Sri Lanka during the 1996 World Cup following a massive bomb in Colombo.

Darren doubtful for rest of season

LONDON, July 31 (Internet report): Darren Gough is to have a further scan on his troublesome calf injury amid renewed fears he will not be able to play again this season.

The Yorkshire fast bowler missed England's opening Two Tests against New Zealand with an injury he first sustained during the World Cup and which then recurred after his earlier-than-expected return in the County Championship match against Warwickshire a fortnight ago.

But after he was re-examined by specialists earlier this week, it is feared the problem is connected to the

degenerative hamstring trouble which forced his withdrawal from England's tour to West Indies two winters ago.

"The problem is still under investigation and nothing is definite," said the England physiotherapist Wayne Morton. "He is having another scan on Thursday and the results of that may be that the injury is immobilised and he is ruled out of cricket for the rest of the season."

Leeds' last offer for Hasselbaink

LEEDS, England, July 31: English Premiership club Leeds United on Friday gave striker Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink a final take-it-or-leave-it offer to stay at Elland Road, reports AFP.

The club, who have turned down a 10 million pound offer for the Dutchman, have handed him "the biggest contract in the club's history," according to manager David O'Leary.

"The club cannot do any more. It's up to Jimmy," said O'Leary.

"I've had loads of offers for my players this summer. Atletico Madrid offered us 10 million pounds for Hasselbaink. We have turned it down. We are not selling him."

Jimmy doesn't want to go. We've got players like Nigel Martyn, Lucas Radebe, Harry Kewell and others worth a lot of money who have signed big new contracts. They want to stay. They believe in me," O'Leary told the Daily Telegraph newspaper.

Yevgeny reaches last four

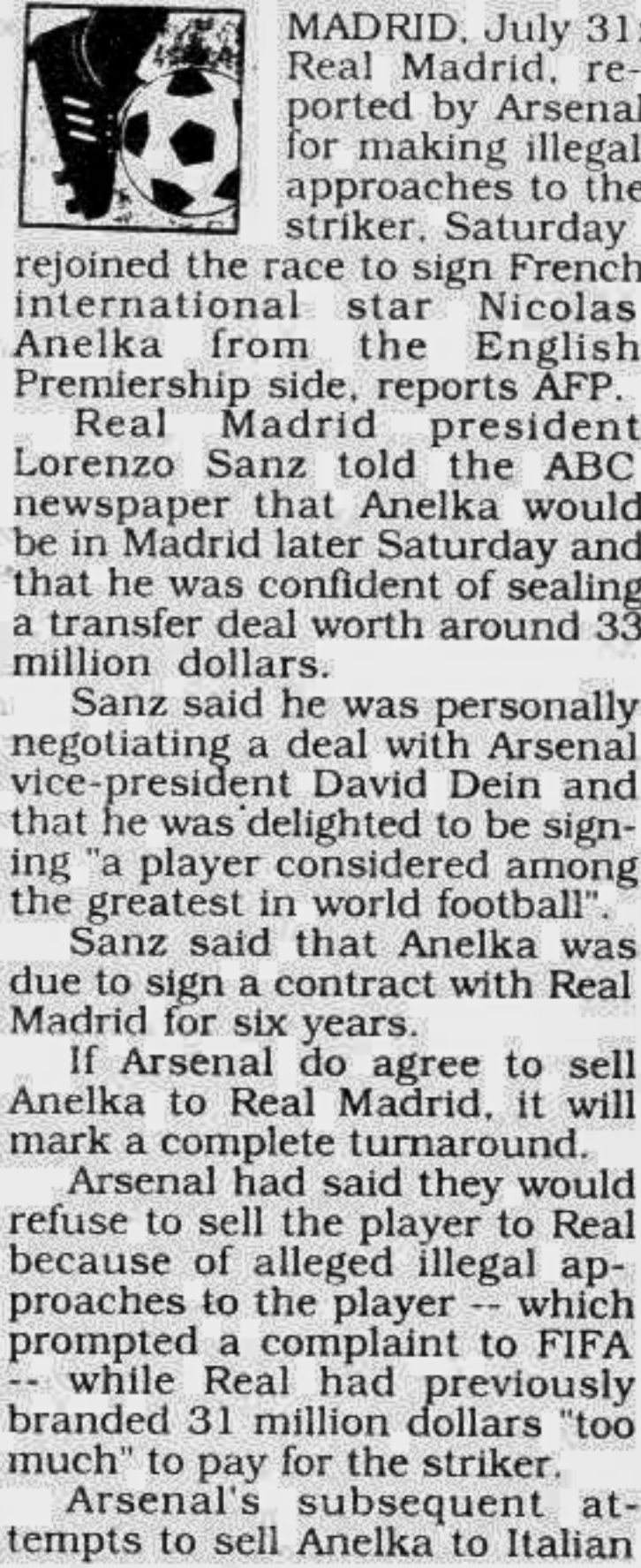
KITZBUHEL, Austria, July 31: Number one seed Yevgeny Kafelnikov was pleased with his form on Friday despite having to struggle before setting up a semifinal against Spain's Albert Costa at the Generali Open, reports Reuters.

The Russian world number four, who has his sights firmly set on regaining the number one spot by the end of the year, had to fight hard to get past Australian Richard Fromberg 6-3, 6-7, 6-3.

The second semifinal will be between Spaniard Fernando Vicente, who beat sixth-seeded Nicolas Lapentti of Ecuador 6-7, 6-1, 6-3, and Austrian Stefan Koubek, a 6-2, 6-3 winner over French Open semifinalist Fernando Meligeni.

Costa, last year's winner on the Kitzbuehel clay, also struggled before eliminating compatriot Juan Carlos Ferrero 3-6, 6-2, 6-3.

Now Real after Anelka



LORENZO SANZ

Sampras, Agassi on course

LOS ANGELES, July 31: Pete Sampras and Andre Agassi moved closer to a rematch of their Wimbledon final on Friday, winning quarterfinal matches in the Mercedes Benz Cup, reports AP.

Sampras, seeded second although he beat Agassi to earn his sixth Wimbledon championship on July 4, overcame old nemesis Wayne Ferreira 4-6, 6-3, 6-3.

Agassi, the No 1 seed and defending champion, advanced when seventh-seeded Lleyton Hewitt of Australia withdrew with a sprained left ankle with Agassi leading 5-4 in the first set.

Unseeded Australians James Sekulov and Andrew Ilie joined Sampras and Agassi in the semifinals.

Sekulov, who had never won an ATP Tour match before this week, upset Michael Chang 2-6, 6-2, 6-2. Ilie rallied past Anthony Dupuis of France 6-7 (8-6), 6-4, 6-4.

Sampras and Sekulov will meet Saturday afternoon and Agassi will face Ilie on Saturday night at the Los Angeles Tennis Center. The finals will be played Sunday.

"Sure, it would be great, and everybody wants that to happen," Sampras said of a rematch with Agassi. "But you can't look that far ahead. That's the kiss of death in this game."

Agassi also said he wasn't thinking about Sampras.

Sampras is ranked second in the world, but will move up to No. 1 by reaching the final of this tournament. Should that happen, he would be ranked at the top for the 271st week, a record. He shares the mark of 270 weeks with Ivan Lendl.

Ferreira had the only service break of the first set, but Sampras, who extended his winning streak to 15 matches, broke the eighth-seeded South African's serve in the second and fourth games of the second set.

Playing in his first tournament since Wimbledon, Sampras took command with a service break in the first game of the third set, and broke Ferreira's serve again at love to end the match.

"Even though I lost the first set, I felt like I was playing fine," Sampras said. "I just had to raise my level a little bit. I can't complain about the way things went today. Everything is where I want it to be. I got my game going when I had to."

"I came out pumped up, maybe too high. It was the best I've played against Wayne, obviously, in the last four or five meetings. He's a great athlete, he does everything well."

"I know I can beat him. It's just a matter of doing it."

And Sampras did in the fifth time in 10 lifetime matches between the two.

"Out of all the times I've played him, I think this is the best he's played," Ferreira said. "I think I played fine. He's the best player in the world, you always want to beat the best."

Hewitt was injured while going after an Agassi backhand with the score tied 15-all and Agassi serving for the first set. Hewitt had won two straight games after Agassi took a 5-2 lead.

"I didn't actually see the accident, I saw him make an effort toward the ball. Once I saw he wasn't going to get there, I turned away," Agassi said.

About the match, Agassi said, "I think it was high-quality tennis and it only had the potential to get better. I knew it was going to be a tough match before I went on the court."

Hewitt tried to play following a 10-minute delay, but decided he couldn't go after a few practice rallies with Agassi.

Sekulov, ranked 236th in the world, is playing in just his seventh ATP tournament.

"I played well, really well," the 22-year-old Australian said. "I've always believed I could do well in the game. Some people mature later, some earlier."

Asked if he was a late bloomer, Sekulov smiled and replied, "I hope so. I certainly wasn't an early bloomer."

Chang, 27, has been bothered by back spasms and is ranked 70th, his lowest in 11 years. He was ranked No. 2 as recently as 1996.

"I feel like I'm not playing at the level I'm used to playing at," said, "I wasn't that happy after winning the first set. I was making too many errors. He played some good tennis, and I should have played better."

Ban on Indonesian star

JAKARTA, July 31: Indonesia's young ace striker Kurniawan Dwi Yulianto has been barred from playing in the Indonesian football team at the South East Asian Games in Brunei after failing a dope test, reports said Friday, reports AFP.

"It is better that this thing is discovered now than in Brunei," Deputy chairman of the Indonesian National Sports Committee (KONI), Arie Sudewo, was quoted by the Berita Buana evening daily as saying.

Kurniawan and another player whose identity was not revealed, tested positive in pre-competition dope tests carried out by KONI ahead of the 20th South East Asian Games.

"KONI decided to ban Kurniawan from competing in Brunei," SEA Games training director Z.S. Imron was quoted by the Jakarta Post daily as saying.

"I have contacted the secretary general of the All Indonesian Soccer Federation (PSSI) and told him to find a substitute, otherwise the national team should play with the remaining 17 players," Imron added.

Berita Buana quoted sources in KONI as saying that the doping tests, carried out in June and again this month, found traces of amphetamines in Kurniawan's urine samples.

Amphetamine, a banned substance, is usually used to reduce weight and to relieve depression but it is also found in several drugs such as ecstasy.

PSSI secretary general Nugraha Besus said his organization was seeking a second opinion on the test from the federation's medical team.

"I have received the test results from KONI and reported to the chairman and he told me to recheck, so we set up the medical team," Besus said according to the Jakarta Post.

The national soccer team has already left Indonesia for Brunei and is due to play Cambodia Saturday.

Kurniawan was a member of the Primavera junior team which trained in Italy in 1993. He played for FC Luzern in Switzerland from 1995 to 1996 before joining a local team, Pelita Bakrie (formerly Pelita Mastrans).

He has declined comment, the dailies said.

China not paying Houghton?

SHANGHAI, July 31: Bobby Houghton, the coach of China's Olympic and national football sides, has not been paid since last year amid an apparent contractual tiff between sports-management companies, the official Wenhui Daily reported Friday, reports AFP.

Houghton and an unspecified number of other foreign coaches were owed a total of 800,000 dollars -- a sum which

included back pay, a variety of different expenses and other contractual obligations, it said.

Swiss firm ISL Group had not paid "one penny" since last year, when it accepted responsibility to pay the expenses of Houghton and the other foreign coaches, the report added.

The obligation was part of a sports marketer the right to package advertising and other sponsorship for all China's national-team competitions, in-

cluding women's and junior teams.

The Chinese Football Association chose ISL over its US-based rival International Management Group (IMG) -- which has majority rights over the country's professional football league -- to prevent IMG from gaining a monopoly in the sport.

Because IMG earlier had signed a contract with Houghton, ISL was to pay the coach by reimbursing it.

Singapore pin hopes on Dane

SINGAPORE, July 31: Singapore has roped in Danish coach Jan Poulsen to steer the island state into the 2010 World Cup soccer finals, reports AFP.

Poulsen, who is currently coaching his side in its quest to qualify for the Sydney Olympics, will become director of Singapore's so-called "Goal 2010" project on October 1, the Straits Times newspaper reported Friday.

"It is a very big project and I am flattered that the Football Association of Singapore (FAS)

has considered me for the position," Poulsen told the daily in a telephone interview from Denmark.

"It is an ambitious target but one I think Singapore can work towards," said the 53-year-old coach who piped 20 rivals to the Goal 2010 project direct job. Among them were Jimmy Shouder, who helped start the football wing at Canberra's Australian Institute of Sport; Colin Dobson, believed to be attached to English premier-ship side Coventry City; and Roy Miller, a Welshman with world soccer body Fifa.

Singapore has never gone

beyond the preliminary rounds of the World Cup or Olympics. Its biggest achievement was winning the Southeast Asian Tiger Cup competition in December last year.

"The Goal 2010 project is difficult but not impossible," John Koh, FAS chief operating officer, told AFP. "The hiring of Poulsen is part of the beginning of a very long term objective, which includes a complete revamp of our youth development programme," he said.

Koh said others interviewed together with Poulsen were also well experienced but "unfortunately we can choose only one."