

Steffi sidelined

CARLSBAD, California, Aug 4: A hamstringing injury forced Steffi Graf to retire from her second-round match Tuesday night against Amy Frazier at the 520,000 dollars TIG Classic, reports AP.

Graf, who had her left thigh wrapped after the 11th game of the second set, was trailing 6-4, 5-7, 1-2 with the score at deuce in the fourth game of the third set.

Graf then walked over to the sideline and informed chair umpire Dessie Samuels she couldn't continue.

With the score tied at 5-5 in the second set, Graf said the injury occurred on the first point of the 11th game.

"It was like a little pull," said Graf, who has won 22 Grand Slam titles. "I had difficulty going after her serve. I tried to stay in it."

Graf, who said the injury was "very hurtful," said she didn't believe the injury would prevent her from playing in the US Open in New York next month.

Frazier won the key 11th game, that lasted 14 points, for a 6-5 lead.

When Graf reached the sidelines on the changeover, she asked for a medical time-out. WTA trainer Laura Eby wrapped Graf's left thigh.

Frazier, who had won just one set in losing six previous matches to Graf, won the second set in the next game when Graf netted a backhand.

After breaking Graf for the seventh time in the match to start the third set, each player held serve before Graf retired in the fourth game.

Martina Hingis, who has undergone a summer of turmoil rebounded from two painful losses in recent months with a tough 7-5, 6-3 victory over Chanda Rubin.

There was great sense of relief afterward for the second-ranked Hingis.

Sharara new ITTF chief

EINDHOVEN, Netherlands, Aug 4: Canadian Adham Sharara was elected president of the International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF) at an executive committee meeting on Tuesday, reports Reuters.

Sharara, the former deputy president who will be succeeding China's Xu Yinsheng, said the committee had also voted against a proposal to increase the size of the balls from 38mm to 40mm.

But he expressed optimism the increase would be approved at the next committee meeting in Kuala Lumpur next February.

"I hope that at the next meeting more delegates will have the courage to vote in favour of changing the size of the ball," Sharara said.

"This is a major step in our sport but it is also a necessary step in order for the ball to be more visible."

World chess roundup

LAS VEGAS, Aug 4: Second seed Alexei Shirov of Spain was upset with white during the second round of the World Chess Championships at the 28 seeds jumped to action, reports AP.

They joined the 36 players who qualified in the previous round of the 3 million dollars tournament at Caesars Palace hotel-casino. The winner of the seven-round, monthlong competition takes home 660,000 dollars and the title of World Champion.

Players are rated by performance, beginning at 2000 with most Grand Masters rates 2550 or higher. Seven players in Las Vegas are rated over 2700.

Shirov, who with a ranking of 2734 was favoured to win, was beaten with white Tuesday by Ivan Sokolov of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Since white moves first, it has a significant advantage at this level. Shirov must win with black in game two of this round Wednesday or go home.

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FIFA suspends Egyptian booters

MEXICO CITY, Aug 4: Soccer's governing body said on Tuesday it had suspended three Egyptian players and demanded a formal explanation for the team's behaviour in an ill-tempered 5-1 defeat by Saudi Arabia in the Confederations' Cup last week, reports Reuters.

"The Football Federation of Egypt has been given 10 days to explain the behaviour of the technical bench and the players during and after the match," FIFA president Sepp Blatter told a news conference.

The Egyptians had strongly protested over the refereeing of Paraguayan Ubaldo Aquino in the Mexico City match that eliminated Egypt from the Cup and sent the Saudis through to the semifinals.

Blatter said Hazem Emam would be suspended for Egypt's next international after being shown two yellow cards by Aquino.

Abdelsatar Sabry, sent off after flooring a Saudi defender with an elbow, and Samir Ibrahim, dismissed for a crude tackle, were each suspended for two matches, Blatter said.

FIFA will decide on any further disciplinary action after receiving a reply from the Egyptians, Blatter said.

The board of the Egypt Football Association and national team coach Mahmoud el-Gohary resigned on Monday following the country's poor showing in the Confederations' Cup.

Egypt drew their two other matches in the tournament against Bolivia and Mexico.



REUNITED: Arsenal's record signing French international striker Thierry Henry (L) and team coach Arsene Wenger posing for photographers with Henry's No 14 shirt at the Highbury Stadium on August 3. Wenger was once Henry's coach at French First Division team AS Monaco. — AFP photo

'Titi' back with guru Wenger

LONDON, Aug 4 (Mail/AF/Inter net): The moment Thierry Henry put pen to paper and sealed his move to Arsenal yesterday, he was returned to the care of the man who nurtured his talents in France.

Henry's 10 million pounds move from Juventus to Highbury - a record signing for the north London club - will enable the French star to rekindle the relationship he once had with his former Monaco mentor, Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger.

Wenger said: "Thierry Henry is a valuable addition to our squad. He is a young international striker who will be a great asset to Arsenal Football Club. He has good experience of both club and international football and will considerably strengthen our firepower."

Wenger and vice-chairman David Dein have wasted no time in responding to the imminent sale of Anelka to Real, adding the two world-class strikers to their team of international stars.

"Thierry is much more of an extrovert than Nicolas was," Wenger said. "He is a team player who will work hard for the whole team."

"He has a good spirit and a good mentality for a young player and he has gained a lot of experience already at international level."

"He gives you a lot of options. He can play wide or in the centre and makes anything possible when he has the ball."

"Thierry has pace, power and great dribbling. I would like to move him into the centre either as the second striker or the main target man."

Henry became surplus to requirements at Juventus after coach Marcello Lippi, who had signed him last season, was replaced by Carlo Ancelotti.

It was Wenger who pushed Henry into the limelight four years ago when he gave the man nicknamed 'Titi' in France his French League debut.

Since Wenger has been at Highbury, Henry has been desperate to join him. Last season, the 21-year-old found himself in trouble for announcing that he wanted to join Arsenal.

However, Monaco were in no mood to let him go at that time and, despite overtures from the Gunners, any hopes of a deal were killed off.

Instead, Henry joined Juventus last January but it was an unhappy time for him in Serie A.

His arrival at Highbury is a far cry though from the days

Perugia punished again

MILAN, Aug 4: Italian soccer club Perugia has been fined 10 million lire (5,562 dollars) and had goalkeeper Angelo Pagotto banned for two games after a mass brawl in a friendly against the Libyan national team, reports Reuters.

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when he was once considered a better 400 metres runner than a footballer. In his early teens Henry stood out against boys older than himself but his local football club thought he would make a better athlete.

Henry turned out for a club called Ulis, close to the neighbourhood of Paris where he was born.

He may well have had to concentrate on track and field if it hadn't been for a slice of luck during a game for Ulis.

The match was watched by a Monaco scout who saw Ulis win 6-0 and a speedy 13-year old winger called Henry score all the goals.

As a result Henry eventually signed for Monaco and on 31 August, 1994, just two weeks after his 17th birthday, he was selected by Wenger to play in the First Division clash with Nice.

His debut was so successful that Wenger continued to play him throughout the rest of the season.

However, controversy was to strike in December 1996, when the youngster decided he would leave Monaco and move to Real Madrid in a six-year deal.

Believing his contract with the French side was coming to a close the following summer, Henry signed a pre-contract agreement with the Spaniards only to find he'd jumped the gun.

Matters were not made easier by the fact that for some reason, Henry, who was already being looked after by two recognised agents, entered into discussions with Madrid through an unlicensed adviser.

However, under French League rules any player signed as a schoolboy, as in Henry's case, is subject to different regulations concerning transfers.

UEFA and FIFA were called in by Monaco, who wanted the pre-contract agreement torn up, while Real threatened to take action against the youngster if he failed to honour the contract he'd signed.

Henry was subsequently fined 42,500 pounds by the world's governing body and the contract was cancelled.

Back on the pitch, and now

wiser from his Madrid affair, Henry signed his first professional contract with Monaco on 13 January, 1997.

Later that season Monaco won the French League title with Henry scoring nine goals in 36 games.

His talents brought the scouts flocking to watch him and it wasn't long before he began to interest the man who gave him his first break.

Wenger's move to Arsenal had been a complete success with the Gunners basking in Double glory and he had not forgotten the talent of the former precocious teenager.

With a reputation further enhanced during France's World Cup triumph last year, Henry could stand it no longer and wanted to quit the French side and join Arsenal, where he would also link up with former Monaco team-mate Emmanuel Petit.

Last summer he declared: "I want to leave and it's not to anywhere that I want to go. The president of Monaco won't answer my request and I'm disappointed."

However, yesterday Henry got his wish to join up with the footballing guru who fashioned his career.

Now it's time for Titi to start repaying the faith Wenger has shown in him.

Wenger's Key Signings: Thierry Henry, Juventus, 10 million pounds; Davor Suker, R Madrid, 3.5 million pounds; Oleg Luzhny, D Kiev, 1.8 million pounds; Silvinho, Corinthians, 4 million pounds; Stefan Malz, Munich 1860, 650,000 pounds; Nwankwo Kanu, Internazionale, 4.5 million pounds; Fredrik Ljungberg, Halmstad, 3 million pounds; Nicolas Anelka, PSG, 500,000 pounds; Alex Manninger, Casino Graz, Free; Emmanuel Petit, Monaco, 3.5 million pounds; Marc Overmars, Ajax, 7 million pounds; Patrick Vieira, AC Milan, 4 million pounds.

FACTFILE

Born: 17 August, 1977, Paris. 1990: Joins French First Division Monaco as a 13-year-old. August 31, 1994: Makes First Division debut against Nice, two weeks after 17th birthday. April 29, 1995: Scores first goals in First Division, two in 6-0 victory against RC Lens. December 1996: Signs pre-contract with Real Madrid, who approach player through agent not registered with FIFA. The world body fines both player and Spanish club and annuls accord. January 13, 1997: Signs first professional contract with Monaco. May 1997: Monaco win French league championship in May and Henry scores nine goals in 36 matches. June 1997: Reaches quarter-finals of World Youth Championship with France in Malaysia. October 11, 1997: Wins first of nine French caps in World Cup warm-up against South Africa in Lens. June/July 1998: Plays for France in World Cup finals, scoring three goals in six matches but remaining on bench in 3-0 victory over Brazil in final. January 18, 1999: Signs for Juventus of Italy's Serie A. July 1999: Declares himself unhappy at the Delle Alpi and advises compatriot Nicolas Anelka not to join "the Old Lady" because of bad team spirit. August 3, 1999: Signs for Arsenal for 10 million pounds.

United to contest rookie's ban

BRUSSELS, Aug 4: Manchester United are to appeal against a life handed out to one of their young defenders after he allegedly grabbed a referee by the throat when on loan to Belgian club Antwerp, reports AFP.

Ronnie Wallwork, 22, ran into trouble after the referee in charge of a game between Antwerp and La Louviere in May claimed he had been attacked by the former Carlisle player.

Another United man, 19-year-old Danny Higginbotham, faces a one-year ban for his part in the incidents at the end of the crunch playoff match which ended in a draw - wrecking Antwerp's chances of promotion.

Wallwork was reported to have grabbed referee Amand Ancion by the throat in the tunnel while Higginbotham is supposed to have insulted him.

United manager Sir Alex Ferguson said after the hearing: "You would expect such a verdict in Russia, not Belgium."

As well as appealing, Ferguson is also considering taking the case to a civil court. Antwerp said they also plan to contest the decision.

The English Premiership giants and Antwerp signed an agreement last November enabling the Belgian second division side to borrow young United stars.

Courier, Lareau post wins

MONTREAL, Aug 4: Jim Courier upset fourth seeded Tim Henman 6-1, 6-7 (3-7), 6-4 in the second round Tuesday of the 2.45-million dollars du Maurier Open, reports AP.

In another upset, Canadian Sebastian Lareau beat fifth seeded Richard Krajcek of the Netherlands 4-6, 7-6 (7-4), 6-4.

Henman beat Courier in five sets at Wimbledon this year after Courier beat the Briton in five sets in Birmingham, England. This is Courier's third win in four career matches against Henman.

"To beat Henman is a good confidence booster for me," Courier said. "We've had some difficult matches this year and I thought I should have won the match at Wimbledon. It's nice to come through in the end rather than letting it slip away."

Courier, punishing Henman from the baseline, had little trouble in the first set, but Henman slowly gained momentum on his serve and forced the second-set tiebreaker.

The top-ranked British player won the last four points to win 7-3.

Two other players were than to serve in the final set until Courier broke Henman in the 10th game.

Courier, bothered by an arm injury last year, has seen his ranking improve 30 spots since the beginning of the year.

"It's been a journey. I was reaching the breaking point physically here last year," Courier said. "I was basically pretty despondent about not being able to continue to play without treating injuries and so many setbacks. It was frustrating. But I've made some adjustments, and right now there are no major health issues."

Mitchell suspended USA unhappy with IAAF decision

WINNIPEG, Manitoba, Aug 4: The senior legal counsel for USA Track & Field said Tuesday the organisation was very disappointed by an IAAF arbitration panel's decision to suspend American sprinter Dennis Mitchell for a positive doping test, reports Reuters.

"We took this case very seriously," Jill Pilgrim said in a telephone interview from her office in Indianapolis. "And we, of course, are very disappointed."

The International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF) panel, in a decision announced Tuesday in Monte Carlo, said the US doping board's ruling in December that Mitchell had not committed a doping offence for a high ratio of testosterone to epitestosterone was "erroneous."

The IAAF then suspended Mitchell, a three-time Olympian and the current US 100-metre champion, for two years from the date of his out-of-competition test - April 1, 1998 - and voided all of his achievements since the positive test.

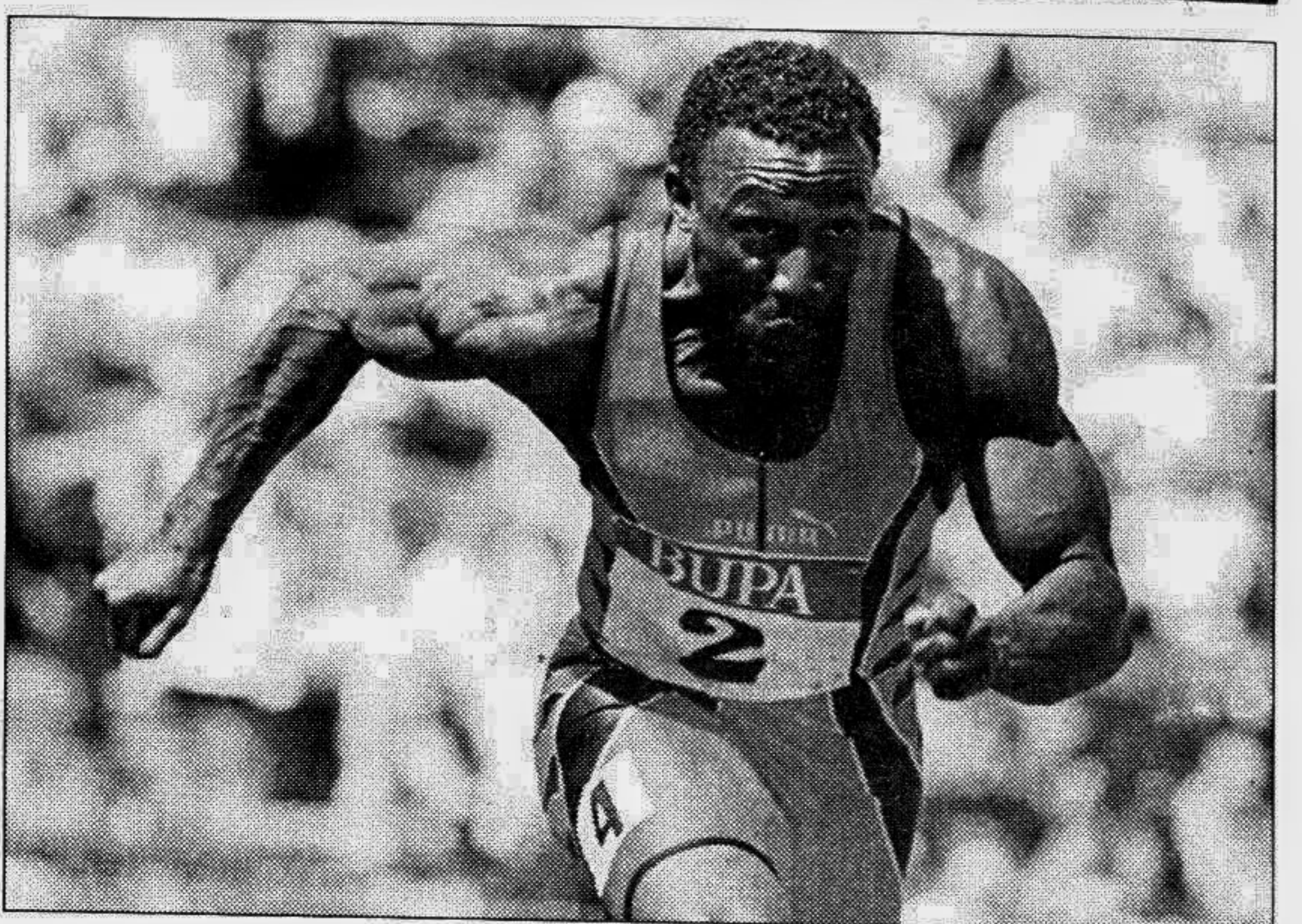
"The decision means Mitchell, who had been cleared by the US hearing board to run pending the arbitration panel's decision, will be able to compete in next year's Olympics if he qualifies. His suspension will end March 31 of next year."

"Dennis Mitchell has been an important part of our sport," Pilgrim said, "and we are hoping that he will be in the mental and physical state of mind to compete in the sport in April and try to make the Olympic team, which he has a very good chance of doing."

Pilgrim said USA TF "took it somewhat of a victory" that an IAAF spokesman had said last month that "it was a complicated case involving hard scientific evidence."

"In the past they had talked about the sex-and-steroid defence, and we tried to make the point that that was a distortion of what we presented at the hearing. That there was very strong and hard, and very good scientific evidence presented."

Mitchell reportedly told the US hearing panel that his testosterone ratio had been raised by drinking beer and having sex the night before the test.



An AFP file photo of ace British sprinter Linford Christie who was suspended by the IAAF yesterday following a positive drug test.

Christie fails drugs test

LONDON, Aug 4: Britain's former Olympic sprint champion Linford Christie has been suspended from athletics after failing a drugs test it was announced here Wednesday, reports AP.

UK Athletics, the sport's governing body in Britain, confirmed that the IAAF has suspended the 1992 Olympic champion following a positive test for nandrolone at an indoor meet in Dortmund, Germany, on February 13.

Christie, 39, who has retired from serious competition, said: "I have consistently opposed the use of banned substances by athletes and it is ridiculous to imagine that I would take them after my retirement."

"I am completely innocent of any wrongdoing and in any case against me will be rigorously defended."

In a statement UK Athletics raised doubts about the recent positive tests for nandrolone.

"UK Athletics is concerned that there appears to be an increasing number of tests (both within domestic and international athletics and also in other sports) which have produced adverse findings of metabolites of nandrolone. UK Athletics believes that UK Sport should conduct a full inquiry or investigation into why this is the case," said the federation.

Christie backed the call for a full investigation into the numerous cases to establish how this could happen without the knowledge of the athletes," said Christie.

Jamaican-born Christie was cleared of drug taking at the 1988 Seoul Olympics. He tested positive after finishing third and ran a British 200m record of 20.09.

The International Olympic Committee's medical commis-

sion accepted the pseudoephedrine discovered in his urine samples had got into his system because Christie had been drinking ginseng tea.

Christie was moved up to second and the silver medal after the disqualification of Canadian Ben Johnson.

Christie incensed the hierarchy of athletics after being disqualified for false starts in the 1996 Olympic 100m final.

Arguing with the decision he delayed the programme by refusing to leave the track.

Since retiring Christie has concentrated on building-up his own marketing business 'Nuff Respect' and manages the careers of several outstanding British sprinters.

He is also employed as an analyst by BBC Television.

Christie's suspension follows hot on the heels of Doug Walker, the Scottish European 200m gold medalist, being cleared of drug taking after testing positive for nandrolone.

Another dooper detected

WINNIPEG, Manitoba, Aug 4: Another doping case has sullied the Pan American Games and a potentially more damaging third incident may only be a day or two away, reports AP.

In the second doping announcement in three days, women's high jump champion Juana Arrendel of the Dominican Republic tested positive for the anabolic steroid stanozolol, Games officials said Tuesday, and was stripped of her gold medal.

But rumours that men's high jump world champion and

record holder Javier Sotomayor had tested positive in his A sample swirled throughout Winnipeg and were neither confirmed, nor denied by the Pan American Sports Organisation or sources in the Cuban delegation.

Asked repeatedly about Sotomayor, a four-time Games champion, failing a doping test, PASO president Mario Vazquez Rana refused to speak about Sotomayor specifically and would say only that the positive A test "could belong to athletics."

It is routine policy for officials to refuse to comment until both the A and B samples test positive.

Sotomayor won the high jump on the last day of the athletics competition. But neither Vazquez Rana nor the medical director of the Games, Eduardo de Rose, would confirm that the positive A test came from the last day of that competition.

Sources in the Cuban delegation, however, said Dr Rodrigo Alvarez Cambra, a top medical official with the Caribbean nation's team, travelled to the doping control testing laboratory in Montreal. It would seem highly unlikely that Alvarez Cambra would travel if a Cuban was not involved in a positive test, and the sources emphasised he would not go if it did not concern a major sports figure.

Arrendel, who won the gold medal with a leap of 1.93 metres (6 feet-4 inches) was the Dominican's only gold medalist at the Games. The country also has won one silver and one bronze medal.

Arrendel was quoted in the Dominican Republic as denying she used stanozolol and said the test may have picked up a decongestant she used before the event.

"In six years in athletics, I have never used substances to enhance my performance," she said in remarks published Tuesday in the newspaper La Informacion.

The Arrendel announcement wasn't even the only doping matter of the day.

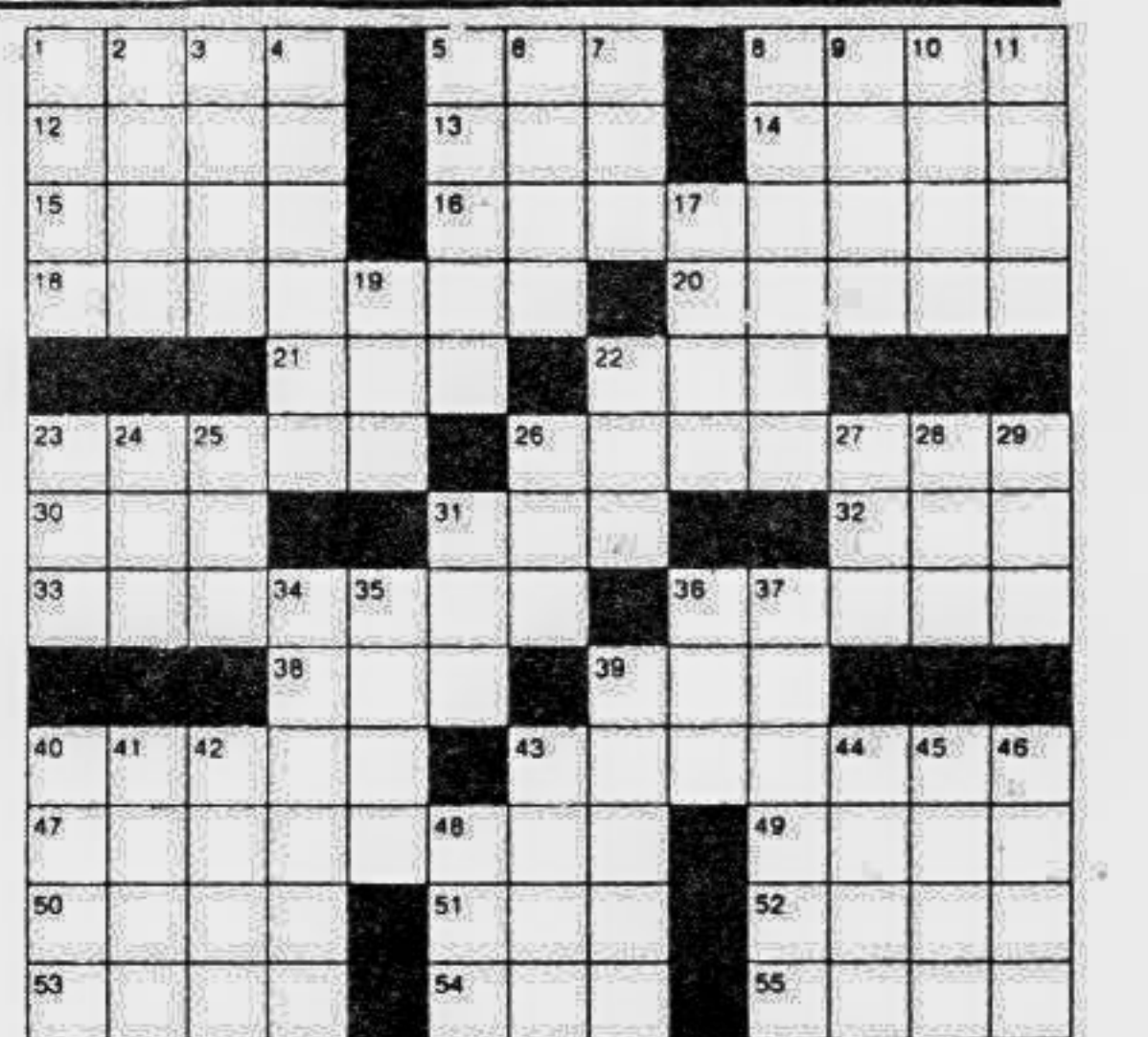
Pan Am officials also said Ray Martinez, a baseball player from Mexico, refused to submit to a doping test Monday after his team's 9-2 loss to Canada in the bronze-medal game. That was tantamount to a positive test, they said.

All of that followed Steve Vezina's positive test for two stimulants and a steroid, a result announced Sunday which cost Canada the roller hockey gold.

An AFP file photo of US sprinter Dennis Mitchell who was banned for two years by the International Amateur Athletics Federation (IAAF) yesterday for failing a drug test.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS 40 'M*A*S*H' locale 3 ' Mommy kissing... 24 Hockey legend 1 First 43 Variety of pike 4 Acceptable king 5 Cambridge campus 47 It starts with a capital E 6 Between gags 27 A deer, a female deer 7 Mad Hatter's quaff 28 Sinsbad's transport 13 Summer drink 8 Confidential hide-and-seek 9 Hindu prince 31 Capp and Capone 15 Unadulterated 51 Obtain 52 Temperate 10 Office silhouette 34 Destroys 16 Boxer's vulnerable area 53 Annoys 54 Whatever 11 Information amount 17 Cinematographer 37 Pabst 35 Nursemaid of India 36 Choice (Abb.) 38 Plaster-board partition 19 'bodkins' 39 Hamburg-er or pepperoni 20 Centrifuge inserts 21 Pt. of speech 22 Computer acronym 23 Bankroll entries 24 Very thirsty 30 Exist 31 Intention 32 Tic-tac-toe win 33 Plaster-board partition 36 Mote 38 Apt. ad 39 Shell game need



CRYPTOQUIP

KBWXLTW'I QZWBIV VQX TI

VQZZBK WCB NXLY: UBXCQUI

TW'I YLJK NLX ICLXW CLUI.

Yesterday's Cryptogram: WHAT WOULD YOU THINK MOST FARMERS WATCH ON TV? "DAYS OF OUR LIVESTOCK."

Today's Cryptogram clue: I equals S

The Cryptogram 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.



German football legend Gerd Mueller (R) giving away the Golden Shoe to FC Porto's Brazilian striker Mario Jardel (L) for becoming the best scorer in Europe during the 1998/99 season. Jardel had scored 36 goals in the Portuguese First Division. — AFP photo