#### Ronaldo in love again ?

HONG KONG, Aug 8: Brazilian soccer superstar Ronaldo dodged questions Sunday about the new blonde in his life, whom he has taken on a tour to Tokyo and Hong Kong, reports

But Milene Domingues took so much the attention away from Ronaldo at a press conference in Hong Kong that organisers had to ask photographers toshow some restraint.

"Have some respect," pleaded compere Nat Chan to the dozens of photographers surrounding Domingues. They had been invited to snap the footballer promoting a new watch.

Ronaldo admitted in June he was going through a difficult time in his private life and confirmed his three-year relationship with Rio de Janeiro model Susana Werner was over.

But he was all smiles again as he watched Domingues sit with his father at the press conference, though neither he nor his entourage would answer questions about her.

Ronaldo has been in Tokyo and Hong Kong to promote a new watch, called the "R9" after him, that will cost between 3,000 and 34,000 US dollars.

Some of the profits will go to a new foundation Ronaldo is helping to set up to provide sporting facilities for povertystricken youths in the shanty towns of Rio de Janeiro.

#### Brazilian booter fails dope test

RIO DE JANEIRO, Aug 8: Brazilian footballer Adriano Barbosa da Silva has been banned after failing a drug test. it was reported here on Sunday. reports AFP.

Barbosa da Silva, who plays for the first division side Vasco de Gama, tested positive for the stimulant etafedrine on July 25, before his team's league match against rivals Corinthi-

The substance is on the list of substances banned by the Brazilian Football Federation (CBF) and Barbosa da Silva was suspended immediately.

His club are claiming that traces of the drug were the result of ointment used during massaging.

#### Referee gets on Gullit's nerve

LONDON, Aug 8: Newcastle United manager Ruud Gullit tore into referee Uriah Rennie after England captain Alan Shearer was sent off for the first time in his career during the 1+0 home defeat by Aston Villa on the opening day of the Premiership season, reports

Shearer, playing his 100th match for Newcastle, was dismissed 19 minutes from time for his second bookable offence.

both for unsporting behaviour. Newcastle's 10 men conceded the only goal of the game four minutes later when Julian Joachim headed past Steve Harper to clinch the points.

But Gullit, who saw a further six players also go into the book, did not pull any punches as he warned that referees could

destroy the English game. "I've never seen a referee being such an influence as I've

seen today, never ever in my whole career. "I think the referee has to be somebody who guides the game

and not be a major part of the game. Today he was a major part of the game and he destroyed it. I blame him for that, I blame him for the fact that we lost this game. "You can fine me whatever

you want. I'm right and I know that I'm right. He can report me, whatever he likes. It does not make any difference," said the furious Dutchman.

### SEA Games

#### Thais, Indonesians shine

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, Brunei, Aug 8: Thai men finished 1-2 in the prestigious 100metre dash Sunday, while karate stylists helped Indonesia build an early lead in the Southeast Asian Games' overall gold medal race, reports AP. Meanwhile, a 32-year-old

Filipino mother kept alive a 16year unbeaten string in SEA Games long jump competition. With a leap of 6.34 metres, Elma Muros-Posadas was 7 centimetres better than Vietnam's Nguyen Bich Van and Philippine compatriot Lerma Elmira Buluitan as she captured her eighth SEA Games gold in the event.

Laos won its first SEA Games gold ever when Vilasone Phikhaikham knocked out Vietnam's Trong Sinh Doan in men's welterweight taekwondo. The Laotians did not even manage a silver medal at the last games in 1997.

Thailand's Reanchai Seeharwong claimed honours as the region's fastest man by winning the 100 metres in 10.26 seconds, .13 ahead of teammate Vissanu Sophanich. Malaysia's Watson Nyambek took the bronze in 10.45.

In the women's 100, Indonesia's Irene Yoseph won in 11.56- .05 and .19 ahead of Thai runners Trecia Robert and Supavadee Khawpeag.

Hers was one of eight Indonesian gold medals in early events Sunday. Thailand, Malaysia and the Philippines trailed with three each.

Indonesia's Supriati Sutono had little competition to worry her in the women's 5,000 meters. Thailand's Viraiwan Kumpitak was the only other entrant, and Supriati beat her by more than 42 seconds with a time of 17 minutes, 12.98 seconds.



Ronaldo and his girlfriend Milene Domingues arriving at their hotel in Hong Kong yesterday. - AFP photo

## Robert shines for PSG

PARIS, Aug 8: A double strike by Laurent Robert inspired Paris Saint Germain to

a 3-1 win over Rennes on Saturday and lifted the under-performing big spenders to top of the French league, reports AFP.

PSG, whose spending power has not been reflected by title success having last won it back in 1994, lead Nantes, who beat Saint Etienne 2-0 on Friday, on goals scored after two matches both having the maximum six points.

Elsewhere Robert's former club Montpellier had champions Bordeaux reeling after going two goals up but had to settle for a 2-2 draw and Metz thrashed Auxerre 3-0 with former Newcastle striker Louis Saha grabbing the third.

Rennes, coached by former PSG defender Paul Le Guen, had levelled the match at 1-1 when PSG's erratic 'keeper Bernard Lama came for a corner but missed the ball by a mile leaving Rennes' defender Lamine Diatta to head home into an empty net was 1-1 maken of

However, PSG scored twice in the second-half, a retaken penalty by the equally erratic

WINNIPEG, Manitoba, Aug 8

Cuba added eight more gold

(AP/Reuters): Cuba won some

more medals; it also lost an-

medals - half of them in boxing

- to its tally at the Pan Am

Games Saturday, but also saw

its list of defections grow, los-

ing a basketball player to hike

the total to nine who have left

the Caribbean island nation's

delegation at the regional

the latest, requesting asylum in

the United States, according to

the Miami-based Cuban-Amer-

bother the Cuban basketball

team, which beat Uruguay 85-79

without him for seventh place

the Cuban boxers, which won

all of their matches Saturday

and helped their country re-

main in second place in gold-

second straight day, with Yudel

Jhonson capturing the 57-kilo

division, Jorge Gutierrez the 71-

The boxers were perfect for a

It also didn't seem to affect

His loss didn't seem to

ican National Foundation.

Juan Leopoldo Vazquez was

other defector.

Olympics.

at the Games.

medal race with 71.

Mickael Madar, and a cracking curling shot by 24-year-old Robert from the edge of the box in the last minute rounded it

Bordeaux produced a battling performance after Montpellier's storming start which featured former French international striker Patrick Loko scoring for the second successive match.

However, Montpellier could not hold it together and Bordeaux levelled the match with half-an-hour remaining as two of their title winning heroes of last season Johan Micoud and Sylvain Wiltord got on the score

Micoud headed home unmarked from a corner in the first-half and then Wiltord slotted home also unmarked from the edge of the box after a superb pass by strike partner Lillian On Friday Olivier Monterru-

bio and Antoine Sibierski

scored the goals in Nantes' 2-0

win at newly promoted St Eti-Monterrubio fired home a well-directed shot in the 35th minute on a rain-soaked night and Sibierski stabbed home a last-minute insurance goal

from close range to give Nantes

Cuban boxers unbeatable

kilo division, Humberto Savi-

gne the 81-kilo division and

Alexis Rubalcaba the 91-kilo

bout; his was a walkover. Amer-

ican Davin King forfeited the

fight because he had two

stitches in his upper lip, an in-

jury he received in the semifi-

of the 12 boxing golds and a

sweep of all the finals in which

Cuba finished the night by

The two boxing golds Cuba

prevailing on penalty shots in

the men's handball final over

didn't win Saturday night went

to Argentina. Omar Narvaez

and Victor Castro claimed the

51-and 63.5-kilo crowns, help-

ing push Argentina past arch

South American rival Brazil in

place with 25 while Brazil,

which was to play for the wom-en's handball and men's bas-

ketball gold on Sunday, was

to provide them with most of

Canada relied on the water

Argentina moved into fourth

they had a fighter.

The victories gave Cuba nine

Rubalcaba had the easiest

and over.

Brazil.

golds.

next with 22

two wins out of two.

In other matches played Friday night, former champions Lens edged Monaco 1-0, promoted Sedan downed Nancy 3-1 and Bastia trounced Strasbourg

Daniel Moreira rounded off a superb flowing move by firing home a crashing right-foot shot past French national team goalkeeper Fabien Barthez five minutes before half-time to give Lens their win over Monaco.

who have gleaned just one point from their opening two matches A Laurent Casanova header

put Bastia on their way against Strasbourg and the Corsicans then got further strikes from Dane Dan Petersen and Frederic Nee. Sedan bounced back im-

pressively from their opening loss to Marseille with goals from Pierre Deblock, Cedric Mionnet and Olivier Quint before Irish international Tony Cascarino grabbed a consolation goal for outgunned Nancy.

In matches played on Thursday night, Lyon won 2-1 at newly-promoted Troyes while perennial strugglers Le Havre held last year's runners-up Marseille to a 0-0 draw.

their gold on Saturday, winning

a pair in swimming, another in

synchronized swimming and a

fourth in water skiing. They

also won the men's softball ti-

tle, a team fencing crown and

came from Jessica Daglau, who

became the first Canadian to

win four golds in Winnipeg.

winning the women's 200 but-

gold plateau by adding 10 in

sports from archery to

and, with 15 medal events to be

decided on the final day Sun-

day, assured itself of winning

the gold race for the 11th time

the south that took one of the

more higher profile titles-soc-

cer. Emilio Mora scored a pair

of second-half goals and Mexico

beat Honduras 3-1 to claim its

third Pan Am soccer crown. It

was the first since 1975 when it

hosted the Pan Am Games and

shared the soccer gold with

Brazil after the 1-1 draw was

abandoned in extra time.

But it was their neighbour to

in 13 Pan Am Games.

That pushed its total to 102

weightlifting.

The Americans reached 100

One of their swimming golds

one in women's taekwondo.

#### Yevgeny, Thomas in final MONTREAL, Aug-8: Yevgeny

Kafelnikov of Russia upset American Andre Agassi 6-1, 6-4 with an inspired display of allround tennis in the semifinals of the du Maurier Open on Saturday, reports Reuters.

Right from the start it was clear the second-seeded Agassi wouldn't be blasting the thirdseeded Kafelnikov off the court, as he had done with most opponents while compiling a 20-2 record dating back to the start of the French Open.

Kafelnikov effectively countered Agassi's trademark groundstroke barrage and had the veteran American on his heels with bold shotmaking of his own. The fourth-ranked Russian ended up with 22 winners to 18 for the third-ranked Agassi.

Kafelnikov will now meet 11th-seeded Thomas Johansson of Sweden in today's final. Johansson defeated ninthseeded Nicolas Kiefer of Germany 4-6, 6-1, 6-3 to reach the most important final of his five-year pro career.

The 2.45 million dollars du Maurier Open is one of the ATP Tour's elite Super 9 events.

Kafelnikov, the 1996 French Open and 1999 Australian Open champion, has been in three previous Super 9 finals and is still looking for his first success. He leads Johansson 4-3 in the career head-to-head but the Swede has won the last two matches, at the 1998 US Open and at the London indoor event

in February. Asked if he had ever seen Kafelnikov play that well, Agassi answered: "Not from the best seat in the house, from the other side of the net. It was quite a display.

"Even though I wasn't incredibly sharp, I felt he was on the ball and hitting his returns hard. He was on top of every aspect of his game."

"I had to come out and show Andre right from the first point that it wasn't going to be easy for him," said Kafelnikov, who now leads their head-to-head meetings 4-2.

"I haven't performed that well since the Australian Open. I wasn't prepared for the claycourt season in the spring and basically I knew I would hate it. i just wanted to get back to my surface (hard courts)."

After Kiefer won the first set, the 22-year-old German seemed to pay for the energy he spent defeating top seed Patrick Rafter of Australia 6-4, 6-7, 7-6 in two hours, 43 minutes on Friday night.

The dropoff was obvious in his energy level, which was reflected in their winners totals. The 17th-ranked Kiefer had 1 in the first set but only one in the second and three in the third. Johansson, ranked 22nd was more consistent with 11, 8 and 12.

"I had the early match yesterday (firmshed by 1 pm on Friday)," Johansson, 24, said, "He was playing and I was at the hotel watching on TV. I could see that he was a little tired in the third set."

## Botha-Briggs bout ends

sey, Aug 8: A tale of two bouts ended up in a majority decision draw between heavyweights Francois Botha and Shannon Briggs in a 10-round non-title fight, reports AP.

day gave way to Botha's rally in the second half of the bout. The fight ended with Botha hammering Briggs relentlessly while Briggs braved an ugly gash above his right eye and from his right ear. Brigs may have saved himself by scoring a sudden eighth-round knockdown late in a round Botha had dominated.

Two judges scored it 94-94 and a third had it 95-92 in Botha's favour. The Associated Press scored it 94-94. All three judges awarded Botha 10-8

Briggs weighed 230 pounds (103.5 kilograms) for the bout in front of 5,150 at the Trump Taj Mahal, Botha weighed 232 pounds (104.4 kilograms). Each will get dlrs 400,000 for the

Briggs (31-2-1) had a 7-inch (17.8-centimeter) reach advantage and controlled the early rounds with a stiff jab. Botha (39-2-1) struggled in the first two rounds, missing wildly over the top with counter right hands before finding the range with it during the third round. Botha, 30, tested Briggs chin often, but spent much of the fight waiting for Briggs to make a mistake and rarely was able

to find combinations until the end.

Briggs, 27, whose only fight since losing to WBC champion Lennox Lewis last year was a first-round TKO over Marcus Rhode last December, went into the fight as a 3-1 favourite, according to Las Vegas oddsmak-

his most memorable bouts. He suffered his first career loss in shocking fashion against Darroll Wilson in 1996, won a stunning upset decision over George Foreman in 1997 and waged his battle with Lewis in

South Africa, Germany and Las Vegas, made his Atlantic City debut. He won the IBF crown with a decision over Axel Schulz in 1995, but was stripped of it when a post-fight examination revealed the presence of steroids.

## Hingis reclaims her spot

# Williams ousts Davenport



CARLSBAD, California. Aug 8: Martina Hingis climbed back to the top of the world rankings by

Venus Williams toppled defending champion Lindsay Davenport in the semifinals of the 520,000 dollars TIG Classic yesterday, reports Reuters. Hingis defeated Coetzer 6-1,

crushing Amanda Coetzer after

6-2 in 51 minutes. Williams, armed with a new forehand, beat the top-seeded Davenport 6-4, 7-5. Hingis said she did not know

that reaching the final combined with a Davenport loss would bring her back to the top when the WTA rankings are issued on Monday. "I didn't know before the match, nobody told me," said

Hingis after winning 12 of the final 13 points to improve to 6-2 over the South African. "It's exciting news for me to get the number one spot again. I didn't expect it. "Coming into the tourna-

ment I was happy to win just the first round and then just keep going. Now I'm back on top and it feels good." Though Hingis has won six

of nine matches in her twoyear-old rivalry with Williams, she said she expected a stern task against the 19-year-old American star. "I think it will be an exciting

match, two youngsters always talked about playing the finals." she said. "She's a very powerful player with a good serve. I just have to take my chances or I'm out of there." When a reporter joked that she would be the underdog,

yeah I like that." Williams was pleased to get past the world number one for

Hingis joked: "I'm the underdog,

just the second time in 10 career meetings, though their one hour 15 minute baseline slugfest was no work of art by either player, as the two Californians posted 52 unforced errors against 32 winners.

"I like winning against her," said Williams, who crushed 23 winners to 9 for her opponent. "I've only had two wins against her and it's only the beginning

of better times." Disappointed after her fourth consecutive straight-sets loss to Davenport in the final of



MARTINA HINGIS last week, Williams added a

new wrinkle to her punishing baseline game - a ferocious forehand. The change paid off for the world's fourth-ranked "I learned a lot from the last

match last week," Williams said. "I don't want to be picked on anymore. I don't want anyone to pick on my forehand just because it's weak, and just give it to them.
"All the other times, Lindsay

overpowered me mainly because I was unable to generate good power from my forehand. would hit a lot of short balls and mis-hits but I changed. I didn't want to keep losing in the manner than I had been.

Williams said she is sending a message to the other players. "In the past I would hit it, it would land short and people would look great hitting winners," she added. "It was never my best side over the last year, and people started taking advantage of it. After matches, they were declaring, 'Oh yeah,

just hit to her forehand." "I wasn't very happy about that. So I decided the only way to stop that is to get better. It's no longer my weakness."

Davenport witnessed a noticeable change first-hand: "Her forehand has improved a lot over the last few months. It used to be a weakness but it's not a liability for her as it used to be. She definitely hit it better today but I don't think I made her hit enough of them.

"She has one of the best backhands in the game, and was going for it, I knew that. I just got outplayed by every-

While Williams has improved, Davenport did not have her normally aggressive allcourt game, spraying shots wide, long or into the net.

"I just felt a little flat and sluggish," said Davenport, whose 13-match winning streak was stopped. "You get those days throughout the year and hope that it's in the beginning of the week or days you can get through. I tried to get myself going or get pumped up but I just couldn't do it. Today, was just one that was in the semifinals against a girl who's very

crowned men's doubles kings on

Victory in the men's singles

# China simply invincible

Rest of the World side and

China would still be in a league

EINDHOVEN. Netherlands, Aug 8: China will leave the 45th World Table Ten-Champi onships with all five gold and five silver medals on offer here

after an awesome display of team spirit and strength in depth, reports AFP. The team event will be played in Kuala Lumpur in February but - on this evidence the International Table Tennis

Federation could put all other

182 member counties into one

of their own. All that remained Sunday afternoon was to see whether Liu Guoliang or Ma Lin would be

the new men's champion while the women's doubles event would pit Wang Nan and Li Ju against Yang Ying and Sun Jin. Wang is the new woman's singles champion, replacing re-

tired legend Deng Yaping, while Ma and Zhang Yingying took the mixed doubles Friday. Liu and Kong Linghui, the

has been something of an obsession for China during the 1990s, with four of the five previous titles going to European Before the tournament Chinese officials admitted that their principal mission was to win the men's title back. But with Ma or Liu set to end that run later Sunday Europe's leading men admitted those days were over. Olympic champions, were Reigning World Champion Jan Ove Waldner bowed out at the semi-final stage after China's Ma Lin came from two sets

Saturday.

down to pull off a remarkable comeback win. The 33-year-old said he was still enjoying the game and was looking forward to next year's European Championships in Bremen and the Sydney Olym-

Most European hopes had rested with Waldner, seeded fifth, who took the first two sets 21-18, 21-14 before edging ahead of Ma in the third.

But ninth seeded Ma seemed to find an extra gear and began to outplay Waldner, who at 33 has two world titles and one Olympic gold medal to his name.

Waldner briefly led in the deciding rubber but Ma, conqueror of Belarussian top seed Vladimir Samsonov, ran out 18-21, 14-21, 21-19, 21-19, 21-17 winner.

The other European semi-fi-nalist Werner Schlager, seeded 15, admitted he was also comprehensively outplayed by Liu. His cause had not been helped by a bizarre injury sustained in his hotel by a fellow guest, who trod on his foot by mistake.

Despite the Einchoven crowd doing their best to back the two Europeans Waldner and Schlager had to concede defeat. Some Dutch fans, naturally backing the Europeans, emulated the Chinese contingent by using upturned litter bins as improvised drums with empty bottles as drumsticks in a bid to compete with the Far Easterners who were using more traditional methods of percussion.

#### CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer 34 Disguised 54 Homer 10 Labyrinth 36 Gesture Simpson's expletive 11 Spider-55 Into the 37 History weaponry sunset 56 What-20 Hard 9 Not a lot 38 Salt ever's left candy Lake 22 Demand DOWN Amerind 24 Lulu 13 Stratagem 39 Burn .25 Hasty 1 Cry of a bit 42 Witticism 2 Decline 26 "Caught 44 Leading 3 Finished 27 °Of 4 Felon man 48 Coop 5 Accedes course' 6 Time 29 Picnic occupant 49 Fashion intruder 50 Narc's 30 Scale founder 7 Beatty/ members 31 Parched Hoffman 51 Clumsy flop 35 Crooner 52 Tackles' 8 Spelling né Vito CRYPTOQUIP Farinola contest 9 Token, 36 Most mates

- AFP photo

China's Mia Lin celebrates the downfall of veteran

Swedish table tennis star Jan-Ove Waldner in the

semifinals yesterday.

**ACROSS** 

1 Sought

5 Smooth-

talking

12 Stromboli

spillage

15 From the

16 Rue the

17 Umbrella

18 Belgrade

resident

19 Bottom

20 "West

Side

Story"

21 Deterio-

rate

23 "The ---

moon"

poster \$\$\$

32 Winning

33 Dogpatch

denizen

25 Strata

28 Wanted

53 Square

maybe

Solution time: 27 mins.

ACE ULNA ELLA HEADLOCK NAIL

Yesterday's answer

DUCEMMONEY

adorable

39 Neighbor

40 Medal

41 Egyptian

45 Seedy

46 Milwau-

output

47 — Blanc

49 Kittenish

cross

43 Probability

of Libya

frame

14 Get rid

N'X UIGF UYA NXVIDACNWYAF

RVYIGWUACAC JIRGFOU

ADAO JIDAC YNW JIWUW.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: ALL ELECTRICIANS CONCUR THAT THEIR FRUIT OF CHOICE IS THE CURRANT. Today's Cryptoquip clue: V equals P

The Cryptoquip 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.



Elima Muros of the Philippines lands in the sand box during the SEA Games women's long jump event yesterday. - AFP photo

# in a draw ATLANTIC CITY, New Jer-

Briggs' early control Satur-

round in the 10th.

It was Botha's first bout since Jan. 16, when he was knocked out by Mike Tyson in the fifth round of a fight he was leading.

Briggs returned to the site of

Botha, who has fought in