

## TRACK NOTES

SEVILLE, Spain, Aug 25: (AP): One down and one to go. Czech star Ludmila Formanova won the women's 800 metres Tuesday in the World Championships to match one achievement of her famous coach. But matching Jarmila Kratochvilova on the second court will be tougher.

Kratochvilova, who has coached Formanova for 11 years, holds the 800 record of 1 minute 53.28 seconds, the oldest mark on the books. Formanova won in 1:56.68, beating Mozambique's Maria Mutola by 0.04 seconds.

"I didn't know if I'd won when I crossed the line. I had to ask some Czech spectators and they told me I was first," the 25-year-old said. "I still can't believe it. I am very happy to have equalled my coach's world title."

## DUANE WHO?

Little-known American Duane Ross had the quickest time in Tuesday's 110-metre hurdles semifinals in which Allen Johnson, the Olympic and two-time defending world champion, was eliminated when he pulled out with recurring right calf injury.

"I keep getting better and I'm going to win gold in the final," said Ross, who has never won a major international title and had run only a best of 13.24 before this season. He ran 13.14.

"This is the hungriest I've ever been in track and field," he added. "Right now I feel like I can't beaten."

Anire Garcia of Cuba (13.18) and Britain's former world champion Colin Jackson (13.19) ran the next best times.

## SI, NO

Spanish and Italian newspapers were split over the controversial decision that resulted in Nirurka Montalvo winning long-jump gold over Fiona May.

"A questionable leap to gold," read a front-page headline in the Barcelona daily *El Periodico* on Tuesday.

"A polemical" victory said El País, Spain's largest national paper.

The headlines in Italy mirrored May's anger over the decision.

"Judges tear away the gold from Fiona May," said Il Giornale, while Corriere dello Sport said, "Fiona robbed of the best gold."

Corriere stood behind May's complaint, and printed a close-up of Montalvo's foot at the foul line with a red circle around the contested toe. But Il Giornale admitted that "it's difficult to say," whether Montalvo's foot improperly broke the plasticine.

The Spanish papers were reticent to claim the Cuban-born Montalvo's gold was entirely for themselves.

"Two countries and just one medal," El País said.

"Spanish gold that comes from Cuba," headlined *El Diario* 16.

Montalvo married a Spaniard in January 1998 and was given Spanish nationality in May this year.

But the first Spanish woman to win an athletics gold medal at an Olympics or World Championships is apparently not famous in her new home.

Few people paid any attention to Montalvo late Monday night when she was seen with several friends at an outdoor restaurant near the famous Seville cathedral.

Still wearing her jumping suit and the trousers of her warm-up suit, Montalvo was asked politely by the restaurant staff to leave at 3 am about an hour after the restaurant regularly closes. She and her friends complied.

## FOOT IN MOUTH

American race walker Danielle Kirk is probably hoping she never gets a footache.

On Monday, American team officials arranged to have her see a dentist. When the Spanish medical team showed up, they wanted to take her for foot X-rays — apparently due to some language confusion.

## Two fail drug test at C'ships

SEVILLE, Spain, Aug 25: Two athletes' positive drug tests in the World Championships threaten to cast another cloud over an event preceded by a series of high-profile doping cases, reports AP.

Nigerian sprinter Davidson Ezinwa, a former world junior champion, tested positive for a banned hormone and faces a two-year suspension. IAAF officials said Tuesday night.

Another athlete, 1,500-metre runner Mohamed Ibrahim Aden of Somal, tested positive for a stimulant and received a warning, the officials said.

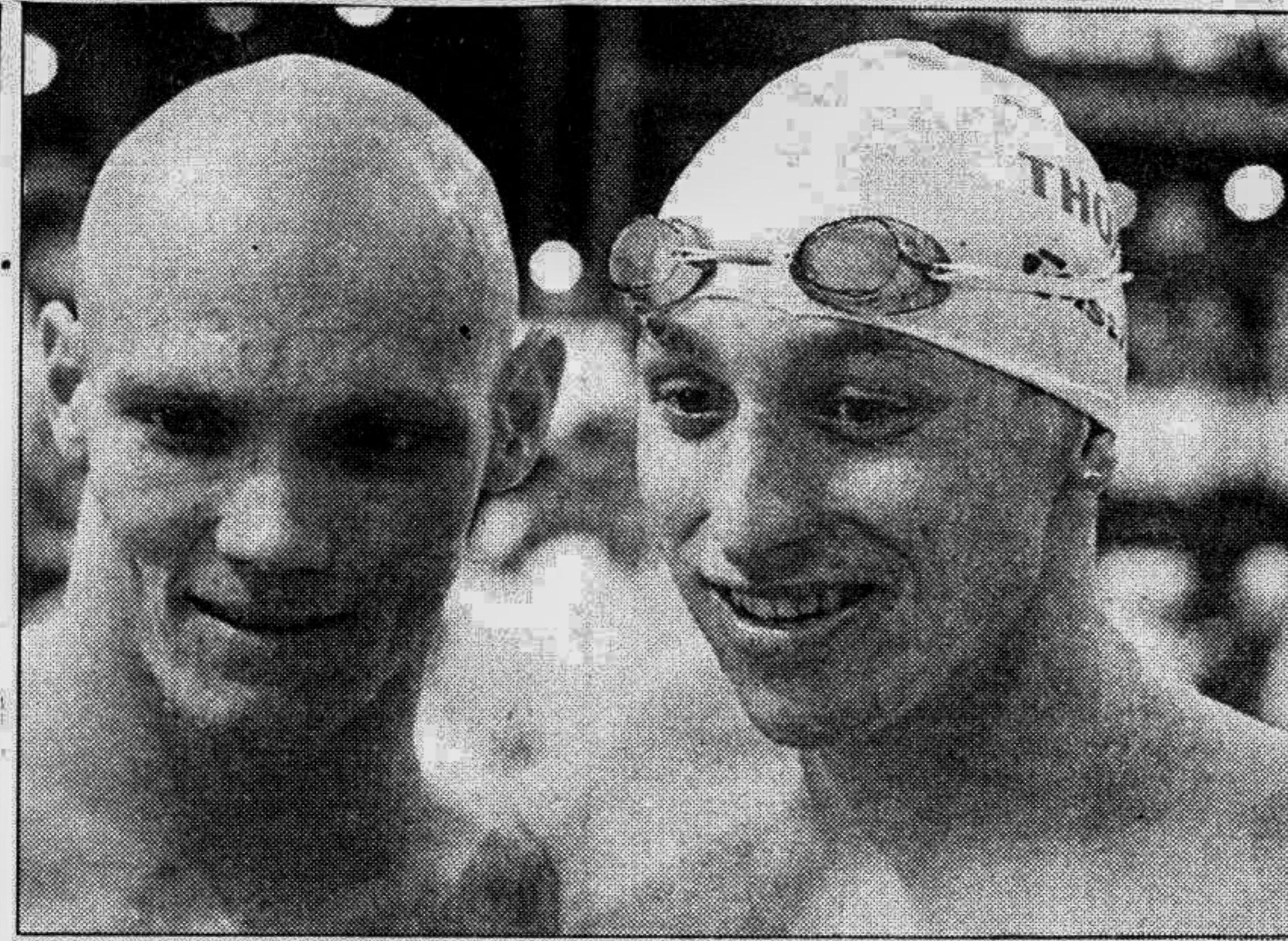
Ezinwa, seventh in his 100m semifinal heat Sunday, tested positive for hCG, a peptide hormone that helps produce testosterone in the body. IAAF medical commission chief Arne Ljungqvist said.

It's Ezinwa's second positive test. In February 1996, he and his twin brother, Osmund, both received three-month bans for the use of the stimulant ephedrine. hCG stands for Chorionic Gonadotropin and is listed under the same class of prohibited substances as human growth hormone.

The substance is considered a serious performance-enhancer which, like steroids, draws a two-year ban.

Some of the sport's biggest stars are missing from these championships, which opened Saturday and close Sunday, after their own drug cases came to light.

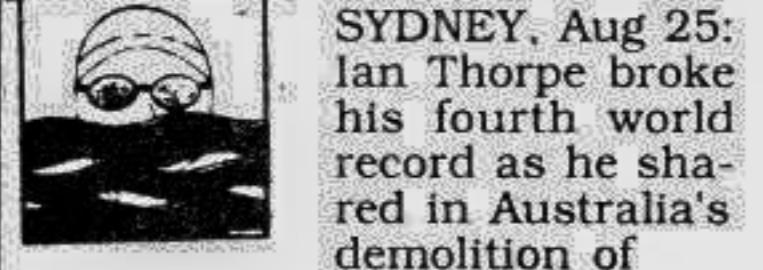
They include Jamaican sprinter Merlene Ottey, winner of more World medals than anyone in history; former Olympic 100-metre champion Linford Christie of Britain; Cuban high jump world record-holder Javier Sotomayor, and US sprinter Dennis Mitchell.



PHENOMENAL: Ace Australian Ian Thorpe (R) poses with Michael Klim after breaking his third world mark in three days in the 200 metres breaststroke at the Pan Pacific Swimming Championships in Sydney on August 24.

— AFP photo

## Thorpe Australia's star



SYDNEY, Aug 25: Ian Thorpe broke his fourth world record as he shattered in Australia's demolition of their 200 metres freestyle relay world record at the Pan Pacific Swimming Championships here Wednesday, reports AFP.

The Australians set a new time of 7min 08.79sec, smashing the record set at last year's Kuala Lumpur Commonwealth Games by 3.07 seconds.

Spurred by Thorpe's lead-off swim of 1:46.28, just 0.28 seconds outside his world record in winning the 200m freestyle final and qualifying fastest in her favoured 200m butterfly event for Thursday's final.

Thorpe had his only setback at the meet when he was the third fastest in the 100m final. He will miss the final because of a rule allowing only two swimmers per nation.

Defending champion Klim won the 100m freestyle semi-final in a Commonwealth record 48.81sec. Teammate Chris Fydlar was second (49.62) and Thorpe third in 49.71.

American Neil Walker was the winner of the other semi-final in 49.70secs, one-hundredth of a second faster than Thorpe.

## MEDAL-TABLE

Medal table after the fourth day of the Pan Pacific Swimming Championship here on Wednesday night she set a Commonwealth record 1:58.17 in winning the 200m freestyle while still having enough in reserve to go the second fastest time in history of 2:06.53 behind Mary T. Meagher's 18-year-old world record 2:05.96.

"I now know that I can break one gold," he said.

"I was a bit under the weather again tonight, but I was able to do a pretty good job as a member of this team."

Klim said: "It's a record that's really special to us being the world champions and having the world record in KL that really means a lot to us."

## Allen sidelined

SEVILLE, Aug 25: Olympic and world high hurdles champion Allen Johnson, who has just returned to action after injury, pulled out of the World Championships yesterday after straining a muscle during a warm-up, reports Reuters.

The American, who has been suffering with a calf injury in recent weeks, failed to turn up for his 110 metres hurdles semifinal after injuring the calf again before the race.

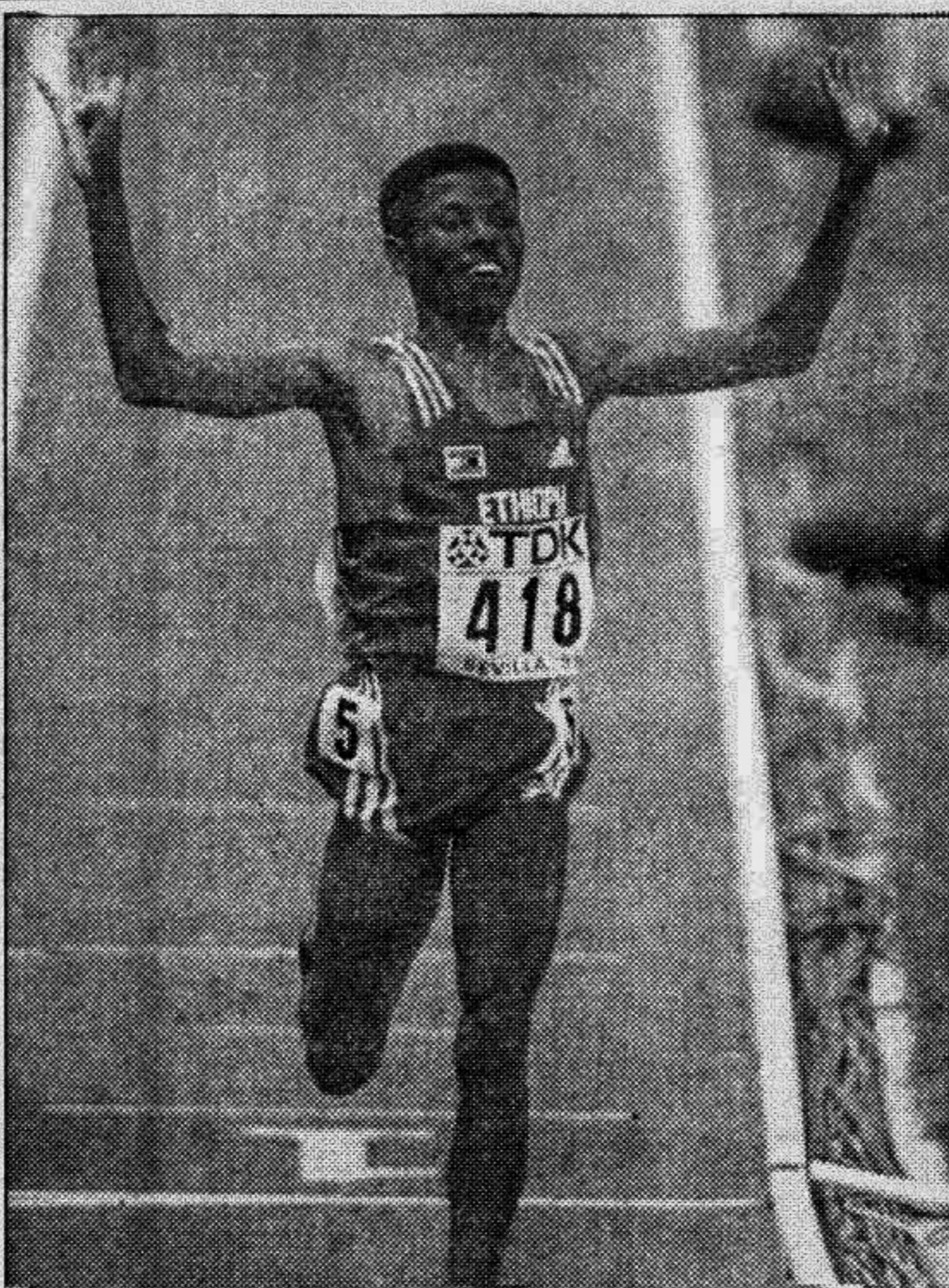
Before Monday's opening day of hurdles heats at the Seville championships, Johnson had not competed since the Rome grand prix in early July.

Britain's world record holder Colin Jackson, one of the favourites, reached today's final when he took second place in a tight finish with Cuba's Anier Garcia.

Jackson clocked 13.19 to Garcia's 13.18. American Tony Dees was third with 13.30.

American Duane Ross looked sharp in winning the other semifinal in 13.14 and predicted he would be the new world champion today.

"I'm going to win the gold. I have been saying that since I've been here. I'm hungry," he said.



Haile Gebrselassie, the Ethiopian long-distance star, starts celebrating after winning the 10,000 metres final at the IAAF World Athletics Championships on August 24.

— AFP photo

## Target world record

SEVILLE, Spain, Aug 25 (AP): There was a serious question about Michael Johnson's health early this year. There isn't now, and the powerful American 400-metre runner thinks he can break the world record in the World Championships.

"I know I'm in shape to run faster than 43.29," Johnson said Tuesday night after blistering over the first 300 metres of his semifinal heat and advancing to Thursday night's final.

American Butch Reynolds set the record in 1988, and Johnson has been chasing it in frustration in recent years. He has come close three times, with clockings of 43.39, 43.44 and 43.49.

"I just have to make sure I don't make any major mistakes," Johnson said. "The pace should be no problem Thursday."

It wasn't Tuesday night. Johnson blazed through the first 300 before shutting down three different times during the final 100.

"I shut down one gear on the end of the curve because I saw that I had a little lead, but I was still afraid of losing the lead," he said.



American track star Michael Johnson running in the heats of the men's 400m in Seville on August 23.

— AFP photo

## Sampras, Hingis top US Open seedings

WHITE PLAINS, New York, Aug 25: World number one Pete Sampras and top-ranked woman Martina Hingis were installed as the top seeds for the US Open tennis championships beginning next week, tournament Director Jay Snyder announced on Tuesday, reports Reuters.

Four-time champion Sampras is seeded first at the US Open for a fifth time, tying the open era men's singles record held by John McEnroe.

Sampras's longtime rival Andre Agassi was made the second seed following Sunday's victory at the Legg Mason Classic in Washington which elevated the Las Vegas native to world number two.

Two-time defending men's champion Patrick Rafter of Australia will be the fourth seed behind Australian Open champion Yevgeny Kafelnikov of Russia.

Hingis, the 1997 winner, was seeded first at Flushing Meadows for the third consecutive year.

Defending women's singles champion Lindsay Davenport was seeded second and fellow American Venus Williams third. Former world number one Monica Seles rounds out the women's top four.

The following are the complete men's and women's singles seedings for the 1999 US Open, the year's final Grand Slam event:

## MEN

1. Pete Sampras (US)
2. Andre Agassi (US)
3. Yevgeny Kafelnikov (Russia)
4. Patrick Rafter (Australia)
5. Gustavo Kuerten (Brazil)
6. Tim Henman (Britain)
7. Todd Martin (US)
8. Carlos Moya (Spain)
9. Greg Rusedski (Britain)
10. Marcelo Rios (Chile)
11. Mark Philippoussis (Australia)
12. Richard Krajicek (Netherlands)
13. Alex Corretja (Spain)
14. Tommy Haas (Germany)
15. Nicolas Kiefer (Germany)
16. Nicolas Lapentti (Ecuador)

## WOMEN

1. Martina Hingis (Switzerland)
2. Lindsay Davenport (US)
3. Venus Williams (US)
4. Monica Seles (USA)
5. Mary Pierce (France)
6. Amanda Coetzer (South Africa)
7. Serena Williams (US)
8. Jana Novotna (Czech Republic)
9. Julie Halarde-Decugis (France)
10. Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario (Spain)
11. Nathalie Tauziat (France)
12. Barbara Schett (Austria)
13. Dominique van Roost (Belgium)
14. Sandrine Testud (France)
15. Amelie Mauresmo (France)
16. Conchita Martinez (Spain)

## Davenport dumps Dechy

SEVILLE, Spain, Aug 25: Top seed Lindsay Davenport advanced into the third round of the WTA Tour event here on Tuesday with a 6-4, 6-2 victory over Nathalie Dechy of France, reports AFP.

Sandrine Testud, also of France, failed to hit top gear, but she reached the second round with a 7-6, 6-3 win over American Tara Snyder, and Elena Likhovtseva outlasted Lisa Raymond to also reach the second round and set up a clash with third seed Monica Seles.

Qualifier Magui Serna of Spain earned a possible third round showdown with second seed Venus Williams by outlasting Slovakian Henrieta Nagyova 7-6, 3-6, 6-3. Williams must first play another Spanish qualifier, Maria Antonia Sanchez Lorenzo, on Wednesday.

Davenport was never threatened by Dechy, who has improved her ranking from 50 to 25 this year with wins over Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario and Australian Open finalist Amelie Mauresmo. The American stamped her authority on the match by breaking to lead 2-1, and although she hit a bump after gaining a second break for 5-2, dropping her serve as she tried to close out the set, it was smooth running in the second.

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