

Sachin may go to Australia for treatment

MUMBAI, Sept 1: Indian skipper Sachin Tendulkar is likely to go to Australia straight after the conclusion of the three-match limited-over series against the West Indies at Toronto on September 14. Mumbai cricket association sources revealed here yesterday, reports PTI.

"Shane Warne (the great Aussie leg-spinner) has suggested to Tendulkar to consult a specialist in Australia for his recurring back problem and he (Tendulkar) seems to be giving thought to the idea," the sources said.

The back problem has not been completely diagnosed yet but several clinical tests done by doctors including magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) has not revealed anything adverse, cricket board secretary, Jaywant Lele, had informed reporters in Colombo on Monday. Earlier reports that the back pain experienced by the master batsman was due to his using a heavy bat was purely speculative and nothing conclusive has yet been established, Lele had said.

The board secretary had also revealed that Tendulkar had experienced back stiffness during India's World Cup campaign in England and which made it difficult to conclude that the problem arose due to excessive humidity in Colombo.

Gilchrist named Aussie A skipper

SYDNEY, Sept 1: Limited-over batsman-wicketkeeper international Adam Gilchrist was Wednesday named as captain of an Australian A cricket team for a five game, one-day series against India A at Woodley Park in Los Angeles from September 15-21, reports AFP.

The team, coached by former Test captain Allan Border, contains three players — Gilchrist, Damien Martyn and Andre Symonds — from the Australian team which Tuesday completed the limited-overs tri-series in Sri Lanka.

It will be the first time an official Australian team has played in the US since 1990. Australia A: Adam Gilchrist (captain), Damien Martyn, Ryan Campbell, Brendan Creevey, Michael Di Venuto, Lea Hansen, Brad Hodge, Brett Lee, Shane Lee, Scott Muller, Corey Richards, Andrew Symonds, Brad Young.

Coach: Allan Border.

Div II hockey

Combined Sporting Club beat Tejaon Agragami 3-1 in a super league match of the Green Delta Metropolis Second Division Hockey at the Moulana Bhasani National Hockey Stadium yesterday, reports UNB.

Mohammad Shantoo, Mamunur Rashid and skipper Masud Haider scored one each for the winners, which dominated the first half by a lone goal while Asif Ahmed netted the consolation goal for the losers.

The day's other match between Mukta Bihanga Tarun Sangha and Uttara Hockey Club was abandoned after a play of eleven minutes at the same venue, as Uttara Hockey Club failed to field required players for continuing the match.

McGrath signs for Worcester

LONDON, Sept 1: Pace spearhead Glenn McGrath will replace Australian team-mate Tom Moody at Worcester in the English county league next season after signing a two-year deal, Worcester announced Wednesday, reports AFP.

McGrath opted for Worcester ahead of several offers from other countries while on World Cup duty in England.

In doing so he has bucked the trend of Australian batsmen but not bowlers turning out for English counties as the Australian Cricket Board has generally opposed moves by bowlers for fear they will suffer fatigue playing all year round.

McGrath argues that he will benefit by staying in peak condition throughout the year.

Lankans lift

From page 13

tralia tried to battle it out and only some lofted hits by tailenders Shane Warne and Jason Gillespie ensured they crossed the 200-mark.

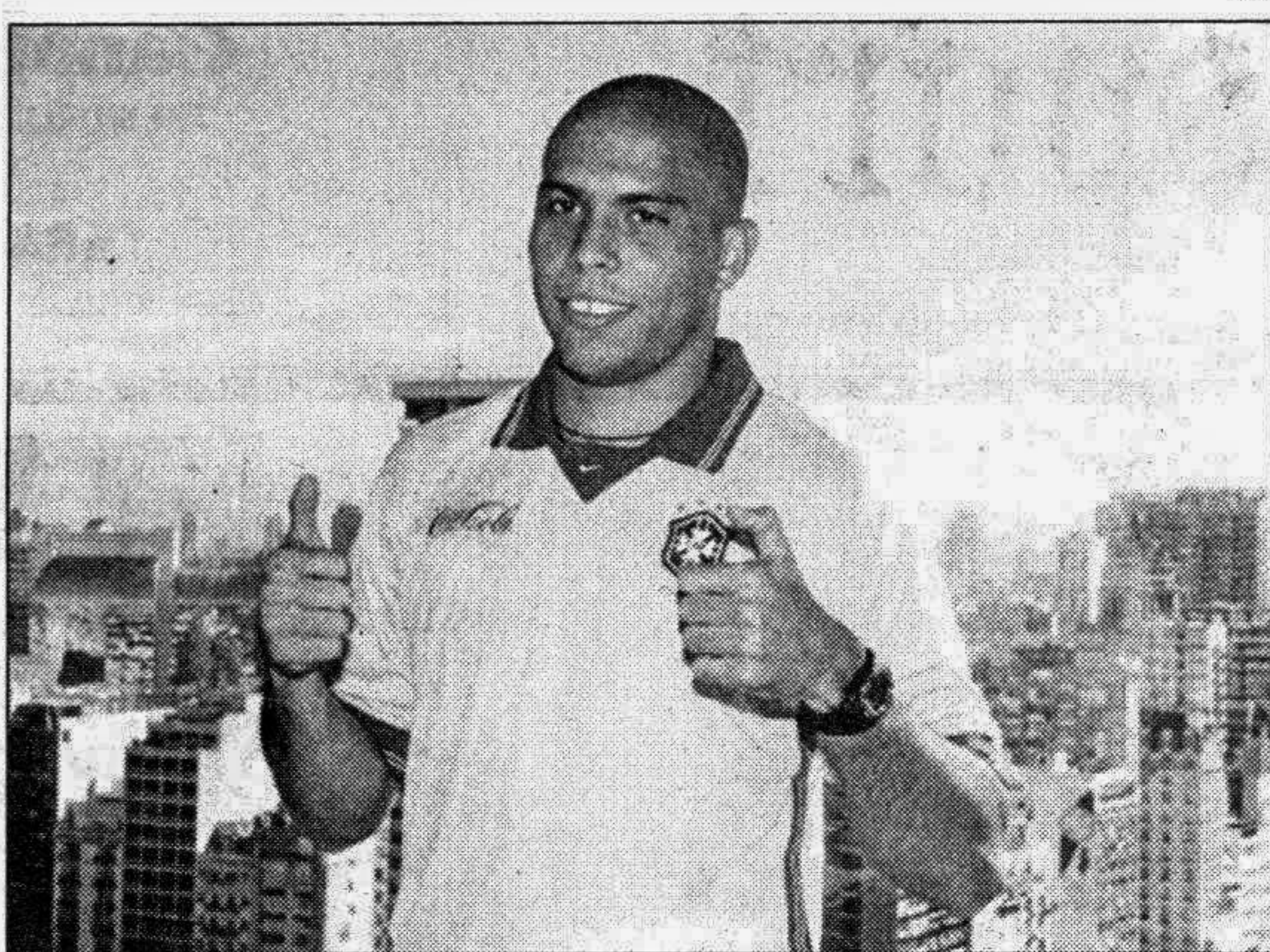
SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of the day-night final in the Awa Cup tri-nation tournament between Australia and Sri Lanka at the R Premadasa Stadium on Tuesday:

AUSTRALIA : 202 all out in 50 overs.			
SRI LANKA :			
Atapattu c Gilchrist b Fleming	24		
Kapatharana not out	95		
Arnold b Gillespie	47		
Jayasuriya not out	26		
Extras : (lb-5, w-5, nb-6)	16		
Total : (For 2 wickets in 39.3 overs)	208		
Fall of wickets : 1-64; 2-174			
Did not bat : M Jayawardene, C Silva, I de Saram, U Chandana, P Wickremasinghe, M Muralitharan, N Zoysa.			

Bowler				O	M	R	W
McGrath	7	0	47	1			
Gillespie	9	0	37	1			
Fleming	7	1	26	1			
Warne	8	0	46	0			
Symonds	3	0	14	0			
Swain	2	0	16	0			
Lehmann	1.3	0	13	0			
Ponting	1	0	2	0			
Result : Sri Lanka won by 8 wickets.							

Man-of-the-match : Romesh Kaluwitharana.
Man-of-the-series : Adam Gilchrist.



Superstar Ronaldo gives thumbs up upon arriving at a press conference in Buenos Aires on August 31. — Internet photo

Brazil out to prove a point

BUENOS AIRES, Sept 1: Brazil's players began arriving Tuesday for Saturday's friendly here against rivals Argentina looking to underline their regional supremacy following their recent Copa America triumph, reports AFP.

The sides will play a second match in Brazil at Porto Alegre on September 7, giving Argentina two chances to atone for their 2-1 quarter-final loss at the Copa in Paraguay.

Brazil's Real Madrid wing-back Roberto Carlos was in confident mood as he arrived. "Brazil are the best team in the world with Argentina on a lower level," said Roberto Carlos, who added his side would use the friendly to assess the state of the squad ahead of next year's World Cup qualifiers to see the team through to the 2002 finals.

At the moment we are going through a preparatory stage with the team staff thinking about the World Cup qualifiers and they will want to make sure

we are able to get off on the right foot. We have to use every training session and every friendly to improve," insisted the Real star.

"We keep on bringing through young players who

make a name for themselves as soon as they get to Europe. This shows that we are superior - but football often turns up surprises and we have to prove ourselves on the pitch," he added.

Roberto Carlos, a mainstay of the Real Madrid side which lifted the 1998 European Champions Cup, also said he believed that South American football remained more "aesthetic" than its European counterpart.

The challenge for Brazil coach Wanderley Luxemburg remains, as with all Brazil coaches, to win in flamboyant fashion.

Barcelona midfielder and reputed Manchester United target Rivaldo said, meanwhile, that Brazil would not treat Saturday's game as a mere workout.

"Matches between Argentina and Brazil are never friendly given the importance both teams attach to them. It's a good chance to see what level we're at."

Brazil will again be looking for great things from new star Ronaldinho Gaúcho of Gremio.



ROBERTO CARLOS

France look to Zidane

CLAIREFONTAINE, France, Sept 1: French World Cup winning playmaker Zinedine Zidane returns to national team action Saturday knowing the world champions are looking to him to revive their flagging European Championship qualification campaign, reports AFP.

France go to Kiev on Saturday to face Group Four leaders Ukraine in the knowledge that defeat could see them slip to fourth in the group if Russia and Iceland win their home games with also-rans Armenia and Andorra respectively.

It is no coincidence that France's alarming slump has coincided with the absence through injury of Juventus star Zidane, who last donned the blue shirt for France's historic Wembley friendly victory over

England in February. The Marseille-born man from Algerian ancestry - a national hero since his two first-half headers put France on the way to their 3-0 World Cup final victory over Brazil - has been sorely missed as since his injury France have had negotiated stormy waters in the group.

First they shared a 0-0 draw with Ukraine at the Stade de France - a match that should have been won by the visitors with only uncharacteristically woeful finishing by Ukraine striker Andriy Shevchenko and



ZINEDINE ZIDANE

superb goalkeeping from Fabien Barthez saving the French in a game where France hardly mustered an attack.

Then came a 2-0 home win over Armenia but in June France slumped to their first defeat as world champions and their first at the Stade de France when visitors Russia won a thrilling match 3-2.

Four days later France were desperately lucky to return from Barcelona with the points when an 86th-minute penalty from Frank Leboeuf salvaged a

1-0 win against Andorra, officially rated the worst team in Europe.

Marseille's Robert Pires and Christophe Dugarry and Lyon's Vikash Dhorasoo all failed to fill Zidane's creative midfield role.

Qualification for the finals in Holland and Belgium is a four-horse race with Ukraine top of the group and Iceland and Russia well in contention and after Ukraine the French have a tricky away trip to Armenia and a home tie with Iceland to negotiate.

The return of former Cannes and Bordeaux player Zidane is manna for heaven for a country still lost in admiration for their World Cup winners but anxious that the feeling of pride in that team should not be diminished by a failure to qualify.

World player of the year Zidane said: "My fitness is coming back bit by bit. It's six months since I wore the shirt with the cockerel on it. I am missing it. I am returning with a great hunger." But I am not indispensable. There exists a team with Zidane and also one without him."

He admits France may have suffered in his absence, saying, "I can bring a little bit more. I can always be expected of me."

Montenegro joins Marseille

MARSEILLE, France, Sept 1: Argentina's Daniel Montenegro has signed for Marseille for six seasons, the sporting director of the French first division club Marcel Dipp said on Tuesday, reports AFP.

Dipp did not however reveal the transfer fee for the midfielder from Argentina's second division side Huracan.

The 34-year-old Helmer, who moved to Sunderland last month after being dropped by Bayern Munich, made use of an agreement he made with Sunderland that he could leave immediately if another club came along which was represented intently.

Hertha Berlin has qualified for the Champions League and have drawn AC Milan, Galatasaray Istanbul and Chelsea as their group opponents.

"I am glad that I can play in the Bundesliga and Champions League with Hertha, it's going to be a big challenge for me," Helmer said. "I also want to thank Sunderland for sticking by our deal."

Hertha were forced to make the transfer because of long term injuries to four key defenders.

Thomas Helmer brings with him a great deal of international experience which is why we can help us in our current situation, especially in the Champions League," Hertha coach Jurgen Rober explained.

"Under the current circumstances he is the ideal solution," club manager Dieter Hoeneß added.

Helmer was rushed to Berlin Tuesday morning for a physical check up and then returned to England to pack his belongings.

MU rope in Taibi

MANCHESTER, England, Sept 1: European champions Manchester United have Tuesday completed the signing of Italian Serie A goalkeeper Massimo Taibi, reports AFP.

Taibi, who has joined United from Venezia in a deal which is worth a reported 4.5 million pounds (seven million dollars), has signed a four-year contract.

United boss Sir Alex Ferguson has moved for Taibi to increase competition among his goalkeepers.

Ferguson has turned to 36-year-old Dutchman Raimond van der Gouw to cover for the injured Mark Bosnich.

When van der Gouw was injured at the end of United's 2-1 English Premiership win over Arsenal, United had to call on the services of substitute goalkeeper Nicky Culpin, who they signed from York City.

But the Treble winners have pulled out of negotiations with Deportivo La Coruna for their Moroccan international defender Nouredine Naybet.

United have called off their pursuit of Naybet because they could not clinch a deal before the Champions League transfer deadline at midnight on Tuesday.

Big hearted Rivaldo

BARCELONA, Sept 1: Barcelona's mercurial forward Rivaldo is to put something back into the game by creating a foundation to aid deprived children in Brazil and Spain, sports daily Marca reported Wednesday, reports AFP.

The foundation, which will bear Rivaldo's name, will also have other sponsors - including Barcelona - with a view to helping Catalunya's most needy children and the rest of the Spanish state, as well as Brazil, in their education, cultural and sporting development.

The foundation's first act is set to be the distribution of some 1,000 packages of basic provisions to the poorest families in Rivaldo's native town of Jardim Paulista.

Iraqi media points at referee

DUBAI, Sept 1: The Iraqi press on Wednesday blamed the referee for Iraq's defeat against Jordan in the Arab Games football final, reports AFP.

The Al-Bath Al-Riyadhi newspaper blamed its players had been victims of Egyptian Jamal al-Ghandur, who it said had "knowingly committed flagrant errors. The most obvious were the two unarguable penalties which he did not award to our team."

Iraq staged an impressive comeback in Tuesday's final after trailing by four goals with 16 minutes of normal time remaining, only to lose in a penalty shoot-out.

"Our national team performed a sort of miracle," it said, saluting "the will, competitiveness and determination" of the team.

The ruling Baath party's mouthpiece, Ath-Thawra, congratulated the Iraqi players on their great energy, but reproached them for their "strange collapse".

Other than the "biased" referee, the paper also blamed "bad luck" for the Iraqi defeat - "Three Iraqi strikes at the goal hit the cursed post."

This bad luck however was crowded over in Kuwait, with the Al-Rai Al-Aam newspaper publishing a caricature of three Iraqi players hanged by the neck from the crossbar of a goal.

"Happy crowning: the defeat of the Iraqi team," the emirate's Al-Anbaa newspaper said.

Kuwait was the only Arab country to have boycotted the Arab Games, because of Iraq's participation.

Iraq invaded and occupied Kuwait in 1990, finally being ejected by a US-led multinational force in the 1991 Gulf War.

Sunderland loan Helmer to Hertha Berlin

COLOGNE, Germany, Sept 1: Thomas Helmer's stay in the English Premier League ended Tuesday after just 54 days when the former German international was swooped up by Bundesliga club Hertha Berlin, reports AFP.

"I am glad that I can play in the Bundesliga and Champions League with Hertha, it's going to be a big challenge for me," Helmer said. "I also want to thank Sunderland for sticking by our deal."

Hertha were forced to make the transfer because of long term injuries to four key defenders.

Thomas Helmer brings with him a great deal of international experience which is why we can help us in our current situation, especially in the Champions League," Hertha coach Jurgen Rober explained.

"Under the current circumstances he is the ideal solution," club manager Dieter Hoeneß added.

Helmer was rushed to Berlin Tuesday morning for a physical check up and then returned to England to pack his belongings.

Sampras, Rafter depart

NEW YORK, Sept 1: Pete Sampras creaked off in misery to start the gloomiest of days at the US Open, and two-time defending champion Patrick Rafter closed out the night by quitting with a shoulder injury, reports AP.

Rafter seemed on his way to an easy victory after taking the first two sets against Cedric Pioline, but the right shoulder that has bothered him, all summer got worse as the match went along.

Rafter's service speed dropped game by game despite several visits by a trainer for massage. When the match went into the fifth set and Pioline broke him, Rafter approached the net, shook his head sadly and gave up.

It was the first time a defending champion — man or woman — lost in the first round in the 118-year history of this Grand Slam tournament.

Even Alexandra Stevenson, the effervescent teen who brightened Wimbledon in her pro debut, fell victim to Tuesday's melancholy as she bowed out listlessly to No 11 Nathalie Tauziat, 6-2, 6-2.

Defending women's champion Lindsay Davenport brought a few rays of sunshine with her efficient 6-0, 6-3 victory over Corina Morariu. Jennifer Capriati added a few more with her first win at the Open since 1992, and Serena Williams won easily in the

evening, 6-1, 6-0, against Kimberly Po.

This is the best I've felt in a long time here, tennis-wise," Capriati said after beating 1997 French Open champion, Iva Majoli 6-1, 7-5. "I feel like I'm ready to play some tennis."

Capriati is far from the giggly teen she was when she reached the semis at the US Open in 1991. In her last four appearances here, she lost in the first round.

"I'm not as goofy as I was before," she said with a laugh. "That's changed. I'm not going to go around saying I'm so excited after I win a match here."

But despite her muted joy, the day had a strange, disjointed feeling, beginning with Sampras' withdrawal because of a herniated disc in his lower back. Sampras, the four-time champion and top seed, would not be going for a record 13th Grand Slam title and would not have a chance to face No 2 Andre Agassi again.

"I'm going to be very bummed out the next couple of weeks," said Sampras, who will lose his No 1 ranking to Agassi or Yevgeny Kafelnikov.

Moments later came the announcement that an arbitration panel in Switzerland had ruled against 1998 Australian Open champion Petr Korda in his steroid case — good news for tennis' anti-doping policy but an unhappy ending to the career of a popular player.

"It's disappointing for Petr," said Martin, president of the ATP Tour. Players Council. "That's no way to finish your career. Despite the fact that he somehow allowed the substance into his body, I think everybody should have a little compassion."

Martin seemed in need of a little compassion, himself, the way he staggered to a four-hour, 6-4, 6-3, 6-7 (2-7), 6-7, (7-5), 7-6 (7-3) victory over Stephane Huet, a 28-year-old Frenchman making his US Open debut as a qualifier.

Martin, who lost both his singles matches in the Davis Cup against Australia last month, blew four match points in the third sets, then watched Huet extend the match to the limit despite severe cramps in his legs and serving hand.

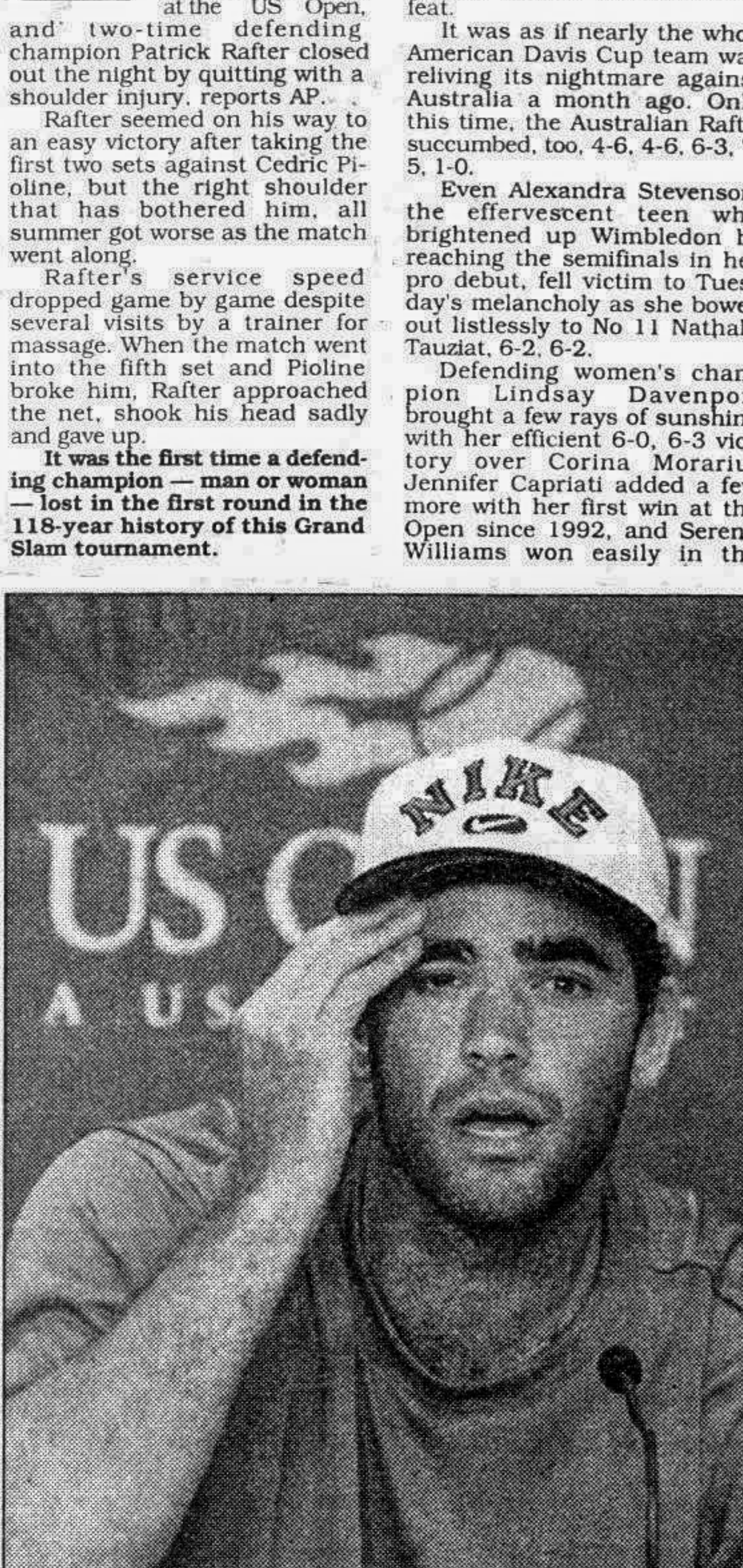
The only thing that was sore on me was my toenails from hitting my shoes," said the 29-year-old Martin, who took out his frustration by slapping his racket against his feet.

"I didn't have a whole lot of emotion to get up with today," he said. "That's something that's got to change. Why? I don't know. I got a haircut yesterday, and I see how much more gray I have."

Courier, a former US Open finalist and two-time semifinalist, might find some gray hairs mixed in with his red after losing 6-4, 6-4, 7-6 (7-5) to 95th-ranked Slava Dosedel of the Czech Republic.

Britain's Tim Henman, seeded No 6, also might gain some gray from his 7-6 (7-1), 6-4, 6-3 loss to Argentina's Guillermo Canas. Ranked No 68.

"Yeah, it was probably an all-time low for me," Henman said. "I don't know really where to begin to describe the way I was playing. It was pretty horrendous."



World number one Pete Sampras answering a question during a press conference on August 31. — AFP photo



Defending US Open champion Patrick Rafter receiving treatment during his match against Cedric Pioline. — AFP photo

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS		DOWN	
1 Legislation	27 Candle count	1 So all can hear	15 Wilted
4 Tucker's partner?	28 On the qui vive	2 Pres. Less loose	19 Bank-rol
7 XIX occupied	30 Rudimentary lessons	4 Swag	20 Tiger Woods' org.
8 Centers	33 One with remote possibilities?	5 La Douce et al.	21 Vision
10 In accompaniment	36 See the world	6 Exemplar of redness	22 Rids of uncertainty
11 Lovers	37 Smartly dressed	7 Sallate	23 Towel word
13 TV junkies	38 Steeple	8 Frog's vocable	24 Harmonized
16 16th-century English dramatist	39 Cupid's a.k.a.	9 Allay	25 Singer
17 Cafeteria stack	40 Crafty	10 Cathy's expletive	26 Ball bigwig
18 Norris Dam org.	41 Lair	12 Twilight time	28 Toon crusher
19 It'll last for days		14 Quarry	29 Suspicious
20 "That's a relief!"			30 "Flow Gently, Sweet"
21 Flirting			31 Race-track transactions
23 Tony winner			32 Shout
25 Temperate			34 Entries in baby's agenda
26 Ray variety			35 Exceptional

Yesterday's answer



CRYPTOQUIP

CRSK YZJZKY STNZDENST.

TRASCL AMMPFAT DHTN PZYHAS

ZK NRSZA RZYR MJSARSEL.

Yesterday's Cryptquip: I'D OFTEN WORRY A MOBILE HOME ON A HILL CAN ROLL AWAY IF IT BECOMES SO INCLINED.

Today's Cryptquip clue: D equals M

The Cryptquip is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that X equals Q, it will equal Q throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.