

Lidya downs Martin

JAKARTA, Sept 4: Dane women's singles top seed Camilla Martin was ousted in Indonesian Open badminton tournament quarter final in Denpasar, capital of Bali, on Friday afternoon, reports Xinhua.

The world champion Martin had to bow out to Indonesian Lidya Jaelawijaya by 11-13, 11-7 and 9-11.

After losing the opening set 11-13, Martin trailed again in the second set 0-6. However, the world champion slowed the game down with clever play, leveling the match at 6-6 finally rallied for 11-7.

In the deciding set, the scores were tied four times at 3-3, 5-5, 6-6 and 9-9. Aided by the crowd in the stadium, Lidya took the last two points and entered the semi-finals of the tournament.

This was Martin's second loss in one week. She became the victim to unseeded Japanese Kanako Yonekura in Singapore Open on August 26.

Indonesia's Ellen Angelina beat fourth seed Mette Sorensen from Denmark with 11-7, 11-9, and Yuli Marfuah, also from Indonesia, beat Judit Meulendijk from the Netherlands by 11-9, 11-4. Angelina and Marfuah entered the women's singles semifinals.

Three Indonesian pairs also entered the semifinals of mixed doubles. Second seed Tri Kusherjanto/Minarti Timur, Bambang Supriatno/Zelin Resiana and Wahyu Agung/Emma Ermawati beat their rivals respectively in the quarterfinal on Friday.

Top seed Michael Soegaard/Rikke Olsen from Denmark beat Indonesia's Imam Tohar/Vita Marissa by 15-5, 15-5, preventing the mixed doubles semi-finals from all-Indonesian affairs.

Northern Ireland coach's caution

BELFAST, Sept 4: Lawrie McMenemy has vowed to quit as Northern Ireland boss if the fans turn on him, reports AFP.

McMenemy's contract is up for renewal at the end of Northern Ireland's Euro 2000 campaign and he claims he will not stay if the supporters do not want him.

McMenemy came under fire from some fans following the disappointing draws against Moldova and Canada last season.

He has since silenced some of his critics with victory over the Republic of Ireland in Dublin and a narrow defeat against world champions France.

The Irish face Turkey on Saturday in their last home qualifying tie and even though their hopes of reaching the finals have all but gone, McMenemy claims he has made progress during his 19 months in charge.

"At the end of the day the public and my players will be my judge," he said.

"If we have not made progress, I will put up my hand and say the time is right for me to move on."

"I don't need hassle at this stage of my life. I believe, though, that we are making progress as far as the biggest achievement so far has been to appoint people of the quality of Joe Jordan, Pat Jennings and Chris Nicholl."

"They are experienced professionals of the highest standard and they have really helped the Northern Ireland senior and Under-21 squads."

Keith Gillespie is resigned to starting the match against Turkey at Windsor Park on the bench.

The one-time star of Northern Irish football expects Jon McCarthy to take his right-wing role.

The Birmingham winger seized his opportunity when Gillespie was unavailable for the Republic game and he followed that up with another impressive performance in the 1-0 defeat against France.

McCarthy's displays mean that for the first time in Gillespie's four-year international career he is not an automatic choice.

Gillespie admits that McCarthy deserves to start ahead of him, but has vowed to win his place back.

"Jon has done really well in the last two games and to be honest I don't expect to be in the 11 which starts against Turkey," he said.

"It's up to me to keep plugging away because I'm desperate to get back into the team."

McMenemy is delighted with how well McCarthy has grabbed his chance. "He has done well in his last two games for us and I don't think anyone can argue with that," he said.

One of the targets McCarthy has set himself this season is to score more goals and McMenemy would be thrilled if he could find the back of the net against Turkey.

Scoring goals remains Northern Ireland's biggest problem and Iain Dowie, with just one international goal in nearly two and-a-half years, will once again lead their attack against the Group 3 leaders.

The 34-year-old, who needs one strike to equal Colin Clarke's record of 13 goals for Northern Ireland, only plays reserve football for QPR.

However Turkish coach Mustafa Denizli refuses to write Dowie off. "Dowie is the most attacking player in the Northern Ireland team," he said.

"In the last years he has not scored too many goals, but maybe that is down to the whole team and not just him."

"He remains a very important player for Northern Ireland and he must be watched."

McMenemy is expected to keep faith with the side which performed so admirably against France.

Turkey have injury worries and Hakan Sukur, Seren Yalcin, Abdullah Ercan and Ogun Temizkanoglu have all been receiving treatment.

Martina, Arantxa progress



NEW YORK, Sept 4: Martina Hingis breezed into the fourth round while Jana Novotna Czeched out of the US Open on a day when a who's who of men's tennis was replaced by a record "who cares" set of qualifiers, reports AFP.

Top seed Hingis ripped German qualifier Sandra Kloesel 6-3, 6-1 here Friday. Now all that stands between her and the quarterfinals is a 12th consecutive triumph over 10th seed Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario of Spain.

And strangeness continued on the men's side, where four qualifiers and a lucky loser have reached the third round, matching a 15-year-old mark for success by those who failed to make the main draw automatically.

Hingis began her streak over Sanchez-Vicario in the round of 16 here in 1996 and has ousted the Spaniard from Grand Slams five times — at least once in each of the past four years.

The Australian Open champion has won 11 sets in a row from Sanchez-Vicario since the 1998 Wimbledon quarterfinals and beaten her three times this year, including in the French Open semifinals.

"When you play the number one player in the world you have nothing to lose," Sanchez-Vicario said. "I will try to give her a hard time. I will play her better than the last matches we played."

"She has more pressure. You must take opportunities when you get them against her. You have to be solid and aggressive when you have the chance. It means more risks for you. You have to show her you're not going to just stand there. You can't make too many unforced errors."

Sanchez-Vicario, who beat Hingis in their first meeting in

1996, advanced by beating 18th-ranked Swiss teen Patty Schnyder 6-2, 6-2.

"It surprised me how she beat Patty. I thought it was going to be harder for her," Hingis said. "But Arantxa always gets where she is supposed to get. Going into that match you have to take her seriously. But I won the last matches quite easily."

In other matches, Barbara Schett downed Virginia Ruano Pascual 6-1, 6-0, and Mary Joe

Fernandez beat Dominique van Roost 7-5, 6-0. At night, France's Amelie Mauresmo beat American Tara Snyder 6-4, 6-3.

Injuries have already forced out all four 1988 men's semifinalists — world number one Pete Sampras, 11th seed Mark Philippoussis, eighth seed Carlos Moya and reigning champion Pat Rafter.

An Open record crowd of 29,042 attended even without

top remaining men's draw Andre Agassi, who plays fellow American Justin Gimelstob in the third round Saturday.

Despite the lost talent, and the rise of qualifiers, this 14.5 million-dollar Grand Slam has not become a Grand Slam, Agassi said.

"To win this tournament, you have to be worthy of it," Agassi said. "Not having Pat and Pete in there certainly opens up the draw for a lot of people. Whoever holds up the trophy is certainly going to deserve it."

He could come from the side of the draw vacated by Rafter and Sampras, where fifth seed Gustavo Kuerten of Brazil, seventh-seeded American Todd Martin and British ninth seed Greg Rusedski all advanced.

Rusedski, the 1997 runner-up here, beat 56th-ranked David Prinosil of Germany 6-4, 6-3, 6-1, and fired a 143-mph ace in the third set.

"Every player in the draw has a chance to win the title once you get to the third round," he said. "With Sampras and Rafter and players like that out, there's always more optimism. It's about taking those chances."

Martin beat Richey Reneberg 6-4, 6-3, 3-6, 6-1 and could face Rusedski with a quarterfinal spot at stake.

"I feel like I could beat everybody," Martin said. "Feeling able to and being able to do it are two different things. I have never won seven matches at a Grand Slam event. It's awfully difficult to say, 'All right, no problem.' Even Pete can't say if he's going to win another one."

Kuerten ousted Dutchman Paul Haarhuis 6-3, 7-6, 3-6, 6-2 to book a date with Goran Ivanisevic, a seeded failure in past years here who has never won a US hardcourt tournament.

Ivanisevic ousted Italian qualifier Cristiano Caratti 6-1, 4-6, 6-2, 2-6, 6-4, winning a second match in a row on hardcourts for the first time this summer despite a rare five double faults in one game.

The freak feat came in the last game of the third set, when the Croatian had a double fault called good by Caratti but squandered his second chance at the point with yet another double fault.

"I started to think too much," Ivanisevic said. "I have to hit harder and harder and I lose the rhythm. But I cannot control it. I just started to force it."

Tommy Haas defeated Mariano Puerta 6-3, 6-2, 2-6, 7-6, 6-1, and 148th-ranked Fredrik Jonsson upset fast-rising 10th seed Nicolas Lapentti of Ecuador 6-4, 5-7, 6-4, 7-5.

Former ITF boss honoured

LAUSANNE, Switzerland, Sept 4: Brain Tobin, the former president of the International Tennis Federation, has received the Olympic Order for "significant contributions to the tennis world" and the Olympics, the IOC said Friday, reports AP.

Tobin, an Australian once ranked No 8 in his country and who played at Wimbledon in the early 1960s, stepped down from the ITF post earlier this year after two four-year terms in charge.

The 68-year-old from Melbourne, home of the Australian Open, served as president of Tennis Australia from 1977-1989.

Tobin deserved the award "for his enduring work on and off the tennis court and the added appreciation of the entire Olympic movement for helping bring tennis back to the Olympics," International Olympic Committee president Juan Antonio Samaranch said in a statement.

In July, Italy's Francesco Ricci Bitti was elected to replace Tobin as ITF president.

Asian jr tennis Seeds sail smoothly

CHENNAI, Sept 4: All the eight seeds in both boys' and girls' section of the Indian Oil Servo Asian junior championship had a smooth start with easy victories in totally one-sided affair here yesterday, reports PTI.

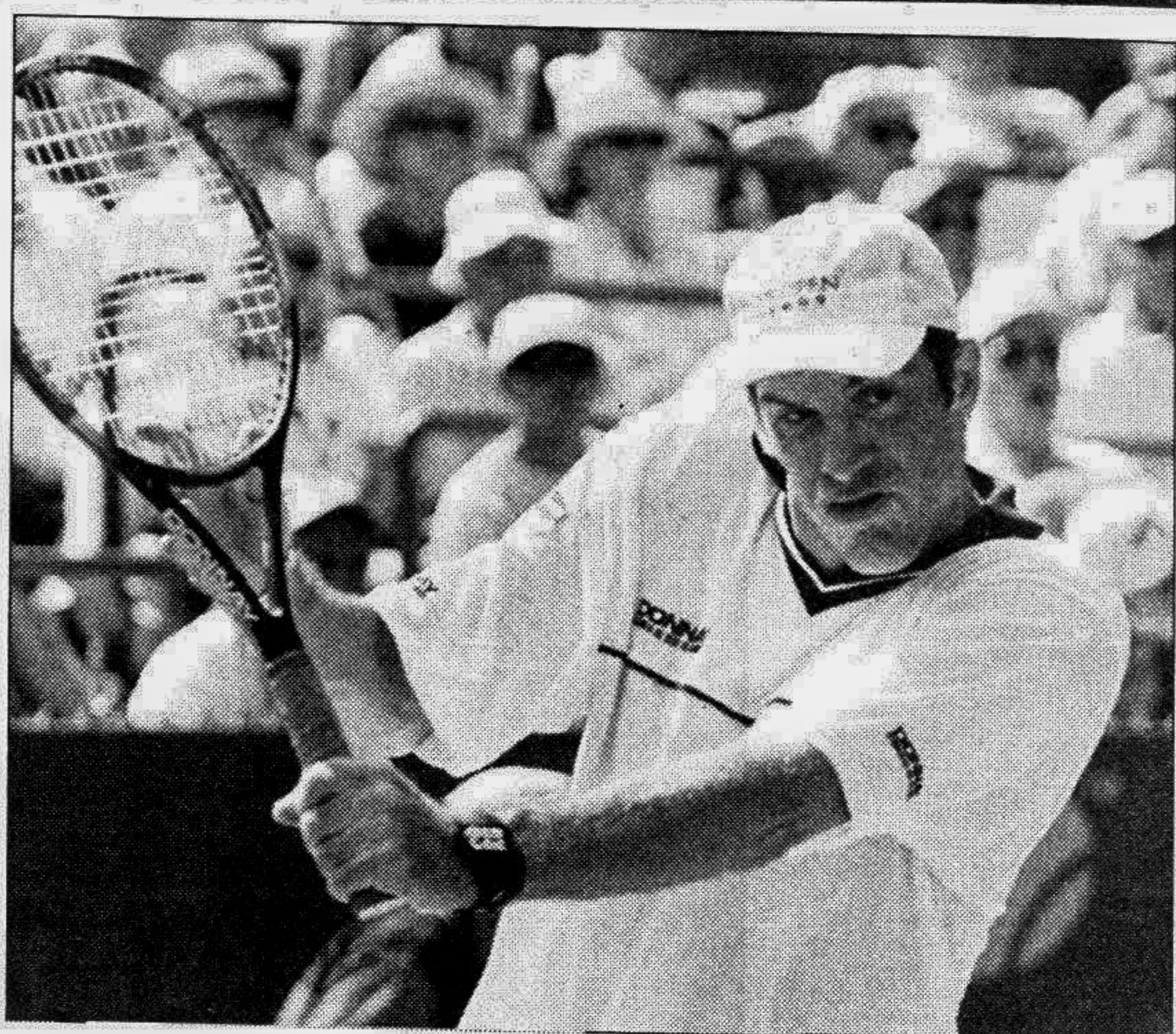
Top-seeded Korean Ryu Seung Min outplayed Maldivian Ahmed Thamooh 21-5, 21-9 and the second seed Subhagit Saha of India had things easy against Aleksandr Kartsen of Turkmenistan 21-9, 21-8.

Third seeded Yung To Long (Hong Kong) had the measure of Salaudinn Abu Taher (Bangladesh) 21-13, 21-9 and China's Tang Peng met initial problems against Hussaim Hani (UAE) 21-11, 21-12 to keep his fourth seed in tact. Fifth seed Lin Ching Hung (Taipei), Sakamoto Rkk Sure (Japan), Kim Jung Hoon (Korea) and China's Wang Hao also streamlined over their lesser fancied opponents.

Similarly, Fujinuma Ai (Japan), Mouna Das (India), Poulomi Ghatak (IND), Li Quanguing (China), Lee Hyangmi (Korea), Lu Yun Feng (Taipei), Lai Ka Yau (Hong Kong) and Zhang Fang (China) also made it into the second round of the girls' event from the twelve groups. So also the winner of the boys' section from 14 groups also moved into the next phase.

In the doubles, top seeded Poulomi Ghatak and Mouna Das pair were beaten by the Chinese Taipei's Lu Yungeng-Panli Chun combine in the semifinals of the girls' section.

In another event, China's Chen Qing and Zhang Fang faced stiff challenge from the Korean duo of moon Hyun Jung and Kim Ryung Ha before the latter surrendered at 21-17, 23-25, 21-7.



Canadian-born Briton Greg Rusedski in action against German David Prinosil on September 3.

Rusedski relishes challenge



NEW YORK, Sept 4 (AP): Two years ago, Greg Rusedski became the first British man in a Grand Slam tournament final in 20 years and the first in the final at the US Championships since Fred Perry won in 1936.

Now he's thinking about becoming the second.

Rusedski, seeded No 9, advanced to the third round of the US Open Friday with a 6-4, 6-3, 6-1 victory over David Prinosil and was encouraged by his performance.

"If I play like that for the tournament, I'll be in good shape," he said. "For me, it's a very satisfying performance."

Positioned in the top half of the draw where favourites Pete Sampras and Patrick Rafter disappeared early, Rusedski would seem to have as good a shot as anyone to reach the final.

Certainly Prinosil thinks so.

"He is in every good shape," he said. "He's moving well. He was very fast on the net. He's playing very well at the moment. If he's playing like this, it's tough to beat him."

This is nothing but good news for Rusedski, who sat out

six weeks this summer nursing a big toe injury on his right foot. He came back last week to reach the final at Boston before losing to Marat Safin.

That brought him to the Open with high hopes.

"Coming off an injury, my first week in Boston I think raised my expectations, have made it to the final," he said. "My first goal is always to get to that second week. If I can win one more match, then my optimism and my shot at winning the title and doing better goes up."

Rusedski, a transplanted Canadian who moved to Britain in 1995, has been on a Grand Slam roller coaster since losing in the final of the Open to Rafter in 1997.

He's been seeded in every Slam since then, as high as No 4 at Wimbledon last year where he was forced to retire in the first round because of an ankle injury. He also went out in the first round at the French Open in 1998, but reached the round of 16 at both the French Open and Wimbledon this year.

At the Open, he's been one of the shadow players, overlooked in the excitement over the Sampras-Rafter bailouts that left Andre Agassi as the favourite for the title.

"That's fine by me," he said. "They only remember who picks up the trophy on Sunday anyway."

He came tantalizingly close to that two years ago and still has bittersweet memories of that moment.

"It was a great moment for my career," he said. "I wasn't 100 per cent because I was struggling with my throat problem. It would have been nice to know if I was 100 per cent what would have happened."

"I think when you get to a Slam final, it's a great experience. But losing in the final ... you're so close to getting your goal and you just missed out. It's a positive, but it's also a negative at the same time because you want to win it."

The experience left him hungry.

"You want to win a major," he said. "That's what makes players — in stature makes you from a good player to a great player."

"You can be a top 10 player, but you need to have that major beside your name to make you feel like you've accomplished things in tennis. That's what makes me want to play tennis — to win that major that I haven't won yet."

OPEN NOTEBOOK

NEW YORK, Sept 4 (AP): Jana Novotna is still hampered by the ankle injury she sustained at the French Open.

Novotna turned her ankle when she stepped on the foot of her partner, Natasha Zvereva, during their doubles match.

Two weeks later she played Wimbledon, where she was the defending champion, then took time off. But the injury still affects her.

"I am concerned about it," Novotna, from the Czech Republic, said Friday after losing her third-round singles match to Anke Huber 6-3, 6-2. "It was very serious."

Now it seems like even after a very long time off ... the ankle is not getting better and I am not feeling 100 per cent.

"I'm not the same player. My movement is not the same. No matter how much I'm trying, I still can't do it."

CYBER RESPIRE

The US Open is traditionally known as the in-your-face Grand Slam, but there is at least one place on the grounds where players can trade in the constant fan buzz for the faint hum of computer terminals.

For the second consecutive year, IBM is providing a cyberspace studio of eight terminals in a small room just off the player lounge and dining room. Once inside, the sound of typing takes the place of sneaker squeaks and bouncing balls, and the sun is muted by a

shaded bay window. The ceiling lights are frequently turned off, and players are free to either surf the Internet or listen to the collection of movie soundtracks, U2 and Madonna CDs cranked to a corner stereo.

IBM representative Lisa Kardon said she fully expected the site to be popular, and there are almost always players leaning on the walls or slumped in soft chairs waiting for machines.

"We were setting up on Saturday and we had people peeking in the door, saying, 'When are you opening?'" she said. "All the players use it to check e-mails, their local newspapers, whatever."

BETTER SIGHTLINES

Keeping your eye on the ball is not as easy as it sounds, but Bolle hopes to make it easier with a new type of sunglasses. Called Competivision, the line of shades makes the ball stand out from all other objects.

"The spectrum of light enters the glass, and it has a neutralising system that mutes all colours other than optic yellow," director of marketing services Mike Connolly said. "It works for women's softball as well, since the ball is also yellow."

The glasses will not work for baseball because that ball is white, which is not technically a colour.

Current No 1 Martina Hingis, of Switzerland, en-

dorses the Bolle shades, but does not use them in matches. The company has designed prescription contact lenses for her, which she uses in practice sessions. The contacts, currently undergoing FDA testing, should be available to the public in October.

ROOKIE LEADER

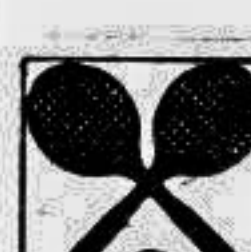
On paper, the Australian Davis Cup team looks to be loaded with talent for its semifinal tie against Russia. But with Patrick Rafter nursing a slight rotator cuff tear and Mark Philippoussis recovering from knee surgery, the top singles mantle may well fall on 18-year-old Lleyton Hewitt.

"It's unbelievable, isn't it?" asked Hewitt, who took a month off before the US Open to recover from a hurting ankle. Obviously there is a cloud over Rafter and Philippoussis, and possibly still a little bit of a cloud over myself as well with the ankle. The good thing is we've got a lot of depth on our team."

Wayne Arthurs, Jason Stoltenberg and Mark Woodforde are also available for singles or doubles duty. The tie will be held on grass in Brisbane on September 24-26.

"Even if I was the No 2 player, I had to try and beat both the guys anyway," Hewitt said. "I don't think it's going to be a big step for me going as the No 2 player into the No 1 player."

Hingis-Williams feud over



NEW YORK, Sept 4 (AP): The war of words between Martina Hingis and the Williams clan — Venus, Serena and Papa Richard — calmed down after a kiss-and-make-up meeting staged by the WTA Tour to defuse the feud.

The top-ranked Hingis gave Richard Williams an autographed T-shirt, and he gave her a hug and a kiss, after she reached the fourth round of the US Open with a 6-4, 6-2 victory Friday over Sandra Kloesel.

Williams had irked Hingis by predicting his daughters would meet in the final, a comment that led to some pretty good jibes volleyed back and forth the last few days.

"They always have a big mouth," Hingis had said.

"She just speaks her mind," Serena responded. "I guess it has a little bit to do with not having a formal education. But you just have to think more ... use your brain a little more in the tennis world."

When Hingis and Serena met in the OVER THE LAZY DOGS locker room Friday, they laughed about the exchanges, insisting to each other that the press had blown up the whole thing. Then a WTA Tour official suggested that Hingis could smooth things out by presenting Richard Williams with an

autographed T-shirt.

Hingis said he had been asking her for an autograph "every single tournament," always sticking his arm out for her to sign.

"I was, like, 'Why waste it? If you take a shower it's going to go off anyway,'" Hingis liked the T-shirt gag and promptly signed it, "To Richard," though she didn't put any love, or any other message, in front of her name.

"It's perfect timing," Hingis said of the truce offering.

The taunts all week underscored the competitiveness of the rivalry that is developing between the Williams sisters and Hingis, who are close in age.

Hingis, 18, clearly is ahead at the moment, a winner of five majors since turning pro five years ago. Neither of the Williams sisters has won even a single major title.

Reached the US Open final in her debut two years ago — only to lose in straight sets to Hingis. So when Richard Williams claimed that his girls are better than Hingis and everyone else, that they're too fast and too athletic and too smart to be beaten, Hingis said she had to wonder.

"He always has his comments," she said. "You know, it's fun. Because I'm better than them so far. I'm the No 1, not them."

"I never missed (school). I was always very happy about, you know, the thing I'm doing right now. I don't think the money's too bad either."

Hingis moved along in the tournament without much problem, though she played a somewhat ragged first set.

"In the beginning, I was a bit nervous," said Hingis, who next plays former champion Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario. "I was like, trying to get my rhythm. I missed a couple of shots, so I was a little bit scared ... Then the second set I was getting better."

"We don't have an off-season like all the other sports and that's a big mistake," Novotna said. "You have to play a lot of tournaments. You play on a lot of surfaces, which doesn't help. This is a perfect example. We have players falling out of draws with injuries like never before."

Novotna complained about the sport's grueling schedule

and lack of rest time for top players.

"It's not a point here and a point there," she said. "It's a lack of confidence, a lack of matches that I had and a lack of movement that I'm missing in my game. What can you do? The US Open is here so you try to be ready."

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