

Dokic loses in final

TOKYO, Sept 26: Wimbledon sensation Jelena Dokic's first WTA final ended in a three-set defeat when she lost the doubles final with Amanda Coetzer at the Princess Cup tennis tournament on Sunday, reports AFP.

The 16-year-old Australian, teaming up with the South African for the first time, crashed to a 7-6 (7/5), 4-6, 2-6 defeat to the second-seeded Spanish-Argentine duo of Conchita Martinez and Patricia Tarabini.

"I was quite happy that first of all we got to the final, we had some great matches throughout the week," said Dokic.

"Maybe we had a chance to win the doubles title, but we didn't do that today unfortunately, but hopefully we will in the near future."

Dokic, who bowed to Martinez in the singles first round here, caused a sensation by upsetting Swiss world number one Martina Hingis on her way to reaching the quarter-finals at Wimbledon.

Dokic and Coetzer pulled off upset victories over American pairs, top-seeded Lindsay Davenport and Corina Morariu in the quarter-finals and third-seeded Lori McNeil and Kimberly Po in the semi-finals.

Dokic said she would play in as many doubles as possible as it improves her play in the singles.

"Hopefully, if I can play doubles, I'd like to try in every tournament."

We've had quite a few tough matches this week, a few tough ones, which is good to get through," said Dokic.

"As I said it helps your singles game, you can practice a lot," added the Australian, who will take part in Moscow and Leipzig later and hopes to start the new year with the Hopman Cup, Sydney and the Australian Open.

Hockeyroos' double delight

SYDNEY, Sept 26: Australia completed the double at the Sydney International Hockey Challenge pre-Olympic event today, winning both the men's and women's gold medals, reports AFP.

Australia came from a goal down to beat the undermanned South Korea 2-1 in the men's final.

Lachlan Vivian-Taylor cancelled out Woon-Gon Yeo's 29th minute opener within a minute and Jeremy Hiskins hit the winner five minutes from time. The Hockeyroos trounced the United States 4-0 in the women's final.

Australia also won both titles at the Champions Trophy in Brisbane in June.

Katrina Powell and Michelle Andrews scored sensational goals in Australia's 4-0 win over the United States to clinch the women's gold medal.

Powell opened the scoring in the ninth minute with a diving back stick shot from an acute angle reminiscent of her goal in the final at Atlanta in 1996.

Then in the 30th minute Andrews mesmerised the American defenders with a dribble along the baseline before slotting home the ball through the goalkeeper's legs from an almost impossible angle.

"The world and Olympic champions, who had played two different games going into the final, were never going to be caught after that start."

"They pretty much ran a clinic out there and didn't charge us for it," said US captain Tracy Fuchs.

The Americans had held Australia to 1-1 on Thursday, earning Fuchs her first point against the Hockeyroos in 11 years.

But Powell, Andrews and Claire Mitchell-Tavernier with a cranking shot in the 14th minute had the match wrapped up 3-0 at half-time.

Newcomer Carmel Souter joined the spree in the 56th minute with her first international goal.

China beat Spain 2-1 thanks to two second-half goals by Hui Ping Yang, the tournament's leading scorer with five, for the women's bronze medal.

Canada beat India 5-3 in a thriller to win bronze in the men's event.

IOC finalises reforms

GENEVA, Sept 26: A key panel charged with overhauling the Olympic movement has finalised its main recommendations on an upbeat note about the prospects for genuine reform, reports AP.

But the public optimism about the future of the International Olympic Committee contrasts with the present reality of crisis and criticism.

A high-level meeting Saturday endorsed proposals from working groups on age limits, terms of office and selection of IOC members; financial transparency; visits to bidding cities and the host city selection process, according to an IOC statement.

"We have no intention of whitewashing," said former US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger. "Our recommendations will have to stand the test of scrutiny," said Kissinger after the meeting.

"We are optimistic that we will succeed," said Kissinger in a telephone interview from IOC headquarters in Lausanne.

Kissinger is a member of the 26-member executive body of the IOC 2000 reform committee set up in the wake of the Salt Lake City vote-buying scandal, which plunged the Olympic movement into its worst ever crisis.



Americans Lindsay Davenport (R) and Monica Seles are all smiles after the presentation ceremony of the Princess Cup in Tokyo yesterday. Davenport won the title after beating Seles 7-5, 7-6 (7-1). — AFP photo

Davenport denies Seles

TOKYO, Sept 26: Lindsay Davenport brought Monica Seles' three-year reign as Princess Cup champion to an end here Sunday, clinching victory in the final of the 520,000-dollar tournament with a hard-fought 7-5, 7-6 (7-1) win, reports AFP.

Wimbledon champion Davenport relied on powerful groundstrokes to seal the straight sets triumph against her American compatriot at the Ariake Coliseum.

Seles, whose only loss in this tournament came in 1990 when it was held indoors, had never been beaten on the hard court here before, winning the singles title five times with three in a row since 1996.

"It was a very tough, close match. Just a few points in the first and second sets made the difference," said Davenport, 23.

"I will, hopefully, come back next year along with Monica and everybody else to play another great tournament."

Both Davenport and Seles hit the ball deep and hard from the baseline, mostly taking points by hitting winners, with errors at a minimum.

Davenport scored a break first to take a 2-1 lead in the first set and led 4-3 in the second, but each time Seles broke back in the following game to level.

But Davenport, firing nine aces against Seles' seven, was steadier on her own service and managed to break her opponent in the 11th game on her way to taking the first set.

Davenport chalked up a decisive 4-0 lead in the second set tie-break, sealing the 95-minute battle when Seles misfired a backhand return.

"I was trying to get her on the defensive and trying to move her around, because her best tennis is when she is dictating inside the baseline, so I wanted to keep the ball deep and move her around," said Davenport.

"It's very important to serve well to Monica, because she does return so well, but I think I was able to serve well enough. On the other hand, my backhand was working very well today."

"Other than that, it's tough to play, two hard-hitters, especially when you like to be the one dictating, so I'm very happy with the result," added the Atlanta Olympic champion.

Seles said: "Lindsay just played a terrific match and at key times she served much better, there's a couple of points here and there, and she was much more solid, also."

"I knew like I could not lose my serve to someone like Lindsay, who has such a strong first serve on both corners, and I've been struggling with my serve all week. I think I had the most double faults I served in my life this week."

It was Davenport's fifth title of the year and 24th overall, which brought her the 80,000-dollar first prize, and saw her winning record against Seles improve to four consecutive wins against two losses in major tournaments.

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French First Division

Monaco thrash PSG

PARIS, Sept 26: Monaco brutally punctured Paris Saint Germain's title aspirations on Saturday, winning 3-0 at the Parc des Princes to give their own tilt at the championship a massive boost, reports AFP.

Lyon took advantage of PSG's slip-up to go top by a point following a goalless draw at home to Strasbourg.

Lyon have 15 points from eight matches with Monaco, PSG and Auxerre, who lost 1-0 at champions Bordeaux, a point further back.

Monaco placed second on goal difference and scored a superb win on the back of goals by David Trezeguet, in blistering form this season, Philippe Leonard and Ludovic Giuly.

Trezeguet hit the first, his ninth of a stunning season to date, from the penalty spot on 30 minutes after PSG keeper Bernard Lama, had upended him inside the area.

Lama was booked for his pains and picks up a suspension as a result, which will keep him out of next month's match against Marseille.

A scorching, low 25metre drive from Philippe Leonard eight minutes from the end ensured there was no way back for PSG, who had previously looked like serious title contenders and Giuly scored the third in the dying seconds.

It was a happy return to the Parc des Princes for former PSG striker Marco Simone, who joined Monaco in the summer and who was roundly booed by the home crowd.

Lilian Laslandes meanwhile cheered Bordeaux with the only goal after six minutes against high-flying Auxerre, netting after a superb tailor-made cross from sidekick Sylvain Wilford.

There were bad news for promoted Saint Etienne, who slid to bottom of the pack without even playing as a 1-1 draw for Le Havre at Bastia took Le Havre above Les Verts.

Saint Etienne travel to fellow strugglers Lens on Sunday, while Rennes came to Marseille, looking to kickstart their poor league season after two Champions League wins.

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STANDINGS

French First Division table after Saturday's matches (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, against, points) French league standings

Lyon	8	4	3	1	10	6	15
Monaco	8	4	2	2	18	9	14
Auxerre	8	4	2	2	10	9	14
Paris SG	8	4	2	2	10	9	14
Sedan	8	4	1	3	14	12	13
Nantes	8	4	0	4	11	6	12
Strasbourg	8	3	3	2	7	7	12
Bordeaux	8	3	2	3	13	11	11
Montpellier	8	3	2	3	12	14	11
Marseille	7	2	4	1	9	7	10
Metz	2	2	4	2	8	6	10
Bastia	8	2	3	3	10	13	9
Troyes	8	3	0	5	6	12	9
Lens	7	2	2	3	4	7	8
Rennes	7	2	2	3	8	12	8
Nancy	8	1	4	3	10	13	7
Le Havre	8	1	4	3	8	12	7
Saint-Etienne	7	1	3	3	13	16	6

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