

## Real might swap Anelka for Zidane

MADRID, Oct 1: Real president Lorenzo Sanz on Friday suggested a swap deal between controversial French striker Nicolas Anelka and his compatriot Zinedine Zidane of Juventus, reports AFP.

The former Arsenal striker may be loaned out to the Italian Serie A side until the end of the season unless his performances begin to merit his 30 million dollar transfer fee, the largest in Spanish football history.

Sanz said the December transfer window may see him contact Juventus with a view to conducting the deal.

According to Spanish newspaper AS, Sanz said: "I was reminded of the December break the other day. I hope and I trust that Anelka's signing will pay off: he is 20 years old and I'm sure his form will eventually take off."

However, if I see that Anelka doesn't deserve his place in the squad I would think about transferring him to Juve in mid-season and bringing in Zidane."

But Sanz added: "This is not a permanent exchange. I wouldn't swap Zidane for Anelka at this point in time, he is just 20 years old."

Sanz's announcement follows a horrendous first two months in Spain for Anelka, who has found himself under pressure from the Spanish media.

The French international has yet to score in a competitive game for his new side and is currently on the treatment table with a knee injury picked up in the Champions League against FC Molde and is expected to be out for at least another week.

World Cup winner Zidane, 27, only recently returned to first-team action for Juve after a long injury lay-off.

Zidane, whose wife is Spanish, has made no secret of his desire to play in Spain.

## 2002 World Cup 83 venues bid for becoming training camps

TOKYO, Oct 1: A total of 83 cities and villages throughout Japan have applied as training camps for the 2002 World Cup finals to be co-hosted by Japan and South Korea, organizers said here Friday, reports AFP.

"We received applications from almost all the prefectures. It means the World Cup has been recognized by the whole country. We are going to select the best training camps for the participating teams," said Japanese football association president Shunichiro Okano.

The Japanese organizing committee and the association will inspect candidates, check the conditions of the facilities and accommodation, and make a recommendation list by the end of June 2001.

Okano said even though countries choose to train in a city which was not recommended by the organizers, Japan will take the best measures for their security.

Candidate cities included some J-League clubs' home grounds, ancient cities of Nara and Kyoto. They also included Mito, some 15 kilometres (nine miles) from Tokaimura where the country's worst nuclear accident occurred Thursday.

## Cole one goal shy of European mark

MANCHESTER, England, Oct 1: Andy Cole on Thursday spoke of his pride at being just one strike away from equalling the legendary Denis Law's goalscoring record for Manchester United in Europe, reports AFP.

Law is United's leading marksman in Europe's premier club competition with 14 goals. Cole's spectacular overhead kick in the 2-1 win over Marseille on Wednesday was reminiscent of Law at his best and it was his 13th for United in the Champions League.

He is now level with former Busby Babe Dennis Viollet and it seems only a matter of time before he breaks Law's 30-year record.

Cole feels privileged to be in the company of such great United strikers.

"I'm very proud to be up there on 13 goals," he said.

"I've taken a bit of stick from the lads now that I'm only one behind Denis Law."

"If I get there I will be delighted with it. It's a great landmark for me because Denis Law was such a great player."

"I'm delighted to even be as close as I am to Denis Law's number of goals in Europe."

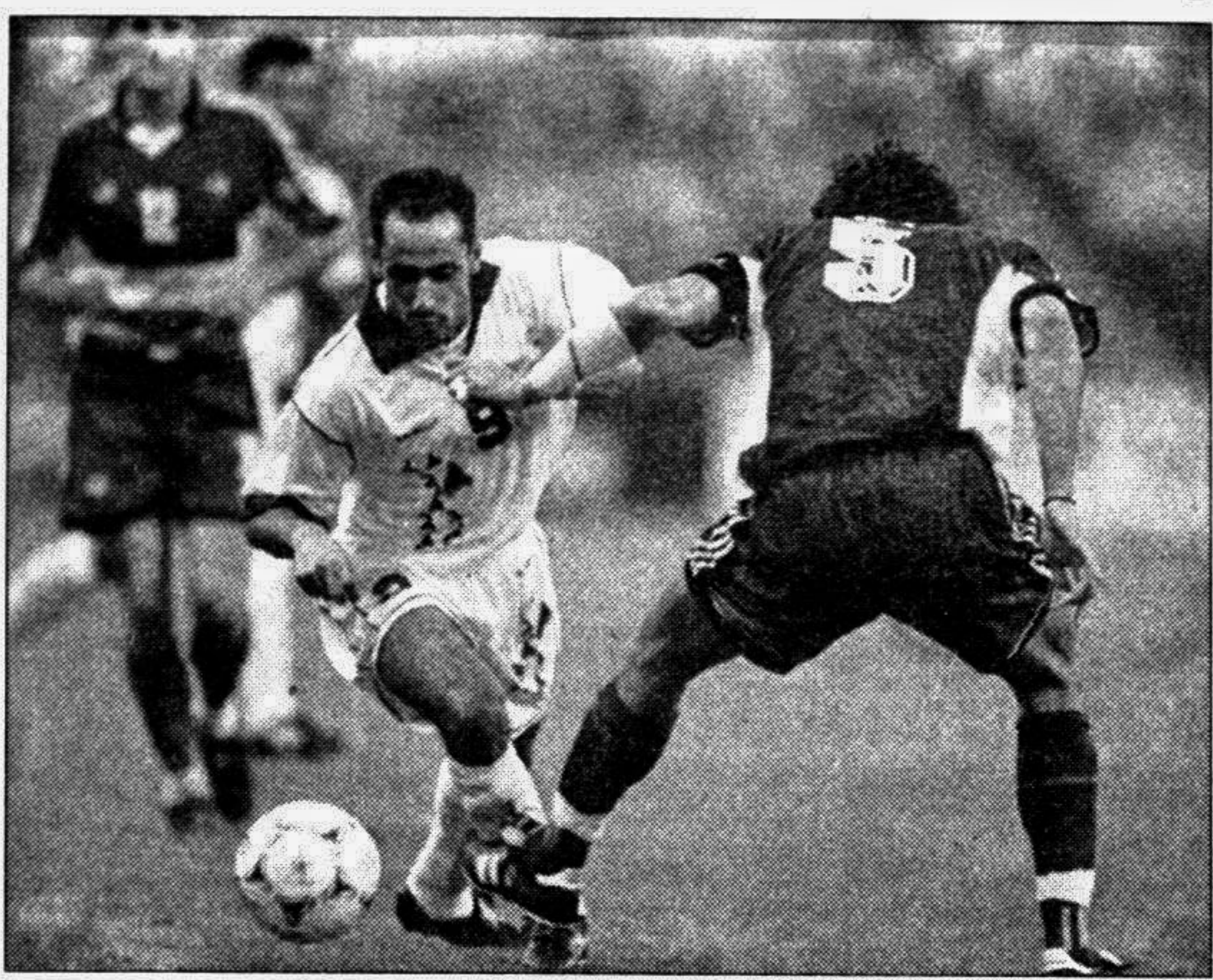
Denis Irwin is also closing in on another United record in Europe.

The Republic of Ireland defender equalled Peter Schmeichel's club record of 36 Champions League appearances against Marseille and needs just one more game to set a new best.

FA finds Elliott at fault

LONDON, Oct 1: The English FA charged Leicester City defender Matt Elliott with misconduct on Thursday following a clash with Liverpool's striker Michael Owen in league match this month, reports Reuters.

Aston Villa manager John Gregory and his England defender Gareth Southgate were also charged for comments made to a match referee after another league game at Leicester.



Saudi international Sami Al Jaber dodges past South Africa's Mark Fish during their Afro-Asian Nations' Cup return leg encounter in Riyadh on September 30. — AFP photo

## Premiership preview

# Euro hangover top guns' worry

LONDON, Oct 1: Manchester United could find themselves knocked off the top of the English Premiership this Sunday - for an hour at least, reports AFP.

Sir Alex Ferguson's side, who have 21 points, visit Chelsea in the game of the weekend which kicks off an hour after second-placed Leeds United's match at Watford.

Leeds, together with Arsenal, have 19 points but with all four sides coming off a heavy schedule of European games, the real winners of the weekend could be Sunderland.

Currently fourth on 17 points, Peter Reid's promoted side will gatecrash the early season title race if they can register their sixth win in 10 games at fellow promoters Bradford.

England pair Kevin Phillips, with eight goals so far, and left-sided Michael Gray have been two important reasons for the Wearside far from weary start to the season.

However, Swede Stefan Schwarz, scorer of the winner against Sheffield Wednesday last week, reckons the fiercely competitive atmosphere at the club is the secret of their success.

"I think that we are doing well at Sunderland because the players in the side know that they have to perform at their best to stay in the team," said the ex-Arsenal and Fiorentina star.

"There is so much competition for places that no-one can afford to relax and that is good for the club."

Arsenal, boosted by a battling 1-1 draw at Barcelona on Wednesday, have England goalkeeper David Seaman back on board after the calf injury that has kept him out all season.

They visit West Ham on Sunday and Croatian Davor Suker could also start in place of Dennis Bergkamp in the Arsenal attack.

The Dutch journeyman, who refuses to fly, set off on his latest road trip back to London from Barcelona on Thursday and may be feeling a little leg weary.

Bobby Robson's Newcastle, still second bottom and four points from safety, attempt to get back on track following the defeat by Leeds last week when they entertain fellow northeast side Middlesbrough on Sunday.

Paul Gascoigne, sent off for using "industrial" language while conversing with a linesman last week, will doubtless have washed his mouth out with soap and may line up for Boro against his old teammates, though he faces a battle with Brazilian Juninho for a place in the starting line-up.

Italian goalkeeper Massimo Taibi let a Matt Le Tissier daisy cutter pass through his legs in the 3-3 draw with Southampton last Saturday.

On Wednesday against Marseille, Norwegian defender Henning Berg was dispossessed by Ibrahim Bakayoko who put the French side ahead before half-time.

"It was a very stupid, stupid mistake," admitted Berg. "I was gutted and it's the worst I have ever felt on the pitch. I've made mistakes before, but you just don't do things like that."

Fixtures

Saturday (kick-offs 1400 GMT): Aston Villa v Liverpool, Bradford v Sunderland, Everton v Coventry, Sheffield Wednesday v Wimbledon.

Sunday (kick-offs 1500 GMT unless stated): Chelsea v Manchester United, Newcastle v Middlesbrough (1400), Tottenham v Leicester, Watford v Leeds (1400), West Ham v Arsenal.

Monday (1900): Southampton v Derby

# Mike in need of money?

NEW YORK, Oct 1: When Mike Tyson's trainer said Thursday his man would knock out journeyman Orlin Norris on October 23 he wasn't expressing fistic hyperbole but rather fiscal reality for the former heavyweight champion of the world, reports Reuters.

These days Tyson, in debt for some 20 million dollars, is reduced to fighting on regular cable television rather than on lucrative pay-per-view, and nothing short of a spectacular early knockout will put the once prolific Tyson money machine back on track.

"There's no question about the outcome of the fight," Tommy Brooks said in a telephone conference call from Las Vegas. "It's just a question of how he does it."

Brooks, brought in as part of a shake-up in Tyson's camp before Tyson fought South African Francois Botha last February, said, "If Mike does what we've been working on in the gym the fight lasts three rounds."

And that's just the outcome Tyson has to produce, Brooks said, to begin to once again recapture the interests of boxing fans and their money.

Brooks alluded to the disappointing Oscar De La Hoya-Felix Trinidad fight earlier this month which Trinidad won on a majority decision. But the fight didn't come close to being the spectacular brawl so many people had predicted.

So Brooks expects the 33-

year-old Tyson to jump into the breach against the nearly 34-year-old Norris and to begin to pump excitement back into boxing and his bank account.

In Tyson's latest comeback, after 3-1/2 months in a Maryland Jail for assaulting two motorists, Brooks will be joined by long-time Tyson friend Jay Bright, who had been jettisoned by Tyson's former handlers, whom Tyson is suing, alleging they stole millions of dollars from him.

It's apparent that while there did not seem to be any problems with Brooks's abilities as a trainer Tyson needed someone closer to him and to the discipline and style of Tyson's former mentor, Cus D'Amato.

# Hingis' birthday wish

MUNICH, Oct 1 (Reuters): Martina Hingis celebrated her 19th birthday on Thursday with a piece of cake for her mother, an afternoon party at Oktoberfest and a humble wish that she might finally win the French Open.

The Swiss star admitted she had learned a lot during a stormy year in which she lost and regained her number one ranking and looked to the future with relish.

"I've learned a lot about emotional patience," Hingis said in an interview during the Grand Slam Cup in Munich, where she and the top performers from the four grand slam tournaments are chasing 6.7 million dollars in prizes.

"I found out you can't have everything at once."

Czech-born Hingis, who has won five Grand Slams began the year strongly by taking the Australian Open. But she walked into a storm when she referred to her muscular opponent Amelie Mauresmo as "half a man" as the French woman revealed she had a girlfriend.

Hingis fell to pieces at the French Open — the only Grand Slam event she has yet to win — while losing to Steffi Graf in the final.

Mercilessly baited by the crowd, Hingis lost control and the respect of practically everybody who witnessed the debacle.

She received a warning for smashing her racket, broke all

the rules of tennis etiquette by crossing to Graf's side of the net to query a line-call, climbed the umpire's chair to remonstrate with the official, served underarm on match point and stormed off court before the prize-giving ceremony.

She fell out with her mother and trainer, Melanie Molitor, and went off to Wimbledon on her own, where she promptly lost in the first round.

Hingis disappeared for what she said was a badly needed holiday.

Rejuvenated for the US Open last month, she breezed through the early rounds and then won a

tense three-set thriller against Venus Williams in the semifinals before being upset in the final by sister Serena Williams.

"I'm happy with the way I played, but maybe not always content with the results," Hingis said on Thursday. "I've learned you have to work hard for it that it doesn't always fall from the sky."

Her main goal for next year is, again, the French Open. "I always dream about the French Open title," she said. "Winning the Grand Slam all four grand slam tournaments in the same years is also a big dream."

Hingis has won the Australian Open three times, Wimbledon in 1997 and the US Open in 1997.

"Tennis is the most important thing for me right now," Hingis said when asked what she might be doing in five years. "It's the thing I do best. It's my main job and I want to stick with it."

Hingis said that the game seemed to be changing and that she enjoyed the new, more physical challenge that the Williams sisters have brought to tennis.

"The physical level of the game is getting higher all the time," she said. "It's gotten more emotional, more physical. I've been playing a technical game and it's a good challenge to raise the fitness level."

Hingis' mental strength appeared to be catching up with her athletic ability and that could be the key to her French Open dream.

## Afro-Asian Cup SA's

RIYADH, Oct 1: South Africa fought off nearly 90 minutes of constant pressure and Sami al-Jaber missed a penalty as South Africa's national team, Bafana Bafana, held Saudi Arabia to a goalless draw to win the Afro-Asian Cup Thursday, reports AP.

Having won the first leg in Cape Town 1-0 on Sept 18, South Africa needed a draw to claim the title and they played accordingly.

The Saudis missed several opportunities, especially in the first half, with Obaid Al-Dosari's goal-bound shot cleared off the line by Mark Fish in the 21st minute.

A controversial penalty was called for the Saudis in the 33rd minute after Kuwaiti referee Saad Kameel ruled that Dumisa Ngobe fouled al-Jaber in the box. Al-Jaber stepped up to take the shot but he fired wide.

Al-Jaber tried to make amends during first half injury time, rounding off two defenders and the goalkeeper but he played a weak square ball to al-Dosari instead of shooting into an empty net giving the South African defence time to clear.

"We played a good match but the 1-0 score in Cape Town made our job difficult. It's a tragedy that we created four scoring opportunities and a penalty but failed to convert any of them," said Saudi coach Milan Macala.

South African goalkeeper Andre Arendse repeatedly frustrated the Saudis, saving several shots from Nawaf al-Temawi and Khaled Al-Temawi.

With time running out, Macala, who began the match with five defenders, put his cautious approach aside and urged all his players forward to try and level the aggregate score.

But the relentless Saudi pressure was met with stiff defending from the South Africans.

Hussein Abdul Ghani's injury time free kick from the edge of the box appeared heading into the top right corner of the goal but Arendse sprang to tip it over.

The Afro-Asian Cup is a meeting between the two continental champions. The match was originally set after South Africa won the 1996 African Cup of Nations, but scheduling problems delayed it from being played.

## Davids to miss Brazil friendly

AMSTERDAM, Oct 1: Dutch coach Frank Rijkaard named a 19-man squad on Thursday to play Brazil and was forced to leave out Edgar Davids who is recovering from eye operation, reports Reuters.

The fiery Juventus midfielder recently had surgery to counter glaucoma in his right eye.

Injured Michael Reiziger does not feature in Rijkaard's plans either but the side for the match on October 9 is otherwise essentially the same as that named ahead of the friendly with Belgium earlier this month.

Belgium and the Netherlands are co-hosting the Euro Championship.

Feyenoord defender Bert Kontermann and Real Madrid midfielder Clarence Seedorf are recalled after missing the Belgian match through injury.

Rijkaard is facing increasing pressure after producing only one win from 10 games in charge. Against Belgium, he solved his team's goal drought but his defence caved in. The chaotic match ended as a 5-5 draw.

Brazil won one and drew one of the friendlies they played against the Netherlands in June. The second match, which Brazil won 3-2, saw five players sent off.

## SQUAD

Goalkeepers: Edwin van der Sar (Juventus), Sander Westerveld (Liverpool).

Defence: Frank de Boer, Marc van Hultum, Bert Kontermann, Jaap Stam, Kees van Wondren.

Midfield: Ronald de Boer, Giovanni van Bronckhorst, Phillip Cocu, Jean-Paul van Gastel, Clarence Seedorf, Aron Winter, Peter van Vossen, Boudewijn Zenden.

Forwards: Dennis Bergkamp, Pierre van Hooijdonk, Patrick Kluyvert, Ruud van Nistelrooy.

## Lens sack coach

LENS, France, Oct 1: French First Division side Lens on Friday said they had sacked Daniel Leclercq after a poor start to the season, reports AFP.

Club president Georges Martel announced the decision to fire 50-year-old Leclercq the day after the club just squeezed into the second round of the UEFA Cup with a narrow win over Israel's Maccabi Tel Aviv.

Leclercq, who led the northern club to the league title in 1998 - their first major trophy - as well as last season's league cup, pays the price for dismal league form which sees the team mired in the relegation zone.

Martel, who hinted at internal difficulties among the Lens hierarchy, said the decision to part company with Leclercq was in the interests of the club.

The two men had earlier had a long discussion Friday morning.

Leclercq's assistants Francois Brissot, Didier Senac and Andre Lannoy will take temporary charge of the team for Sunday's match against Auxerre.

"We had hoped to come in the top five and win another trophy," said Leclercq, but his hopes were dashed by successive home defeats by promoted Sedan and Saint-Etienne.

# Haas has the laugh of Agassi



MUNICH, Oct 1: Andre Agassi dived with danger in a whitewash first set and couldn't recover, taking an upset defeat against Tommy Haas 6-0, 6-7, 6-4 at the 6.7-million-dollar Grand Slam Cup on Thursday, reports AFP.

It was Agassi's first match since winning the US Open just over two weeks ago and then revealing that he and Steffi Graf were indeed a couple.

Agassi, trophyholder at two Grand Slams and a finalist at Wimbledon this season, looked listless in a 6-0 first-set sweep, where German hope Haas, 11th

in the world, had his way in just 17 minutes.

It was not until 20 minutes into the quarterfinal contest at the richest payday in tennis that Agassi managed to win a game.

The world number one started getting comfortable on the hardcourt at the Olympiahalle as he levelled for 2-2 with a love game sealed with an ace.

The 29-year-old American broke for a 5-4 lead but found himself back level a game later.

In the tiebreaker, the American dominated, squaring the match at a set each with a return winner on the first of four set points.



German Tommy Haas in action against Andre Agassi. — AFP photo

Agassi produced the most ill-timed of double-faults to face a pair of break points in the seventh game of the final set. The American saved the first with a serve winner, but on the second Agassi hit a backhand into the net to drop to 3-4.

Three games later, victory went to the 21-year-old German.

"It was a good performance from me," said Haas. "I started well and it took him time to find his game. I had a few mistakes in the tiebreaker, but it came up a good win."

However, Agassi will exit with a 250,000 dollars bonus for two Grand Slam titles plus 175,000 dollars for a quarterfinal showing (after a first-round bye).

"I was lucky to have a chance today," said Agassi. "I came here to play tennis, this (pressure) is not ideal. You try to focus on what you are doing, you hope it doesn't affect you on court," added the American referring to the Steffi Graf affair.

Thursday's programme was full, with women completing their first round matches from an eight-strong field.

Venus Williams, the defending champion, was playing against Austrian Barbara Schett, while American Lindsay Davenport was facing Frenchwoman Mary Pierce.

Thomas Enqvist, the Australian Open finalist, was wrapping up a full day as he played Nicolas Pietrangeli of Ecuador.

Women's world number one Martina Hingis had the day off.

# Andre ducks Steffi affair

MUNICH, Germany, Oct 1 (Reuters): "Love thirty" has taken on a new meaning for Andre Agassi since the American tennis champion revealed his romance with Steffi Graf — who turned 30 in June.

Agassi said on Thursday he had no plans to start learning German and declined to reveal when his relationship with the recently retired German tennis star began.

"I've just enjoyed my time with her," Agassi, 29, said in his first extensive comments on the relationship at a news conference following his first-round defeat by Tommy Haas at the Grand Slam Cup.

"It's not any different than anybody you enjoy spending time with," he added.

Agassi said he would not follow Graf into retirement. The German quit a month after turning 30, Agassi, the world's

top-ranked tennis player, will hit 30 on April 29.

"I don't even think about that," he said of retirement. "That's hopefully a long way away."

Graf and Agassi have known each other on the international tennis circuit for more than a decade and they both celebrated comeback triumphs at the French Open in June — three months before announcing they had fallen in love with each other.

German newspapers have since been filled with wildly speculative reports that Agassi and Graf are planning to marry — perhaps as soon as January 1, 2000 — and are contemplating having children.

"I have no plans, no," Agassi said when asked about the reports.

Agassi, whose two-year old marriage to actress Brooks Shields ended in divorce earlier this year, was his usual laconic self when talking about

his tennis game but confined himself to brief and rather evasive replies when asked about Graf.

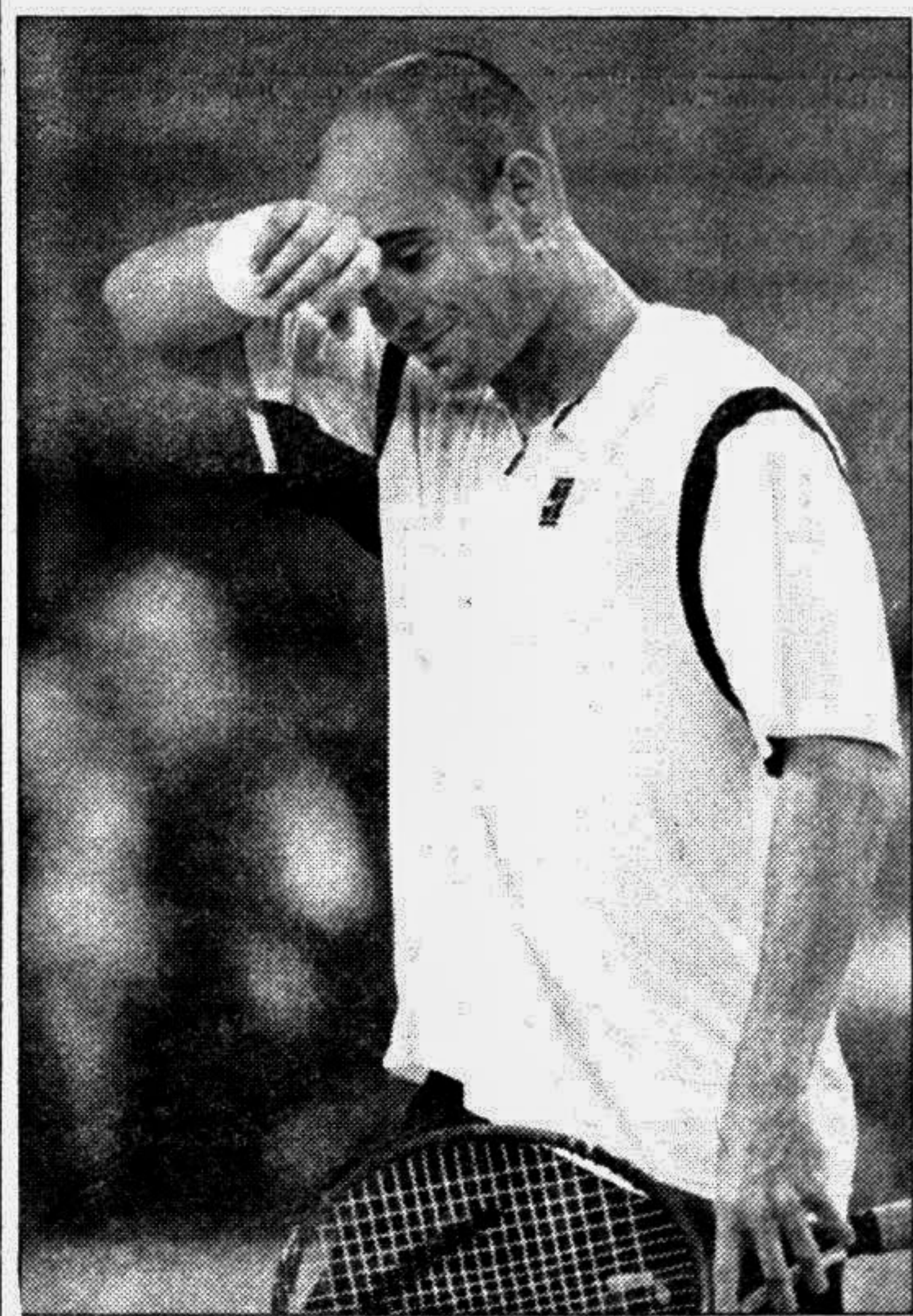
He declined to say why Graf, who accompanied him on a flight from the United States to Munich on Tuesday before going on to Vienna and then her home town of Heidelberg, did not appear at the Grand Slam Cup for his match on Thursday.

"Not really, no," Agassi said when asked if he wanted to explain her absence. Asked if Graf planned to come to Munich, Agassi said: "No, I mean, that's her business, what she's doing."

Graf has avoided the German media since her father was convicted for tax evasion and sent to jail. She recently split up with her boyfriend of seven years Michael Bartels.

When asked on Thursday why he and Graf had got together after knowing each other for so long, Agassi said: "I don't know if I can explain it."

Agassi had said after winning the French Open in June that he had been inspired by Graf. Asked on Thursday how she had inspired him, the American said: "This is for me to know and you to figure out."



Andre Agassi wipes his forehead after dropping a point. — AFP photo

## Henman humbled

TOULOUSE, France, Oct 1: Frenchman Nicolas Escude beat top-seeded Briton Tim Henman 6-4, 6-2 in the second round of the Toulouse Open yesterday, reports Reuters.

Cheered by the local crowd, Escude, ranked 80th in the world, took advantage of Henman's unusually weak serve to win the first set and cruise through the second thanks to blistering passing shots.

"I played an enormous match today," said Escude. "I managed to upset him by taking a lot of risks. It worked as he was afraid to come to the net. I kept the pressure until the finish."

Henman refused to attend the post match media conference.

Escude, who had been out of action for most of last season through injury after reaching the 1998 Australian Open semifinals, showed he was back on form at the US Open earlier this month.

The Frenchman, then ranked 136th in the world, beat Chile's Marcelo Rios on his way to the quarterfinals, losing to eventual winner Andre Agassi.

Henman's loss continued a difficult week for seeds in Toulouse as half of them, notably weary Davis Cup semifinalists Cedric Pioline, Sebastien Grosjean of France and Marat Safin of Russia, disappeared in the first round.

## CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

- Angelic instrument
- Dunkard
- Parlor piece
- Deathless flower of myth
- House: brick — nest —
- Well-read
- Liquor or Levesque
- Jungrau, e.g.
- Window covers
- Polo on the move
- Nie
- Eastern nursemaid
- Library clientele
- Col-umnist
- Festive
- 30 — "Town"
- Boots from office
- Whirl
- 35 Monad
- Undoos a dele

DOWN

- Spout from the pulpit
- Child's play
- Mel of Coopers-town
- Soldier Field squad
- Hit
- Author Wister
- Locate
- Shakespearian septet
- Woody's son
- Word hollered by Jerry Lewis
- Squealer
- 2001 computer pal
- 2 Parisian
- Solution time: 22 mins.
- SOFA SLED RTG PIER TAXI ONE ALEC ODOOR MEN MYTH REID SCAITZ
- FAMILY SCRAPE
- ACTIVE ABBEY
- STRAID ALLEGE
- LEI APE
- ALMS VICE ARFS LITE DISH RIOTIT AVE DOTE HELD SEY PETER
- 21 In the thick of
- 22 Demolish
- 23 Monica's chapeau
- 25 Quilt
- 26 Hitchcock tour de force
- 27 Belong
- 28 Stereo alternative
- 31 Hosp. staffers
- 33 Why
- 34 Defy curfew or gravity
- 36 Broke's advice
- 37 Bulletin board item
- 38 Exam format
- 39 Heap
- 40 Mop
- 43 Prior night
- 44 Kids' card game
- 45 H
- 46 Rep.'s rival

Yesterday's answer

1	2	3	4	5	6
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