

Battle for Everton's ownership

LONDON, Oct 17: The battle for ownership of English Premiership club Everton has moved up a gear with the news that a US finance house has had its bid accepted to buy out chairman Peter Johnson's 48 percent controlling interest, club sources said Saturday, reports AFP.

On Monday, accountants representing Manhattan-based EM Warburg Pincus and Co can begin checking the books of the Goodison Park club with a view to the deal being completed.

It is believed that vice-chairman Bill Kenwright, who has been struggling for almost a year to win control of the club himself, will now have to join forces with another English consortium of businessmen to fight the US offer.

The Warburg Pincus bid, believed to have been brokered by computer games entrepreneur and Everton fan Paul Fennigan, has been presented to Johnson's Leeds-based brokers Arthur Anderson, and accepted by the now Jersey-based major shareholder.

A source said: "This is obviously subject to contract and due diligence."

In layman's terms, that means time for accountants to check the club's books, and that starts officially next week.

On Thursday the club held their annual general meeting, where Kenwright could even be voted off the board by Johnson's majority control, and the scene is set for a battle royal between the US bidders and the theatre impresario.

An offer of around 30 million pounds (48 million dollars) from a group of high-powered English businessmen has already been rejected by Johnson. Now shareholders expect Kenwright to hit back by agreeing to join forces with the businessmen's group to outbid Warburg Pincus.

Kevin Nolan, spokesman for the club's shareholders association, confirmed that his organisation know about the US bid and accept that it is genuine, but he said: "I will believe it has happened only when the cheque has cleared the bank."

Sources believe that the Americans offer is only the beginning of another lengthy, and increasingly bitter, battle for control of the club.

Everton, a big club with a large fan base, have been forced to live in the shadow of their Merseyside neighbours Liverpool for much of the past two decades. They last won England's top division in 1987, but picked up the FA Cup in 1995.

GAISF stands by IOC

TOKYO, Oct 17: The General Association of International Sports Federations (GAISF) has pledged support for the International Olympic Committee (IOC) in the global fight against doping, reports AFP.

The association adopted a resolution on Saturday at its annual general assembly in Osaka, western Japan, vowing to support and assist the IOC-led anti-doping movement.

GAISF, which groups 88 international sports federations, called on national governments to contribute to the campaign.

The IOC plans to set up a new independent international anti-doping agency by the end of this year.

It will published an annual list of banned substances, set a standard for doping controls, in particular out-of-competition spot checks and open a laboratory to oversee controls.

GAISF president Kim Un-Young, who is also an IOC executive from South Korea, called on different sports governing bodies to enforce doping controls during and out of competitions.

The IOC leads the anti-doping fight movement. Kim said, noting that the anti-doping agency would have a "significant budget" and that a programme of controls towards the 2000 Sydney Olympics has been specified.

"GAISF must join this fight, which should not be limited to the Olympic Games, but must be permanent all year around," Kim said.

He added: "The international federations have the ability to fight, through regular controls during and out of the competitions, and can harmonise the regulations and sanctions according to Anti-Doping Code elaborated by the IOC."

Choi clinches WBC belt

SEOUL, Oct 17: South Korea's Choi Yo-sam became the new World Boxing Council light flyweight champion with an unanimous decision over Thailand's Saman Sor Jaturong in a 12-round title match on Sunday, reports AP.

The 27-year-old South Korean challenger, employing effective jabs connected with telling straight punches, kept the Thai champion in the defensive from the start. He controlled most of the match before 1,000 spectators at Seoul's Olympic gym.

The 30-year-old Thai, aware that he was behind in points, came out strong in the final rounds, hurling several good lefts and rights, but he looked tired.

The Korean entered the match as the WBC's No 1 challenger in its light flyweight category. The victory improved Choi's career record to 21 wins, 10 of them by knockout, against one defeat. Jaturong's record dropped to 41 wins against three defeats.

Both weighed in at 48.98 kilograms (94.5 pounds).

French First Division

Auxerre remain atop



PARIS, Oct 17: Auxerre's 3-1 home victory over Bastia on Saturday kept them on top of the French league first division though, surprisingly by the result, the Burgundy side were not at their best, reports AFP.

Steve Marlet and Stephane Guivarch had put Auxerre 2-0 ahead by the sixth minute and then Finnish international Teemu Tainio added a last-minute goal to complete the scoring.

Lyon, who beat Marseille 1-0 through a Sonny Anderson goal on Friday, are in second spot and Monaco, 3-0 winners over Strasbourg on Saturday, are third.

Although Auxerre, the 1996 French league and cup winners, are top, their display against Bastia did not see them in control as the result suggested.

Bastia were often the more positive side, with Auxerre content to contain the Corsicans without creating any effective attacking moves.

Marlet connected from a Bernard Diomedé cross to put the ball past Bastia keeper Eric Durand in the fourth minute.

Two minutes later, Kuami Agboh slid the ball to Diomedé on the edge of the box. Diomedé once more crossed and Guivarch knocked the ball home to double the score.

Bastia took more of the initiative in the second half and deservedly managed to score an equalizer through Ousmane Soumah with 13 minutes left.

However instead of Bastia getting an equalizer, Auxerre went further ahead with a move involving yet another cross by Diomedé.

Finnish international Tainio, with just keeper Durand to beat, lobbed him for an emphatic result but not an emphatic performance by Guy Roux's side.

Marseille, conquerors of Paris St Germain Tuesday, could have been excused for having only half a mind on Friday's game in light of their crucial Champions league clash with Manchester United on Tuesday.

Lyon's win, thanks to their in-form Brazilian striker and former Marseille hitman Anderson, gave them a timely boost before their own Champions league tie with Celtic at home on Thursday.

Anderson, who scored both goals in his side's defeat of Nantes midweek, once again proved his worth to Lyon.

Pouncing on a defensive blunder by Marseille's William Gallas Anderson slotted the ball past keeper Stephane Porato for a 37 minute strike.

This came after Ravanelli had gone close with a curling left footer drawing on all of the visiting keeper's acrobatics to keep it out of his net.

Monaco, without Argentine playmaker Marcelo Gallardo who has a groin injury, earned their sixth success of the season thanks to a great performance

by their Italian Marco Simone who scored twice.

Simone also scored twice against Bordeaux on Wednesday and now has eight goals, one behind teammate David Trezeguet who has nine.

The principality side brought in youngsters in Norway's John Risse and Pontus Farnell of Sweden, in place of Gallardo and Sylvain Legwinski, who has a right knee injury.

In the 28th minute, the for-

Vencel with a right foot shot from about 20 metres.

Lamouchi scored a third in the final minute into an empty net to cap his superb personal performance.

Meanwhile Fabien Barthez injured his right thigh in the 20th minute in a clash with teammate Philippe Leonard, but managed to finish the game although he did not appear to be fully fit.

Sylvain Wiltord scored for Bordeaux in a 1-0 win at



Monaco's Italian recruit Marco Simone (L) being chased by a Strasbourg defender.

— AFP photo

STANDINGS

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

Auxerre	11	7	2	2	19	13	23
Lyon	11	6	2	3	13	7	21
Monaco	11	6	2	3	24	12	20
Bordeaux	11	5	3	3	19	15	18
Paris Saint Germain	11	5	3	3	15	12	18
Marseille	11	4	5	2	14	10	17
St Etienne	11	4	4	3	18	17	16
Sedan	10	5	1	4	16	18	16
Rennes	11	4	2	5	15	17	14
Bastia	11	3	4	4	14	17	13
Strasbourg	11	3	4	4	10	15	13
Metz	10	2	6	2	11	9	12
Nancy	11	3	3	5	16	16	12
Nantes	11	4	0	7	11	13	12
Troyes	11	4	0	7	10	16	12
Montpellier	11	3	2	6	13	18	11
Lens	11	3	2	6	7	14	11
Le Havre	11	2	4	5	11	17	10

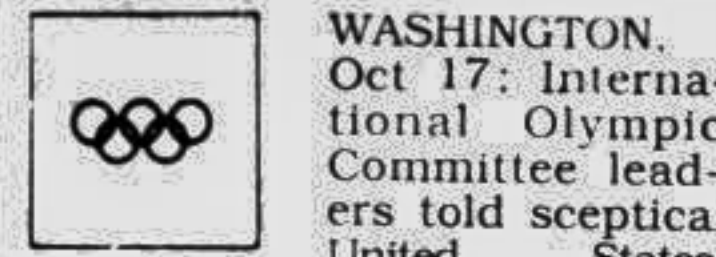
mer AC Milan and Paris Saint Germain player scored with a glorious left-footed volley from a cross from the right by in-form Sabri Lamouchi.

In the 72nd minute, Simone yet again beat keeper Alexander

Nantes, and Mikael Madar hit an 80th minute goal to earn a point in a 1-1 draw at Nancy.

Other matches had 1-0 victories for St Etienne over Troyes, Rennes over Le Havre and Lens over Montpellier.

Reforms will suffice!



WASHINGTON, Oct 17: International Olympic Committee leaders told sceptical United States lawmakers that reforms will solve the Olympic bid scandal caused by "weak people" and outdated management practices, reports AFP.

A Congressional hearing here Thursday into 7.8 million dollars of favours and improper gifts for IOC members by the bid group for the 1996 Atlanta Summer Olympics featured a defence by IOC director general Francois Carrard.

"Our problems were caused by weak people, structures and procedures," Carrard said. "The result of an old-fashioned structure of managing modern Games was not corruption, but a situation in which some less responsible members, a small minority, showed poor judgement and abused the system."

"While the Games evolved, our organisational structure did not. In effect, we did not realise we were going through a growth crisis."

Ten IOC members were expelled or resigned in connection with the Salt Lake City bid scandal, which prompted a look at excesses involved with the Atlanta bid that revealed earlier violations by that group.

IOC president Juan Antonio Samaranch has agreed to testify here on December 15, three days after the conclusion of an IOC meeting in Lausanne, Switzerland, to adopt major reforms in the wake of the money-for-votes scandal.

"I hope you will see the IOC president's willingness to come to Congress to explain the reform as yet another step toward greater transparency," Carrard said.

US lawmakers have their doubts about Samaranch and the IOC's willingness to control itself, with Texas Republican representative Joe Barton saying Samaranch should be ousted "sooner rather than later" and not be allowed to oversee reforms after making the IOC "a cesspool."

Pennsylvania Democratic representative Ron Klink saying he is "sceptical the IOC is serious this time" and California Democrat Henry Waxman called the IOC progress on reform "remarkably slow."

Kenneth Duberstein, vice chair of the US Olympic bid oversight panel whose suggestions US lawmakers have pushed the IOC to adopt, cited former US President Ronald Reagan in his

thoughts on the IOC's believability.

"It's important we evaluate the IOC's progress at each step of their journey," Duberstein said. "I'm reminded of a Russian proverb my former boss, President Reagan, referred to on occasion - trust but verify."

While I'm encouraged by what the IOC is doing, I also believe they should be closely and frequently monitored."

The IOC 2000 reform committee and the IOC ethics committee created earlier this year will meet in Lausanne later this month for final recommendations before the December IOC meetings.

"While the results of the December special IOC session will be the measure of merit, good progress has been made by the IOC to date," USOC president Bill Hybl said.

Among suggestions put forward by reformers are nomina-

tions and elections for members, lowering the age limit to 70, setting service terms at eight years and allowing presidents an eight-year term with re-election only possible once.

A revamped bid process would have IOC screening of candidate cities, a greater evaluation committee and the reform panel wants to eliminate IOC member travel to candidate cities.

The ethics committee would investigate violations and impose sanctions on IOC members as needed, but oversight of bid groups would fall to national Olympic committees. The USOC reform panel wants an outside oversight group with power to punish IOC members.

"The USOC could have done more to oversee the Atlanta and Salt Lake City bid processes," Hybl said. "If we had done so, we probably would not be here today."



Giovane Elber (R), Bayern Munich's Brazilian international striker, tries to shove off a Hertha Berlin defender.

Kremlin Cup

Pierce named top seed

MOSCOW, Oct 17: Mary Pierce of France heads the entry list for the 1.05 million dollar Kremlin Cup WTA Tour event, which begins Monday at the Moscow Olympic stadium, reports AFP.

Pierce will defend her title, which she won beating Monica Seles in last year's final.

Vitaly Yakovenko, Russian tennis association press-officer said the field, which features eight of the world's top 20 players, is one of the strongest in the tournament's history.

Organisers expect Barbara Schett, Julie Halard and Natalie Tauziat to play with local favourite Yelena Likhovtseva likely to be among eight seeds.

The winners of this year's tournament will receive 150,000 dollars.

The WTA event will be followed by the junior's tournament and ATP Kremlin Cup, starting on November 6.

This year's event, the 10th anniversary of the Kremlin Cup tournament, is the last time the men's and women's events will be held separately. Next year the ATP and WTA tournaments will be united in a one-week 2.2 million dollar indoor event.

Seeds: Mary Pierce (Fra xl), Barbara Schett (Aut x2), Julie Halard (Fra x3), Natalie Tauziat (Fra x4), Dominique Van Roost (Bel x5), Conchita Martinez (Esp x6), Sandrine Testud (Fra x7), Yelena Likhovtseva (Rus x8).

Politicians score victory

KAMPALA, Oct 17: Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni has Saturday afternoon won a friendly football match between the cabinet team and the team of the Federation of Uganda Football Association (FUFA), reports Xinhua.

In the football match at Mandela Stadium here, the cabinet team got a comfortable victory over the FUFA team led by the FUFA President Danis Obua.

President Museveni thrilled the football enthusiasts at the stadium by scoring the second goal for his team through a penalty kick in the second half of the game.

The cabinet team, with Museveni as its captain, had in the recent past days done rigorous training. Prime Minister Apollo Nisibambi is the team's goal keeper.

Before the match kicked off, President Museveni requested the audience to stand and observe a minute of silence in memory of the late former Tanzanian President Julius Nyerere who passed away in a London hospital two days ago.

The cabinet-FUFA game was a curtain raiser to the Group A Olympic Qualifier match played between the Ugandan U-23 team and the Young Warriors from Zimbabwe.

McCoist's Season over

GLASGOW, Oct 17: Kilmarnock striker Ally McCoist, who broke his leg in Saturday's Scottish Premier League match against Rangers, could be out for the rest of the year, reports AFP.

The former Scotland and Ibrox favourite was injured in a challenge with Lorenzo Amoroso during his side's 1-1 draw at Rugby Park.

McCoist, who has only recently returned to form after a previous injury, was taken to hospital where a fractured fibula was diagnosed.

He will spend six weeks in plaster but is hoping to return to first-team action before the winter shutdown.

McCoist told Sunday's News of the World newspaper: "It's a real blow because I felt I was just beginning to hit some decent form."

"It was a completely accidental collision with Lorenzo and I actually carried on after the tackle and got a shot in on goal. But deep down I knew something was amiss."

Rios tackles Tillstrom



SINGAPORE, Oct 17: Top seed Marcelo Rios of Chile was made to fight all the way Sunday to retain his crown in the 725,000-dollar Singapore Open ATP Tour event, reports AFP.

Rios, a former world number one, converted his sixth championship point to score a 6-2, 6-7 (7-5) victory against Swedish qualifier Mikael Tillstrom.

The win enabled the Chilean to retain valuable ranking points in his bid to find a place in the year-ending ATP World Championships at Hanover.

And the 250 ATP points were backed by the top prize of 111,500 dollars.

Tillstrom had to remain content with 58,650 dollars.

The Swede, who had to qualify for the tournament because of his slump in his rankings to 142, can take heart from the fact the 175 ATP points he earned here would hold him in good stead in his bid to get back into the top 100.

In the doubles, the American pair of Max Mirnyi and Eric Taino denied the second seeded Australian pair of Todd Woodbridge and Mark Woodforde their 54th title on the tour, winning the final 6-3, 6-4.

The Americans claimed the 48,700-dollar top prize, while the Australians had to remain content with 25,560 dollars.

The Woodies, as the former world number one doubles pair are popularly known, had won the title here last year.

For Rios, this was only his third title in 1999 and the second he has successfully defended, having earlier won at St Poelten.

The Chilean started in great fashion, hitting his dreaded forehand with telling effect and moving Tillstrom about the court. Breaks in the second and eighth games gave him the first set in a mere 26 minutes.

And the way he started the second, it appeared he was a man in a hurry. Four aces to kick off the set and Rios was 1-0 ahead without his opponent even touching the ball. But that was the calm before the storm.

The defending champion was down 0-40 in the third game but fought back to duce only to hit an overhead long on the fourth break point of the game and hand the initiative to Tillstrom.

Players held serve without much alarm till Tillstrom was serving for the set at 5-4. That was when the dogfight began.

Tillstrom saved three break points, wasted a set point himself before giving Rios the break-back and it was back on serve.

Next it was the Chilean's turn to struggle, saving four break points before holding serve to lead 6-5. Deuce was called nine times as Tillstrom stayed off five championships and managed to take the set into tie-break.

There was no let up in the drama and the near-capacity crowd of 5,000 loved every bit of it. Two mini break apiece and it was all even till 5-5 when Tillstrom hit an easy looking high forehand volley just wide.

Rios did not let slip the opportunity and was at the net to cash in on his sixth championship point and pocked the title in an intense battle that lasted an hour and 32 minutes.

Bundesliga

Bayern's show of class



COLOGNE, Germany, Oct 17: Bayern Munich's return to form Saturday, marked by a 3-1 win over Hertha Berlin, was overshadowed by the club's decision to effectively sack Mario Basler and Sven Schuster for a late night scuffle in a Bavarian restaurant, reports AFP.

President Franz Beckenbauer delivered a short statement to journalists announcing that reserve keeper Schuster and ex-German international Basler were suspended after this week's incident and should look for new clubs.

Neither player was named in Saturday's team which delivered one of its best performances this season against Bayern's fellow Champion League participants.

Giovane Elber and Paulo Sergio exploited gaps in Hertha's defence for two early goals before quarter of an hour had passed. Sergio struck again on the hour for a 3-0 lead which was only tarnished by Berlin's Dariusz Wozniak in the 82nd minute when all was lost.

Elber's 4th minute goal was systematic of Hertha's lapsed concentration. Oliver Kahn booted his goal kick the length of the field, right over Hertha's defence, and the Brazilian striker had little trouble converting.

"It's deadly when you boost the opposition's confidence like that so early on," Hertha coach Jurgen Rober said. "Our defenders positioned themselves stupidly. Giovane wasn't offside as some of us claimed at half time. The second goal too was catastrophically. We were caught completely snoozing."

Hertha fought back after the break but Sergio's second goal, initiated by Stefan Effenberg, broke their challenge and left Jurgen Rober to ponder improvements before AC Milan come to visit next week.

"I had a funny feeling before the game that Giovane Elber would be the man of the match but it was Paulo Sergio. Still, we can feel happy about the win and that both our Brazilians scored three goals," Franz Beckenbauer smiled.

Saturday's result lifts Bayern to fourth on 14 points. The top trio remain Borussia Dortmund on 19 points and

Hamburg level with Bayer Leverkusen on 17.

Hamburg continued their title challenge with a 2-0 home win over Freiburg. Keeper Hans-Jorg Butt proved once more he is a true penalty killer with a 22nd goal from the spot. It was sweet revenge because the man he beat was ex-Hamburg keeper Richard Golz.

Golz was dumped by Hamburg after 13 years at the club and moved to the Black Forest. In his first clash against his old side 18 months ago, Golz hammered a penalty past his successor Butt. On Saturday, Butt returned the favour.

"Playing here at home I had no choice but to take the penalty because the fans were calling for me," Butt said. "I'm glad now that all the talk is over about that missed penalty in Freiburg. I've now converted 10 penalties and missed only one so I think that whole Freiburg thing is forgotten."

Kaiserslautern squandered two valuable points by allowing Duisburg to come back and score twice in the final 30 minutes to equalise 2-2.

1860 Munich almost did the same thing at Werder Bremen. Bremen's Peruvian striker Claudio Pizarro dived in the area after 73 minutes and won a spot kick which Andreas Herzog buried. Then Marco Bode missed a sitter, and finally a Torsten Frings goal was incorrectly flagged offside.

Under siege 1860's Daniel Borimirov put the issue beyond dispute with a 90th minute goal for a 1-3 Lions victory.

Eintracht Frankfurt's horror run continued Saturday when Hans Rostock beat them 3-1, their fifth successive defeat. On Friday, Arminia Bielefeld lost 2-0 to Borussia Dortmund and Bayer Leverkusen crushed SSV Ulm 4-1.

On Sunday, Stuttgart host Schalke and Wolfsburg travel to Unterhaching in Munich.

STANDINGS

Bundesliga table after Friday's and Saturday's matches (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, against, points):

Borussia Dortmund	8	6	1	1	13	3	19
SV Hamburg	8	5	2	1	19	9	17
Bayer Leverkusen	8	5	2	1	15	8	17
Bayern Munich	8	4	2	2	12	9	14
Munich 1860	8	4	1	3	15	10	13
SC Freiburg	8	3	2	3	15	10	11
Vfl Wolfsburg	7	3	2	2	12	13	11
Hertha Berlin	8	2	4	2	12	14	10
Vfb Stuttgart	7	3	1	3	7	9	10
Kaiserslautern	8	3	1	4	12	18	10
Hansa Rostock	8	3	1	4	11	19	10
Werder Bremen	8	2	3	3	17	10	9
Schalke 04	7	2	3	2	8	9	9
Arminia Bielefeld	8	2	3	3	6	12	9
Eintracht Frankfurt	8	2	1	5	10	13	7
Unterhaching	7	2	1	4	7	10	7
SSV Ulm	8	1	2	5	9	16	5
MSV Duisburg	8	0	4	4	9	15	5