

## Euro 2000 Thai police plan action against betting

BANGKOK, May 21: Thai police will crack down on illegal betting during next month's Euro 2000 soccer tournament, a Thai newspaper reported Sunday, reports AP.

European soccer teams have large and loyal followings in Thailand and other Southeast Asian countries, and betting on their games is widespread.

Betting activity usually crests during the World Cup but is also common for British and other European league play.

Police said they are especially concerned at the involvement of students in gambling, because they sometimes turn to crime to pay off their gambling debts, reported the Bangkok Post.

Bookmakers are active in many of Thailand's largest cities and use mobile phones and transfers of money through bank accounts to make their activities hard to detect, the Post quoted police as saying.

Police said they had asked the Education Ministry to order schools to take measures against student gambling and would stake out suspected downtown betting centers.

The Euro 2000 tournament will be held June 10 to July 2.

## 'No football' town!

CAMPOROSSO, Italy, May 21: If a youngster feels tempted to kick a ball around the streets of the northern Italian town of Camporosso, they could end up having to pay a 50,000 lire (\$23 dollar) fine or have their ball confiscated, reports Reuters.

In an extraordinary move in soccer-mad Italy, Camporosso town council issued a by-law banning any type of game that includes the "throwing of objects" in its streets or squares, Italian news agency ANSA reported on Saturday.

The law was passed after residents complained about groups of youths who played soccer into the evening, making noise and marking the town's walls.

## De Bruijn sets new swim mark

MONACO, May 21: Dutch veteran Inge de Bruijn set a women's 50 metre butterfly world record on Saturday and followed it with a European best in the two-lap butterfly race, reports Reuters.

De Bruijn clocked 25.83 seconds in the 50 metres butterfly, beating the previous best of 26.29 set by Sweden's Anna Karin Kammerling in the European championships in Istanbul in July 1999.

De Bruijn set the world during speed trials and broke her own European 100 metres butterfly record in the final of that event to win a 20,000 francs (\$3,000) prize.

There is no prize for records in the speed trials but a swimmer breaking a world mark in the finals will be awarded 100,000 francs (\$16,000). If no other world record is broken on Sunday, however, De Bruijn may be awarded the prize.

De Bruijn, 1999 European champion in 100 metres butterfly and 50 metres freestyle, set the record in her second attempt of the day wearing a skin-shining black bodysuit which she said enabled her to rise higher in the water.

The 27-year-old US based for the last three seasons, overcame a false start in the 100 metres butterfly final to clock 57.96 seconds -- 26.90 at the turn -- to break her 11-month old European record.

She set her previous record of 58.49 when winning the European title in Istanbul on July 30 last year.

## New records set at Vienna Marathon

VIENNA, May 21: Running in almost perfect conditions, Kenyan runner Willy Cheruiyot and Maura Viceconte of Italy smashed the respective course records for men and women in the Vienna City Marathon on Sunday, reports AP.

Cheruiyot crossed the finish line in 2 hours eight minutes and 48 seconds, breaking the previous record, set by Ethiopian runner Taya Moges in 1998, by 33 seconds.

Viceconte put in an outstanding race to come in 2 hours 23 minutes 47 seconds, 7.2 minutes ahead of the record set in 1997 by Tatiana Dzhabrallova of Ukraine. It was the Italian runner's personal best time -- more than four minutes faster than her previous record.

Cheruiyot, who started the race as a pacemaker for the favorite Simon Bor, also of Kenya, ran together with his countrymen from start to finish. Bor was in front going into the final stretch, then Cheruiyot broke away in the last few meters to cross the line first.

"I did not expect such a race," Cheruiyot said at the finish. "It was a wonderful race."

Miroslav Goleblevski of Poland was third with 2:09:04. Runners enjoyed near perfect conditions, with mild summer temperatures under clear blue skies on the flat course that takes them past some of the city's most famous landmarks.

Organizers said the 10,000 entrants for this year's race was an all-time record in the now 15-year-old event.

# Monica against Amelie



ROME, May 21: Monica Seles lined up an Italian Open final against France's Amelie Mauresmo here on Saturday -- 10 years after the American won this tournament as a 16-year-old prodigy, reports AP.

Both women were in a hurry on the Centre Court -- Seles brushing aside compatriot Corina Morariu 6-3, 6-1, shortly after Mauresmo hammered Colombian qualifier Fabiola Zuluaga 6-1, 6-2.

Sunday's final of the 1.08 million dollar tournament will see the first ever meeting between the two players, both of whom are clearly on top of their clay-court game.

Seles made a bright start -- breaking for 2-1, serving out for 3-1 but being broken for 3-3 when she put a two-flashed backhand wide.

However, the former world number one broke back immediately for 4-3 after Morariu double-faulted and served out for 5-3.

Sensing her chance, Seles powered into a 40-15 lead on Morariu's serve. The first set point evaporated when she was caught out by a deftly-executed drop shot. But when Morariu followed up by ploughing a forehand into the net, the first set was over.

And the second didn't last long either. Morariu netted a backhand, flung her racket to the floor in disgust and slumped to a fatal 3-1 deficit.

She didn't win a single point for the rest of the match.

Seles was delighted with her return to the final 10 years on. "It feels fantastic," she said.

"I have such great memories from 1990, and to come back and play so well in 2000 is really a fantastic feeling."

Describing the intervening years, which included the 1993 stabbing in Hamburg which cost her a two-year absence from the WTA Tour, she said: "A lot of things in my life."

"But in terms of my career, I never lost the love that I have for the game of tennis and that's what really means the most to me."

"So that's why I look back really fondly, even through the difficult times of my life... the toughest thing for me when I got stabbed was really not playing for those years. That was the only period that I didn't really want to go back to the tennis court."

As for Sunday's final, she added: "I really like Amelie's style of play. I've seen her play in Australia... I'm really looking forward to tomorrow's match."

Mauresmo, who won the Sydney tournament this year and reached the 1999 Australian Open final, was simply in a different league to her 64th ranked opponent and needed only 64 minutes to seal her victory.

## Thomas Cup

# Indonesia retain crown



KUALA LUMPUR, May 21: Taufik Hidayat led Indonesia to their fourth successive Thomas Cup crown, winning a climactic final showdown against China here Sunday, reports AP.

Indonesia won 3-0 to earn the right to raise badminton's most coveted trophy for a record 12th time.

Hidayat, who at 19 is the youngest player in the tournament, secured the all-important third point after beating Ji Xinpeng in a hard-fought battle that lasted 61 minutes.

Indonesia, who struggled to a 3-2 win over Denmark in the semifinals, completed today's proceedings in three and a half hours, ending China's hopes of regaining the title they last won 10 years ago.

The defeat also dashed China's dreams of completing the double a day after their women bagged the Uber Cup.

Indonesia's victory was sweet revenge against China, which denied it the title in the 1982 and 1986 finals.

Indonesia had beaten China in the 1984 finals and today's result squares the finals battles between the two nations.

The Indonesians, starting as the favourites in the 21st edition of the Thomas Cup, played their hearts out in front of a near capacity crowd of 12,000, the majority of which were their supporters, at the Putra Indoor Stadium.

Indonesian assistant manager Hadi Nazri said the team had achieved its target of retaining the trophy.

"We came here with the intention of winning. We expected a score of 3-2 but the Chinese players appeared nervous but I believe it was because it was their first time in such a major tournament," Hadi said.

"As the games progressed they improved and played world class badminton."

Hadi was full of praise for Hendrawan and said his win paved the way for the 3-0 victory.

Hendrawan played very well and fought for every point. His performance inspired the others," Hadi said.

After world No 2 Hendrawan defeated Xia Xuanze in the opening tie, China's hopes of upstaging Indonesia in the final grew severely bleak.

Xia had beaten Hendrawan in two previous outings, at this year's All-England final and the Swiss Open semifinals, and the Chinese were counting on

Mauresmo, who would face Seles for the first time, was glad just to have got things over with quickly.

"It was better for me to have an easy match today," she said. "I was still a little bit tired from yesterday and I have doubles to play again today."

And she added: "I'm playing well. I hope it's going to last."

Looking ahead, she said: "I've never played Seles before, but I know her game. Once she's into her rhythm, she's like a steam-roller. But if we meet, I've got what it takes to beat her."

The first set was strictly one-way traffic as Zuluaga showed none of the power and precision with which she had ousted another Frenchwoman, second seed Nathalie Tauziat, on Friday night.

Mauresmo seemed to love, broke to love and served out again for a commanding 4-1

hopeful, there was no let-up in the second set.

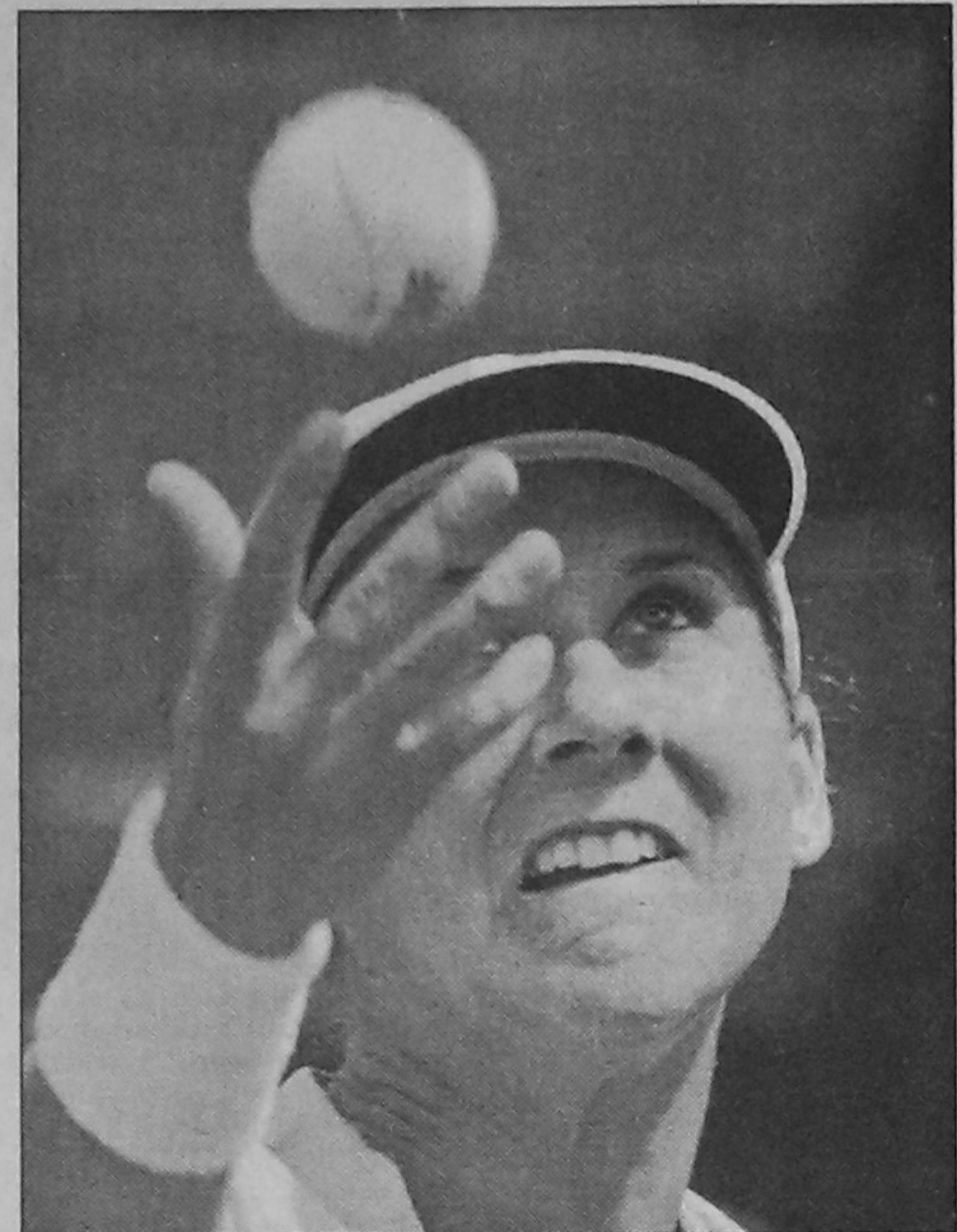
Mauresmo broke to love twice -- for 1-0 and 4-1 -- and reached 5-1 after avoiding a break point when Zuluaga went for a backhand winner down the line but the ball landed fractionally the wrong side of the line.

It was Zuluaga's last faint chance of staging a comeback, and even another attack of match-point wobbles for Mauresmo failed to change the outcome.

The first match point at 40-30 went begging when the Colombian finished a fine rally by manoeuvring Mauresmo out of position and smacking a potent drive into the corner.

The Frenchwoman matched that with a crunching forehand down the line to bring up her second match point -- but followed up by ballooning a backhand.

However, she was third time



American Monica Seles is about to serve in her Italian Open Semifinal against compatriot Corina Morariu on Saturday.

— AFP photo

lucky when Zuluaga's attempted passing shot finished long and Mauresmo responded by slamming down a service winner.

Zuluaga, who was feeling the effects of both the qualifiers and her run to the semis, paid tribute to Mauresmo: "She played really good... and I was a little bit tired."

"I've been playing here since Saturday and I've been having a lot of tough matches."

The 12th seed, who had 'choked' four times at match point against Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario on Friday, surprisingly trailed 40-0 on her own serve after making some needless mistakes at 5-1.

But she had little difficulty lifting her game to reach deuce, before wrapping up the set in 28 minutes.

And for the Colombian

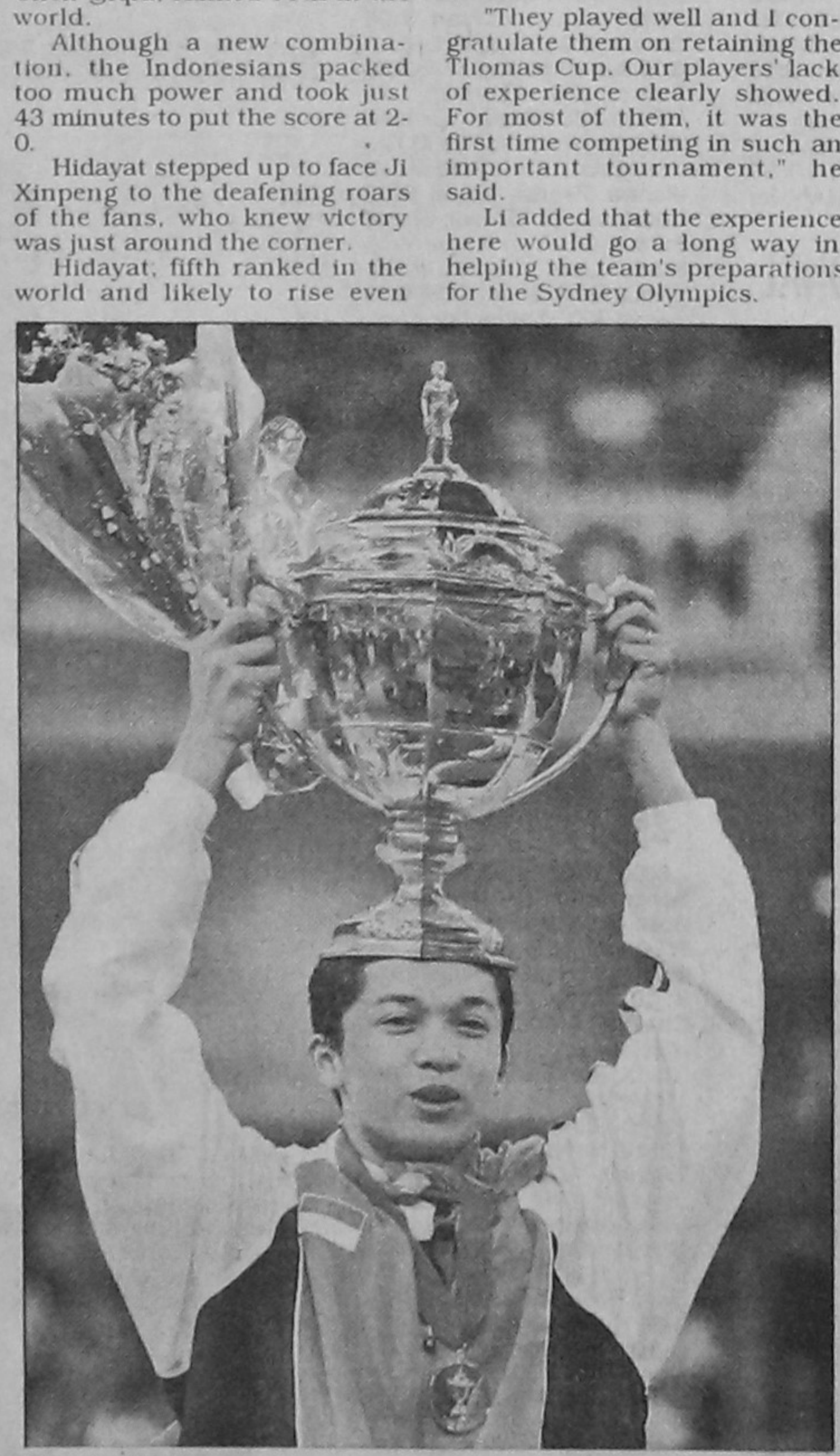
higher after his outstanding performances here, was in fine form against his nervous opponent.

Hidayat, who stunned Olympic champion Poul-Erik Yoye-Larsen in the semifinals, put his jumping smashes to good use as he carved out a 15-9, 17-14 win to ensure the trophy remained in Indonesia's possession for another two years.

Chinese coach Li Yongbo commended the performance of the Indonesian team.

"They played well and I congratulate them on retaining the Thomas Cup. Our players' lack of experience clearly showed. For most of them, it was the first time competing in such an important tournament," he said.

Li added that the experience here would go a long way in helping the team's preparations for the Sydney Olympics.



Taufik Hidayat of Indonesia holds aloft the Thomas Cup after beating China's Ji Xinpeng in the final in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

— AFP photo

## Mariner Youngs' new committee

Sports Reporter  
A 43-member executive committee of Dhaka Mariner Youngs Club for 2000-2002 was formed at its general meeting on Friday.

ASM Ali Khabir Chand, vice-president of Bangladesh Cricket Board and chairman of Druti Paribahan, has been appointed as the president of the club while Bangladesh Handball Federation general secretary Asaduzzaman Kohinor has been made general secretary respectively.

The other members of the club are: vice-president -- Shamul Alam, Ali Ahsan Khokon, Abdul Malek, Nuruzzaman, Kamrul Islam Kamal, Mokhesur Rahman, Gazi Saidur Rashid, Iqbal Hossain Chotton, joint-secretaries -- Alangir Kabir and Saifuddin Bhuiyan Palash, treasurer -- Sheikh Golam Sobhan, assistant treasurer -- Saidur Rahman Moinir, office secretary -- SM Nasir, assistant office secretary -- Anwar Hossain Masum, hockey secretary -- Badrul Islam, assistant hockey secretary -- Abdul Alim, cricket secretary -- Wasim Khan, assistant cricket secretary -- Zahid Hossain, handball secretary -- Moinuddin Bhuiyan, assistant handball secretary -- Raihanuddin Sabuj, basketball secretary -- Sheikh Golam Sarwar, members -- Arshadul Haq Munna, Mustafizur Rahman, Hasanullah Khan Rana, Sa Gollam Sattar, Manzoor Kader Khasru, Mahbub Alam Chowdhury, Tareq Chowdhury, Shakil Khan Faruki, Riaz Ahmed, Manzoor Alam Sohel, Rubaiyat Salauddin, Shahin Rashedi and Abu Sadat Rashid.

## Woodies enter final

HAMBURG, May 21: It was Australia day in the Hamburg Masters Series doubles at the Rothenbaum stadium here Saturday as players from Down Under featured exclusively in the semifinals, reports AP.

And there was no love lost as experienced tandem Todd Woodbridge and Mark Woodforde ousted Davis Cup winning teammate Lleyton Hewitt and his playing partner Pat Rafter 6-4, 6-3.

The 'Woodies' combination is one of the most successful doubles pairing of all time as they have each won 62 titles in all and 56 together. Only John McEnroe's partnership with Peter Fleming and Bob Hewitt's pairing with Frew Macmillan have won more -- taking 57 titles.

The 'Woodies' are the most successful pairing still active and they now stand on the verge of that elusive 57th title together.

In the other semi Joshua Eagle from Toowoomba in Queensland and Melbourne's Andrew Florent bowed to Wayne Arthur, like Hewitt an Adelaide, and Sydney-born Sandon Stolle, who advanced to face the Woodies after a 7-6, 7-6 victory.

Tyson, Lewis seek support

WASHINGTON, May 21: Lennox Lewis has the titles. Mike Tyson has the name. Now both heavyweight boxers seek the support of British boxing backers on the path to what could be a championship

matchup, reports AP.

Lewis defends his World Boxing Council and International Boxing Federation titles against South Africa's Francois Botha in London on July 15 while Tyson faces fellow American Lou Savarese on June 24 in Glasgow, Scotland.

Lewis has not fought in London in six years, since losing his title there to Oliver McCall in his only pro defeat. He is not expected to catch the same crowds to gather that Tyson did in his London fight last January.

"People see me all the time," Lewis said. "They look on Tyson as a novelty. People want to see who he is, this man who fights people, who has been in jail."

Ex-champion Tyson hopes to challenge for the world crown Lewis now owns, saying his fights are tuneups to recapture the glory he owned a decade ago.

"Let's go man-to-man in the streets if he wants," Tyson said to Lewis. "He can't beat me in the ring. I'm coming at him and when I do, he will pay."

"It should be two or three more fights and I will be ready. I'm gradually working myself back up. I'm humble, but I'm still ferocious and ruthless. I want the belief and confidence I had in myself at one point back again."

Tyson has also taunted Lewis for his failure to approach the pay-per-view records Tyson set against former champion Evander Holyfield. Lewis attracted only 375,000 paying viewers for his recent victory over Michael Grant, one-third of Tyson's totals.

Toulouise return to top flight

PARIS, May 21: Toulouise joined Lille and Guingamp in the French First Division next season following Saturday's final round of matches in the Second Division.

Toulouise, who drew 1-1 at Caen, finished a point ahead of fourth-placed Sochaux, who beat Nantes 2-0.

It meant a swift return to the top flight for Toulouise coach and former French international Alain Giresse following his brief and unhappy spell at the helm of Paris Saint Germain.

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Brazilian Gustavo Kuerten plays a backhand return against Russian Marat Safin during their Hamburg Masters Series final encounter yesterday.

# Kuerten, Safin face off



HAMBURG, May 21: Brazilian fifth seed Gustavo Kuerten made a slow start but still reached the final of the 2.95 million-dollar Hamburg Masters Series on Saturday with a 6-3, 6-3 win over Romanian qualifier Andrei Pavel, reports AP.

In Sunday's final he will face Russian 12th seed Marat Safin, who knocked out defending champion Marcelo Rios of Chile 7-6, 6-2 in 1hr 30min to reach his third final inside a month having already won in Barcelona and Mallorca this year.

Kuerten, who ended the hopes of Champions Race leader Magnus Norman of Sweden in the quarter-finals, won in 1hr 07min to become the first Brazilian to make the final here having previously suffered two quarterfinal exits.

Although 1997 French Open champion Kuerten will start as favourite Safin, whose win over Rios propels him into the world top 10, actually has a hold over him having won all three of their meetings to date.

"It's always been close between us -- just a point here and there. It's a big test for both of us," said Safin of their previous clashes.

Both 23-year-old Kuerten, who now goes second behind Norman in the Champions Race standings, ahead of Andre Agassi from his pre-Hamburg position of sixth, and Safin, 20, lost the opening three games of their respective matches before advancing with strong second set showings.

"I'm really happy. It's the first time I've made the final and I'm having fun here," said Kuerten afterwards.

"I tried to play my normal game and I thought he'd not be so confident on the backhand returns. He surprised me and sent down some great returns,"

Kuerten, who is just returning to fitness after recent back problems, shrugged off a number of mediocre service games to break for 1-0 in the second set but Pavel, whose only tournament win came at Tokyo in 1998, refused to crumble and broke twice to level at 2-2.

Kuerten, who has six Tour titles to his name to date and who had beaten Pavel three times -- always on clay -- in their previous meetings, allowed the German-based Romanian to get his nose in front at 3-2.

But he then stepped up a gear to hold for 3-3 and finish with a four-game winning streak, a

the Brazilian admitted as he explained his slow start, which saw him broken twice to go 0-3 behind before winning six straight games to take the set.

"I tried to mix up the tempo -- slow it down, then add a little pace. I'm really happy as I only recently came back from injury then reached the final (in Rome) last week and now here I am in another final," said the samba star, who sent over a brilliant return when Pavel had a point for 4-0.

Asked if he would slip in a week-long break in Brazil after Sunday's final, Kuerten said that might just be feasible.

"But it's a long way -- maybe I'll go to the moon," he laughed.

The Romanian, 26 and a debutant here, was bidding to become only the second qualifier to win the tournament after Spain's Roberto Carretero, who unexpectedly triumphed at the Rothenbaum stadium in 1996.

"I thought I had a chance but I made a mistake thinking I had the first set wrapped up," said Pavel, playing only his second Masters quarterfinal after Stuttgart last year and looking to emulate countryman Ilie Nastase, who reached the 1970 final here.

"He's the king of the clay -- he's so relaxed on court."

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In the second Rios wilted as the time roles were reversed with Safin going 3-0 ahead. At 4-2 Rios lost his last chance when he squandered a break point and Safin steamed on to win comfortably.

"I'm really happy with my performance," said Safin. "But I only started thinking after I lost the first three games. Then I started taking my time and got into the match. I hope I can repeat it tomorrow."

He now has won 17 matches in 18 and is into his second Masters Series final after last year's Paris Indoor, where he lost to Andre Agassi.

# Torch coming to Pacific



GUAM, May 21: The Olympic torch arrives here Monday for the start of a tour of the south Pacific that has been marred by trouble in Fiji and the Solomon Islands, reports AP.

It was unsure if the torch relay would visit either Fiji, where gunmen were holding the prime minister hostage, or the Solomons, where ethnic violence had left 50 dead.

A Sydney Organising Committee for the Olympic Games (SOCOG) spokesman in Sydney said they were monitoring events in both countries.

But in Guam, at least, the country was set for a party.

This American territory is the first stop in the 13-country, 18-day trip around Oceania that is being paid for by the Australian government as a goodwill gesture to the region which supported the Sydney 2000 Games bid in 1993.

Each country would have had to find 500,000 dollars (\$700,000 US) to pay for the relay until Australian Prime Minister John Howard put his hand in his pocket.

Cruz admitted the relay was a rare chance for Guam to make itself known.

"We approached this not only with the Olympic spirit in mind, but for less altruistic reasons," he said. "For the government of Guam this is a unique opportunity."

Olympians from Chinese Taipei, Hong Kong, South Korea and China have been invited to carry the flame in Guam.

They include Chinese Olympic gold medalist Junxia Wang, winner of the 5,000m in Atlanta in 1996, marathon runner Gi-sheng Hsu from

Taipei, Ng Siu Ching of Hong Kong and Young-Jo Hwang of South Korea.

But International Olympic Committee vice-president Kevin Gosper will not be in the party.

The Australian head of the Oceanic Olympic Association pulled out of the Oceanic leg of the relay following the controversy over his decision to let his 11-year-old daughter Sophie run in the lighting ceremony in Greece last week.

ITINERARY  
May 22: Guam; May 23: Palau; May 24: Federated States of Micronesia; May 25: Nauru; May 26: Solomon Islands; May 27: Papua New Guinea; May 29: Vanuatu; May 29: Samoa; May 30: American Samoa; May 31: Cook Islands; June 2: Tonga; June 3: Fiji; June 5-7: New Zealand

## CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

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