

Warne earns his keep

LONDON, June 4: Australian Test star Shane Warne claimed five wickets to earn Hampshire an outside chance of victory over defending champions Surrey in their English County Championship Division One clash at The Oval Saturday, reports AFP.

Warne has made a slow start to his career in the English game but helped his side dismiss Surrey for 142 and leave Hampshire facing a target of 266 in Sunday's final day if they are to achieve their first championship victory of the summer.

They will resume having lost two wickets in reaching 58 by the close, openers Jason Loney (0) and Giles White the men out.

Warne picked up five for 31 and Alan Mullally claimed four for 31 as only Adam Hoolloake (41) made much impact for Surrey.

Hampshire had earlier been able to add just three runs to their overnight 207 for eight before they were all out — Martin Bicknell claiming his fourth wicket in the process — leaving them 123 behind on first innings.

They moved off the foot of the Division One table as they eclipsed Durham by 190 runs at Tunbridge Wells to log their first championship win of the season.

Durham, needing to reach an improbable 334 to win after resuming the final day on 44 for two, collapsed after lunch to lose five wickets for eight runs in the space of 11 overs as they slipped from 95 for four to 103 for nine.

Australian Simon Katich made 41, but otherwise the Durham batsmen had no answer to the bowling of spinner Min Patel (four for 38) and captain Matthew Fleming (15-9-14-3) as they were eventually all out for 143.

The top-of-the-table clash between Yorkshire and Leicestershire was abandoned as a draw without a ball being bowled on the final day at Headingley.

The sides took seven points each to leave Leicestershire still a point clear of their opponents at the summit.

It was a similar story at Old Trafford, with third-placed Lancashire taking eight points and Derbyshire seven as no play was possible Saturday. The visitors left Lancashire a point adrift of roses rivals Yorkshire.

Robin Martin-Jenkins claimed three morning victims to complete the second five-wicket haul of his Sussex career and set up a comprehensive victory at Hove as Glamorgan suffered their first championship loss of the season.

Glamorgan avoided an innings defeat on the final day but let Sussex needing to score just seven runs for victory, which they achieved in eight deliveries without the loss of a wicket.

Sussex, bottom of the Division Two without a win at the start of the fixture, moved up to fifth as they picked off the last four Glamorgan wickets for the addition of 42 runs to dismiss the Welsh county for 284.

Martin-Jenkins removed Adrian Shaw (45), Robert Croft (31) and Darren Thomas (0) to give him five for 94.

Darren Robinson's unbeaten 93 steered Essex to a five-wicket win over Northamptonshire at Ilford, their first in Division Two.

Robinson's ninth boundary saw Essex triumph after they had resumed on 170 for four in pursuit of a 226 target.

Gloucestershire captain Mark Alleyne inspired his Benetton and Hedges Cup finalists to an 85-run first championship victory of the season with a six-wicket haul against Middlesex at Lords.

Middlesex, resuming on 39 without loss as they chased a 298 victory total, reached 133 for two as Justin Langer (49) and Owais Shah (33) shared a third-wicket stand of 76.

But once Alleyne removed Langer it exposed the tail, and he went on to take six for 49 as the hosts were dismissed for 212 to leave them on the foot of the table.

Nottinghamshire openers Darren Bicknell and Guy Welton made a mockery of the troubles Warwickshire's batsmen had on the Edgbaston pitch by piling on an unbroken 194 for the first wicket to establish a commanding lead.

Warwickshire, joint leaders at the start of the match, had added six runs to their overnight total before losing their last wicket as Notts dismissed them for a meagre 110 on the second morning.

But Bicknell, who made an unbeaten 90, and Welton — still there on one run less — encountered no such problems to leave Notts in pole position to register their first championship win with two days still to play.

2006 Asian Games bid OCA to inspect facilities in KL

KUALA LUMPUR, June 4: The Olympic Council of Asia will send a five-member delegation to Kuala Lumpur next month to inspect facilities available for the 2006 Asian Games, the national news agency Bernama said Sunday, reports AFP.

Kuala Lumpur is among four cities bidding to host the games. The other three are Hong Kong, New Delhi and Doha, Qatar.

Pusan in South Korea will stage the next Asian Games in 2002.

The evaluation committee headed by Muhammad Latif Butt, an OCA vice-president, will look at the city's sports facilities, transportation and accommodation.



England's Chris Schofield finds himself in an awkward position after being hit on the helmet by a rising Heath Streak delivery on the third day of the second Test at Trent Bridge on June 3. — AFP photo

Play starts after lunch on Day 4

England gain upper hand

NOTTINGHAM, England, June 4: Play began after lunch on the fourth day of the second and final Test between England and Zimbabwe after a waterlogged outfield washed out early play on Sunday at Trent Bridge, reports AFP.

Zimbabwe resumed on 51 for two in reply to England's 374 all out.

Umpires Dave Orchard and Mervyn Kitchen decided not to start play before lunch. The wet weather in central England has robbed 115 overs including the first washout of a day full day's play here in 33 years. The second day was abandoned without a ball bowled.

Overnight thunderstorm brought a deluge leaving some parts of the playing area under water.

England opener Michael Atherton, who sat through a frustrating 34 hours and 41 minutes without play, reached his 14th Test century on Saturday and helped the home side post a fighting total.

His 136 runs scored in nine minutes under eight hours was his fifth century at Trent Bridge and made him the most successful batsman here with 998 career runs in 10 Tests.

He improved on Denis Compton's previous record of 955 runs.

"I wasn't aware of any records," Atherton said after the third day. "It was nice to get another hundred here."

"It's always good to get runs, no matter who it's against. You can only score runs against what's there."

England, already leading the two-match series 1-0 following

their emphatic innings and 209-run win at Lord's will be fighting against time to force a result in this weather-shortened game.

Atherton, 32, nursed his Lancashire county teammate Chris Schofield through some nervous moments in his second Test innings to help the left-hander post his maiden Test half century.

Schofield, the side's only spinner, hit a gritty 57 in his near three-hour stay at the crease. In the first Test he was dismissed for third ball naught and didn't get a bowl in the England win.

In the 14 overs of batting before daylight stopped play on the third day, Zimbabwe lost both their openers — Grant Flower and Guy Whittall — to new-ball bowlers Daren Gough and Ed Giddins.

Zimbabwe must score 175 runs in their first innings to avoid being forced to follow on.

Flower, the brother of skipper Andy, continued with his wretched run of single-figure scores and fell victim to a poor umpiring decision.

Flower was adjudged caught at short leg by Mark Ramprakash off Gough by English umpire Mervyn Kitchen off the fifth ball of the innings.

At the crease were the experienced Murray Goodwin and a promoted Neil Johnson on 11 and nine, respectively.

In his first over in Test cricket, Schofield's leg spin was hit for nine runs.

Batsman Stuart Carlisle picked for this Test to strengthen the batting after the first Test debacle suffered a cracked right index finger during the England innings on the

first day and will bat if required.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at close of play on the third day of the second and final Test between Zimbabwe and England at Trent Bridge on Saturday:

ENGLAND: First innings (overnight 203-3)					
Atherton c G Flower b Mbawanga	136				
Ramprakash c G Flower b Johnson	56				
Hussain c Streak b Nkala	21				
Hick c Murphy b Nkala	5				
Stewart lbw b Whittall	1				
Knight lbw b Whittall	1				
Flintoff lbw b Mbawanga	16				
Schofield b Murphy	57				
Caddick c G Flower b Nkala	13				
Gough c Campbell b Streak	9				
Giddins not out	3				
Extras (b-9, lb-13, w-16, nb-10)	48				
Total: (All out in 135.3 overs)	374				

Fall of wickets: 1-121, 2-182, 3-188, 4-209, 5-221, 6-264, 7-303, 8-335, 9-358.

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Streak	32	7	82	1
Nkala	31	7	82	3
Johnson	22	7	63	1
Mbawanga	18	6	40	2
Murphy	12.2	1	36	1
Whittall	19	7	47	2
G Flower	1	0	2	0

ZIMBABWE: First innings

G Flower c Ramprakash b Gough	0
Whittall lbw b Giddins	28
Goodwin not out	11
Johnson not out	9
Extras (lb-2, nb-1)	3
Total: (For 2 wks in 14 overs)	51

To bat: A Flower, S Carlisle, A Campbell, H Streak, M Nkala, B Murphy, M Mbawanga.

Fall of wickets: 1-1, 2-33

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Gough	5	0	12	1
Caddick	4	1	24	0
Giddins	4	2	4	1
Schofield	1	0	9	0

Barada back in action

LONDON, June 4: Ahmed Barada, the squash star who was stabbed in the back outside his Cairo home ten weeks ago, makes a comeback at the Super Series finals which starts Monday at the Broadgate Arena, reports AFP.

The world number three needed an operation and three weeks convalescence in Germany before recovering from two deep wounds near to his lower spine, but whether he is fully ready for top level competition is a matter of conjecture.

Physically Ahmed is back to full strength. Barada's manager Robert Edwards said in the run-up to the five day event which starts Monday.

"Mentally however he is still very shaken by the incident and it will be interesting to see how he copes with the situation."

The attack on Ahmed was not dissimilar to that suffered by the tennis player Monica Seles in Hamburg in 1993, and it took her a great deal of time to overcome the mental side-effects.

Seles is said to have written a note of sympathy and encouragement to Barada which was originally to have been brought from Miami in time for his comeback. But the go-between has been unable to travel to London and the message will now be delivered later in the year.

Barada would prefer to have made his comeback in a smaller event, but the lack of tournaments on a tour which has been hit by an economic downturn has forced him back in at the deep end.

He will now have to test the extent of his recovery against the world's top eight men, with Scotland's world number one Peter Nicol trying to make his first successful defence of a major title.

The London-based left-hander last year became the first player simultaneously to hold the quartet of the World Open, British Open, Super Series and Commonwealth titles. But Nicol has a distance to go before he can be regarded as a worthy successor to Jansher Khan, the Pakistani who won the Super Series title four times in five

tries and dominated the game for a decade.

Nevertheless Nicol reckons that in the past few months, during which he has won three titles with overwhelming performances, he has for the first time pulled significantly ahead of the field.

A fully recovered Barada is one of two men capable of disputing Nicol's claims — the other being Jonathon Power, the former World and reigning British Open champion.

The unpredictable Canadian lost to Nicol in the finals of both the Irish Open in Dublin and the PSA Masters in

Hurghada (Egypt) this year, but his flamboyantly creative game has at its best given Nicol the run-around.

Barada has also had his moments against Nicol, beating him to take the Heliopolis Open title last year, but withdrew against him with a toe injury half through the Flanders Open final in Antwerp in March.

Barada is in the same round robin group as Nicol but can afford to lose to the champion and still survive because two players each from two groups qualify for Thursday's semi-finals.



Frenchman Cedric Pioline playing against Spaniard Albert Portas during their French Open third round encounter yesterday. — AFP photo

Champions' hockey Netherlands win women's trophy

AMSTERDAM, June 4: A twice taken penalty 87 seconds before the final whistle, gave hosts the Netherlands a 3-2 win over Germany in the women's final of the Champions' Trophy on Saturday, reports Reuters.

Ageeth Boomgaardt converted the penalty after her first attempt was saved by German goalkeeper Julia Zuehl, who was then penalised for standing in front of the goal-line.

Boomgaardt had earlier given her side a fifth minute lead with a low flick at a penalty corner. The Dutch also scored, through Dilliane van den Boogaard, from their second corner, in the 18th minute.

The Germans who had been slow to settle down, were quickly on terms with two goals by Nadine Ernsting-Krienke, goals that made the German left winger the tournament's top scorer with five goals.

Her first was a tip in, her second a solo effort after she had stolen the ball from defender van den Boogaard.

The Germans did more of the attacking but the Dutch managed to force corners. It was from their fifth that van den Boogaard forced the controversial Dutch penalty.

The Netherlands' win brought them the women's trophy for the first time since 1987 when the world's top six event was first contested and left Germany runners-up for the third time.

Holders Australia who had won the trophy on the last five occasions, finished out of the top two for the first time. They defeated Argentina 1-0 in the bronze medal match with a late corner goal, struck by Jenny Morris.

South Africa finished fifth, defeating New Zealand 2-0 with a fine goal a second before half-time by Pietie Coetzee and a second half solo effort by Karen Symons.

Magura cricket

MAGURA, June 4: Challenge Club and Babul Smriti Sangha won their respective matches in the Econo Cricket League at the Magura Stadium today.

Both teams moved into the quarterfinals.

Challenge defeated Young Boys Club by 7 runs while Babul Smriti beat Surjamukhi Club by 4 wickets.

BRIEFS SCORES

CHALLENGE CLUB: 85 all out in 24 overs (Faisal 12, Mishti 10, Litu 9, Bipu 3/11, Jewel 2/17, Rupak 2/17).

YOUNG BOYS CLUB: 78 all out in 21.3 overs (Sajib 18, Bipu 15, Russel 8, Faisal 4/7, Mishti 2/21, Firoz 2/16).

Result: Challenge Club won by seven runs.

SURJAMUKHI CLUB: 117 all out in 24.4 overs (Bimdu 50, Babu 15, Smik 7, Niloy 7; Mamun 3/16, Champak 2/15, Partho 1/18, Madhu 1/21, Mukta 1/24).

BABUL SMRITI SANGHA: 118 for six in 24.4 overs (Pankaj 38, Partho 28, Shucharu 1/12, Smik 1/25, Tito 1/34).

Result: Babul Smriti Sangha won by four wickets.

'Champs' League causes a concern

LONDON, June 4: Fears that cricket history is about to be repeated have led to Australia captain Steve Waugh assuring the Australian Cricket Board (ACB) that none of their contracted players have been signed for a series of breakaway matches later this year according to a report in the Daily Express here on Saturday, reports AFP.

The games are apparently scheduled for the unlikely cricket venue of Kathmandu in Nepal.

The main cricket ground there is owned by Zee TV, who are mounting a significant bid for rights to broadcast the next two World Cups.

For some time there have been unconfirmed reports that should Zee TV's bid fail they will simply sign up the world's leading cricketers for their own matches.

The Express report went on to quote an unnamed Indian Test player who told the India.com website on Friday: "The Indian Board pay us peanuts. Why shouldn't we go to someone who is more generous?"

"Most of us would readily move if the price was right."

So far this scenario is highly reminiscent of the 'Packer affair', one of modern cricket's most significant crises.

Back in 1977 Australian media mogul Kerry Packer had failed in his bid to let the ACB allow him the rights to televise their Test matches.

Packer was so annoyed that he secretly signed up the world game's best players, including nearly all the leading Australian and West Indian cricketers of the day, for a series of matches during the Australian summer that ran in direct opposition to official Tests.

The 'circus', as it became known, introduced coloured clothing and day-night matches to cricket and threatened to bankrupt the poorer Test nations such as the West Indies, who couldn't sell tickets for their home games when their stars were playing for Packer.

It eventually ended after two seasons when the ACB allowed Packer's Channel Nine the television rights to official international matches in Australia — rights it still holds today.

Talk of a split gives the ICC another contentious topic for discussion to add to match-fixing when it meets here at Lord's on June 25.

Hingis, Rubin reach qtrs



PARIS, June 4: World number one Martina Hingis got an early-morning wake-up call on Sunday before advancing to the quarterfinals of the French Open women's singles — the only Grand Slam she has yet to win, reports AFP.

Hingis, irked at having to play a third straight morning match, took the tennis equivalent of a catnap in the second set before ousting unseeded Romanian Ruxandra Dragomir 6-3, 0-6, 6-1 to set up a meeting with unseeded American Chanda Rubin.

Afterwards, the Swiss teen joked she'd only agree to get up for an early start in future if the organisers could guarantee the weather would be fine.

"I'm not going to go out there if they put me on first again unless it's sunny. I'm going to play in pants next time. I was freezing out there," the 19-year-old said, explaining she has become used to playing in countries which generally offer warmer climates — including Australia and the United States.

"Then when you come here to Europe it's freezing cold. My body's not used to it any more. It's not very easy to play in cold

weather like this."

Last year at Roland Garros, Hingis lost much of the support of her French fans when she threw a tantrum in the final which she lost against Steffi Graf but said this year she felt she was on target to claim the crown.

"I think I play just so many hours of tennis and it comes very naturally to me. You have some bad and some worse days, definitely," added the Swiss, who even if she doesn't like early starts could hardly be accused of lacking confidence whatever time she steps onto the slow, red clay.

"I think I've got one of the best techniques and strokes when I'm playing well. It's kind of easy for me to play well," she said.

Last year Hingis revealed she had lit a candle on a visit to the Sacre Coeur cathedral before facing Graf — but it didn't help.

"Nothing like that this year, but I'm going to go there after the tournament, hopefully," said Hingis.

Rubin, a quarterfinalist at Roland Garros in 1995, says she will let Hingis shoulder the

"It feels great to be back in the quarterfinals. I haven't really processed it all yet. Any pressure is gonna be on her," said Rubin, a 24-year-old from Lafayette, Louisiana, who occasionally warms-up with Hingis.

"This next week is gonna be another level. But if I can get on top of her that'll rattle her a bit. She's definitely a confidence player. If I can get ahead I'll have a good chance."

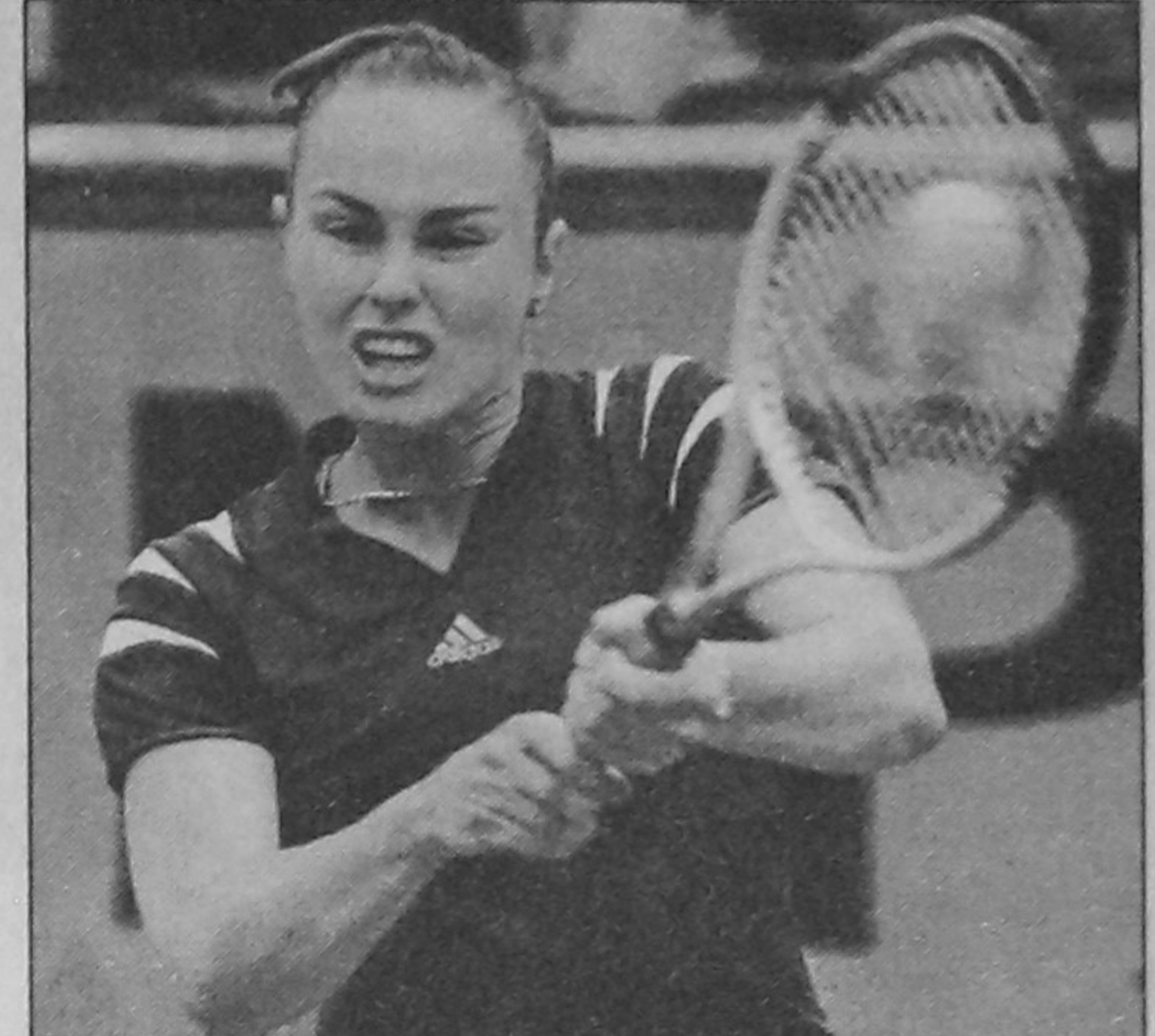
Rubin beat Natasha Zvereva of Belarus, a finalist here back in 1988, 6-4, 7-5.

Rubin took 38min to win the first set against Zvereva and the second went to 5-5 before the American broke for 6-5 and then served out for the victory. There were no fewer than 10 breaks of serve in the match.

It was the American's fourth win in five meetings with Zvereva as she equalled her best performance here.

All eight fourth-round women's singles were scheduled to be played Sunday, along with four men's fourth-round encounters.

The remaining four men's fourth-round matches are slated for Monday, including



Martin Hingis of Switzerland hits a return to Romanian Ruxandra Dragomir in the fourth round of the French Open yesterday. — AFP photo

pressure that the Swiss will be under in Tuesday's match. She is content to savour her fine run after overcoming a career-threatening hand injury which left her unable even to hold a racket.

third-seeded Swede Magnus Norman against last year's beaten finalist Andrei Medvedev of Ukraine and sixth-seeded Frenchman Cedric Pioline against 12-seeded Russian Marat Safin.

FRENCH OPEN NOTEBOOK



PARIS, June 4 (AFP). With Yevgeny Kafelnikov, 20-year-old Marat Safin and teen star Anna Kournikova hogging their share of the limelight, Russia is moving steadily to the forefront of world tennis — and another young hope, Max Mirnyi, says there are political reasons for that.

Mirnyi, now playing for independent Belarus, remembers the old Soviet system of excellence which developed the likes of Andrei Chesnokov, who is now enjoying success as Safin's coach, as well as Ukraine's Andrei Medvedev.

It was a hard school, according to Mirnyi, but effective.

"The system only allowed the best two to play (overseas) competitions — for the rest, there was nothing. But the positive thing was it was extremely competitive," he said.

Mirnyi said Belarus president Alexander Lukashenko was continuing to push the sport — just as former Russian president Boris Yeltsin, another self-confessed tennis nut, had during his time.

DOESN'T IT MAKE YOU SICK?

Playing at the French Open is enough to make you sick — at least, that appears to be the case, with players suffering from a whole range of ailments in the opening week.

For outgoing champion Andre Agassi, it was a blister which wrecked his tournament.

but he was far from being the only one.

For Australian Andrew Ilie it was wrist cramps as he bowed out to Russia's Marat Safin while Swiss pair Roger Federer and Michel Kratochvil both said they felt like throwing up after a five-set tussle lasting four-and-a-half hours in the summer heat.

Colombian Fabiola Zuluaga also suffered an upset stomach as she exited the women's singles at the hands of Natasha Zvereva and even Monica Seles had to resort to antibiotics to treat a cold on her way into the last 16.

Chile's Marcelo Rios pointed to pains in his legs as he lost in the opening round while Hernan Gumy and Davide Sanguinetti also felt queasy as they crashed out.

Lindsay Davenport tumbled out with a back injury, while Rika Hiraki went of the women's doubles with a twisted ankle.

Former world number one Pete Sampras must be feeling pretty sick, too — of the sight of Parisian red clay.

His assault on the only Grand Slam he has never won failed once more when he slid out in the first round to Australia's Mark Philippoussis.

BIG NAMES SPARE THEIR TIME

Pat Rafter and Martina Hingis are two of the biggest names in tennis — but they haven't forgotten their roots.

The two-time US Open champion from Australia and

the world number one from Switzerland both took time out to sign autographs for adoring young fans at Roland Garros on Saturday afternoon — drawing huge crowds.

Organizers said Anna Kournikova and another Australian, Mark Philippoussis, had proved the most popular autograph-signers over the opening five days of the tournament.

MEDVEDEV'S FRIEND

Ukraine star Andrei Medvedev has a famous fan in attendance as he aims to repeat his feat of making last year's final at the French Open.

Striker Andrii Shevchenko, a fellow Ukrainian who plays football for AC Milan, has been at court-side cheering Medvedev on.

Other stars spotted in the crowd have included French World Cup winners Zinedine Zidane and Frank Lebouef as well as Croatian international striker Davor Suker.

Medvedev, meanwhile, has been the butt of jokes for wearing long, baggy plaid shorts — he says he only wears them because they are comfortable and that it has nothing to do with superstition.

"I'm superstitious about not being superstitious," he said. "I wouldn't do the same things because it is silly. You become dependent on things that have nothing to do with your tennis. Why should I go to the same restaurant or wear the same shorts?"

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS	37 Rainbow	DOWN	25 Approach
1 WWF	39 Maternal	1 Castle	27 Lofly
surface	41 Squabble	protection	28 Dispatch
4 Satellite	43 Accepted	2 St. Louis	28 "Clueless"
antenna	44 Lubricate	attraction	words
8 Stroller	46 "Concentration"	3 Grill for	29 Sushi
12 Tulsa sch.	puzzle	Fonteyn	wrapper
13 Rue the	50 Scrawny	4 Dilettante	30 Brick-
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14 Cupid's	55 Downed	6 The lady	—; nest
specialty	56 Needing	7 Signifi-	31 "Take —
15 One	way to	cance	your leader"
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Yesterday's answer