

Surfing first of foremost

SYDNEY, Sept 9 (Reuters): Check your training times, check your event schedule, but first make sure you check your e-mail.

Sport may be the aim of the Olympic Games but web-surfing runs a close second at the Athletes Village in Sydney.

"If I had to wait an hour, I would. You have to check your e-mails," said Petra Banovic, a swimmer from Croatia who had stood in line for 20 minutes at the village's Surf Shack cyber cafe for a turn at one of its 70 terminals.

In the Internet age, the Surf Shack is proving the biggest draw at the Village, pushing the electronic games arcade - a prime attraction at past Games - off top slot.

"It's just quicker" (packed full), said Pilar Martin, media relations manager at the free cyber cafe, which is run by computer giant IBM, an official Olympic sponsor.

"We've literally got them lining up at the door when we open at nine o'clock."

Nearly 1,000 athletes at the village, less than half full now but home to nearly 11,000 competitors once the Games get under way on September 15, have already set up their own personalised home pages since the cafe opened last Saturday.

Sports enthusiasts can access the athletes' pages via www.ibm.com/fanmail and send electronic appreciation to their favourite athletes, sports teams or national delegations.

"You get them from people you've never even heard of," said Heather Newsham, a 23-year-old softball player from Winnipeg, Canada, whose home page lists her favourite food as steak and tells fans she loves movies and Italian soccer.

"I haven't replied yet, but I will."

The cyber cafe is the third at an Olympic Games and by far the biggest - a reflection of the global reach of the Internet and e-mail as a fast, low-cost means of communication.

A day on

From page 8

later use.

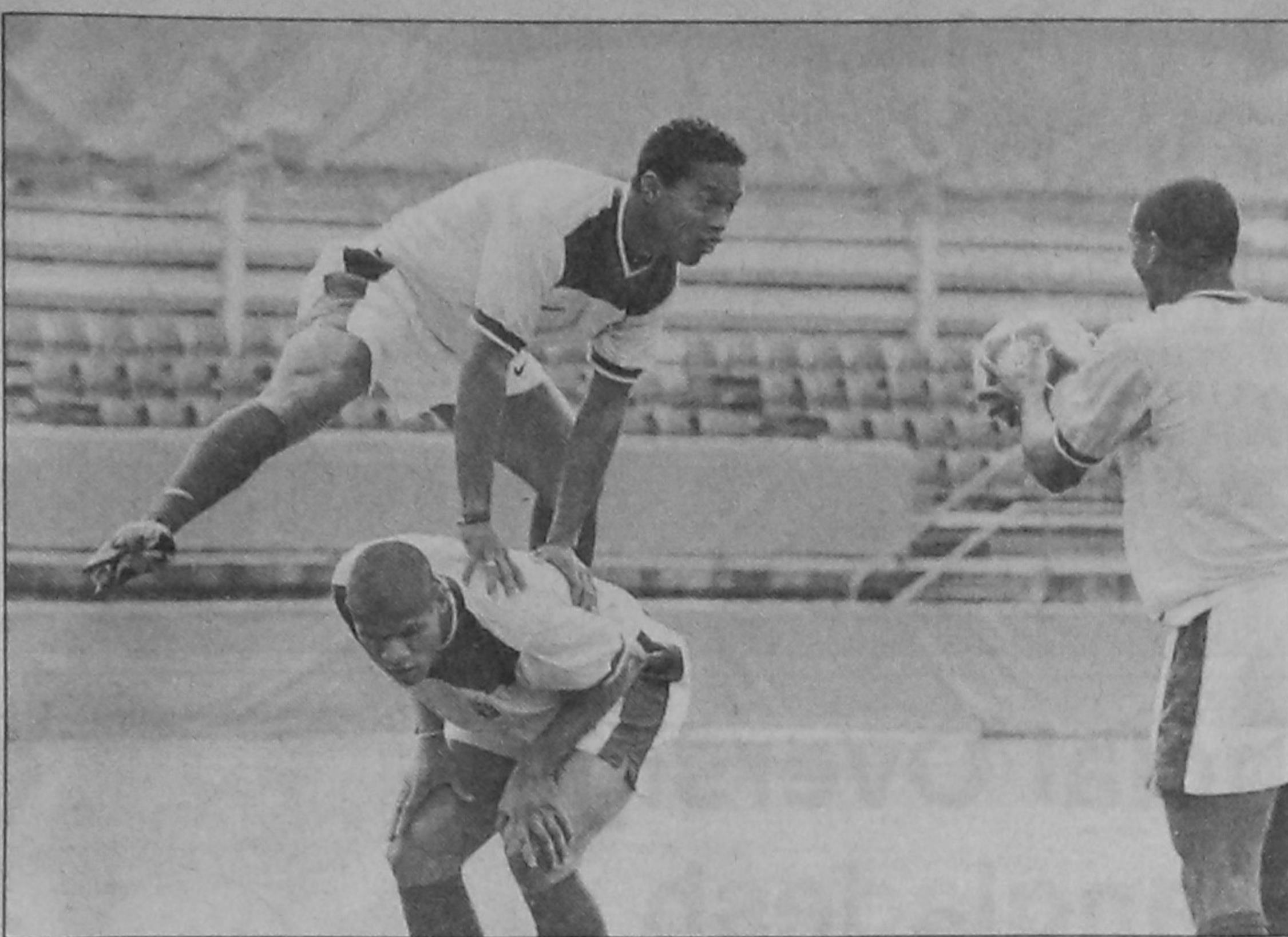
The former opening batsman was mindful of the fact that since Bangladesh has been brought up on a diet of one-day cricket the transition to Test level would require a whole new approach.

"I've tried telling them that it is easy to become a one-day player. Being a Test player requires one being mentally strong and also having a huge amount of concentration power."

"Even a genius like Tendulkar doesn't sit back on his achievements instead practises for hours in the nets before the next assignment."

Asked to explain what kind of fielding lessons he would be teaching, Mahanama, himself a world-class fielder, said he would brush up on the basics - correct throwing method, getting into posture and above all keeping the eye on the ball - these are the common mistakes he hoped to go over again when the course starts on Sunday.

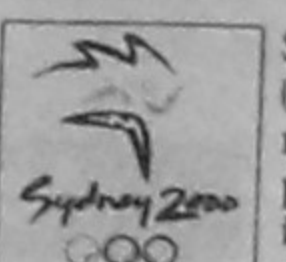
Mahanama who still feels he has a lot to offer to the game hopes to continue sharing his knowledge for years to come.



Brazilian star Ronaldinho leap-frogs a teammate during a practice session at the Marconi Oval in Sydney yesterday.

—AFP photo

Can Ronaldinho do it for Brazil?



SYDNEY, Sept 9 (AFP): Brazil's long wait for Olympic gold looks like it could finally be about to end.

The emergence of an exciting new generation of stars led by the brilliant 20-year-old striker Ronaldinho has left Wanderley Luxemburgo's squad as favourites to claim the only major title to have eluded world football's most successful nation.

The coaches of Italy, seen as the Brazilians' main rivals, Spain and the Atlanta gold medalists Nigeria may beg to differ.

But none of them can lay claim to the kind of explosive talent that Luxemburgo will have at his disposal when the 16-nation men's tournament kicks off on Thursday, two days before the Games officially open.

Ronaldinho, who scored nine goals in seven matches to fire Brazil to Sydney as winners of the South American qualifying tournament, has inevitably grabbed all the headlines.

But many feel that playmaker Alex, who will celebrate his 23rd birthday on Friday as Brazil open their campaign against Slovakia in Brisbane, is an even better prospect.

The pair, who seem to enjoy a near telepathic understanding, were outstanding in Brazil's 3-1 World Cup qualifying win over Argentina in July.

They have since been joined in the full national side by another member of the Olympic squad, Athirson, an attacking left-back who is emerging as a worthy heir to Real Madrid's Roberto Carlos.

Like the Brazilians, Italy have opted to forego their right to include any overseas players in their squad - opting instead to rely on the group of players that lifted the European under-21 title in May.

If both countries can top their opening groups they will not face each other unless they both advance to the final.

But while the Brazilians are not expected to have any trouble navigating past Slovakia, South Africa and Japan, the Italians have a tougher task in trying to get past the hosts Australia, Nigeria and Honduras.

The Italian youngsters face a baptism of fire on Thursday when they take on Australia in front of a 90,000 sellout crowd at the Melbourne Cricket Ground.

But coach Marco Tardelli believes his team, anchored around Inter Milan's promising young playmaker Andrea Pirlo, is unlikely to be overwhelmed or intimidated by the occasion.

"They are so proud to be here. I know they will give full commitment," he said.

With Nigeria weakened by the withdrawal of a number of top players, including African player of the year Nwankwo Kanu, Tardelli believes the Australians could provide the toughest opposition in Group A.

Italian football chiefs have done their bit for the campaign by delaying the start of the domestic season until October 1 to avoid the kind of club-versus-country battles that have undermined the Nigerians' preparations.

Japan and South Korea lead Asia's challenge with both countries anxious to put on a good display in the run-up to the 2002 World Cup, which they will jointly host.

South Korea are the reigning Asian youth champions and showed good form to record back-to-back 5-1 wins over Nigeria in recent warm-up matches for Sydney. But with only a handful of professionals in their squad, they look set to struggle in a group B that in-

cludes strongly-fancied Spain, Morocco and Chile, who have included Inter Milan striker Ivan Zamorano, 33, as one of their over-age players.

The Japanese however do look in with a chance of a medal in the wake of their strong showing during the qualifying campaign -- when they won 12 games in a row.

The squad named by French coach Philippe Troussier includes Roma's midfielder Hidetoshi Nakata, an attacking midfielder with the potential to be one of the stars of the Games, and five of the players who finished as runners-up to Spain in the world youth (under-20) championship earlier this year.

Troussier, who signed up on Friday to coach Japan through to the World Cup, is convinced that his squad has the quality to at least match the country's best-ever performance in Olympic football -- a bronze medal in 1968.

"Seven or eight countries have a chance to win a medal and Japan is one of them," he said. "Our goal is to get a medal."

AFP SOCCER BRIEFS

TURIN, Sept 9: French mid-field star Zinedine Zidane ended speculation that he might be moving to Spain when he announced on Friday he was staying at Italian Serie A club Juventus until 2005.

Zidane's contract had been due to expire at the end of June 2004 but he agreed to a year's extension. The announcement effectively kills off rumours that he was heading for Barcelona or Real Madrid.

The smiling Zidane seemed relaxed as he spoke of his future with the Turin side and claimed that the League title was Juventus' priority for the coming season and not the Champions League, which he has never won.

SAMMER KIDNAP TRIAL BEGINS

HAGEN, Germany, Sept 9: A 56-year-old butcher and a 46-year-old bricklayer appeared in court here on Friday charged with plotting to kidnap Borussia Dortmund coach Matthias Sammer and his family.

According to the prosecution, the two men planned to seize Sammer, his wife Karin and their daughter Sarah last November and then demand a ransom of 1.8 million marks (\$803,000 dollars).

The kidnap plot was exposed when the bricklayer got cold feet and handed himself in to police.

NAPOLI GALA FOR DIEGO

NAPLES, Sept 9: Napoli are planning a gala match in honour of former player and Argentine legend Diego Maradona, who helped them to their first ever Serie A titles in 1987 and 1990, sports daily Corriere dello sport reported Friday.

Negotiations have already begun between the club president Franco Corbelli and Maradona's agent Pablo Cosentino that would see the current Napoli side play against a select Argentine team.

DD 7 (BANGLA)

7:15 Sambad 8:40 Khas Khabar 9:00 Gane O Kothar 9:30 Movie Club Film (Last Thursday's Film Rpt): 12:00 Barnali 12:30 Movie Club Film (Last Friday's Film Rpt): 1:30 Sphatik Doorpan 2:00 Target 2:30 Continuum 3:00 Movie Club Film (Last Friday's Film Rpt): 3:30 Geet Saangeet 4:30 Sunday Bangla Film: 5:30 Sambad 6:30 Khas Khabar 7:20 Binodan (Magazine show) 7:30 Bangla Sambad 8:00 Rang Bahari 8:30 Juktikakko 9:00 Special Prog 9:30 Serial: Sidhanta 10:10 Khas Khabar 10:20 Mokho Mukhi 10:50 Sambad 11:00 Rangor.

ALPHA BANGLA TV

6:00 Aalap 7:00 News Bulletin 7:05 Gria Saja 7:30 Bharat Bhromon 8:00 Surer Ei Jhama Dhara 8:30 Manabi 9:00 News Bulletin 9:05

Lancs still in the hunt

LONDON, Sept 9: Lancashire kept the English County Cricket Championship title race alive by claiming maximum bowling points and gaining a swift first-innings advantage over Somerset, reports AFP.

Glen Chapple continued his recent resurgence in form by snaring four for 34 as Somerset were shot out for a paltry 132 at Old Trafford.

England's fifth-Test hero Mike Atherton then plundered another half-century as Lancashire closed the opening day on 142 for three.

Atherton, scorer of 191 in the Oval success over the West Indies, reached stumps unbeaten on 54 as the hosts forged a 10-run advantage.

A cloud does hang over Old Trafford, however, as Mike Denness, chairman of the pitch advisory group, has questioned the standard of the Manchester surface -- an eight-point penalty would all but scupper Lancashire's hopes.

Surrey's relentless pursuit of a second consecutive title was hampered by the London rain but Adam Holoake's side still had enough time to ensure relegated Durham -- one of the two Division One sides to beat them this season -- followed on.

Resuming on 165 for six, England leg-spinner Ian Salisbury claimed seven for 105 as Durham made 241. Second time around, they manoeuvred to 10 without loss.

It was slow going at Canterbury, where Kent crawled to 194 for four, 207 adrift of Yorkshire, from 78.3 overs.

Test star Rahul Dravid struck 72, including 11 boundaries before becoming the first of two victims for Matthew Hoggard -- leading the attack in the absence of Darren Gough, Craig White, Chris Silverwood, Ryan Sidebottom and Paul Hutchison.

The visitors had earlier completed their slump from 327 for two to 401 all out, after beginning the second day on 365 for seven.

Hampshire spin twins Shane Warne and Shaun Udal destroyed the Derbyshire batting at Southampton as Derbyshire lost their last six wickets for six runs in only 18 balls and were forced to follow on still 170 runs adrift.

They closed the third day at 32 for two, still 138 behind after Udal dismissed opening batsman Steve Stubbs and Australian Michael Di Venuto in quick succession.

In reply to Hampshire's first-innings total of 522, Derbyshire were handedly placed to avoid the follow-on figure of 373 with Rob Bailey (90) and James Poynter (40) at the wicket, but from 346 for two, Derbyshire slid to 352 all out.

Warne finished with figures of four for 103 and Udal took two for 81 during the Derbyshire demise.

Jayasinghe to miss 4x100m relay

COLOMBO, Sept 9: A woman sprinter who became embroiled in controversy over alleged sexual advances and other harassment by powerful politicians, has been dropped from Sri Lanka's 4x100 metre relay team for the Sydney Games, news reports said Saturday, reports AP.

Susantika Jayasinghe, a 200-metre silver medalist at the World Track Championships in Athens, was dropped because she "evaded" baton-changing practice with the national team. The Island newspaper reported.

Lazio win Super Cup

ROME, Sept 9: Lazio won the Italian Super Cup here on Friday night, beating Inter Milan 4-3 in the Olympic stadium, reports AFP.

Lazio did the League and Cup double last season and Inter were beaten Cup finalists.

Munna bails

From page 8

Jewel, Ruhul Amin, Motiur Munna, Bipul (Shoaib), Selim, Rakib, Nakib and Alif.

Rahmatganj MFS: Milon, Mintu, Deem Mohammad (Apu), Kingshuk, Zaman, Anwar, Shamim, Iqbal (Azim), Milon (Jalal) Moni and Tipu. Referee: R Alam.

TODAY'S MATCH

Abahani vs Brothers Union (5pm)

An American affair



NEW YORK, Sept 9: Lindsay Davenport and Venus Williams set up an All-American final for the first time in 16 years with semifinal victories here Saturday at the 15-million-dollar US Open, reports AFP.

It will be the first time since the 1984 US Open final between Chris Evert-Lloyd and Martina Navratilova that two American women compete for the title.

Third-seeded Venus earned her second trip to the final here with a tough 6-4, 3-6, 7-5 victory over world number one Martina Hingis.

It was not an easy ride for Venus. Down 5-3 in the decisive set and two points away from defeat, the 20-year-old American scrambled to earn the vic-

tory.

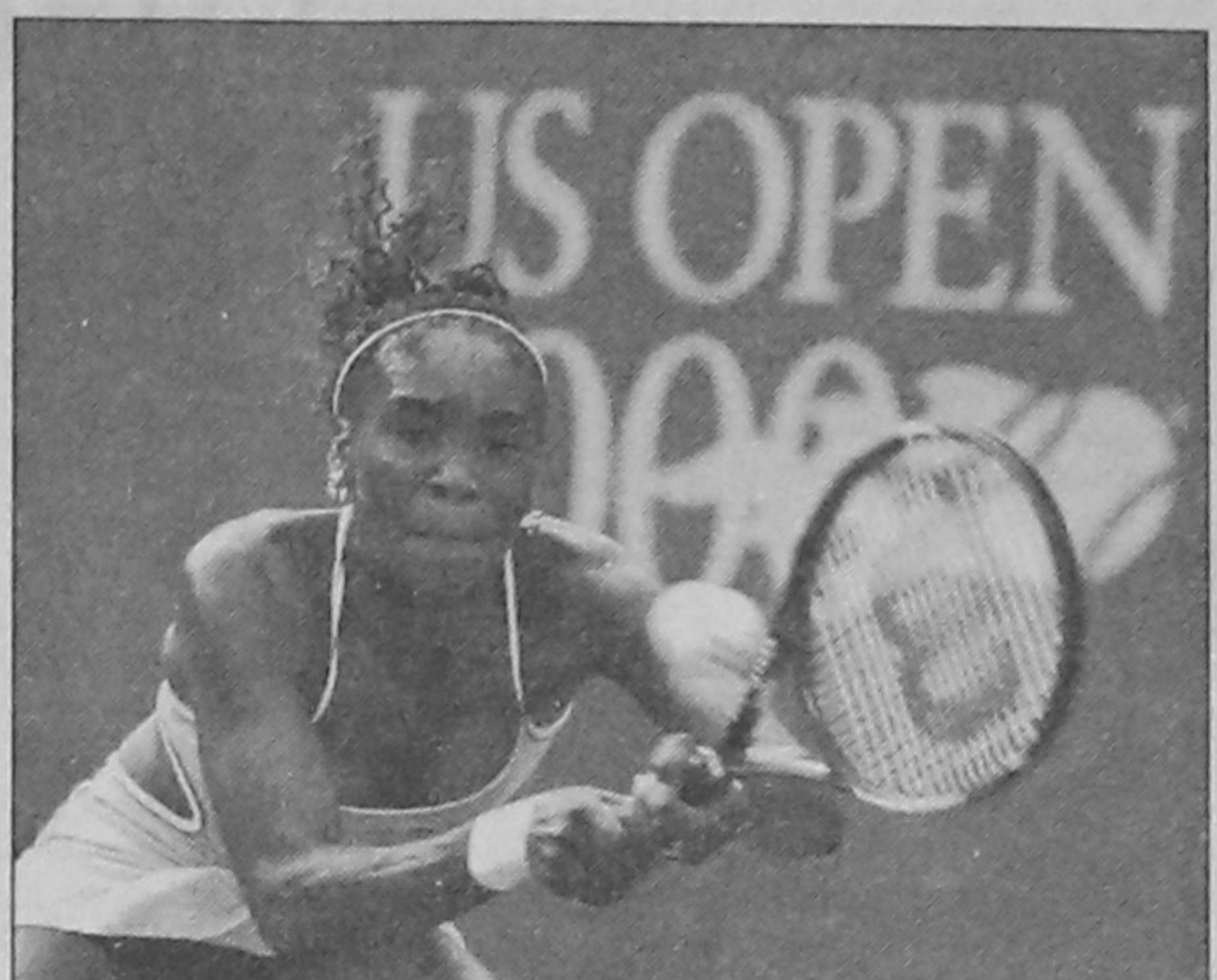
"I really didn't want to lose today," Venus said. "I felt I deserved to be in the final and I found a way to get there."

Venus said she was not content with her game Friday, committing a total of 47 unforced errors. "My balls kept flying long during the entire match and I wasn't moving well. But I just kept slugging away, hanging in there and things worked out."

But the African-American said she is confident that she will produce a better quality of play Saturday. "This is the final of a Grand Slam. Everything's at stake. I'm not going to give anything away," Venus said.

In the other semi-final, Davenport, the second seed, fought off a late come-back from 25-ranked Russian teen Elena Dementieva.

Up a set and 5-2 with four



American Venus Williams plays backhand against Martina Hingis of Switzerland during their US Open semifinal in New York on September 8.

—AFP photo

Men's semifinals

Contrasting combatants



NEW YORK, Sept 9: Two experienced veterans, two young guns - that's the line-up for Saturday's semifinal double-header at the U.S. Open, reports AFP.

Unseeded 1999 finalist Todd Martin, the hero of night-owl fans at Flushing Meadows after winning his last two matches in dramatic fashion under the lights, faces Russian sixth seed Marat Safin, tipped as a star of the future.

Four-time champion Pete Sampras has benefited from a sympathetic draw and a solid level of form, to reach the last four against the fast-rising Aussie who beat him for the Queen's title, Lleyton Hewitt.

The semifinals will be a perfect test of the new generation against their elders.

At 19, Hewitt already has four titles on the ATP Tour to

his name this year and is playing for the first time at this level of a Slam.

The same goes for Safin, the Moscow-born, Spanish-trained right-hander whose skills are not limited to his favoured clay after he took a hardcourt title at Toronto last month at the Masters Series.

Sampras is aiming for a 14th Grand Slam title. But after setting the record of 13 with his Wimbledon win last July over Patrick Rafter, the 29-year-old American is relaxed about his place in the game.

But he's well aware of the damage the fleet Hewitt can cause. "He's one of the best movers we have in the game, he really did some damage to me at Queen's. He's a feisty young guy that's not going to give me any free points."

"He's had a great year, he's won titles, he's beaten top players. I think we know he's one of

match points on her serve, the 24-year-old American tightened up and dropped the next four games to let Dementieva go up 6-5 before prevailing for a 6-2, 7-6 (7/5) victory in one hour and 21 minutes.

"I'm happy I won in two sets and to be in the finals, but disappointed by the way it ended," Davenport said.

For Saturday's final, Davenport has an advantage on paper, leading Venus 9 to 5 in head-to-heads. But Venus, who won four of the last five meetings, will cause enormous problems to the tall Californian.

She generates the same power from the baseline, has a big serve, moves better than Davenport and charges the net more these days, something she picked up by playing doubles along side sister Serena.

"Playing Venus is a little more difficult for me," Davenport said. "She serves big and hits the ball hard. I'll have to keep the ball deep and not let her step in. I'll have to go for winners when I see an opening before she does."

The elder of the Williams sisters beat Davenport in the Wimbledon finals this year, becoming the first African-American to capture the title since Althea Gibson in 1958.

She has not lost a match since then, winning WTA titles this summer in Stanford, San Diego and New Haven while brushing opponents aside along the way without dropping a set.

With the win Saturday against Hingis, Venus stretched her winning streak to 25. "If it could continue this way for ever, it would be unbelievable," she said.

Venus said that her second trip to the final will be nothing like the first one where she was dismantled 6-0, 6-4 by Martina Hingis in 1997. "Martina took advantage of me because I didn't know what was going on. I didn't know what I was doing," she said.

the guys who's going to be the future of the game."

The hours that Martin is forced to spend in the training room to prepare for each match are paying dividends for the 30-year-old.

And he is winning the hearts of the fans, as well as his emotions come to the fore at winning moments. "This is the U.S. Open, that incites a little bit of energy from me," he said. "It's exciting, I'm able to feed off the crowd."

Martin and Safin have never met. Sampras leads Hewitt 3-1 having won a match each year 1998-00.

Lleyton lifts doubles crown

NEW YORK, Sept 9: Australian Lleyton Hewitt and Mirnyi of Belarus won the U.S. Open men's doubles title here Friday, defeating American Rich Leach and Ellis Ferreira of South Africa in three sets, reports AFP.

Hewitt and Mirnyi, teaming up for the first time, beat the veteran American-South African pair 6-4, 5-7, 7-6 (7/5) in 1hr 55min to become the first unseeded duo in the history of the Open to win the doubles crown.

"It's been an unbelievable week. It's a fantastic win. I'd like to thanks Max for playing with me," Hewitt said.

At 19, Hewitt became the youngest man in the Open era to win a Grand Slam doubles crown, stretching his doubles winning streak to 11 matches.

His last tournament victory came in Indianapolis three weeks ago when he captured the title there with fellow-Australian Sandon Stolle.

Bruce Stadium turf okay

CANBERRA, Sept 9: A last-minute race to replace the turf at Canberra's Bruce Stadium paid off Saturday with the new surface getting the thumbs up from international officials to host Olympic soccer matches, reports AFP.

A final inspection by officials from SOCOG and world soccer governing body FIFA approved the new grass, hastily laid over the last three days after the original turfing went drastically wrong.

TV Guide

Sunday 10th September

(All programmes are in local time. The Daily Star will not be responsible for any change in the programme)

BTV

3:00 Opening Announcement, Recitation From The Holy Quran And Programme Outline 3:15 Patriotic Song 3:20 Open University Prog 4:00 Bangla News 4:05 Animation Film: Jim Henson's Animal Show 4:30 Pusti Thathto 4:45 Porichay 5:10 Sashtoth Thathto (Health Developing For Mother & Children) 5:25 National Television Debate Competition 6:05 Metho Sur 6:30 Transmission From Chittagong Center 7:00 Sambad (Bangla News) 7:05 Maiti-O-Maus 7:25 Buranima (Programme For Local Travelling) 8:00 News At 8 (Bangla) 8:20 Geetibichitra 8:50

Package Serial: Rakanfer #1/4 (Shahiduzzaman Salim, Tarin, Shimal) 9:30 Comedy Series: Molla Nasrudin (Bangla Dubs) 7:40 Kate Sate 8:00 Din Protidin 8:25 Rythm 9:00 Drama Kar Saja Sijo 10:00 Reciting from Holy Quran 10:10 71-ar Sabdho Syrik 10:40 Music 11:15 Drama Everyday Saponokher Chabi 12:00 Music 12:40 Kate Sate 1:05 Rythm 2:00 Drama Kar Saja Sijo 3:00 Bangla Cinema: Binmoy (Uz-zal/Kabori) 6:00pm Reciting from Holy Quran 6:10 Frames of

CHANNEL-i

6:15 Drama Everyday Saponokher Chabi 7:00 Music Next Generation 7:40 Kate Sate 8:00 Din Protidin 8:25 Rythm 9:00 Drama Kar Saja Sijo 10:00 Reciting from Holy Quran 10:10 71-ar Sabdho Syrik 10:40 Music 11:15 Drama Everyday Saponokher Chabi 12:00 Music 12:40 Kate Sate 1:05 Rythm 2:00 Drama Kar Saja Sijo 3:00 Bangla Cinema: Binmoy (Uz-zal/Kabori) 6:00pm Reciting from Holy Quran 6:10 Frames of

Changes 6:40 Arcenic 7:15 Drama Everyday Saponokher Chabi 8:00 Sazzay Sappo Ghar 9:05 Sasroy Ghar 9:15 Hol Line 10:00 Amar Choto 11:00 Bangla Cinema: Joban Sanggi (Zahid Hassan/Sama) 12:00 Magazine: Suvo Rattri

EKUSHEY TV

2:00 Ajker Potrikay 2:10 Andho Shikari 2:35 Chintan 3:00 Eku-shey News Headlines 3:02 Bangla Movie: Mithur Mritu 5:40 Drishhti 6:00 Ekushey News Headlines 6:02 Expedition to the Animal Kingdom 6:30 Chardike 7:00 Ekushey Headlines 7:02 Ajker Potrikay 7:10 Classic Cartoons 7:20 Jana Ajana 7:45 Ekushey News 8:00 Ei Shopto 8:30 Noorjahan 9:30 Nepot-thor Nayok 10:00 TV News 10:20 Shorashori 11:00 Ekushey Late Night News 11:15 Ei Shopto 11:30 Ekushey News Headline

DD 7 (BANGLA)

7:15 Sambad 8:40 Khas Khabar 9:00 Gane O Kothar 9:30 Movie Club Film (Last Thursday's Film Rpt): 12:00 Barnali 12:30 Movie Club Film (Last Friday's Film Rpt): 1:30 Sphatik Doorpan 2:00 Target 2:30 Continuum 3:00 Movie Club Film (Last Friday's Film Rpt): 3:30 Geet Saangeet 4:30 Sunday Bangla Film: 5:30 Sambad 6:30 Khas Khabar 7:20 Binodan (Magazine show) 7:30 Bangla Sambad 8:00 Rang Bahari 8:30 Juktikakko 9:00 Special Prog 9:30 Serial: Sidhanta 10:10 Khas Khabar 10:20 Mokho Mukhi 10:50 Sambad 11:00 Rangor.

ALPHA BANGLA TV

6:00 Aalap 7:00 News Bulletin 7:05 Gria Saja 7:30 Bharat Bhromon 8:00 Surer Ei Jhama Dhara 8:30 Manabi 9:00 News Bulletin 9:05

Serial: Googly 9:30 Bahari Ahar 10:00 Ghrisheja 10:30 Sa Re Ga Ma 11:30 Serial: Swami Vivekananda 12:00 Anpadar Janya 12:30 Serial: Bhalobasa Mondobasa 1:00 Cine News 1:30 Serial: Bhawan Purer Chattutea 2:00 Serial: Jemon Bolben Sir 2:30 Bangla Movie: Ghrishadha (*Utam Kumar, Suchitra Sen) 3:00 Serial: Hyar Majhe 5:30 Surer Ei Jhama Dhara 6:00 Mon Nive 6:30 Shudhu Tomake Chai 7:00 Serial: Gugli 7:30 News In Bangali 8:00 Serial: Jhara Samayer Upkatha 8:30 Serial: Agni Yuger Padatik 9:00 Kichu Smriti Kichu Gaan 9:30 Serial: Iskabonar Bibi #24 (Indrani, Shila Dittay) 10:00 Sanghat 10:30 Serial: Sat Kahan 11:00 Half Chaitale #28 11:30 Serial: Majar Khala Kabaitay 12:00 Serial: Andolon 12:30 Serial: Mojar Chobi 1:00 Serial: Kipurush 1:30 Bangla Movie: Ghrishadha (*Utam Kumar, Suchitra Sen) 4:00 Serial: Ek Akasher Niche

STAR SPORTS

7:30 Spanish Football League 2000/01 9:30 Formula One Qualifying 2000 Monza, ITALY-Italian Grand Prix 10:30 World Wrestling Federation Metal 11:30 Wta Tour The Pilot Pen New Haven, CT USA Final 1:00 Nba Inside Stuff 99/2000 1:30 Formula One Qualifying 2000 Monza, ITALY-Italian Grand Prix 2:30 US Open US Open 2000 New York, NY USA Men's Single S/F & Women's Single Finals 5:00 Live-Race Day Raceway Monza, ITALY-Italian Grand Prix 5:45 Live-Formula One 2000 Formula One World Championships Monza, ITALY-Italian Grand Prix 8:00 Sports India 8:30 Futbol Mundial 9:00 Spanish Football League 2000/01 11:00 Live-US Open US Open 2000 New York, NY USA Men's Singles Final & Ladies Dbls Final

ESPN