

# Star Sport



Dhaka, Saturday, September 16, 2000, e-mail: dssports@bdonline.com



**Named after the host city, Syd the platypus is a team-player and born leader. He is focused, dynamic and enthusiastic and captures the Australian energy and sense of humour. He represents the water.**

## ABSORBING ANECDOTES

SYDNEY, Sept 15 (AFP): Quotes of the day Friday from the Olympic Games here:

"I've always tried to do my best, whether it was doing the laundry or weightlifting." - Brazilian women's weightlifter Elisabete Jorge, 43, who worked as a laundress and a pizza chef before pursuing her Olympic dream.

"We have athletes leaving Sydney, and there are athletes who will not be coming to Sydney." - US drug czar Barry McCaffery on positive tests results prior to the Games.

"You will never defeat it entirely. It is a problem that will be always there." - Britain's Princess Anne on the use of performance enhancing drugs in sport.

"There are loads of track coaches down there, but I have only one coach, John Smith. John is the best coach walking on this earth." - Trinidad sprinter Ato Boldon on his confidence in his American coach.

"What ever they are feeding those guys, I would like to know. I eat a lot of Chinese food. I should have fed it to my son. He's only 6-foot-4." - US Olympic basketball coach Rudy Tomjanovich on the China's towering basketball players.

"The great part about being young is you don't have a clue what's going on. That's a great thing to have when you're racing." - Defending 400m individual medley Olympic champion Tom Dolan on the advantages of youth at the Games.

"Australia's tyranny of distance is conquered today as the world comes to us." - The Australian newspaper in a column trumpeting the Games as a chance to bridge Australia's geographical isolation from the rest of the world.

## Honesty pledged

SYDNEY, Sept 15: Australian hockey player Michelle Hawkes took the Athlete's Oath on behalf of all competitors at the Sydney Olympics here Friday, reports AFP.

Continuing a tradition that started at the Antwerp Games in 1920, Hawkes pledged to uphold the sporting traditions of the event.

The text of the oath is: "In the name of all the competitors I promise that we shall take part in these Olympic Games, respecting and abiding by the rules which govern them, committing ourselves to a sport without doping and without drugs, in the true spirit of sportsmanship." A second oath was taken on behalf of the judges and officials.

## Two Romanians sent packing

BUCHAREST, Sept 15: The Romanian Olympic Committee (COR) have sent home weightlifters Traian Cihorean and Adrian Mateias after the pair were caught doping, the Committee announced here Friday, reports AFP.

Following positive tests in Sydney by the athletes Traian Cihorean (56 kg) and Adrian Mateias (105 kg) the COR have decided to withdraw them from competition and to ban them from the Romanian Olympic team for life, the Cor said without specifying what products the pair had taken.

## Sparkling opening

By Tawfiq Aziz Khan

Australians have a penchant for perfection. The SCG, MCG, Melbourne Park tennis complex and the newest indoor cricket stadiums are good examples of their excellence.

But on Friday, at Sydney, they showed once again that they leave nothing to chance, not even when umpire Darrel Hair called Muralitharan for 'throwing'.

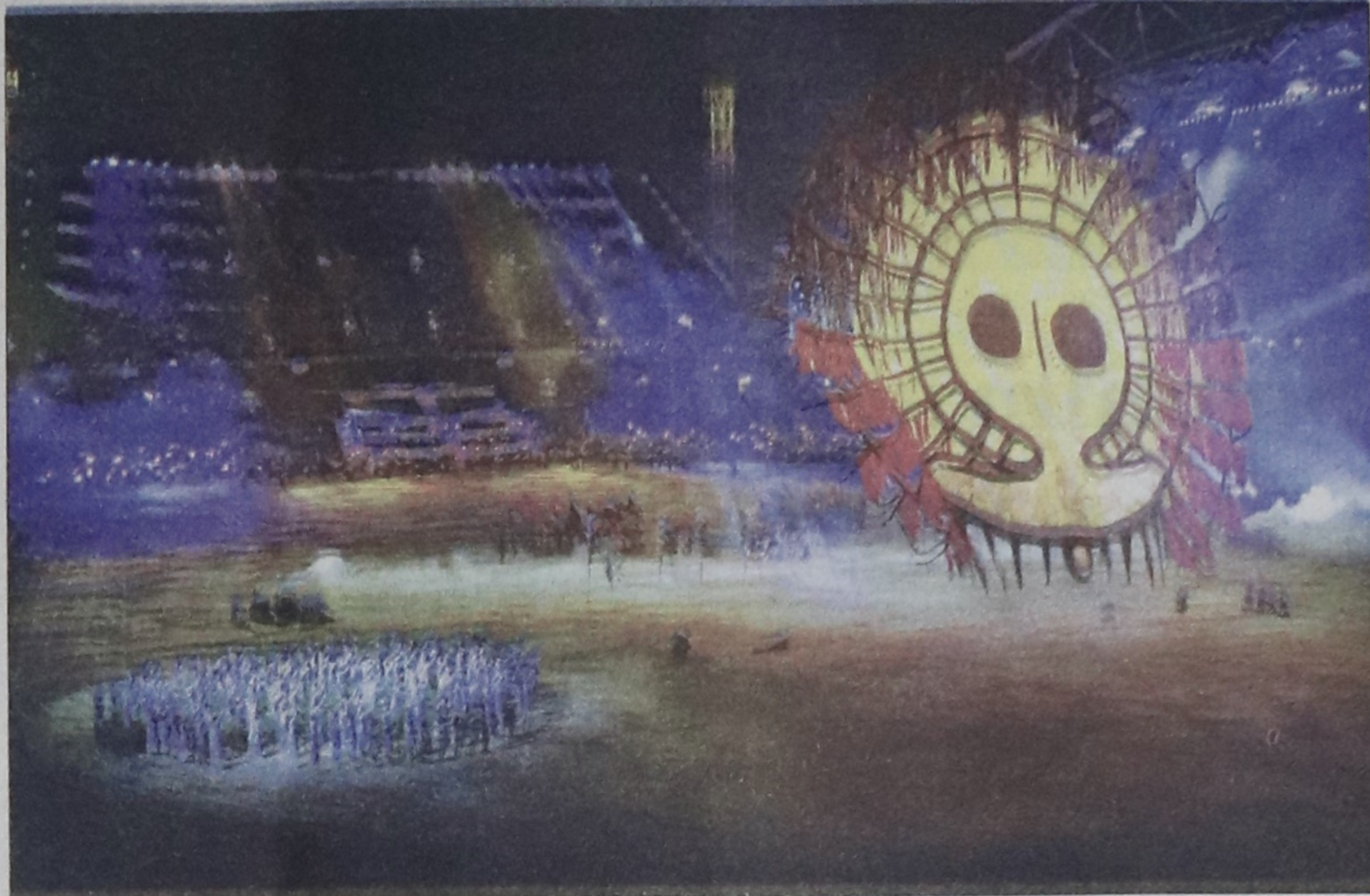
Since the marvels of modern science have opened vistas of the ordinary millions, nothing more absorbing, more spectacular and more inspiring could so far be seen. It was a real show time at Sydney and the organising committee down there has scored a perfect ten like Nadia Comaneci.

In our heydays we were fed mostly by newspapers and we had to be content with whatever the reports had said about such events. But we are lucky to be a part of the transition and beneficiaries of the information explosion and IT revolution. Those of us who could not make it to Sydney were glued to the television set, but Bill Gates did not rely on his own innovations. He was, physically there at the stands.

The whole programme was so minutely detailed and superbly executed that the synchronisation of the technical staffs and the thousands of artists on the ground and up in the air only could match the precision of solar system. Indeed, no amount of praises was that much for them. The march past of the athletes was another spectacle of colours rendered by the participants from 200 countries, the largest so far for any game in the modern era.

Unlike other games that we were lucky to see on TV, Sydney presented a very different spectacle, both in colour and attitude. Here again the typical Australian informality was in abundance and that added unprecedented gaiety to the whole proceedings. From the tiny East Timor to the Trinidad and Tobago or the big China, all were in high spirits, possibly, except to the cases of the contingents from South Asia. Most of them looked like participants of a mourning procession. But it was possibly the greatest moment of the march past when the arch-enemies, the two Koreas, appeared on the scene

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SUNNY NIGHT! A sun sets the Olympic Stadium alight during the 'Djkapurra & clans & Wandjina' segment of the opening ceremony yesterday. - AFP photo

## How the drama unfolds

SYDNEY, Sept 15 (AFP): The opening ceremony for the Sydney Olympics has got underway here Friday in Stadium Australia.

International Olympic Committee (IOC) president Juan Antonio Samaranch and Australia's Governor General Sir William Deane took their seats at Stadium Australia as the Australian national anthem 'Advance Australia Fair' was played.

First into the arena itself were stockmen on horseback — stockmen are the Australian equivalent of cowboys — who paraded in formation, forming

the five Olympic rings on an arena covered in a red-orange surface to depict a traditional outback landscape.

The riders trailed Olympic and Australian flags behind them.

Next a girl playing 'the Spirit of Australia' entered the Stadium and was hoisted into the air for the first real sepiet of the ceremony — a sequence that featured giant representations of Australia's famous marine life.

The section, entitled 'Deep Sea Dreaming', depicted tropical fish, jellyfish and other sea creatures.

Then came a long section that depicted the culture and

traditions of Australia's indigenous people, the Aborigines.

A fire section followed and then another showpiece in honour of Australia's unique flora and fauna began.

A scene followed illustrating the arrival of the British who would colonise Australia, with a depiction of the man considered to have discovered the country, Captain James Cook from Staines, Yorkshire in northern England who arrived on a representation of his ship the Endeavour.

Another legendary figure during the fledgling days of Australia — bushranger Ned Kelly — also had a role in the sequence depicting the role of Britain — many of whom were convicts — in developing the continent.

The early industries that built the economy of the host nation were portrayed with many references to sheep, wool and mining before a lawnmower sequence which depicted the quick rate of development of the

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WE ARE ONE: In a groundbreaking gesture of goodwill, delegations of bitter neighbours North and South Korea march together during the opening ceremony of the 2000 Games yesterday. - AFP photo

## Unified Korea

SYDNEY, Sept 15: Athletes from North and South Korea struck a sporting blow for the cause of reunification Friday, marching together for the first time at an Olympic opening ceremony, reports AFP.

Wearing identical uniforms, about 180 athletes from the Cold War foes strode into Sydney's Stadium Australia behind a white flag adorned with a light-blue Korean peninsula and the simple banner 'Korea' to the tune of folk song 'Ari-rang'.

The packed crowd stood and cheered as the Koreans, led by South Korean female basketball player Chung Eun-Soon and Pak Jang-Chol, a North Korean judo coach, entered the stadium holding hands raised in a symbol of unity broadcast to an estimated 3.5 billion people worldwide.

The move, brought about as a result of negotiations between the two countries and the International Olympic Committee, marked the first time since they went to war in 1950 that the two countries had marched under a common flag at the Olympics.

The Koreans are still technically at war, having never signed a peace accord.

But ever since a June summit between the South's President Kim Dae-Jung and the North's supreme leader Kim Jong-Il, the two Koreas have been progressing slowly towards peace and reunification.

Officials in Seoul on Friday said Kim Jong-Il was likely to visit the South Korean capital next year while defence ministers

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## Hearty & healthy

SYDNEY, Sept 15: All five Bangladeshi athletes are in good as the actual competition starts from tomorrow, reports UNB.

Swimmer Karar Samedul Islam has recovered from a mild fever.

Despite feeling unwell for two days, Samedul still attended practice sessions along with Doly Akhter at the Sydney University Swimming Pool and Sydney Aquatic Centre.

Commonwealth gold medal shooter Sabrina Sultana has also been busy.

Both Sabrina and Karar make their Olympic debuts on Saturday.

Sabrina will compete in her favourite 10-metre air rifle

event at the Sydney International Shooting Centre in Cecil Park, some 35 kilometres from the Athletes' Village between 9 am-14.30 pm (Sydney time).

Samedul is in action in the 100 metres breaststroke in heat number two to be held during 10 am to 12 noon (Sydney time) at the Sydney Aquatic Centre.

Samedul with his best timing of 1.09.51 was placed sixth among the seven competitors in heat-two ahead of Guinea swimmer Facinet Bangoura.

SAF Games champion sprinter Mahbub Alam and Fouzia Huda Jui worked out in the village. Their events are on September 27 and 22 respectively.

Akhter competes in the 100 metre breaststroke from 10 am to 12.30 pm (Sydney time) on September 17.



HUMAN DRAGON: A performer in his elements during the 'Fireater' part of the opening ceremony yesterday. - AFP photo

## Fury fizzles out

SYDNEY, Sept 15 (AFP): The threat of mass Aboriginal protests during the Sydney Olympic Games eased Friday just hours ahead of the opening ceremony.

Plans for a mass march from the heart of the local Aboriginal community in suburban Sydney to Prime Minister John Howard's central office fell through, as did efforts to form a human chain at exit routes from Sydney Airport.

Despite fears in the lead-up to the Games that demonstrations could get out of hand, senior police were able to join Aboriginal protesters during sacred ceremonies on Friday.

At demonstrations which have gone ahead, there have been no arrests and media representatives usually outnumbered protesters.

The morning after a million

people packed the streets of Sydney to welcome the arrival of the Olympic flame, fewer than 100 protesters turned out to start the march on Howard's office.

Another 200 from the unauthorised Aboriginal tent embassy temporarily set aside their differences with the march organisers to join them mid-procession.

They carried banners saying "White Australia has a black history" and "Australia — a sorry sight for the world to witness".

The demonstration had been billed by Aboriginal protesters and supporters as the main event to air grievances on issues including high rates of imprisonment, health problems and economic neglect.

The Metropolitan Aboriginal Land Council, which is organi-

ising officially sanctioned protests, blamed the Sydney Organising Committee for the Olympic Games (SOCOG) and renegade indigenous protest groups for the dismal turnout.

Aboriginal activist and protest organiser Lyall Munro admitted it was the third land council protest to flop.

"I feel a bit dejected about the numbers. Obviously we're very concerned about the lack of response for the proposed human chains out of the airport and the lack of response for this program," Munro said.

"I suppose one could say interference from particular quarters, particularly SOCOG appointees and other groups have had a dire effect on the outcome."

But, activist Trevor Close, who raised the Aboriginal flag

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## Today's menu

SYDNEY, Sept 15 (AFP): Saturday's schedule for the Sydney Olympics:

**FOOTBALL**  
Bruce Stadium, Canberra  
Women's Preliminaries (Germany v Brazil)  
Men's Preliminaries (USA v Cameroon)  
Sydney Football Stadium  
Women's Preliminaries (Australia v Sweden)  
Men's Preliminaries (Australia v Nigeria)  
Brisbane Cricket Ground  
Men's Preliminaries (Czech Rep v Kuwait)  
Hindmarsh Stadium, Adelaide  
Men's Preliminaries (Italy v Hungary)

**HOCKEY**  
State Hockey Centre  
Women's Preliminaries (South Korea v Argentina)  
(Germany v New Zealand)  
Men's Preliminaries (Netherlands v Great Britain) (Spain v South Korea)  
Men's Preliminaries (Canada v Pakistan) (Malaysia v Germany)

**SHOOTING**  
Sydney International Shooting Centre, Cecil Park  
Women's 10m Air Rifle Qualification, Men's Trap Qualification, Women's 10m Air Rifle Final, Men's 10m Air Pistol Qualification, Men's 10m Air final

**SWIMMING**  
Sydney Aquatic Centre  
Women's 400m Individual Medley Heats, Men's 400m Freestyle Heats, Women's 100m Butterfly Heats, Men's 100m Breaststroke Heats, Women's 4x100m Freestyle Relay Heats, Men's 4x100m Freestyle Relay Heats

Women's 400m Individual Medley Final, Men's 400m Freestyle Final, Women's 100m Butterfly Semifinals, Men's 100m Breaststroke Semifinals, Women's 4x100m Freestyle Relay Final, Men's 4x100m Freestyle Final

**ARTISTIC GYMNASTICS**  
**BADMINTON**  
**BEACH VOLLEYBALL**  
**BASKETBALL**  
**BOXING**  
**TRACK CYCLING**  
**EQUESTRIAN**  
**FENCING**  
**HANDBALL**  
**JUDO**  
**TABLE TENNIS**  
**TRIATHLON**  
**VOLLEYBALL**  
**WATER POLO**  
**WEIGHTLIFTING**

## Jenny's quest

SYDNEY, Sept 15 (AFP): Jenny Thompson's five Olympic gold medals aren't enough, not without the solo gold that has so far eluded the US swimming great's grasp.

"I would have retired after Atlanta if I'd won an individual gold," admitted Thompson, who walked away from the 1996 Games with three relay golds — taking her career total to five.

"But really it's a kind of a blessing in disguise that I didn't. This has been the best four years of my career."

In these fruitful four years, Thompson has captured world titles in the 100m freestyle and 100m butterfly and earned 11 titles in two Pan Pacific Championships.

At the 1999 Pan Paces at the Olympic pool she captured Mary T. Meagher's 18-year-old world record in the 100m fly, a race that earned USA Swimming's Performance of the Year honours.

At the US Trials, the 27-year-old lowered her own national record in the 100m freestyle and held off Stanford teammate Dara Torres to win the 100m fly.

On Saturday her quest for the grail of individual gold begins with the heats of the 100m fly.

It won't be easy. As well as Torres, Thompson will have to battle Dutchwoman Inge de Bruijn, who has twice improved upon the world record Thompson set in August of 1999.

Australian Petra Thomas owns the fourth-fastest time in the world this year, and will be buoyed by the support of Australian fans.

Thompson is well aware of the difficulty of her task. In 1992, at the age of 19, she went to Barcelona fresh from shattering the world record in the 100m freestyle.

She won her first two Olympic relay titles, anchoring the United States' world record-setting 4x100 free squad. But she finished second in the 100m free behind China's Zhuang Yong.

"I went in as world record holder and got a silver. I suppose I should have been happy to be the second best in the world but it was definitely disappointing," Thompson said.

"There was also a disgruntled feeling: I got second, why aren't people happy for me?"

Out of sorts, Thompson finished fifth in the 50m free. Two years later she failed to win any individual medals at the Rome World Championships dominated by a Chinese women's team later tainted by a doping scandal.