



Record number of female athletes

The inclusion of the Women's Modern Pentathlon means that the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games boost the proportion of female competitors to 42 per cent on the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games. Women compete in every sport in the Sydney Games except boxing, wrestling and baseball.



SYDNEY, Sept 18 (AFP) - The schedule for Day 4 Tuesday at the Sydney Olympics:

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

HOCKEY
State Hockey Centre
Men's Preliminaries (Spain v Poland)
Women's Preliminaries (Netherlands v South Africa) (Australia v Spain)
Men's Preliminaries (Argentina v Korea) (Australia v Indonesia)

SWIMMING
Sydney International Aquatic Centre
Men's 100m Freestyle Heats
Women's 200m Butterfly Heats
Men's 200m Breaststroke Heats
Men's 4 x 200m Freestyle Relay Heats
Men's 100m Freestyle Semifinals
Women's 200m Freestyle Final
Men's 200m Butterfly Final
Women's 200m Individual Medley Final
Men's 200m Breaststroke Semifinals
Women's 200m Butterfly Semifinals
Men's 4 x 200m Freestyle Relay Final

TENNIS
Tennis Centre
Men's Singles First Round
Women's Singles First Round
Men's Singles First Round
Women's Singles First Round

ARCHERY
ARTISTIC GYMNASTICS
BADMINTON
BASEBALL
BOXING
BASKETBALL
BEACH VOLLEYBALL
CANOE/KAYAK
EQUESTRIAN
HANDBALL
JUDO
ROWING
SAILING
SHOOTING
SOFTBALL
TABLE TENNIS
VOLLEYBALL
WATER POLO
WRESTLING

9 found doped

SYDNEY, Sept 18: A total of nine Olympians have been suspended for drug use, including six who have been banned from the Athletes' Village. International Olympic Committee officials said Monday, reports AP.

Patrick Schamsch, head of the IOC Medical Commission, said the other three - all wrestlers, two from Egypt and one from Morocco - were suspended before they arrived at the Village.

The Village was off limits for another six: A weightlifter from Taiwan, an Iranian boxer, a swimmer from Kazakhstan, a weightlifter from Norway and two weightlifters from Romania, he said.

Abased by Abbas

HOCKEY

SYDNEY, Sept 18: Pakistan's penalty corner ace Sohail Abbas slammed the first hattrick of the Olympic men's hockey to lift the former champions to a record 8-1 win over Great Britain here on Monday, reports AFP.

Malaysia also made their mark in Group A by holding the Netherlands to a goalless draw, while Germany scored twice in the last eight minutes to snatch a 2-1 win over Canada.

The Germans lead the group

of death with six points from two games, followed by Pakistan and the Netherlands with four each. Canada and Malaysia have one point each while Britain are yet to open their account.

The top two teams from the group will qualify for the semi-finals.

Abbas, the 23-year-old bank employee from Karachi, who was vilified by the Pakistani media after his side's 2-2 draw against unfancied Canada on Saturday, hit back with a vengeance.

Abbas scored twice within the first 10 minutes to spark a goal spree which saw Pakistan pump in four goals in each half.

Mohammad Nadeem and Atif Bashir chipped in with two goals apiece and Mohammad Sarwar scored one as Pakistan recorded the largest victory margin in the current competition.

It was also Britain's worst Olympic defeat, surpassing their 7-0 rout by Australia at Tokyo in 1964.

Britain's Australia-born coach Barry Dancer described his team's performance as "humiliating", saying "we were terrible in a number of areas."

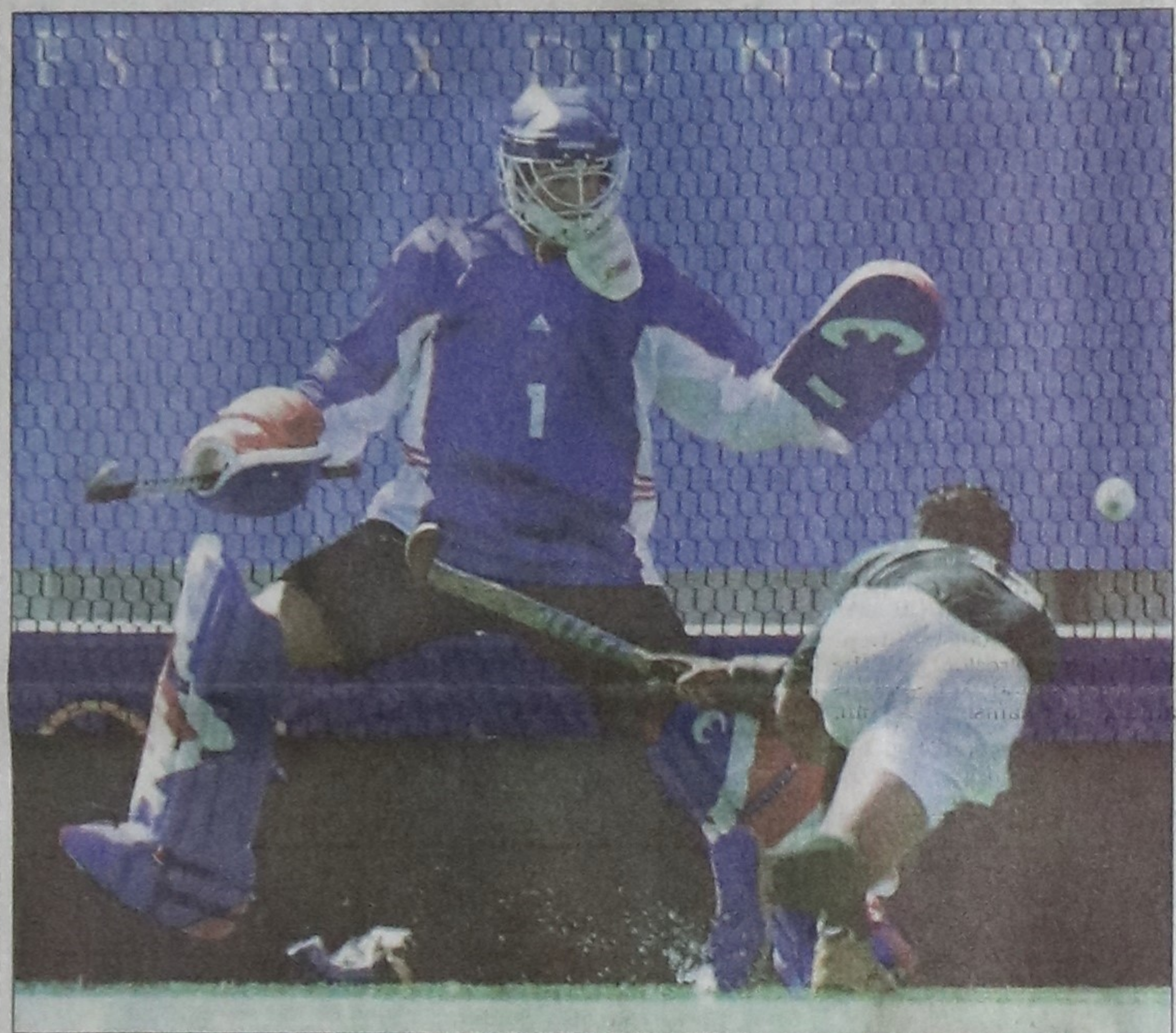
In contrast to Abbas' breathtaking display, Britain's own penalty expert Calum Giles failed to score even one goal.

Pakistani manager Ishtiaque Siddiqui paid glowing tributes to his chief marksman, but stressed his was not a one-man team.

"Sohail is obviously our trump card," he said. "We cannot lose with him in such form."

"But this match showed the others are capable of delivering as well. The flanks worked well."

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OH NO, NOT ANOTHER ONE! Simon Mason (L), the Great Britain goalkeeper, anxiously watching a goal bound shot from Pakistan's Sohail Abbas during their Olympic men's hockey fixture yesterday. Great Britain were crushed 8-1. -AFP photo

A Sino milestone

GYMNASTICS

SYDNEY, Sept 18: China won their first-ever gold medal in an Olympic team event here Monday when they won the men's gymnastics final, snapping a string of four silver-medal showings, reports AFP.

The four-time world champion Chinese scored 231.919 points with Ukraine second at 230.306 and dethroned 1996 champion Russia third at 230.019, a major disappointment but good enough to edge Japan for bronze by 1.62 points.

Li Xiaopeng, China's 19-year-old world vault champion, set the pace for China on parallel bars with 9.775 and floor exercise at 9.687 as well as vault with a 9.712.

After landing his final vault, he was hugged by teammates and ran back into the waiting arms of other Chinese gymnasts before the group gathered to hug in celebration of the long-awaited golden moment.

The triumph was a team effort. Yang Wei, 20, led on high bar with a 9.762 and the rings at 9.687. Xing Awei, 18, led on pommel horse at 9.750. And it was superior depth as well as top scores that produced the long-sought gold.

Xing's pumping of his fists after perfect landings, small punches of satisfaction, grew more vigorous as China's lead grew, stretching after every apparatus with consistent scores in the 9.7 range.

Chinese gymnasts applauded and slapped hands

after each solid routine, sensing the achievement at hand. A trainer videotaped a group cheer as they awaited the walk to the last apparatus.

When the moment of triumph came at last, ending a history of near misses in gymnastics and such other events as women's football and softball, they celebrated and congratulated each other with more hand slaps and hugs.

China opened with one of the night's best performances to seize command early while an early mistake was a signal of doom for Russia.

Russia's Alexei Bondarenko, 1999 world runner-up on parallel bars, badly stumbled on his high bar landing in the first rotation, scoring only an 8.70.

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X-FILES! China's Yang Wei gets into an X position during his horizontal bar routine during the final of the men's gymnastics competition yesterday. China won the gold. -AFP photo



WHEN THE 'THORPEDO' MISSED! Dutchman Pieter van den Hoogenband (R) touching the finish mark ahead of hot local favourite Ian Thorpe in the final of the 200 metres freestyle yesterday. -AFP photo

Dutch demolition Record-tech pool

SWIMMING

SYDNEY, Sept 18: Pieter van den Hoogenband completed his demolition of Ian Thorpe in the 200m freestyle Monday, beating the Australian to Olympic gold in scintillating style, reports AFP.

The baby-faced Dutchman had already snatched the world record in the semifinals from Thorpe - who had lowered the mark four times in little more than a year.

"I thought the world record would last for only two minutes, now it's two days," van den Hoogenband said. "It's so weird: the world record and Olympic gold."

Van den Hoogenband rubbed it in the final, matching his world record of 1:45.83.

The pair made the final turn in precisely the same time, and Thorpe, who set a world record in winning the 400m free and anchored the Australian 4x100m free relay to victory in a world record time on Saturday, didn't have enough gas in his tank to respond to van den Hoogenband's finishing kick.

"Maybe I went out too fast, maybe I didn't go out fast enough," Thorpe said. "You can analyse it too much afterwards."

"It doesn't matter to the re-

sult. In the last part of the race, I don't think I could have given it anything else."

Thorpe, who was also swimming with the weight of all Australia's expectations on him, couldn't match his semifinal time, which was just two-hundredths of a second outside van den Hoogenband's newly minted world record.

He couldn't match his own previous two world records, taking the silver in 1:45.83.

"I was pretty flat," the 17-year-old said. "That's because of the Olympic programme. It's something I don't like, but I have to deal with it."

All four of Thorpe's likely gold medal events were scheduled for the first half of the eight-day competition. On Tuesday came the heats of the 4x200m free relay which may yet see him join Murray Rose and Dawn Fraser as the only Australians to win three gold medals in one Olympics.

Van den Hoogenband said he didn't have a strategy for beating Thorpe. In fact, he tried not to think about Thorpe at all.

"I pushed off the last turn. I just thought, I want this gold medal," van den Hoogenband said.

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SWIMMING

SYDNEY, Sept 18: The great debate over the secret behind the spate of Olympic records pouring out of Sydney's Olympic pool continued Monday with the records being attributed to the pool's high-tech design, reports AFP.

A total of twenty-eight world records have been set at meetings here over the past two months, with eight in just two days of Olympic competition.

But while most competitors describe the Homebush Bay pool simply as "fast", record-breaking US champion Tom Dolan puts it down, in part, to the high-tech modern pool along with the arrival of body-suits.

Dolan broke his own six-year record in the men's 400m individual medley Sunday when he clocked 4:11.76.

"The fact that you have deep water all the way through. The depth of the water allows the water to push down and not rebound," explains Dolan.

"It's also very important that the gutter system is even with the level of the water. Water going into the drainage system not coming back out."

And he believes that body-

suits are also responsible.

"Long suits, short suits, whatever you wear things are progressing," said Dolan, adding that the motivation of the swimmer had also a lot to do with the records.

In fact the designers of the Olympic pool set out to make it the fastest in the world. It is at least 2.5 metres deep throughout so turbulence does not rebound from the floor.

It has 10 lanes rather than the traditional eight, while its wet deck is at water level, so that waves wash over the side and away rather than rebound through the pool.

In addition the water is also different than the average Olympic pool.

It's double filtered, initially through sand carbon to eliminate impurities, then through ozone, meaning that it needs two-thirds less chlorine than other pools, providing less irritation for swimmers.

The lane ropes have also been scientifically designed to eliminate wash between lanes, while the starting blocks have been tilted at just the right angle to facilitate speedy starts.

The floor and walls have been textured to absorb energy.

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SYDNEY, Sept 18 (AFP) - Final updated Olympic medals table on the third day of the Sydney Games Monday.

	G	S	B
USA	6	5	2
France	4	6	2
China	4	1	5
Australia	3	5	5
Italy	3	1	3
Netherlands	3	1	0
Japan	2	3	1
Turkey	2	0	0
Germany	1	3	2
Russia	1	2	3
Great Britain	1	2	1
Cuba	1	1	2
Bulgaria	1	1	1
Switzerland	1	1	1
Ukraine	1	1	0
Canada	1	0	1
Czech Rep	1	0	1
Romania	1	0	1
Spain	1	0	1
Croatia	1	0	0
Hungary	1	0	0
Lithuania	1	0	0
Mexico	1	0	0
Slovakia	0	2	1
South Korea	0	2	1
Brazil	0	1	1
North Korea	0	1	1
Greece	0	1	0
Chinese Taipei	0	1	0
Yugoslavia	0	1	0
Belarus	0	0	2
Indonesia	0	0	2
Belgium	0	0	1
Costa Rica	0	0	1
Georgia	0	0	1
Kyrgyzstan	0	0	1
Latvia	0	0	1
South Africa	0	0	1
Sweden	0	0	1
Thailand	0	0	1



THREE AGAINST ONE: Three Australian spikers Louise Bawden (L), Priscilla Ruddle (C) and Tamsin Barnett jumps together to block the ball during their women's volleyball encounter against Brazil at the Sydney Entertainment Centre yesterday. -AFP photo

Bribe for a bribe

SYDNEY, Sept 18 (AP) - Olympic boxing has finally sunk to this - even the people running it are offering bribes.

Actually, amateur boxing officials are going one better by giving Olympic judges and referees an offer they can't refuse - double the bribe in cash for anyone reporting an attempt to influence the scoring of a fight.

If that doesn't work, spy cameras high above the ring in the Sydney Exhibition Centre are trained on judges to help make sure there's no misconduct.

With boxing just fighting its way off the ropes as an endangered Olympic sport, desperate measures are being taken to keep it scandal-free in Sydney.

"We mean it," said American Loring Baker, who made the special double-your-bribe offer. "By doing this we are actually trying to eliminate the possibility of a bribe."

The logic may seem convoluted, but amateur officials hope just that fact the offer was made may be enough to keep the 35 referees and judges in line during the games.

That would be a change from previous Olympics, where

questionable decisions raised suspicions of shady dealings and almost got boxing tossed out of the Olympics.

"We don't have any hard evidence of judges being crooked," said Baker, general secretary of the International Amateur Boxing Association (AIBA). "But we have to remove the shadow of doubt."

That shadow has lingered over amateur boxing for a long time. But it exploded into the public eye during the tumultuous Seoul Olympics in 1988, which ended with Roy Jones Jr being robbed of a gold medal against a South Korean.

Amid calls to ban boxing from the Olympics, AIBA introduced computerised scoring to try to ensure all boxers got a fair break.

Problem was, there were still human judges punching the buttons.

That was evident only last year at the World Amateur Boxing Championships when four AIBA judges were suspended and their decision reversed after Russian welterweight Timour Gaidalov was given a win over Cuba's Juan Hernandez.

The decision touched off a protest and Cuban heavyweight Felix Savon later refused to enter the ring for his fight with American Michael Bennett. Fidel Castro expressed his outrage, and a sports commentator on government-controlled television called the judges "misérable, corrupt people."

"You hear everything about that one bout and nothing about the other 298," Baker said. "We found out it was biased and we took action."

In Sydney, the 35 judges and referees - who sit together at ringside in matching white suits and bow ties when not working - were selected only after going through a weeklong screening program in Kazakstan in June where they judged fights in groups and had their scores compared with each other.

AIBA officials were at first shocked about how much the scores differed - proving that an incompetent official can be just as bad as one who is corrupt. But as the week went on the judging improved and 35 of the 53 in attendance were picked to work the Olympics.

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