

Track to take

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history for if he wins he will become the first man to defend a 400m title successfully.

For Greene, not satisfied with having one nom de guerre employs two — the 'Phenomenon' and the 'Kansas Comet' — he needs to keep his nerve if he is to win the title in his Olympic debut.

Certainly the 26-year-old, who has been dubbed the Michael Jordan of athletics by Hudson Smith International (HSI) manager Emmanuel Hudson, appears to have the self-belief to do it because as he has remarked, the bigger the stage the better he performs.

However with both then world recordholder Leroy Burrell and Frankie Fredericks failing to justify favouritism in the last two Olympics Greene's training partner Ato Boldon may well have a point when he observed.

"It's not me who has to beat Maurice, it's him who has to beat me."

While Greene will have to deal with favouritism so, too will Australian darling Cathy Freeman.

With her greatest rival in the 400m Marie-José Pérec having gone on a bizarre odyssey to Singapore and then to a police station just 48 hours before their heats started, she should bring the gold home for the Aussies and more importantly give her indigenous people the Aborigines the oxygen of publicity.

One of the most exciting rallies of all will hopefully be run before the world's eyes in the 110m hurdles as Johnson fights it out with perennial rival Colin Jackson.

While they may not set the world alight personality wise they will certainly set the track on fire.

The 28-year-old Johnson, who admits he would like to receive more appreciation for what he has achieved, will have to overcome a hamstring injury if he is to retain his title and one cannot imagine that that factor will not be nagging him when he comes to the line on Sunday morning.

Friendship

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Manchester United footballer Dwight Yorke are the other parts of Trinidad's Trinity of sportstars who regularly globetrot to visit one another and support their friends in their major international events.

But if he were to become his country's first Olympic champion since Hasely Crawford won 100m gold in Montreal in 1976 Boldon would guarantee an elevation in status. What would his Caribbean island state give him if victorious? "Tobago," Boldon answers immediately.

Articulate and intelligent, Boldon is competing in his third Olympics, having raced at 100 and 200 metres as a teenager in Barcelona in 1992.

Now 26, and hungry for success after missing out on championship competition in 1999 through injury, Boldon accepts his role as underdog to Greene. "I don't have to beat Maurice," Boldon says. "He has to beat me."

"He has his strengths, I have my advantages. I have Olympic experience, this is his first Olympics."

Perec on

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to communicate with the outside world and launch attacks on the Australian media.

"I have the impression that everything has been made up in order to destabilise me," she said. "The Games have just begun and I wish they were over already. I'm so frightened."

Notoriously private, Pérec had been training away from her team mates and was staying in a city hotel far from the athletes' village.

She has been racked by injury since being diagnosed shortly after the 1996 Games with the strength-sapping Epstein-Barr syndrome and only made a belated comeback in Europe earlier this year.

She was beaten into third place in a 400m Grand Prix event in England in June and has not raced since, entering and withdrawing from race after race.

But French athletics president Philippe Lamblin said on Tuesday her training was going well and her body could stand up to her schedule.

Freeman has beaten her only once, at a European invitational just weeks after their Atlanta showdown.

Her biggest threat, barring Pérec's return, is now expected to come from Mexico's Ana Guevara. Britain's emerging Katherine Merry and America's Latasha Colander-Richardson.

Keown breaks Donetsk's heart

LONDON, Sept 21: English Premiership side Arsenal came from 2-0 down to beat Ukrainian side Shakhtar Donetsk 3-1 in a thrilling, ferociously contested Champions League Group B match here on Wednesday night, reports AFP.

England central defender Martin Keown was the unlikely goalscoring hero, scoring twice in the final five minutes.

It seemed the game was heading for a draw when with 90 minutes up Keown got on the end of a Nwankwo Kanu cross to toe-poke the ball home.

Donetsk had shown Stalinist-like powers of resistance, especially as they were down to 10 men for the whole of the second half. Wave upon wave of Arsenal attack came crashing down upon them but the current Ukrainian league leaders refused to yield until the five minutes from time when Keown chested in a corner.

Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger knew how tough the underhanded Donetsk would be. "They (Donetsk) are currently top of their domestic league — ahead of Dynamo Kiev... they come out quickly and if you are not alert to the situation they can catch you on the break. In short, they are a team you must respect," Wenger wrote in his programme notes.

Mindful of the Frenchman's words, Arsenal ensured the Ukrainians spent most of the opening quarter in their own half. The home side had several chances to take the lead, the best failing to Robert Pires in the 15th minute.

The midfielder was superbly played in by Nigerian international Nwankwo Kanu. But from the left-hand side of the box, the French midfielder's shot clipped the heel of goalkeeper Yuri Vrt.

Donetsk's last line of defence was in action again four minutes later, quickly off his line to narrow the angle and block Fredrik Ljungberg's shot after the midfielder had reacted quickly to France World Cup winner Patrick Vieira's pass.

It was one-way traffic and Arsenal's French striker Thierry Henry could consider himself unlucky to have had a couple of earlier offside decisions go against him when he was through on goal.

He was even more unfortunate in the 25th minute when his curling 25-yard free kick hit the crossbar with Vrt beaten.

It was therefore sadly inevitable that, having survived all this pressure, Donetsk took the lead with their first real shot of the game.

Alexey Bakharev's free-kick from 20 yards was well-struck. But it hit Pires, who was stood away from the defensive wall, to leave England goalkeeper David Seaman with no chance in the 25th minute.

Then three minutes later Donetsk were 2-0 ahead. A neat reverse pass

found Andriy Vorobev unmarked and his well-placed shot from a tight angle on the left was expertly chipped over

Seaman. Donetsk's small band of supporters, looking like Holland followers in their bright orange shirts, were understandably delighted although they still had a job to make themselves heard in the face of deafening Arsenal support.

In the final minute of normal first-half time an increasingly bad-tempered match saw Donetsk captain Serhiy Popov sent-off by German referee Hartmut Strampe for a second bookable offence after he had impeded Vieira.

Then in stoppage time Arsenal got a goal back. Substitute Sylvain Wiltord, on for Pires, was brought down in the box by full-back Mikhail Starostyak. Henry's penalty strike was well-saved but Wiltord followed up to reduce the deficit to 2-1 at half-time.

Roared on by a near-capacity 33,922 crowd Arsenal started the second half in fine style. They really should have been level in the 51st minute when a fine display of close control saw Kanu elude three defenders before pulling his shot wide.

Then Henry almost scored one of the goals of the season when, with the ball crossed behind him, his flicked sidefoot went narrowly past the far post.

Arsenal's pressure was relentless. In the 72nd minute Vrt flapped at a corner. The ball came out to full-back Lee Dixon and his long-range effort was tipped over the bar by the goalkeeper.

Dixon had another chance

two minutes later. Henry's cross from the left found the full-back on the right. His 20-yard effort was on target but somehow the out of position Vrt flung himself to his left to keep out a shot heading for the top corner. It was a fantastic save.

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Shakhtar Donetsk's Mikhail Starostyak (lying on the ground) and goalkeeper Yuri Vrt are devastated after their last-minute defeat to Arsenal in the UEFA Champions League at Highbury on September 20.

—AFP photo

Champions down Spartak

MADRID, Sept 21: Defending European Champions League winners Real Madrid thanked Ivan Helguera for their 1-0 Group A victory against Spartak Moscow on Wednesday night, reports AFP.

Madrid, who drew 2-2 at Sporting Lisbon last week, thereby ousted Spartak from the top of the pool.

In the 51st minute, a corner was played back to Roberto Carlos who took on Jerry-Christians Tchuisse also both hit the post during the first period to unsettle the Santiago Bernabeu faithful.

Madrid were a bit fortunate in the first half and their keeper Iker Casillas saved them at least three times, particularly in a one-on-one against Andrei Tikhonov.

Spartak's Maxim Kalynchenko and Jerry-Christians Tchuisse also both hit the post during the first period to unsettle the Santiago Bernabeu faithful.

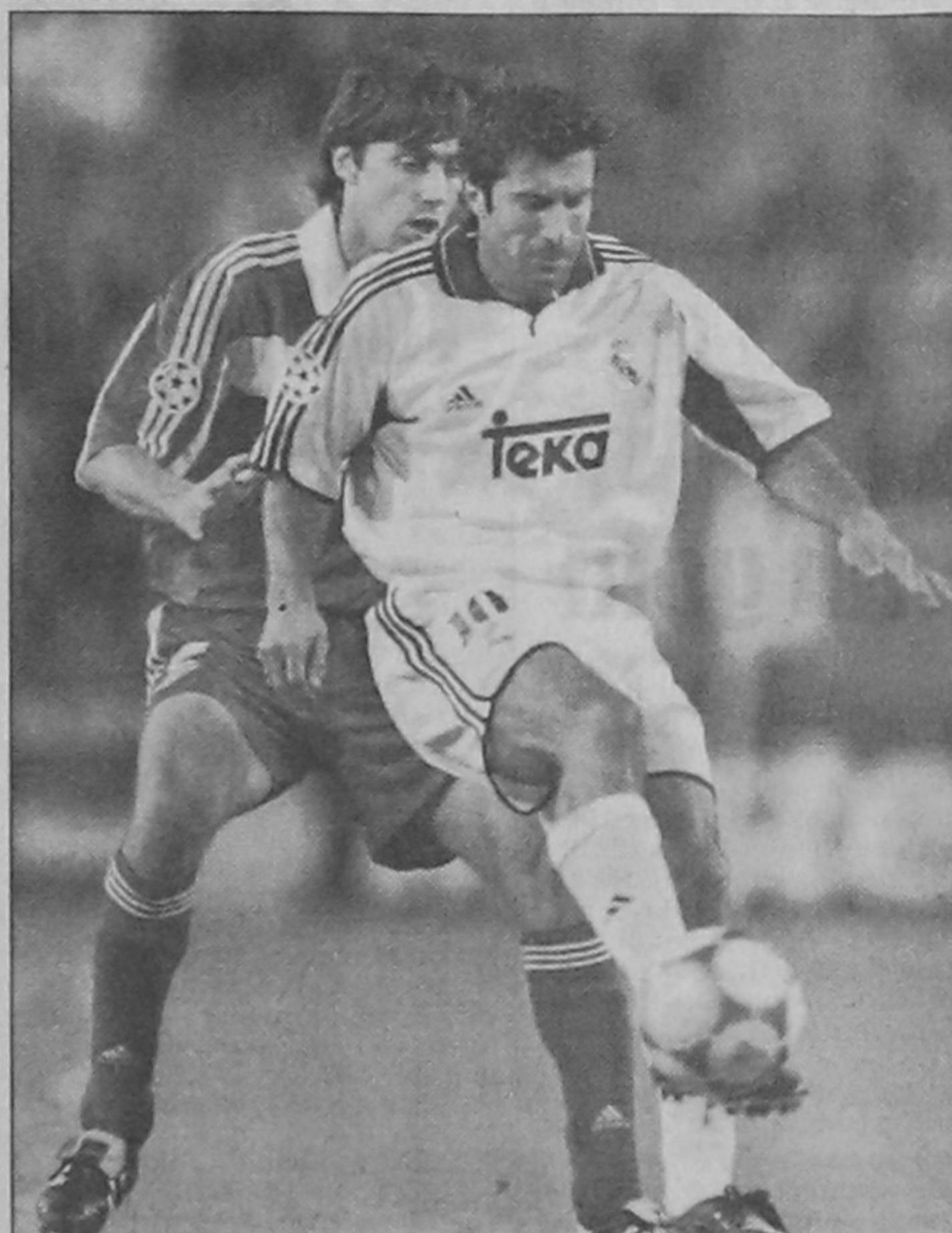
Real, who dominated territorially against a five-man defence, only really had one good chance before the break.

Striker Pedro Munitis set up Guti with a great opportunity but the stand-in captain, in the absence of injured superstar Raul, was not able to keep his shot on target.

But French athletics president Philippe Lamblin said on Tuesday her training was going well and her body could stand up to her schedule.

Freeman has beaten her only once, at a European invitational just weeks after their Atlanta showdown.

Her biggest threat, barring Pérec's return, is now expected to come from Mexico's Ana Guevara. Britain's emerging Katherine Merry and America's Latasha Colander-Richardson.



Real Madrid's Portuguese star Luis Figo (R) is under pressure from Spartak Moscow's Evgeny Bushmanov during their European Champions League fixture at the Bernabeu Stadium in the Spanish capital on September 20.

—AFP photo

CHANNEL-1

6:15 Drama Everyday : Az Robi 7:20 1 Dream of Jennei 8:00 Din Protidin 8:40 10:00 Reciting from Holy Quran 9:00 10:10 Ap Gane Gane 10:40 Aritho oh Nithi 11:15 Drama News Headlines

EKUSHEY TV

2:00 Aikor Potrikav 2:10 Shorashori Evening Prog.

3:00 Opening Announcement Recitation From The Holy Quran And Programme Outline 3:15 Patriotic Song 3:10 Bangla News 4:00 Bangla News 4:05 Bangla Film Cont.: 6:05 Sukhi Paribar (Population Based Prog.) 6:30 Transmission From Chittagong Center 7:00 Sambad (Bangla News) 7:05 Malonche (Morden Songs) 7:25 Serial On Nature- Raong Kara 8:00 8:00 Bangla News At 8:20 Serial On Health-Timirachano #18 8:50 Drama Series: Gul Sanobar (Bangla Dub) 9:00 Shuvechha (Magazine) 10:00 News At Ten (English) 10:20 English Series: The X-Files 11:30 Bangla News 11:35 English News 11:40 A) Programme Outline For Saturday B) National Song 11:45 Closing

3:00 Ekushey News Headlines 3:02 Dream of Jeannie 2:00 Abhobesa 2:55 I Focus 3:00 Bangla Cinema: Nacher Putul 6:00 Reciting from Holy Quran 6:10 1 Music 6:40 Abirati Ar Kazi Arif 7:15 Drama Everyday : Meghe Dhaka Akash 8:00 Flop Show 8:40 Six Million Dollar Man 9:15 Valobhashi Bhole Thai 10:00 Drama : Gunay Bib 10:55 1 Focus 11:00 Bangla Cinema 12:00 Ekushey News Headlines

5:30 Islamic program 6:32 Islamic program 7:10 New Film Songs 7:50 ATN Music 8:25 Knighter 9:00 Film Magazine 9:35 Reporting Prog 10:10 Musical Prog 11:30 Islamic program 11:30 Islamic Prog 3:00 Bangla Film : Demag 6:32 Child Prog 7:10 Viewers Prog 7:50 Magazine Prog 8:25 Drama Serial

Gonzales Valencia's hero

HEERENVEEN, The Netherlands, Sept 21: Last year's European Champions League beaten finalists Valencia won 1-0 at Dutch side Heerenveen here on Wednesday in a Group C match, reports AFP.

Valencia had to work hard against a determined Heerenveen seeking to dispel the memory of their 3-1 defeat at Lyon a week ago.

The first chance went to the Dutch after a tentative start from either side, when Anthony Lurling's shot lacked the power to beat Valencia's new goalkeeper Cantizares. Lurling also put the ball in the Valencia net on 25 but it was ruled off-side.

Valencia slowly took control of the midfield with Gaizka Mendieta being chiefly responsible.

The only goal of the game came on 38 minutes from Valencia's gritty Argentine striker Kily Gonzales who earlier in the week said he'd rather sit at home than on the Valencia bench.

In the second half, Heerenveen made sporadic chances but never once really threatened Valencia who closed up shop in a clinical manner.

Ortega out for a month

Buenos Aires, Sept 21: Argentine international striker Ariel Ortega of River Plate will miss the World Cup qualifier between Argentina and Uruguay here on October 8 through injury, his club said Wednesday, reports AFP.

Ortega damaged a ligament in his left knee during River Plate's 4-0 win at Los Andes last week and will be out for a month, said club doctor Luis Seveso.

Ortega is also likely to miss the Argentine classic between River Plate and Boca Juniors in a league clash on October 15.

Since his arrival at River Plate Ortega has gelled well with his new team-mates and along with Javier Saviola, Pablo Aimar and Colombian Juan Pablo Angel, are known as the "fantastic four".

RESULTS AT A GLANCE

PARIS, Sept 21 (AFP): European Champions League first phase results on Wednesday:

Group A

Real Madrid (Spa) 1 (Helguera 51) Spartak Moscow (Rus) 0 Leverkusen, Germany Bayern Leverkusen (Ger) 3 (Ramelow 65, Brdaric 73, Neuville 77) Sporting Lisbon (Por) 2 (Andre Cruz 12, Sa Pinto 79, Pen)

Group B

Lazio (Ita) 3 (Inzaghi 35, 70, Simeone 58) Sparta Prague (Cze) 0 London Arsenal (Eng) 3 (Wiltord 45, Keown 85, 90) Shakhtar Donetsk (Ukr) 2 (Bakharev 26, Vorobev 29)

Group C

Heerenveen, The Netherlands Heerenveen (Ned) 0 Valencia (Spa) 1 (Gonzales 38)

Athens Olympiakos (Gre) 2 (Ofori Quaye 19, Giovanni 34) Lyon (Fra) 1 (Foe 88)

Group D

Graz, Austria Sturm Graz (Aut) 3 (Yuran 32, Schopp 64, Schupp 81) Galatasaray (Tur) 0 Monaco, France Monaco (Fra) 0 Glasgow Rangers (Sco) 1 (Van Bronckhorst 8)

Group E

Glasgow Rangers 2 (2) 2 (1) Galatasaray 1 (0) Sturm Graz 1 (0) Galatasaray 0 (0) Monaco 1 (0) Glasgow Rangers 0 (0) Monaco 0 (0)

Group F

Monaco 2 (0) Sturm Graz 1 (0) Galatasaray 0 (0) Monaco 0 (0) Glasgow Rangers 0 (0) Monaco 0 (0)

Group G

Sturm Graz 2 (0) Galatasaray 1 (0) Monaco 0 (0)