

Sport

Gay claim

SYDNEY, Sept 24: Gay Games chief Garrie Gibson said Sunday that elite athletes at the Sydney Olympics were afraid to admit their homosexuality, reports AFP.

Gibson, the organiser of the 2002 Gay Games — also to be held in Sydney, believed that athletes were afraid to publicise their sexuality because they feared they would lose lucrative sponsorship deals.

He believed 1,000 of the 11,000 competitors at Sydney were gay or lesbian.

"For the vast majority of them their sexuality is something that they have had to hide, to keep hidden because they did not want their sexuality to be an issue in competing in sports," Gibson said at a news conference.

"(They) don't come out about their sexuality because of the fact that it can have an impact on their opportunities to compete or on their opportunities to attract sponsorship."

Lion Queen

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"I believe that I proved a point to a lot of people including some in Jamaica who didn't think I would even make the final," she said.

"Okay I didn't get a medal but I think finishing fourth isn't bad for a 40-year-old!" added Ottey, who won seven Olympic medals including two silvers.

Ottey, who has won 34 major championship medals including two World Championship 200m titles, was also delighted that she had not left athletics under a cloud having been cleared because of lack of evidence that she tested positive for nandrolone last year.

"I would never have felt comfortable walking down the street with that black mark attached to my reputation," she said.

"I still feel that I have been unfairly treated by the authorities, who knows what I could have done here if I had had the right amount of time to prepare, but at least I have got my reputation back," she added.

However, while several members of the sports ruling body — including the president Lamine Diack — the International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF) remain convinced that she shouldn't have been exonerated, one of her closest confidants said that there was one very good argument against her ever taking drugs.

Little vs Large

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Szabo's comments.

"It wouldn't have taken a rocket scientist to work out what tactics to employ," she said.

A similar strategy had failed in Paris for the 1997 world indoor 5000m final as O'Sullivan hit the front with a lap to go only for Szabo to fight back and head her down the final straight.

Whether O'Sullivan will go for the same strategy come Monday is in the laps of the gods and taken on her win in the heats on Friday she could play any game although there is one place she will certainly be — on her preferred outside spot.

"If you get caught on the inside you can miss a break or get involved in barking and that is not useful at all... I don't mind taking the long way home," she said.

The 30-year-old, who is much happier these days having had a daughter Clara last July with her Australian lover Nick Bideau, is counting on Ethiopian Gete Wami, who was a late call-up as a teammate fell ill and was meant to be concentrating on the 10,000m, to take it into a war of attrition between herself and Szabo.

Szabo, who refuses to talk as a matter of superstition before the final, on the other hand will want to control the race with her own front-running tactics gradually winding it up and burning off her rivals one by one.

Of course in any duel the two can concentrate too much each other and someone else can sneak through and break the party up.

However, it is going to be really down to a good little 'un can beat a good big 'un and hopefully O'Sullivan can see this time put her mark on Olympic history and say that these Atlanta memories are 'Gone with the wind'.

End of Luxemburgo?



RIO DE JANEIRO, Sept 24: Brazil's dream of an Olympic gold medal in soccer was rudely postponed until 2004 — and maybe longer, if the team doesn't show a lot more than it did at the Sydney Games, reports AP.

The 2-1 overtime loss Saturday to Cameroon, when Brazil held a two-player advantage, eliminated the four-time World Cup champions and frustrated their quest for the only major soccer award that has eluded them.

Across this soccer-crazy country, fans woke at 6 am Saturday to watch Brazil take on Cameroon in the Olympic quarterfinals in Brisbane, Australia. What no one expected was to see the Brazilians outplayed, outthrust and thoroughly embarrassed.

"Shame in Brisbane: Brazil is out," read the headline on the Web site of Lance, Brazil's premier sports newspaper.

"The fans feel very let down," said Popov, 28, after losing his 100m title.

Freestyle Kings



SYDNEY, Sept 24: The scene has been set for a major showdown in the future between Pieter van den Hoogenband and Holland, the major revelation of the Sydney Games, and Australian star Ian Thorpe.

These Olympics marked the changing of the old guard, with a new generation of sprinters pushing aside former greats.

But while Thorpe had been expected to dominate here it was the flying Dutchman who proved himself to be one of the rising stars of the freestyle.

The Dutchman has earned a reputation for not being overawed by the reputations of others, after proving Thorpe was not invincible by winning the 200m final, and going on to defeat legendary Russian Alexander Popov in the 100m.

Thorpe may have recorded the highest men's medal tally in the pool with three gold and two silver, but van den Hoogenband got the up in swimming and Pieter did another one, so we're moving forward."

Bye Barber

SYDNEY, Sept 24: France's heptathlon world champion Ingrid Barber ended her bid to win the Olympic title here on Sunday when clearly unfit she only made one attempt in the long jump before quitting the discipline, reports AFP.

The 25-year-old Sierra Leone-born athlete, who has lived in France since 1992 and was cleared to compete for them in 1999, took the decision after going to see the team physiotherapist.

Barber, who has been troubled by injuries throughout the season and was a major doubt coming into the Games, did not look in great shape on Saturday as she plummeted from leading the competition after two events to seventh place by the end of the day's proceedings.

said Marcio Mara, a sports-writer for the Rio newspaper Jornal do Brasil. "When the team left for Brazil, everybody felt that these kids were going to renew Brazilian soccer."

After an opening 3-1 win over Slovakia, Brazil was stunned 3-1 by modest South Africa and struggled to beat Japan 1-0.



LU LEMBURGO

Against Cameroon, not exactly a premier soccer power, the Brazilians looked lethargic and confused, getting caught endlessly in offside traps. Cameroon made a 1-0 lead stand up until the final seconds of regulation time, when Ronaldinho found the net on a free kick.

Even with a two-man advantage in overtime, Brazil was

unable to score — or to stop a 3-on-2 break that gave Cameroon the winning goal.

The goal also may have marked the end of coach Wanderley Luxemburgo's tenure at the helm of Brazilian soccer. The national team, which he also coaches, has played erratically in the qualifying round for the 2002 World Cup, and the consensus was that Luxemburgo had to bring home the gold medal to guarantee his job.

Luxemburgo said Saturday that he felt "70 per cent responsible" for the defeat. For the first time, he acknowledged that Brazilian Soccer Confederation President Ricardo Teixeira might give the coaching job to someone else.

"If he thinks we have done a bad job, he has the complete right to change staff," Luxemburgo said.

Luxemburgo didn't help his chances when he declined to use the three players over 23 allowed under Olympic rules. Many Brazilians felt he should have called veteran striker Romario, who scored three goals in Brazil's 5-0 rout of Bolivia in a World Cup qualifier this month.

Luxemburgo also has been the target of accusations by former business associate Renata Moura Alves, who told police that Luxemburgo evaded taxes and ran an illegal scheme selling soccer players and buying apartments and cars with the undeclared profits. Luxemburgo has denied any wrongdoing.

"With the loss in Sydney, added to all his personal problems, Luxemburgo's permanence as coach is untenable," said sportswriter Mara.

won both the 4x100m and 4x200m free relays.

But the Dutchman stunned the home crowd when he snatched the world record in the 200m semis from Thorpe, who had lowered the mark four times in little more than a year, and matched his world record of 1:45.35 in the final.

"I won two gold medals and broke the world record. At the moment I'm the best," conceded van den Hoogenband.

"I'm in the best shape of my life. I trained really, really hard for these Games and I'm getting much stronger," he added.

Aboriginal leader on the Opening

SYDNEY, Sept 24: The Olympic Games opening ceremony, which drew heavily on Aboriginal themes, marked a turning point for reconciliation between black and white Australia.

"An indigenous leader said Sunday, reports AFP.

The ceremony sells in itself the advantages of having a vibrant and functional Aboriginal community in this country," said Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATISC) chairman Geoff Clark.

The inclusion of central elements of indigenous culture and the decision to give Aboriginal runner Cathy Freeman the honour of lighting the Olympic cauldron were extremely significant, he said.

"If that's going to be part of the future presentation of Australia then it has to be there to be maintained and protected by legislation."

But Clark said that the years of discussion about reconciliation must now come to an end, and a phase of action, including the signing of a formal treaty between black and white Australia, began.

"That's the sort of momentum that will bring about a change and a political opportunity that the government will not be able to ignore."

"The people now want change, they're sick of the debate," he said.

The glare of international media attention during the Olympics would help Australians kick-start the formal process that would finally result in a treaty being signed, the ATISC head said.

Australia's conservative government has been criticised for failing to say sorry to Aboriginals for past injustices, including the forced removal of indigenous children from their parents.

Naoko toast of Japan

SYDNEY, Sept 24: Naoko Takahashi became the first Japanese woman to win an Olympic athletics gold medal on Sunday, when she destroyed a world-class marathon field in the heat of the Sydney sun-slime to take the women's 42.2 kilometre (26 miles 385 yards) race here, reports AFP.

Takahashi pulled away from her opponents with some fearless front running in the latter stages, crossing the finishing line in Stadium Australia in an Olympic record 2hr 23min 13sec, a world-class time despite the tough course in gruelling conditions.

Her winning time was 1min 47sec faster than the time France's Alain Mimoun ran to win the men's Olympic title when the Games were last staged in Australia, in Melbourne in 1956.

"I didn't know for certain that I had won until 30 metres from the finish," Takahashi said.

"My legs were hurting badly at the end. This was the hardest race of my life."

Takahashi's uncertainty was because she was pursued all the way by the relentless Lidia Simon, of Romania, last year's World Championship third-placer.

With only 7km to the finish, Simon was finally dropped by her Japanese rival's relentless surges, but she rallied to finish in 2:23:22.

"I'm so very tired," Simon said after she crossed the line.

"I had to take a lot of risks to try to stay with Takahashi. I never expected her to run so fast."

There was one more unexpected hurdle for Takahashi to pass when a volunteer approached her in the mistaken belief the race was over with the final lap of Stadium Australia to run but after quick intervention from an official she was allowed to complete the race unimpaired.

Takahashi's victory was also Japan's first Olympic athletic gold for men or women since 1936 when Naoto Tajima won the triple jump in Berlin.

Also in 1936, Korean-born Kitei Son won the Berlin Olympic marathon for Japan but Son always maintained that although he was wearing a Japanese vest, in his heart he won that medal for Korea.

In 1948 Son, who became a national hero in Korea for emphasising his true nationality, carried the flag for Korea at the Opening Ceremony in London and in 1988 he took part in the final stages of the torch relay in Seoul.

But thanks to Takahashi Japan, a marathon-crazy country, now have a gold that no-one can take away from them.

Tomorrow never

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overwhelmed by the warm reception given to him from the Sydney crowd — and that explained why he ripped off his running shoe and hurled one of them into the stands following his win.

"You know the fans here are so great... I was just overwhelmed with them greeting me the way they did."

"I wanted to give them something because me giving them the shoe wasn't enough, so I gave them my shoe. But it's worth that much then I think I want it back," Greene quipped when told it had been valued at up to 100,000 US dollars.

As well as the crowd, Greene paid handsome tribute to his training partner and silver medalist from Saturday's clash, Trinidad and Tobago's Ato Boldon.

"I told Ato last night — I couldn't have done this without you," Greene said.

"With him anything is possible. Ato has brought me to where I am today. In practice we're so hard on each other — I help him, he helps me."

"We push each other to places you don't think it's possible to go. I don't believe I could have performed the way I have, and the way I do, without him," Greene said.

Boldon, bronze medalist in 1996, returned the compliment. "I know what he's capable of and I knew I was going to have to run a personal best to beat him. He was the better man on the night, he's a phenomenal athlete," he said.

"Personally, I was just happy to be here. I had seven months out of the game last year and out of the eight finalists in Atlanta I was the only in Sydney on Saturday night. That's an achievement," he said.

Primera Liga

Real come out of shell



MADRID, Sept 24: European champions Real Madrid moved joint top of the Spanish title race with Saturday's 4-1 drubbing of Athletic Bilbao with an exuberant showing which left coach Vicente del Bosque purring, reports AFP.

Real remain behind reigning champions Deportivo La Coruna on goal difference as 'Super Depor' made do with a 1-1 draw at struggling Real Sociedad after having Uruguayan goalscorer Pandiani sent off.

Barcelona moved into fourth a point behind the leading pair, who both have seven points from three games, with a 3-1 home win over Racing San-

tander as the Catalan club bounced back from a Champions League mauling at Besiktas in Turkey.

A crowd of 65,000 at Real's Santiago Bernabeu stadium watched Real first toy with, then swamp Bilbao even though the 'merengues' were without experienced strike tandem Raul and Fernando Morientes through injury.

Fringe players Guti and Pedro Munitis promptly leapt off the reserves bench and grabbed three goals between them, while Luis Figo ran the show by setting up both of Guti's goals, the first a towering header.

Brazilian wingback Roberto Carlos blasted the other goal with a trademark freekick.

"I think we played brilliantly and really connected with the

fans tonight," said del Bosque. Roberto Carlos agreed the whole side had been on song and shown their strength in depth.

"We showed the squad is really strong. Athletic didn't play well as we didn't let them."

If the Madrid motor looks well-oiled the same cannot be said of Barca's as they struggled to see off Santander.

Two goals from Patrick Kluitert and a fine individual effort from Marc Overmars were enough to override an effort from Argentine Marcelo Fabian Espina but only several saves from Barcelona keeper Francesc Arnau denied the visitors a point.

Deportivo's Galician neighbours Celta Vigo can go top Sunday night if they beat Espanyol.

French First Division

PSG sail on Robert



PARIS, Sept 24: A rocket from the right boot of high-flying Paris Saint-Germain winger Laurent Robert sealed a 2-1 win over Cup holders Nantes and sent his side to the top of the league on Saturday, reports AFP.

Previous leaders Bastia salvaged a 3-3 draw at Sedan while Lens play on Sunday and would go back on top if they beat local rivals Lille.

A comical opening goal from record French signing Nicolas Anelka gave PSG the lead when the ball rebounded off goal-keeper Mickael Landreau and one of his defenders giving the striker the easiest of tap-ins.

It looked like being an easy night for the Parisians but Nantes had other ideas and conjured up an equaliser after 53 minutes.

A move down the right led to a low cross from Alioune Toure who picked out Eric Carrière. He neatly laid the ball off for Romanian Viorel Moldovan who made no mistake from close range.

It was then left to Robert to take all three points three minutes later, as he romped down the left wing, cut inside and unleashed a wicked shot into the top right hand corner giving Landreau no chance.

A see-saw battle at Sedan had last season's surprise packages leading 3-2 deep into injury time before a corner was

not cleared by the Sedan defence and Yann Lachuer blasted home the equaliser.

Strasbourg went 2-0 up against Saint Etienne before two goals from Brazilian striker Alex brought the sides level with 10 minutes left.

The Alsace club then stole the points with a deflected freekick from captain Teddy Bertin to continue their mini-revival which should keep coach Claude LeRoy in his job for at least another week.

Yugoslav Danijel Ljuboja opened the scoring for Strasbourg after only nine minutes and Mario Hass added the second just before half-time.

Reigning champions Monaco recovered from their mid-week Champions League defeat against Glasgow Rangers with a 3-1 away battering of Metz.

It took them only seven minutes to open the scoring through Shabani Nonda but Metz equalised with an own-goal on the stroke of half-time when the ball bounced off the head of Philippe Christaval past a startled Stephane Porato.

Dado Prso then got the winner with 17 minutes remaining and Ludovic Guly added some insurance with six minutes left.

Troyes continued their fine start to the season with a 2-0 win over struggling Rennes, which moved them up among the leaders.

Second-half strikes from Jeremie Rothen and Yugoslav

Sladjan Djukic were enough to send high-spirited Rennes to their third defeat of the season and keep them camped in the bottom half of the table.

Lyon's up and down season continued as they lost at home to newly-promoted Guingamp with a late wonder goal from Fabrice Florese.

With time running out, Florese picked up the ball deep in his own half and took off on a run which saw him ghost past four defenders and carve his way into the Lyon area before blasting home a shot past the stunned Gregory Coupet.

It was Lyon's second defeat in four days, following their 2-1 loss against Greek side Olympiakos in the Champions League. They now take on Spanish giants Valencia in the Champions League on Tuesday.

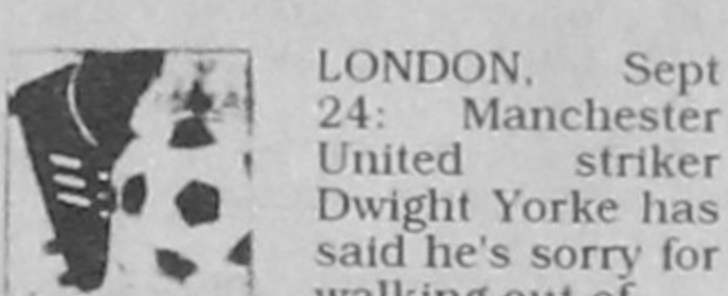
Marseille battled their way to a precious away win at Auxerre on in a fiercely-contested match thanks to a goal from Djamel Belmadi.

Marseille made the breakthrough after 64 minutes as Belmadi started and finished a penetrating three-man move.

Picking the ball up 35 yards out, he played consecutive one-two's, receiving a skilful backheel from Brazilian Marcelinho.

He then calmly rounded Auxerre keeper Fabien Cool before slotting the ball into an empty net despite a desperate last-gasp lunge from defender Jean-Alain Boumsong.

Yorke says sorry



LONDON, Sept 24: Manchester United striker Dwight Yorke has said he's sorry for walking out of Old Trafford when he was told by Sir Alex Ferguson that he had been dropped for Manchester United's match against Chelsea on Saturday, reports AFP.

Yorke was unhappy that he was not even on the bench and drove off 90 minutes before kick-off.

Such behaviour will not endear him to Ferguson and Yorke need only look at his friend and former Aston Villa teammate Mark Bosnich to see the consequences of falling out with United's disciplinary manager.

Yorke released a brief statement through his agent to try to make amends.

"I was disappointed to be left out of the team, but I fully understand the position bearing in mind how well the other three strikers are playing," he said.

"The manager told me as soon as I arrived at Old Trafford that I was not playing and as it was a morning kick-off, I decided that it was better to spend the day relaxing at home."

"I'm training hard and staying focused and will hopefully be in contention for Tuesday's game against PSV Eindhoven."

Ferguson played down any suggestion of a bust-up and after United's 3-3 draw with Chelsea he said: "I don't know anything about him walking out."

"I had a word with him before the game and he seems OK."

However, with Any Cole and Teddy Sheringham in such fine form, Yorke faces a potentially tough road back to claim a regular place.

It could also be some time before Jaap Stam is playing and the centre-half has won his battle with Ferguson to have an operation on his troublesome Achilles injury.

On Friday, Ferguson claimed talk that Stam needed surgery was "far fetched", out 24 hours later revealed that the Dutch international would be having an exploratory operation, which could sideline him for a month.

"Jaap felt that another scan would clear up the whole thing. We sent him to specialist in London and his opinion is that the Achilles injury has lasted too long and doesn't think treatment would necessarily clear it up," said Ferguson.

"So we're going to put him in for an exploratory next Saturday morning by the specialist, and it will keep him out for a minimum of a month."

Fabien Barthez is struggling to be fit for the game even though he has almost recovered from his pulled back muscle.

The French goalkeeper has missed United's last two games and Ferguson feels next Sunday's trip to Arsenal will be a more realistic target.

"He came on really well this week to the point where I thought he may even have made Chelsea, but it's just

stopped a little bit and there's still a little niggle," said Ferguson.

"We've done another scan and it's clear. He could have a chance for Tuesday but he's more likely to be ready for the Arsenal game."

Le Saux proves a point

LONDON, Sept 24(AFP): Graeme Le Saux showed his leadership qualities in a rousing display for strugglers Chelsea in their thrilling 3-3 draw against table-toppers Manchester United at Old Trafford on Saturday.

Chelsea captain Dennis Wise was ruled out of the game through illness and so Le Saux took over the skipper's armband.

The defender's most telling contribution came when he refused to give up a seemingly lost cause to clear Andy Cole's shot off the line in the second half when United led 3-2.

He also gave England coach Kevin Keegan a timely reminder of his attacking ability on the left with a hand in all three Chelsea goals.

Le Saux, whose heroic display was rewarded with the man-of-the-match award afterwards, was a bit elated, beamed Le Saux. "If they had scored that, it might have all been over. I was just fortunate that I managed to read what Andy Cole was doing and got my foot to it."

TV Guide

Monday 25th September

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

BTV

12:45 Opening Announcement, Recitation From The Holy Quran And Programme Outline 1:00 Sydney Olympic 2000 Highlights 2:00 Live: Sydney Olympic 2000 4:00 Bangla News 4:05 Educational Programme: Learning In The Lab And Fun With Math / Japanese Video 4:30 Sushito Thaitio (Health Developing For Mother & Children) 4:45 Sports Programme 5:20 Anu-Parmanu 5:45 Pusti Thaitio 6:05 Live Transmission New Artist Audition From Chittagong 7:00 Sambad (Bangla News) 7:05 Dhanchappa (Song of Nazrul) 7:25 Barta Probaho 8:00 Bangla

News At 8 8:20 Package Drama: Tritio Pakha (Afsana Mimi, Tony Daves, Mita Noor) 10:00 News At Ten (English) 10:20 Sydney Olympic 2000 Highlights 11:30 Bangla News 11:35 English News 11:40 A Programme Outline For Tuesday B) National Song 11:45 Closing

ATN BANGLA

5:30AM Islamic Program 6:32 Viewers Songs 7:10 Magazine Prog 7:50 Drama 9:00 Musical Prog 9:35 Musical Prog 10:10 Drama Serial 10:45 Bangla Film: Kholi Khabar 6:32 Children Prog 7:10 Musical Prog 8:25 Musical Prog 9:00 Magazine Prog 9:25 Musical Prog 10:10 Drama Serial 10:45 Bangla Film: Jibon Sangeet

BBC WORLD

6:00 BBC World News 6:30 The

Air Show 7:00 BBC News / Asia Today Inc. 7:45 Reporters 8:00 BBC News / Asia Today Inc. 8:45 Reporters 9:00 BBC News Inc. World Business Report 9:30 Asia Today 9:45 Reporters 10:00 BBC World News 10:30 Life-God Among The Children 11:00 BBC World News 12:00 BBC World News 12:30 India Business Reports 1:00 BBC World News 1:30 Click Online 2:00 World News 2:10 World Focus: Correspondent 3:00 World News 3:30 HARDtalk 4:00 BBC World News 4:30 The Air Show 5:00 BBC The World Today 5:30 Correspondent 6:30 Made In India 7:00 BBC World News 7:15 World Business Report 7:30 Life-God Among The Children 8:30 HARDtalk 9:00 World News 9:30 Asia Today 10:00 World News 10:15 World Business Report 10:30 Mastermind India 11:00 BBC World News 11:35 World Business Report 11:45 World Sport 12:30

HARDtalk