

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 shabbily 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

From page 13

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 barging 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 Ciara last July with her Australian lover Nick Bideau, is counting on Ethiopian Gelete Wami, who was a late call-up as a teammate fell ill and was meant to be concentrating on the 10,000m, to make it a hard tough race and turn 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 frontrunning 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 if a good little 'un can beat a good 'big 'un and hopefully for O'Sullivan she can this time put her mark on Olympic history and say that those Atlanta memories are 'Gone with the wind'.

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 Bangla News 4:05 Educational Programme Learning In The Lab And Fun With Maths / Japanes Videos 4:30 Sashtho Thaththa (Health Developing For Mother & Children) 4:45 Sports Programme 5:20 Anupamna 5:45 Pusti Thattha 6:05 Live Transmission New Artist Audition From Chittagong Center 7:00 Sambar (Bangla News) 7:05 Deulanchapa (Song of Nazrul) 7:25 Barta Probaho 8:00 Bangla

End of Luxemburgo?



LU NEMBURGO

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 up 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, outlasted 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,"

Against Cameroon, not exactly a premier soccer power, the Brazilians looked lethargic and confused, getting caught endlessly in offides 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

won both the 4x100m and 4x200m free relays.

But the Dutchman stunned the home crowd when he snatched the world record in the 200m semi-final 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 scene has been set for a major showdown in the future between Pieter van den Hoogenband of 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.

Popov 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 Eunice 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.

"He's the greatest 200-100 freestyle man in the world, there's no doubt about it," said American Josh Davis. "He did the fastest 100m free ever and made it look like it was really easy."

The Flying Dutchman — with his two individual golds and two world records and bronze in the relay and 50m — in many ways superseded Thorpe as the best swimmer of the Games.

"I think Peter has done a fantastic job here," said double gold medalist Gary Hall Jr. of the United States.

"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 ATSC 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.

"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.

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," he said.

"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.

Baldon, bronze medalist in 1996, returned the compliment.

"I know what he's capable of and I knew he 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.

"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."

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