

Zia held

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh International Master (IM) Ziaur Rahman lost point once again when Dimitri Reinderman of the Netherlands held him to a draw in their crucial ninth round clash of the Goodricke International Open Chess Tournament at the Gorky Sadan in Kolkata yesterday.

After the draw, Zia was left with a hard task of collecting a minimum of one and a half points from his last two games to get his second Grand Masters norm. He is now sharing the crowded second spot along with six others with six points each. Five players -- Andrei Kharlov, Joseph Gallagher, Sandipan Chanda, Ehsan Ghaem Maghami and Maxim Sorokin -- are at the top spot with 6.5 points each.

Another Bangladeshi IM Abdulla Al-Rakib also drew his ninth round fixture with Jayant S Gokhale of India on the day to raise his tally to 4 points.

ITF jr tennis

OUR CORRESPONDENT, RAJSHAH

A total of 14 quarterfinal -- four boys' singles, four girls' singles, four boys' doubles and two girls' doubles -- matches of the ITF Junior (U-18) Tennis Championships were held at the Rajshahi Tennis Complex yesterday.

The results are as follows: In the boys' singles -- Timur Stephan of Canada defeated Rohan Gajjar of India 7-5, 6-3, Lu Hue Tung of Hong Kong beat Hung Long Suk of Korea 6-2, 6-1; Hishi Wang Chang of Taipei beat Nimank Mishra of India 6-1, 6-1 and Yung Bum Seo of Korea defeated his fellow countryman Seang Kim 6-4, 7-5. The winners moved into semifinals.

In the girls' singles -- Pichaya of Thailand defeated Cheng Hing of Taipei 6-3, 6-1; Megha Vakaria of India defeated Ciel Ki Cheng of Korea 6-2, 4-6, 6-1; Eumi Zung of Korea beat Rebeka Daniel of England 6-1, 6-3 and Sanjya Mirza of India defeated Mariya Roza 6-1, 6-1. The winners moved to semifinals.

In the boys' doubles -- Tau Sao Yang and Chen Hi couple of Taipei defeated Kartika Hikim of India and Joel Ford of Australia 7-5, 6-3; Rebeka of England and Reddy of India defeated Piasaya of Thailand and Lesika of Australia pair 6-1, 6-4.

In the boys' doubles -- Indian pair Sunil Kumar and Vinod defeated Bangladesh pair Amol and Alamgir 6-4, 6-3; Eu Chek Wall and Eu Hi Tung of Hong Kong defeated Chow Ken Hiesh and Wang Keng 6-2, 6-2; Agasti Putu of Indonesia and Alna Bani of Oman beat Arun of India and John Sefeky of USA couple 6-1, 6-7, 6-3 and Indian pair Korea Rostagir and Rashi Behl couple defeated Bimon of India and Damir of Kazakhstan 7-5, 7-5.

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Magura cricket

OUR CORRESPONDENT, MAGURA

Surjamukhi Club moved into the final of the Continental Courier Cricket tournament beating Skyheart Cricket Club by four wickets in the second semifinal at the Magura Stadium yesterday.

Winning the toss, Skyheart batted first and scored 87 for all in 24 overs.

In reply, Surjamukhi made 90 for six in 22 overs.

Tickets go

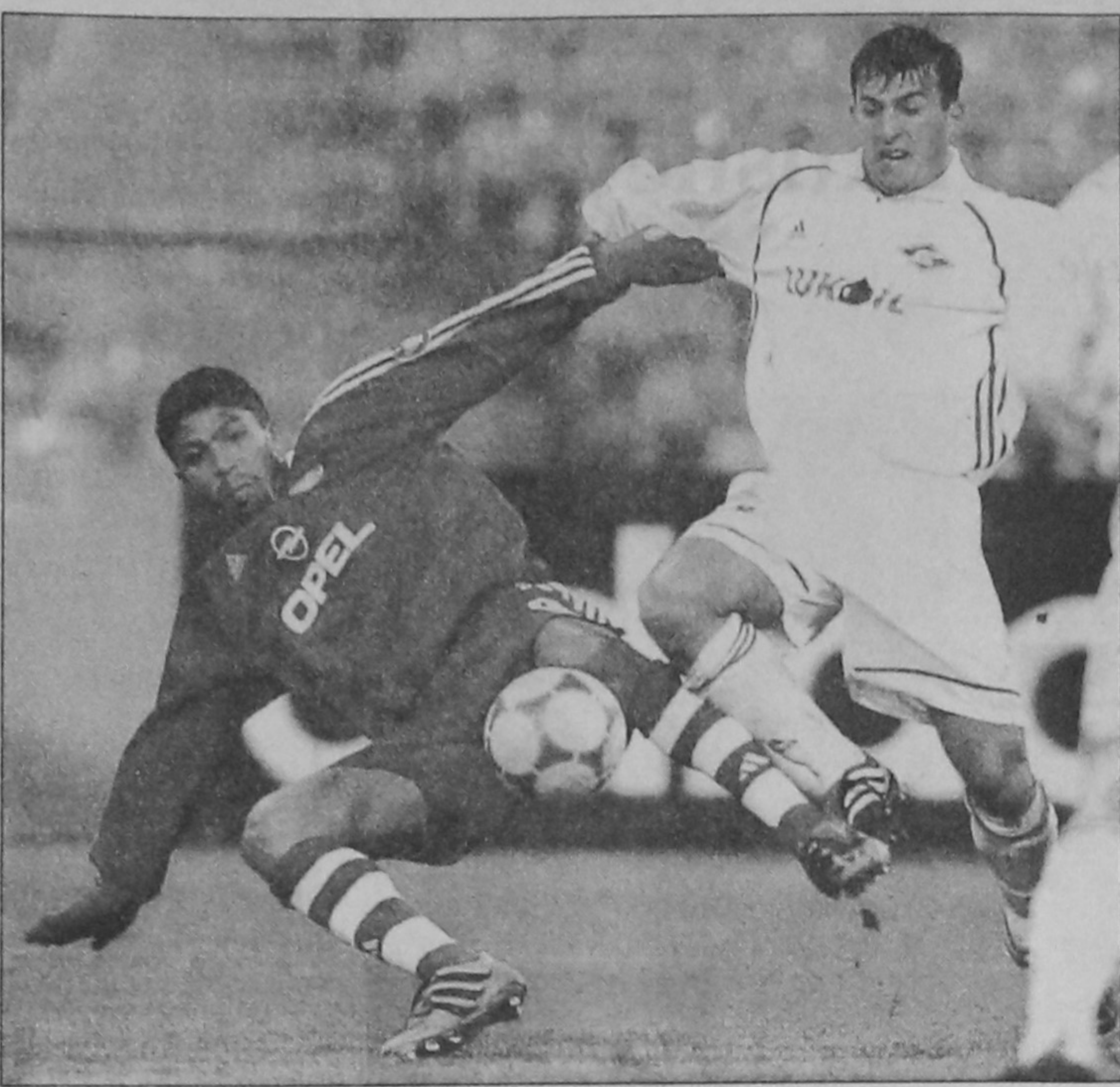
somewhere," he said flipping furiously through a Korean language newspaper before locating FIFA's website on the sports page.

But Lee Shin-woong, a 35-year-old accountant in Seoul said he will be content to watch the games on television. "TV will be good enough for me. I can't afford to buy a ticket," he said.

Seoul will host the opening Cup match on May 31, 2002, when reigning champions France will take on an opponent to be selected in a draw this December in South Korea. Yokohama in Japan will host the final match.

South Korea is building 10 stadiums to host the event, including a 64,000-seat facility in Seoul that will be Asia's largest football-only stadium.

South Korea and Japan not only fought an intense bidding war for the right to be sole host, they have recently clashed over Japan's intention to write the name "Japan" before "Korea" on ticket applications written in Japanese.



Bayern Munich's Brazilian international Giovane Elber (L) tries to get the ball in the Champions League match against Spartak Moscow.

Champions' League Bayern owe Elber one

Football

REUTERS, Munich

Brazilian Elber struck a late goal to give Bayern Munich a 1-0 win over Spartak Moscow on Tuesday which stretched their lead in Group C of the Champions League.

Elber headed home from close range 11 minutes from time for the 1999 Champions League finalists who now have seven points from three games in the second phase, three more than second-placed Arsenal.

Bayern were on top from the start with Stefan Effenberg and Mehmer Scholl running the midfield but they looked clumsy in front of goal until Elber broke the deadlock.

Elber and Scholl had wasted

opportunities before Elber's shot from the edge of the box bounced off the bar in the 32nd minute in what was Bayern's best chance before the break.

Relying on counter-attacks, Spartak threatened the Bayern goal first in the 37th minute with a spectacular overhead kick from Uzbekistan international Jafar Ibrimov which almost surprised Germany goalkeeper Oliver Kahn.

Four minutes later an angled shot from the edge of the penalty area by Brazilian striker Robson flew just wide.

The second half followed the same pattern with Elber again Bayern's most dangerous player.

In the 74th minute he collected a fine pass from substitute Carsten Jancker and tried to flick the ball past Spartak goalkeeper Alexander Filimonov. He managed to punch the ball to safety.

Spartak, now bottom of the group with three points, had not played a competitive match since losing 3-0 to Olympique Lyon in their previous Champions League game on December 5.

But they fought bravely and Filimonov had a great game, denying Bayern with a string of brilliant saves until Elber's header from a Scholl cross left him stranded.

Bayern will now visit Spartak in their next group match on February 21 and three points from that game would almost certainly guarantee the Munich club a place in the last eight.

The German champions will be without libero Jens Jeremies. He will be suspended after collecting his third yellow card of the competition on Tuesday.

New seedings for 2003 WC

INTERNET, Johannesburg

Australia and South Africa could meet in the next World Cup final after a revised seeding system to be used at the South Africa in 2003 was approved by the ICC.

The seedings are based on the percentage of wins each country has achieved in their one-day international matches since the end of the last World Cup and, although matches up until September 2001 will be included, current holders Australia and host nation South Africa are unlikely to be moved from first and second place respectively.

The system would set up a repeat of 1999's infamous tied semifinal between the two archrivals, a game which many claimed pitted the best two sides in the tournament.

"The reason for this cut-off date is that it is our intention to announce the programme of matches in October 2001," Ali Bacher, executive director of the 2003 World Cup, said in a statement on Tuesday.

The top-seeded team will be placed in one group, alongside the fourth, fifth, eighth, ninth, 12th and 13th seeds, while the second seed will play the third, sixth, seventh, 10th, 11th and 14th seeds before the second phase of the tournament.

Although winning percentages, which exclude matches which end without a result, may change before September, the current records of the competing nations would group Australia (80 per cent) with Pakistan (55.1), England (55), West Indies (37.2), Zimbabwe (25.45) and two qualifying nations, who will fight for their right to compete during the ICC Trophy in Toronto in July.

South Africa (64.58) would be grouped with Sri Lanka (61.36), India (47.17), New Zealand (38.89), Bangladesh (0), Kenya (0) and the final qualifying nation.

Saurav fully

FROM PAGE 13

of this series. The Australians are a good side. So are we. So it will be a hard fought series. As far as revenue is concerned we have defeated them twice during their last two visits to India.

Q: Starting from your debut at the Lords Test, is this probably the toughest series that you are having to play?

A: No, not at all. At the international arena, every series, each game is tough. This series has become a topic of discussion because of the consistency of the Australians. They are coming here after winning 15 Tests in a row. But that does not change our targets. We have to perform and win. So this series is no different from any other series as far as the toughness of the job is concerned.

Q: How to plan to utilise the "Home" advantage?

A: We will definitely discuss a lot of points at the conditioning camp. All that I can say is that we will play according to our strengths.

Q: As a captain you have always wanted pitches where the ball bounces and comes to the bat. However, as far as this series is concerned, you are talking about playing on turners. Why?

A: Simply because, we do not have any other options. Overnight, we cannot start playing Australia on wickets which are quick. That would then harm the team. The best way however, is to prepare hard wickets in the domestic tournaments. It will then help to produce technically correct batsmen and good bowlers.

Q: Which aspects of the game would you work on at the conditioning camp?

A: We have to work on a lot of things. We have to improve our close catching. We have to see that

we are able to utilise all the chances that we have. However, more than anything else, the emphasis definitely will be on fitness. It is not only for the Australian series but because we have a long international season ahead of us.

Q: Shane Warne, was not all that successful in 1998. So will he get the respect that he gets from the other sides?

A: You always have to respect Warne. He is a great bowler, the world's best leg spinner. You have to respect his experience and talent.

Q: Experience is one thing that your regular openers do not have. Will this affect them especially when they play a bowler like Glen McGrath.

A: Both Ramesh and Shivsundar Das have shown their potentials. I am confident that they will handle all the pressures very well.

Q: Where is the real strength of the Australian side?

A: Steve's side is strong in every department of the game. Be it bowling, fielding or batting. They are a complete side. That has been the main cause of their success.

Q: The fate of this series will depend on what aspect?

A: It will depend on our batting. If the batsmen can get runs consistently, the series will not be very easy for the Australians.

England's final warm-up

Cricket

REUTERS, Matara

England get their final dress rehearsal for the Test series against Sri Lanka in a four-day game against a Board President's team starting on Thursday.

The match in the southern coastal town of Matara continues England's build-up to the inaugural Test series, which begins in the nearby city of Galle on February 22, and follows a convincing 165-run win over another board team in Colombo.

"The England selectors have some interesting decisions to make ahead of the Galle Test," said skipper Nasser Hussain after virtually all his key players found form.

Graeme Hick and Michael Vaughan hit half-centuries as they vied for the number six spot while fast bowler Darren Gough and left-arm spinner Ashley Giles also impressed, taking four wickets each.

But a cautious Hussain said he was still looking to tie up a few loose ends.

"We are just going in the right direction. We've still got a lot of work to do," he said.

"The fielding has been a bit scrappy at times, the spin bowlers need to get a few more overs in and a few of the batsmen need to spend more time in the middle," said Hussain.

Opener Michael Atherton, Graham Thorpe and Alec Stewart are yet to find their touch among the batsmen.

With the exception of opener Marcus Trescothick, who was rested for the game in Colombo, England played a virtual Test side.

Trescothick is the only England batsman to score a century on the tour so far, making exactly 100 before retiring in the opening two-day game against a Colts XI in Colombo.

Hussain said England would look to play anyone who had not yet had a chance on the tour, raising the prospects of seamer fast-bowler Matthew Hoggard and off-spinner Jason Brown.

In the Sri Lankan camp, all eyes will be on three spinners -- Niroshan Bandaratilake, Malinga Bandara and Muthumudalige.

Pushpakumara -- who will press their claims to stand in for bowler Muttiah Muralitharan, who is recovering from a groin strain.

Among the batsmen, Tillekeratne Dilshan, who made a century against England in Colombo, and former Test player Hashan Tillekeratne will bid for a recall to the national side.

TEAMS

ENGLAND (from): Nasser Hussain (captain), Michael Atherton, Marcus Trescothick, Graham Thorpe, Alec Stewart, Graeme Hick, Michael Vaughan, Craig White, Ashley Giles, Robert Croft, Andrew Caddick, Darren Gough, Matthew Hoggard, Jason Brown.

BOARD PRESIDENT'S XI (from): Tillekeratne Dilshan (captain), Avishka Gunawardene, Ruwin Peiris, Hashan Tillekeratne, Sunendra Kumar, Jeevantha Kulathunga, Muthumudalige Pushpakumara, Niroshan Bandaratilake, Malinga Bandara, Ruchira Perera, Dinusha Fernando, Prasanna Jayawardene, Chamara Silva, Nisal Randika.



Bangladesh Tennis Federation president Alamgir Farouque Chowdhury addressing a press conference organised in connection with the 15th Bangladesh International Junior Tennis Championships at the federation office at Ramna in the city yesterday. The championships begin at the National Tennis Complex in Ramna on February 17.

Coe blasts Christie

Athletics

AFP, London

British middle distance legend Sebastian Coe has attacked sprinter Linford Christie, questioning the former Olympic champion's credentials as a role model to young athletes.

Writing in the Daily Telegraph newspaper, Coe, himself a double Olympic champion in the 1980s, blasted Christie for recently describing British athletics as "corrupt."

Christie, whose two-year suspension for a positive drug test ended Wednesday, said an interview he would not want his children to enter the sport.

But in a hard-hitting retort Coe, who competed in the same British team as Christie for six years, claims Christie should take a long hard look at himself before criticising officialdom.

"(Christie) would be well-advised to do some soul-searching as he returns today from a two-year suspension after testing positive for nandrolone," said Coe.

"Christie's place as our greatest sprinter is unquestioned...but there has been controversy on the

way." Coe continued: "Christie's captaincy of the British team was marked by continual conflict with team coaches, most notably high profile and disfiguring arguments about the order of baton changes in the sprint relay."

"I sat in one team meeting when he made himself deliberately unintelligible to all but those who had a passing knowledge of jive and, if officialdom was to blame for anything, it was to turn a blind eye to his boorish behaviour and then making him team captain to buy some peace."

Coe was sharply critical of Christie's behaviour at the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta when the reigning champion was disqualified for two false starts.

"(Christie) gracefully paraded himself before an Olympic final having false-started twice. In doing so, he seriously affected the chances of fellow competitors before being asked to leave the stadium."

"Christie says in his interview: 'The sport is so corrupt now I wouldn't want my child to do it.' Well, I hope my children do take up the sport. And I only hope they look long and hard before deciding on a role model."

Satkhira cricket

OUR CORRESPONDENT, SATKHIRA

Ganamukhi Sangha and Ariance Club won their respective matches of the Acme First Division Cricket League yesterday.

At Satkhira Stadium, Ganamukhi defeated Rasulpur Juba Chakra by eight wickets.

Sent into bat, Rasulpur made 131 for nine in 30 overs.

In reply, Ganamukhi scored 133 for two in 24.2 overs.

At Satkhira Government College Ground, Ariance beat Sultrapur Club by 68 runs.

Winning the toss, Ariance decided to bat and scored 253 for seven in 45 overs.

In reply, Sultrapur collected 185 runs for six in 45 overs.

Vento to play Hingis

REUTERS, Doha

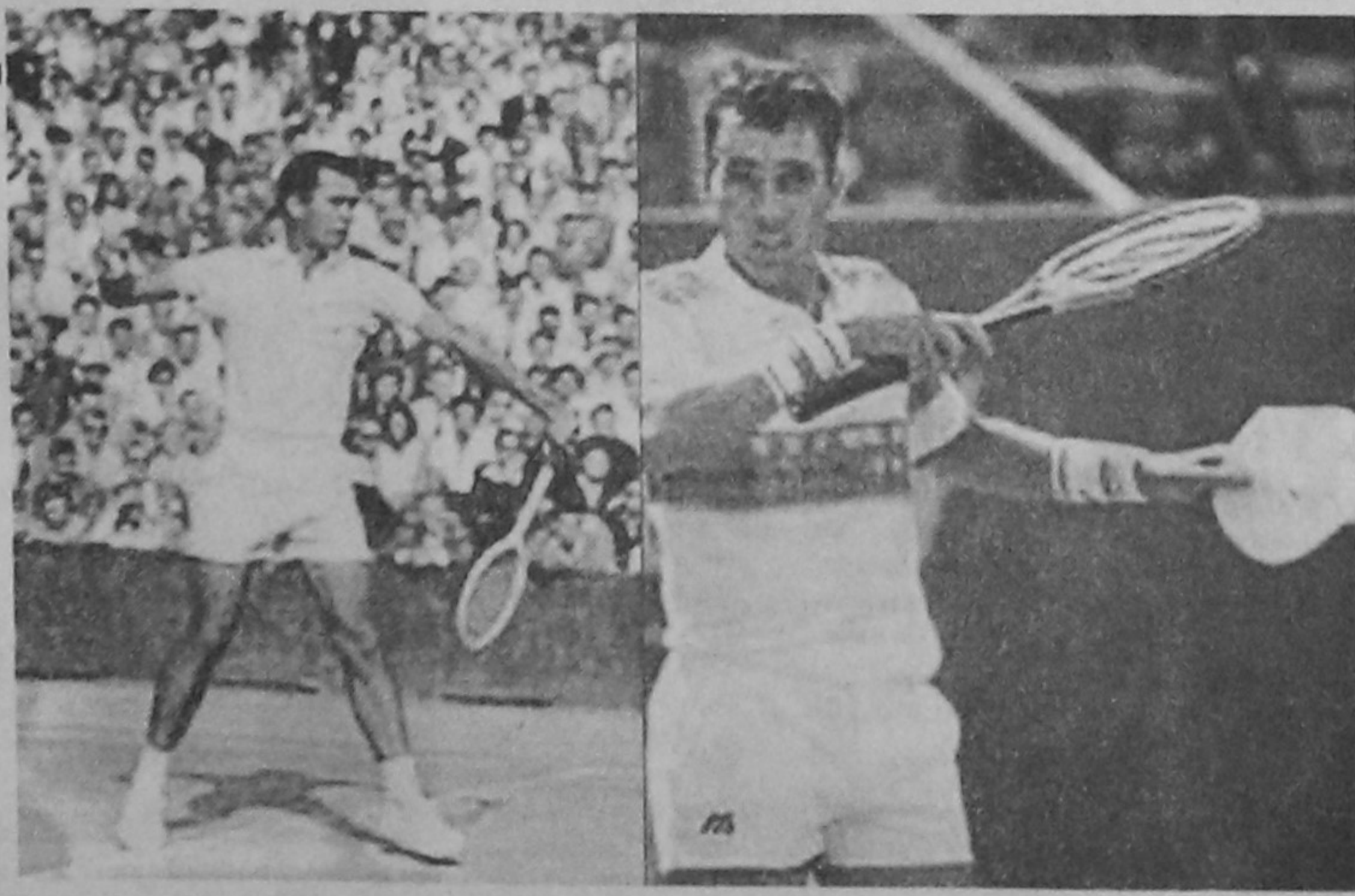
Venezuelan wild card entry Maria Vento booked a second round match against world number one Martina Hingis by overcoming German Barbara Rittner 7-6, 6-7, 6-3 in the 170,000 dollars Qatar Open yesterday.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down words. Includes a solution time of 25 mins.

Cryptoquip puzzle grid with letters and numbers for solving.

CRYPTOQUIP SE R Y Z M I I L D M Y N M Y Q T S A N P P M L P R Y Z H I Q Y A L A J R I J L R E Y Y T P Y P N D Yesterday's Cryptoquip: I WONDER WHETHER PEOPLE WHO ARE AFRAID OF ANIMALS SOMETIMES FEEL PET-RIFIED. Today's Cryptoquip Clue: L equals A



Mervyn Rose (L) and Ivan Lendl.