

Hasibul steals the show

SPORTS REPORTER
A brilliant half-century from tail-ender Hasibul Hossain guided Enamul Hoque's Green team to an exciting two-wicket win over the Naimur Rahman-led Reds in a practice match at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

The hard-hitting right hander scored 64 off just 38 balls as the Greens, chasing a commanding total of 257 in 45 overs, reached 262 in 43.4 overs with two wickets to spare.

Hasibul's swashbuckling knock contained four sixes and six boundaries.

Middle-order batsman Al-Shahriar chipped in with a 54-ball 52 while opener Ashraf and Ehsanul Haque scored 39 and 38 respectively.

Left-arm seamer Bikash Ranjan was the most successful Red bowler taking three wickets for 61 runs followed by left-arm spinner Mohammad Rafique who captured two wickets.

Earlier, Reds batting first, scored 257 for eight in 44.2 overs with opener Javed Omar Belim scoring 105. Opener Mehrab Hossain (60) and middle-order Habibul Bashar with 26 were the other notable run-getters.

Off-spinner Sabbir Khan took highest three wickets for Green conceding 65 runs.

SCORES IN BRIEF
RED: 257 for 8 in 44.2 overs (Javed Omar 105, Mehrab 60, Bashar 26, Sabbir 3/65)

GREEN: 262 for 8 in 43.4 overs (Hasibul 64, Al-Shahriar 52, Ashraf 39, Ehsanul 38, Bikash 3/61, Rafique 2/41)

Result: Green won by two wickets. WI captain next week

REUTERS, St Johns

The West Indies captaincy will not be announced until the middle of next week the West Indies Cricket Board (WICB) said on Thursday.

The line-up for the opening Test against South Africa should be known by next Wednesday or Thursday and the skipper will not be named until then, a WICB spokeswoman said.

The first Test starts in Georgetown on Friday.

The WICB also denied that Jimmy Adams had been sacked as captain even though he had omitted from a 16-man training camp in Trinidad this weekend.

"Anybody can still be called up," said a WICB spokeswoman. "We are waiting for the next two matches before announcing the final 13."

Guyana and Jamaica start the four-day Busta Cup final on Friday and South Africa open their five-Test tour with a three-day game against a Busta Cup XI, beginning on Sunday.

They call 'em

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10,000 Test runs, said the lifeless wickets provided in domestic cricket were contributing to the team's downfall.

"Once the ball starts to bounce above the knees, the Indian batsmen suddenly freeze," he said.

"On domestic pitches that are as flat as the autobahns of Germany, all the batsmen have to do to get on to the front foot.

"But the moment they are pushed on the back foot, they are lost. How does one expect them to be good against a relentlessly accurate Glenn McGrath."

Bedi, one of the game's great left-arm spinners, took a swipe at all-rounder Ajit Agarkar, who recorded his seventh successive duck against the Australians.

"If Ajit is persisted with as an all-rounder, then I was a mainline batsman," he said.

"Surely the Indian batting can not revolve around Sachin Tendulkar all the time."

"And captain Saurav Ganguly was anything but an inspiration for his team — a marked difference between the two leaders."

"There is plenty to learn from this Australian side...owning up individual responsibility, pulling your weight in the side and discipline in every department of the game," Bedi said.

Tendulkar played a lone hand for India with 76 and 65, showing why he is rated one of the best batsmen in modern cricket.

Ganguly, under media scrutiny recently because of his reported extra-marital affair with a film actress, managed just eight and one in the match.

Waugh warns India

Cricket
AFP, Bombay

Australia's cricket captain Steve Waugh on Friday warned India not to expect any mercy from his world-beating side after the 10-wicket demolition in the first Test.

Waugh, hoping to win Australia's first series on Indian soil in 31 years, led his team to an emphatic three-day win at the Wankhede Stadium on Thursday.

He said Australia's 16th consecutive Test victory had demoralised the hosts to such an extent that they will struggle to pick themselves up for the remaining two Tests at Calcutta and Madras.

"Psychologically, this was a very significant win," Waugh said. "They appeared pretty down taking the field in our second innings. We had only 47 to get, but when you get them in seven overs, you know you have scored a point."

"In that respect, I think we've made some inroads for the next Test match," Waugh said.

India will do well to take the Australian captain seriously.

Before the tour began, Waugh had outlined his strategy to strike at the Indians early — win the toss, field first and shatter their confidence in the first session.

He did just that in Bombay, Waugh put India in on an unusually green wicket and reduced them to 31-3 within the first hour and 55-4 soon after.

A shell-shocked India managed

just 176 in the first innings and 219 in the second, defeated as much by the pace of Glenn McGrath and Jason Gillespie as the spin of Shane Warne and Mark Waugh.

As the tourists ran a lap of honour to a standing ovation from some 45,000 home fans, Indian captain Saurav Ganguly was jeered for failing to stop the embarrassing defeat.



STEVE WAUGH

Waugh conceded the freak dismissal of master batsman Sachin Tendulkar in the second innings was "a major turning point."

Tendulkar, who made 65, pulled Mark Waugh hard, but the ball deflected off short-leg fielder Justin Langer's shoulder to mid-wicket where Ricky Ponting sprinted to his right and picked a blinder just off the ground.

"That catch changed things a bit," Waugh said. "But it shows that if you hang in there long enough things will turn around."

"It was a pretty lucky catch but at the same time Ponting still had to take that catch and make the most of the opportunity."

Waugh said the key to success in India was to remain cool and composed under trying circumstances.

"It was pretty hard out there. There was a lot of noise when the Indians were batting, but we kept our cool in tough situations."

"We've learned our lesson from previous tours where we tended to rush a bit when the crowd cheered a stroke by their batsmen."

"This time we pulled back a bit, relaxed, took a deep breath and focussed on the next ball."

Waugh also paid rich tributes to Adam Gilchrist and Matthew Hayden, whose scintillating stand of 197 off 195 balls enabled Australia to recover from 99-5 and post a match-winning total.

"The way Gilchrist and Hayden played, there were glimpses of how Sir Donald Bradman would have played," Waugh said.

"They were two of the great Test match hundreds."

Waugh said the win was the best respect the team could pay Bradman, the batting legend who died at the age of 92 on Monday, a day before the Test began.

The second Test starts at the Eden Gardens in Calcutta on March 11.

Ganguly to lead Board XI

REUTERS, New Delhi

India's under-fire skipper Saurav Ganguly was on Friday drafted in to play in a three-day game against Australia, a day after his team's 10-wicket defeat in the first Test.

Ganguly, not originally selected for the game, will replace wicket-keeper Vijay Dahiya as captain of the Indian Cricket Board President's XI for the New Delhi match starting on Tuesday, CK Khanna, vice-president of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), told.

Ganguly, criticised for his poor batting and captaincy after India lost the Bombay Test with two days to spare, will look to rebuild his confidence ahead of the second Test starting in his home city of Calcutta on March 11.

The left-hander scored eight and one in his two innings in the first Test.

Imran doesn't like it

INTERNET, undated

Pakistan legend Imran Khan has lambasted the International Cricket Council (ICC) for its handling of suspected bowling actions.

Khan, one of the greatest all-rounders of all time and a veteran of 88 Tests, said the laws regarding throwing needed to be revised, and said that umpires need to react to controversy during the match, not after. His statements came after umpires Doug Cowie and Steve Dunne reported Shoaib Akhtar of bowling with a suspect action in Thursday's ODI against New Zealand.

"I just don't understand why (the ICC) does not simplify the rule which constitutes chucking," Imran told on Friday.

Last year saw Waqar Younis suspended and Azhar Mahmood fined under the law regarding ball-tampering, but Imran insists that this was also ineptly handled.

"In both the cases, no action was taken on the spot," he said. Referring to the most recent controversy surrounding Shoaib, Imran said, "To me it doesn't make sense. If the umpires thought he was throwing, they should not have allowed him to continue. How can the umpires allow a bowler to carry on when in their opinion he is throwing?"

"Similarly, Waqar and Azhar were penalised by the match referee despite the fact that the umpires in the centre neither changed the ball nor reported the matter."

Shoaib home, Pak trio in N Zealand

REUTERS, Christchurch

Pakistan's reinforcements arrived in New Zealand on Friday as fiery pace bowler Shoaib Akhtar returned home to be treated for injury.

Spinner Arshad Khan, batsman Younis Khan and wicketkeeper Humayun Farhat flew in to bolster the tourists for the three Test series which begins on March 8.

Arshad has eight Test caps for 30 wickets, with a career highlight being five for 38 against Sri Lanka in March 1999.

Younis scored a century on his Test debut against Sri Lanka in late 1999 and in that three-match series averaged 85.50. The 23-year-old has now played nine Tests for an average of 31.

Humayun is the heir apparent to Pakistan captain Moin Khan and is a powerful middle-order batsman.

The 20-year-old is the older brother of Imran Farhat, who made his one-day international debut in the just completed series against New Zealand, which the home team won 3-2.

Media censure

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cally," said cricket writer Rajan Bala in a front page article in The Asian Age.

He said the Australian pace bowlers did not need to exploit Ganguly's weakness against short-pitched bowling aimed at his ribcage since he had fallen cheaply to the spinners.

"Australian juggernaut crushes India" said the Hindustan Times, while The Times of India added, "Indian capitulation gives amazing Aussies the 'sweet sixteen'," referring to Australia's 16th Test win in a row.

Former Indian captain Sachin Tendulkar, in contrast, was praised for his half-centuries in both innings.

Former Indian bowler Bishan Singh Bedi, referring to Tendulkar's second-innings dismissal to a brilliant Ricky Ponting catch after a pull shot bounced off short leg fielder Justin Langer, said: "Surely, Indian batting cannot revolve around Tendulkar all the time."

The Asian Age also had a graphic headlined "duckometer," with details on Bombay all-rounder Ajit Agarkar's seven consecutive ducks against Australia. It nicknamed him the "Bombay duck," in reference to a popular variety of fish.



American heavyweight boxer Evander Holyfield shows off his muscles during a weigh-in ahead his bout against compatriot John Ruiz in Las Vegas on March 1.

Holyfield's chance

Boxing
AFP, Las Vegas

Evander Holyfield fights John Ruiz for the second time in eight months Saturday, seeking a more emphatic victory than the controversial decision that gave him the World Boxing Association heavyweight title in August.

But for Holyfield, 38, the fight is about more than silencing critics who said the vacant WBA crown should have gone to Ruiz last year. It's about proving he is still a dominant force in the heavyweight ranks.

"My goal is to become the undisputed heavyweight champion of the world," said Holyfield, who boasts a record of 37-4-1, with 25 wins inside the distance. "If it means (Mike) Tyson, then I will fight him. If it means Lennox (Lewis), I will fight him. Whoever it is, I will fight him."

But Ruiz, 29, said the first fight proved that Holyfield is on his way out, and he, Ruiz, is on his way in.

"I don't know if people really want to see Holyfield keep fighting," Ruiz said. "I feel people are tired of hearing about the same guys over and over again, that they want some new names and new fights."

Despite his disappointment in August, Ruiz said, he proved to himself in the first fight with Holyfield that he was championship material.

"I learned I deserved to be in the same category with these guys," said Ruiz, who brings a record of 36-4, with 27 wins inside the distance, to the fight. "Everybody considered me a B-level fighter, and they said I would not even last one round. But that fight proved to myself and the rest of

the world that I could become the heavyweight champ.

"This time, hopefully, the judges will be looking at it as though there are two fighters in the ring instead of just one," he added.

Ruiz said he expects both himself and Holyfield to be better in the rematch than they were the first time.

"I'm prepared for him to come out harder this time, especially the first three or four rounds," Ruiz said. "He hates to see someone come out and jab him. He used to be a boxer but somewhere along the way he decided he's a brawler. He wants that from the other fighter. I went along last time and I beat him anyway. I'll beat him easier this way."

Promoter Don King says the winner of Saturday night's pay-per-view fight in Las Vegas will defend the WBA title in China in June.

Ferrero slays another

Tennis
AFP, Dubai

Juan Carlos Ferrero, the star of Spain's Davis Cup triumph in Barcelona in December, is making himself a hero in the Middle East too after saving three match points to upset the seedings for the second successive day.

Ferrero's 5-7, 7-6, 6-3 victory over the sixth-seeded Dominik Hrbaty came thanks to a recovery from 15-40 on his serve at 4-5 in the second set, and it carried him to the final of the Dubai Open for the second year in succession.

"I was very pleased to save the two match points and, after the tie-break, just glad still to be in it," said Ferrero, who sounded as dazed by his escapes as were crowd, for he had forgotten one of the match points.

That was the most dangerous of the three, in which Ferrero traded drives from the back with the in-form Hrbaty and was fortunate to see the Slovakian's faded forehand drive slew wide of the sideline.

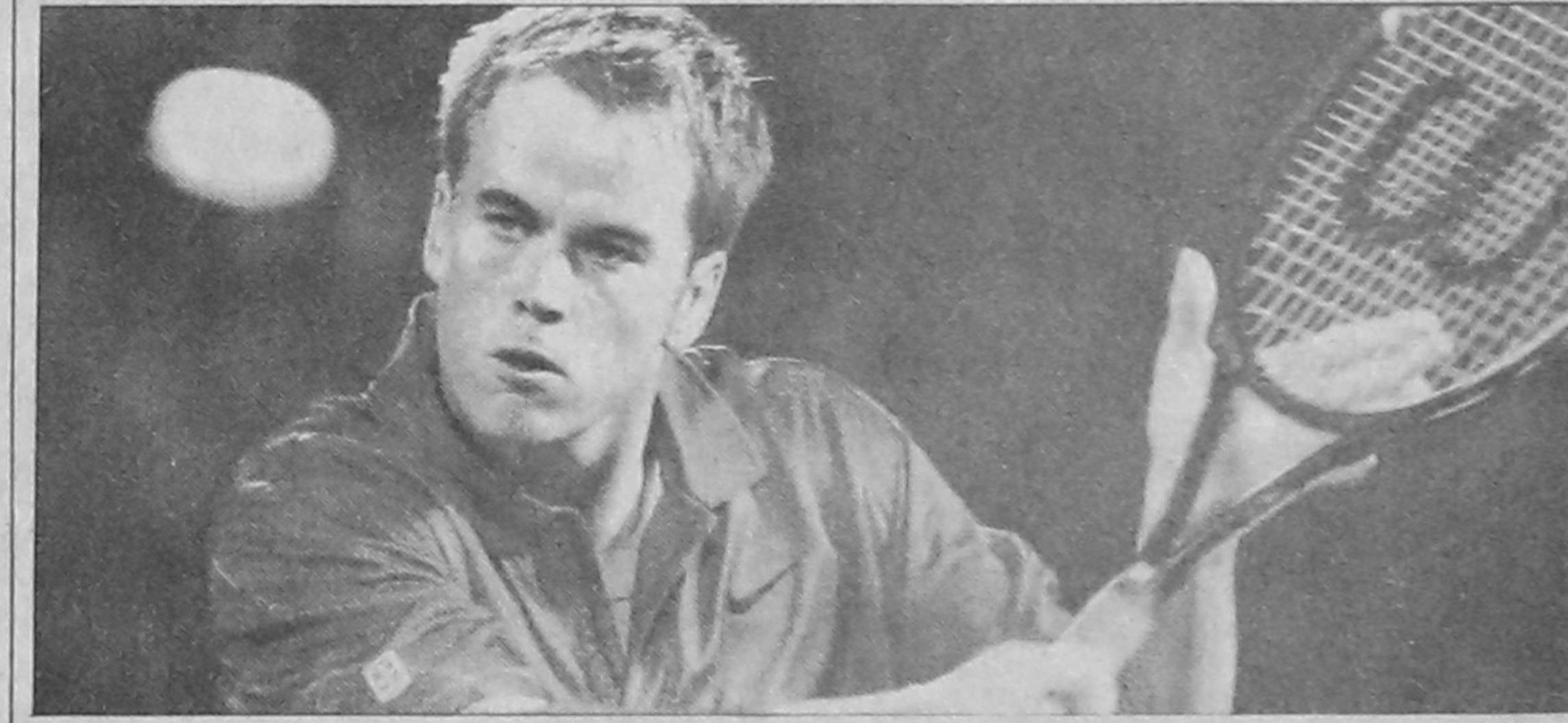
The two match points Ferrero did remember — and few would forget them — was when he smacked down two successive aces from 15-40 to deny an opponent who for two sets was the more enterprising and confident-looking player.

But in the tie-break Hrbaty served two disastrous double faults in a row which effectively cost him the set and after that, though rarely at his best, Ferrero played with more conviction.

"The Davis Cup meant there was not much time to get ready for this year," admitted Ferrero, who had played only four matches all year before this week. "I didn't do well at the Australian Open or at Rotterdam, but now I am starting to play better."

Nevertheless it took an uncharacteristically poor game concluded by Hrbaty's seventh double fault before the tenacious Ferrero made the only break of the final set. It took him to 4-2 and after it he soldiered his way to his improbable victory.

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Sweden's Magnus Norman hits a backhand in his match against Juan Carlos Ferrero of Spain in Dubai on March 1.

Andre, Lleyton move on

Tennis
AFP, San Jose

Andre Agassi and Lleyton Hewitt advanced, but Mark Philippoussis was not as lucky Thursday night in the second round of the ATP Tour Sybase Open.

The top-seeded Agassi, who is competing in his first event since defending his Australian Open title last month, cruised to a 6-4, 6-2 victory over Michel Kratochvil of Switzerland.

Agassi, seeking his fifth title at San Jose, will meet Armenian Sargis Sargsian in the quarterfinals.

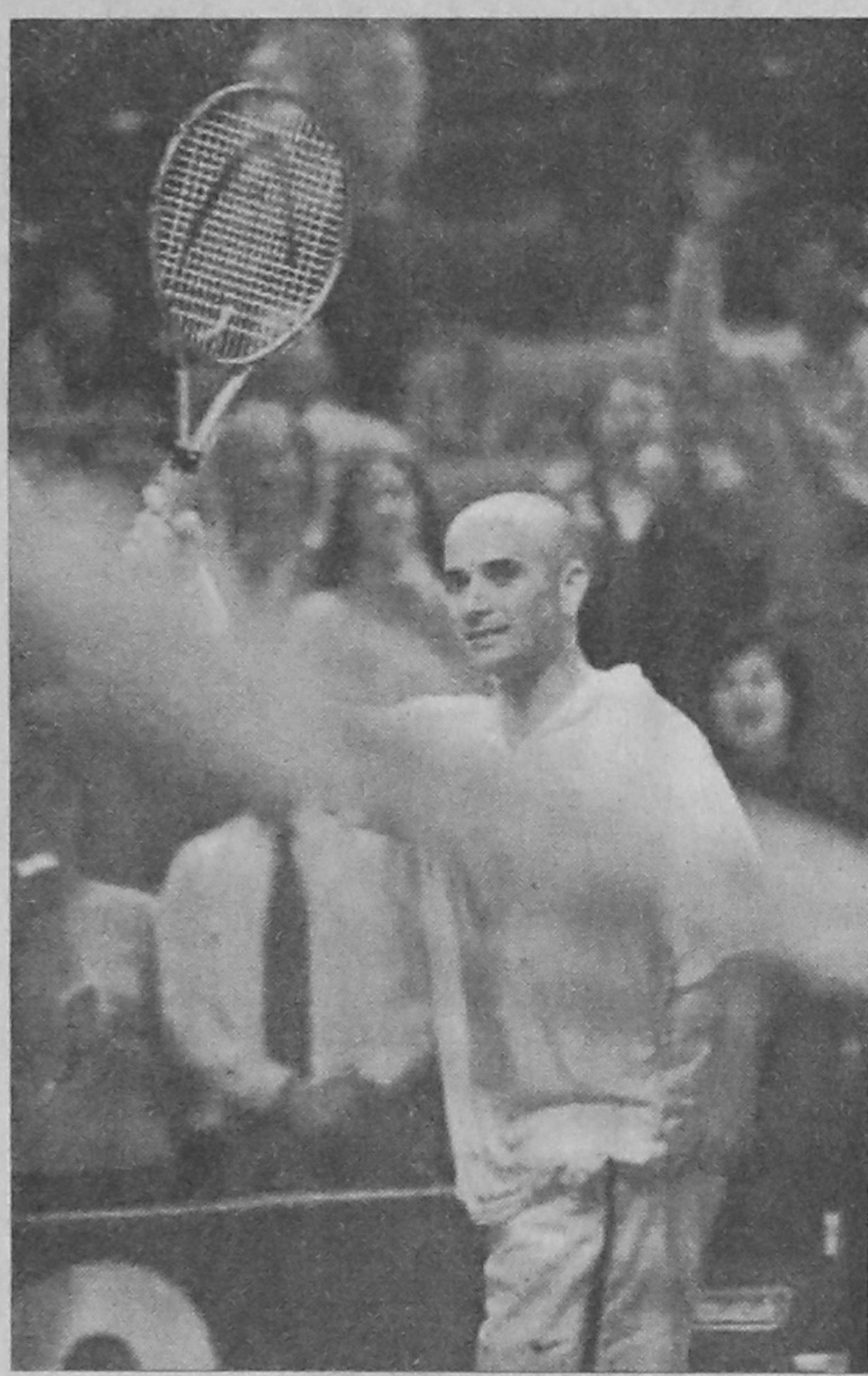
Agassi, 30, had to withdraw from this event last year due to a back injury but has compiled an impressive 33-4 record, reaching the quarter-finals in eight of his previous nine appearances.

Hewitt, the second seed, outlasted Andrei Stoliarov of Russia, 6-2, 6-7, 6-3, and will play eighth seed Greg Rusedski of Britain in the quarterfinals. The Australian is seeking his second title of the year after winning at Sydney last month.

Philippoussis, the two-time defending champion and third seed, was ousted by Juan Balcells of Spain, 6-4, 6-7, 7-6. Philippoussis was playing his second tournament of the year after knee surgery. The 24-year-old Australian made a successful debut last week at the Kroger St. Jude in Memphis, capturing his ninth career singles title.

Fourth seeded Tommy Haas of Germany moved into the quarterfinals earlier Thursday as he rallied for a 4-6, 6-3, 6-4 win over 34-year-old Magnus Gustafsson of Sweden, the oldest player in the draw.

Haas improved his season record to 15-3 with Thursday's win. He won his second career title at Adelaide in January and is coming off a semi-final showing in Memphis.



Andre Agassi waves to the crowd after defeating Michel Kratochvil in the second round of the Sybase Open tennis tournament in San Jose, California on March 1.

Sun shines at Scottsdale

Tennis
AFP, Scottsdale

With rain steering clear of the State Farm Tennis Classic for the first time in three days, Lindsay Davenport, Monica Seles and Jennifer Capriati rolled into the quarterfinals Thursday at the hardcourt event.

The top-seeded Davenport, scheduled to play Spain's Gala Leon Garcia since Tuesday, finally got on the court and cruised to a 7-5, 6-2 win in a night match.

Davenport, who had a first-round bye, improved to 5-0 all-time against Leon Garcia, who defeated Anne Kremer of Luxembourg on Monday.

Earlier, Seles, who defeated Capriati in Sunday's final at the IGA US Indoors in Oklahoma City, needed just 56 minutes to eliminate Cara Black of Zimbabwe, 6-0, 6-3.

Capriati, the reigning Australian Open champion, bounced back from her defeat last Sunday by defeating Jana Nedeljkovic of Canada 6-2, 6-4.

In other second-round action, fifth seed Kim Clijsters of Belgium rallied past American Jennifer Hopkins, 5-7, 6-2, 6-3, seventh-seeded American Lisa Raymond eliminated Ai Sugiyama of Japan 7-5, 3-6, 6-1 and eighth-seeded American Meghann Shaughnessy dispatched Nadejda Petrova of

Russia 7-6, 6-3. Tina Pisnik of Slovenia recorded the lone upset of the day as she outduelled Elena Likhovitscva of Russia 7-5, 1-6, 7-6, in the completion of a match suspended Wednesday.

Magui Serna of Spain got past American Kristina Brandi 1-6, 6-2, 6-4, in an unseeded encounter and will face Soles in the quarterfinals.

Last year, Davenport was going for successive titles, reaching the final here after winning the Australian Open. But her title match with Martina Hingis was cancelled due to rain.



Bir Shrestha Captain Mohiuddin Jahangir House receiving the champions' trophy of the annual inter-house sports competition of the Rifles Public School and College from chief guest Maj Gen ALM Fazlur Rahman, DG of Bangladesh Rifles, yesterday.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer
ACROSS 1 'Men in Black' co-star 6 Nasal noises 12 Amphitheaters 13 1936 Loretta Young movie 14 Update the equipment 15 Frank admission 16 October stone 17 Notoriety 19 Strike speechless 20 Counterfeit 22 Staff 24 Outback avian 27 Dermatologist's case 29 Speedy 32 Buffy is one 35 Corsica's neighbor 36 'Perpetua' (Idaho's motto)
DOWN 1 Ms. Hari 3 Objects of worship 4 Acapulco uncle 5 21,780 square feet 6 Mine car 7 Vacillate 8 'Yo te' 9 In these times 10 Rodents do it 11 Yard event 12 Box-office sign 18 Pardon 21 'Ball' 23 Birds' feather link
Solution time: 27 mins.
CRYPTOQUIP
P ZRPAL ZRQZ ZRF
PAWQSTBN OTSQA
VQBKRZ NZFQGPAAQ
VGTVL OPGG WQVF ZPSF
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: MANY GOURMETS WILL CONTINUE TO THEORIZE THAT CANDY ORIGINATED IN SWEETZERLAND.
Today's Cryptoquip: Clue: Z equals T
The Cryptoquip is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that X equals Q, it will equal Q throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an acrostic give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.