

World mark awaits Suarez

AFP, Suwon, South Korea

Mexican football legend Claudio Suarez was preparing Tuesday to equal the world record for international caps, and said his sights were set on finishing his career at the World Cup.

Suarez, just 32, is scheduled to make his 157th appearance for the Aztecs in this city just outside the capital Seoul Wednesday as Mexico begin their Confederations Cup defence against Australia.

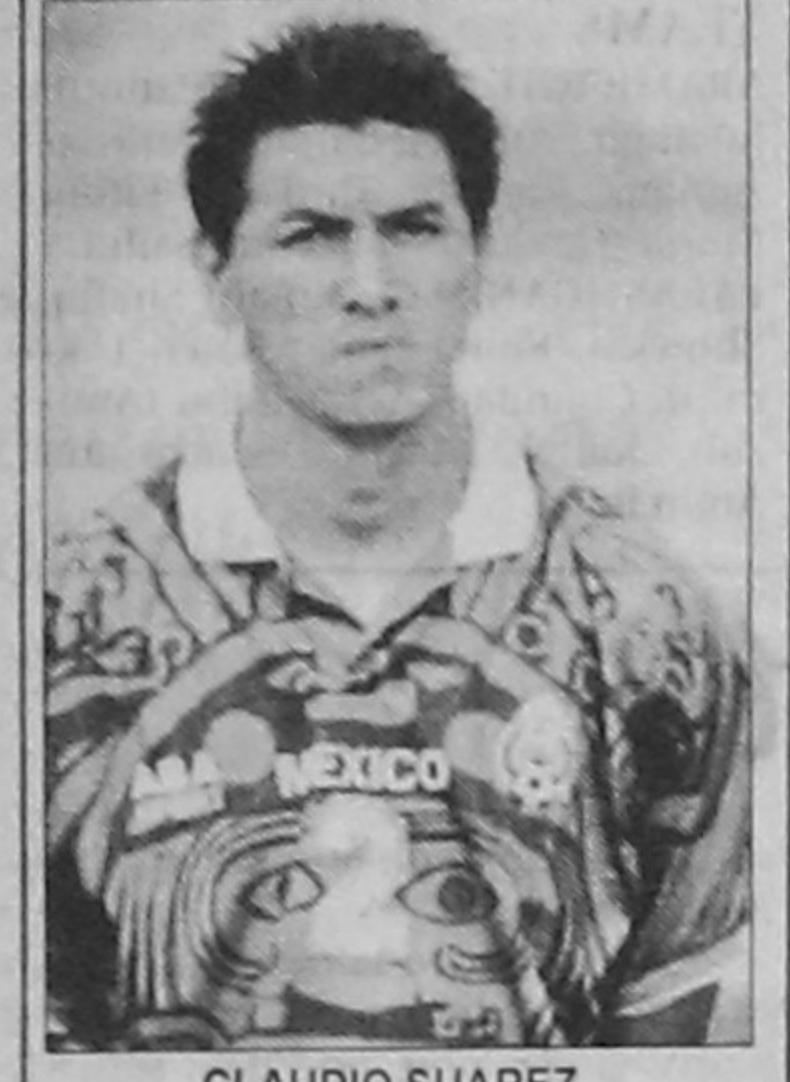
The Mexican skipper said the match would be one of the proudest moments in his career.

"I feel so good," he told AFP through an interpreter. "It is for me and the effort I have put in for all my career and the support from all my friends and the players."

The centre back has been a feature of the Mexican defence for more than a decade and is one of the most highly regarded players in world football.

He lifted the Confederations Cup trophy in front of 110,000 home supporters at Mexico City on July 4, 1999 after a 4-3 victory over Brazil that triggered wild celebrations.

But unlike other Mexican stars



CLAUDIO SUAREZ

such as former Real Madrid ace Hugo Sanchez, he has never played abroad and currently plays his club football for Tigres.

Suarez, who went through a vigorous massage and stretching session as the Mexicans trained at Suwon's World Cup stadium Tuesday evening, said it was his fitness that had enabled him to play so many games.

"I think the soccer game don't have age, it only have effort and working," he told reporters.

He also said that he planned to appear in the next World Cup in South Korea and Japan in 2002 with Mexico well placed in the qualifying tournament. "I hope to final my career in the World Cup," he said.

Suarez is expected to surpass the world cap record currently held by Egyptian Hassan Hossam when Mexico play their second match against South Korea in this eight-nation tournament.

Mexico's final group match is against the World Cup holders and European champions France.

Skerritt gets his marching orders

REUTERS, Bridgetown

West Indies team manager Ricky Skerritt has been sacked by the West Indies Cricket Board (WICB), he confirmed on Monday.

Skerritt was sacked by the Board's chief executive Gregory Shillingford and told not to attend the team's training camp in Trinidad ahead of the forthcoming tour of Zimbabwe and Kenya.

"I was e-mailed by CEO Gregory Shillingford and I was told that a letter of termination would follow," Skerritt told Reuters by telephone from his home in St. Kitts.

The WICB said in a statement that last Friday that Skerritt "was contacted and directed not to participate in the training camp in Trinidad."

At that time, he was also informed that a letter of termination of his contract would be sent to him within seven days, Shillingford said.

The WICB held a series of meetings last week and, after further meetings are concluded, the WICB will make an overall statement on the management team for our cricket tour to Zimbabwe and Kenya," Shillingford added.

Indians in

FROM PAGE 13

first on Pakistani soil since 1989. The two sides played three Tests in India in 1999 despite unsuccessful threats from Hindu fundamentalists to disrupt the matches.

India cancelled a scheduled tour of Pakistan in December and then twice pulled out of the Sharjah limited-overs series in the United Arab Emirates.

The weekend decision to play in the Asian Test Championship came days after India invited Pakistan military ruler General Pervez Musharraf for peace talks.

India accuses Pakistan of backing Muslim rebels in the disputed Himalayan state of Kashmir, which has sparked two of the South Asian rivals' three wars since they gained independence from Britain in 1947.

Co-hosts' ultimate test



KOREA/JAPAN 2001



FRENCH OPEN AT A GLANCE

INTERNET, Paris

Highlights from the 9.6 million dollars French Open on Monday at Roland Garros:

Weather: Warm and sunny. Temperatures between 61 and 85 degrees.

Attendance: 30,865.

Results:

Men's singles: No. 1 Gustavo Kuerten beat Argentina's Guillermo Coria 6-1, 7-5, 6-4; No. 15 Jan-Michael Gambill lost 4-6, 6-2, 6-4, 7-5 to Kristian Pless of Denmark.

Women's singles: No. 2 Venus Williams lost 6-4, 6-4 to Austrian Barbara Schett; No. 5 Amelie Mauresmo lost 7-5, 7-5 to Germany's Jana Kandar; No. 15 Jelena Dokic beat Adriana Garsi of the Czech Republic 6-0, 6-0.

Stat of the Day: 43 -- Number of unforced errors by Venus Williams during her first-round loss.

Quote of the Day: "Nothing's a setback. It's just a loss." -- Venus Williams.

Forget about Wimbledon

AFP, Paris

Defending men's singles French Open champion Gustavo Kuerten said after reaching the second round on Monday that he still intends to skip Wimbledon and have a rest rather than graze on grass.

The 24-year-old Brazilian came here with back and thigh problems which had marred his preparations but looked good in seeing off Argentine upstart Guillermo Coria in straight sets.

But asked about whether he would head across the English Channel afterwards Kuerten said he thought he would rather have a rest.

"Maybe it would be a good time for me to rest a little bit. In Hamburg I lost early so I had time to rest a bit, so I feel much better now."

"But I think I still have to recover a little bit and rest. It (Wimbledon) is going to be the perfect time for me (to rest)."

"I'm looking for maybe more rest and then prepare myself for other tournaments," said Guga, who is targeting a third Roland Garros crown after his 1997 win and last year.

Kuerten first intimated he might miss Wimbledon at Monte Carlo last month when he voiced sympathy for Spanish clay specialists such as Alex Corretja, who boycotted the event last year in protest at the tournament using its own selection procedures for seeding to the detriment of non-grass specialists.

Day 2

FROM PAGE 13

Murphy	18	1	75	3
Viljoc+	10	0	53	0
Rennie	2	0	10	0

ZIMBABWE A: First innings

Ebrahim not out	25
Rennie C Digne b Mohanty	1
Masakadze not out	6
Extras: (lb-1)	1

Total: (For 1 wkrt in 16 overs) 33

Fall of wicket: 1-10

To bat C Wishart, C Evans, D Viljoen, T Taibu, T Friend, B Murphy, D Mutendera, B Strang

Bowler O M R W

Zaheer	6	3	11	0
Mohanty	6	2	10	1
Nehra	2	0	9	0
Singh	2	1	2	0

run to the Hamburg final.

"I had four days off and only trained Friday and Saturday so I'm feeling pretty good," he added. (AP)

FERRERO LIKES TO SUFFER

Juan Carlos Ferrero, who hopes to capture Gustavo Kuerten's French Open crown, says he likes to suffer a little in the name of boosting his ranking and his title collection.

The 25-year-old fourth seed came here labouring under an abductor strain which forced him to miss the World Team Cup last week and then needed treatment for a foot problem amid his 6-2, 6-2, 6-3 dismissal of Austrian Stefan Koubek.

"He took the battle to me but I played solidly," said the man the Spanish call Mosquito because he is so slim.

"The final stages cost me a bit but it's better if you have to suffer a little," said the Davis Cup winner who stands second in the ATP Champions Race following his Masters Series win in Rome and

run to the Hamburg final.

After getting to the final of the Masters Series event at Miami earlier this year Gambill donated some of his winnings to a zoological park near his home in Washington State.

The park is home to various feline creatures, including lions and jaguars.

But Gambill, who turns 24 on Sunday, also likes jaguars of a different kind.

He collects the four-wheeled variety.

GOING GLOBAL

Roland Garros is already a global event - but this year the influence in the tournament has spread wider than ever.

Some three billion people - half

the world's population - are set to

tune in at some point or another to watch broadcasts of the action

in 166 countries on 133 television stations, who will show between them around 6200 hours of tennis across the fortnight.

Biggies storm thru'

Tennis

AFP, Paris

win the singles crown here, followed Agassi on court and swept aside Gala Leon Garcia of Spain 6-1, 6-0 and sent out a stark message to her rivals.

"You have to beat me that's all I can say - you have to beat me," said the 20-year-old Swiss miss, who joked she had been in a hurry to finish the job.

"It was so hot out there - I thought I'd better take every point," she laughed.

and Spanish 11th seed Arantxa Sanchez defeated Greta Arn of Germany 4-6, 6-2, 6-1.

Agassi, having endured a poor clay warm-up to the event with early departures in Rome and Hamburg, had to dig his heels in to take the third set on the tiebreak but was otherwise untroubled against Johansson.

"I feel ready, but it was hard work," said the 31-year-old Agassi after wrapping his match up in 1hr 51min.

"There are a lot of good players out there on clay. For me it's not about how long I play it's how intense I play. And I'm starting to get a little more comfortable out there," revealed Agassi, the Australian Open champion.

Safin likewise quickly reached cruising speed as he pocketed the opening two sets but lost his rhythm in the third before streaking through the fourth to win in 2hr 1min.

The Russian said he put his fitness level at only about 60 percent - but that was more than enough to see off Hippel.

"I am glad to come back here and happy that I am getting over the injury," said Safin, whose best finish here in four visits to date remains last year's quarter-final berth.

"I am getting better - but still have to play some matches to gain some confidence back."

"There were some little nerves. It's the first match, the first round of Roland Garros so it was a little bit difficult."

In other men's action, Spaniard Carlos Moya showed glimpses of the kind of form which led him to the 1998 title here as he ground compatriot Feliciano Lopez into the red dust 6-1, 6-4, 6-0 in just an hour and a quarter, winning 91 percent of his first service points.

Spanish 13th seed Alex Corretja of Argentina 2-6, 7-6 (7/3), 6-3, 4-6, 6-1 while Spaniard David Sanchez, caused a minor stir by beating Swedish ninth seed Magnus Norman 4-6, 6-4, 6-7 (6/4), 6-1, 6-2.

Norman was the third men's seed to fall.

Tommy Haas of Germany thrashed Jerome Golmard of France 6-0, 6-1, 6-1 while Sargs Sargsian of Armenia also moved on when Norwegian opponent Christian Ruud retired injured with a back injury with Sargsian leading 6-1, 3-1.

FRENCH OPEN DIARY

AFP, Paris

French Open diary on the second day of the tournament here Tuesday.

EVERYBODY LOVES SCHETT

Juan Carlos Ferrero, who hopes to capture Gustavo Kuerten's French Open crown, says he likes to suffer a little in the name of boosting his ranking and his title collection.

The 25-year-old fourth seed came here labouring under an abductor strain which forced him to miss the World Team Cup last week and then needed treatment for a foot problem amid his 6-2, 6-2, 6-3 dismissal of Austrian Stefan Koubek.

"He took the battle to me but I played solidly," said the man the Spanish call Mosquito because he is so slim.

"The final stages cost me a bit but it's better if you have to suffer a little," said the Davis Cup winner who stands second in the ATP Champions Race following his Masters Series win in Rome and

run to the Hamburg final.

After getting to the final of the Masters Series event at Miami earlier this year Gambill donated some of his winnings to a zoological park near his home in Washington State.

The park is home to various feline creatures, including lions and jaguars.

But Gambill, who turns 24 on Sunday, also likes jaguars of a different kind.

He collects the four-wheeled variety.

GOING GLOBAL

Roland Garros is already a global event - but this year the influence in the tournament has spread wider than ever.

Some three billion people - half

the world's population - are set to

tune in at some point or another to watch broadcasts of the action

in 166 countries on 133 television stations, who will show between them around 6200 hours of tennis across the fortnight.

CRYPTOQUIP

V C O U U L Y J Q Q B

E O J Q R Y M O U E O B M

Q R D V Q C Q Y O B

Q Y O B O L O J D ?

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: I KNOW FOR CERTAIN HOW THE MOST EARNEST CONFECTORS CAN MAKE A MINT.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: Q equals T

The Cryptoquip is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

