

IOC won't let IFs expand

AFP, Lausanne

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) on Wednesday declared war on international sports federations (IF) who are pushing to increase the size of the Olympics.

The IOC unveiled the programme for the 2004 Athens Games here and IOC sports director Gilbert Felli admitted he was expecting a battle from IFs unhappy with the plans.

One of the most affected sports will be boxing. Instead of 12 weights it has been told to reduce the total to 11. The super heavyweight is expected to be scrapped with the other weight limits being changed. The total number of boxers taking part must be reduced by 26.

Wrestling has been told that they can have a women's event but only if

they cut down on the number of men's events.

Fencing has also been told it can have an extra women's event but must reduce else where. The number of competitors must remain the same.

Swimming's request for a 50-metre race and open water race to be added to the programme was rejected.

Athletics have been told to introduce a maximum quota.

Football is one the few sports allowed an increase. The number of women's teams competing will be increased from eight to ten. FIFA had asked for the total to be raised to 12.

"This is the first time for years that we have not increased the number of events for an Olympics. For the first time we are trying to

apply the rules," said Felli. "No doubt some federations will be very unhappy but so be it."

Badminton, baseball and tennis had all asked for extra events but the IOC firmly rejected the demands.

"We are trying to limit the number of events to 300 and the number of athletes to 10,000," explained Felli.

The IFs have until December to agree to the changes or put forward another solution.

However the International Tug of War Federation's hopes of being allowed back into the Olympics were boosted when Felli confirmed that the sport was to be recognised as an Olympic sport.

The last time the tug of war was in an Olympics was in the 1920 Games in Amsterdam.

USTA donates \$1m for WTC relief fund

AFP, New York

Ten days after completing the US Open, their annual multi-million dollar money-maker here, the US Tennis Association donated one million dollars to the World Trade Centre relief effort.

"This tragedy is an incalculable loss to the city and the nation," said USTA President Merv Heller.

The sport's national governing body delayed a Davis Cup relegation tie against India originally set for this weekend to October 12-14. The competition will remain in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, with the loser out of contention for the trophy in 2002.

Kowshik

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and the more he plays the better he will become," said Mainul at a press briefing at the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) office at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Besides, captain of the shadow national team Khaled Mahmud and Mushfiqur Rahman will also fight for the all-rounder slot in the national team.

The 14-member team is once again a combination of youth and experience.

Apart from Kowshik, the selectors also invested in newcomers wicketkeeper Anwar Hossain, middle-order batsman Tushar Imran, opener Rafiqul and BKSP paceman Anwar Hossain Munir.

Tushar and Munir have recently returned from a three-week course at the world famous Commonwealth Bank Cricket Academy in Australia.

Experienced left-arm spinner Mohammad Rafique has been handed a chance to regain his place back in the Test squad.

The tour would also open the door for two middle-order batsmen Sanwar Hossain and Hasanuzzaman, who played well in the National and the Premier Leagues.

Although the selectors could argue that they chose the best possible team, however young middle-order batsman Mazharul Huq can claim that he deserves a better treatment. The right-hander was not only impressive with the willow in the practice matches at the BUET ground but also shed a several pounds in an effort to appease selectors, not happy about his weight.

The Bangladesh A team will leave for India on October 13. They will play four three-day games and four limited-overs matches in different parts of western India.

SQUAD

Khaled Mahmud (captain), Mehrab Hossain, Rafiqul Islam, Sanwar Hossain, Sanwar Hossain, Mohammed Ashraful, Tushar Imran, Anwar Hossain (wicketkeeper), Mohammed Rafique, Fahim Muntasir, Mushfiqur Rahman, Bikash Ranjan Das, Masrafeen bin Murtoza Kowshik and Anwar Hossain.

Standby: Hannan Sarker, Rajin Saleh, Sabir Khan, Neeyamur Rashid, Sajid Kadir, Mohammed Alamgir and Ahsanullah Hasan Rana.

Tamarine, Jelena in qtrs

Tennis

AFP, Tokyo

Thai star Tamarine Tanasugarn shrugged off a second set lapse to beat Australian Nicole Pratt in the second round of the Princess Cup tennis tournament on Thursday.

Playing her first tournament since a first-round loss at the US Open, the seventh-seeded Thai needed one hour and 55 minutes to defeat Pratt 6-3, 3-6, 6-2.

Third seed Jelena Dokic of Yugoslavia, who captured her first career title at the Italian Open in May, powered her way through to the next round with a 6-4, 6-4 win over Russian teenager Lina Krasnoroutska.

Tamarine double-faulted at 0-40 to lose the first game of the second set and soon found herself 1-3 down with Pratt hitting an array of forehand winners.

The Thai star eventually lost the set with another service break in the ninth game.

But she recovered in the final giving away only four points on her serve and the match with a beautiful backhand down the line.

"I was rushing a bit in the second



AI SUGIYAMA

set and my concentration was a little bit off," said Tamarine, 24.

"She started to play more aggressive and her serve was going well. It was very hard for me to come (to the net), her slice was very deep.

"I started well in the third. I tried to come a lot to the net and tried to cool myself down and tried to play my game. I realised that I have to come to the net. That helped me a lot. That was good in the third."

In Friday's quarterfinals, Tamarine will take on either French Open finalist and top seed Kim Clijsters of Belgium or Cara Black of Zimbabwe.

Dokic, who received a first-round bye and was playing her first match since a loss in the final of the Brazilian Open on Saturday, had no problem against Krasnoroutska and was on the court for only 68 minutes.

"It's been a long trip. I still have jet lag, so I was very happy to get through and play well," said Dokic, 18.

"I was glad that I was up all the time and kept the pressure on her. It would have been tough in a third set

... I'm sure as the tournament goes on, I'll be feeling a lot better," she added.

On Friday, Dokic will play American Meilen Tu, the winner over Lizele Huber of South Africa 6-7, 6-1, 7-5.

Only the best in Paris show

AFP, Paris

The world's leading players have confirmed they will take part in the Paris Indoor Open from October 29 to November 4, the French Tennis Federation announced here Wednesday.

The tournament will feature the winners of the year's four Grand Slams - America's Andre Agassi, who won in Australia, Brazil's Gustavo Kuerten, who was the winner of the French Open, Wimbledon champion Goran Ivanisevic of Croatia as well as Leyton Hewitt of Australia who clinched the US Open crown earlier this month. champion Marat Safin.

Seeds sail

AFP, Quebec

Luxembourg's Anne Kremer and Croatia's Iva Majoli led a sweep by five seeded players here Wednesday in first-round matches at the 170,000-dollar WTA Challenge.

Third seed Kremer, runner-up at the Budapest Open in April, ousted Canadian lucky loser Diana Srebrevic 6-2, 6-0.

TV watch

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Super Selector 9:00 pm Cricket Classics Boycott's best England vs New Zealand Third Test 1986 11:00 pm

Irakli slays Gimelstob

Tennis

AFP, Shanghai

ond-round defeat of Brazil's Andre Sa in the pair's first career meeting.

Carlsen only came back to the game in June after 18 months out with shoulder problems, which required two operations. He reached the semifinals on grass at Newport in the US, but went out with cramps in the first round of the US Open.

The 28-year-old is glad to be back in competition after so long away. "I'm just happy to be back on tour, there are a lot of young guys coming up. It's going to be tough having been out for so long," he said.

"The game is improving all the time and I have to improve with it."

After his showing so far this week in China's sprawling commercial capital of 17 million, the Dane is keen to keep up his new-found momentum.

"I have to look at the positive side -- I'm 100 per cent motivated. I think I can recover my game even better than before. Being away has helped me to realise how lucky we are -- how much I love to play, how much I love to compete."

The only seed due on court, number two Rainer Schuttler, was playing a later match against Swiss surprise Ivo Heuberger.

Labadze found himself an instant hero at home after beating tennis legend Agassi. "I've had a lot of pressure -- from people here and from some back home," he admitted. "But now that I've won two rounds, the pressure's off."

The Georgian dropped the first set in a tie-breaker. "I was nervous and not playing that well. I tried to calm down in the second."

Gimelstob served for the match three times in the second set, and on each occasion Labadze blunted the threat. "He made a few easy mistakes and I had some good returns. I knew he was down mentally after the second. In the third, I made less mistakes." Two of the Friday quarterfinal line-ups at the Xian Xia centre have already been decided, with third-seeded Swiss Michel Kratchovil facing Edwin Kempes of Holland and fourth seed Francisco Clavet of Spain taking on Japan's Takahiro Terachi.

Freeman eyes comeback

Athletics

REUTERS, Sydney

Australia's Olympic 400 metres gold medallist Cathy Freeman says she has finally rediscovered her competitive juices after taking a year off.

Australia's most prominent Aboriginal sportswoman said she has planning to resume training in about six weeks time and was targeting next year's Commonwealth Games as her immediate goal.

"The tingly feeling's definitely back," Freeman told a corporate luncheon in Sydney on Thursday.

"There's a time and a place for

everything and when I check-in on the first day of November I'll be ready to get back into it, go hard (and) try and win in the Commonwealth Games next year."

Freeman became one of the world's best known athletes when she lit the flame at the opening ceremony for the Sydney 2000 Olympics before winning gold.

Freeman also won the 400m at the 1997 and 1999 World Championships but did not compete at this year's titles in Edmonton after deciding to take a year's sabbatical.

"I'm still in shock," admitted the youngster. "Even this morning, I woke up excited."

Dane Kenneth Carlsen, another success story in the making, moved into a Friday confrontation with Labadze through his 6-4, 6-3 second.

On Tuesday, Labadze sent the tournament draw into a tailspin when he beat top-seeded drawcard Agassi in straight sets, the biggest win of his career.

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