

Kremlin Cup Hingis, Kafelnikov top seeds

AFP, Moscow

World number one Martina Hingis of Switzerland and local favourite Yevgeny Kafelnikov, currently sixth in the ATP race, are the top seeds in the WTA and ATP sections of the Kremlin Cup, which starts here on Monday.

Amelie Mauresmo and Nathalie Tauziat of France, Belgium's Justine Henin and Jelena Dokic of Yugoslavia were also named among seeds in the ladies section of the 12th annual Kremlin Cup.

Russian US Open semi-finalist this year Marat Safin, Roger Federer of Switzerland, Germany's Tommy Haas along with Frenchmen Fabrice Santoro and Nicolas Escude were seeded in the men's section of the 2,185,000-dollar event.

The four top seeds in the WTA tournament - Hingis along with Mauresmo, Henin and Tauziat - were given first round byes.

The winner of the 1,185,000-dollar WTA event will pocket 175,000 dollars of prize cash, while top prize in the one-million-dollar ATP tournament is a 137,000-dollar cheque.

Hewitt, Seles spearhead Japan Open

AFP, Tokyo

Red-hot Aussie Lleyton Hewitt, fresh from his US Open victory and Davis Cup heroics, returns to tournament play this week at the Japan Open as the number one seed.

"It's the first time I'm playing here as a professional in Japan, so I'm really looking forward to the opportunity to play some more (of my) best tennis," said the 20-year-old Australian who arrived here Sunday morning.

Hewitt won the US Open last month, defeating Pete Sampras in the final, and then led Australia to victory in the Davis Cup semifinal in Sydney a week ago.

"I'm pretty happy with the last three weeks... to go out there and beat him (Sampras), and try to do that in my first-ever Grand Slam final was an unbelievable feeling for me," he said.

"Then two Davis Cup matches and qualify into the final... it's been a hectic two or three weeks, but it's fantastic to finally win my first Grand Slam."

Hewitt and fourth seed Swede Jonas Bjorkman, who he beat in the Davis Cup semifinal, were drawn in the top half of the draw with Marcelo Rios of Chile and Francisco Clavet of Spain.

Defending champion Sjeng Schalken of the Netherlands leads the bottom half with third seed Rainer Schuettler of Germany, fifth seed Michel Kratochvil of Switzerland and sixth seed Michael Chang of the United States.

Monica Seles is the top seed in the women's singles, with Thailand's Tamarine Tanasugarn seeded second, Japan's Ai Sugiyama seeded third and American Meilen Tu seeded fourth.

Seles said she was looking forward to the tournament after enjoying five victories previously in the Princess Cup in Japan.

Takahashi sets new world marathon mark

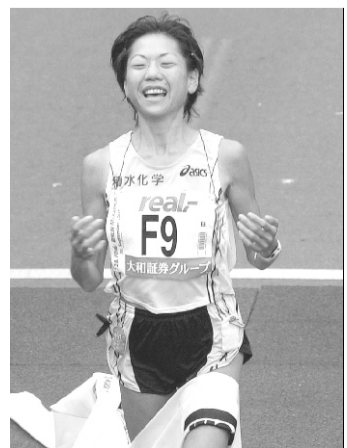
AFP, Berlin

Japan's Olympic champion Naoko Takahashi clinched the fastest ever women's marathon victory here on Sunday breaking the 2 hours 20 minutes barrier.

Her winning time of 2 hours 19 minutes 46 seconds was the first time a woman had ever dipped below 2:20 and it bettered the previous best time of 2:20.43 set by the 1999 winner here Tegla Loroupe of Kenya.

Loroupe was second Sunday, almost nine seconds behind the Japanese winner.

The men's race was won by Kenya's Joseph Ngolepus in 2:08.46 with countrymen William Cheruiyot and William Kiplagat in second and third places respectively.



Olympic champion Naoko Takahashi of Japan celebrates the Berlin Marathon victory on Sunday.

Premiership Miracle United!

Football

AFP, London

Manchester United produced an amazing second-half fightback to beat Tottenham 5-3 and take joint top spot in the English Premiership here Saturday.

United were reeling at 3-0 down after a superb first-half performance from Tottenham but the reigning champions came out all guns blazing after the interval to pull off a remarkable victory.

David Beckham sealed a brilliant display from Alex Ferguson's men, scoring the fifth and final goal after Argentine record-signing Juan Sebastian Veron had put United 4-3 ahead.

Ferguson said he told his players "to stop feeling sorry for themselves" at half-time.

"These are the best players in the country and they should play like that," the United manager explained.

"Once the first goal went in for us though, I thought our football was fantastic."

Beckham, captain for the day in place of the suspended Roy Keane, said: "We knew if we could get a goal early in the second half it would come from there."

"We're a team that always recovers well from knocks. We've got great character in this team and great players," the England midfielder added.

United had drawn level with goals from Andy Cole, Laurent Blanc and Ruud van Nistelrooy.

Defeat was a bitter blow for Tottenham, who had taken the lead through debutant defender Dean Richards in the 15th minute and then gone 3-0 up with further strikes from Les Ferdinand and Christian Ziege.

The London club's manager Glenn Hoddle said: "We lost our belief and they got theirs from the early goal in the second half. It looks like a Jekyll and Hyde performance from both sides."

In-form Bolton slipped up at home to Sunderland, losing 2-0 against Peter Reid's side after the Wearsideers scored through Kevin Phillips - the striker's 100th league goal - and Jody Craddock.

Elsewhere, Arsene Wenger's Arsenal went ahead of United on goal difference after shrugging off their European hangover to beat Derby 2-0 at Pride Park.

French star Thierry Henry fired Arsenal into the lead with a brilliant free-kick on 21 minutes which flew into the top corner after Francis Jeffers was fouled.

Henry, furious after Arsenal crashed to defeat against Panathinaikos in the Champions League last week, doubled the lead from the penalty spot on 64 minutes to make sure of the win, despite Arsenal finishing with 10 men after Martin Keown was sent off.

Wenger was delighted with the way his team responded to their Champions League setback.

"I thought we gave the right response today," Wenger told Sky Television. "The team looked dangerous, well organised and didn't give many chances away," said Wenger, who praised striker Henry.

"I'm pleased for him. I believe he's maturing as a player; he's a fighter, he wants to win and he scores goals as a consequence of his improved performance."

Henry said: "I am playing as a striker so I have to put the ball in the net. We had a lot of criticism after the

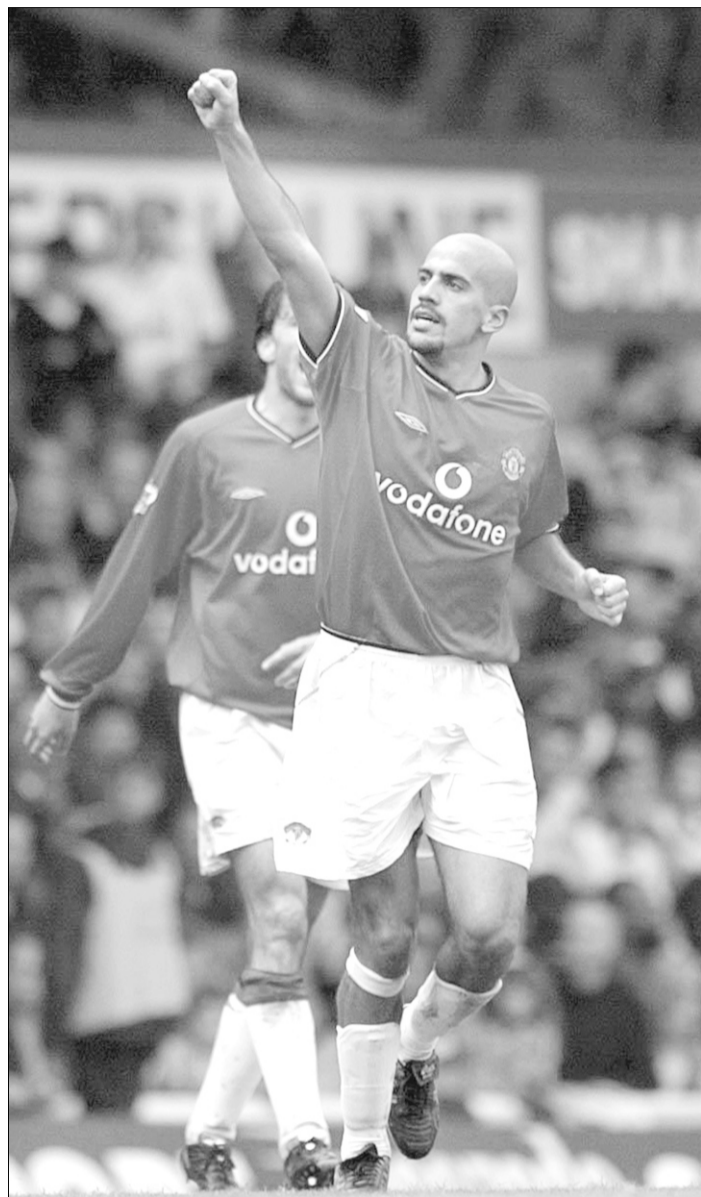


PHOTO: AFP

Juan Veron, the Manchester United superstar, exults after scoring against Tottenham Hotspurs at White Hart Lane on September 29.

Panathinaikos game. But at the end of the day the most important thing is that we got three points."

At the Riverside, Southampton moved off the bottom of the table, achieving only their second win of the season with a 3-1 victory over Steve McClaren's faltering Middlesbrough, the Saints netting first through striker James Beattie.

Marian Pahars made it 2-0 from the penalty spot with Middlesbrough pulling one back through Alen Boksic, also from a spotkick, 15 minutes from time. Beattie added his second to make sure for Southampton.

There was controversy at the Valley, where Charlton defeated Leicester 2-0 in a stormy match.

Both sides were fuming with the referee after having a player sent off, with Leicester boss Peter Taylor visibly outraged. Charlton's goals came from Jonathan Johansson and South African international Shaun Bartlett.

In a cosmopolitan west London derby, Jean Tigana's Fulham entertain Chelsea at Craven Cottage and Aston Villa face Blackburn at home.

Premiership's top six

English Premiership table after Saturday's matches (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, goals against, points):

Table with 7 columns: Team, Played, Won, Drawn, Lost, Goals For, Goals Against, Points. Rows include Arsenal, Man United, Leeds, Bolton, Sunderland, Newcastle.

Rios-Schuettler finale

Tennis

AFP, Hong Kong

Chile's Marcelo Rios put his fluid tennis into overdrive Saturday, blunting a challenge from Australian Andrew Ilie 6-4, 6-2 to move into the final of the 400,000-dollar Hong Kong Open against German Rainer Schuettler.

Rios, at eighth, the last seed left in a field which began with draw-cards including former Grand Slam winner Marat Safin and Michael Chang, spent 57 minutes in setting up his second title match of this season.

Rios has played his way into contention after arriving on Tuesday from Slovakia and a Davis Cup date indoors.

"I was pretty tired when I got here. I never expected to do this well," he said. "I'm looking forward now to winning the title, I'm feeling confident for Sunday."

The 25-year-old started 2001 with a trophy in the Gulf state of Qatar, in the first week of January. He suffered a setback through ankle surgery in late June and is competing in only his third tournament since the French Open in the spring.

The South American, who stood world number one for a short period three years ago under the previous ranking system, will play the on-form Schuettler for the trophy and 54,000 dollars in prize money.

Schuettler stayed on track for a possible second title in two weeks

as he defeated Andre Sa 6-4, 6-0.

The 25-year-old Swiss-based German now stands one victory shy of doubling up in two events played

Clijsters sails, Tauziat fails

AFP, Leipzig

Top seed Kim Clijsters booked her place in the final of the 565,000 dollar WTA event here on Saturday, but French veteran Nathalie Tauziat crashed out.

Belgian girl Clijsters struggled to see off the challenge of Russia's Elena Dementieva, seeded seven, but eventually persevered to win 6-1, 3-6, 6-1.

World number five Clijsters, the defending champion here and the runner-up at the French Open this year, will face sixth seed, Bulgaria's Magdalena Maleeva, in Sunday's final.

Maleeva saw off second-seed Tauziat 4-6, 6-4, 6-3 to end the French girl's hopes of winning a title in her final season on the tour.

Tauziat, the 34-year-old veteran and who won the title here in 1999, was let down by an inconsistent serve which contributed a large part to her first loss against the Bulgarian girl since 1993.

A Wimbledon runner-up in 1998, Tauziat is retiring from the sport at the end of this season after 18 years on the tour.

in the Far East. He beat Swiss friend Michel Kratochvil last week in Shanghai to claim the Shanghai Open.

Rios, who lost in the second round here a year ago, was untrodden by the erratic, yet enthusiastic Ilie, competing in his first semifinal of the season.

The Chilean broke once in the first set and twice in the second to secure the victory. Rios struck seven aces to four for the Aussie, who also had the same number of double-faults.

Rios never faced a break point while Ilie saved three of six on his serve.

"I have a lot of confidence from Shanghai," said Schuettler, 49th in the Champions points race. "I just go out there, try to have fun and enjoy the match. Everything I'm hitting right now seems to be going in - I don't know exactly why, but I won't complain."

"We were both nervous at the start," admitted Schuettler, who is aiming to follow the winning tradition set here by last year's champion, compatriot Nicolas Kiefer.

"We both wanted to win and to give our best. "You can miss some easy shots when that is the case. After he lost the first set, he seemed to get frustrated and I was able to finish off the match quickly."

The German, who beat top seed Juan Carlos Ferrero in the quarter-finals, is fighting against a calf injury which required an on-court visit from the trainer, but expects to be fit for his second straight finale.

Bundesliga Leaders' fairytale run ends

AFP, Berlin

Surprise Bundesliga leaders Kaiserslautern crashed to their first defeat of the season as they lost 2-0 to strugglers VfL Wolfsburg on Saturday.

Wolfsburg's Polish international striker Andrzej Juskowiak opened the scoring in the 14th minute and defender Frank Greiner put the result beyond doubt with the second goal eight minutes from time.

With their first win of the season, Wolfsburg moved off the bottom of the table, while Andreas Brehme's Kaiserslautern side could see their five-point lead at the top cut to two if reigning champions Bayern Munich beat VfB Stuttgart at the Olympic Stadium on Sunday.

Former World Cup winner Brehme said: "No one can say that we didn't have enough chances to win this game. The way we used those chances is the only thing I can complain about in this match."

Borussia Dortmund moved into third spot with a hard-fought 2-1 victory at newly-promoted St-Pauli. Brazilian Ewerthon marked his league debut for Dortmund with the first goal and giant Czech striker Jan Koller added a second in the 33rd minute.

Dortmund were cruising until St-Pauli midfielder Thomas Meggle made them sweat with a 77th-minute effort.

French First Division Lyon outclass Rennes

AFP, Paris

Title favourites Lyon thrashed Rennes 4-0 to go top of the French league on Saturday thanks to a fine display from new boy Pegguy Luyindula.

Lyon have 19 points from nine matches and lead Auxerre on goal difference after they came from behind to force a 1-1 draw at third-placed Lens, who now have 18 points.

Lille also have 18 and can go clear at the top Sunday with victory at struggling Sedan.

Rehagel out to deny England

AFP, London

Greece coach Otto Rehagel vowed his side will do everything they can at Old Trafford next Saturday to prevent the win that would earn England World Cup qualification.

Rehagel said he was excited at the prospect of causing a major upset so that his native Germany could earn a late automatic ticket should they beat Finland.

The 62-year-old former Bayern Munich coach told Saturday's Sun: "My heart still beats for Germany and I'll do everything in my power to make sure they win the group."

"If we get a win, I'll be a hero in Greece. If we get a win or a draw I will be a hero in Germany. It is a wonderful opportunity."

Widjaja wins

AFP, Jakarta

Wild card Angelique Widjaja of Indonesia beat South Africa's eighth seed Joannette Kruger 7-6, 7-6 to win the 170,000-dollar WTA tournament in Nusa Dua, on the Indonesian resort island of Bali, on Sunday.

The world ranking of the new champion is now expected to move up from 579 to somewhere in the 140s when the new list is issued on Monday. Widjaja becomes the first Indonesian to win a WTA event since Yayuk Basuki in Beijing in 1994.

Widjaja said afterwards: "I wasn't nervous today and I had nothing to lose. Kruger is more senior than me and I wasn't expected to win. I'm very happy and very proud."

Kruger, who beat top seed Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario in the semi-finals, said: "She played very well and did what she had to do. I don't want to take anything away from her."

SA seal

FROM PAGE 13 Nkala 9 1 46 2 Whittall 6 1 27 0 Strang 6 0 35 0 G Flower 4 0 17 1

Did not bat: J Kallis, J Rhodes, L Klusener, C Henderson.

Result: South Africa won by six wickets.

Series: South Africa won 3-0. Man-of-match: Neil McKenzie. Man-of-series: Herschelle Gibbs.

Umpires: Mumtaz-Ahmed Esat, Graeme Evans (both Zimbabwe).

TV umpire: Quinton Goosen (Zimbabwe).

Match referee: Naushad Ali (Pakistan).

Primera Liga Barca move atop

Football

AFP, Madrid

Barcelona went to the top of the Spanish First Division, albeit for only a day, after their 2-0 victory at Real Sociedad on Saturday.

The Catalan club's Dutch international striker Patrick Kluivert got the first goal after 30 minutes when a porous Real Sociedad defence left him to shoot at will.

Barcelona clinched the game 12 minutes before the end when Xavi Hernandez unleashed a blistering free kick from just outside the area, which went under the body of Real Sociedad goalkeeper Alberto Lopez.

Barcelona coach Charly Rexach admitted that the victory had gone a long way to steadying their nerves, and boosted their morale, after a start to the season when they have got results but not always impressed.

"We were clearly the better side during the first half," said Rexach, noting that both Kluivert and his compatriot Philip Cocu had gone close before the first goal finally arrived.

"They made life difficult for us for the first 25 minutes of the second half but after the second goal I was always sure we would win," added Rexach.

Barcelona have 11 points from five matches this season, and have yet to lose, but will be displaced from pole position regardless of the outcome of Sunday's Galician derby between Deportivo La Coruna and Celta Vigo.

The defeat keeps Real Sociedad rooted firmly to the bottom of the Spanish First Division, with just one point and one goal to their name.

Real Sociedad coach John Toshack laid the blame for the defeat squarely at the feet of the referee Rafael Ramirez Dominguez.

"Barcelona were the best for the first 45 minutes but we were the best for the rest of the match. However, he seemed to blow for a foul everytime we put in a tackle. It was a bit excessive," commented the Welshman.

Toshack will be well aware though that time is running out for him to get a win, despite his success in saving Real Sociedad from relegation last season, after joining them midway through the campaign.

The San Sebastian club elected Jose Luis Astiazaran as its new president during the summer and the ambitious 37 year-old lawyer has already said he will not tolerate this



PHOTO: AFP

Roberto Carlos (L), Real Madrid's Brazilian superstar, executing an overhead kick under pressure from Valladolid's Jose Jimenez at Madrid on September 29.

season starting in similar fashion to the last.

One place above the struggling Basque club are Rayo Vallecano, who crashed 3-1 away at Espanyol and who are also still winless after five games.

Valladolid salvaged a point at Real Madrid, getting a 2-2 draw thanks to a thunderbolt free kick from their Mexican international Cuauhtemoc Blanco, just a minute from the whistle.

It was Blanco's first league goal for the club he signed for in the summer of 2000 after spending most of last season out injured.

However, Valladolid can count themselves lucky because Real Madrid had around two-thirds of the possession but failed to convert it

into goals.

Zinedine Zidane scored for the defending Spanish champions after just four minutes, his third goal in as many games, with the World Player of the Year heading home a Luis Figo cross.

However, Fernando Sanchez got the visitors back on level terms barely a minute later when Real Madrid let their guard down and he picked up a long punt forward before slotting the ball past Iker Casillas in the Real goal.

Raul Gonzalez put Real Madrid 2-1 ahead with a clever chip over the head of Valladolid goalie Ricardo Lopez after 19 minutes, and the game looked as though it was going to finish that way until Blanco's late strike.

Primera Liga's top six table showing teams, matches played, wins, draws, losses, goals for/against, and points.

Serie A Roma, Batistuta party

Football

AFP, Rome

Reigning Italian champions AS Roma were convincing 2-0 winners over high-flying Juventus on Saturday as Argentinian star Gabriel Batistuta scored his first goal of the season.

Juventus crashed to defeat in front of their own fans at the Delle Alpi stadium in Turin after being weakened by the absence of key players Edgar Davids and Paolo Montero through suspension.

Roma, who have had trouble scoring goals since the start of the season, got back on track with a 37th minute opener from Batistuta, whose season-opener came from a direct free kick.

But his night was spoiled when he was sent off 20 minutes from the end for elbowing an opponent in the



PHOTO: AFP

AS Roma's Argentine ace Gabriel Batistuta's (not in picture) shot entering the net past the outstretched hand of Juventus custodian Gianluigi Buffon on September 29.

face. Brazilian midfielder Marcus Assuncao wrapped up the points for

Roma with a goal in second-half injury time.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down words.

Cryptoquip puzzle grid with numbers 1-51 and a key for deciphering the message.

5-21 CRYPTOQUIP Z J S M B B X N C H H W X B F V I O A C O Z W Y X S P J S V I O W B C R P H S I M Y R F B R Z J S A B N Saturday's Cryptoquip: I'M CERTAIN THAT A GOOD PHOTOGRAPHER IS LIKELY TO MAKE MANY SNAP DECISIONS. Today's Cryptoquip Clue: W equals F 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.