

CPC games from today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The annual indoor games of Chittagong Press Club begin at its auditorium today.

The month-long competition for the journalists working in the port city will be inaugurated by Abbasuddin Ahmad, managing director of the City Bank Ltd.

About 100 journalists and their children are expected to compete in the twelve events of this year's meet, being sponsored for the first time by a private bank.

McGrath says it will be like WC

REUTERS, Sydney

Australia fast bowler Glenn McGrath has said the home side would improve as the triangular limited-overs series went on and likened Australia's slow start to their victorious 1999 World Cup campaign.

Australia opened the series with a 23-run loss to New Zealand at Melbourne Cricket Ground on Friday night and returned to the ground on Sunday to be beaten by South Africa by four wickets.

McGrath, who missed Sunday's game because of a one-match suspension for dissent, said the signs were positive for Australia despite being on the bottom of the table.

Stuart, Trevor

FROM PAGE 13

Table with 4 columns: Player, O, M, R, W. Rows include Wishart, Rennie, Flower, M'tharan, G Flower, Streak, Extras, Total, Fall of wickets, To bat.

To bat: Dion Ebrahim, Douglas Marillier, Travis Friend, Henry Olunga

Table with 4 columns: Bowler, O, M, R, W. Rows include Vaas, Buddika, M'tharan, Jayasuriya, Chandana, S'weera.

Umpires: David Shepherd (England) and TH Wijewardene (Sri Lanka).

Pakistan in Ctg

FROM PAGE 13

international cricket in their own backyard.

Besides, the CJKS, after a futile attempt at selling only season tickets last November, opted to release daily tickets this time.

The tickets went on sale from Monday. They will only be available at the CJKS gymnasium counters.

Eng can't train

FROM PAGE 13

"The wickets at the CCFC are not conducive and you can't play shots that you can in one-day internationals.

"Besides we've been allowed to practice only for one-and-a-half hours in the afternoon, which is not adequate," Fletcher added.

England lost a three-Test series 1-0 in India late last year and returned for the one-day series after going home for a Christmas break.

Fletcher said there had been no problems during the Test tour.

"When we first came for the Test series, we had very good practice facilities in Bombay. We were hoping they would be decent here too," he said.

England were originally scheduled to train for the one-day series in Bombay, but were asked to move to Calcutta after a sixth international was added to the series.

After the Calcutta opener, the other five matches will be played at Cuttack (January 22), Madras (January 25), Kanpur (January 28), Delhi (January 31) and Bombay (February 3).

Pull outs spoil day one

Australian Open

AFP, Melbourne

Andre Agassi, Serena Williams and Gustavo Kuerten limped out of the Australian Open Monday, leaving the year's first Grand Slam tournament short of three of the biggest names in tennis.

Americans Agassi and Williams both cried off before they had even played a ball. Serena's departure follows the withdrawal of Lindsay Davenport last week.

And Kuerten, who has won the French Open three times on the famous red clay court of Roland Garros, hobbled out against unseeded Frenchman Julien Boutter, complaining of a hip injury.

The Brazilian, who needed treatment for a back injury in the fourth set, has yet to win more than four matches on the rubberised Rebound Ace surface at Melbourne Park and he only flattered to deceive when he took the first two sets.

Boutter, who joined the tour only after getting a degree in applied



PHOTO: AFP

Brazilian second seed Gustavo Kuerten grimaces while receiving treatment during his match against France's Julien Boutter in Melbourne yesterday. He crashed out a five-set thriller.

mechanics, dismantled the Brazilian's game for a stubborn five-set triumph against the odds.

Agassi, the defending men's champion and three-time winner, said his recurrence of an old right wrist injury could be career-threatening.

Mary Pierce, another crowd

puller here and the 1995 champion, was also quickly through the exit door with an abdominal injury suffered against American Jill Craybas.

Organisers will be grateful that glamour queen Venus Williams, the US Open and Wimbledon champion, saved their blushes with an easy straight sets victory over American qualifier Anselie Carrill.

Britain's Tim Henman also remains in the hunt after beating Australian Todd Larkham, as does four times winner Monica Seles, seeded eight, who beat Switzerland's Patty Schnyder and is scheduled to meet Venus in the last eight.

Goran Ivanisevic of Croatia, last year's sensational Wimbledon winner, scheduled to play French fifth seed Sebastian Grosjean in the fourth round, needed four sets to overcome determined Czech opponent Martin Damm.

Grosjean, who admits he is not fully match-fit, also dropped a set against Spain's Juan Balcells.

Yevgeny Kafelnikov of Russia, the 1999 champion seeded four, raced through in straight sets against German qualifier Michael Kohlmann and then said he had room to improve before he faced a potential quarterfinal against Grosjean or Ivanisevic.

Serena, the 1999 US Open champion, withdrew from her first round match against former Wimbledon champion Conchita Martinez of Spain with an injury to her right ankle she picked up in the semifinals of the Sydney International last Friday.

Venus was also disappointed for her sister, whom she could have met in the semi-finals, but said she was able to put it out of her mind in her quest for a first Australian Open crown.

"Right now I think that I just have a lot more experience on my side, and I feel confident, so that's two important things going into a championship like this," she said.

Agassi said he pulled out because, at his age, he needed to take care of himself.

His withdrawal opens the way for Sampras to play the new world No 1 Lleyton Hewitt in the semifinals.

Martina cruises

REUTERS, Melbourne

Martina Hingis has enjoyed the easiest of starts to her Australian Open campaign, coasting to a 6-2, 6-2 first round win over injured Frenchwoman Virginie Razzano.

Hingis beat Razzano in straight sets in the third round of last year's Australian Open and Monday's result was predictable once it became apparent Razzano was not completely fit.

Razzano took a time out to receive massaging to both her legs trailing 4-2 in the first set and while she managed to get back on court, she won just two of the next 10 games.

Hingis was unusually nervous, dropping her opening service game, but quickly found her confidence on the Rod Laver centre court and was pleased with her first outing.

"I was a little nervous at first so I'm happy to get through the first round," said Hingis, who wrapped up victory in an hour to set up a meeting with German qualifier Greta Arn.

"I played her last year and she gave me a tough match so I expected it to be hard."



Hingis showed no signs of the ankle problem that cost her the number one ranking last year as she launched her campaign to reach a sixth straight Australian Open final.

To play like Stefan

AFP, Melbourne

British No.1 Tim Henman has tweaked his game and says he is more a Stefan Edberg type player these days.

"I'm trying to place my serves more and then use volleying skills well and athletic ability around the court, like Edberg," said the supremely fit sixth seed after beating Australian wildcard Todd Larkham in the first round here 7-5, 6-2, 6-2.

And his service game has improved immeasurably. Against Larkham, he got a consistent 70 percent of his first serves in.

"There have been elements that I've worked hard on and one of them has been my serve," he said.

"I feel like I've got a good understanding of what I'm trying to do with my motion (during the serve), and obviously the proof is in the pudding. I am making a lot of first serves."

V-Day b'ball begins today

UNB, Dhaka

The Fed-Ex Victory Day Basketball Tournament begins today at the Dhanmondi Gymnasium.

Bangladesh Krira Shikha Protisthan (BKSP) will play the Army Sports Training School (ASPTS) at 4:30 pm while Bangladesh Navy encounter Saints Club at 6 pm on the opening day.

Housing and Works Minister Mirza Abbas will inaugurate the 15-day meet while managing director of sponsors Bangladesh Express (Fed-Ex) Company Limited Tanveer Madar will be present as special guest.

GROUPINGS

Group A: Bangladesh Navy, Wizard, Bangladesh Police, Bakshibazar and Saints Club.

Group B: Bangladesh Army, Rangers Club, Josephites Club and Bangladesh Air Force.

Group C: Bangladesh Rifles, Writh, Rising Force and Sobhanbagh Basketball Association.

Group D: Dhumketu Club, BKSP, Blazers and Europa Youth and Army Sports Training School (ASPTS).

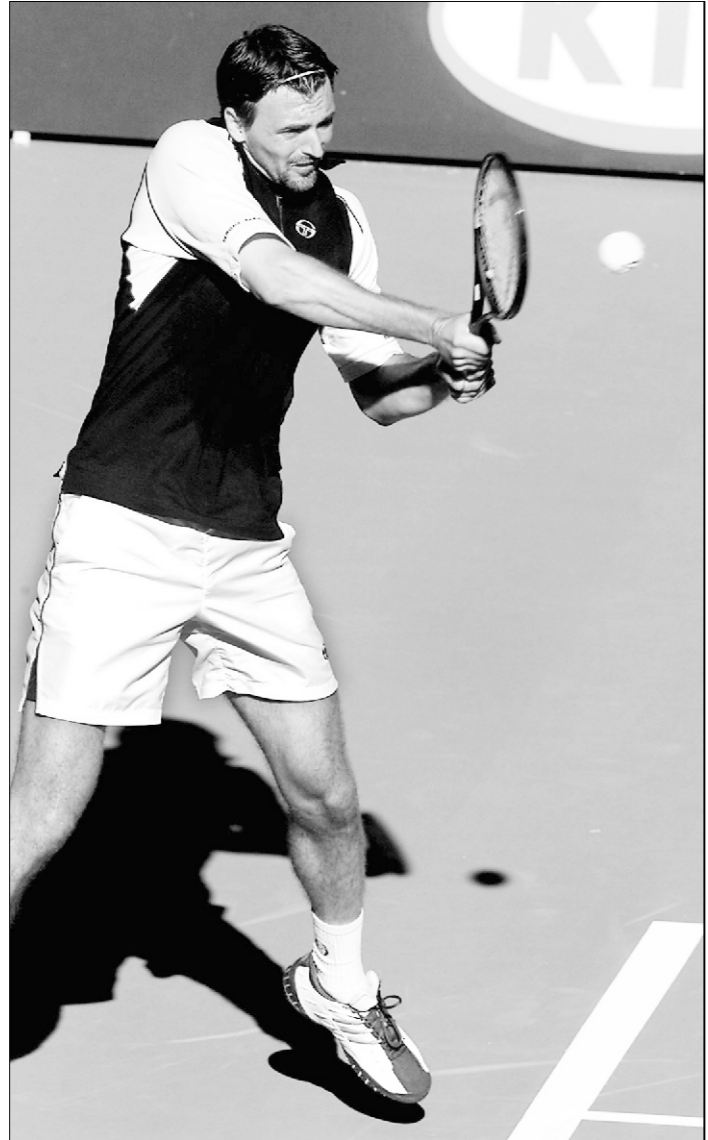


PHOTO: AFP

Big-serving Croatian Goran Ivanisevic hits a backhand against Martin Damm of the Czech Republic yesterday. The Wimbledon champion won 4-6, 7-5, 7-6, 6-4.

Agassi's worst fear

Australian Open

AFP, Melbourne

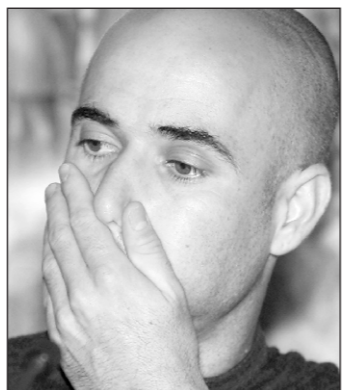
Andre Agassi's stellar tennis career is in limbo after a career-threatening wrist injury forced him out of the Australian Open here Monday.

The seven-time Grand Slam champion and defending champion announced his stunning withdrawal on the opening morning of the year's first major tournament.

The 31-year-old American great was favourite to win his fourth Australian Open, but now his immediate playing future is in doubt.

He left here Monday with wife,

Steffi Graf, and their baby son, to return home and get expert diagnosis of what confronts him.



ANDRE AGASSI

"I need to make sure that I'm okay, I'm not in any position to play anyhow, so I need to take care of myself," Agassi said at a press conference to announce his withdrawal.

"If there's any good news it is that now I have some time to do that. "How I respond or recover from that is still a question mark and sometimes those questions are good things, and other times they are not."

Agassi had surgery on the right wrist just before Christmas in 1993 and was out of tennis for 11 weeks. He felt pain in the wrist during last Saturday's final of the Kooyong International against Pete Sampras, which he lost in three sets.

"I can only go on my experience in the past, which is not a good one, it was an attempt to play through some pain back in 1993 that led to eventual surgery in (that) December," Agassi said.

Agassi explained the injury was a combination of trauma, wear and tear with haemorrhaging in the scar tissue. "They cleaned it out then, but there was no guarantee how long that would last, so there is long-term concern, it's a difficult situation," he said.

"Today's Cryptoquip Clue: K equals E

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down. Includes a solution time of 24 mins and a Cryptoquip clue.

Cryptoquip puzzle grid with a 9-6 clue and a solution time of 24 mins. Includes a solution key for the crossword.



General secretary of Bangladesh Basketball Federation Selim Chowdhury (L) listens to a query from a reporter during a press conference in connection with FedEx V-Day basketball tournament yesterday.



PHOTO: AFP

OUCH! A series of pictures showing French star Mary Pierce signing autographs over an inflated tennis ball that later hit her at the Australian Open yesterday.

AUSSIE OPEN NOTES

Australian Open

AP/AFP, Melbourne

Mary Pierce's injury woes continued Monday when she joined the growing exodus limping away from the Australian Open.

But the Frenchwoman's problems, it seems, were not limited to an abdominal strain she felt during her first-round match against American Jill Craybas.

Pierce, the 1995 Australian Open champion and 2000 French Open winner, called for the trainer and left the court at deuce in the opening game for a lengthy period.

She said later explained that they'd been on a walkabout looking for somewhere private for treatment.

"We must have spent, I don't know, five, it felt more like 10 minutes, trying to find a place where she could evaluate me and strap me," said Pierce.

"There wasn't any private room... my dress is all one-piece so to get to my stomach area I had to take my dress off."

Pierce returned to the court but quit when trailing Craybas 4-0. Pierce has been troubled by ankle and hamstring problems in recent weeks after being sidelined for much of last year with a back injury. Her ranking fell to No. 7 to No. 130 in 2001.

HOT WORD

Injury was the hot topic at the Australian Open Monday.

After Agassi and William's withdrawals, on top of Lindsay Davenport's pre-tournament pullout with a knee complaint and the injury worries surrounding a number of leading contenders, Monica Seles sounded a word of warning to her younger rivals on the women's tour.

Seles, a four-time Australian Open champion, says the modern generation of power players needs to be careful.

"My generation definitely had a lot less injuries than the young ones are having now," said the 28-year-old Seles, who owns nine Grand Slam titles. She opened with a win over Switzerland's Patty Schnyder.

Seles said the women's tour had looked at ways to limit problems and "gave everybody a two-month break which I thought would have helped."

"Time will tell. The young ones definitely have to take good care of themselves if they want to stay long enough in the game."

NO GOLF

Yevgeny Kafelnikov is known as the "iron man" of men's tennis for the grueling number of matches he plays each year. But the Russian, it seems, wants to be even more focussed.

Kafelnikov, the fourth seed, is a keen amateur golfer but said Monday he was resolved to put the golf clubs away, at least for the Australian Open, and keep his mind totally on tennis.

"Time is running away from me. I'll have plenty of golf when I retire," the 27-year-old Russian said after his first-round win over Michael Kohlmann of Germany.

"It's a new commitment I've made for myself and I'm going to follow that up. Golf is one of my hobbies, it's one way that I can get away from the game and to refresh my energy."

Asked what he was going to do instead, the Russian answered: "I don't know. I'm going to keep myself busy playing singles and doubles. That's one explanation."

ADICTED TO LOVE

Martina Hingis has had plenty of success on the court but not so

much off it and is looking for love.

"A lot of people are afraid of me -- especially guys," she told a women's magazine here. "It's not easy to find the right one. It's one of the consequences of fame -- a lot of people can't handle it."

"I'm proud of what I've achieved and I hope to find a person strong enough to cope with it all and respect me at the same time."

GORAN ON HIS BEST BEHAVIOUR

Private Goran Ivanisevic, on leave from the Croatian army, answered the call to arms from Czech opponent Martin Damm to win a tough four-setter without losing his temper.

The sensational 2001 Wimbledon champion says the new-look Goran can win more stripes with parade ground discipline.

Dave to become GM of ICC

REUTERS, Johannesburg

Former Test player Dave Richardson has said he is to accept a top post with the International Cricket Council (ICC).

Richardson, South Africa's wicketkeeper in 42 Test matches after the end of the country's apartheid induced isolation from world cricket, is to be appointed to a newly-created position of ICC general manager (cricket), national radio station SAFM reported.

"I believe that (ICC chief executive) Malcolm Speed identified a slight credibility problem for the ICC because of the lack of ex-players involved in the administering of the game, so that is why I have been appointed."

Richardson, a qualified lawyer, told South African-based website Super Cricket from London.