

Japan Open  
Lee moves  
into final

AFP, Tokyo

Lee Hyun-II of South Korea put an end to Pulella Gopichand's excellent run on Saturday to reach the men's singles final at the Japan Open badminton tournament for a second year running.

The fifth-seeded Korean, playing last year's All England champion from India for the first time, used his attacking smashes as the best weapon to score a 7-1, 7-4, 7-3 victory in 33 minutes.

The women's singles final will be an all-Chinese affair between defending champion Zhou Mi, top seed, and 1999 Malaysian Open champion Dai Yun.

Zhou amazingly won 15 rallies in a row from a 5-3 lead in the first game to 5-0 in the third on her way to a lopsided 7-3, 7-0, 7-2 victory over her former teammate Wang Chen, who now represents Hong Kong.

Fifth-seeded Dai pulled off her first win in many years and only her second win overall against fellow Chinese Asian champion Zhang Ning with a 1-7, 7-5, 7-0, 7-5 performance.

"I'm really glad that I made the final again," said Lee, who will turn 22 in 11 days."

## Alex upsets Pete's plan

### Tennis

AFP, Paris

Alex Corretja rallied from two sets down to shock grasscourt king Pete Sampras here Friday and even Spain's Davis Cup World Group quarterfinal against America at one match apiece.



PHOTO: AFP

American Pete Sampras plays a forehand return against Spaniard Alex Corretja during their Davis Cup quarterfinal fixture on Friday.

Sampras has posted one of the great grasscourt records in history – including seven Wimbledon titles – while Corretja has skipped the world's premier grasscourt tournament in five of the last seven years.

Sampras' prowess on grass was to have given the United States the edge over the claycourt loving Spaniards at the Westside Tennis Club.

But Corretja surprised the former

world No. 1 4-6, 4-6, 7-6, 7-5, 6-4 to give the visitors a crucial point heading into Saturday's doubles.

Earlier Friday, Andy Roddick of the United States fired 11 aces and remained unbeaten in six Davis Cup singles matches with a 6-3, 7-5, 7-6 victory over Tommy Robredo.

Corretja wasn't the only one to spring a world Cup surprise on Friday, when Jiri Novak held his nerve to defeat Nicolas Escude and pull the Czech Republic level with holders France.

France, playing indoors in the south-western French city of Pau, had gained the edge earlier in the day when Sebastien Grosjean had battled back from a set down to see off Bohdan Uhlirach 6-3, 3-6, 0-6, 6-3, 6-1. But Escude's 7-6, 6-1, 6-7, 7-5 defeat came as something as a shock as he had not lost a singles rubber in the Davis Cup in nine matches since 1998.

After a tense first set, Escude was the first to crack, losing his serve in the second game of the second set as the wily Czech built up a two-set lead.

The Frenchman, backed by a passionate crowd, hit back to take the third set before the greater court craft of Novak told in the fourth set although the Czech was pulled back from 5-3 to 5-5 before he rediscovered his composure.

The winners of the tie in Pau will face either the United States or Spain in the semi-finals.

The United States will try to regain the advantage in Saturday's doubles, when a no-doubt weary Corretja teams with Juan Balcells against Todd Martin and James Blake.

In the other quarterfinals, Yevgeny Kafelnikov and Marat Safin gave Russia a commanding 2-0 advantage against Sweden in Moscow and Argentina took a 2-0 lead against Croatia in Buenos Aires.

The Russians are in a strong position to win their tie and claim their first ever win over the Swedes as they head into the doubles on Saturday and the reverse singles on Sunday.

Kafelnikov defeated fellow 28-year-old Thomas Enqvist in straight sets to follow Safin's similarly comfortable 6-4, 6-4, 6-4 win over Australian Open champion Thomas Johansson earlier in the day.

In Buenos Aires, Gaston Gaudio gave Argentina an early lead over Croatia as he mastered the clay surface to beat Ivan Ljubicic 7-6, 6-2, 6-3. Juan Ignacio Chela beat Ivo Karlovic 5-7, 6-4, 6-4, 6-2.

Total of wickets: 1-0, 2-5, 3-25, 4-57, 5-6, 7-8, 7-9, 8-105, 9-112

**BOWLING** O M R W

Srinath 10 2 20 2

Zaheer 10 3 22 2

Kumble 14.3 7 28 2

Bangar 8 5 8 0

Harbhajan 19 5 37 4

Tendulkar 1 0 2 0

**INDIA:** First innings

Shiv Das c Nagamootoo b Dasrath 20

Dasgupta run out 6

Ganguly not out 40

Tendulkar not out 3

Extras: (lb-3, nb-1) 4

Total: 73

Fall of wickets: 1-18, 2-42

**BOWLING** O M R W

Griffith 7 1 24 0

Thomas 9 4 28 0

Dasrath 7 1 12 1

Basil 3 1 6 0

Harinarine 1 1 0 0

Total for 2 wkts) 73

Fall of wickets: 1-18, 2-42

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