

Olsson out-jumps Edwards

Athletics

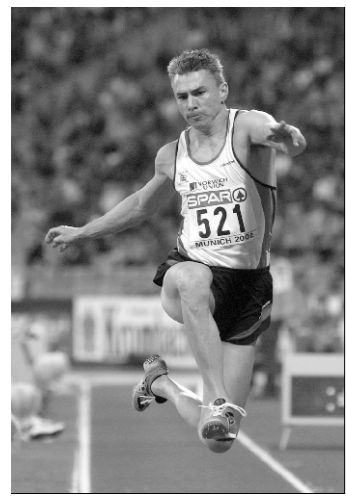
AFP/REUTERS, Munich

World and Olympic champion Jonathan Edwards conceded the European triple jump title to his young pretender Christian Olsson of Sweden on a rousing night of action here on Thursday.

Days after completing the 'Grand Slam' of the four major titles available to him by winning at the Commonwealth Games, the 36-year-old Briton saw his European crown pass to the lanky 22-year-old he has tipped as his successor.

Like long jumper Heike Drechsler the previous day, time caught up with Edwards who saw world silver medallist Olsson usher in the new generation with a winning jump of 17.53 metres.

Edwards even lost the silver



JONATHAN EDWARDS

medal to 1999 world champion Charles Friedek of Germany whose 17.33m edged out his 17.32m. Edwards unleashed a huge jump in the final round but it was a foul.

"I must admit I am disappointed," said Edwards. "I jumped well and only the last one was decent. The conditions were not good but I'm happy for Christian who deserved the win."

The new European triple jump champion set his sights on breaking the Englishmen's long-standing world record.

Olsson has never gone beyond 18 metres, let alone threatened Edwards's world record leap of 18.29, which he set in Gothenburg in 1995.

"I should be the next 18.50 man. Why not?" Olsson said.

Olsson's rise to the top has been a rapid one -- but only after he concentrated on the triple jump instead of his first love -- the high jump.

The 1999 European junior high jump champion -- whose best leap in the vertical discipline would be good enough to challenge for a medal at a major championship -- realised he would make an even better triple jumper.

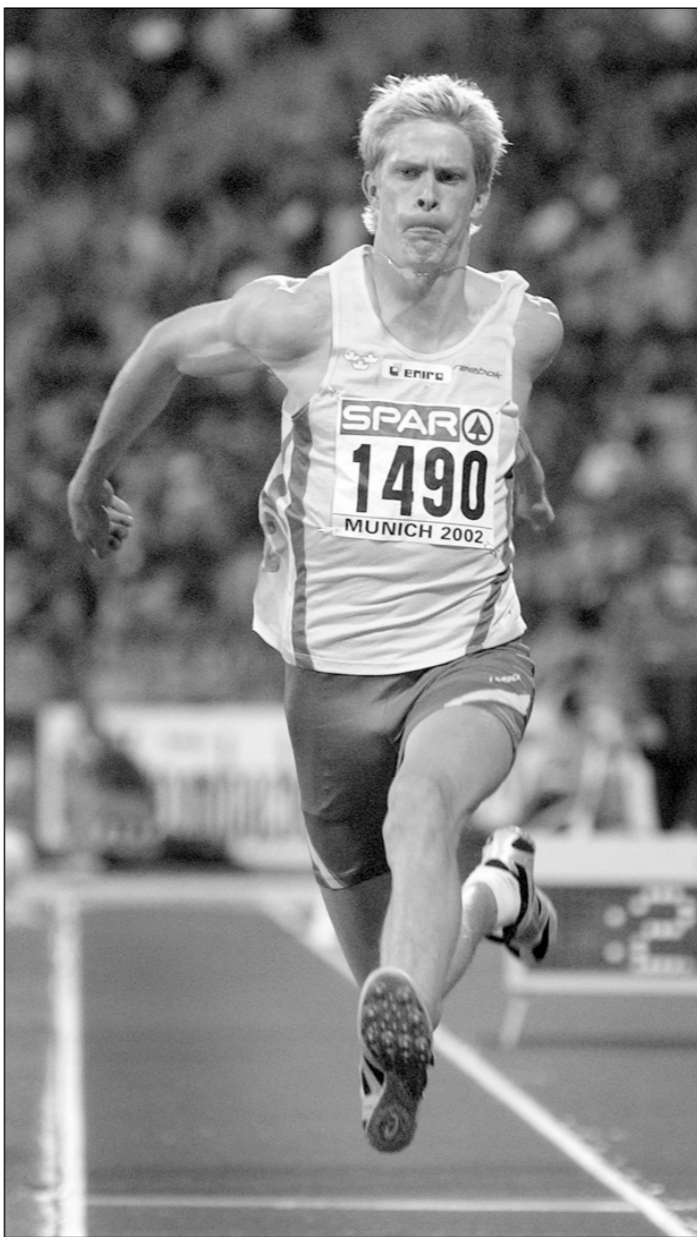
In May 1999 he improved from 14.48 to 16.27 and has not looked back since.

A silver medal behind Edwards in the world championships last year in Edmonton served notice that the Briton, at long last, had a serious rival.

The pair have battled it out all season in Europe. Edwards drew first blood with a 17.78 leap in front of Olsson's home crowd in Stockholm, but the Swede took his revenge three days later in Monaco.

"The important meeting from my point of view was Monaco. From then on I had the confidence I needed," said Olsson, who later set a personal best of 17.64 in Karlstad in late July.

Edwards is not fretting just yet though. "I lost one competition but it's not the end of the world."



CHRISTIAN OLSSON

Dokic keen to stay put

REUTERS, Los Angeles

Jelena Dokic has admitted that she would rather stay in Yugoslavia, following reports that her father wanted to move to Britain.

After falling out with the Australian Tennis Association and moving the family back to Yugoslavia, Damir Dokic now wants to uproot again after clashing with authorities in Belgrade over the building of a tennis academy in the city.

Damir is confident that Britain, where he was once arrested for drunkenness at a tournament in Birmingham and thrown out of Wimbledon after smashing a reporter's mobile phone, will offer a welcome.

"I'd like to stay at home in Yugoslavia if that's possible. I don't know if it would be or not. I guess we'll find out by the end of the year," Jelena said after beating Janette Husarova to reach the quarter-finals of the Los Angeles Open.

"If I did happen it would be a long-term thing. He has some plans to do something. I don't know what it is but it's not happening right now."

"I haven't discussed it in full with him, so I'm not thinking about that while I'm playing."

"It happened recently and I don't talk about things like that while I'm playing and in the middle of the season."

"I'm not sure exactly what he's going to do or what's going to happen," she added.

Damir confirmed that the family would be seeking British citizenship, an extreme reaction to being refused permission to build a house and tennis centre.

But as was the case following previous controversies, his daughter is standing by his decision.

"I'm sure he has good reasons," she said. "We had a lot of problems there, a lot of troubles."

"If we do something, there's a good reason for it. We just don't do things because of small things that happened."

"There are a lot of things that happened over there and a lot of not so good things for me," she added without offering to elaborate.

Jelena, who has managed to rise to a career-high of fifth in the world despite the antics of her eccentric father, admitted she is growing tired of the constant upheavals in her life.

"I had to move to Australia and then back home. I don't think I have home right now."

"I would like to settle, but while you play tennis there are a lot of players living in three or four countries, so that's normal."

"I don't think you stay in one place for more than maybe a few weeks or a month or two of the year," she said.

Britain's notorious tabloid newspapers might welcome a character such as Damir Dokic, and Jelena admitted the fact that the family could be a target for them had crossed her mind.

Marcus making

REUTERS, Cincinnati

After 15 years at the top of tennis, Michael Chang is glimpsing at life after the sport and plans to take up missionary work.

At this week's Cincinnati Masters the former French Open champion acknowledged his tennis-playing days were numbered.

"I'm in the twilight of my career," the 30-year-old said. "When you're young, it's easy to take things for granted."

"After another year and a half or so, then it'll be time to move on to other things."

The devout Christian is already making plans for the future. "Definitely some missionary work is on the agenda," he said. "Tennis will be mixed in there as well."

"I have a passion for young people, I feel like I am in a position to impact them and touch their lives, maybe particularly the Asia-Pacific

area. We have several options available, first we would talk to the ICC, then activate the ACC to consider an Asian boycott," Zia added.

But ICC president elect, Pakistani Ehsan Mani, played down fears of an Asian split in Test cricket.

"I don't see international cricket be split in Asia and sincerely hope the situation will not go to boycotts," he said.

"You have ten Test playing countries and can't have resentments between two or three countries."

The ICC is waiting to be fully advised by the ACB before making a decision on what it can do to resolve the problem.

"We're not going to force a team to play in a country their government advises them against travelling to," said spokesman Brendan McClements.

PCB plans

FROM PAGE 13
attack near their Karachi hotel. The blast killed 11 French naval engineers and three Pakistanis.

The calling off the tour, Australia hinted they would be willing to play Pakistan at a neutral venue.

"Since our President Pervez Musharraf was also involved in the matter we would take any advice from him on playing at a neutral venue," Zia said.



PHOTO: INTERNET

BAD LUCK: Mehdi Baala of France (L) shakes hands with Spain's Reyes Estevez after the men's 1500 metres final at the European Championships in Munich on Thursday.

Baala's dramatic 1500

Athletics

REUTERS, Munich

France's Mehdi Baala won the 1500 metres European title in dramatic fashion on Thursday, diving to the line to edge out Spain's Reyes Esteves in the closest major championships final for the event.

The 48,500 crowd in the Olympic stadium then went wild when Ingo Schultz captured Germany's first gold medal of the Munich festival in the 400 metres but that race could not match the 1500 in terms of excitement.

Baala and Esteves both embarked on a lap of honour draped in their national flags, believing they would be tied for the gold medal.

However, several minutes after the race, Baala was declared the winner ahead of the defending champion.

The pair were credited with the same time of three minutes 45.25 seconds after the photo finish with Portugal's Rui Silva winning bronze in 3:45.43.

"It was a long wait but I could wait for ever for that kind of news," Baala said after becoming France's first 1500 metres European champion since Michel Jazy 40 years ago.

World silver medallist Schultz ended a frustrating wait for the

home fans, who had to be content with one silver and one bronze after the first two days of action, when he entered the final straight in front to win in 45.14 seconds.

Spain's David Canal was a surprise second in 45.24 with world indoor champion Daniel Caines of Britain having to settle for the bronze in 45.28.

"This was basically my first 800 metres race," the 27-year-old Schultz said referring to the extra lap of honour he completed after the race.

Defending champion Grit Breuer tried to make it an even more memorable day for the host country in the women's 400 metres but despite a strong finish, she could not stop Russian Olesya Zykina from winning in 50.45 seconds.

East German-born Breuer clocked 50.70 for the silver medal while Britain's Lee McConnell finished a distant third in 51.02.

Roman Sebrie underlined his dominant status in the decathlon by taking gold.

The 27-year-old Czech, who set a world record with 9,026 points last year, secured his first major track and field title with a combined total of 8,800 points over the two days of competition.

Estonia's Erki Nool, who beat Sebrie into second place at the Sydney Olympics two years ago, took silver with 8,438 points while

Russia's Lev Lobodin came third with 8,390.

World champion Tomas Dvorak, who has been struggling lately, pulled out after failing to clear a height at the pole vault.

Veteran Romanian Ionela Tirlea comfortably retained the women's 400 metres hurdles title, beating local hope Heike Meissner and Poland's Anna Olchiewiczuk into second and third.

Slovenia's Jolanda Ceplak, the overwhelming favourite in the absence of world and Olympic silver medallist Stephanie Graf of Austria, led from start to finish for victory in the women's 800 metres final, Spain's Mayte Martinez and Briton Kelly Holmes taking silver and bronze.

The third day of the Munich championships started with Olympic and world champion Robert Korzeniowski stamping his authority on the men's 50 kms walk with yet another title.

The defending champion from Poland destroyed his rivals to win in a world best three hours 36 minutes and 39 seconds, eclipsing the previous mark of 3:37:26 set by Russian Valery Spitsyn in May 2000.

A personal best for Russia's Aleksey Voevodin was good enough for the silver medal with Spain's Jesus Angel Garcia finishing a distant third.

IOC may change 2008 Games dates

INTERNET, Beijing

Olympic officials will consider a request from Beijing to change the dates of the 2008 Olympics, because the city's fierce mid-summer heat could prove too much for athletes.

The chief of the IOC's organising committee for the 2008 event Hein Verbruggen told reporters in Beijing that it was "extremely important" that the IOC consider what is best for athletes.

"The dates as they are now - end of July, beginning of August - are dates imposed by the IOC. It's not something that Beijing presented to us."

Gu sets new

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Gu, 20, hurled the hammer 71.10 metres to add three meters to the previous Asian record of 68.08 meters set by her compatriot Yinghui Liu in Shanghai three months ago.

"I'm absolutely delighted to start China's gold hunt in the Asian championship," said Gu, who reclaimed the Asian championship title that she last won in 1998 in Fukuoka, Japan.

"I've got no words to express my delight. This is a big boost to my aspirations for winning an Asian Games gold medal," she said.

The quadrennial Asian Games will be held in Busan, South Korea, on September 29-October 14.

Gu began with a throw of 65.41 metres, surpassing her Asian championship record of 61.86 metres, which she set in winning the 1998 event. That throw would have clinched her the gold Friday as silver medalist, Taiwan's Huang Chih Feng, only managed a distance of 58.19 metres and India's Kaur Hardeep came third with 57.82.

Jennifer stretched

Tennis

REUTERS, Los Angeles

Jennifer Capriati was forced to go the distance to reach the quarterfinals of the Los Angeles Open on Thursday as Serena Williams and Lindsay Davenport eased through with straight set victories.

Capriati was kept on court for two hours eight minutes before securing a 6-3, 6-7, 6-2 win over Thailand's Tamarine Tanasugarn.

By contrast, top seed Williams strolled to an easy 6-2, 6-1 win over Nathalie Dechy of France, while Davenport had a minor scare in the second set against Russia's Tatiana Panova before securing a 6-2, 6-4 win.

Capriati appeared to be firmly in control when she took the first set and led 3-0 in the second, but Tanasugarn refused to give up the battle.

Mixing up her shots and keeping second seeded Capriati on the move, the 16th seed also benefited from 11 double-faults from her opponent in the second set.

The Australian Open champion double-faulted three times on break point in that set, and failed to close out the match after serving for victory at 5-4 and 6-5.

The battle remained close in the final set, until Capriati claimed the last three games.

"I played great in the first set, but lately playing at night has been really bothering me," Capriati said. "Maybe I started rushing a bit (as it got dark) and got thrown off."

"I go through these phases and get tentative and can't find the right rhythm."

"In the second set I just concentrated and said get it in, no matter

what."

Capriati blamed the problem with playing under lights on laser eye surgery. It was fine for two years, but now she has a problem.

"I have a bit of a halo and they say that sometimes after a while lights can start to become really



JENNIFER CAPRIATI

bright," she explained. Capriati will face doubles specialist Ai Sugiyama for a place in the semi-finals after the Japanese player beat South Africa's Amanda Coetzer 6-1, 7-6.

After winning this title in 1999 and 2000, Williams fell to Monica Seles in the quarter-finals last year and Davenport went on to lift the title.

However, the pair are scheduled to meet in the final of this year's event if they win their next two matches.

Williams is playing her first tournament as the world number one, having taken over the top spot from sister Venus after beating her in the Wimbledon final.

But being the best in the world doesn't feel the way she expected it to.

"Being number one isn't all I thought it would be," Williams said.

"I thought I'd be excited every day, all the time, but I'm the same person as I was."

"I'm not disappointed as I know where I'll be seeded...and it's good that Venus is number two because we're always at the opposite end of the draw now."

Davenport seemed destined for an easy victory, but stumbled after building a 3-1 lead in the second set.

She had to fight off five break points at 3-2 before holding serve with her seventh ace, and although she broke Panova to love to lead 5-2 she failed to serve out the match.

The third seed was also threatened at 5-4, holding off a break point before securing victory.

"I think she played a little bit better and then I started struggling with my first serve," Davenport said. "It was a good hold at 3-2 when I was down four or five break points, but then I eased up way too much."

"At the end I was probably lucky to hold out that last game."

"But it was a good match up until the point I had trouble closing it out."

"I just lost my concentration, thinking the match was over with two breaks, and you can't be like that."

"You have to play all the way to the end."

In the quarterfinals, Williams will play Chanda Rubin, who overwhelmed Daja Bedanova 6-2, 6-1.

Davenport faces Eleni Daniilidou, after the Greek player continued her good run with a 6-0, 7-5 upset win over 10th seed Anne Kremer.

Fourth seed Jelena Dokic had an easy afternoon when Janette Husarova retired with a lower back injury after losing the first four games.

Dokic will next play Rita Grande, a 6-2, 6-1 winner over Katarina Srebotnik.

The Williams sisters are known for their off-court interests, and after her win Serena revealed that she would like to break into acting when her schedule allowed.

"I'm a struggling actress," she said.

"I'm trying to get some parts, but my schedule right now is conflicting with my acting. But I've been taking classes and I'm doing really well."

"I'm very serious about it and I'd like to act with Sean Connery, Anthony Hopkins or Morgan Freeman...someone like that."

"I'd like to have a small role but I'd like the movie to be all about me, so maybe I could get hurt in the beginning and stay in a coma the whole time."

Aussies not

FROM PAGE 13
February is also in doubt because of security fears.

"We're extremely hopeful that we'll be able to play in Bulawayo during the World Cup but it's too early to make a judgement on that," Sutherland said.

Several senior Australia players including captain Steve Waugh have expressed concerns about touring Pakistan.

Sutherland said the players had been advised of the decision and added he had spoken personally to Waugh who was understanding of the decision.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Navigation aid
4 Irene of 'Fame'
8 Basilica section
12 Binary digit
13 Burden
14 Repast
15 Sound stage
16 Sharp
18 Make adjustments
20 Actor Wallach
21 Ledge
24 Collar inserts
28 Broadcasting
32 Glaswegian, e.g.
33 Wish
34 Sailing vessel
36 CBS logo
37 'Paradise Lost' character
39 Prompt
41 Detroit dud
43 Drench
44 Mid-afternoon social

DOWN

1 'Guinness Book' quantity
2 From square one
3 Fountain of music
11 Right angle
17 Golfer Ernie
19 Blond shade
22 Composer
23 Detroit team
25 Scored 100
26 Vacillate
27 Cancel a dele
28 Evangelist
29 Artist's model, maybe
30 Squad
31 Old news-paper section
35 Opera villain
38 June Cleaver, e.g.
40 -- out a living
42 Formerly called
45 Spot of wine?
47 Cast a ballot
48 Satan's speciality
49 Standing
50 Reactions of surprise
51 Siesta
52 La-la lead-in
53 Cauldron
54 Galena, e.g.

Solution time: 25 mins.

LET'S LEAH BIAH
OATH AGRA REAT
BROADCAST ORE
BRIEF WIND
OARS FRANKLIN
AGO SLUGS ONE
TOASTERS LOGE
OEUX MIMED
KASSEM PLUS
ELI BRODITAILL
NOIR OGRE
TIE EWES GREAT

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CRYPTOQUIP

DT QAP BKNNYF EA IY
KGG APE AT SKZB DE Z
K OYKG WOKR JKESBDFR

EBY J A O G W R A I P Q
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WHEN THE YOYELER MAKES HIS WONDERFUL MUSIC, IT'S DEFINITELY A PEAK PERFORMANCE.
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: G equals L.

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.

Chang to become a missionary

Tennis

REUTERS, Cincinnati

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Agassi versus Hewitt

Tennis