Frenchman Advances to International Quarterfinals

The Associated Press

KEY BISCAYNE, Fla. — Yannick Noah became ill in the fifth set Monday against Jakob Hlasek, but the Frenchman recovered to win his fourth-round match at the International Players Championships.

Noah, seeded 12th, advanced to the quarterfinals with his third straight, five-set victory, 6-4, 3-6, 6-4, 2-6, 7-5. The match took 3½ hours.

Hlasek's elimination left only one of the top six seeds, No. 1 Ivan Lendl, with three rounds to go. No. 7 Thomas Muster, who beat Eduardo Bengoechea 6-1, 6-1, 6-1, was the highest-seeded player left in the bracket opposite

In women's play, top-ranked Gabriela Sabatini swept unseeded Ann Grossman, 6-4, 7-6 (7-2). Tenth-seeded Lori McNeil double-faulted five times in one game and lost to No. 3 Helena Sukova, 6-3, 6-2.

Noah led 4-3 in the final set and was about to receive serve when he suddenly bent over, walked to a corner of the court and vomited. He then

sat down, causing a brief delay in the

Umpire Rudi Berger warned Noah for the delay, then penalized him one game point before the match resumed.

Hlasek, who was serving, won that game. Noah looked wobbly, but he twice held serve, then broke the fifthseeded Czech for the victory.

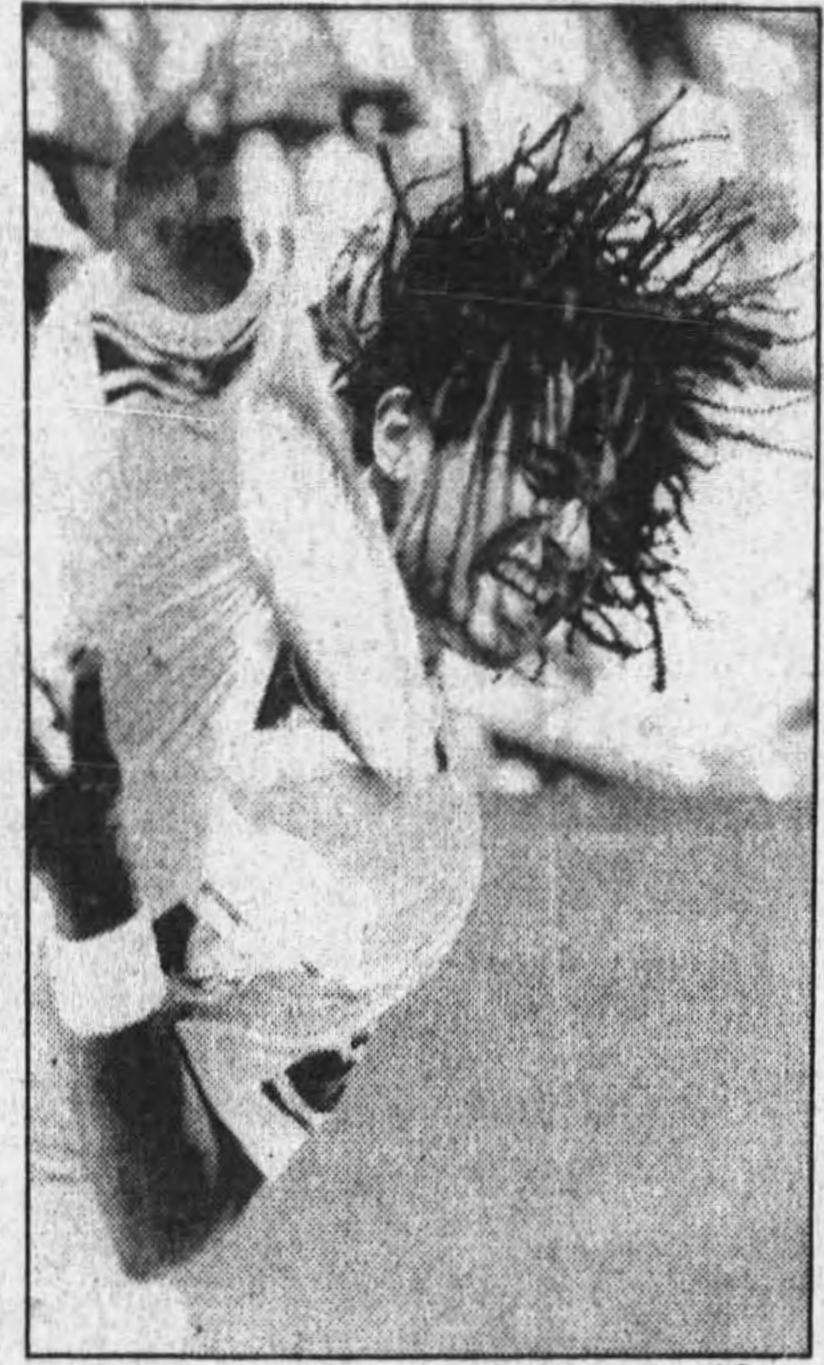
Noah said that a carbonated drink, rather than the hot, humid weather, had made him sick. He then complained about being penalized by

"All he cares about is giving me a penalty point instead of calling the trainer," Noah said. "I think it's

Under the rules, the umpire may suspend play for an injury but not for delays caused by a player's "natural loss of physical condition."

"It's not an injury timeout," Hlasek said. "Yannick knew it, too . . . The delay didn't bother me because I won the game. If I would have lost it, would have said it bothered me."

Hlasek clearly was upset, however, after hitting a volley wide on the \subsection Scores, Page 6E



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Yannick Noah delivers one of his serves clocked Monday at 120 mph.

match's final point. He angrily swatted a ball out of the stadium while Noah flopped to the ground, his face to the sky and his arms outstretched in

celebration. Noah's victory was his second over Hlasek in two weeks. In a tournament at Indian Wells, Calif., Hlasek had

four match points but lost.

Judge Rejects Agents' Mistrial Motion

Prosecution Decides Bears' Morris Won't Testify

By Chris Mortensen

Staff Writer CHICAGO — Prosecutors decided Monday not to put Chicago Bears wide receiver Ron Morris on the witness stand, prompting an unsuccessful motion for a mistrial on behalf of sports agents Norby Walters

and Lloyd Bloom. A federal judge also blocked Walters from having the father of singer Michael Jackson testify on the agent's behalf. U.S. District Judge George Marovich ruled that any testimony from Joe Jackson would be irrelevant to an alleged threat made toward the group's

manager, Ron Weisner, in 1981. Morris was scheduled to testify about alleged threats made by Bloom when the player tried to back out of a contract. The government also has four tape-recorded conversations between Bloom and Morris, court records show.

But Morris's credibility as a player at Southern Methodist University caused the prosecutors to cancel his scheduled testimony, sources close to the government

The government concluded its case Monday against Walters and Bloom. Today, the agents will begin their defense against charges of racketeering, mail fraud, wire fraud and extortion.

Because Morris's allegations were included in opening statements to the jury, Bloom's defense attorney, Dan Webb, asked Marovich on Monday for a mistrial. Marovich denied the motion.

Morris is one of at least two

players who will not testify in the trial after telling prosecutors of alleged threats by Bloom. Former Auburn running back Brent Fullwood also told a federal grand jury in 1987 of a threat Bloom made to "bump off" his new agent, but the government decided he would not make a suitable witness, sources close to the prosecution said.

The government also dropped a mail fraud count involving George Swarn, a former running back from Miami University of Ohio. Swarn's academic records raised questions as to whether he should have been eligible to play his senior season in 1986, Webb said in his opening statement last month.

Walters plans to make a motion today to recall prosecution star witness Michael Franzese, the organized crime boss who testified to making the alleged threat to Weisner.

Alvarez's Changeup Delivery: From a Barfly to Bible Study

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. - Jose Alvarez was on his way to a bar again, his routine at Southwestern Louisiana University, when he came upon a football player on his way to Bible study. Not that the football player was a big-time evangelizer. His coach had given him a choice — Bible study or three-mile runs — until he'd done penance for some indiscretion. Bible study sounded less ex-

Alvarez tagged along and sat and listened, and the more he listened, the more he became curious about this Jesus Christ guy. He switched from nightly barflying and started going back to Bible study until he became convinced that this was what he was looking for in his life.

"I'd been doing all the things they do at that age, drinking, chasing girls and living on the wild side. Christians to me were guys who shaved their heads and stood on street corners selling magazines," he said. "I began to see something different. I became a Christian, and that has brought a peace and stability to my life."

There are Biblical quotations that should go here, but Jose Alvarez hadn't started out this conversation with the intention of preaching. It came up by chance, his trying to explain how a borderline pitcher endures six seasons of rejection by four teams, riding buses that snort and groan through the night, living the second-class life of the minor leagues, being passed around like a ragged urchin, still clinging to hope that somewhere in his life there was a place in major league baseball for him.

His boyhood life in Tampa had been considerably disturbed when his father was sentenced to prison for association with a crime ring. Jose tells the story of driving to Atlanta with his mother for visits at the big stone fortress down at the end of Boulevard, of passing by Atlanta Stadium, then in construction.

"It's a baseball stadium," his mother told him. "The Milwaukee Braves are moving here."

"Someday I'm going to pitch there," he said. Boys, you know, will be dreamers. "Sounds foolish, but I said it."

Sure enough, he did pitch there, but briefly, for the Braves who won the 1982 division championship. Then he was gone, back to Richmond. Out of sight. Vanished. Like a missing person.

The Braves traded him to Houston an unknown soldier, and Alvarez's road show began. From Richmond to Tucson to Memphis to Jacksonville to Greenville, back to Richmond to Greenville to Richmond. During this time he had been cut off by Houston, by Kansas City and by Montreal. Four big league teams had told him to pack it in. Still he kept calling on his faith, and his faith kept answering.

"It was the reason I kept on. It had given me



Desire, Dedication, Determination and Discipline, I tell the youth groups I talk to. Four D's," he said, and laughed, "my school grades."

The Braves had drafted Joe Lino Alvarez out of SW Louisiana, where he had broken nearly all of Ron Guidry's school records. If there was one universal reason major-league teams kept cutting him down, it was size. He's about 5-10, slightly built, wiry like a steeplechase jockey, and all mus-

cle and gristle. "That was it, size," Bobby Cox, the Braves general manager, said. "He has one of the best curveballs in the big leagues." Like the one he fanned the left-handed Don Mattingly with the other day. The Yankees had him on the ropes, two on, nobody out. He shut them down and Mattingly was

his third out. When the last of the four big-league clubs, Montreal, cut him three springs ago, it was handy that the Braves were just over the fence. He threw for their coaches, talked to Henry Aaron about a place on the farm, and started over again at Greenville. He was patient, bided his time, always in condition, waiting . . . waiting.

Finally, on May 9 last year, he got his call. The Braves were desperate for pitching. Ten years since he'd drifted into Bible study in LaFayette, La., and his faith had held up. The next night, May 10, the phone rang in the Braves bullpen. "Tell Alvarez to warm up," was the message.

"I almost broke into tears. 'Someday I'm going to pitch there,' I'd told my mother. Somebody said that ought to be made into a movie," he said. "I could almost see God looking down, pointing His finger and saying, 'See, I told you.'"

The best part of the plot is that he made it. He has established his place as the man the Braves go to in the toughest part of the game, when trouble erupts in the middle. You don't get a lot of saves in middle relief, but you get a lot of work, and last year he won five games. His earned-run average was under 3.00, only seven of the 40 baserunners he inherited scored, and he struck out two-thirds more batters than he walked.

This time the heat isn't on. He has his bed made in the big leagues. He's established. They made much of his elderly status as a rookie last year, but 32 is a pup compared to Satchel Paige (46) — he was more carnival than pitcher — Diomedes Olivo (42) and Alex McColl (39). By those standards, and his four D's, he could still be pitching into the next century.

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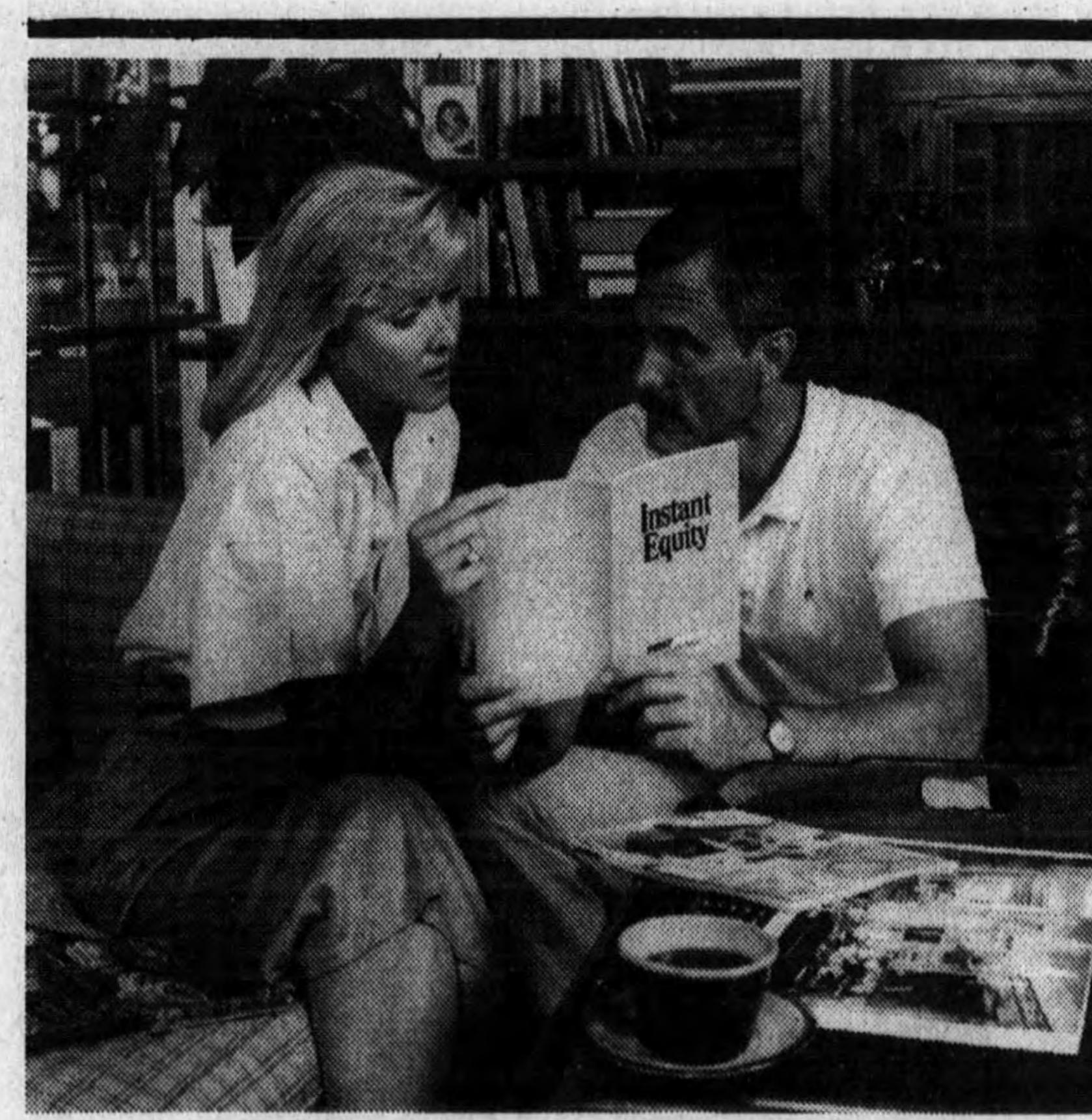
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