

BARCELONA BRIEFS

Rip van Winkles

BARCELONA, July 18: Teams from Afghanistan and Somalia have defied all attempts by Olympic organisers to find out whether they are coming to the Barcelona Games, reports Reuter.

Mandela's moment

BARCELONA, July 18: Nelson Mandela will watch South Africa return to the Olympic fold after a 32-year absence, reports Reuter.

Touts make a kill

BARCELONA, July 18: Tickets for the sell-out Barcelona Olympics opening ceremony are going for 1,500 dollar — three times their face value, reports Reuter.

Hard luck indeed

BARCELONA, July 18: American Olympic cyclist Dave Nicholson broke his leg Friday during a training run accident when he tried to avoid a car, and will be sidelined for up to three months, reports AP.

Only seven more days to go

BARCELONA, July 18: Pierre de Coubertin, the man who started it all, would be amazed. Bigger, brasher and costlier than ever, the greatest show on earth opens in Barcelona next Saturday with 15,600 athletes and officials expected from a record 172 eligible nations in the games of the 25th Olympiad, reports Reuter.

gathered in Athens for the first modern Games, funded by the sale of souvenir stamps and medals.



Germany dominated the medals table at the Seoul Olympics.

Both countries have gone, swept away by the tide of change that destroyed communism in Europe and ended the cold war.

In their place come the Commonwealth of Independent States and Georgia, former Soviet republics competing as one for the first and last time, and the first Unified German Team for 28 years.

Back too will be South Africa — returning to the Olympic fold after 32 years as pariahs over apartheid — the Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, and Cuba,

Caribbean stayaways since 1980.

The Barcelona Games will be the first since Munich in 1972 to be spared a political boycott.

Even tiny Albania, once Europe's most isolated country, is expected to be there when an archer lets loose a burning arrow to light the Olympic flame at the opening ceremony, signalling the start of 16 days of sport.

"In Barcelona, the Games mean we have seen a 70-year-long dream come true," said Maragall, referring to the first time the capital of Spain's staunchly nationalist Catalonia region, bid for the Games in 1920.

He calls the relationship between Barcelona and the Olympics a "love affair". No suitor has lavished so much on the object of its desire.

Since this bustling city of two million people was awarded the Games in 1986, more than nine billion dollars in public and private money has been spent on sports facilities, roads, communications and a general facelift for the occasion.

Maragall hopes the investment will pay off. He has an eye on flood of foreign business and tourism generated by the Games which will attract 400,000 visitors and an estimated 3.5 billion television viewers worldwide.

Germany come in full force

BERLIN, July 18: Boris Becker's down, Katrin Krabe's out, but Germany's Olympics team is still likely to snatch a lion's share of gold in Barcelona, reports AP.

Germany got a boost in Albertville when it topped the Winter Games' medal count.

The current squad, the first all-German Summer Olympics team since 1964, is likely to keep up the pace.

Berlin's Super tabloid newspaper tipped the Germans for 99 medals, including 35 gold.

Some of the stars: tennis queen Steffi Graf, Heike Drechsler in the long-jump, sprint cyclist Jens Fiedler and high-jumper Heike Henkel.

Two of Germany's tennis stars seemed to be having pre-

The dark legacy of East German doping will be hanging over the team when the competition gets under way later this month.

One swimmer from the defunct Communist nation, Astrid Strauss, is frantically trying to prove her super-high testosterone levels came from too much booze during a party and not from drugs. With the start of the Games drawing closer, she's barred from Barcelona.

The German basketball team, boosted by NBA player Detlef Schrempf, could be a dark-horse contender for the bronze. German riders have a good shot at medals, while the German team also has a chance in such lesser-watched sports as handball and water polo.

Germany is fielding several medal contenders in track and field. They include Dieter Baumann in the 5,000 meters, Sigrun Grau at 800 and Jens-Peter Herold at 1,500.

Yet, the Maerkische

Allgemeine newspaper cautioned that the outlook for the country's runners, jumpers and tossers had become "modest" compared with the harvest in Seoul in 1988. Four years ago, East German track and field competitors grabbed 27 medals, along with four for the West Germans.

The Soviet Union dominated the overall medal count in Seoul with 132, followed by East Germany with 102, the United States with 94 and 40 for West Germany.

Germany will sorely miss the likes of swimming greats Kristin Otto from the East and Michael Gross from the West.

World champion swimmer Joerg Hoffmann has a shot at a medal in the grueling 1,500 meters. Women's coaches are pinning their hopes on 14-year-old Franziska van Almsick in the 200-metre freestyle.



HEIKE HENKEL

Shot-putter Ulf Timmermann is hoping for a repeat of his gold in Seoul, but says it will take at least a 21.5-metre toss to be in the running.

Germany will be fielding its usual fiery fencers. Anja Fichtel, who won two golds in 1988, also will be part of the women's team fencing effort in Barcelona.

Fichtel isn't in the individual competition, and the main reason has nothing to do with her awesome talent: she gave birth to little Laurin just six weeks before the start of the Games.

Youngest Olympian

BARCELONA, July 18: At least one athlete in is guaranteed a place in the record books, win or lose at the Barcelona Olympics which open on July 25, reports Reuter.

At the tender age of 11, Spanish rowing eight cox Carlos Bienvenido from Barrera is the baby of the host country's Olympic team.

His fame will be short-lived. Pint-sized Carlos, who weighs in at just 47 kilos (104 lbs), plans to retire from coxing next year when he gets too heavy.

He is delighted to be at the Games. "I deserved it," he told the Spanish newspaper ABC. "I've sat there in the rain and caught lots of colds."

No age limit applies to Olympic competitors other than those set for health reasons by individual sports federations.

The record books say the youngest medalist was a French boy, name unknown and aged between seven and 10, who coxed the winning Dutch rowing pair at the Paris Games in 1900.

Klinsmann to play in France

PARIS, July 18: German international striker Jurgen Klinsmann is set to move from Inter Milan to Paris Saint Germain and should sign for the French club on Monday, reports AP.

"There are only a few details left to settle and I the absence of any disaster he'll be in Paris on Monday afternoon to sign," the club's general manager Jean-Michel Moutier said on Friday.

Klinsmann, 28, at the end of the month, enjoyed two successful campaigns with Inter Milan, including the 1991 UEFA Cup win, before a slump in form last season saw him put up for sale.

A move to Real Madrid had been lined up but that fell through with the departure of Real's coach Rinus Michels at the end of the season.

A key player in Germany's 1990 World Cup triumph, Klinsmann only regained his international place during the recent European Championships because of injuries in the squad.

And despite performing well in the side that reached the final in Sweden only to be beaten 2-0 by Denmark, other European clubs expressed little interest in the powerfully-built player who once rivalled Marco van Basten for the title of the world's most dangerous striker.



Swiss Rolf Jaermann is all smiles as he is kissed by two hostesses of the Tour de France, after winning the 12th stage between Dole and St-Garvais Friday. Jaermann is placed 64th in the overall standing.

Birthday boy Samaranch spends a busy day

BARCELONA, July 18: It was business as usual for Olympic chief Juan Antonio Samaranch, 72 on Friday, reports Reuter.

Samaranch, president of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), spent his birthday chairing a meeting in Barcelona of the IOC's 10 strong executive board.

An IOC spokesman said no special events were planned to mark Samaranch's birthday in the city where he was born and made his warmly career.

The Summer Olympics open in the Catalan capital on July 25.

Sprint queen Ottey seeks her crown

BARCELONA, July 18: Jamaican sprinter Merlene Ottey, the eternal runner-up, has never had a better chance for gold than in what are sure to be her last Olympic Games, reports AP.

Now 32 and with retirement plans mapped out, Ottey has entered both the 100 and 200m in Barcelona and in the build up to the Games she has run into outstanding form, clocking the fastest 100m in the world this year (10.80 sec) at Salamanca, Spain less than two weeks before the official opening here.

If she repeats that kind of form the elusive Olympic gold could finally be hers.

The powerful yet graceful sprinter has come a long way from her home town of Hanover, 20 miles from the Jamaican capital of Kingston, to the luxury apartment she now has in Rome where she wants to pursue a career in fashion design after finally retiring.

She was one of seven children but her family were relatively well-off with her father running his own farm and her mother working as a nurse.

"With nine of us in the family though, coming up with the money to buy me track shoes was very difficult. I used to run in barefeet on cinder tracks when I started — nothing was going to stop me running."

She competed for Jamaica for the first time at the Central American Games in 1978 and won the first of a seemingly endless supply of bronze medals. A year later at the Pan-Am Games she won another bronze in the 200m, and had done enough to convince the University of Nebraska that here was star talent in the making.

They awarded her a scholarship, gave her the kind of coaching that has benefited so many youngsters from the third world and its been honours and medals nearly all the way for the past decade.

At her first Olympics in Moscow in 1980 she won another 200m bronze — and she collected two more bronze medals in Los Angeles in 1984 in the 100m and 200m.

Her haul from the World Championships is silver and the five bronze medals and she has two silvers and a bronze from the World Indoor Championships.

At Commonwealth Games level at least she has won three

golds, a silver and a bronze.

It's an impressive haul and the only time she failed to return from a major championship with a medal was from the Seoul Olympics in 1988 when recurring bronchitis early in the year cut back her training and a troublesome hamstring restricted her movement in the 200m final. Somehow she still managed to finish fourth.

She considered retiring after those Games. But re-considered and came back in dazzling style. In 1989 she won all 21,100m she ran, but 1990 was even more successful.

After winning the sprint double at the Commonwealth Games in Auckland at the beginning of the year she was ranked the world No 1 sprinter, winning all 36 finals she ran in from 60m to 400m.

It was also the year that Ka-



MERLENE OTTEY

trin Krabbe first made the headlines with her double victory in the 100m and 200m in the European Championships. Krabbe was also in awesome form that year but lost three times at 100m and three times at 200m — all of them to Ottey.

The situation was reversed last year when Ottey's winning streak of 56 straight 100m victories was ended by Krabbe in the World Championships in Tokyo. Ottey took the bronze in the 100m and also had to be content with the bronze in the 200m. Krabbe won the gold in both — but won't be running in Barcelona.

Ottey finished last year as the world No 1 in both the 100m and 200m but her defeats in Tokyo left her as the uncrowned queen of world sprinting. She will be determined to put that right at the Olympics.

Only devil can deprive Mike Johnson

BARCELONA, July 18: If, by some devilish ruse, the official engraver had already carved the name Michael Johnson on the 200m gold, not many people would be too surprised, reports AP.

For the 24-year old world champion, starts as the hottest favourite to win any track final in Barcelona.

In the last two years he has only lost twice — over 200m, once to US teammate Leroy Burrell in a wind-affected race in May 1990 and once to Namibian Frankie Fredericks in Rome.

At 400m, Johnson has an unblemished record, winning all 22 races he has run at the distance since arriving on the international scene in 1990.

In London last week he ran a personal best time of 43.98 sec, the seventh fastest of all time, and would have attempted the 200 — 400m double in Barcelona except for problems with the original track schedule.

Although it was altered, largely to help him achieve that aim, Johnson has stuck to his decision just to run the shorter distance.

His defeat to Fredericks in Rome also helped convince him that attempting to run eight heats and finals in the two events in Barcelona could have been counter productive.

Apart from being unmissable on the track because he is usually so far ahead of the field, Johnson is also an unmistak-

able athlete because of his unique running style.

His old high school coach Joel Ezar told sports illustrated magazine that "he runs like a statue" — and its easy to see what he means.

Johnson has an erect, upright style and keeps his torso virtually as straight as a guardsman. He takes short, rapid strides and appears to be gliding or skimming across the track.

At the start of the 1992 season, he said: "I feel I am going to break the record in 1992 and when I do, it's not going to be with a 19.70 or 19.71, but with a pretty big margin. I need a fast track, good competition and a lot at stake — those are the ideal conditions."

Those conditions could all come together at Barcelona on the evening of August 6 and there's no need to doubt his word of what will happen if they do.

In July 1990, on a freezing night in Edinburgh, Scotland, he clocked 19.85, the fourth fastest ever at sea level.

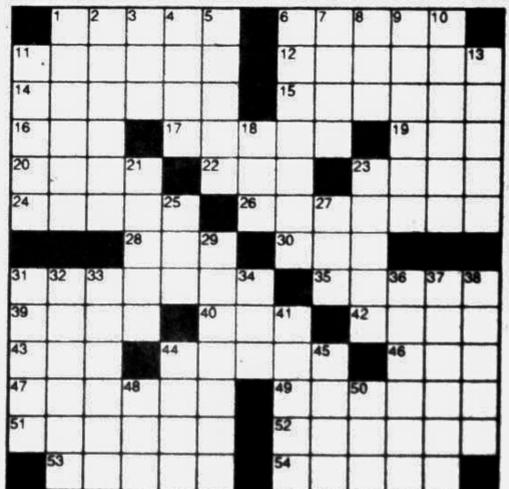
He has already run under 20 seconds twice this year and nine times in all, and Menna's long-standing mark, set at altitude in Mexico City in 1979, has never looked so shaky.

This will be Johnson's first Olympics after a broken leg kept him out of contention in 1988. It seems as though only a similar mishap could deprive him of the gold this time around. The engraver is watching the situation closely.

A quiet, unassuming man of few words, he prefers to live a

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS 1 Waist-coats 6 Sur-passes 11 Sift 12 Ogden resident 14 Real — 15 Mollusk-shell currency 16 — generis 17 Beauty parlor 19 Capp and Capone 20 O'Hara's home 22 "My Mama Done — Me" 23 Glaswegian 24 Did a Van Winkle 26 Trevi coin-tossers 28 "Ten thousand saw — a glance" (Wordsworth) 30 KGB counter-part 31 Is harshly discordant 35 Region 39 Adam's grandson 40 Lepidopterist's prop 42 Between jobs 43 Rds. 44 Laugh-a-minute guy 46 Anatomical duct 47 "Casey at the Bat" poet 49 Hidden 51 Greek moon goddess 52 Tortes' tops 53 Reposes 54 Nuisances DOWN 1 Illustrative photo, e.g. 2 Uncut 3 Mac-Dougall's 4 Young-uns 5 Perspire 6 Pastoral 7 Harrow's rival 8 Carpentry tool 9 Greek-Turkish region 10 Tar or salt 11 Mae and Adam 13 Fits in snugly 18 Depressed 21 "In — eye!" 23 Puppeter Lewis 25 Chess champion Mikhail 27 Perch 29 Holdings 31 "He — at scars..." 32 Stamen part 33 "The deal is off" 34 Prepared 36 Pre-Christmas season 37 Trolley din 38 Criteria 41 Dutch treat? 44 Minimal change 45 Gait 48 Unquestionably 50 "My country, — ..."



CRYPTOQUIP

RHKUF GCF DUYPUIYRE JGKKUFE OZRRI DU SFRNNUY RSGCK GCF HURKI GH OZRE

Today's Cryptiquip clue: H equals F

The Cryptiquip 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.



US boxer Riddick Bowe (L) and South African Pierre Coetzee pose for photographers in weigh in session on July 17 for their July 18, 12-round heavyweight elimination bout for a chance to fight champion Evander Holyfield in Las Vegas, Nevada.