

# Korda-Novotna—true Czechs

PERTH, Jan 1: Czech tennis pair Petr Korda and Jana Novotna will make an historic first sporting appearance for the new Czech Republic in the 12-nation Hopman Cup mixed teams tournament starting tomorrow, reports Reuter.

Both Korda and Novotna, the second seeds, said they wished to play under the new flag of their country which formally came into being on January 1 with the split from Slovakia.

The pair reconfirmed their Czech nationality and indicated they would play for the new republic, Cup chairman Paul McNamee said.

Last year, the annual tournament featured the world sporting debut of a Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) team with Andrei Cherkasov and Natalia Zvereva on court.

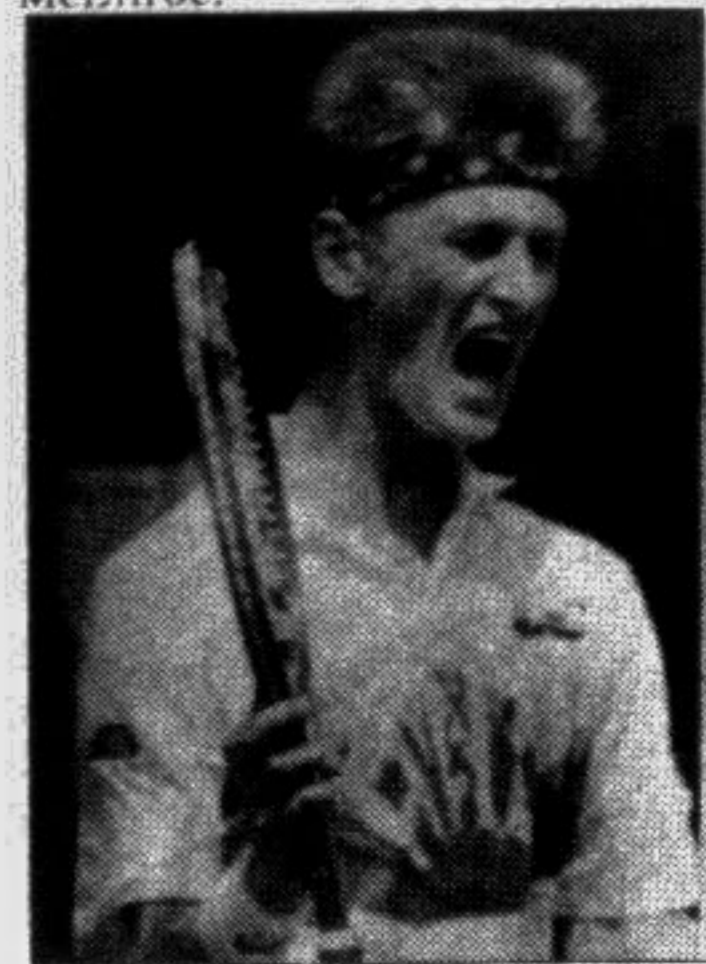
Korda, last year's French Open finalist, and Novotna, the number one women's doubles player, will face a tough challenge in the fifth edition of the Cup from German favourites and top seeds Michael Stich and Steffi Graf.

Graf, the world number two, will use the Australian 700,000 dollar (US 480,000 dollar) event as preparation for the year's first Grand Slam tournament, the Australian Open, later this month.

She will be trying to erase the memory of a disastrous start to 1992 when, playing with Boris Becker, she was struck down by a virus in Perth and was later forced to withdraw from the Open.

Stich, teaming up with Graf

for the first time in a mixed doubles, arrives fresh from winning the Grand Slam Cup in Munich. He has proved himself one of the world's best doubles players, winning Wimbledon last year with John McEnroe.



PETR KORDA

The unique tournament also features a South African team for the first time following the republic's emergence from sporting isolation. The South Africans will be represented by top 20 player Wayne Ferreira and Amanda Coetzer.

Switzerland, who won the tournament last year, have been weakened by the late withdrawal of Jakob Hlasek, whose 1992 partner Manuela Maleeva-Fragniere will be joined by Claudio Mezzadri, world ranked 97th.

Under the competition format, each tie features one women's singles one men's singles and one mixed doubles. The semifinals are on January 6 and 7, with the final on January 8.

The South Africans will play the first match of the tournament against Australian pair Wally Masur, the country's number one player, and Nicole Provis.

The top four seeds — Germany, the Czech Republic,



JANA NOVOTNA

Spain and the United States — get a first-round bye.

### SEEDINGS:

- Germany ( Michael Stich/Steffi Graf)
- Czech Republic (Petr Korda/Jana Novotna)
- Spain ( Emilio Sanchez/Arantxa Sanchez Vicario)
- United States (Maliva Washington/Mary Joe Fernandez)
- France ( Guy Forget/Nathalie Tauziat)
- Switzerland ( Claudio Mezzadri/Manuela Maleeva-Fragniere)
- South Africa ( Wayne Ferreira/ Amanda Coetzer)
- Austria ( Thomas Muster/ Judith Wiesner)

# Graf, Stich tipped to win Hopman Cup

PERTH, Jan 1: German superstars Steffi Graf and Michael Stich are strong favourites to win the 482,000 US dollar Hopman Cup mixed teams tennis event starting here tomorrow, reports AFP.

Graf, the reigning Wimbledon men's singles crown in 1991, will not be in action in the 12-nation contest at the Burswood Superdome until Tuesday.

They clash with the winner of Sunday's meeting between Austria, represented by Thomas Muster and Judith Wiesner, and Andrei Medvedev and Natalia Medvedeva of the Ukraine.

Graf was partnered by Boris Becker in last year's Hopman Cup, but a viral ailment removed the sting from her game. The tournament, seen as a useful warm-up for the Australian Open event later in the month, starts Saturday morning with a clash between South Africa and Australia.

Australia's Wally Masure and Nicole Provis seem to face a tough job against rising stars Wayne Ferreira and Amanda Coetzer.

Other teams in the tournament are: Czech Republic (Petr Korda, Jana Novotna), France (Guy Forget, Nathalie Tauziat), Israel (Amos Mansdorf, Anna Smashnova), Japan (Yasafumi Yamamoto, Kimiko Date), Spain (Emilio Sanchez, Arantxa Sanchez), Switzerland (Claudio Mezzadri, Manuela Maleeva-Fragniere), United States (Maliva Washington, Mary Joe Fernandez).

# Bonner gives his a win to remember

EL PASO, Texas, Jan 1: Record-setting flanker Melvin Bonner caught two touchdown passes and Baylor beat No. 22 Arizona at their own defensive game Thursday, presenting coach Grant Teaff with a career-ending 20-15 victory in the Hancock Bowl, reports AP.

Teaff, doused with ice and lauded at midfield by the jubilant Bears, is leaving the sidelines to become the school's athletic director. He ended a 21-year coaching career in Waco with a record of 128-105-6.

The 6-foot-3 Bonner, who finished with a Hancock-record 166 yards on 5 receptions, wrecked and Arizona defense that was No. 2 in the nation this season while giving up an average of just 9 points a game.

Bonner caught a 61-yard scoring pass off a halfback option throw from reserve Brandell Jackson and shook loose on the sideline for a 69-yard TD run.

Arizona got a 7-yard scoring run from quarterback George Malaulu and field goals of 22 and 20 yards by Steve McLaughlin.

Bonner burned corner back Keshon Johnson on both of his scoring plays. A beaten Johnson fell down at the Arizona 40 on the Jackson-to-Bonner connection with 4:50 left in the half. With 14:10 left in the game, Johnson was unable to wrap up Bonner on the sidelines, allowing him to streak untouched into the end zone to put the Bears in front for good 14-13.

Bonner also bailed out the Bears after Baylor (7-5) stopped an Arizona (6-5-1) drive at the goal line early in the fourth quarter. With the nose of the football touching the goal line and Baylor facing a third-and-10 situation, Bonner found a seam in the Wildcats secondary and pulled in the pass from quarterback J. J. Joe for a first down.

The Bears got out of the trap, and Baylor converted two fourth quarter fumbles by Arizona sophomore back Chuck Levy into field goals of 32 and 35 yards by Trey Weir.

The defense did the rest, stopping two Arizona drives in the final minutes. The first Wildcats bid ended on downs at the Baylor 22 and the second died with the clock at the Bears 28. After a pass from Malaulu slipped through flanker Heath Bray's hands at the goal line, a fourth-down, final-play prayer sailed long. Malaulu completed 20 of 38 passes for 282 yards.

# Barkley fires up Phoenix Suns

PHOENIX, Jan 01: Charles Barkley has a new zest for the game. Kevin Johnson is healthy again, and the Phoenix Suns are close to becoming the team Barkley envisioned when he asked to be traded to a contender, reports AP.

"The biggest difference, I think, is that this team is a lot hungrier than any of the ones I was with in Philly," Barkley said after the Suns scored 78 second-half points Wednesday night in a 133-110 win over Houston.

"I got to the sixers after they had done it all," Barkley added. "There just wasn't much else to accomplish. But this team hasn't won it, and we want it real bad."

An NBA title is nearly the only honour which has eluded Barkley, a six-time All-Star and the top scorer for the Dream Team at the Barcelona Olympics.

After Phoenix acquired him, Barkley said he no longer cared about personal goals.

So far, however, he's ahead of his career averages at 25.9 points, 13.4 rebounds and 4.8 assists a game, and the Suns (21-4) have won 14 in a row.

The streak lasted all of December and tied Phoenix with the 1971 Los Angeles Lakers for the third-best monthly record ever. The Lakers were 14-0 in November 1971 and went 16-0 the next month.

Boston's 15-0 in December 1959 is the second best record for a month.

Perhaps more to the point, the talent surrounding the best player in Phoenix history is so good that the Suns are generating more offense in less time, a sort of nuclear reaction in hoops.

Barkley played only 35 minutes, Johnson 36 and Majerle 40.

"When I get doubled and can pass to a guy who's making his shot ... that makes the double-team hesitate a bit. It makes my life a whole lot easier," Barkley said.

"I think my job is going to be a lot easier than it has been the last four years," said Johnson, whose late-season injuries have been blamed for the team's early playoff exits. "I won't have to play 40 minutes, I won't have to bring the ball up the court every time, and I

won't have to be involved in every play."

It was a convincing performance for the Rockets.

"He's a totally different ballplayer," said Hakeem Olajuwon, who came into the NBA in 1984, the same year as Barkley. "He has a new team, a



C BARKLEY

new arena, fantastic teammates. He has all a guy could want. There's all this new energy. They're looking at a championship if they do it right."

Johnson has played in just seven games this year and seemed to be in form for the first time. He hit 10 of 13 shots and also had 10 assists.

"He's a deadly weapon we try to take advantage of," said Barkley, who in late June named Johnson as the key to exploiting his ability.

It didn't work that way at first, coach Paul Westphal put Barkley, and Johnson on opposing teams during training camp, and Johnson's injury problems began during the preseason.

Houston coach Rudy Tomjanovich said he thought fast breaking, smaller teams may be the wave of the future, and nobody does it as well as Phoenix, he said.

"You've got to make them play a five-on-five game so the advantage is to your height, because if they get into the transition game, the big bodies. Hare always going to be a step behind," Tomjanovich said.

# Yeovil may become an Arsenal nightmare

LONDON, Jan 1: Arsenal could hardly have been landed with a more awkward FA Cup third-round tie as they try to revive their ailing season than Saturday's trip to giant-killing specialists Yeovil, reports AFP.

The Somerset minnows hold the non-league record for the most Cup wins against league opposition and arsenal look prime material to become victim number 17 after their recent dismal run.

Monday's 1-0 Premier League loss at Aston Villa was their fifth defeat in seven games and forced gunners manager George Graham to read the riot act to his suffering squad.

"I left the players in no doubt about how I felt," fumed the Scot. "It is my job to remind them very quickly about the standards that I expect. I have to make sure that the players who go out for Arsenal have the necessary self-esteem."

Graham will have England defenders Tony Adams and Lee Dixon back for the Yeovil trip, but the Arsenal boss knows his side still face a tough test to avoid what would be the most embarrassing defeat in the club's history.

"We are under no illusions," he said. "This is the real David and Goliath scenario, and everyone wants David to win."

"What I'm hoping is that the FA Cup may provide us with a different environment in which we can thrive. At the moment we are in a low, but we can get out of it."

Arsenal's north London neighbours, Tottenham Hotspur, also take on non-league opposition in Marlow,

but their task has been eased with the switch Hart Lane.

Even Marlow manager Dave Russell admits: "In my heart of hearts I can't see us winning."

Unusually not one of his players has any league experience and they currently lie near the foot of the Diadora Premier Division, well down the non-league hierarchy from Yeovil, who are in the Vauxhall Conference.

"We're seen as the carrot-crunchers from the river," says assistant manager Laurie Craker. "Unfashionable — the Wimbledon of non-league soccer, if you like."

"If we were to win, it would be the biggest upset in the history of the Cup bar none. Think about it. Really you're talking about what is no more than a village side taking on one of the biggest clubs in Europe."

Nevertheless, they are the only club to have played in every edition of the FA Cup — they reached the semi-finals in 1882 — and even chipped in to help buy the original trophy.

Bristol Rovers boss Malcolm Allison is considerably more upbeat about his side's chances of upsetting high-flying Villa.

"I've already said we'll win," said the 65-year-old, who guided Manchester City to FA Cup success in 1969.

Form shows otherwise. Rovers have lost their last two games to sink back into the First Division relegation struggle, while Villa are third in the Premier League and expect to welcome back 13-goal leading scorer Dalian Atkinson on Saturday after a two-match absence with a stomach injury.

Two other Premier League clubs hope to have their top marksman back after injury to help ward off the possibility of surprise home defeats by Second Division opposition.

England striker Alan Shearer faces a late test on a damaged right knee before Blackburn's tie with Bournemouth, while Brian Deane is expected to be given the all-clear to play in Sheffield United's game against Burnley after being carried off with concussion against Manchester City five days ago.

Meanwhile, Bulgarian

striker Nontcho Guentchev will play for Ipswich against Second Division Plymouth despite having six stitches inserted in a shin wound during the 2-1 win over Blackburn on Monday.

In-form Crystal Palace are not so fortunate, however. Midfielder Gareth Southgate misses the trip to Second Division Hartlepool after breaking a bone in his right foot. He faces four weeks out of action.

That is a blow for Palace, as Southgate has been one of the young players who have inspired the London club to a six-match winning run.

Hartlepool manager Alan Murray, who has steered Pool from bottom of the football league to fourth in division two in less than three seasons, believes Palace could be in for a shock.

"They were here in the League Cup last season when we drew 1-1," said Murray. "We were hammered in the second leg, but Palace know they will get a game."

"I know they're the form team at present, but this is one of those matches top teams dread. It's a small ground and the crowd is limited to less than 7,000. I'm sure Palace would rather be at home."

The same could be said for Sheffield Wednesday, who visit First Division Cambridge United, where they were hammered 4-0 in the fifth round of the Cup two years ago.

However, Wednesday manager Trevor Francis insisted: "This match offers us the chance to atone for the disappointment that we suffered in one of our poorest FA Cup performances in my time here."

A First Division side with a better chance of beating Premier opposition are high-riding Tranmere, who travel to relegation threatened Oldham.

Tranmere manager John King said: "Not many sides are going to go to Oldham and get a result. But this is the FA Cup and anything can happen. We've got to go out and give it our best shot."

Leeds should see of Charlton at Elland Road since the FA Cup offers the champions their only chance of glory after a dreadful league cam-

paign.

Although Leeds have managed only one goal in the last three games, Charlton have also gone off the boil after a superb start to the season.

They can boast only three wins in the last 20 league and Cup games, and Charlton player-coach Steve Gritt admitted: "It will be a difficult trip for us."

Not bad for a start

BANGKOK, Jan 1: Nearly 100 foreign runners will compete in this weekend's Hanoi Marathon, the first major sports event held in the Vietnamese capital, the official Vietnam News Agency reported Friday, reports AP.

About 200 Vietnamese from all over the country will join runners from Britain, Russia, Australia, Hong Kong, Thailand, Japan, the United States, Canada and other countries, said the report, monitored in Bangkok. World-class marathoners are competing, it said.

Also taking part are 15 foreign diplomats posted in Hanoi and 11 members of the UN peacekeeping operation in Cambodia.

Competing in the 10-kilometre (6 mile) wheelchair race is Graham Edwards, Western Australia's Minister for Sports and Recreation, who lost both legs to a land mine in the Vietnam War, the report said.

The competition is mainly funded by the San Miguel Corp., a Philippine brewery.

"This is the first time that we have organised such a major sport event in our capital," said Hoang Vinh Giang, director of the Hanoi Sports Department. "The government of Vietnam views this event as an opportunity to create an atmosphere of international good will through sports."

The event marks another step in Communist-ruled Vietnam's attempt to break the international isolation that followed its late 1978 invasion of Cambodia.

The country's first major marathon was run in the major southern city of Ho Chi Minh in February 1992. A British lawyer living in Hong Kong, Tim Sauter, won the race in 2 hours, 43 minutes, 26 seconds.

# Czechs, Slovaks go separate ways

BRATISLAVA, Jan 1: Czechs and Slovaks will go their own ways politically and economically on new year's day, leaving the former Czechoslovakia's sporting structure in a state of some confusion, reports Reuter.

A single Czechoslovak soccer team will still continue playing at least for a year in the world qualifications and even longer if the team qualifies for the 1994 finals.

The position is similar in ice hockey where Czechoslovakia, one of the world's top teams, will play as a single entity until the 1993 World Championships in Germany.

On the domestic scene, however, arguments rumble on. The emerging sports federations of the two new republics have failed to agree on a single territorial competition in either soccer or ice hockey,

and decided, to the dismay of fans and experts, to organise their own local competitions.

Both new republics will set up new soccer First Divisions, with most of the top teams, such as Sparta Prague, Slavia Prague, Olomouc or Ostrava, remaining in the Czech republic.

Only a minority, including Slovan and Inter Bratislava, will be involved in the new 12-team Slovakian First Division.

"We will no longer be able to watch matches of the greats such as Sparta versus Slovan, or Ostrava against Inter Bratislava. It will be a loss for us all," said respected sports writer Jaroslav Salek.

The situation in ice hockey will be similar, with most top teams remaining in the Czech republic.

Internationally, however, the Czech republic has been designated as the successor to Czechoslovakia in the World

Championships, on the basis that the national team has had more Czech than Slovak players over the past five years.

Slovakia, on the other hand, will have to start from the bottom rung, playing for qualification for the lowest C Group in October 1993.

Even given the quality of Slovakia's ice hockey players, this will not be quite as easy as it seems. The qualification group will also include new countries from the former Soviet Union in the form of Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and the Ukraine. All, at one time, contributed players to the Soviet national squad.

The case of basketball neatly sums up the difficulties created. The Czech men's team and the Slovak women's team have been nominated as the "successor" teams, relegating the Czech women and Slovak men to lowly qualification dog-fights.

# Two very precious moments

CINCINNATI, Jan 1: Carl Pickens will be upset if he has another season like the one that earned him Associated Press Offensive Rookie-of-the-Year honours, reports AP.

Except for two moments — a 95-yard punt return and a clutch 22-yard touchdown catch — the Cincinnati Bengals receiver had an unremarkable first year.

"Basically, there's only been two big plays, the punt return and the catch," Pickens said. "That's basically the only thing that I've done."

It was good enough to let him edge New Orleans' Vaughn Dunbar by two votes for the offensive rookie honours announced Thursday, but not good enough to satisfy Pickens. The second-round draft pick from Tennessee was more overwhelmed than overwhelmed.

"It's just been a long season," he said. "It's been rough having to come in and try to learn and be competitive and keep my head up and continue to go forward."

Progress came haltingly for Pickens, who failed to hold a starting job as a receiver and lost his job as punt returner near the end of the year. But he's not too upset that he didn't do too much.

"There's nothing really to be frustrated about," he said. "Coming in, I didn't know what to expect. Last year, we only

won three games, so I didn't come in expecting to win the conference or even go to the playoffs."

"I didn't really set any goals because I didn't know how much playing time I was going to get. I didn't even know I was going to be returning punts. These things happened unexpectedly, so I've just had to go with the flow."

The expectations begin next year. The Bengals (5-11) will be well into their rebuilding, and Pickens will become either a big part of the offense or a bust.

"I'm going to set my goals: make a certain amount of catches and touchdowns and try to be one of the top five or six in different categories, among the top receivers in the league," he said.

# Ikonnikova banned

MOSCOW, Jan 1: Galina Ikonnikova, who tested positive for Methyltestosterone, an anabolic steroid, after a road race in Switzerland, has been banned for four years, the Russian Athletics Federation said, reports AP.

However, Russian authorities were not worried about the fate of four athletes discovered with steroids by Swedish customs officers two weeks ago.

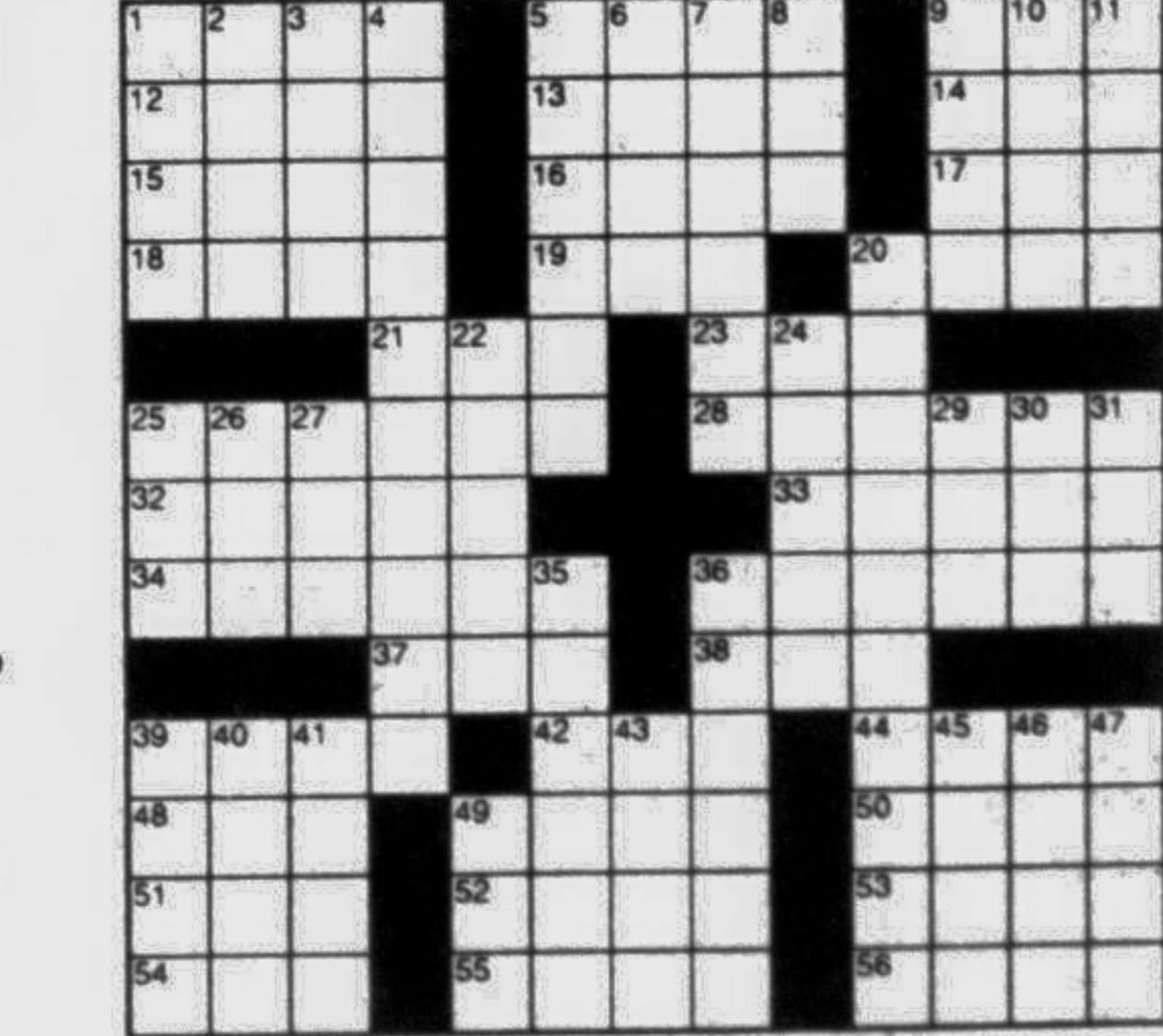
"If they had tested positive we would have been informed by now," said director of coaching Vadim Zelichenko.



The Bangladesh Reds during practice at the Dhaka University central playground yesterday. The Reds start their President Cup defence on the opening day of the 11-day international soccer meet against FC Polonia Warszawa at the Dhaka Stadium on January 6. — Star photo

# CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

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| ACROSS                  | sheet                     | 56 Sawbucks                | 20 Drum                     |
| 1 "Fat farms"           | 38 Lee's troops           | DOWN                       | noise                       |
| 5 Sail holder           | 39 Shock abbr.            | 1 "M*A*S*H"                | 22 NYC                      |
| 9 Curly's pal           | 42 Abbott's first baseman | 2 Charles' game            | hockey team, headline-style |
| 12 Apple infiltrator    | 44 Anything but that      | 3 Woody's son              | 24 Some daytime TV fare     |
| 13 Initial chip         | 48 Guidonian note         | 4 Is suspicious            | 25 Faux follower            |
| 14 Conclusion           | 49 Last writes?           | 5 Ailment                  | 26 Wish otherwise           |
| 15 "Winnie — Pu"        | 50 Receipts' total        | 6 Strong as                | 27 Wrath or Koppel          |
| 16 "Hawaii Five-O" star | 51 Moroccan city          | 7 Rill                     | 29 Top-grossing film, e.g.  |
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CRYPTOQUIP  
E A G N H V Z S V W Z N V N -  
F O S W Z E O K N B X J U M N O  
H N K X G U F J N L X U S O X  
S J J Z S G B W E Q A X B .  
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: SHE DIDN'T KNOW HOW TO FILL HER BACK-YARD BIRD FEEDER, SO SHE'S WINGING IT.  
Today's Cryptoquip clue: W equals P  
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.