

Graf is all grace, Sanchez steady

MELBOURNE, Jan 26: Three-time champion Steffi Graf wore down Olympic gold medalist Jennifer Capriati with deep groundstrokes Tuesday and advanced to the semifinals at the Australian Open with a straight-sets victory, reports AP.

The No 2 seed from Germany outlasted her seventh-seeded American rival 7-5, 6-2 in a power-hitting back-court struggle that went for one hour 22 minutes.

Graf on Thursday faces No 4 seed Arantxa Sanchez Vicario of Spain.

Sanchez Vicario, who made the final four for the third straight year, defeated No 5 seed Mary Joe Fernandez of the United States 7-5, 6-4, ending the American challenge in the women's event.

Sanchez Vicario was too steady for two-time finalist Fernandez in a contest between two patient and usually precise baseliners who had trouble with their rhythm.

Graf fell a break behind early in each set, but soon got her game back on track both times, using her greater mobility to move Capriati around.

Graf's shots had more depth and consistency than those of 16-year-old Capriati, whose precocious ability — which she used to beat Graf in the Olympic final — flickered in patches.

The German also was more willing, after her penetrating shots, to come to the net, where she displayed terrific touch. Despite her vow to attack more, Capriati won only five points at the net.

Graf broke through in the final game of the first set, breaking Capriati's serve at 15 after a hard-hitting battle of attrition.

She later won five straight games after Capriati broke to lead 2-1 in the second set — clinching the win with her booming forehands and clever sliced backhands as the young

American wilted. "It was very close. We both went for our shots," Graf said. "The way she is going for her shots, the way she's improved, she's tough."

"The only time I've ever hit that hard was against Monica [Seles] two years ago at the US Open. It was real intense," Seles won that match but was later upset by Italian

Linda Ferrando. Capriati said Graf had been in superb form. "She played great. She had an answer for everything," she said. "Her shots were really penetrating."



Steffi Graf of Germany in full stretch after backhanding a return to her opponent Jennifer Capriati of the United States at the Australian Open yesterday. Graf won 7-5, 6-2.

Graf said practising with male players, including Swede Lars Wahlgren, helped hone her game.

"The way I've practised in the last few weeks, with guys who hit the ball hard, I knew I could do it."

Graf now has won six of her seven meetings with Capriati.

"This definitely showed me I'm in good form. It will definitely help me in my next match," Graf said.

Graf is seeking the 12th Grand Slam title of her career, while Capriati lost in the quarterfinals for the second straight year but was satisfied with her performance.

"That was pretty hard," she



ARANTXA SANCHEZ

The Center Court proved pretty lonely for Capriati. Hundreds of German fans waved flags, but there were only a handful of Americans.

Sanchez Vicario now is 6-1 in her career against Fernandez, who made her earliest exit from the tournament since 1989.

"I had my chances, but made too many unforced errors at the wrong time," Fernandez said.

Sanchez said her aggression had given her the edge over Fernandez.

"She's a tough opponent and solid on the baseline, so you have to go for it when you get the opportunity," she said.

Jansher pulls out of Canadian Open

CALGARY, Jan 26: Top seed Jansher Khan has withdrawn from the Canadian Open squash championship with a knee injury, reports Reuter.

The world number one will automatically receive a zero ranking score for late withdrawal from the event. He was due to face qualifier Paul Gregory of England in the first round on Monday.

The Professional Squash Association will decide if any disciplinary action should be taken after receiving a written explanation and medical certificate from Jansher.

He injured his left leg when he slipped during the second game of the Super Series final in Zurich last week, but went on to be at Australian Chris Dittmar.

Ali to visit Iran

NICOSIA, Jan 26: Former world heavyweight boxing champion Muhammad Ali will visit Iran next month, the Iranian news agency IRNA said on Monday, reports Reuter.

Ali, who converted to Islam while he was world champion, would be a guest of Iran's Boxing Federation during boxing competitions marking the 14th anniversary of Iran's Islamic Revolution February 6-9, it said.

McColgan angered by IAAF proposal

LONDON, Jan 26: British 10,000 metres world champion Liz McColgan on Monday angrily condemned proposals by international athletics chiefs to institute strict controls over both athletes and their agents, reports Reuter.

The International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF) agreed at a weekend meeting in Jakarta on punitive measures for athletes refusing to take part in designated competitions such as continental and World Championships.

Those failing to comply would be barred from both the Olympics and the lucrative Grand Prix finals.

"I am the only one who decides where I run," declared McColgan, back home briefly from Florida where she does much of her training.

Ana Quirot gives birth to a girl

HAVANA, Cuba, Jan 26: Cuba's Olympic 800 metres bronze medalist Ana Fidelia Quirot, who is being treated in hospital for severe burns suffered in a domestic accident, has given birth to a baby girl, doctors said on Monday, reports Reuter.

The birth, which was artificially induced, took place on Sunday. The baby was in perfect health and the birth did not affect the health of the mother, who remained in a critical but stable condition in a Havana hospital.

Quirot, 29, was more than seven months pregnant when she was rushed to hospital on Friday night after suffering burns to her face, neck and abdomen at her home.

Doctors said she was burned when a bottle of alcohol she was using to help wash and whiten clothes exploded.

Quirot, who is the reigning 400 and 800 metres Pan American champion, is a household name in Cuba.

Reynolds a victim of racism?

COLUMBUS, Ohio, Jan 26: World record holder Butch Reynolds said on Monday he was stunned

by the IAAF's action this weekend and suggested he was a victim of racism and anti-American sentiment by the world governing body for athletics, reports Reuter.

The International Amateur Athletic Federation on Saturday gave Reynolds a one-month deadline to suspend all legal action against them and withdraw his allegations of misconduct over a failed drug test. The IAAF did not specify what further action they might take if Reynolds did not meet their deadline.

"I was shocked" Reynolds said of the IAAF statement in a telephone interview from his California residence.

"I was hoping this was not a black and white thing. I was hoping this is not a discrimination ordeal or they're not playing anti-Americanism on me. But I think all of those things are starting to come to light," Reynolds said.

The world record holder at 400 metres won a 27.3 million award against the IAAF from a US district court in December over lost income due to his disputed suspension. The IAAF

refuses to acknowledge the US courts' jurisdiction and has vowed not to pay.

Reynolds was suspended in 1990 after testing positive for an anabolic steroid during a meeting in Monte Carlo. He

with when they released a statement saying that they were not going to further his suspension. Now they're saying they want me to apologise for something that I didn't do."

"I can't see why I should apologise. There is nothing for me to apologise for," Reynolds protested.

"If they give me something concrete that I said that I should apologise for then it would be a different story. But all I said was that I'm innocent. I said that I didn't use drugs and I proved it. If they're mad at me because I said I didn't use drugs and I proved it, it's too bad."

"It's no longer about a drug issue," Reynolds continued.

It's about a person's rights. It's now about freedom of speech. It's about things that our country fought for and stands for. And for me to give up on my principles and what I believe in, I would be less than an American citizen."

Reynolds said he planned to continue training for the indoor season and would run the 400 metres at the Millrose Games in New York on February 5.

He also hopes to qualify at 400 metres for the US team for the World Indoor Championships to be held in Toronto in March.

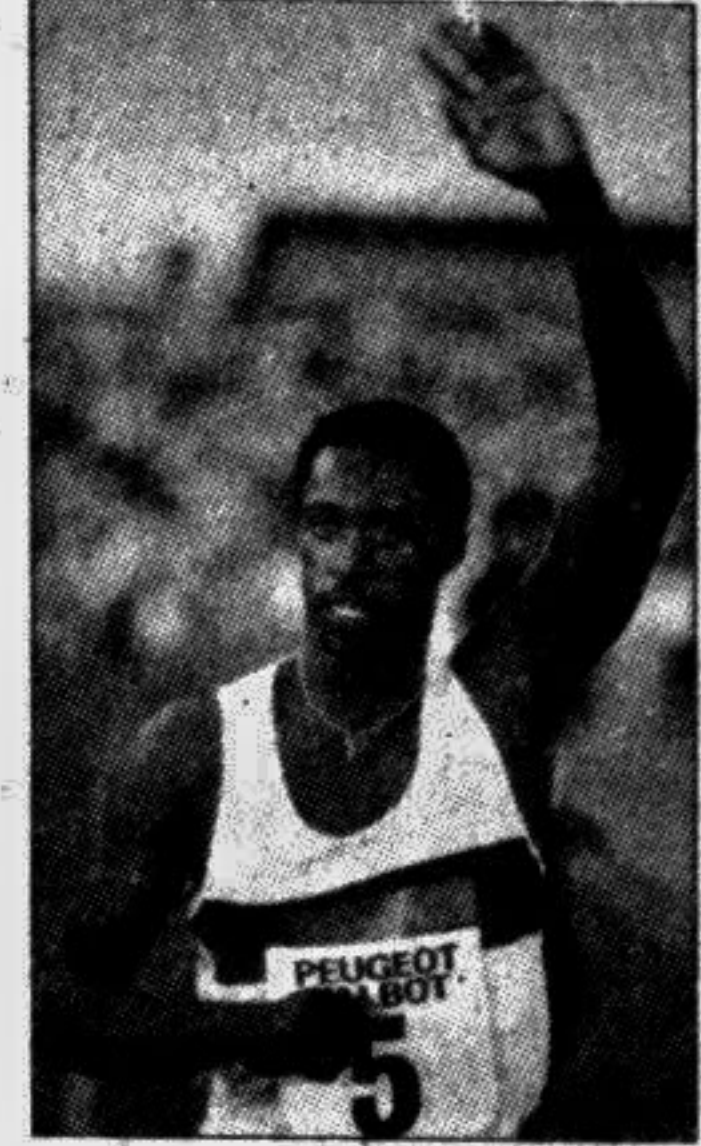
"I thought it was all over

with when they released a statement saying that they were not going to further his suspension. Now they're saying they want me to apologise for something that I didn't do."

"It's no longer about a drug issue," Reynolds continued.

It's about a person's rights. It's now about freedom of speech. It's about things that our country fought for and stands for. And for me to give up on my principles and what I believe in, I would be less than an American citizen."

"I thought it was all over



BUTCH REYNOLDS

has always maintained his innocence and fought the suspension in the US courts.

The suspension ended on December 31 and he's free to compete again.

"I thought it was all over

They've a lot, they want more

JAKARTA, Jan 26: Athletics is proving one of sport's biggest money-spinners, but competitors

want a greater share of the spoils, reports Reuter.

Robert Stinson, treasurer of the International Amateur Athletic Federation, said at the weekend IAAF revenue had grown spectacularly since the early 1980s when it was laying the foundations for a Grand Prix circuit and World Championships.

Between 1988 and 1991 revenue totalled 80 million dollars. "The signs are we will do considerably better," Stinson said. Predicting revenue of around 180 million dollars between 1992 and 1995.

But leading athletes and their agents want big broadcasting deals, which are the main reason for the federation's high expectations, translated into prize money.

Some have threatened to boycott the World Indoor Championships in Toronto in March and the World Championships in Stuttgart in August if they do not get direct prize money from the 91 million dollars contract the IAAF has just signed with the European Broadcasting Union (EBU).

IAAF vice president Ollan Cassel said the EBU deal represented the second biggest rights fees for any sport in Europe outside the Olympics.

He said the windfall was a result of its long-range planning and creative approach to marketing athletics, using a promotion company ISL Marketing AG.

The IAAF signed contracts for four-year periods, while FIFA, soccer's world governing body, had tied itself up for 12 years.

"What happened was that they (FIFA) made this deal three years before 1990, they didn't project the changes in Europe. We recognised what

was going to happen to the EBU," Cassel said.

Organisers of the 1996 Olympic Games in Atlanta, have tied up a record 250 million dollars deal with the EBU for broadcasting rights.

The IAAF was able to take advantage of the breakdown of the broadcasting cartel after the European Community introduced anti-trust laws and talk directly to the EC member countries.

But revenue was being threatened by the fragmentation of the market by satellite and cable television, ISL vice-president Peter Sprogis said.

It cut down viewership, leaving networks without the ratings to attract sponsors especially in the United States.

Europe was also becoming fragmented and Japan would complete satellite and cable television cover by 1997.

Cassel said another way to increase revenue was to get star athletes to promote their events, as USA Track and Field had done for its indoor season starting with the Millrose Games.

Athletes such as Greg Foster, Roger Kingdom and Tony Dees will use the sharp rivalry among them in the 110 metres hurdles to promote their competitions on television.

"We are concentrating on head-to-head competitions," Cassel said, adding that a survey of 500 people found that this was their favourite kind of competition. A world record was ranked seventh in a list of preferences, he added.

Purely athletic events dominated a list of the 1991 World Championships getting 152 million viewers worldwide.

The sport's drawing power was demonstrated as the IAAF council met. Local sponsorship produced a bonus of half a million dollars for Ethiopian athlete Addis Abebe, who closed a world best time in a 10 km road race in Jakarta on Sunday.

But the viewership could drop if disgruntled athletes

without the promise of prize money carry out their boycott threat and if athletics continue to be plagued by doping scandals.

The IAAF is currently embroiled in a messy dispute with 40 metres world record holder Butch Reynolds, who is claiming damages from them after being banned for drug abuse.

A posthumous refusal

TOKYO, Jan 26: Organisers ignored complaints from the International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF) over the testing of material used to construct the controversially fast track used at the 1991 World Championships, reports Reuter.

But Seiko Yasuda, then general-secretary of the World Championships organising committee, was quoted as saying on Monday there was nothing wrong with the material.

"The track material was examined by a Japanese facility instead of an IAAF-owned facility. But there is no such rule that an examination of the track has to be made only by the IAAF facility," Yasuda said.

True, the IAAF complained. But we decided to just ignore it because we are confident of our quality examination," Kyodo news agency quoted Yasuda as saying.

Britain's Sunday Times newspaper reported the stadium track had been tested by a British laboratory and found to be harder and less flexible than permitted by IAAF, making it faster in sprints.

The report said the track was not fully tested by the IAAF before the 1991 World Championships where Lewis set a world record of 9.86 seconds in the 100 metres and Powell broke Bob Beamon's 23-year-old long jump record with an 8.95 metre leap.

Seles in semis

MELBOURNE, Jan 26: Defending champion Monica Seles overcame unseeded French player Julie Halard 6-2, 6-7 (5-7), 6-0 Tuesday night, advancing to the semifinals of the Australian Open after a surprising struggle, reports AP.

Seles, aiming for her third straight Australian title, currently is riding a 23-match winning streak but was given a fright before recovering her composure in the third set.

Gutsy Halard was playing her first Grand Slam quarterfinal in 23 attempts. She played solidly at first, then spectacularly in the second set. She led 5-3 in games and then out-hit Seles after the set went to a tiebreaker.

Seles wasted three match points in the second set, but made no mistake in the third, pouncing on any loose balls from Halard, who is ranked 29th.

Seles conceded more games against Halard than the eight she had given up in the first four rounds.

Laver predicts

Sampras is the man

MELBOURNE, Jan 26: Former Australian tennis star Rod Laver predicts Pete Sampras will follow in his footsteps and complete a Grand Slam of the game's four major tournaments, reports AP.

Laver, the only person in history to complete two Grand Slams, said Tuesday he expects Sampras to win the Australian Open and leave his mark on the history of the sport.

"I look at Sampras and see he has all the shots needed to win a Grand Slam during his career," Laver said.

"He has a big serve and can hit a lot of different shots. He's the one most likely to do it, I think."

Laver said he previously had felt Germany's Boris Becker might be capable of winning the Australian, French and US Opens, along with Wimbledon, in the same year.

"He was very successful on grass and hard courts and being German, I thought he would have been able to win on clay."

"The fact that Becker hasn't won it shows you the depth of tennis today."

American Sampras, the former US Open champion, will play New Zealander Brett Steven on Wednesday in the quarterfinals of the Australian Open.

Becker lost in the first round.

Laver said he felt it was far harder today to win the Grand Slam than when he completed it in 1962 and 1969.

"There are four different surfaces nowadays," he said. "When I won it, three of the four tournaments were on grass."

Men's quarterfinals today

MELBOURNE, Jan 26: The always wacky Swedish fans will be truly schizophrenic. Do they

cheer for long-time hero Stefan Edberg or for underdog Christian Bergstrom?

The two Swedes face off in the men's quarterfinals at the Australian Open on Wednesday, a day that also will see top-seeded Jim Courier play No. 7 Petr Korda. No 3 Pete Sampras meet unseeded Brett Steven and No. 11 Guy Forget take on No. 14 Michael Stich, reports AP.

The Edberg-Bergstrom match will test the allegiance of the Swedish fans, who have become a very vocal institution here. In fact, with their faces painted in the blue-and-yellow national colors, some say they should be institutionalized.

They can, energize competitors at crucial times or get on opposing players' nerves with their chanting, singing and rhythmic clapping. Amos Mansdorf of Israel glared at them after they irritated him in the deciding fourth-set tiebreaker against Edberg last week.

It's anybody's guess who they will side with this time — the second-seeded Edberg, who is nursing a bad back while seeking his third title here, or giant-killer Bergstrom, who counts No. 8 Ivan Lendl and No. 10 Wayne Ferreira among his four victims so far.



Brett Steven of New Zealand fixes his racket during his fourth round match against Australian Richard Fromberg at the Australian Open in Melbourne on Monday. Steven, ranked 71st in the world, beat Fromberg in four and a half hours enroute to quarterfinals.

"I guess they will sing a few songs for Stefan and a few songs for me, so that will be pretty fair, I think," Bergstrom said.

While there is concern about Edberg's back, despite his quick, painless dispatch of France's Arnaud Boetsch in the last round, Bergstrom said, "I

feel pretty good," Sampras said. "Even though I'm a bit stiff here and there and my feet are a bit sore, there's a lot of adrenalin out there and you just have to work through it."

His next opponent is Steven, a New Zealand native and former Southern Methodist University star ranked No. 71, who has had to fight hard each round of his first Grand Slam event.

Steven's last match, against Australia's Richard Fromberg, lasted a grueling 4-1/2 hours, and he had to battle back from a 5-2 deficit in the final set by saving off two match points and taking six of the last seven games.

"Physically, if I can come through and get up and be all right, I hope to be competitive," Steven said. "If not, it's going to be really, really tough because Pete's playing extremely well."

Except for one outburst that cost him a dirr 1,000 fine, Courier has been as quiet on court as usual, slipping into the quarterfinals without losing a set. He will face a kindred spirit in hard-hitting baseliner Korda, the lanky left-handed Czech whom he beat in a pre-tournament exhibition.

"I think it's going to be very aggressive tennis," Korda said.

Stich, the 1991 Wimbledon champion and winner of dirr 2 million at the Grand Slam Cup last month, has struggled to find his form and keep his temper, being fined twice. But the German found his service rhythm late in his last match, and that improved his disposition considerably.

"I think at the end, I was mentally a bit stronger than the other guys, and that maybe the experience I've had over the last couple of years," Stich said.

Korda keeps up the trend

MELBOURNE, Jan 26: At least one Czech has checked into the Australian Open every year since 1985, and the latest is French Open finalist Petr Korda, reports AP.

Ivan Lendl, who became an American in July 1992, was a quarterfinalist in 1985 and 1987-1992. He won the title here in 1989 and 1990.

Miloslav Mecir made it through to the final eight in 1987 and was finalist in 1989. There was no tournament in 1986 when the open was switched from December to January.

his feet — that he attributes to the soft Rebound Ace surface. But as the American Davis Cup start hoped during a warm-up tournament, he seems to be peaking at just the right time.

He swept No 13 MaliVai Washington in the last round in three sets, ripping a dozen aces, and says he is playing better each match.

"I feel pretty good," Sampras said. "Even though I'm a bit stiff here and there and my feet are a bit sore, there's a lot of adrenalin out there and you just have to work through it."

His next opponent is Steven, a New Zealand native and former Southern Methodist University star ranked No. 71, who has had to fight hard each round of his first Grand Slam event.

Steven's last match, against Australia's Richard Fromberg, lasted a grueling 4-1/2 hours, and he had to battle back from a 5-2 deficit in the final set by saving off two match points and taking six of the last seven games.

"Physically, if I can come through and get up and be all right, I hope to be competitive," Steven said. "If not, it's going to be really, really tough because Pete's playing extremely well."

Except for one outburst that cost him a dirr 1,000 fine, Courier has been as quiet on court as usual, slipping into the quarterfinals without losing a set. He will face a kindred spirit in hard-hitting baseliner Korda, the lanky left-handed Czech whom he beat in a pre-tournament exhibition.

"I think it's going to be very aggressive tennis," Korda said.

Stich, the 1991 Wimbledon champion and winner of dirr 2 million at the Grand Slam Cup last month, has struggled to find his form and keep his temper, being fined twice. But the German found his service rhythm late in his last match, and that improved his disposition considerably.

"I think at the end, I was mentally a bit stronger than the other guys, and that maybe the experience I've had over the last couple of years," Stich said.

Korda keeps up the trend

MELBOURNE, Jan 26: At least one Czech has checked into the Australian Open every year since 1985, and the latest is French Open finalist Petr Korda, reports AP.

Ivan Lendl, who became an American in July 1992, was a quarterfinalist in 1985 and 1987-1992. He won the title here in 1989 and 1990.

Miloslav Mecir made it through to the final eight in 1987 and was finalist in 1989. There was no tournament in 1986 when the open was switched from December to January.

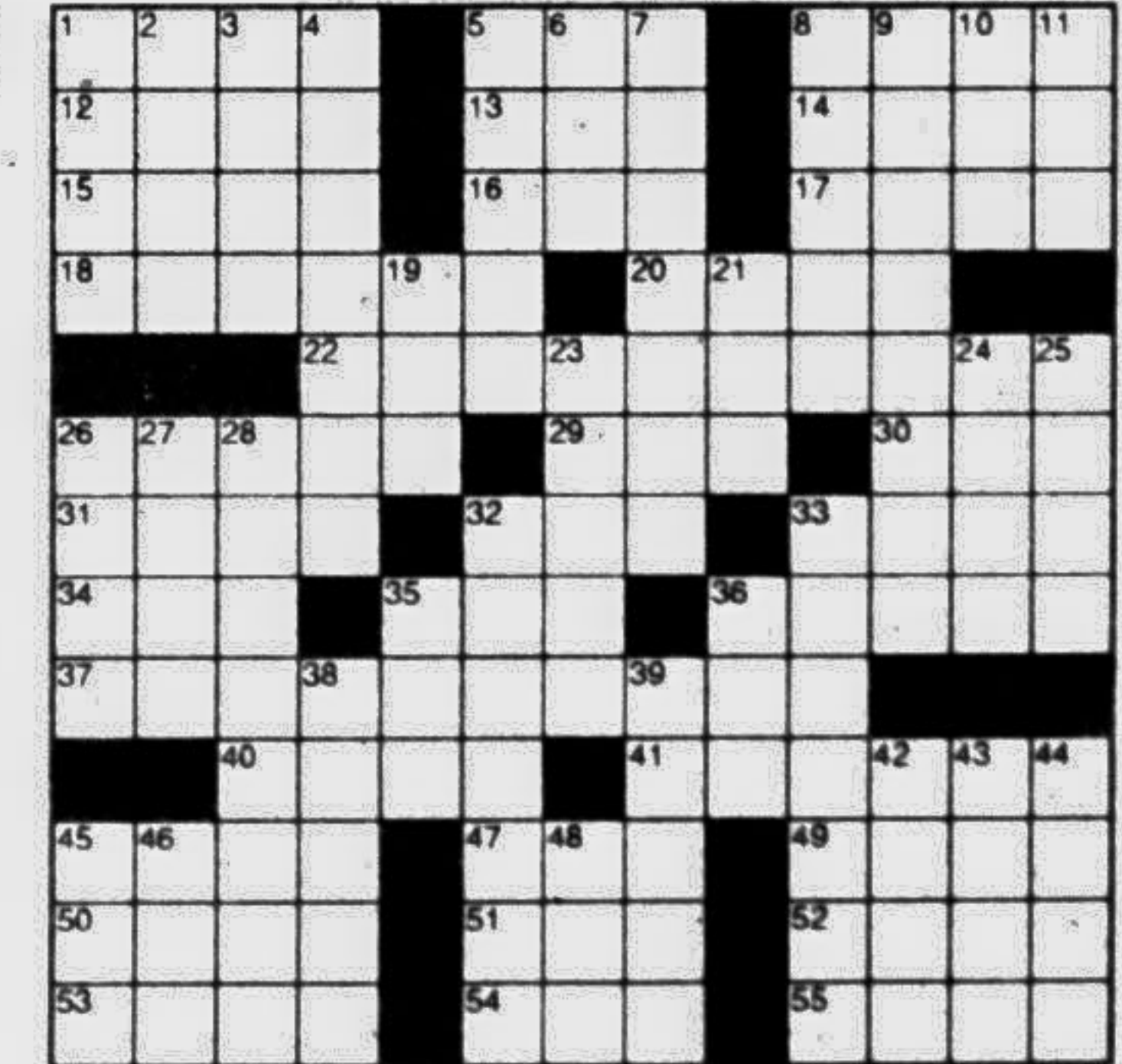
CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

- ACROSS
- 1 Rate of speed
- 5 Ostrich's kin
- 8 Barge or punt
- 12 Argonauts' patroness
- 13 Heavy weight
- 14 Musical ending
- 15 Wise to
- 16 Line of fashion?
- 17 Portent
- 18 Four-poster feature
- 20 Farm fraction
- 22 Church observance
- 26 Gretzky's statistics
- 29 Mamie's man
- 30 "This — recording"
- 31 Associate
- 32 Petrol
- 33 Cry like a banshee
- 34 Zlich
- 35 Shriver of tennis
- 36 Stately residence
- 37 Church observance
- 40 Diplomat's sine qua non
- 41 Brass and bronze, e.g.
- 45 French meat
- 47 Sea flier
- 49 Vicinity
- 50 Incenses
- 51 Charles Dutton sitcom
- 52 "— Three Ships"
- 53 Word before
- 54 Witness
- 55 Actress Diana
- DOWN
- 1 Stylish
- 2 Horne or Olin
- 3 Press agent?
- 4 Full metal jacket?
- 5 Antiknock fluid
- 6 One Stooze
- 7 Reveals one's face
- 8 Contempt
- 9 Jay Leno, e.g.
- 10 Praiseful verse
- 11 Ashy
- 19 — de deux
- 21 Poolroom prop
- 23 Florida city
- 24 Unaltered
- 25 Ivy League campus
- 26 Horde of hobbs
- 27 Medley
- 28 Assigned as a portion
- 32 Hose holders
- 33 Am-bushed
- 35 Army rank: abbr.
- 36 — de mer
- 38 Donald Duck's girlfriend
- 39 Emulate Astaire
- 42 Roughly
- 43 Calendar quota
- 44 Adages
- 45 Tease
- 46 Start of Montana's motto
- 48 Caviar

Solution time: 23 mins.



Yesterday's answer 3-5



3-5 CRYPTOQUIP

X N W L P W J K O P P H V O
M W L V N O M X X G K G S
P N O T L O C H P P U J R P N O U L
N O G S X P W R O P N O L

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: COMPASSIONATE
CARDIOLOGIST'S HEART IS IN THE RIGHT PLACE.

The Cryptoquip is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think