Sally Gunnell of Great Britain (C, gold) is flanked by USA's Sandra Farmer-Patrick (R, silver) and Russia's Margarita Ponomarjowa (L, bronze) as they stand on the podium of the 400m hurdles event at the World Athletics Championships in Stuttgart on Aug 19. Gunnell broke the world record. —AFP photo

Opal exhibition in Stuttgart

STUTTGART, Aug 20: Briton Sally Gunnell set the first world record of the World Athletics Championships on Thursday and Merlene Ottey finally got the gold medal which has eluded her throughout her career, reports Reuter.

In the first of two gripping women's races, Olympic champion Gunnell stormed to victory in 52.74 seconds in the 400 metres hurdles, slicing one-fifth of a second off the previous record, as she lunged for the finish line to edge out American Sandra Farmer-Patrick.

Ottey, the 33-year old Jamaican who lost the 100 metres title by one-thousandth of a second, just held on to win the 200 metres gold as American Gwen Torrence closed fast the last few strides.

Ukrainian Sergei Bubka became the only athlete to take world titles in a single event at all four championships held when he cleared six metres to win the pole vault.

And there was a stirring win for American Olympic champion Kevin Young in the men's 400 metres hurdles.

Ottey's jinx on gold was in grave danger of continuing as the Jamaican reached for the self-destruct button in the last 10 metres of her race.

Clearly ahead throughout and apparently in total control, she seemed to stop running as the sprinters neared the line and Olympic champion Torrence closed fast and almost caught her.

Torrence raised her arms in triumph, thinking she had just won. Had the race been half a metre longer, she surely would have.

Bubka's delight at winning a fourth gold with just three clearances at 5.70, 5.90 and six metres, turned to anger and frustration when he aimed for his 35th world record with three unsuccessful attempts at 6.14.

The Ukrainian, who for once missed out on a medal at last year's Olympics, was furious with judges who initially counted him out before one attempt, seemingly unware that six minutes are allowed for record attempts rather than the usual two.

"I was ready for a world record," he complained afterwards.

Young, hero of Barcelona where he broke the nine-year-old world record of Ed Moses with an exhilarating 46.78-second run, produced the sixth fastest race in history to win in 47.18.

The American found no one capable of matching his blistering pace as he came off the final bend to take the lead, leaving defending world champion Samuel Matete of Zambia to take the silver and Jamaica's Winthrop Graham the bronze.

"I'm the big daddy in this house," said the fun-loving American who cavorted around the track on his lap of honour, delighting the crowd with his clowning and juggling with his shoes.

It was not such a happy day for some other big names. World and Olympic champion Heike Henkel of Germany just qualified for the final of the women's high jump but then was forced to pull out with an Achilles tendon injury.

Bulgarian world record holder Stepka Kostadinova will also miss the final, failing to qualify with her best jump of 1.90 metres. Officials at one stage said she had made the final but later admitted to making a mistake.

Olympic decathlon champion Robert Zmelik of the Czech Republic pulled out on the first day after four events because of an ankle injury.

American world record holder Dan O'Brien led with 4,598 points at the halfway stage by just four points from German Paul Meier and was complaining of a groin injury.

The men's 1,500 metres world record holder Noureddine Morceli of Algeria, who arrived in Stuttgart only on Wednesday evening after teasing organisers about whether he would take part or not, ran the fastest time to react the semifinals.

But former world champion Abdi Bile of Somalia and European champion Jens-Peter Herold of Germany were both eliminated after separate falls in their heats.

Medals table after the fifth day of the World Athletics Championships on Thursday (tabulate under gold, silver, bronze):

United States	7	5	2
Germany	2	1	2
China	2	1	2
Kenya	2	0	2
Britain	2	0	1
Russia	1	4	4
Jamaica	1	1	2
Ukraine	1	1	0
Finland	1	1	0
Spain	1	0	2
Japan	1	0	1
Tadjikistan	1	0	0
Czech Republic	1	0	0
Mozambique	1	0	0
Italy	0	3	0
Ethiopia	0	1	1
Belarus	0	1	1
Zambia	0	1	0
Portugal	0	1	0
Namibia	0	1	0
Kazakhstan	0	1	0
Australia	0	1	0
Uzbekistan	0	0	1
Romania	0	0	1
Hungary	0	0	1
Netherlands	0	0	1
Denmark	0	0	1

Note: Two bronze medals were awarded in the pole vault.

O' Brien on course

STUTTGART, Germany, Aug 20: Dan O'Brien extended his lead in the decathlon Friday as he closed in on a second consecutive World Championship title, reports AP.

The American world record-holder clocked 14.08 seconds in the 110-metre hurdles and threw the shot 47.92 metres (157-3), giving him 6,389 points after seven events of the two-day competition.

O'Brien, who led by four points after the first day, boosted his lead over Paul Meier of Germany to 118 points. Meier, who clocked 14.63 in the hurdles and threw the shot 45.72 metres (150) had 6,271 points.

Eduard Hamalainen of Belarus climbed into third place, with 6,270 points. He set a world record decathlon time of 13.57 seconds in the hurdles — bettering his own previous mark of 13.65 and threw the shot 49.26 metres (161-7).

Morceli makes a point

STUTTGART, Aug 20: After weeks of defying World Championship organisers with a boycott threat, it took defending champion Noureddine Morceli only three minutes Thursday to reimpose his authority in the 1,500, reports AP.

The brilliant Algerian took the lead in his qualifying heat with just under a lap to go to outrun his challengers and an ugly crash that could have jeopardized his chances of reaching the semifinals.

"I want to be a champion here because all the great athletes are here," Morceli said after winning his heat, side stepping any controversy that his defiance of the International Amateur Athletic Federation had caused.

While Morceli coasted in the home straight to set the best time of the night (3:37.84), the other runners were having trouble staying untangled.

Veteran Steve Cram of Britain hit Jens-Peter Herold with his hand, sending the German sprawling across the track. Only Herold, a favorite to reach the final, was affected.

Morceli seemed as oblivious to that drama on the track as to the commotion his demands for money had caused. He arrived in Stuttgart only late Wednesday, keeping everyone in suspense whether he would show up.

Gunnell sets a new record

STUTTGART, Aug 20: Sandra Farmer-Patrick led Sally Gunnell over each of the 10 flights in the world 400 metres hurdles final, broke the world record and still finished second, reports Reuter.

A desperate late surge by Gunnell over the final 10 metres gave the Olympic champion the gold medal and a world record of 52.74 seconds.

Farmer-Patrick, sprawled on the track, could only look up in disbelief as Gunnell held her hands high in the air to acknowledge the tumultuous applause.

"You have got to have a dream," said Gunnell. "You have got to believe you can get out there and do it."

For Farmer-Patrick, who ran the race of her life, there was initial despair, then pride as she realised her time of 52.79 had also broken the old world record of 52.94.

"After the race I was devastated. But now I'm holding my head up high," she said.

The race had promised to evolve into something special after the semifinals which revealed that Gunnell was hurdling with the precision and control she showed at last year's Olympics while Farmer-Patrick's technique had improved dramatically since Barcelona.

Farmer-Patrick was first to rise over the initial flight and held the advantage at the final barrier, showing she is now a true hurdler rather than just a runner and jumper.

The gold medal was in reach for the Jamaican-born American until Gunnell, grimacing as she made a supreme last effort, clawed back the deficit and stretched for the line to win by five hundredths of a second.

"I wanted to win tonight," she said. "I didn't know I was going to break the world record.

"The whole year has been geared towards tonight. The world record was just a total bonus."

Farmer-Patrick is now coached by Bob Kersee, husband of Olympic and world heptathlon champion Jackie Joyner-Kersee.

Kersee, who had a noisy argument with officials trying to prevent him getting on to the track to attend to Farmer-Patrick, said Thursday's race had opened up the promise of an historic rivalry.

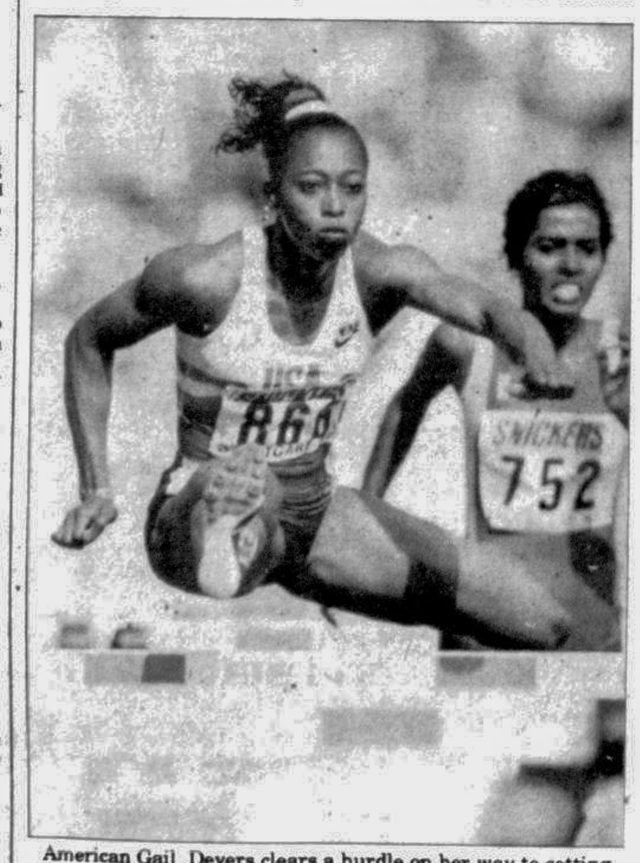
"Sandra has sent a message," Kersee said. "This is going to be like Muhammad Ali against Joe Frazier, Jackie Joyner against Heike Drechsler." Farmer-Patrick added: "Sally knows every time she races me she is going to have to break the world record."

Thursday's race was final confirmation that Gunnell is now one of the greatest hurdlers of all time.

A former 100 metres hurdlers who realised she would never be a title contender unless she moved up a distance, Gunnell is now Olympic, world and Commonwealth champion plus world record holder.

"Technically, it was my perfect race," she said. "The time I have been hoping for was 52.50. I think I can run faster."

So does Farmer-Patrick, so does Kersee and the scene has now been set for some electrifying contests when the Grand Prix circuit resumes after the championships.



American Gail Devers clears a hurdle on her way to setting the day's fastest time of 12.74 seconds in the women's 100m hurdles heat at the World Athletics Championships in Stuttgart on Thursday. On the right is Sriyani Kulwansa from Shri Lanka. — AFP photo

Australia at the receiving end

LONDON, Aug 20: England bowlers Devon Malcolm and Angus Fraser stifled a potent batting attack Friday as Australia struggled to 239 for eight on the second day of the sixth cricket Test at The Oval, reports AP.

Playing in their first Test of the series, Malcolm and Fraser each took three wickets and Australia looked certain to fall far short of England's first innings total of 380 all out.

Derbyshire fast-bowler Malcolm, ignored by the selectors this summer despite having played in 24 previous Tests, finally supplied the pace needed to give England a chance for their first five-day win over Australia since 1986.

Fraser, playing in his first Test since aggravating a hip injury 2.5 years ago, fooled the Australians with swinging deliveries on a firm pitch thought to be ideal for batsmen.

Only opener Mark Taylor was able to pass the half-century mark a feat achieved by four England batsmen on Thursday.

Earlier, Paul Reiffel took two wickets as England's tail-enders, resuming on an overnight total of 353 for seven, were dismissed in less than an hour.

When Australia came to bat, it was Malcolm who struck first.

On the bowler's ninth delivery, Michael Slater tried to hook a boundary, but instead looped the ball off the top edge to Graham Gooch for a simple catch at short leg. Out for four, Australia stood at nine for one.

The same combination saw off David Boon. But not before the Tasmania batsman sliced a six off Malcolm over third man.

But with the score on 30, Boon was out for 13 when he hit an inside edge off his pad to give Gooch another easy grab.

With Australia at 42 for two at lunch, England called on Fraser.

Playing in place of the injured Martin Bicknell, the Middlesex paceman took a wicket on his 17th delivery when he fooled Mark Waugh with a ball that broke back from off stump. Waugh, who scored 10, could only edge the chest-high bounce into the gloves of wicket keeper Alec Stewart to leave Australia at 53 for three.

Australia retaliated with the left-handed duo of Taylor and captain Allan Border, who built a partnership of 79 before Malcolm captured wicket No. 3.

Taylor, who reached 50 when he hit a cover drive for four off Steve Watkin, was out for 70 when he backed up on a Malcolm delivery and sliced it to Nasser Hussain at gully.

Fraser added to Australia's collapse by taking two more wickets after the tea interval.

Steve Waugh played inside an off-stump delivery and was bowled for 20, and Allan Border nicked a similar ball back to Stewart to retire with 48.

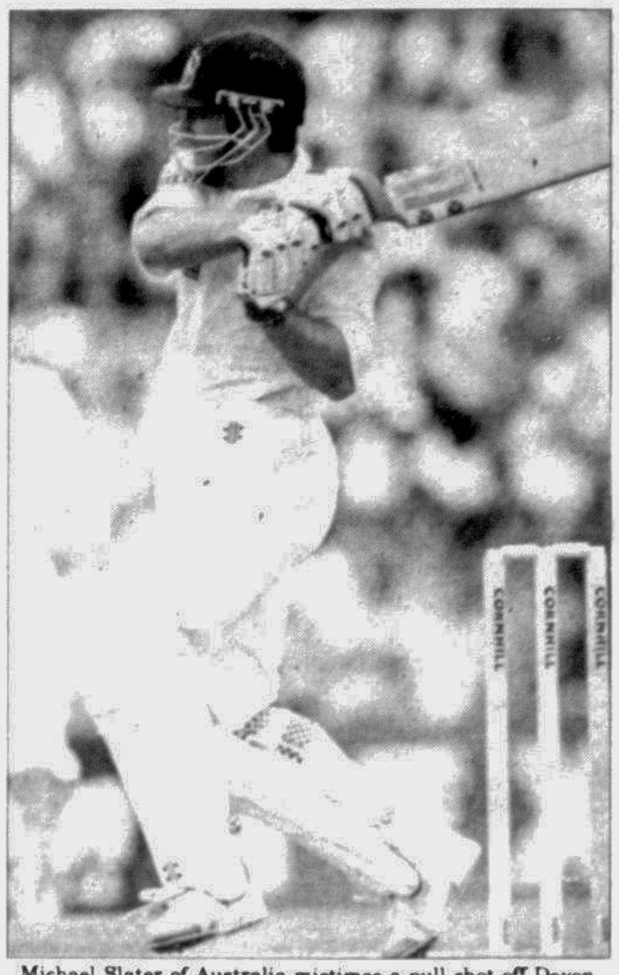
That left Australia at 181 for six, and it was Watkin's turn to add to the tourists' misery.

The Glamorgan fast-bowler, called up to the team before the fifth Test, bowled a double-wicket maiden over. He got Merv Hughes out for seven on a drive to Mark Ramprakash at cover point and forced Reiffel to take a week swing that pushed the ball to Matthew Maynard at first slip.

England amassed their total Thursday with half-centuries from Gooch, Michael Atherton, Graeme Hick and Stewart.

Hughes finished the innings with three wickets for 121 runs. Steve Waugh, Warne and Reiffel each took two wickets.

Australia lead the series 4-0, with one draw. Another victory would give the tourists their best-ever record in an Ashes series in England.



Michael Slater of Australia mistimes a pull shot off Devon Malcolm of England to be caught by Graham Gooch for four during the second day of the sixth and final Test at The Oval yesterday. — AFP photo

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at close of the second day Thursday of the sixth cricket Test between England and Australia at the Oval:

ENGLAND: First innings

Gooch c Border b Steve Waugh	56
Atherton lbw b Steve Waugh	50
Hick c Warne b May	80
Maynard b Warne	20
Hussain c Taylor b Warne	30
Stewart c Healy b Hughes	76
Ramprakash c Healy b Hughes	6
Fraser b Reiffel	28
Watkin c S Waugh b Reiffel	13
Such c M Waugh b Hughes	4
Malcolm not out	0
Extras: (lb7, W1, nb9)	17
Total: all out	380

Fall of wickets: 1-88; 2-143; 3-177; 4-231; 5-253; 6-272; 7-339; 8-363; 9-374.

Bowling:	O	M	R	W
Hughes	30	7	121	3
Reiffel	28.5	4	88	2
S Waugh	12	2	45	2
Warne	20	5	70	2
M Waugh	1	0	17	0
May	10	3	32	1

AUSTRALIA: First innings

Taylor c Hussain b Malcolm	70
Slater c Gooch b Malcolm	4
Boon c Gooch b Malcolm	13
M Waugh c Stewart b Fraser	10
Border c Stewart b Fraser	48
S Waugh b Fraser	20
Healy not out	39
Hughes c Ramprakash b Watkin	7
Reiffel c Maynard b Watkin	0
Warne not out	14
Extras: (b3, lb5, w2, nb4)	14
Total: for eight wickets	239

Fall of wickets: 1-9; 2-30; 3-53; 4-132; 5-164; 6-181; 7-196; 8-196.

Still to bat: May

Bowling:	O	M	R	W
Malcolm	20	4	70	3
Watkin	23	4	66	2
Fraser	20	3	63	3
Such	14	4	32	0

Rhodes regains touch in time

KURUNEGALA, Shri Lanka, Aug 20: Jonty Rhodes, one of South Africa's most valuable batting assets, laid to rest any concern over his form with a solid 50 as the tourists drew their three-day game against a Shri Lankan Board XI here Friday, reports AFP.

Rhodes, who had scored just 10 runs in the two innings he has had in the current tour, found his form in the nick of time to give a boost to the batting line-up ahead of Sunday's first one-day international in central Kandy.

Having bowled out the Board XI 42 runs behind their first innings score of 333 for 9 declared, the South Africans reached 156 for 4 in their second innings when the umpires called off the match five overs from the end.

Vice-captain Hansie Cronje was unbeaten on 38 after sharing a 70-run fourth-wicket stand with Rhodes.

Cronje's 103-minute innings contained a six off left-arm spinner Don Anurasiri and three boundaries.

It was evident that South Africa not only wanted more batting practice but also a timely knock from the right-handed Rhodes.

In fact cricket manager Mike Procter promoted the 24 year-old batsman over two others in the batting order to provide him with another opportunity to come good before the major matches.

"We wanted him to get more batting. We are delighted at the way he played today," said skipper Kepler Wessels.

Rhodes was eventually out shortly after reaching his half-century when he tried to sweep Anurashri but was caught at forward short-leg by Dulip Samaraweera. He had four boundaries in his 106-ball knock.

Speedster Fanie de Villiers captured three more wickets as Shri Lanka lost their last five wickets for 29 runs after resuming from an overnight 262 four 5.

Test all-rounder Sanath Jayasuriya did not last long when he played a rash stroke to point where Rhodes took the catch off the third ball of the day from paceman Richard Snell.

Jayasuriya fell at his overnight score of 54 inclusive of nine 4s and two sixes.

The home side were eventually bowled out for 291 in their first innings half an hour before lunch.

De Villiers finished with best figures of 5 for 68 while Snell returned figures of 4 for 75.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at close on the final day of the three-day match between South Africa and Shri Lanka Board XI at the Welegedera Stadium here Friday:

SOUTH AFRICA: 1st innings — 333 for 9 dec (AC Hudson 91, KC Wessels 62, PL Symcox 77 not out; Dharmasena 5-91).

SHRI LANKA BOARD XI: 1st innings (262 for 5 overnight)

MC Mendis c Palframan b De Villiers	5
D Samaraweera c Palframan b De Villiers	72
HP Tillekeratne b Snell	3
H Wickramaratne c Cullinan b Eksteen	82
ST Jayasuriya c Rhodes b Snell	54
N Fernando lbw Snell	11
U Chandana c Cook b Snell	37
DL Liyanage b De Villiers	7
K Dharmasena lbw De Villiers	1
SD Anurasiri not out	2
R Pushpakumara c Palframan b De Villiers	0
Extras: (b6, lb6, nb5)	17
Total: (all out)	291

Fall of wickets: 1-12; 2-23; 3-160; 4-182; 5-223; 6-262; 7-285; 8-288; 9-291.

Bowling	O	M	R	W
Snell	27	7	75	4
De Villiers	30.4	8	68	5
Cronje	10	4	13	0
Symcox	25	9	71	0
Eksteen	13	3	52	1

SOUTH AFRICA: 2nd innings

KC Wessels c Fernando b Liyanage	17
AC Hudson lbw Liyanage	31
NJ Rhodes c Samaraweera b Anurasiri	50
D Cullinan b Liyanage	17
H Cronje not out	38
SJ Cook not out	2
Extras: (lb1)	1
Total: (4 wkts)	156

Fall of wickets: 1-34; 2-59; 3-83; 4-153;

Bowling	O	M	R	W
Liyanage	14	5	29	3
Pushpakumara	11	1	57	0
Anurasiri	19	2	53	1
Dharmasena	8	4	16	0
Tillekeratne	1	1	0	0

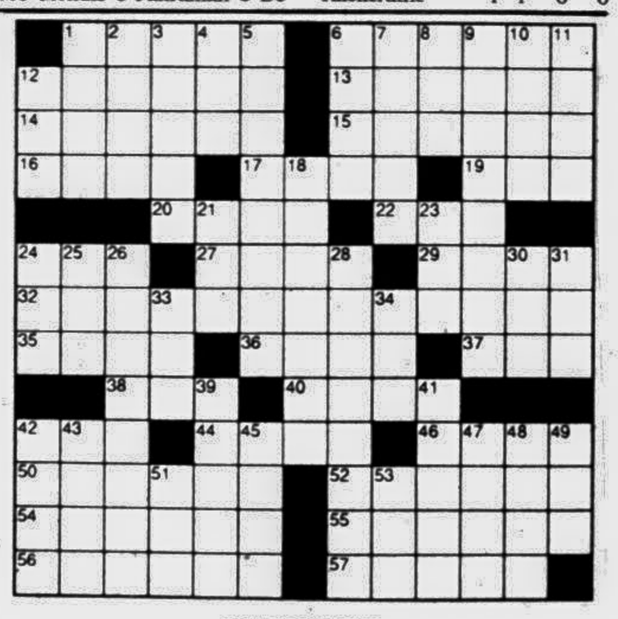
CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 Sir's counterpart
6 Conceded
12 "The — Game" ('57 movie)
13 Ferdinand's widow
14 Warlike woman
15 Video display elements
16 Paddock parent
17 Yawn
19 He meets a lot of sick puppies
20 In need of sharpening
22 Resort
24 Prosperous times
27 Simple
29 He gave us a lift
32 Bottom half of a winning ticket?
35 Farm fraction
36 Enervates
37 "— Tripper" (1965 song)
38 Capp and Capone
40 Bunt type
42 Siesta
44 Danny or Stubby
46 Met melody
50 Muppet on drums
52 Fountainhead
54 Be benevolent
55 Swimmer's choice
56 Viewpoints
57 Kilns

DOWN
1 One of the Three Bears
2 Admitting air
3 Stupefied
4 Start of a Latin I trio
5 They mutilate
6 Reagan role opposite Pat O'Brien
7 Hardy of fashion
8 Irritate
9 Up
10 Eric of "Monty Python"
11 Cartoonist Thomas
12 Dawber of "Mork and Mindy"
18 "So soon?"
21 Ref
23 Spacecraft compartment
24 Puzzledom's grape
25 Photo
26 Method of de-icing
28 Strong coffee
30 "— Little Spanish Town"
31 Pen
33 Conger or moray
34 "This — recording"
39 Emulate Brian Boitano
41 Kin of actress Teri
42 Zip, in Xochimilco
43 In due time
45 Pub potations
47 Laugh-a-minute
48 Print-shop supply
49 Personal question?
51 — de mer
53 Harper Valley org.

Solution time: 24 mins.

B	A	R		P	I	L	E		S	T	O	W
O	L	E		A	D	O	S		I	O	W	A
A	D	A	M	W	E	S	T		G	R	E	Y
R	A	M	O	N	A		U	G	H			
			D	E	L		A	U	T	I	S	M
T	O	Y	E	D		F	R	Y		N	A	E
A	W	O	L		K	E	Y		M	E	L	T
M	E	G		L	I	Z		M	A	Z	E	S
E	N	A	M	E	L		P	I	C			
			O	I	L		A	G	H	A	S	T
F	R	O	M		J	A	Y	N	O	R	T	H
B	A	L	M		O	L	E	O		E	Y	E
I	N	D	Y		Y	A	R	N		A	X	E



CRYPTOQUIP

J W H U C V U W K P J O O D V K H H V U O N H H U C D , M K B P N P V K M Q N N C M J K Q , "B N P U I K H V H V U I K P."

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: OVERWEIGHT PEDESTRIANS MIGHT WELL POUND THE PAVEMENT.

Today's Cryptoquip clue: V equals H

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.