

Becker bows to Chesnokov

COMMACK, New York, Aug. 25: Second-seed Boris Becker lost to Russia's unseeded Andrei Chesnokov, 6-4, 3-6, 6-2 in the first round of the 300,000 dollar Waldbaum Hamlet Cup on Tuesday and the German did not go quietly into the night, reports Reuter.

Becker, the fourth-ranked tennis player, was outplayed through most of the match as Chesnokov, ranked 25th, took advantage of his numerous errors.

Becker lost a 3-0 lead in the first set, scoring only four points as he fell behind 3-5.

"That's when I got confidence I could win, when I broke his service the first time," Chesnokov said. "I played well and he missed a lot," Chesnokov said. "I had a good service return. That was the key."

After Becker scored a decisive break in the eighth game of the second set and held at love in the ninth to even the

match, Chesnokov broke service in the fourth and eighth games of the third set to win.

Becker led 40-0 in the last game, but errors dumped him into deuce. Chesnokov got match point with a backhand lob and won when Becker double faulted.

"I had trouble with the umpire (Richard Kaufman, US)," Becker said, "and it isn't the first time I've had trouble with him. There must have been 20 bad calls on both sides of the net and he didn't have the guts to overrule one of them."

Becker said he also asked the tournament director to allow him to withdraw from the tournament last Friday but was refused.

"I was tired and knew I wouldn't be 100 per cent if I played here. I asked them to use the wild card they gave me for someone else."

Tournament director Wendy Parr said: "Becker asked for a wild card entry three weeks ago and we advertised him being here. He asked to withdraw last Friday, the day we are making

human rights."

The letter was sent to the heads of such companies as Coca-Cola, Visa International, Eastman Kodak, Xerox and Time Warner, Inc. All are or have been Olympic sponsors.

Disclosure of the letter came as Beijing's candidacy received the backing of the head of the 42-member Olympic Council of Asia, a Chinese sports official said Wednesday.

He Zhenliang, head of China's Olympic Committee, and delegates from seven other Asian countries attended an OCA bureau meeting that concluded Tuesday with a pledge by its president, Sheikh Ahmed Al-Fahad Al-Sabah, to back the Beijing bid.

The Kuwaiti president said he would write all council members to back Beijing's bid for the 2000 Olympics.

The 90 members of the International Olympic Committee will vote in Monte Carlo on Sept 23 to select a host city from among Beijing, Berlin, Manchester, England, Istanbul and Sydney, Australia. Brasilia pulled out earlier this

Beijing bid's newest foe

NEW YORK, Aug. 25: A leading human rights group is urging major corporate sponsors of sports events to help defeat Beijing's candidacy for the 2000 Olympics, reports AP.

In a letter to leading officers of 17 companies, Human Rights Watch said the Chinese government's record of political and religious oppression made it unfit to host the Games and that awarding the Olympics to Beijing could wind up smearing any companies that chose to associate with the event.

"Given China's widely condemned human rights record, a Beijing-based Olympiad is likely to seriously damage the prestige of the Olympic Games," the letter, signed by Human Rights Watch chairman Robert L. Bernstein, said. "In that event, your company's public image could also suffer by association."

"I hope you will seriously consider the possible implications of a Beijing Olympiad and use your influence on behalf of

human rights."

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He, the highest-ranking Chinese sports official to visit Taiwan since 1949, met Wednesday with Wu Ching-kuo, Taiwan's IOC member, to seek his support.

Wu declined to say if he would vote for Beijing, although the Chinese Olympic chief offered to let Taiwan play host to a few contests if Beijing won the bid.

The nationalist government fled to Taiwan in 1949 after losing a civil war to communist forces in China. Both governments contend they are the sole legitimate rulers of all of China.

In Sydney, Bruce Baird, the New South Wales state government minister in charge of the Sydney bid, said he did not expect all Asian countries to support Beijing simply because they were China's neighbours.

"There is a great fragmentation in terms of where votes are coming from," he said. "People cannot make bold assertions as to where they think votes are coming from and we certainly know our bid is looking good."

Chan tumbles out of Welsh Open

BLACKPOOL, England, Aug. 25: Hong Kong's Franky Chan slumped to his third successive defeat here on Tuesday night to crash out of the Welsh Open, reports AFP.

The Kowloon Snooker Club owner, whose form has dipped since his successful passage to the final qualifying competition to the Dubai Classic and Grand Prix, went down 5-2 to Englishman Colin Morton in the seventh qualifying round. Yasin Merchant ploughed a lone furrow for India's snooker players to reach the last 128.

The world number 188, who reached the same stage of the European Open last week, maintained his solid form to make it four wins in a row in the 140,000 pound (£210,000 dollar) event.

Merchant, the highest-ranked Indian professional, needed only 82 minutes to whitewash Eddie Lott 5-0 before including breaks of 71, 43, 71 and 54 during a 5-3 win over Lott's fellow Englishman, Mark Davis.

When the tournament resumes on September 18, Merchant needs to negotiate three more rounds to secure a place in February's concluding 32-man phase.

His compatriots — Sontu Multani and Geet Sethi — will not be there.

After easy victories over Englishmen Matt Wilson and Tony Rempel by 5-2 and 5-1 margins, Multani appealed on course for the next stage when he established a 4-2 lead over Steve Duggan.

However, Duggan, who

reached the last 16 of the 1989 World Championship, drew on his greater experience to snatch a 5-4 verdict.

Sethi, the world billiards champion, opened with a 5-1 rout of veteran Irishman Dessie Sheehan, but then slipped 5-3 to Karl Burrows.

Burrows constructed runs of 59, 57 and a 137 total clearance, the tournament's highest break so far.

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Six-man Aussie Davis Cup team named

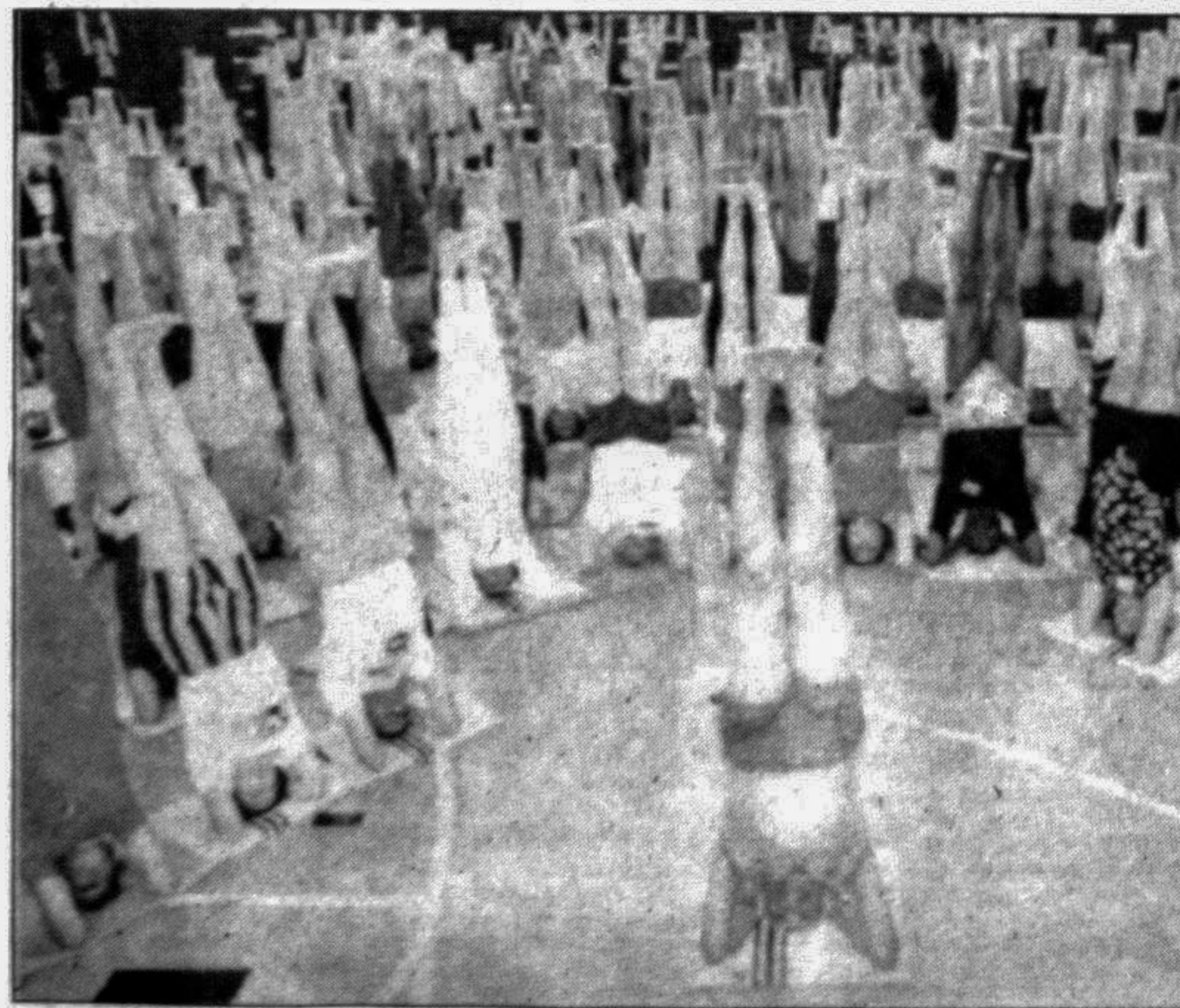
MELBOURNE, Aug. 25: Australia named a six-man squad today for the Davis Cup semifinal against India next month and said a doctor would go with the players and they would drink only bottled Australian water during their stay in India, reports Reuter.

National body Tennis Australia said Richard Fromberg, Wally Masur, Jamie Morgan, Jason Stoltenberg, Todd Woodbridge and Mark Woodford were in the squad named by team captain Neals Fraser.

All six players were members of Australia's team which won two ties earlier this year in the Davis Cup.

Tennis Australia president Geoff Pollard said the national tennis body had decided to send a doctor with the squad for the semifinal at Chandigarh, from September 24 to 26. It will be the first time an Australian Davis Cup squad has had a travelling medical officer.

The winners of the semifinal will play either Sweden or Germany in the Davis Cup final on December 3 to 5.



Indian yoga master (C) conducts a 'shirshasana' session during an international yoga convention at Crystal Palace on August 24. The 'guru', in his 70s, has been teaching his method for more than 50 years. — AFP photo

Easy passage for Indonesian shuttlers

NEW DELHI, Aug. 25: Indonesia's top-ranked duo of Joko Suprianto and Susi Susanti have drawn easy passages in the league phase of next month's 160,000-dollar World Cup badminton tournament here, reports AFP.

The annual five-event tournament, which runs from September 1 to 5 at the Indra Gandhi Indoor Stadium here, features the Game's top players under invitation from the International Badminton Federation (IBF).

World number one Suprianto depends his men's singles title, bunched in Group A with Park Sung-Woo of South Korea and late entries Pontus Jontti of Finland and Peng Chen of Malaysia, according to the draw released here Wednesday.

The winner of the round-robin group joins leaders from three other groups in the semi-finals of the 16-member men's singles event.

Suprianto's chief rivals for the winner's cheque of 12,000 dollars will be fellow-Indonesians Allan Budi Kusuma and Hermawan Susanto.

Olympic champion Kusuma, who won the recent Indonesian Open, is placed in group C with Sweden's Jens Olsson, Thailand's Sompol Kookasemkit and Ong Ewe Hock of Malaysia.

Susanto, runner-up to Suprianto at the last World Cup, is in Group D with Liu Jun of China, Kim Hak-Kyun of South Korea and England's Anders Nielsen.

World number one and Olympic gold medalist Susanti leads a field of 12 in the ladies' singles also divided into four groups for the preliminary phase of the tournament.

Susanti's opponents in the league will be Christine Magnusson of Sweden and Joane Muggerridge of England before facing an expected semifinal clash against depending champion Tang Jiahong of China.

Rexy Mainaky and Ricky Subagja of Indonesia head the eight pairs competing in the men's doubles event. There will be six pairs each for the women's doubles and mixed doubles.

Jontti and Chen were included in the star-studded men's field after the withdrawal of world number five Thomas Stuer-Lauridsen of Denmark and Malaysian Foo Kok Kenong due to injuries.

Waiting to be rid of dinge

MANCHESTER, Aug. 25: The 2000 Summer Olympics offer Manchester a heaven-sent opportunity to rebuild the rotting core of the world's first industrial city, reports Reuter.

Much of urban Manchester resembles scenes from the long-running television soap opera "Coronation Street" with gloomy rows of back to back terraced houses, boarded up shops and derelict factories.

"This area is in dire need of regeneration," admits Dick Palmer, general secretary of the British Olympic Association referring to Manchester's run-down image.

The Olympics would provide a wonderful legacy for the city of Manchester for many generations to come. The bid organizers say Manchester offers the International Olympic Committee (IOC) a compact, risk-free Games where the athletes would come first.

Although the bid is technically excellent, Manchester is arguably the least glamorous of the five candidates.

But bid leader Bob Scott rejects this as a significant weakness, insisting the city is happy to be judged on its technical merit. "We don't believe it is a glamour parade," he says.

Manchester's bid concentrates competition in 15 of the 25 Olympic sports in the centre of this sports-mad city. Athletes would be able to walk from their village along a canal to the city centre, the main stadium complex and venues for 10 sports.

Transport and security would be no problem, organizers say. Manchester has a large local rail network and the Metrolink Light Railway which would link venues.

Police are used to dealing with the 50,000-strong crowds who watch the Manchester United soccer club. Britain's anti-terrorist experience built up over 20 years dealing with the Irish Republican Army would also be put to good use.

After losing the race for the 1996 Games to the US city of Atlanta, Mancunians — the 2.6 million people who inhabit this northern English city — believe Britain deserves to host the Games again.

London staged the 1908 and 1948 Olympics and British athletes have never missed a Games. "Britain is a good son of the Olympic movement whose time has come," says Scott.

"Manchester does not have just one argument. It has a raft of arguments," he added.

"You would choose us if you didn't want to take any risks. We will get it right. We believe we have the makings of a classic Games."

The athletes would be housed in a village stretching in a "dog bone" shape from the city centre to the Olympic centre, containing the main stadium, the badminton and gymnastics arena and velodrome. Every athlete would have a single bedroom.

Four universities, containing 10,000 rooms, would be used to house the media. Cruise liner would line the Manchester ship canal for sponsors' guests.

Manchester already has 28,000 hotel beds and a further 7,500 would be provided by 2000. All hotels have signed a charter guaranteeing no price increases specifically for the Games.

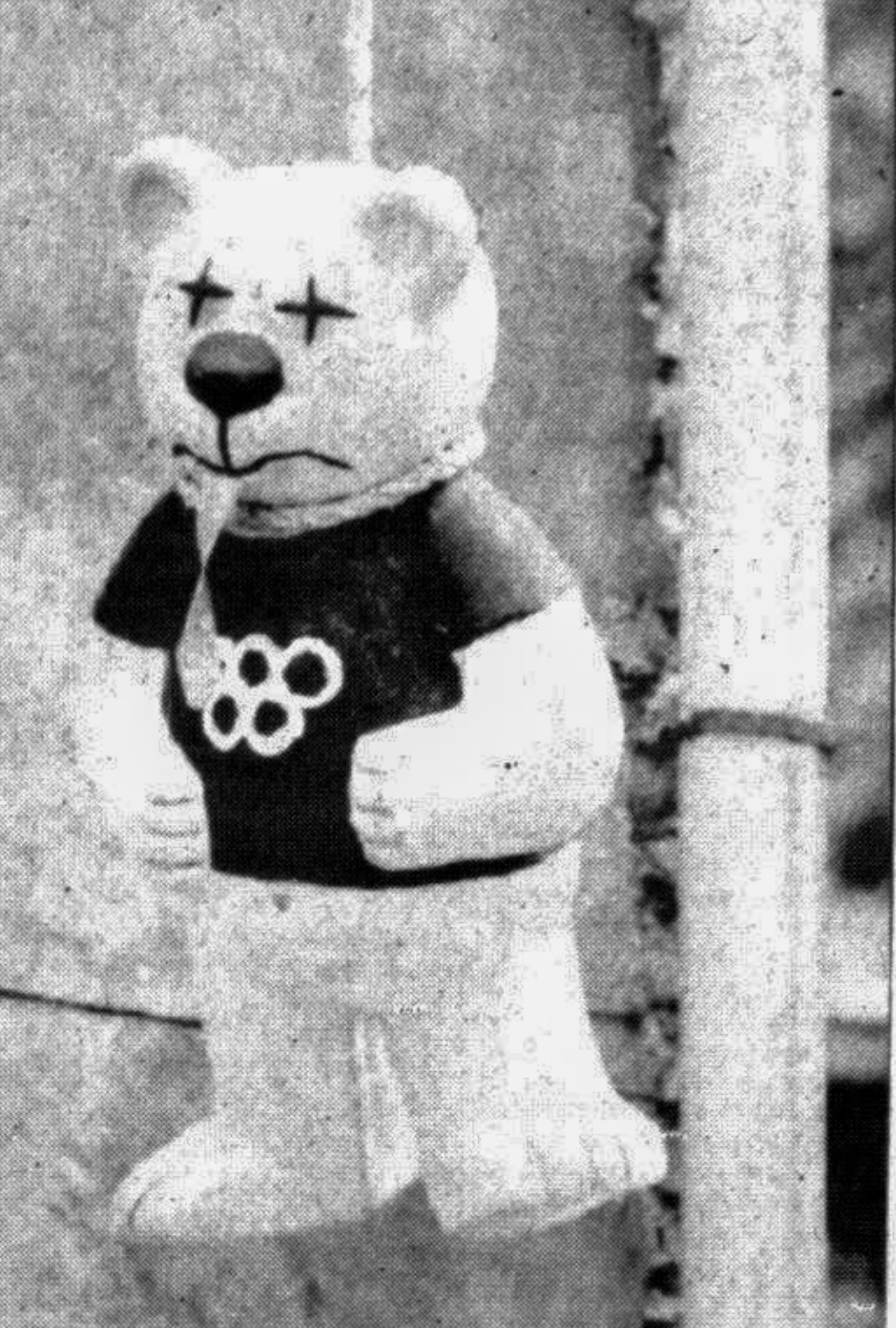
The city has learned important lessons from its failure to win the 1996 Games. They have tried to increase the involve-

ment of ordinary people — 70,000 children are being taught about the Olympics in schools — and, crucially, the government supports the bid.

Margaret Thatcher showed little enthusiasm four years ago. Her successor as Prime Minister John Major is a sports fan and has stressed his support. He profit estimates.

Scott believes Manchester could make a 92 million dollar profit after generating 1.45 billion dollars in revenue.

If successful, city authorities plan to spend 2 billion dollars on a building programme, including 250 million dollars from the Games' operating budget.



Berlin's proposed Olympic 2000 mascot seen hanged yesterday as a counter to the wave of publicity to promote the city's bid of hosting the Games. The IOC selects the host city on September 23.

which they hope would transform the cradle of the industrial revolution into a modern metropolis.

During his visit, Samaranch was driven past the edge of moss side, reputed to be the drugs capital of Britain where guns and crack cocaine are said to be available on most street corners.

The vista of squalid back streets with their dreary buildings was made even more depressing by light rain — Manchester's dismal weather is renowned throughout Britain.

Officials say the Games would reverse the city's slide into decay, providing 115,000 man-years of employment and triggering 6 billion of expenditure in the region.

IOC inspectors were impressed by Manchester's plans for urban renewal and reclamation, but while the city's planned infrastructure was well received, the commission noted that 10 of the existing 15 sports facilities need renovation.

The organisers stress the environmental benefits of the bid — 80 per cent of new facilities would be built on reclaimed land and each venue has an assured use after the Games.

Huge red-brick warehouses dating from the city's 19th century heyday would be turned into the press and broadcasting centres. A vast factory area has been razed to make way for a partially completed velodrome and the 80,000-seat main stadium.

The stadium would almost certainly not be built if the city does not win the Games in September.

Swede Davis Cup hopes smothered

STOCKHOLM, Aug. 25: Swedish Davis Cup tennis hopes suffered a blow after key doubles player Anders Jarryd had another knee operation, team chief John-Anders Sjogren said on Wednesday, reports Reuter.

"It is difficult to say whether he can play in the semifinal against Germany on September 24-26," Sjogren said from his home in Bastad.

Tuesday's surgery was the eighth knee operation Jarryd has undergone in his career.

The 32-year-old, who made his first Davis Cup appearance against Japan in 1981, will have to rest for at least two weeks.

"Then he has to regain tempo and match training without causing further complications such as swellings in the joint," Sjogren said.

He added: "If he's back on court for a week or so, I see no problems."

Some saw it as a publicity stunt for the Blizzard who are drawing fewer than 400 fans per game this season. It was Johnson's first public appearance since his life-time suspension in March.

Scattered applause from the 200 fans greeted the public address announcement that the Magic line-up features former Canadian and world champion sprinter Ben Johnson.

Johnson posed with his teammates for pre-game photographs and also shook hands and posed for photos with the South American quartet. After the match, he told reporters: "No questions. I'm hot. I'm sweating and I'm too tired."

Johnson's participation raised questions about whether his life-time ban from athletics prohibited him from playing organised soccer.

OCA chief backs Beijing bid

TAIPEI, Aug. 25: Beijing's bid for the 2000 Olympics looks more promising now that it is backed by the head of the 42-member Olympic Council of Asia, a Chinese sports official said Wednesday, reports AP.

"I am confident that we can host the event," He Zhenliang, head of China's Olympic Committee, told reporters.

He, with delegates from seven other Asian countries, attended an OCA bureau meeting that concluded Tuesday with a pledge by its president, Sheikh Ahmad Al-Fahad Al-Sabah, to back the Beijing bid.

The Kuwaiti president told the meeting he would write all council members to back holding the 2000 Olympics in Beijing.

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"There is a great fragmentation in terms of where votes are coming from," he said. "People cannot make bold assertions as to where they think votes are coming from and we certainly know our bid is looking good."

Johnson makes pro-soccer debut

TORONTO, Aug. 25: Ben Johnson, banned for life from athletics after two positive drug tests, made his professional soccer debut on Friday in a friendly match between a local club and a South American all star team, reports Reuter.

The match preceded a game between the Toronto Blizzard of the American professional soccer league and Clarendon Hazard united, Jamaica's national champions.

Some saw it as a publicity stunt for the Blizzard who are drawing fewer than 400 fans per game this season. It was Johnson's first public appearance since his life-time suspension in March.

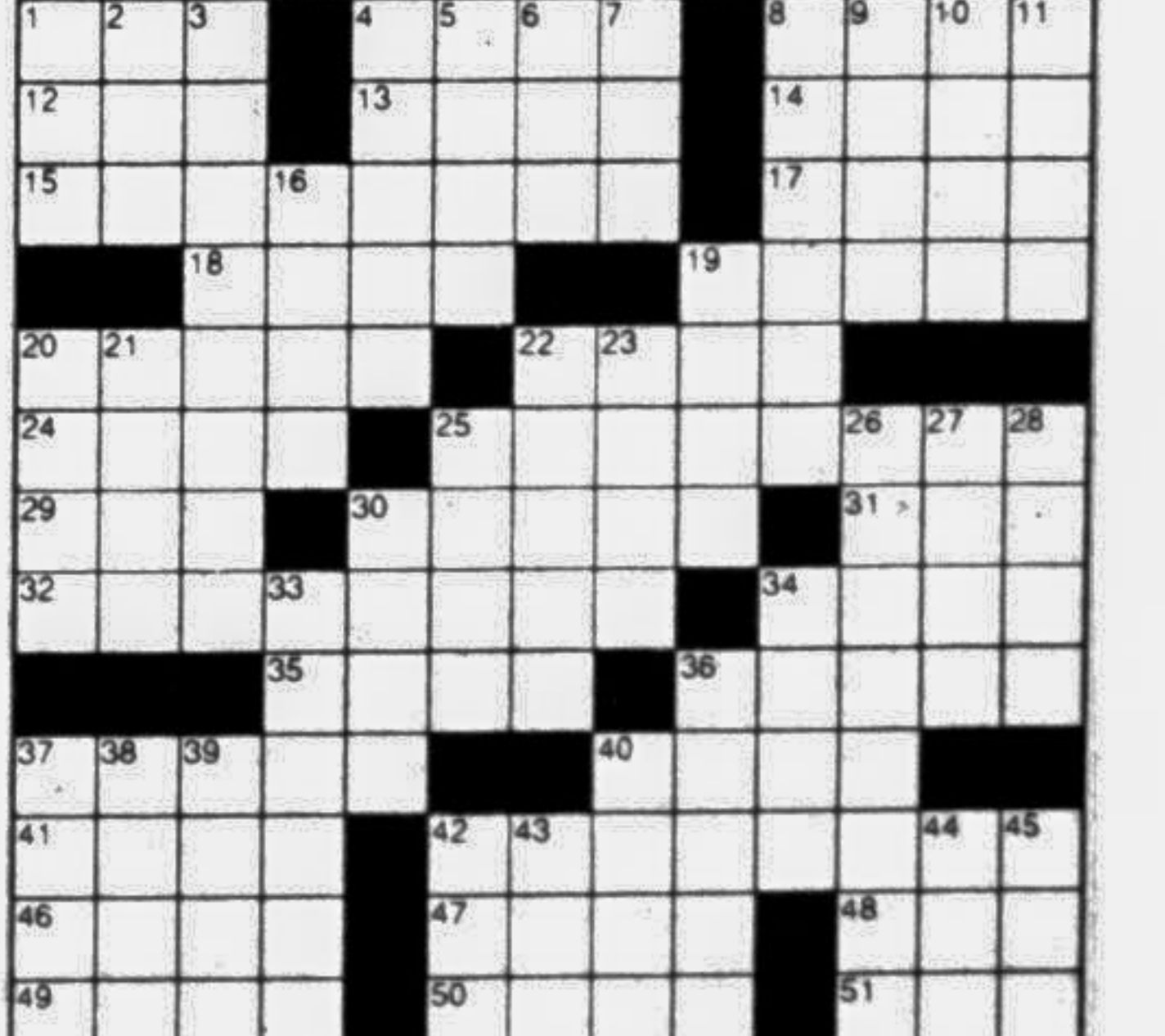
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CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

- ACROSS
- 1 Scroogean expletive
 - 4 Bloke
 - 8 Trapped in a labyrinth
 - 12 Dos
 - 13 Conductor
 - 14 Busy with
 - 15 South-western saloons
 - 17 Campus area
 - 18 Lower suddenly
 - 19 Zest
 - 20 Simper
 - 22 Propeller craft
 - 24 Defeat: colloq
 - 25 Walkie-talkie's cousin
 - 29 Literary collection
 - 30 Sleuth played by Beatty
 - 31 Praiseful verse
 - 32 Treacherous
 - 34 Malefic
- DOWN
- 1 Tampa Bay jock.
 - 2 Defeat: colloq
 - 3 Assign odds
 - 4 Future rooster
 - 5 Exemplar of jobs
 - 6 Muslim official
 - 7 Neg.'s opposite
 - 8 Hooch
 - 9 Responsibility
 - 10 Pronto, in the O.R.
 - 11 Fuss
 - 12 Young (rebel of a sort)
 - 13 Conductor
 - 14 Busy with
 - 15 South-western saloons
 - 17 Campus area
 - 18 Lower suddenly
 - 19 Zest
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 - 34 Malefic
- Solution time: 26 mins.
- FLAP DOS BARB LAIR WHO ARIA ANDA AMY SOON KEENER BRIM COFFEECAKE MORES LAX TILL AVER KON RICK RED AIR SOCKS CROISSANTS LOSS OYSTER ABET OHS NOIR LUNA FEE NOIR ANTS FRY IDLE



CRYPTOQUIP

E V V F T H V H W M Y T H M R L G G L R T F Y G W O Y L E Y U L U T E O U

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: SEAMSTRESS DUMPS FIANCE, AN ERRATIC FELLOW; SHE COULDN'T PIN HIM DOWN.

Today's Cryptoquip clue: G equals F

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.