

Story US Open fans hate to hear



NEW YORK, Sept. 7: The sad look in Martina Navratilova's eyes, the weak, final wave to the crowd, the disgust in her voice, all told the story US Open fans hated to hear, reports AP.

Suddenly, she was gone in the round of 16 Monday, beaten by Helena Sukova again at a crucial moment in her career. This time, Sukova won 7-5, 6-4, her long arms reaching out to swat returns that Navratilova was a bit too slow to catch. Once before, Sukova was there to stop Navratilova's bid for a Grand Slam, in 1984 at the Australian Open, and end her '74-match winning streak.

The loss left the United States without a women's singles quarter finalist for the first time in the tournament's history, dating to 1887.

Navratilova, a month shy of 37, was the oldest player in the Open and she gave it more life than anyone. Fans packed her matches, cheered her almost the way they cheered Jimmy Connors when he made his final charges at 39 and 40. They wanted her to win a fifth Open, show everyone she wasn't too old, too slow to do it again.

In truth, she was. She couldn't get to the net quickly enough to pick up Sukova's returns. She couldn't volley with the agility and sharpness she had for so many years. She hit too many shots just a tad wide or long, and she couldn't put pressure on Sukova's serves.

"They just weren't falling," Navratilova said. "I felt like I was playing golf. They weren't going in by inches. I didn't make one lob. I tried that shot too many times. If I play well, I win easily. If I'm a little off it's always a struggle. There wasn't any luck for me today. She made some great shots and I didn't."

"The crowd was fantastic. This is what I always wanted. To have the chance and the crowd. Then I blow it. I was tied up in knots. I didn't let myself go and play with reckless abandon."

Last American hope blown off

NEW YORK, Sept. 7: Martina Navratilova's exit from the US Open on Monday marked the first time no American woman had reached the quarter-finals since women began playing in the tournament in 1887, reports Reuters.

The third-seeded Navratilova suffered a frustrating 7-5, 6-4 loss to 12th-seeded Helena Sukova of the Czech Republic in the round of 16.

The three other most promising American hopefuls didn't make it as far as Navratilova.

Sixth-seeded Mary Joe Fernandez pulled out of the Open at the last minute, citing abdominal problems.

Seventh-seeded Jennifer Capriati was upset by Lella Meskhi of Georgia in three sets in the first round.

And 16th-seeded Zina Garrison-Jackson was a third-round loser to Natalia Zvereva of Belarus.

Navratilova, a Czech-born US citizen, said her position as the lone possibility for an American to reach the quarter-finals came to mind during her loss.

"I started thinking Jennifer is out, Mary Joe is out and I am the last American hope," she said.

Navratilova, a four-time US Open champion, was the last American woman to win here, in 1987.

It was Sukeva, 6-foot-2 (1.88-metre) with long pipestem arms, who had the lucky net cords, the shots that nicked the edges of the lines, the calls that went her way. She needed all

any volleys then. Instead of ribbons and trophies, she stakes this time go far beyond the \$35,000 to the Open winner or the \$10,000 to an Open quarter-finalist.

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Helena Sukova of the Czech Republic emits a cry of joy after carving an upset 7-5, 6-4 victory over third-seed Martina Navratilova of the United States in the fourth round of the US Open tennis at the National Tennis Centre, Flushing Meadow on Monday. — AFP photo

that luck. She had been out 2 1/2 months this year with a broken foot, and she was the second oldest in the tournament at 28.

And just like that, in 1 hour, 23 minutes, Navratilova was gone, like so many other top players in this Open.

This loss, Navratilova said makes her think about quitting tennis. And it makes her think about fighting back, going for a championship once more.

"Unfortunately, all those things go through my head in the match," she said. "It doesn't matter how much you win. You want to win one more time. I had a chance here and I blew it. It's like a drug. You want to taste it one more time. It's not like I need it. It would be a nice way to go. I know my game is there. My mind won't let me perform. That's what aggravates me, and why I bang my head on the wall."

In other women's matches, No. 2 Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario beat No. 14 Nathalie Tauziat 6-4, 6-3; No. 10 Magdalena Maleeva defeated her sister Katerina 6-2, 6-3 and Natalia Zvereva beat the "lucky loser" from qualifying, Maria Jose Gaidano, to reach the quarter-finals.

Among the men, Pete

Thomas Muster, who beat Brad Gilbert 6-4, 7-5, 6-7 (5-7), 6-2.

Fourteen years ago, Sampras and Chang played each other for the first time on a school court in Poway, Calif., near San Diego. They were about 7 years old, totting big rackets they needed both hands to swing.

Neither one can remember who won, though Sampras thinks he might have taken it and Chang recalls it went three sets.

Now the US Open quarters will be their playground following Sampras 6-4, 6-4, 7-6 (7-4) victory over Thomas Enqvist and Chang's 6-4, 6-3, 6-4 decision over Wayne Ferreira.

"It is pretty amazing where we have come from and now where we are," Sampras said. "He is the youngest French Open winner. I am the youngest US Open winner. There are pretty interesting memories to go back to."

They played each other all the way through the juniors, and then eight matches as professionals, Chang winning six of those.

"He had a great two-hand backhand down the line, great forehand down the line that he still has," Chang said of the young Sampras. "He didn't have

Sampras, the 1990 Open champion who is coming off a Wimbledon victory, is trying to regain the No. 1 ranking he held so briefly this year. Chang, the 1989 French Open champion, is going for a second Grand Slam that would significantly raise his status in tennis.

"When we were younger, Pete was pretty much winning the majority of the time," Chang recalled. "As we got a little bit older, I was starting to sneak in a few more wins."

Chang sneaked one in at the French four years ago in the second round, winning 6-1, 6-1 6-1, then went on to take the title at 17. Chang also won their next four matches, all on hard courts like the ones at the US Open.

Sampras, six months older, didn't beat Chang as a professional until 1990, and that was on an indoor carpet. Sampras' only other victory over his old chum also came indoors, and Chang won their last match on a hard court in key Biscayne, Fla. in 1992.

"I think he has a lot of guts," Sampras said. "Chang and Courier, mentally, are the toughest guys on the tour. Chang has got a lot of respect from the guys on the tour."

Harper called back in West Indies squad

BRIDGETOWN, Sept. 7: West Indies have recalled Guyanese all-rounder Roger Harper for their tour of Sharjah, India and Sri Lanka this year, reports Reuters.

Harper, 30, last played for his country in 1988 although he was included in the squad for West Indies' first ever Test against South Africa last year.

Barbadian batsman Roland Holder, who hit three centuries in the last West Indies' season, has also been selected.

WEST INDIES: Richie Richardson (captain), Desmond Haynes, Phil Simmons, Brian Lara, Carl Hooper, Keith Athurton, Jimmy Adams, Roland Holder, Roger Harper, Junior Murray, Curtly Ambrose, Courtney Walsh, Kenneth Benjamin, Winston Benjamin and Anderson Cummins.

Stephenson to stay in Sussex

LONDON, Sept. 7: West Indian all-rounder Franklyn Stephenson has agreed to another season in English county cricket with Sussex, two days after a traumatic experience with bat and ball in the Natwest Trophy final on Saturday, reports Reuters.

The Barbados-born player, 34 made just three runs and conceded 15 in the final over of the match as Sussex suffered an extraordinary defeat off the last ball against Warwickshire.

Stephenson is currently in his second year as Sussex's overseas player. He also plans to play another two winters in South Africa with Orange Free State.

Hughes sidelined with bad knee

MELBOURNE, Sept. 7: Australian fast bowler Merv Hughes may be sidelined for up to three months after undergoing a weekend knee operation, reports AP.

Hughes told the Channel 10 television news on Tuesday that he did not expect to be back in action until December.

Channel 10 said the operation was more complicated than expected and that calcified bone had to be removed from Hughes' knee.

It was the second knee operation Hughes has undergone this year. Hughes has been one of the mainstays of the Australian attack since making his Test debut in 1985.

He was one of the stars of Australia's recent 4-1 Ashes series victory over England, where his flamboyant personality made him a popular figure with the fans, who call him "Sumo" because of his expansive girth.

The knee injury is almost certain to rule Hughes out of a three-test home series against New Zealand.

Hughes was not immediately available for further comment.

Yoo puts off harness

SEOUL, Sept. 7: World Boxing Association junior flyweight champion Yoo Myung-Woo said Tuesday he is retiring from the ring, reports AP.

Yoo, 30, said he had been in a dilemma since his offer to fight World Boxing Council champion Michael Carbajal of the United States was rejected.

SA ensconced at Colombo



COLOMBO, Sept. 7: South Africa's frontline batsmen struck timely form to propel their side to a commanding position on the second day of the second Test here Tuesday, reports AFP.

South Africa secured a 112-run first innings lead as they moved to 280 for 2 at the close following two century-stands against a helpless home attack.

Shri Lanka, who made a dismal 168, are now faced with the prospect of another thankless day on the field with South Africa determined to pile up a massive match-winning total on the third day.

Skipper Kepler Wessels played a captain's innings with a sedate 92 on a lucrative day that saw three more half-centu-

task, suddenly regained its fluency here.

After Wessels had set up a 137-run opening wicket stand with Andrew Hudson, vice-captain Hanse Cronje and Daryll Cullinan took control to produce a further 101 runs in 163 minutes for an unfinished third wicket.

Cronje and Cullinan, in fact, hit their maiden Test half-centuries as they showed Sri Lanka the way to perform on a perfect batting strip.

Cronje was unbeaten on 54 off 169 balls with seven boundaries and Cullinan also scored the same number of fours to remain 52 not out.

Unlike Wessels and Hudson, who displayed a certain degree of unease against spinners, the third-wicket pair handled the entire bowling line-up with con-

exquisite back-cut off left-arm spinner Sanath Jayasuriya.

Cullinan, playing in just his third Test, reached his 50 in the next over after batting for 131 minutes.

Shri Lankan skipper Arjuna Ranatunga tried eight bowlers including himself in a bid to dislodge either of them but the two talented South Africans batted remorselessly to give their side the whip-hand with three more days to go.

Resuming from an overnight 48 for zero, the opening combination of Wessels and Hudson once again gave their side a solid start.

The left-handed Wessels, in particular, showed his best form on tour with a 304-minute knock that contained seven boundaries and a freak six through overthrows.

Both openers were content to play quiet roles as they gradually exposed a tame attack that had its task made more difficult by a pitch that was full of runs.

Their partnership ended in the eighth over after lunch when seamer Pramodya Wickremasinghe had right-hander Hudson leg-before for 58.

Hudson had nine fours in his 177-ball knock.

Wessels then saw South Africa pass the Sri Lankan total in the 70th over before he was dismissed two overs later by trying to drive off-spinner Muttiah Muralidharan and offering a catch to wicket-keeper Pubudu Dassanayake.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at close on the second day of the second Test between Sri Lanka and South Africa at the Sinhalese Sports Club grounds on Tuesday.

SRI LANKA: First innings (168 all out)

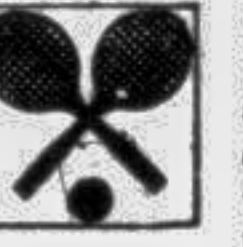
SOUTH AFRICA: First innings (overnight 48 for no loss)

Wessels c Dassanayake 92
Hudson lbw b Wickremasinghe 58
Cronje not out 54
Cullinan not out 52
Extras: (b-1, lb-11, nb-11, w-24) 24
Total: (for two wickets) 280

Fall of wickets: 1-137; 2-179
To bat: Jonty Rhodes, Brian McMillan, Dave Richardson, Pat Symcox, Richard Snell, Allan Donald and Brett Schultz.

Bowling: O M R W
Ramanayake 16 5 42 0
Wickremasinghe 22 4 63 1
Hathurusinghe 7 4 12 0
Dharmasena 32 10 67 0
Muralidharan 24 9 37 1
Jayasuriya 7 1 34 0
De Silva 3 1 7 0
Ranatunga 2 0 6 0

Navratilova never gives up



NEW YORK, Sept. 7: Martina Navratilova's bitter disappointment at the US Open on Monday left a bad taste in her mouth, but the winner of 18 Grand Slam titles still craves more, reports Reuters.

After 12th-seeded Helena Sukova of the Czech Republic eliminated the third-seeded, four-time champion, with a 7-5, 6-4 round-of-16 victory at the US Open on Monday, the issue of retirement was once again raised with the soon-to-be 37-year-old Navratilova.

"It makes me want to say, forget it, I don't want it anymore, or say, next year is definitely my last year. But it also makes me want to work harder," Navratilova said. "All

those thoughts are going through my mind. The problem is they are going through my mind on the court."

Navratilova, who said she would definitely return to the circuit next year, said it would probably be her mental attitude rather than her physical ability that determines her future.

The Czech-born US citizen doesn't believe she is chasing rainbows. Excluding the French Open, a claycourt event which would be too hard to conquer, Navratilova thinks she has a reasonable chance at any of the other three majors.

"I still want to be out there," said Navratilova, who has won four tournaments this year. "I still want the opportunity to be out there and have one more chance at the title."

She is adamant that this

year's Open crown was in her reach.

"I am so disappointed because I had the chance. I have the game and haven't been able to produce it. I think I care too much. The crowd is fantastic. This is what I always wanted, to have the chance and have the crowd behind me and I just blow it."

It wasn't sour grapes, however, on Navratilova's part.

She knew she was out-matched on Monday by Sukova, a player she had beaten in 25 of 29 earlier meetings. Her defeat left the women's draw without a single American in the quarter-finals.

Navratilova's trophy shelf back home in Aspen, Colorado, is jammed full of mementoes of a 20-year career, that has produced 165 singles titles.

The Ashes Series in retrospect

By A M Chowdhury



In the last Test match of the Ashes series at the Oval England at long last came out of their habit of losing. Their streak of Test defeats started with last summer's defeat on the same ground against Pakistan, which cost them the series, and continued through winter's South-Asian tour in which they lost four Tests in a row against India and Sri Lanka. The Australians under Allan Border did not give them any respite this summer either. The visitors won the first two, held on to a draw in the third and continued their winning spree in the next two, making it certain that the Ashes urn will be in their safe custody with 4-0 lead in the series.

The Australian supremacy in the series was overwhelming. The margin of their victories (in chronological order) — 178 runs; an innings and 62 runs; an innings and 148 runs and eight wickets — clearly indicate Aussie superiority.

England were at their wits end to find out their best possible combination. They tried as many as 23 players and only three — Graham Gooch, Mike Atherton and Alec Stewart — played in all six Tests. Graeme Hick and Mike Gatting got axed

after the second and the former got a recall only in the last. Philip De Freitas was dropped after the first; Chris Lewis and Phil Tufnell after the second; Andrew Caddick after the fourth and even Robin Smith had to go after the fifth.

Mark Lathwell was tried in two Tests; Mark Blythe in three; Martin Bicknell, Mathew Maynard and Martin McCague in two each; Nasser Hossain in four; Nail Foster, Mark Ramprakash, John Emburey, Steve Watkins and Devon Malcolm found themselves in the squad once each.

The Australian batting looked solid all through and dictated the first five encounters. In the second and fourth Tests they amassed 632-4 dec. and 653-4 dec. respectively which helped them force England to follow on in both and post innings victories. In the fifth their first innings total of 408 was enough to earn them an eight-wicket win. Only in the sixth Test, when the fate of the series was irreversibly decided, did England dictate the terms and get their only success in a hapless summer.

David Boon (555, av. 69.38) and Mark Waugh (550, av. 61.11) formed the mainstay of the Aussie batting and as many as five batsmen averaged above 50, including Allan Border.

If the Australian batsmen laid the foundation of their triumphs, their bowlers, in effect, polished them off. Shane Warne, with a superb exhibition leg-spin bowling was the main wrecking ball. Having arrived in England with 31 wickets (av. 30.80) from 11 Tests since his debut against India in January, 1992, Warne added 34 more to that tally in the Ashes series at an average of 25.79. None of the English batsmen, with the exception of Graham Gooch, could play him with any amount of confidence. With his first ball of the series he rang the death knell of Mike Gatting and throughout kept on the pressure on the bewildered English batsmen.

Shane Warne was ably supported by fellow-Victorian Merv Hughes (31 wks. at 27.86), who, in the absence of Craig McDermott, had to bear the brunt of the Aussie attack and did an admirable job. Tim May (21 wks. at 28.19) and Paul Reffel (19 wks. at 20.84), who played only in the last three Tests, were no less deadly.

On the other hand, England could not really come up with an effective bowling combination to stymie the Aussie juggernaut. Their medium pace attack appeared up and down stuff lacking in penetration. The introduction of Devon Malcolm

in the last Test brought about a change. He generated lot of pace on the Oval wicket and with Steve Watkins and Angus Fraser, whose return to Test cricket was the most welcome news for England, back in the squad, the English pace attack, for the first time in the series, looked like having some fire in it.

It would be unjust if I do not mention Graham Gooch's success with the bat in the series, though as a Captain he appeared rather at the dead end lacking in positive and innovative approach. Gooch totalled 673, the highest on either side, at an average of 56.08. He was the only batsman for England to have averaged over 50.

Mike Atherton, the new England Captain, is the only other England batsman (553, av. 46.08) to have success with the willow in the series. Others were consistently inconsistent. Atherton's leadership seem to have brought back enthusiasm and initiative in a hitherto demoralised England team.

Allan Border, the most capped Test cricketer (147 Tests), returned home a very happy man having won his third successive Ashes series and registering his 28th win in 84 Tests as Aussie Captain, a world record on both counts.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

- 1 Fair share, at times
- 5 Kyoto cucumber
- 8 Punch neighbor
- 12 Huron's
- 13 Took off
- 14 Terrible guy?
- 15 Companion
- 17 Surrealist extraor-
- 18 — Paulo
- 19 Japanese drama
- 20 Sublease
- 21 Bart, to Homer
- 22 Chore
- 23 Add
- 26 Commuters' domain
- 30 Tempera-
- 31 Peruke
- 32 Avis
- 33 Dressed carefully
- 35 Massage
- 36 Vat
- 37 Petrol
- 38 Wear
- 41 Boiling

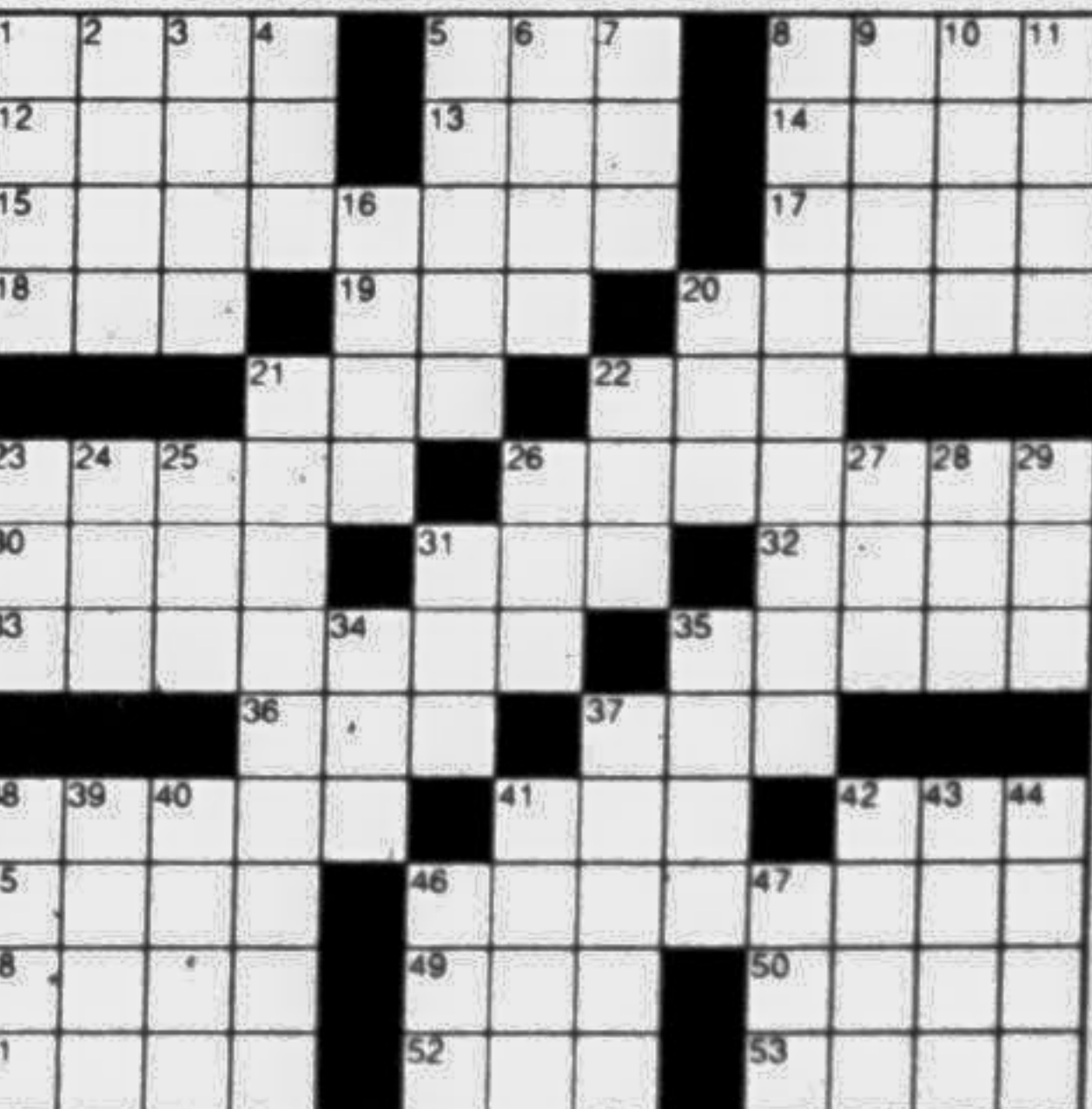
DOWN

- 2 Beach resort
- 4 Doctor's due
- 5 Sky hunter
- 6 "Well-
- 7 Tempered Clavier"
- 8 Ear
- 9 Ellipse
- 10 Race driver Yar-
- 11 Heal, osteally
- 16 Kentucky fort
- 20 Burglarize
- 21 Shunt
- 22 Omar's wine
- 23 Solution time: 27 mins.
- 24 Rock concert eqpm.
- 25 Backing
- 26 Caesar or
- 27 "Norma —"
- 28 Cor-
- 29 Depressed
- 30 Spider-Man's
- 31 Man's
- 32 Enthusiast
- 33 Actress Capshaw
- 34 "Waiting for —"
- 35 Oscar Madison, e.g.
- 36 Hemingway sobriquet
- 37 Pizzeria fixture
- 38 Pelt
- 39 "Bringing Up —"
- 40 Milwaukee products
- 41 Terrier
- 42 type
- 43 Sermon subject
- 44 Took the gold

ANSWERS:

ACROSS: 1. FORTUNE, 5. TOFU, 8. NEIGHBOR, 12. WARRIOR, 13. TAKEOFF, 14. GUY, 15. COMPANION, 17. SURREALIST, 18. PAULO, 19. DRAMA, 20. SUBLEASE, 21. BART, 22. CHORE, 23. ADD, 26. COMMUTERS, 30. TEMPERA, 31. PERUKE, 32. AVIS, 33. DRESSED, 35. MASSAGE, 36. VAT, 37. PETROL, 38. WEAR, 41. BOILING.

DOWN: 2. BEACH, 4. DOCTOR, 5. SKY, 6. WELL, 7. TEMPERED, 8. EAR, 9. ELLIPSE, 10. RACE, 11. HEAL, 16. KENTUCKY, 20. BURGLARIZE, 21. SHUNT, 22. OMAR, 23. SOLUTION, 24. ROCK, 25. BACKING, 26. CAESAR, 27. NORMA, 28. COR, 29. DEPRESSED, 30. SPIDER-MAN, 31. MAN, 32. ENTHUSIAST, 33. ACTRESS, 34. WAITING, 35. OSCAR, 36. HEMINGWAY, 37. PIZZERIA, 38. PELT, 39. BRINGING, 40. MILWAUKEE, 41. TERRIER, 42. TYPE, 43. SERMON, 44. TOOK.



CRYPTOQUIP

U ZILHXID: JUCUFKBLON
Z K J Y C X F U Y X I K N
L H X I U D U I X C
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: MY PAL, THE CAPABLE
SEA CAPTAIN TURNED PUBLISHER, IS THE MAST
HEAD.

Today's Cryptoquip clue: H equals V

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.