

## Samaranch not alarmed

MONTE CARLO, Sept 17: Olympic leaders said on Thursday they were confident that opponents of Berlin's 2000 Games bid would not be allowed to disrupt next week's vote to select the host city, reports Reuters.

Speaking 24 hours after a series of explosions outside the Berlin premises of companies, sponsoring the bid, Olympic boss Juan Antonio Samaranch said he was satisfied with security arrangements in Monaco.

Samaranch, president of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), will chair a week of IOC meetings in Monte Carlo starting on Friday.

Asked whether the IOC was concerned about the possibility of violent disruption, Samaranch told Reuters: "No, because we trust the organisers. Monaco knows very well how to manage security problems."

Berlin is competing against Sydney, Beijing, Manchester and Istanbul for the right to stage the Millennium Games. But its bid has drawn massive protests from Berlin activists

who argue that the city should invest money in housing and boosting its economically depressed eastern hinterland rather than the Olympics.

In April anarchists opposed to the bid claimed responsibility



SAMARANCH

for fires inside two department stores and attacks on 29 Berliner Bank branch offices.

Samaranch, who cancelled a scheduled trip to Berlin in May for security reasons, was met by hundreds of demonstrators when he visited the city last month.

IOC director general Francois Carrard said Wednesday's explosions were "highly unfortunate, but not a total surprise."

Security is a crucial issue for the IOC, particularly in Monte Carlo where delegations from the bidding cities will include a number of leading political figures and other VIPs.

Referring to the Berlin explosions, Carrard said: "The possibility of such events was discussed months ago and I would expect the Monaco authorities to be ready to deal with any kind of security risk."

Berlin's opponents have threatened to disrupt the Monte Carlo meetings, but Carrard added: "The people in Monaco are very serious about security matters and the totally aware of all the potential security risks."

The IOC is keen to avoid any repetition of its 1986 session in Lausanne which was disrupted by noisy demonstrations by opponents of Amsterdam's bid for the 1991 Games, which were awarded to Barcelona.

The vote to choose the 2000 Games hosts takes place next Thursday.

## Lillehammer to go back to Stone Age

LILLEHAMMER, Norway, Sept 17: Lillehammer will go back to the Stone Age to light the Olympic flame for the Winter Games it will host next February, reports AFP.

Competitions are to be held in Norway from next month to find out who can light a flame fastest by rubbing two sticks together, the Lillehammer Olympics Organising Committee (LOOC) announced Friday.

On November 27, the winner will rub his sticks together to make a fire in the fireplace at the home of the founder of Telemark Skiing, Sondre Norheim, in Morgedal in Telemark.

For 75 days, the torch will then tour the mountains and fjords of Norway and even go out to a North Sea oil platform. It will meet up with the Olympic flame from Greece in Oslo on February 5. The opening ceremony will be in Lillehammer on February 12.

The torch will be given to ski-jumper Ole Gunnar Fidjestøl, who will take it down the Olympic Ski Hill before handing it over for the lighting of the Olympic flame in the stadium.

Organisers have asked the International Olympic Committee for permission to end the tradition of using doves as a peace symbol during the ceremony. They have had dozens of letters from animal rights campaigners claiming that the doves could be killed by the cold after being released in the stadium.

## ONOC shifts hq

SUVA, Sept 17: Fiji's sports minister Ratu Inoke Kubuabola Thursday welcomed the relocation of the Oceania Association of National Olympic Committees (ONOC) headquarters from Auckland to Suva, reports AFP.

He confirmed that cabinet had agreed to support the move and to provide accommodation for the ONOC offices.

ONOC comprises the 11 national Olympic committees of Oceania and helps the International Olympic Committee (IOC) in coordinating its sports development programmes in the region.

The IOC's Olympic solidarity programme provides between 50,000-100,000 US dollars to each member country annually.

The ONOC member countries are American Samoa, Australia, Cook Islands, Fiji, Guam, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, Tonga, Vanuatu and Western Samoa.

Last June Fiji was successful in its bid to house the headquarters of the ONOC during deliberations at the annual general assembly in Auckland.

At that meeting Fiji Amateur Sports Association (FASA) and the national Olympic Committee's (FASANOC) secretary-general, Robin Mitchell of Suva, was elected ONOC secretary-general.

For the first eight years (1981-89) the ONOC headquarters were in Melbourne.

Fiji takes over as ONOC headquarters until the beginning of the 27th Olympiad in 1996.

## Paes gets wild card entry

TOULOUSE, France, Sept 17: Leander Paes, who engineered India's Davis Cup victory over France in July, has been given a wild-card entry to next month's ATP tournament here, organisers said Thursday, reports AFP.

Also present for the 400,000-dollar tournament from October 2-10 will be Spain's French Open winner Sergi Bruguera, the top seed.

## Beijing denies programming

MONTE CARLO, Sept 17: China's top Olympic official denied on Wednesday that the release of political prisoners and a recent spate of Chinese world records had been timed to help Beijing secure the 2000 Games, reports Reuters.

Western critics have speculated that the recent release of a number of political dissidents and an unprecedented burst of four women's world record in six days by Chinese runners had been aimed at boosting Beijing's Olympic ambitions.

China has spared no pains in its efforts to obtain the 2000 Games when the International Olympic Committee (IOC) makes its choice next Thursday from five bidding cities — Sydney, Beijing, Manchester, Berlin and Istanbul.

But He Zhenliang, IOC vice president and head of the Chinese National Olympic Committee, said the release of political prisoners and last week's world records were unrelated to the bidding process.

He denied that the release on Tuesday of Wei Jingsheng, one of China's foremost political dissidents, was an attempt to soften up the IOC.

"I'm a bit surprised. When someone is arrested according

to our law, outside people make a lot of noise about human rights," he said.

"Then, when we release someone, we are also criticised by those who say we are doing it because of the bid. What should we do? Please tell us. Everything we do is according to our law, but people always want to criticise us."

When Wei was freed after serving 14 years of a 15-year sentence imposed for advocating democratic change, diplomats in Beijing said his release was clearly linked to the Olympic vote.

He Zhenliang also scoffed at suggestions that the run of world records by Wang Junxia and Qu Yunxia had been time to promote Beijing's bid.

"They had no connection with the bid. They were the result on many years of effort in track and field," he said.

Wang chopped a colossal 42 seconds off the 10,000 metres world record last week before smashing the 3,000 metres mark twice in 24 hours.

She was competing in China's National Games, in which Qu also beat the 13-year-old record for the 1,500 metres.

But he said the dates for the national games had been arranged four years ago, long before the IOC voting schedule was known.

"The Chinese aren't such good planners. I laugh at people who think we can foresee everything."

He also dismissed western allegations that the success of China's swimmers at last year's Barcelona Olympics and their track and field athletes at the Stuttgart World Championships last month was achieved by doping.

"For those who didn't know about our training methods it was a surprise. I understand that. But what I can't understand is why this is always attributed to doping."

"It's not correct. We have our anti-doping programme and we have strict measures to fight against doping, internationally and domestically," he said.

Referring to the revolutionary endurance training used by coach Ma Junren, he said: "We're not selfish people, we wish to share our experience with others."

"The coaches and even the athletes of all other countries are welcome to come to China and undergo the same training programme. If they can endure it."

Lou Dapeng, vice president of the Chinese Athletics Federation, added: "We would like the world to know how we train, that it's not just a matter of taking a few tablets."

## Unchanged Indian squad for Davis Cup semifinal

NEW DELHI, Sept 17: India will keep their winning squad unchanged for the Davis Cup semifinal with Australia next weekend but their captain conceded on Friday that they would be the underdogs, reports Reuters.

"The Australians start as the overwhelming favourites in the semifinal," captain Naresh Kumar said.

Ramesh Krishnan will lead the challenge in the northern Indian town of Chandigarh from September 24-26, a spokesman for the All-India Tennis Association (AITA) said.

Krishnan will be helped by Zeeshan Ali, Gaurav Natekar and Leander Paes, a 20-year-old in his fourth Davis Cup season who played a crucial role in India's quarter-final triumph over France by winning both his singles matches.

Kumar said India had a chance of winning the singles matches.

## Agassi makes Sampras bite the dust

PHOENIX, Sept 17: Pete Sampras, the first American to win Wimbledon and the US Open in the same year

since John McEnroe in 1984, was no match for Andre Agassi, reports AP.

Facing each other in a Thursday night exhibition, Agassi routed the new US Open champ 6-3, 6-4 in just 69 minutes.

Sampras took over the NO. 1 ranking in the world after winning the US Open title Sunday. Agassi had lost in the first round, dropping his ATP Tour ranking to No. 20.

But Agassi came out with a crisp serve and was the sharper of the two players Thursday night.

Using his strong serve to win the first set, Agassi wrapped up the match by breaking Sampras twice while winning four straight games in the middle of

the second set. He took the lead for good at 4-2 when his forehand volley kissed the netcord and fell over for a winner.

"The serve is something I've been working on and I was happy with it," said Agassi, who will face Sampras again Friday night in Inglewood, Calif. "I have made some forward steps and now I want to keep the ball rolling."

The crowd for 10,239 enjoyed some spirited rallies as well as good-natured clowning from both players, who each made \$15,000 to \$175,000 for the night.

"I haven't picked up a racket since Sunday. I went down to Florida and relaxed," said Sampras, who wrestled the world's top ranking away from Jim Courier. "Winning a tournament like Wimbledon and then coming back to win the Open makes this a season to remember."

# BERLIN

freut sich auf

# Olympia 2000

in

# SYDNEY



Anti-Berlin and anti-Beijing Olympic bid paraphernalia adorned the walls of Sydney 2000 Olympic bid headquarters yesterday. Beijing and Berlin are seen as Sydney's main rivals when the International Olympic Committee (IOC) meets in Monaco to decide which city gets the honour of hosting the Millennium Games. The German T-shirt reads, "Berlin looks forward to the 2000 Olympics in Sydney."

## China threatens retaliation

MONTE CARLO, Sept 17: Beijing's Olympic bid, already surrounded by controversy over human rights, became embroiled in a new stir Friday when a Chinese official raised the possibility of boycotting the 1996 Atlanta Games, reports AP.

Zhang Baifa, executive vice mayor of Beijing and a senior member of the bid committee, said China could decide on a boycott as "revenge" for US congressional opposition to Beijing's candidacy for the 2000 Olympics.

The US House of Representatives passed a resolution last month urging rejection of Beijing's bid because of China's human rights record. Sixty US Senators have also come out against the bid.

The International Olympic Committee will select the host city next Thursday, and Beijing is considered one of the top contenders. Sydney, Australia, Manchester, England, Berlin, and Istanbul, Turkey, are the other candidates.

Zhang's comments, made in a Australian television interview in Beijing, came as a Chinese delegation of nearly 200 people

arrived in Monte Carlo to support the bid and as the IOC executive board opened a four-day meeting.

Chinese officials have previously attacked the US initiatives as political interference, but Zhang was the first to publicly speak of a possible retaliatory boycott. IOC vice president Kevan Gosper of Australia had warned of such a possibility in June.

"The American people are very good to us. It's their Congress which is stupid," Zhang said in the interview with Australia's Special Broadcasting Service Television. "If Congress can pass a resolution objecting to our bid for the 2000 Olympics, we could, frankly, boycott their Atlanta Games in 1996."

"If our bid fails, we could write to Congress to protest about their interference and justifying our revenge."

The interview, conducted Aug 31, was scheduled to be broadcast Saturday. A transcript was made available Friday.

Chinese officials in Monaco did not confirm the boycott possibility, but — more significantly — they did not rule it out either.

"Our main efforts are now concentrated on guaranteeing the success of our bid, that's all," said He Zhenliang, head of the Chinese Olympic Committee and a vice president of the IOC. "I never head about (the boycott threat). China is taking part actively in the Olympic movement, that's all. Any supposition would not be valid at all."

Wu Zhongyuan, vice president of the Chinese Olympic Committee and a spokesman for the Beijing bid, called the congressional moves "interference in the principles of the IOC charter and the legitimate rights and interests of the Chinese people."

"This has aroused indignation of the Chinese people, including Zhang Baifa. The Chinese Olympic Committee has not yet studied the question of participation in the Atlanta Olympic Games."

Pressed again whether he could rule out a boycott, he said Zhang "can express his personal views but the Chinese Olympic Committee as a whole has not yet studied this question."

"The Chinese Olympic Committee has always respected and supported the pur-

pose the Olympic movement," Wu said. "The committee will support all efforts that will contribute to the Olympic movement."

IOC director general Francois Carrard downplayed the boycott threat.

"I think we must take this with great care," Carrard said. "To me, it is not conceivable that any national Olympic committee behind any candidate city would formally contemplate any form of boycott of the Games. I am not concerned ... I think it is most unlikely it would happen."

Carrard said the statement should be taken in the context of the tension of the final days of the race.

"I wouldn't be surprised if there weren't more statements and controversies in the next few days," he said.

Bob Brennan, a spokesman for the Atlanta organising committee, said, "We've always said that politics have no place in the Olympic Games."

China has released three political prisoners in the past week in an apparent attempt to deflect criticism of its human rights record before the IOC vote.

But the anti-Beijing campaign has not let up. The European Parliament adopted a resolution this week condemning China's policy on Tibet and saying the Olympics should not be held in Beijing "unless significant progress is made in ensuring respect for human rights by the Chinese regime."

Chinese officials reacted angrily to a comment by British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd, who said Beijing did not deserve the Games. Without elaborating, Hurd said there were "very strong reasons" to oppose Beijing.

"The decision where to hold the Olympic Games will be made by the IOC," said Wu Jianmin, another bid spokesman. "We feel astonished and regret that (Hurd) has discarded gentlemanly to openly meddle in IOC affairs."

## Animus over remarks linger

HONG KONG, Sept 17: Hong Kong's leading pro-China politician attacked British foreign secretary Douglas Hurd on Friday for saying Beijing did not deserve to host the 2000 Olympic Games, reports Reuters.

Tsang Yok-Sing, chairman of the Democratic Alliance Party, accused Hurd of aggravating Sino-British relations already tense due to troubled talks over Hong Kong's democratic future.

Hurd said in an Australian television interview on Thursday that if the British city of Manchester did not win the International Olympic Committee (IOC) vote on September

23, Sydney should host the Games.

"It certainly doesn't help to improve the relations between Britain and China which have been quite tense lately," Tsang told TRHK radio. "It would make people in Hong Kong more worried that the Sino-British talks may break down."

"Mr Hurd's remarks seem to indicate hostility..." he told the government station.

Sino-British negotiations aimed at defusing a row over governor Chris Patten's proposal for democratic reform have dragged on for five months with little signs of progress.

With Patten threatening to push ahead with reform if the talks fail, the atmosphere has

further soured. Separate talks on practical arrangements for Hong Kong's return to China in 1997 also ended on Thursday with little to show.

With Hong Kong a major gateway to China, local businessmen have strongly backed Beijing's bid. Beijing, Sydney, Manchester, Berlin and Istanbul are all seeking to host the 2000 Games.

Beijing, anxious to be chosen as host city, recently released several dissidents from jails, including long-serving democratic activist Wei Jingsheng.

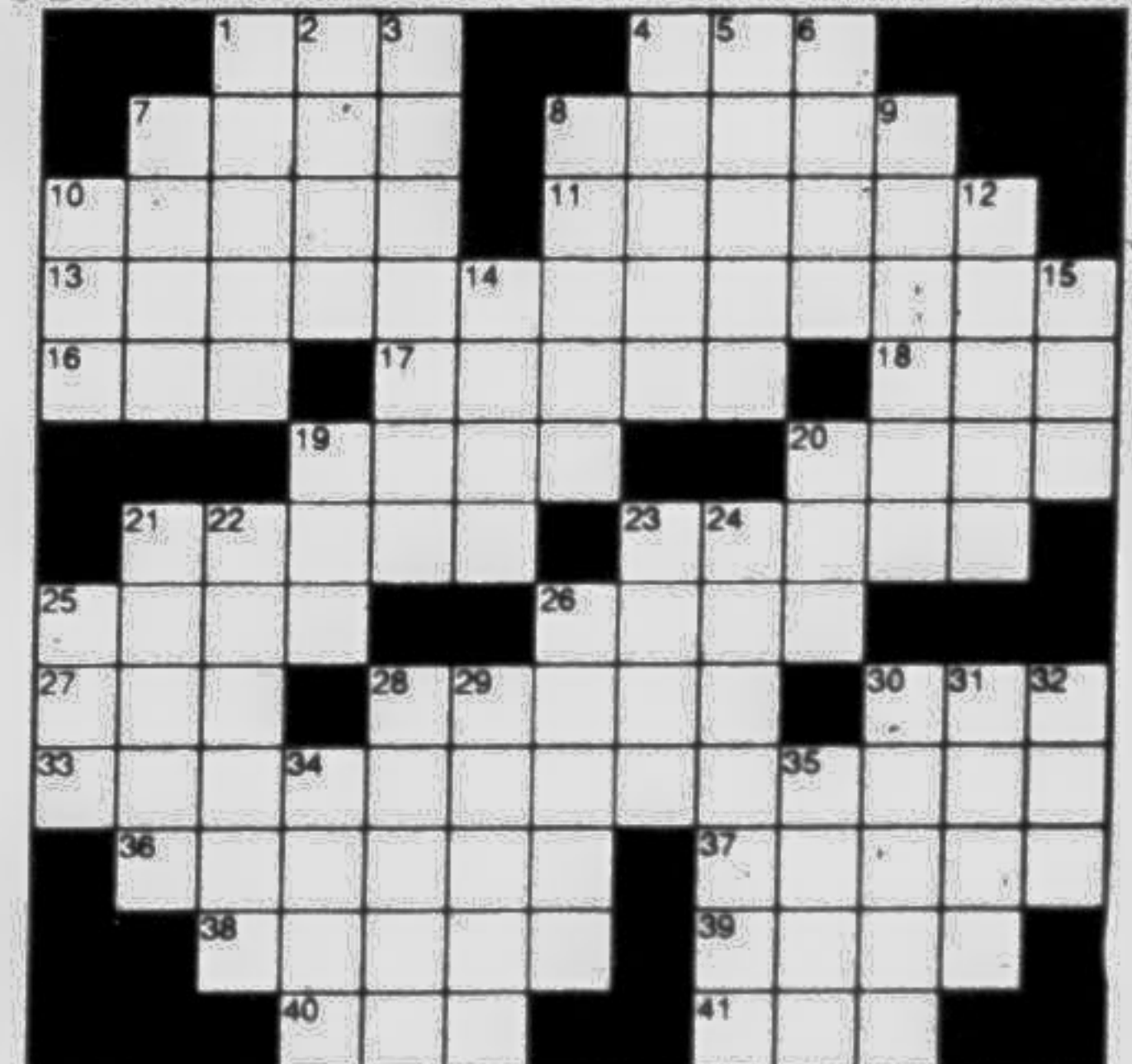
Diplomats say the releases are aimed at winning favourable international publicity for its bid before next week's IOC vote in Monte Carlo.

## CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

|                                |                               |                          |                                  |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|
| ACROSS                         | 33 Sharif role                | mism                     | 15 Wapiti                        |
| 1 Cornfield comment            | 36 Frosh's cap                | 4 "Stop da —!"           | 19 "Guys and Dolls" role         |
| 4 Biz degree abbr.             | 37 Construction-site fastener | 5 Cotillion figure       | 20 Caustic solution              |
| 7 Accompanying                 | 38 Shirts' opponents          | 6 "O, my Luve is like —" | 21 Ersatz chocolate              |
| 8 Sorrowful sorts              | 39 Enthusiastic               | 7 Obsolescent pronoun?   | 22 "— Restaurant"                |
| 10 "Flying Down" lyric snippet | 40 Earn a Tony, maybe         | 8 Did a croupier's job   | 23 Lave commander                |
| 11 Dormant                     | 41 Terhune pooch              | 9 Time                   | 24 Fleet com-                    |
| 13 Chamberlain role            | DOWN                          | 10 Harem room            | 25 Flop-                         |
| 16 "I — Camera"                | 1 Approximately               | 12 Datum for Bob Barker  | 26 Discon-                       |
| 17 Fraction                    | 2 Persisting                  | 13 Orange coat?          | 28 Seattle cager, for short      |
| 18 Part of RSVP                | 3 "Newlywed Game"             |                          | 29 Do a letter-perfect job?      |
| 19 Remit                       | 4 Euphe-                      |                          | 30 Michelangelo subject          |
| 20 Anti-burglary device        |                               |                          | 31 Like some cheeses             |
| 21 Encrusted                   |                               |                          | 32 Came upon                     |
| 23 "The Duke"                  |                               |                          | 34 "We'll — cup o' kindness yet" |
| 25 "Cagney & Lacey" star       |                               |                          | 35 Cry regarding Zapata          |
| 26 Lose brightness             |                               |                          |                                  |
| 27 Spoon-bender Geller         |                               |                          |                                  |
| 28 Tic                         |                               |                          |                                  |
| 30 Mr. Ham-marskjöld           |                               |                          |                                  |

Solution time: 22 mins.

YESTERDAY'S ANSWER 1-6



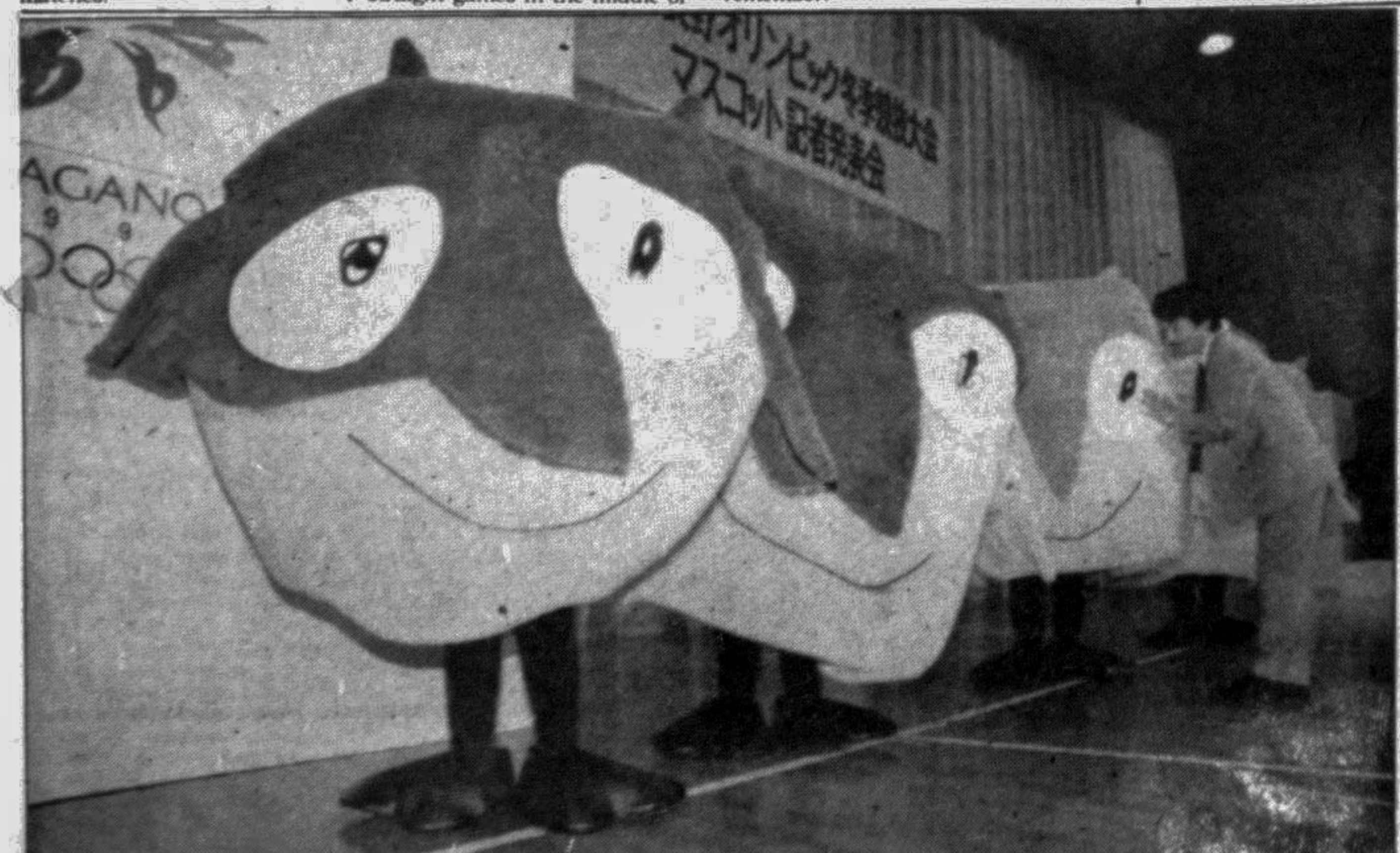
CRYPTOQUIP

J W T E L G I Z L E L H P Q L  
T K G L U K Z U J L Q L M O B  
P W L Q G O B H G P U M L Q H

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: AMBITIOUS TAPE-MEASURE SALESMAN LEARNED TO PUT HIS BEST FOOT FORWARD.

Today's Cryptoquip clue: E 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.



An official of the Nagano Olympic Organising Committee (NAOC) lines up four owl mascots called the 'Snowlets' for the 1998 Nagano Olympic yesterday. NAOC unveiled the mascots yesterday and is inviting suggestions for individual names of the Snowlets until November 1.