

S Africa poised to pocket series



COLOMBO, Sept 18: Vice-captain Hanse Cronje hit an unbeaten 73 to help South Africa keep the upper hand on the fourth day of the third Test against Sri Lanka here Saturday, reports AFP.

South Africa reached 159 for four in their second innings when bad light stopped play two overs from the scheduled close.

With just a day remaining, the third Test looks set to end in a draw unless South Africa suffer a dramatic batting collapse on the fifth morning. The tourists have an overall lead of 179 after Sri Lanka declared their first innings 20 runs short of South Africa's first innings total.

Cronje put on 94 runs with Jonty Rhodes for the fourth wicket to help South Africa recover from a jittery 65-3.

Rhodes was bowled round his legs by off-spinner Muttiah Muralidharan after an uncharacteristic 19 off 86 balls. He proved to be an ideal foil at one end preferring to play a sedate role during the crucial partnership.

The right-handed Cronje, who made a century in the second Test, scored a six off right arm off-cutter Kumara Dharmasena and six boundaries in his 214-minute innings. Sri Lanka had earlier declared their first innings at 296-9.

The declaration came when pace bowler Brett Schultz took his fifth wicket by dismissing Sanath Jayasuriya for 65 in his first over after lunch.

It was Jayasuriya's fourth half-century in 12 Test matches.

Sri Lanka's chances of dominating the match evaporated with their snail-paced approach in the first innings. In fact, they took more than 10 hours to reach the total of 296.

Left-arm Schultz ended with best figures of 5-63 to increase his wicket-tally to 20 in the three-Test series. This is the second time the young pace ace has claimed a five-wicket haul. He took 5-48 in the second Test.

Medium pacer Chandika Hathurusinghe sent Sri Lanka off to a great start by clinching the important wicket of skipper Kepler Wessels in the sixth over.

Cronje and opener Andrew Hudson were dented further success for Sri Lanka until the tea break with a 47-run second-wicket stand.

But South Africa came under pressure immediately after tea when they lost two more wickets in the space of seven runs. Hudson played on to a ball from seamer Champaka Ramanayake and was bowled for 28 in the third ball after the short interval.

Sri Lanka then came back into the game when South Africa lost the third wicket in the 30th over.

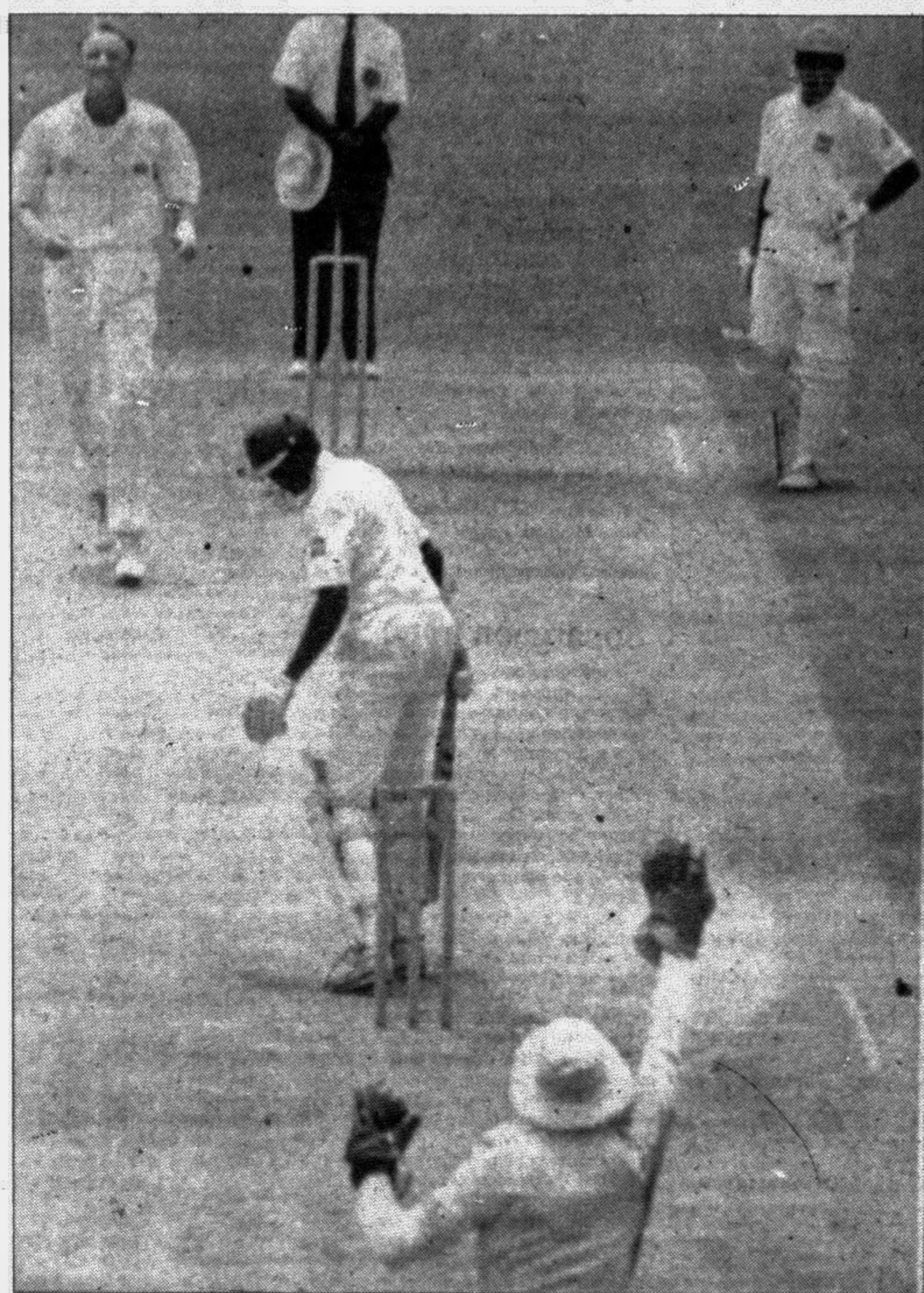
Substitute fielder Dulp Samarawera beat wicket-keeper Pubudu Dassanayake when he ran behind the wicket

from forward short leg to hold on to a catch from first innings centurion Daryll Cullinan off Dharmasena.

But the talented Cronje and first Test hero Rhodes pulled their side out of the rut with

Donald Dassanayake run out 8
De Silva lbw Symcox 82
Ranatunga c Richardson b Schultz 50
Tillekeratne c Richardson b Schultz 37

SOUTH AFRICA: Second innings
Wessels c Mahanama b Hathurusinghe 7
Hudson b Ramanayake 28
Cronje not out 73
Cullinan c (sub) Samarawera b



Sri Lankan batsman Duleep Liyanage looks back as an express delivery from South African fast bowler Allan Donald clips his off ball on the fourth day of the third and final Test in Colombo yesterday.

their 117-minute stand.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at close of the fourth day of the third and final Test between Sri Lanka and South Africa at the Saravanamuttu Stadium, Saturday:

SOUTH AFRICA: First innings 316 (D J Cullinan 102, D J Richardson 62, Muralidharan 4-64).

SRI LANKA: First innings (245-5 overnight)
Mahanama c McMillan b Schultz 25
Hathurusinghe c Richardson b

Jayasuriya c Cronje b Schultz 65
Dharmasena c Richardson b Schultz 5
Liyanage b Donald 0
Ramanayake not out 0
Extras: (b-7, lb-9, nb-7) 23
Total: (9 wks dec) 296
Fall of wicket: 1-1; 2-27; 3-55; 4-156; 5-202; 6-263; 7-273; 8-294; 9-296.
Did not bat: M Muralidharan.
Bowling:
Donald 30 12 62 2
Schultz 36.5 9 63 5
McMillan 30 8 64 0
Snell 25 8 44 0
Symcox 18 5 47 1

Dharmasena 4
Rhodes b Muralidharan 19
McMillan not out 0
Extras: (b-4, lb-17, nb-7) 28
Total: (4 wks) 159
Fall of wicket: 1-11; 2-58; 3-65; 4-159.
Bowling:
Ramanayake 10 1 26 1
Hathurusinghe 8 4 7 1
Liyanage 4 1 17 0
Muralidharan 15 3 39 1
Dharmasena 18 8 29 1
Jayasuriya 3 1 17 0
De Silva 3 1 3 0
Umpires: B Aldridge (New Zealand) and B C Cooray (Sri Lanka).

India too against Beijing bid

NEW DELHI, Sept 18: Tibetans boycotted work in India's Kashmir Saturday in a bid to stop the International Olympic Committee (IOC) from awarding the 2000 Olympic Games to Beijing, protesters and reports said, reports AFP.

More than 250 Tibetans working in the garment industry of the northern states summer capital of Srinagar walked off work to protest China's bid for the Games, the Press Trust of India (PTI) said.

They shouted anti-Chinese slogans and urged compatriots living in other parts of India to call on the IOC to exclude China from the Games race, PTI said.

"Let the Games be elsewhere, but not in China," the protesters chanted. Besides Beijing, Berlin, Istanbul, Manchester and Sydney are contenders for the 2000 Olympics.

The venue of the Games is to be decided on September 23 at an IOC session in Monaco where four young Tibetans Saturday were detained by police for protesting against Beijing's bid. They were later released.

The Tibetan Youth Congress (TYC), which is in the forefront of an anti-Chinese campaign in India, said some 500 TYC activists will stage a protest Sunday in central New Delhi.

"We will organise a run for no Olympics in China," a TYC spokesman said, adding that many Indians will also participate in the five kilometre (three mile) race to a landmark World War II memorial.

"China does not deserve to host the Games because it has never regarded the Olympics spirit as an international movement," he said.

Tibetan spiritual leader the Dalai Lama and thousands of others fled their homeland after Beijing ruthlessly crushed an anti-Chinese uprising in Tibet in 1959.

Chinese troops occupied Tibet in 1950.

Oil over troubled water

MONTE CARLO, Monaco, Sept 18: Chinese officials Saturday sought to contain the potential damage caused by statements suggesting China could boycott the 1996 Atlanta Olympics if Beijing is not awarded the 2000 Games, reports AP.

Zhang Baifa, chief executive of the Beijing bid committee, denied he had raised the possibility of a boycott as revenge for US Congressional opposition to China's 2000 candidacy.

In a translated interview by Australia's Special Broadcasting Service Television, Zhang was quoted Friday as saying:

"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."

However, in a statement released Saturday through the official Xinhua news agency, Zhang said the reported comment was incorrect.

"An American friend told me that you have every reason to boycott the Atlanta Olympic Games, but I said that China sticks to its firm position that it fully supports the Olympic movement, and therefore we will not do that," Xinhua quoted him as saying.

Xinhua also reported that He Zhenliang, president of the Chinese Olympic Committee, told reporters Friday that China "would send its athletes to take part" in both the 1994 Winter Olympics in Lillehammer and the 1996 Summer Games in Atlanta.

In fact, He, while ruling out an official boycott, had stopped short of guaranteeing that China's athletes would actually take part.

With less than a week to go before Thursday's vote on the host city by the International Olympic Committee, the statements issued through Xinhua appeared to be a clear attempt

at damage control following the wide publicity given to the earlier remarks.

On Friday, He told a news conference: "Regardless of the vote of Sept 23, China will continue to do everything to contribute to the development of the Olympic movement. There was never a boycott threat. The question of a boycott of the Atlanta Games does not exist."

However, when pressed to state categorically that Chinese athletes would compete, He would not do so.

"Our athletes are training very hard, both for the Winter Olympics in Lillehammer and the Atlanta Games," the official said several times, both in French and English.

He's wording seemed to leave

Bantering bout over Games site

LONDON, Sept 18: The Prime Ministers of Britain and Australia sparred with each other on Friday as they backed their national bids to host the Olympics in the year 2000, reports Reuters.

John Major and Paul Keating were asked after talks at 10 Downing Street whether they debated the relative merits of Sydney and the northern English city of Manchester as venues for the Summer Games.

"I'm sure I can't say anything beyond that which would be entirely predictable and that is that we think Sydney is by far the best technical bid," Keating told reporters.

He added with a smile, "No doubt, that will be disputed by the (British) Prime Minister."

open the door that the Chinese could eventually decide not to compete in Atlanta — without calling it a boycott. That was the case in 1984 when the Soviets cited security reasons as the official reason for their absence at the Los Angeles Games. In fact, the Soviets were retaliating for the 1980 US-led boycott of the Moscow Olympics.

Kevan Gosper, an IOC vice president from Australia, said Saturday that he didn't believe that China was holding out a boycott threat.

"I genuinely believe that they would propose to be in Atlanta — win or lose," said Gosper, who also serves as an official on the 2000 Olympic bid from Sydney, Australia. "It's simple logic: if Beijing was not successful here, there's every indication that they would propose to go again for 2004. It does not make sense not to go for Atlanta, does it?"

Beijing and Sydney are considered among the top contenders to host the 2000 Games. The other candidates are Manchester, England; Berlin and Istanbul, Turkey. The IOC's 90 members will select the winner by secret ballot.

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.

While Beijing was embroiled in controversy, Sydney officials proudly announced that more than 100,000 people had offered their services as volunteers should the Australian City win the bid. They said applications had come not only from Australia but also from Europe, Asia, the Pacific and the Americas.

Doubts over Chinese track stars dispelled

BEIJING, Sept 18: China's World record setting track stars were found to be drug free after undergoing tests, a committee which organised the 7th National Games said Friday, reports AFP.

Dai Wenzhong was quoted by the officials Xinhua news agency as saying that no traces of illegal substances were found in urine samples taken by the women that set world records in the 1,500, the 3,000 and the 10,000 metre events at the Games which ended earlier this week.

"They gave their urine samples for doping tests immediately after breaking the world records," he said.

The remarkable performances of Wang Junxia and Qu Yunxia, who train under Ma Junren, immediately raised suspicions that the women were using performance enhancing drugs.

Protesters qui vive

BERLIN, Sept 18: While Berlin Olympic committee officials scrambled for votes in Monte Carlo, about 3,000 people rallied in the German capital on Saturday to protest against the city's bid for the Games, reports AP.

Protesters said the money should be spent on housing and local improvements, rather than on hosting the Summer Olympics in the year 2000.

The development of the Olympic Games into an event in which doped-up athletes compete for commercial sponsors brings into question the whole meaning of the Olympics," organizers said in a flyer.

Berlin police said that as of early afternoon, the protesters were peaceful as they listened to anti-Olympics speech on the Alexanderplatz in East Berlin.

Police were bracing for possible trouble by anti-Olympics activists later in the day. The protesters set off a series of small bombs earlier in the week in Berlin and the Baltic coast city of Rostock.

Militant activists say they'll be in Monte Carlo, attempting to harass members of International Olympic Committee when they vote on Thursday.

Berlin was once a favourite to host the Games. But the city's bid has become highly politicized, drawing athletes and supporters into debates on the high costs of the game.

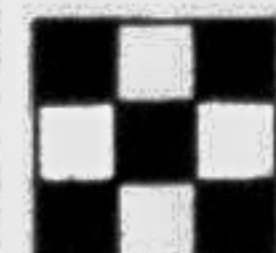
Flies matter for Beijing bid

BEIJING, Sept 18: China on Saturday reported success in a massive fly-swatting campaign aimed at winning the 2000 Olympic Games for Beijing, reports Reuters.

"To create conditions to apply to host the Olympics, the capital's fly density has had a clear fall," the Beijing Evening News headlined on its front page.

The newspaper quoted the "leading small group on a no-fly city" as saying there had been a clear decline in the density of flies and a corresponding decrease in the rate of contagious diseases.

Karpov sustains advantage



AMSTERDAM, Sept 18: Russian ex-world champion Anatoly Karpov held onto his slim lead in the FIDE World Chess Championship on Friday by drawing the seventh game against Dutch Grandmaster Jan Timman after just 21 moves, reports Reuters.

The Russian now leads by four points to three, with 17 games left to play. The eighth game is today.

Curly-haired Timman, 41, arrived a few minutes late after his taxi got lost, but soon settled down.

Playing with the white pieces, he followed exactly the same line against Karpov's favourite Caro-Kann defence as in Games One and Three, evidently determined to undermine Karpov's faith in the opening.

The line, now dubbed "The Zwolle variation" after the venue where Timman first played it two weeks ago, strands white's king in the centre of his position instead of tucking him safely behind a pawn rampart.

But the line compensates white by giving the advantage of the bishop pair which can be

deadly in attack. Karpov switched to nc5 on move 16, in place of qb6 played in the third game, and the position at first looked equal or perhaps slightly better for white.

"This line with no6 was already analysed in the first game and we thought it may be better for white," said Dutch International Master Paul Boersma.

"White has a slight advantage, but only slight," said Israeli International Master Eli Shvidler.

The Russian manoeuvred his knights to the centre, but it became evident that he had a problem finding a good square for his queen's bishop.

Meanwhile, Timman put both his rooks on the open queen's file ready to sweep into black's position.

But then on move 21 watching experts were surprised to see a draw agreed.

"Timman really should have played on," Shvidler said.

The experts said Timman should have used the slight advantage of the white pieces, which move first, to go for a win which would have pulled Karpov back to a level position.

But the Dutchman told Reuters after the game that he did not think he had a sufficient advantage to push on.

"I offered the draw. Karpov improved on his play in the third game, which I was clearly winning," Timman said.

Timman was sanguine about his performance in the match, saying that he had been leading both games five and six until he missed winning continuations. In the end, he salvaged only half a point out of a possible two in these games.

"I have made some bad mistakes, like in games five and six. (But) it's a long match," he said.

The first 12 games in the 24-game match are to be played in the Netherlands and the rest in Oman. The first player to reach 12 1/2 points wins.

FIDE, the world chess body, disqualified reigning champion Garry Kasparov and official challenger Nigel Short in March after they rejected FIDE's planned venue.

They formed the breakaway Professional Chess Association and are currently contesting The Times World Chess Championship in London.

Bubka not blase, Christie OK



FUKUOKA, Japan, Sept 18: Pole vaulter Sergei Bubka narrowly missed ending his season with a new world record Saturday, and world champion sprinter Linford Christie ended his season winning the 100 metres, reports AP.

Bubka appeared to be on his way to yet another record as his feet cleared 6.14 metres (20 feet, 1 3/4 inches), one centimetre (1/4 inch) over his own world best. But the Ukrainian hit the bar with his chest on his way up on his first try, and failed to come close on his next two attempts.

Bubka, who has set 34 pole vault world records indoors and outdoors and two at the Toto International in past years, won the event with a vault of 5.80 metres (19 feet, 1/4 inch).

Christie, meanwhile, made easy work of the 100 metre field at this meet in the southern Japan city of Fukuoka, cruising to a 10.06 second victory.

Andre Cason of the United States followed behind the Briton at 10.14.

American Michael Johnson, world champion over 400 metres and a former world champion in the 200 metres as well, overcame a cold and jet lag to nip Namibia's Frank Fredericks and win the 200 in 20.19 seconds. Fredericks finished in 20.22.

It was my last race of the season, so I wanted to win and I did," he said. "But I came here from New Delhi, and before that London and home so I have been through several time zones. My explosive endurance right now isn't at its best."

Also ending the season on a winning note was 110-metre hurdles specialist Colin Jackson, the world champion and world record holder. Jackson of Great Britain, won the event in 13.14.

In the 400 metres, world record holder Butch Reynolds breezed to the finish in 45.15,

well ahead of fellow American and 1992 Olympic champion Quincy Watts, who was timed at 45.75.

South Korea's Jin-Il Lee upset Stuttgart bronze medalist Billy Konchellah of Kenya in the 800 metres, winning the race in 1 minute, 49.76 seconds.

In women's events, Stefka Kostadinova of Bulgaria failed to better her own world record of 2.09 metres (6-10 1/4), but won the high jump competition with a leap of 2.05 (6-8 3/4). Romania's Galina Astafei finished second with 1.96 (6-5).

Germany's Hielke Drechsler, the gold medalist at the World Championships in Stuttgart and in the Barcelona Olympics, won the long jump with a jump of 7.09 metres (23-3 1/4), well of her best of 7.48 (24/6 1/2).

Sandie Richards of Jamaica easily won the 400 metres in 52.16. Nigeria's Mary Onyal finished second with a 53.12.

"I wanted to run faster, but I guess it's not such a bad time," he said. "I'm glad I won."



World record holder Linford Christie (C) of Britain confirms his supremacy as he crosses the finish line to win the men's 100-metre dash at the Toto International Track and Field meet yesterday in Fukuoka, Japan. Christie clocked 10.06 seconds while American rivals Andre Cason (L) and Dennis Mitchell placed second and third.

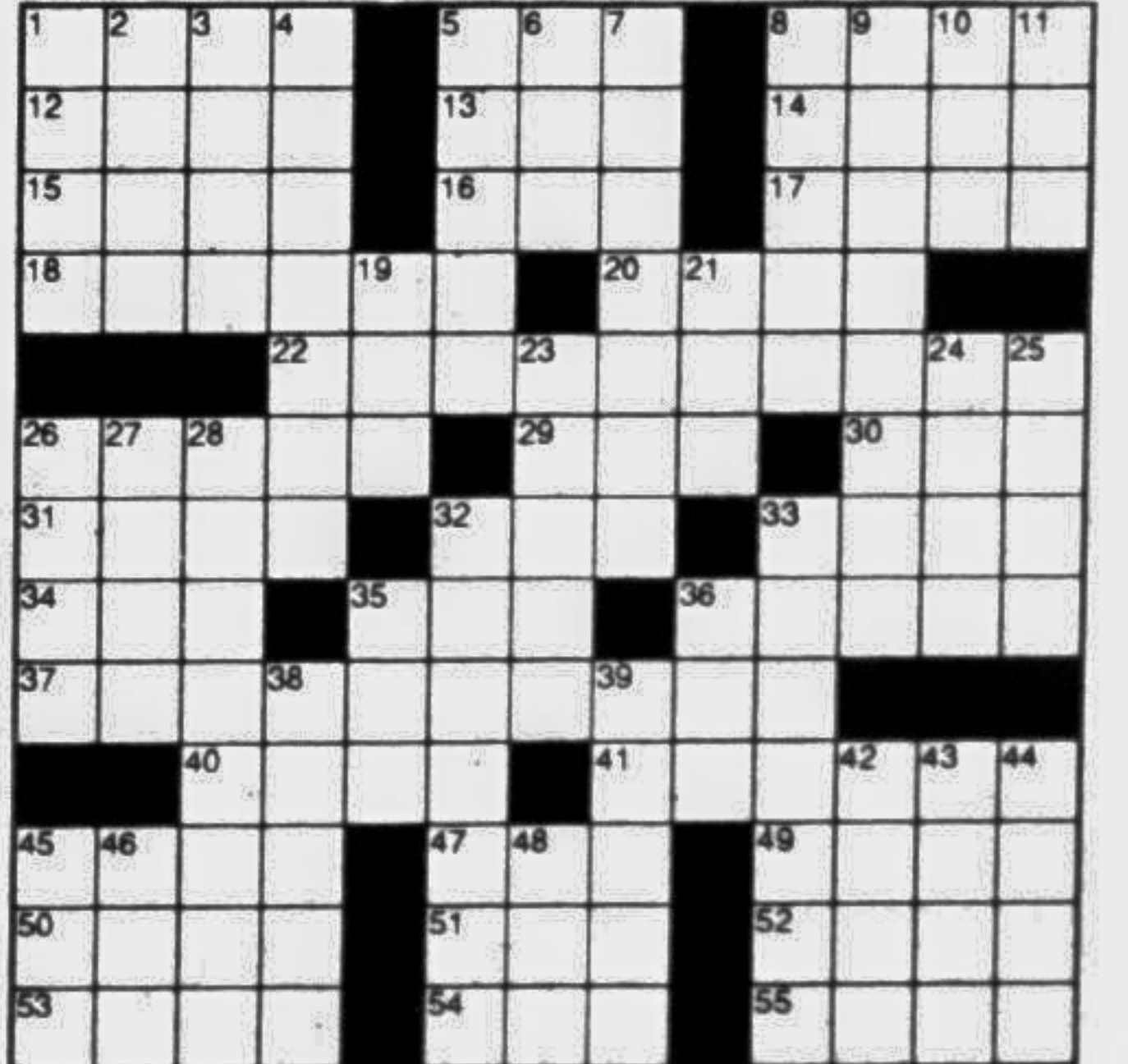
CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 "— Nearly Was Mine"
5 Fluffy accessory
8 Witticism
12 Appraise
13 "Cabaret" lyricist
14 State for sure
15 Finished
16 Land a hand
17 "Take — your leader"
18 Insist upon
20 Admitting customers
22 Expert
26 Antileban Indian
29 Whammy
30 Actress Thurman
31 Exploits
32 Yes, Virginia... newspaper
33 Rhett's last word
34 Funnyman Caesar
35 Moreover
36 Entree precursor

DOWN
19 Collar
21 Opposite of bellum
23 Dull sounds
24 Austen heroine
25 McNally's partner
26 Point section
27 Atlas
28 Warbler
32 Get cozy
33 Liam Neeson movie
35 Parisian's pal
36 Cousteau's milieu
38 Emulates Spitz
39 Heavy reading?
42 Color quality
43 Strong as —
44 "Look Homeward, Angel" hero
45 Barn occupant
46 Namath or Montana
48 Intention

Solution time: 23 mins.

CAW MBS WITH RUERS OHRIO ASLEEP DOCTOR KILL DARE AMA PIECE SIL SEND LOCK CAKED WAYNE DAILY SPASM DAG DOCTOR ZHIVAGO BEANIE RIVET SKINS AVID ACT LAD



CRYPTOQUIP

P A X Q T W U T T Z X U
E X X Q X Q D E D Z O K X
U D H G X G T A X O S P
P A X F H P X T E A H G F T G G
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: GLOVE THIEVES ARE OFTEN FINGERED BY ALERT BYSTANDERS.

Today's Cryptoquip clue: W equals G

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.