

Edberg to disprove critics



PARIS, Sept 28: Swedish tennis player Stefan Edberg hit back on Monday at suggestions his career was on the slide, reports AFP.

The 27-year-old, heavily criticised after a string of poor performances, is determined to silence his doubters — and the best way to do that, according to Edberg, would be to add another Grand Slam title to his career successes.

"I don't think I'm finished. I've been in the world top ten for nine years and my target is to stay there for a tenth year in 1994," he said.

"Also, my goal is to win a Grand Slam title, the French Open at Roland Garros if possible."

Yet many believe the London-based Swede is not the force he once was, a view reinforced by brittle displays in the last three Grand Slam tournaments and capped by Sweden's capitulation against Germany in the Davis Cup last week.

Edberg fell to 19-year-old Ukrainian Andrei Medvedev in Paris in June in the quarter-finals. Worse still, he was completely out-thought tactically by the teenager, who relied on the lob to win 6-0, 6-7, 7-5, 6-4.

At Wimbledon, Edberg went one better, reaching the semi-

nals before coming across Jim Courier, the eventual losing finalist, whose power blew holes in the Swede's game plan.

His performance dipped badly at Flushing Meadow, where he was among a long list of seeds to make an early exit, losing 7-6 (7/3), 6-4, 4-6, 6-4 to unseeded Czech Karel Novacek.

And his showing in the Davis Cup semifinals in Sweden, when he was obliterated by Marc Goellner, and then beaten by Michael Stich in the 'dead' reverse singles, did little to dispel the impression of a man struggling with falling form.

Edberg, however, who became a father recently and has admitted that event has affected his on-court concentration, explained away his defeat against Goellner by arguing the German had been irrepressible.

"Certainly I could have played better, but Goellner was really strong, serving as he did — I have never played anybody before who served four aces in a tiebreak."

And he admitted he found it almost impossible to take an interest in the Stich match, with Germany already holding a winning 3-0 lead in the tie.

Edberg, trained by Englishman Tony Pickard, is sure he can add to his tally of six Grand Slam titles, despite a 1993 which saw him miss out on the majors for the first time in three

years and slip from second to fifth in the world rankings.

"If possible, I would like to win at Roland Garros. I'll prepare for it, like I did this season, with a few warm-up tournaments on clay. After all, I'm only 27."

Men's top 20

MONTÉ CARLO, Sept 28: Leading men's singles rankings issued by the Association of Tennis Professionals on Monday, reports Reuter.

1. Pete Sampras (US)
2. Jim Courier (US)
3. Boris Becker (Germany)
4. Sergi Bruguera (Spain)
5. Stefan Edberg (Sweden)
6. Michael Stich (Germany)
7. Andrei Medvedev (Ukraine)
8. Michael Chang (US)
9. Goran Ivanisevic (Croatia)
10. Richard Krajicek (Netherlands)
11. Petr Korda (Czech Republic)
12. Thomas Muster (Austria)
13. Cedric Pioline (France)
14. Alexander Volkov (Russia)
15. Ivan Lendl (US)
16. Wally Masur (Australia)
17. Karel Novacek (Czech Republic)
18. Todd Martin (US)
19. Magnus Gustafsson (Sweden)
20. Marc Rosset (Switzerland)

Brad Gilbert bundled out

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 28: Fifth-seeded American Brad Gilbert was bundled out in straight sets by Peruvian Jaime Yzaga in the second round of the 300,000 dollar Saem Open on Tuesday, reports Reuter.

Unseeded Yzaga, ranked 58th in the world, took one hour 38 minutes to defeat Gilbert, ranked 32nd in the world, 6-1, 7-5.

"The surface here is slow and Yzaga is a good clay court player. But I feel I could have won the second set," Gilbert said.

A jubilant Yzaga said: "It was a good win for me. The weather was hot, but I was not affected, having trained in Miami. I hit the ball well, but I think Gilbert was tired."

Australian Davis Cup hero Jason Stoltenberg, the eighth seed, bowed out of the tournament after injuring his hand during play. He conceded a walk over to Sweden's Jonas Bjorkman.

Stoltenberg, who last week-end helped Australia to beat India and reach the Davis Cup final, lost the first set 4-6 and was trailing 0-2 in the second when he fell as he reached for a shot.

He was taken to hospital with a swollen right hand.

Top seed Jim Courier of the United States was facing Canada's Albert Chang later on Tuesday.

Wang Shi-Ting on winning race

SAPPORO, Japan, Sept 28: Taiwan's ace and second seed Wang Shi-Ting beat Catalina Cristea of Romania 6-0, 6-3 in the first round of the 100,000 dollar Sapporo Ladies Open tennis tournament here Tuesday, reports AFP.

Wang, ranked 30th in the world, who grabbed her first major victory in Hong Kong nine days ago, advanced to a second-round match with Belgian Dominique Monami, who also swept aside China's Li Fang 6-4, 6-3 in opening-day action.

Third seed Yayuk Basuki of Indonesia whipped Debbie Graham of the United States 6-4, 6-1 elsewhere in the 32-way first round.

Top-seeded South African Amanda Coetzer, fresh from her biggest career victory in Tokyo Sunday, combined with American Linda Harvey Wild to beat the South African-Australian duo of Tessa Price and Kirrily Sharpe 2-6, 6-2, 6-1 in the doubles first round.

Coetzer, the world's number 14, was set to appear in the singles first round Wednesday when she takes on Japanese wildcard Ai Sugiyama, and fourth-seeded Mrianne Werdel faces fellow-American Chanda Rubin.

Belgium bash Brazil

BRUSSELS, Sept 28: Belgium beat Brazil in their Davis Cup World Group qualifier on Monday, taking an unbeatable 3-1 lead in the rain-hit tie when Bart Wuyts beat Fernando Meligeni, reports Reuter.

Play was halted on Sunday because of bad light, and rain prevented a resumption until Monday afternoon when the second reverse singles between Belgium's Filip Dewulf and Brazilian Jaime Oncins was called off.

Bolletieri on a new mission

DOHA, Sept 28: Nick Bolletieri, the man who coached Andre Agassi to a Wimbledon title and produced many other tennis stars from his world famous Florida Academy, said he is starting a similar operation in Qatar, reports Reuter.

Bolletieri said on Monday that he planned to start bringing in specialists to coach local players in November.

The more promising players would be flown to Florida for further instruction, said the American, who is on a four-day visit to Qatar.

Good start for Eltingh

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 28: Jacco Eltingh of the Netherlands played a big serving game to beat Greg Rusedki of Canada and lead the singles charge in the first round of the Malaysian Open tennis championship here Monday, reports AFP.

Playing his first match after a five week lay-off forced by bad dehydration, Eltingh displayed remarkable grit and returned from a game down to end Rusedki's dominance on the court with 3-6, 7-5, 7-6 (7-4).

But the Canadian lost ground in the second set when the right-handed Eltingh struck back and broke him in the 11th game to win 7-5.

The Dutchman went on to pick the decider after a 7-4 tie break.

From Bombay slums to world stage

By A J Singh

Vinod Kambl scored a record 793 runs from eight innings in the just concluded Test cricket series against Sri Lanka. This followed his sensational innings against England in the winter season when he hit two double centuries in two successive innings. Yet he has few friends in the cricketing world. Gemini News Service charts the journey of the 21-year-old who has risen to the world stage from a Bombay shanty town:



Vinod Kambl is the world's youngest left-hander in cricketing history to have scored two double centuries in two successive innings. He achieved this feat in Bombay during the third Test against England in the winter tour.

Now the 21-year-old Indian has scored a record 793 runs from eight innings in the just-concluded series against Sri Lanka. Thus he broke the record of India's top opening batsman Sunil Gavaskar, who returned from the West Indies tour in 1971 with 774 runs in eight innings.

Kambl's story is a fairy tale. He has risen from Bombay's shanty towns to a high position in Indian cricket.

His batting statistics are phenomenal. In his first four Test matches he scored 544 runs, an average of 132 per Test. Five of his 13 first-class centuries have been converted into double hundreds. In 11 first-class games, he scored 1,200 runs, taking his total to over 3,500 runs from 31 matches.

This ranks him alongside Sir Donald Bradman and Wally Hammond as the other cricketers to have scored double hundreds, and that too in just his third and fourth Test appearances.

And yet things have not been too good for young Kambl. Though the selectors were convinced that he had the talent, his fellow players have found fault with his temperament.

His flamboyant flashy attitude, especially some of his antics matched by his wild clothes, did not go down well with his team-mates. His coach, Ramakant Achrekar, says: "He often does not know how to behave on and off the field. He may not mean anything adverse, but it comes across as if he couldn't care less."

Kambl says there used to be a lot of talk and gossip about him and his behaviour. "That is because I was a little childish then. He is now a more mature player and a changed man. Even his critics acknowledge

that he has improved with every match."

The basics of Test cricket is to stay at the wicket," says Kambl. "I went into the Bombay innings with this attitude. But I must say even I was surprised that I managed to stay almost 10 hours at the wicket."

Kambl recalls: "When I go out on 13 at Calcutta in my first Test, I told myself how can I get out like this? Then, in Madras, when I got 59 I told myself, Why

and Vivian Richards, former West Indian skipper. Why? Cricket commentator T Tejpal says: "Most likely, the quest for the purity and discipline of Sunil. And the sheer power of Vivian."

India's youngest run-getter Sachin Tendulkar and Vinod Kambl are school buddies and have played cricket together in many national matches for years.

In fact, over the years Kambl began to be referred to as Sachin's playing partner. "Everywhere I went I was Sachin's partner," says Kambl. "Now no longer. Now I'm Vinod Kambl."

Kambl came from a poor family in the shanty township of Kenjurmarg in Bombay. He had a difficult childhood. His father had to work hard to provide for the family and his mother had to attend to all the household chores and look after his three younger brothers.

Since Kambl was the eldest child in the family, he had no one to guide him. When he was 20 one of his distant cousin Avinash came into contact with him. They became friends and spend their weekends together. "He is like an elder brother to me and has changed me completely," admits Kambl.

The other influence in Kambl's life is that of Sunil Gavaskar. After Kambl was dropped from the team which toured Australia last season, Gavaskar gave him some technical and personal hints.

Recalls Kambl: "He told me 'Vinod, it is your life and only you can take control over it.' He did."

Kambl has matured because he has started thinking about his family. He says: "My father has a year to retire and, being the eldest son, I will have to look after my family. All this makes you think about life. Now Test cricket has hastened my change both as a cricketer and as a person." —GEMINI NEWS

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VINOD KAMBLI
'I'm hungry for runs'

Kambl attributes this change in attitude to Ajit Wadekar, team manager and a former Indian skipper. "I've tried to follow his (Ajit's) advice to concentrate and not to go for my strokes initially," says Kambl. "He keeps telling me not to flash outside the off-

can't I get a hundred? I get a 50 and then take a new guard, then again a new guard after a 100 and so on. I aim to get runs in 50s and that is what keeps me going. I'm hungry for runs. All I want to do is to score more and more."

His idols are Sunil Gavaskar

French judokas want top place

HAMILTON, Canada, Sept 28: French judo chiefs believe that with a little help from ex-Soviet fighters they can take Japan's spot as judo's top nation at the World Championships here on Thursday, reports AFP.

"We really believe we can now overtake Japan," said French director of coaching Jean-Luc Rouge. "We should win the women's competitions anyway but the break of the Soviet Union will hurt them more than us."

Their men will have more opponents in their best categories."

Japan won 11 medals, including four men's titles at the 1991 World Championships, to France's seven medals and two titles.

Japan were pegged back to 10 medals and only two titles at last year's Olympics in Barcelona while the French maintained their record of seven medals and two titles.

At the European Championships at Athens in May the French walked away with 12

medals, including three men's titles and two women's. Former Soviet fighters won the other five men's titles and he believes they will cancel out the Japanese men here.

"We respect the Japanese but in the past we have tended to follow them blindly," said Rouge who was light-heavyweight world champion in 1975.

"In the last couple of years we have tried to develop our own skills and our results in the last 12 months seem to have improved drastically," he said.

"Japanese judo seems anchored in the past. They don't question what they are doing," he added.

Team manager Fabien Canu, middleweight world champion in 1987 and 1989, was more reserved in his predictions.

"The gap has narrowed over the last five years but Japan are still number one," he said.

"They responded to their Seoul Olympic disaster but this might be our best chance as nearly all our Olympic fighters are still with us," he said.

Japan are battling to defend not only their dwindling dominance but also their time-honoured belief in the all-white fighting strip.

The International Judo Federation will vote on a European proposal that opponents should fight in either blue or white to make matches easier to follow and better for television.

All-Japan Judo Federation president Yukimitsu Kano says white symbolises judo's "Purity". A similar proposal was voted down 87-50 in 1989.

Japanese team manager Yashuhiro Yamashita hopes to bring home all eight men's titles, compared with four at the last championships.

Yamashita, 1981 double world champion, said they were "watching what the former Soviet forces are up to."

Heavyweight Naoya Ogawa is seeking an unprecedented fourth straight world title in the men's open category.

He lost to Georgia's David Khakhalechvili in the over-95 kilo heavyweight final in

Barcelona and three months later the 1.93m (6ft 5in) 130 kilo (286 pound) giant was floored by Belgian Harry van Barneveld with a leg throw at the Kano Cup in Tokyo.

But Khakhalechvili, 23, has hit top form, winning the open and heavyweight titles at the European Championships in May.

He beat Van Barneveld in the open final and David Douillet of France in the heavyweight.

Olympic light middleweight (78kg) champion Hidehiko Yoshida, who underwent surgery on his right ankle in April, faces strong opposition in European champion Darcel Yandzi of France and Russian Alexei Timochkin.

Japan are also pinning their hopes on the Nakamura brothers. Yochio Nakamura, 22, beat 1991 middleweight (86kg) titleholder Hirotaka Okada at the national trials for Hamilton.

His younger brother Yukimasa, 21, won at featherweight (65kg) in the Paris Open and east Asian Games this year.

Asprilla—the air supplier



ROME, Sept 28: Flamboyant Colombian striker Faustino Asprilla is a breath of fresh air in a soccer world in which the vast majority of players look likely they have been assembled on a production line, reports Reuter.

Asprilla, who plays for Italian club Parma, is a potent blend of pace, power and flair as he has just demonstrated with a run of form which most players can only dream of.

First he played a starring role in Colombia's astounding 5-0 rout of Argentina in a key World Cup qualifier, netting twice.

His return to action with Cup Winners' Cup holders Parma was equally dramatic, the black forward striking two fine goals in the last three minutes to turn defeat into victory as the Italians began their defence of their European title against the Swedes of Degerfors.

His golden September continued with a hat-trick in the league game with Torino and he then conjured up another special as Parma held Sampdoria 1-1 last Sunday—each goal followed by the fun-loving Asprilla's trademark celebration cartwheel.

His skills have prompted comparisons with South American greats such as Diego Maradona and even Pele.

"Asprilla can take us where

the great Diego took Napoli—to the Italian title," said Parma president Giorgio Pedraneschi.

Only 23 years old, Asprilla would seem to have some of the same self-destructive tendencies as Maradona.

He missed Parma's Cup Winners' Cup triumph at Wembley last May after badly gashing his leg in a mysterious incident back home in Colombia.

He maintained all along that he had trodden on a bottle beside his swimming pool despite media reports that he kicked in the window of a bus during a rowdy night out.

Colombia's World Cup qualifying campaign also had its rocky moments with Asprilla involved in an altercation with photographers at Bogota Airport and briefly walking out on the squad after being dropped.

In Italy, stories abound of the cars he has written off and how the salsa music blasting from the house he shares with his wife and baby son have shaken and stirred sleepy Parma.

But Parmalat, the dairy products group which provides the financial backing for the ambitious club, believes he can create the right sort of impression at the World Cup finals next year.

"We (Parmalat) have agreed an advertising contract with him which we will exploit during the World Cup in the United States... Faustino will be a rep-

resentative for our products," said Pedraneschi, who has an executive position with Parmalat.

"We chose him because we think he can be the number one at the World Cup."

Gazzetta Dello Sport echoed the judgement.

"The Treasure Asprilla," ran a recent headline. "Thanks to him Parma are now the most popular team with opposition fans."

The deal which brought Asprilla to Parma from Nacional of Medellin some 15 months ago cost the Italians little more than seven billion lire (4.4 million dollars).

Asprilla made a slow start in Italy but burst into life in the closing stages of last season, making his name with a brilliant goal at the San Siro Stadium which ended Milan's record unbeaten league run.

Parma now have their star under contract until 1998 and coach Nevio Scala says Asprilla can be one of the very best if he has the maturity to take advice.

"If he listens and does what I tell him to do he can be one of the real greats," Scala said.

Asprilla would seem to have the drive to curb his extravagant character and fulfil his potential with a club that has rocketed out of obscurity in the past 10 years.

"My objective is to win the Italian league title, that is the most prestigious goal. I am working for that," he said.

Tapie's back against wall



PARIS, Sept 28: French soccer league president Noel le Graet said on Monday Marcelle boss Bernard Tapie should quit, reports Reuter.

"I think he should step down," said the Le Graet after the world soccer authorities banned the European champions from the World Club Cup and European Super Cup.

"He wants to go, you can feel it," Le Graet told French radio. "Marcelle is a superb showcase which dramatically lacks money and sponsors."

Self-made millionaire Tapie said it was unfair to punish his club before accusations they bribed league opponents Valenciennes had been proven in a French court. But he was adamant he would not quit.

"It's a lot for accusations that have not been proved," said Tapie after hearing of the new sanctions against Marseille, al-

ready banned from defending their European crown and stripped of their French league title.

"I'm never discouraged," he told French radio. "I feel like shouting because it's unfair... but I will not disappear just because a handful of crooks are trying to do us down."

Tapie had briefly threatened to resign after fans invaded the pitch during his side's 3-0 home defeat by Metz in a league match on Friday forcing the referee to abandon the game.

Marseille, accused of bribing Valenciennes to throw a key league match last May, had been due to play in the World Club Cup and the Super Cup with anticipated earnings of around 8.8 million dollars compensating them for being banned from Europe.

FIFA, world soccer's governing body, and UEFA, meeting in Zurich, decided that losing European Cup finalists AC Milan should replace Marseille

in both competitions.

Marseille vice-president Jean-Louis Leveureau blame the French soccer authorities for Monday's move.

"These sanctions are the last step of a process ignited by French soccer officials," he said. "Once these officials hinted that Marseille did something which contradicted sport's ethics, it was logical for FIFA and UEFA to impose sanctions."

Milan coach Fabio Capello said he was pleased that his side would be competing in the World Club Cup and European Super Cup.

"I said I would before the decision was made and I am now," Capello said.

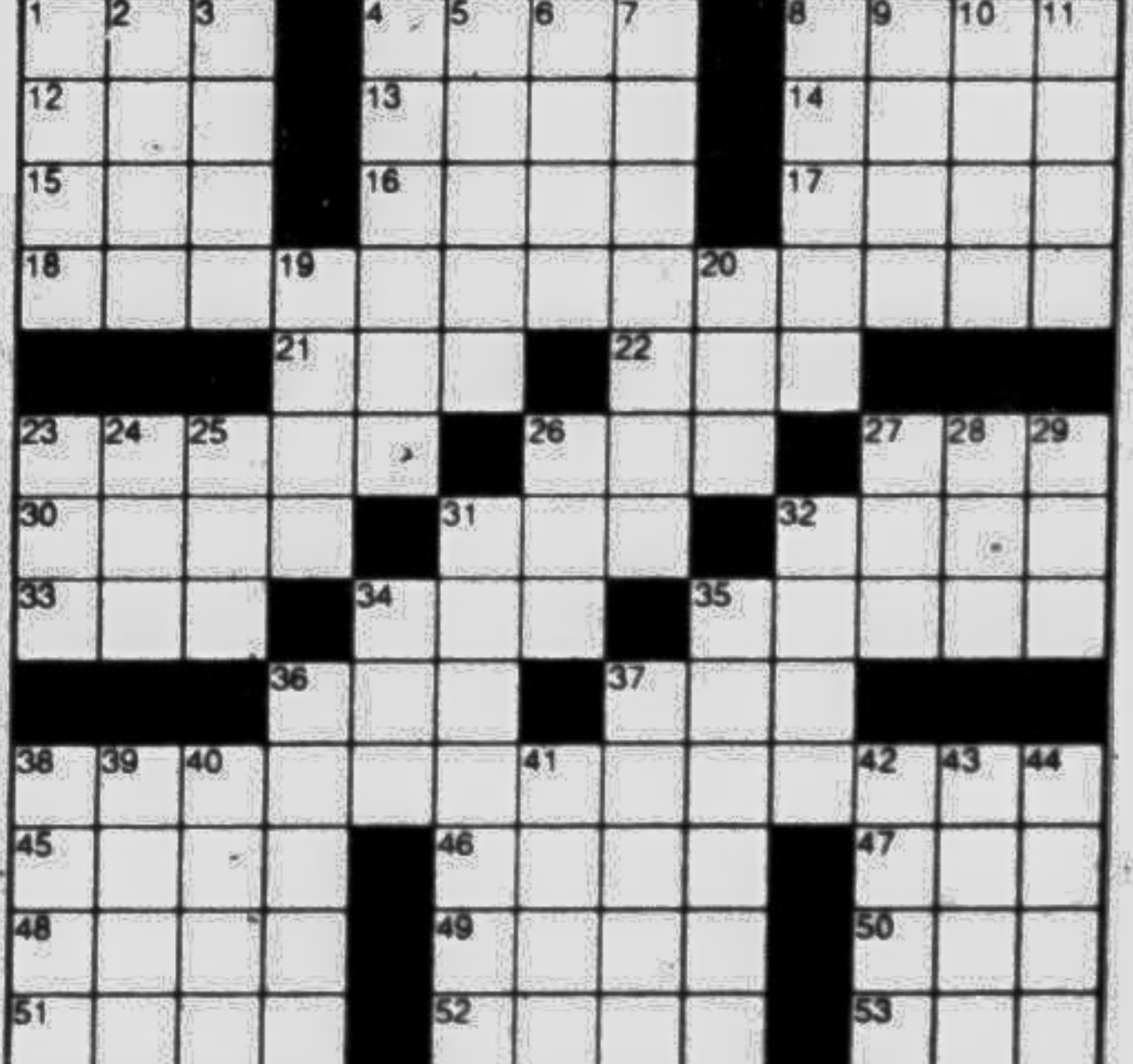
But former Marseille striker Jean-Pierre Papin, who now plays for Milan, said: "I don't think it's right that Marseille cannot play these two finals. If they have been allowed to retain the title, they should also be able to enjoy the consequent rights."



Players and officials of Pioneer Eleven, who won the Selection football championship beating Khuina Division in tie-breaker yesterday. —Star photo

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS	34 Hector, opposite once?	52 Stocking stuffers	19 A different color
1 Fluffy accessories	35 Inane	53 Crucial	20 Work unit
8 Dude-vant's pseudonym	37 — Im-possible	DOWN	23 Mandible
12 "Caught ya!"	38 Office machine	1 Ridicule	24 Future aves
13 — and Away	45 Jai follower	2 Cairo's river	25 Josh
14 Lotion ingredient	46 Director Kazan	3 Poi base	26 Chart
15 Evergreen	47 Altar affirmative	4 Unusually abundant, as crops	27 Zilch
16 Apportion	48 "Nautilus" commander	5 Phantom's realm	28 Completely
17 Post-Christmas event	49 Singer/actress Carter	6 Self: pref.	29 Tarzan's "son"
18 Kitchen appliance	50 Use pincers	7 Ghost	31 Modern
21 Verily	51 Reveille's	8 Impudent	32 Smack
22 Have a go at it	Solution time: 23 mins:	9 "Oh, woe!"	33 "Great Expectations" hero
23 Nicholson role	RES BAT CHUTE	10 — con-tendere	35 Filches
26 One of Louis's girls	ORE ASH ZONAL	11 A few bucks?	36 It's the last word in Barcelona
27 Apprehend	ANI CHICANERY	37 With aloofness	38 Crave
30 Eager	LIZ HONOR	39 Olive genus	39 Olive
31 Train component	DEER RED GLIB	40 Freeway access	40 Freeway
32 Narc's measure	MAIZE SOWED	41 Sub in a tub?	41 Sub in a
33 Bankroll	WILD AHA EXAM	42 Fail	42 Fail
	PRANKSTER NOR	43 Garfield's pal	43 Garfield's
	AERIE ERA IRK	44 Suggesting thick cord	44 Suggesting
	SCALD DAY ANY		



CRYPTOQUIP
ZVBVGFRD, NYRGGRQ KVFU
M SDRRB FUZN, DRTDGF
FA UVZGRYT MG JAID
SMDQRBVBS MBSRY
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: THE PERSON WHO ESCAPED FROM PRISON MIGHT FIND WORK AS A FILING CLERK.

Today's Cryptoquip clue: \$ 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.