

Pernfors on remarkable run

SYDNEY, Oct 4: Mikael Pernfors of Sweden continued his resurgence Monday with an impressive 6-3, 6-3 victory over American Patrick McEnroe in the first round of the \$75,000 Ansett Australian Indoor tennis championships, reports AP.

The 30-year-old Swede, troubled by a series of injuries in recent seasons, began the year ranked 237th on the IMB/ATP tour computer but has risen to 36th over the past

nine months.

Pernfors overcame a shaky start to dominate as McEnroe produced a steady stream of errors.

"My timing was excellent from the start," Pernfors said. "I feel now that I'm playing as good as I've ever played."

"I don't think I've played that well before, and I don't think I've played that well after," admitted Pernfors after Monday's victory. "So I don't know if I can get back to playing like that, I could play perhaps two sets like that in a year."

Pernfors indicated his comeback was on track when he took out world number two Jim Courier, Czech Petr Korda and American Todd Martin in the final to land the Canadian Open at Montreal last July.

His ranking had fallen to 239 at the end of 1991 as he

made his painful re-entry into the tour. But going into this week's Sydney event, he was ranked 35 with the chance of raising it further next Sunday at this ATP championship tournament which will offer 230 tour points and 146,000 US dollar to the winner.

"I've been feeling fine for a little more than a year, I've probably played more this year (20 tournaments) than I've ever played tournament-wise," he said.

"When I play a lot on hard courts, I still get a little pain in my Achilles' tendon, otherwise I don't have any problems."

"I never got close to quitting. I guess at one point I was worried about ever being able to play again, because my foot never seemed to heal, but I never considered quitting."

"I was told by a lot of people that it would take me three months to fully recover, but I couldn't walk after six months."

"It took me about a year and a half before I felt like I could run a 100 per cent."

Australian wildcard Patrick Rafter breezed into the second round with a confident 7-6 (8-6), 6-4 victory over New Zealand Davis Cup player Brett Steven.

Rafter, 20, who beat world No 1 Pete Sampras in Indianapolis two months ago, said he had set himself the target of making at least the semifinals.

He had to save three set points in the first set against Steven, who at 37 is ranked 50 places higher than Rafter.

In other first-round singles action, Richard Fromberg defeated fellow Australian Todd Woodbridge 6-1, 4-6, 7-5, while Steve Bryan beat Chuck Adams 6-2, 3-6, 6-3 in an all-American contest.

Top seed Jim Courier of the United States was to play German qualifier Alexander Mronz in his first-round match Monday night.

The tournament is being contested by five of the top 10 ranked players in the world. The winner will collect \$146,000, with the runner-up earning \$81,000.

Defending champion Goran Ivanisevic of Croatia, No 2 seed Boris Becker of Germany and No 3 seed Andrei Medvedev of Ukraine were inactive in singles Monday.

Graf sweeps Novotna aside

LEIPZIG, Germany, Oct 4: Steffi Graf swept aside Jana Novotna 6-2, 6-0 to win the 375,000 dollar Leipzig women's indoor tennis tournament in Germany's national day on Sunday, reports Reuter.

Graf, top seed and defending champion, never let the Czech third seed into the match, dominating the indoor court with powerful serves and precision volleys.

It was the first time the pair had met since Graf beat the Czech in the Wimbledon final in July, but any hopes Novotna had of gaining revenge quickly disappeared as the German broke her serve at will.

Graf capitalised on her first match point on Novotna's serve when the Czech, who turned 25 on Saturday, hit a backhand beyond the baseline. The match was over in less than an hour.

"We all know Jana can play much better," Graf told the crowd afterwards. "But maybe she was up too late last night celebrating her birthday."

It was Graf's fourth victory in as many years in the East German tournament and coincided with the third anniversary of German reunification.

Graf said she was particularly proud of her victory because it took place on unity day.

"Winning on this particular day was special," Graf said. "I'm happy to have played such great tennis today."

Graf pulled out

LEIPZIG, Germany, Oct 4: Steffi Graf said on Sunday she would not defend her title in this week's 750,000 dollar European Indoor tennis tournament in Zurich because of a foot injury, reports Reuter.

"I will probably undergo an operation tomorrow," Graf told German television after beating Jana Novotna to win the 375,000 dollar Leipzig Indoor tennis tournament.

The operation would be carried out in Essen.

"I suffered a fracture in a foot on Friday, but I hope this will be a small operation," Graf added.

The injury did not seem to bother her in the final against the Czech third seed, whom she crushed 6-2, 6-2.



Top seed Jim Courier of the United States takes a backhand against Germany's Alexander Mronz in the first round of the Australian Indoor tennis championships in Sydney yesterday. Courier defeated Mronz in straight sets 6-2, 7-5. —AFP photo

Sicilian Tennis final postponed

PALERMO, Sicily, Oct 4: Heavy rain forced the postponement of the final of the Sicilian international tennis tournament between Sergi Bruguera of Spain and Thomas Muster of Austria on Sunday, reports Reuter.

The pair, the top two seeds, will now try to play the match today.

Palumbo wins road race

PERTH, Australia, Oct 4: Giuseppe Palumbo of Italy won the men's road race Monday at the World Junior Cycling Championships, finishing almost two minutes ahead of the chasing pack, reports AP.

Pulumbo covered the 125 kilometres (77.67 miles) in 3 hours, 21 minutes 36 seconds.

Mariano Freddick of the United States was second in 3:23.16, with Mochele Razzano, Palumbo's Italian teammate, third in 3:23.39.

More than two dozen riders fell in a multiple collision that forced organisers to halt the race during the first circuit and restart it after a 20-minute delay.

Several riders suffered minor injuries.

French rider Elizabeth Chevanne-Brunel won a three-rider sprint to take the women's road race.

The 18-year-old from Dordogne completed the 62.5 kilometres (38.8 miles) in 1:52.08.

She finished just ahead of Italian Cinzia Faccini, with Karine Botier of France third. All three were credited with the same time.

Chevanne-Brunel finished second to Germany's Hanka Kupfernagel in last year's World Junior Championship in Athens, Greece.

"My year up to this point had not been good because of some crashes and mechanical problems," she said. "This course was very difficult, but it was good for me as I like to climb."

Salmi shines in Lyon Marathon

LYON, France, Oct 4: Algerian Mohamed Salmi won the "Lyon Marathon" here on Sunday, ignoring the cold and rainy weather to come home in 2 hr 13 min 9 sec ahead of Moroccan El Hadi Moumou and Petro Meta of Tanzania, reports AP.

Fiorio races ahead

NICOSIA, Cyprus, Oct 4: Italian driver Alessandro Fiorio punched through the first stage of the gruelling Rothmans Cyprus motor rally Friday to secure a 59-second lead on the first day of the event, ranked among the top 10 in Europe, reports AP.

Fiorio, last year's winner, is driving a Lancia Delta Integrale with Vittorio Brambilla as his co-driver.

Second behind the Italian team at the end of the first stage, was Antonis Jeropoulos, the 1991 champion, in a Mitsubishi VR4, followed by Baqheera of Lebanon in Lancia Delta Integrale.

Jimmy McRae's Ford Sapphire Cosworth caught fire, but he and co-driver Ian Grindrod bailed out unhurt. Alistair McRae and co-driver David Senior decided not to take any risk, and dropped out when they found oil from the gearbox began leaking onto the hot exhaust of their Subaru Legacy.

Sethi in final

BOMBAY, India, Oct 4: Top seed Geet Sethi and English rookie Roxton Chapman Set up an intriguing semi-final clash in the World Professional Billiards Championships after scoring stunning wins Sunday night, reports AP.

The 20-year-old Chapman, the youngest pro on the circuit, shocked fellow-Englishman and world No 4 Peter Gilchrist 1,120-1,007 in an exciting Quarter-final match.

Chapman, who led 518-316 after the first two-hour session, converted an unfinished break of 179 to a mammoth 331 in the second session, the highest break in the current championships.

The lanky Gilchrist reduced the margin to 54 points with 15 minutes remaining in the four-hour match, but Chapman hung on grimly to record a career-best victory.

The in-form Sethi came a step closer to defending his world title by blasting veteran Indian colleague Michael Ferreira by an astonishing margin of 1,432 points in another quarter-final match.

The 32-year-old Sethi, who trounced England's Clive Everton by over 1,000 points in the tournament opener Friday, compiled eight century breaks to hand Ferreira a crushing 2,038-606 defeat.

Meanwhile, English veterans Norman Dagle and Bob Close advanced to the quarter-finals with easy wins in their opening matches.

Dagle, 23, displayed fine form to oust compatriot Mark Wildman 1,306-615 and set up a clash with Australia's Robbie Foldvari.

Stich stuns Edberg

BASILE, Switzerland, Oct 4: Michael Stich, a late replacement, beat top seed Stefan Edberg in four sets to win the 800,000 dollar Swiss indoor men's tennis tournament after last year's winner Boris Becker pulled out, turned in a powerful service display in the last two sets to clinch a 6-4, 6-7, 6-3, 6-2 victory in the final, reports Reuter.

After taking the first set, when Edberg served three double-faults to give the German an early break, Stich appeared to lose his rhythm in the second.

The Swede surged to a 4-1 lead before Stich fought back to level the score at 6-3 only to lose the set on the tie-break.

Edberg seemed shaken by the German's comeback, and his own strong service began to let him down while Stich piled on the pressure in the third set with a series of aces that left Edberg shaking his head.

In the fourth set, Stich never seemed in trouble and outmanoeuvred the Swede with a series of passing and drop shots.

Stich said afterwards he had found problems coping with Edberg's service at the start of the second set.

"But once I pulled that back I knew I could take the match," he told reporters.

Mutola — the fleet-footed girl

Maria Mutola hit the headlines when she won the women's 800 metres in the World Athletics Championships in Stuttgart. The 20-year-old middle distance star is from one of the world's poorest countries, Mozambique. Athletics was not even her first love, reports Gemini News Service, but she triumphed to become the first woman runner from sub-Saharan Africa to win either an Olympic or outdoor world title.

In the local Ronga language of Mozambique *dumba nengue* roughly translates as "having confidence in your feet." It is usually applied to the street hawkers around Maputo, who have to move quickly when the police come around. Nowadays in Mozambique the phrase is applied to someone else — Maria Mutola.

At the World Athletics Championships in Stuttgart, Germany, in August the 20-year-old showed it to be a superb moniker as she crushed opposition from the rest of the world in the women's 800 metres with a last lap turn of speed that left the rest floundering for the minor medals.

The fact that she was one of the hottest favourites to get a gold after a string of sparkling performances leading up to the championships, including winning the African Championships in Durban, does not diminish her achievement.

She is now probably the country's richest woman and its worth \$10,000 in appearance fees every time she steps on the track. A world record, which is well within her grasp, will be worth another \$30,000.

She said: "I can break the world record and I would like it to be a solo run, not using pacemakers. I'm strong enough to do it on my own."

To add to her coffers she also has a most lucrative contract with the sports wear company, Nike. These seem like fantastic figures to people in a country where the average wage is still less than \$150 a year and until recently would have dazzled Mutola herself.

Mutola was brought up in the Chamanculo, a poor shanty area on the outskirts of Maputo, but by the age of 13 she was regarded as the country's best female soccer player. Her muscular physique and swift legs made her a natural winger and despite her short stature — she is still only 1.62 metres tall — she was regularly on the score sheet in the boy's junior league in which she played.

She was banned from moving up into the seniors by the Mozambique Football Federation which refused to allow mixed teams. "I think it was because I was better than many of the men," she joked. "I would have shown them up!" Fortunately for Mutola one man did admire her skills — Jose Craverinhas, Mozambique's

leading poet.

He said: "I saw Lurdes (as Mutola is known at home) playing football in Matalala where Eusebio was born. When the federation told her she couldn't play any longer, I asked her to try athletics."

His son, Stelio, who started coaching her when she switched sports in February 1988, said that "from the very first day I saw that she would be a good athlete." Despite her initial reservations about the tough training regime Stelio set her, she progressed quickly.

By August that year she ran in the African Championships in Algeria where she picked up a silver medal in the 800 metres behind the local star and future Olympic champion, Hassiba Boulmerka.

A month later she was at the world's greatest stage for sport — the Olympics in Seoul — but few would have identified her as a future world champion after she finished seventh in her heat.

The rest, as is often said, is history. Her first major success

came at the 1990 African Championships in Cairo where she won both the 800 metres and 1500 metres. It was a year of double celebration. Not just for Mutola's two titles but because Jose Craverinhas became the first African to be awarded the Premio Luis Camoes — the highest honour for Portuguese literature which is awarded by Portugal's President.

It was also the time the three realised that she was not going to progress much further in Mozambique, where the job track is a bumpy, dirt and sand circuit. Despite Stelio's two years studying athletics in what was East Germany, he knew it was time for her to move on.

Attempts to get scholarships in the United States and the former colonial power, Portugal, proved fruitless, but she had come to the attention of President Chissano. He encouraged the Mozambique Olympic Committee to make contact with the International Olympic Committee on Mutola's behalf.

The following year their Olympic Solidarity Programme, which provides support for athletes from developing countries, arranged for Mutola to travel to America and attend high school in Eugene, Oregon, where she met her current coach Margo Fuld.

The transformation from aspiring African runner to genuine medal contender in major games was rapid. At the 1991 World Championships she finished fourth in a new African record, despite being blatantly blocked on the line by a Romanian runner.

Last year she showed how far she had come since her previous Olympic appearance and was placed fifth in the Barcelona 800 metres. Last March she topped it all by winning the World Indoor Championships 800 metres in Toronto.

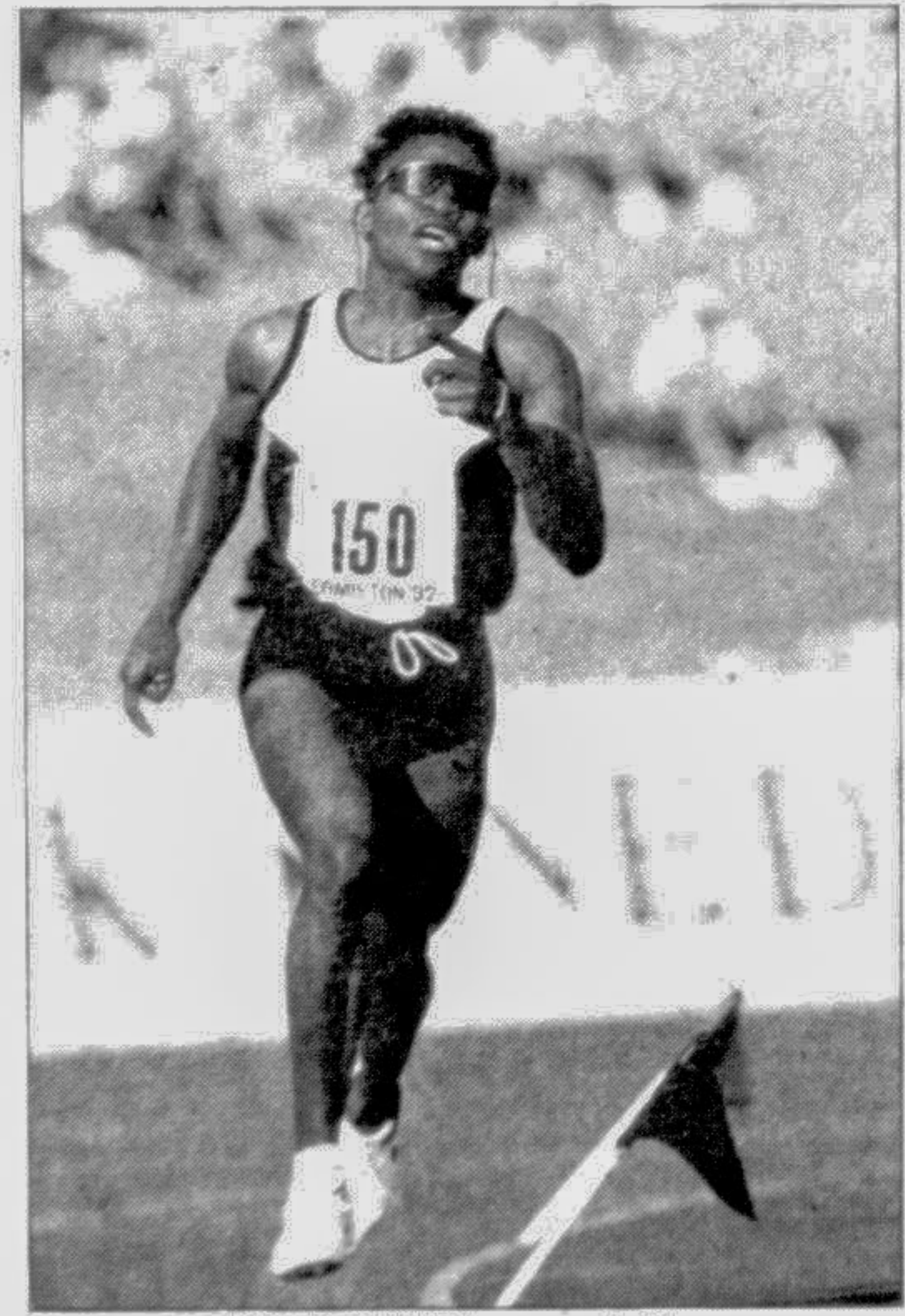
Her victory in Canada was the first ever world title for a sub-Saharan African woman athlete world championship and a first time any sportsman or woman representing Mozambique had won a title in any global sports contest.

How Mutola made such progress is no secret. She said: "I have been working hard since Barcelona. After the Olympics I was a little disappointed because I felt I did not have the power over the last 100 metres. Now I am much more sure of myself. In my training I've spent a lot of time on racing tactics. We also worked on technique."

Stelio is also hoping that Mutola's victory is a catalyst for many more stars — male and female — to emerge.

He said: "I think there are many other athletes like Lurdes and Argentina (Paulino, a world championship finalist), but it is always a big fight to get them to do athletics. Maybe that will change now that we have a world champion. By 1995 you are going to start hearing about them."

Dumba nengue is also a metaphor for the local informal economy where Mozambicans get their everyday food and goods. Soon Stelio hopes it may not only a Mutola who goes to a major championship shopping for a gold medal. —GEMINI NEWS



MARIA MUTOLA... remarkable

Japan reassert ascendancy

HAMILTON, Canada, Oct 4: Japan were confirmed as the world's leading judo nation after winning two of the last four titles to finish with four golds in a total of 10 medals at the World Championships which finished here Sunday, reports AP.

South Korea, with three golds, were the second most successful nation in a championships which swept aside the old order.

None of the 1991 champions retained a title and Hungarian light heavyweight Antal Kovacs was the only Olympic champion to triumph.

The expected blitz by ex-Soviet fighters failed to materialise. They won five titles at the European Championships in May, but there was no gold in the six medals they won here.

Japan had performed slightly better at the 1991 Championships when they won 11 medals, including four men's titles, but here they surprisingly failed to win any of the three heavyweight categories.

That should have been rectified by the 1995 Championships when they may well be irresistible on home soil.

Poland were surprisingly the top European nation, Rafael Kuback broke Japanese hearts when he swept Naoyu Ogawa off his feet for an ippon.

Ogawa, aiming for a fourth title in the open category, had to make do with a bronze.

Kuback used the same leg throw in the final to knock out Germany's Henry Stohr who had beaten Olympic heavyweight champion David Khakhelchvili of Georgia in the semifinals.

Beate Mksymova, a towering mass of 144 kilos, won the women's open title for Poland's other gold medal.

Japan's Ryoji Sonoda stuck gold at his first World Championships when he beat Olympic champion Nazim Guseinov of Azerbaijan in the bantamweight final.

Yukimasa Nakamura won the featherweight title and his brother Yoshio Nakamura won the middleweight gold medal.

Ryoko Tamura, 18, became only the second Japanese woman to win a world title after Kaori Yamaguchi's featherweight title in 1984.

Her unanimous decision over China's Li Aiye in the bantamweight final made amends for her failure in last year's Olympic final and bronze medal in the 1991 World Championships.

Cecile Bowak, in Barcelona, had to make do with a bronze medal at featherweight in her last major championship.

She was the only one of France's Olympic champions to finish with a medal here.

David Douillet had given over French confidence of taking over from Japan as the top nation, a good start by beating Khakhelchvili in the heavyweight final to avenge his European Championship defeat.

But performances dipped from then on. "Too many fighters were guilty of carelessness and we may have made the mistake of relying on our old guard. Perhaps, we should have given the youngsters a chance," said France's national director of coaching Jean-Luc Rouge.

Japan reassert ascendancy

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Earring location

5 Garden

8 "Queen for —"

12 Top

13 Actor Ferrigno

14 Diner request

15 Network

16 Doctrine

17 Author Wister

18 Cheap substitute

20 Gave a bad review to

22 Mrs. Larry Fortensky

23 Vigor

24 Do

27 Neighbor of Jupiter

32 Bother

33 Singer Orbinson

34 Luau music-maker

35 Filled with gasoline

38 Gratis

39 Pack

quantity

40 "Bali —"

42 State of secrecy or privacy

45 Clinton's school

49 Leeway

50 Famed first baseman

52 " — Team"

53 Complex-ion woe

54 Charged particle

55 Intimation

56 Lion's share

57 USO audience members

11 " —"

58 Pop

1 Glistening fabric

2 Telephone aide, for short

3 Harry's Mrs.

4 Let the air out

5 Winter forecast

6 Dawn

7 Landfill

8 Repentant one

9 Rain

10 Scenarist James

11 " —"

Cassius...

19 Scale member

21 Mimic

24 Surface for Hulk Hogan

25 Rhoda's mom

26 Rainy forecasts

28 Without a — (broke)

29 Big winds

30 Tina's ex

31 Ruby or Sandra

36 Borodin-based musical

37 English river

38 20 percent fractions

41 Chopper

42 Pull an all-nighter

43 Crazy

44 Little branch

46 Columbus' home

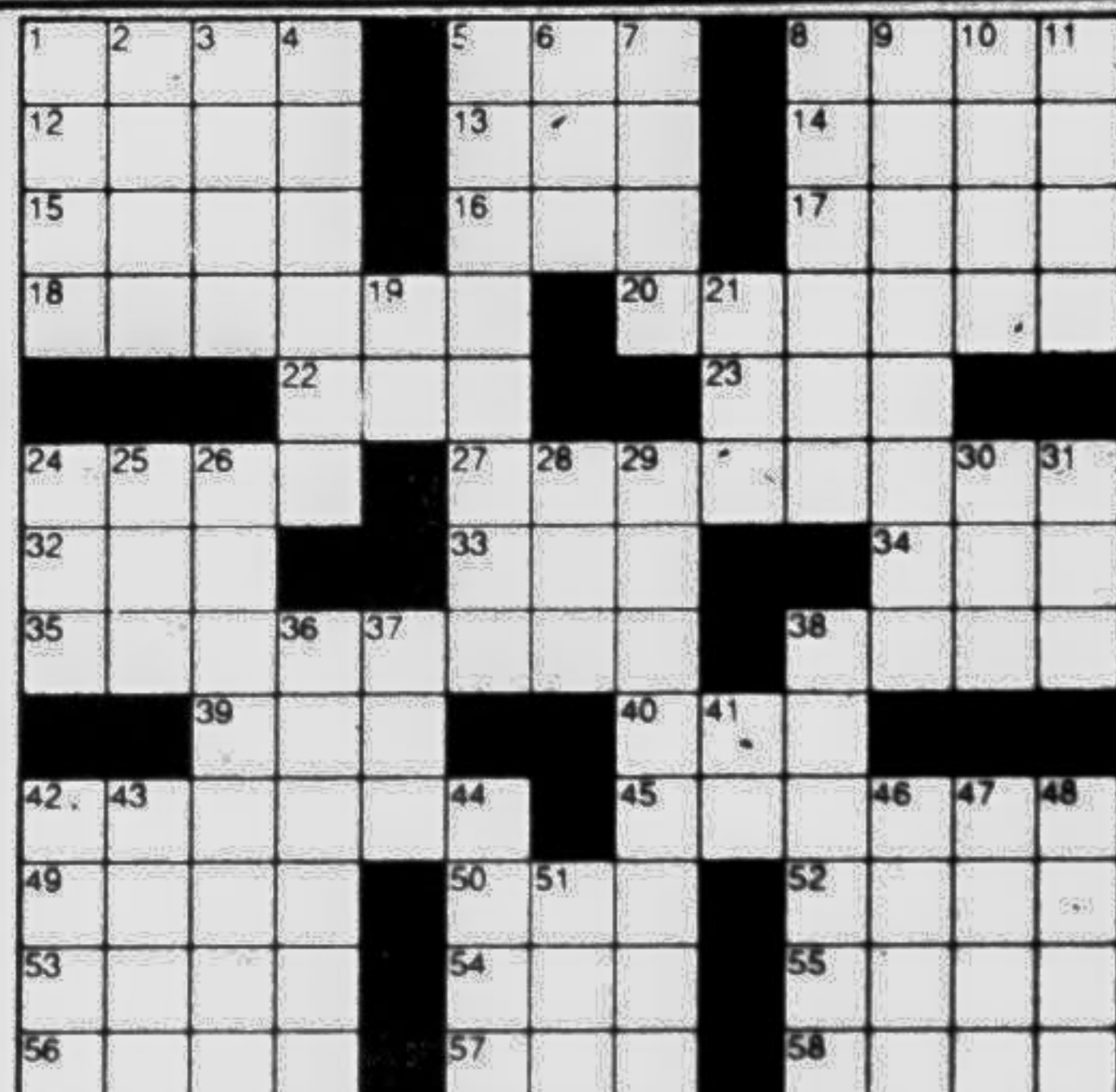
47 Tear

48 Facts

51 — polli

Solution time: 23 mins.

LOGS PAD SMOG
AMAT AMY HERA
MAZATLAN EXAM
PREGO ELAINE
EWER ARC
JAMS VIEW ARB
ECU GIVEN LOO
DEC ALAR AIDA
HIP LOST
SWANEE CLASP
PICK MARIACHI
ASHE IVE SMUG
SHOD TEX TENS



CRYPTOQUIP

A O AOEYZ UAEU BMELT
UD DBOL E MDVEM
TADO GEVUDYF EYO
EGDDU

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: UNRUFFLED DINNER
GUEST'S COMMENT AFTER TRYING MY BORSCHT:
"THIS BEETS ALL!"

Today's Cryptoquip clue: B equals P

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.

About the Author: PHIL MINSHULL is a British freelance sports journalist and broadcaster with a special interest in African sport. He is a regular correspondent for the BBC World Service and writes for on athletics for several British newspapers.