

Sport

Mac shelves Davis Cup plans

INGLEWOOD, Calif., Oct 5: John McEnroe withdrew as a candidate for US Davis Cup team captain Monday, saying "personal considerations" prevented him from pursuing a job he coveted only weeks ago, reports AP.

The four-time US Open champion said he has "left open the option" of playing again in the Davis Cup and has "not ruled out the possibility" of becoming team captain in the future.

"The move was announced in a two-paragraph statement released by a longtime associate, Mike Altieri, director of public relations of Forum Sports.

McEnroe did not elaborate on his reason for withdrawing, although he is separated from his wife, actress Tatum O'Neal, and they have yet to settle custody arrangements for their three children.

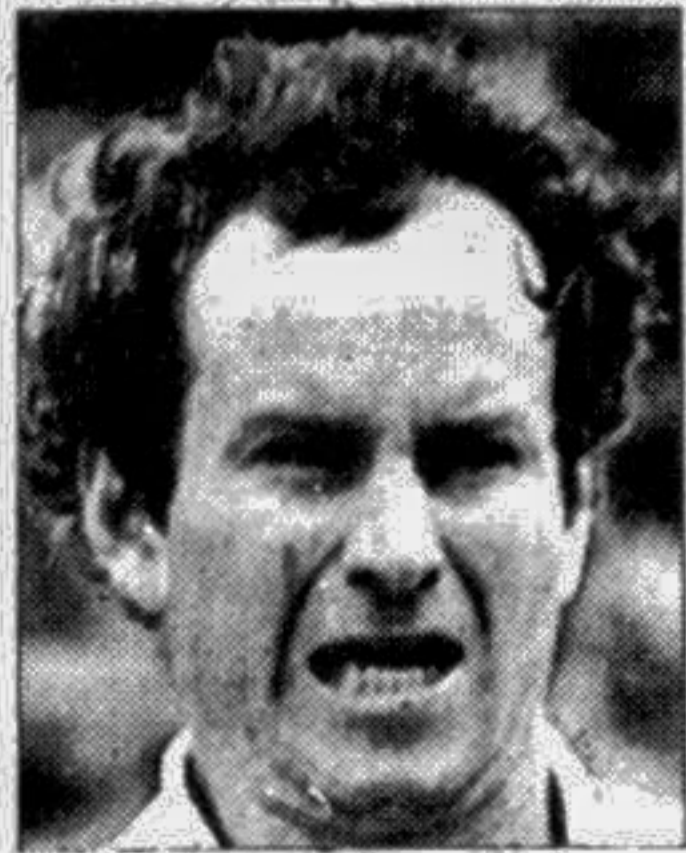
A representative for McEnroe in New York said neither he nor his father and adviser, John McEnroe Sr., was immediately available for comment.

Tom Gorman resigned as captain Sept 9. On the same day, McEnroe said on the USA Network: "I think I've made it clear that I would like to be Davis Cup captain.... I don't think there's a US player that doesn't want to be captain of the Davis Cup team. I think it's a great honour."

McEnroe, 34, is the winningest player in US Davis Cup history and led his country to titles in 1978, '79, '81 and '82.

J Howard "Bumpy" Frazer, president of the US Tennis Association, called McEnroe the "greatest contributor to Davis Cup in modern times." He said he was "very surprised" to hear of McEnroe's withdrawal.

"We will, of course, respect his decision and will continue



JOHN McENROE with the selection process," he said.

Frazer said last month the USA wanted to name its new captain in October. Pairings for the World Group are to be announced October 19 in London.

Brad Gilbert, Stan Smith and Tom Gullickson also have been mentioned for the post. Gilbert is still an active player

while Smith and Gullickson work for the USA.

McEnroe, now semi-retired and no longer playing Grand Slam tournaments, has clashed with the USA hierarchy for years. Although his criticism did not win him friends among the leadership and his on-court outbursts won him few points for tennis diplomacy, he remained a favourite with the players.

"I thought he had a real good shot at the job and he would have brought a lot of excitement to it," US doubles player Richey Reneberg said from the Australian indoor tournament in Sydney. "He'll be a good guy for the job one day, that's for sure. He would have been good for the game right now. It's a pity."

A problem for US Davis Cup teams for many years has been getting the top players to leave lucrative tournaments and exhibitions to devote weeks to Davis Cup workouts and matches.

Gorman, 47, captain since 1986, left the team after the United States defeated the Bahamas in Charlotte, NC, Sept 24/26. The 5-0 victory sent the US team to the World Group in 1994 and dropped the Bahamas to the World Group in 1994 and dropped the Bahamas to the World Group in 1994 and dropped the Bahamas to the World Group in 1994.

O Gorman, who played on the 1972 championship team and captained two US teams to Davis Cup titles, said he now wants to work in player development.

Graf will be out of action for some time

ESSEN, Germany, Oct 5: World number one Steffi Graf will be out of action until the end of October after undergoing an operation on her injured right foot on Monday, reports Reuter.

Doctors at the Essen Hospital, where the 24-year-old German was treated, said Graf would need three weeks of treatment to recover from the chipped bone in her foot.

The French Wimbledon and US Open champion will miss indoor tournaments in Zurich this week and in Brighton, England, starting on October 18. The German is the defending champion at both events.

Becker pulls out of doubles

SYDNEY, Oct 5: World No 3 Boris Becker has withdrawn from his doubles commitments at the Australian indoor tennis championships, put has assured organisers he will continue in the singles draw of the one million US dollar tournament, reports AFP.

The triple Wimbledon champion informed tournament promoter Graham Lovett Monday that he had a stomach complaint and would not be fit for his doubles match with partner Petr Korda later in the day.

"Boris says it's a food thing and he has been vomiting, but has no temperature and his German doctor, who is accompanying him here, says he should be okay to play his first singles match on Wednesday," said Lovett.

Becker, who withdrew from his last event in Basel with a leg injury, is scheduled to face Australian wild card Neil Borwick here.

Muster makes his day

PALERMO, Sicily, Oct 5: Austrian Thomas Muster gave himself a belated birthday present when he beat top-seeded Spaniard Sergi Bruguera in straight sets to win the delayed final of the Stellan international tennis tournament on Monday, reports Reuter.

Number two seed Muster, who turned 26 on Saturday, triumphed 7-6, 7-5 over French Open champion Bruguera in a match which had been put back 24 hours because of heavy rain.

The success will propel the Austrian into the world top 10 when the latest ATP rankings are announced.

Maradona wins Basile's heart

BUENOS AIRES, Oct 5: Diego Maradona, training hard with his new club, has received a glowing tribute from national team coach Alfio Basile, encouraging speculation he could make a return in Argentina's key World Cup qualifiers, reports Reuter.

Maradona, who played for Sevilla in Spain last season, is scheduled to make his debut with Argentine First Division Newell's Old boys on Thursday against Ecuador's Emelec.

"He looks sensational, lean and as motivated as a new-comer," Basile told the daily La Nacion in an interview published on Monday.

"He trains three times a day. If you hadn't seen him for a while, you would struggle to recognise him."

Maradona's performance will be monitored closely by Basile, who is under pressure to recall the former national captain for matches against Australia on October 31 and November 17 which will decide whether Argentina reach the 1994 World Cup final.

Fans have clamoured for Maradona's return ever since Argentina were thrashed 5-0 at home by Colombia in September, forcing the play-offs against Australia.

Maradona, who signed with Newell's three weeks ago, has shed over 12 kilograms since returning to Argentina in June. He now weighs less than he did at the 1986 World Cup final.

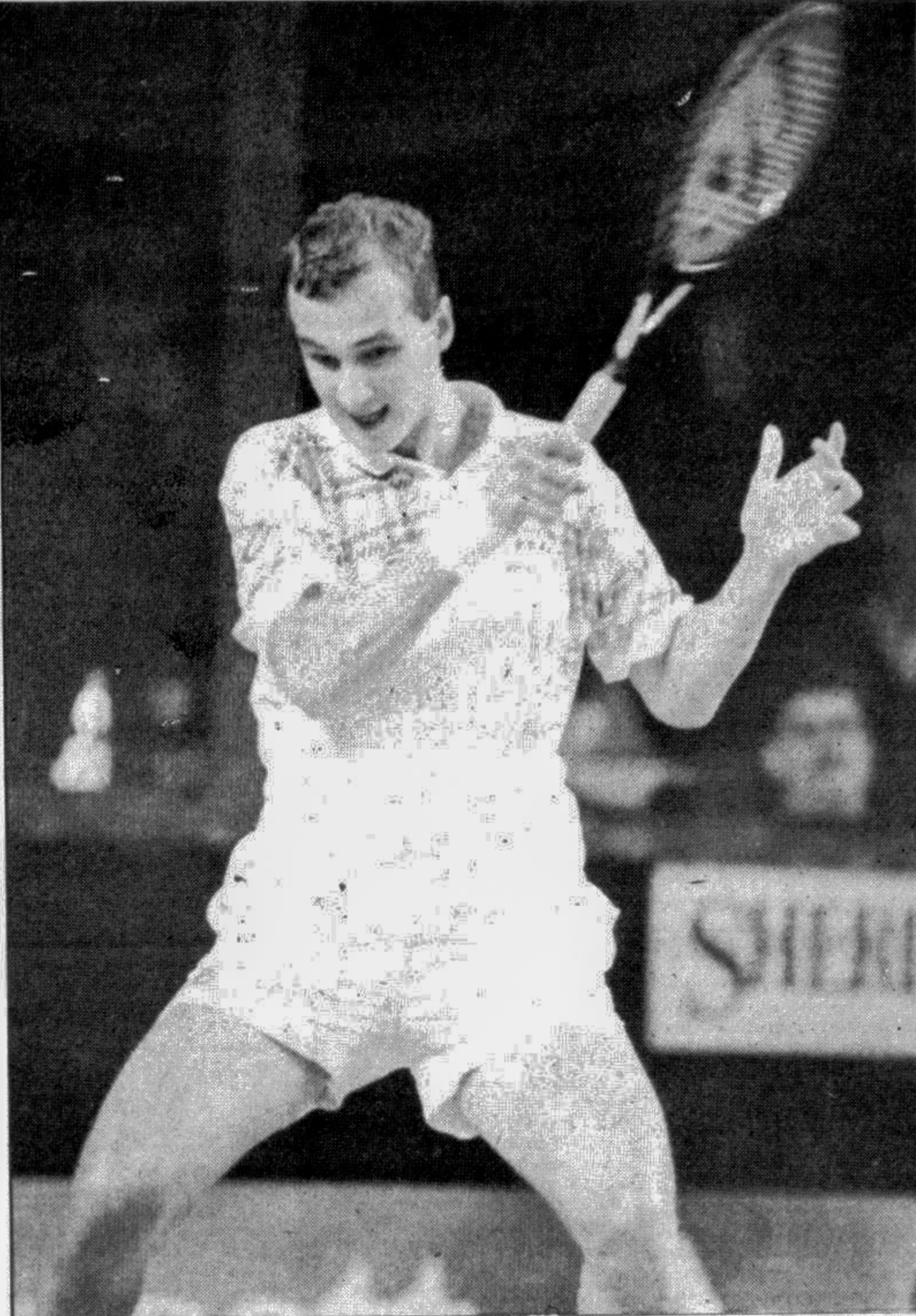
At loggerheads with Basile after he was left out of the squad for the South American group qualifiers, Maradona has repeatedly said he must prove himself at Newell's before thinking about an international comeback.

Basile has yet to commit himself, but the door appears open for Maradona. "As yet nobody is ruled out," Basile said.

Cashing in on popularity

MANCHESTER, Oct 5: English Premiership leaders Manchester United aim to cash in on their popularity by developing several financial services, reports AFP.

A credit card will be the first step in United's venture and they are likely to extend it to insurance. United are a public listed company on the stock exchange.



Third seed Ukrainian Andrei Medvedev makes a forehand shot against unseeded Australian Heath Denman in the first round of the Australian indoor tennis championships in Sydney on Oct 5. Medvedev won 6-4, 6-4.

Worried Medvedev fights on

SYDNEY, Oct 5: Andrei Medvedev put the turmoil in Russia out of his mind Tuesday and advanced to the second round of the \$75,000 Ansett Australian Indoor tennis championships, reports AP.

Third-seeded Medvedev defeated Australian qualifier Heath Denman 6-4, 6-4 to advance to the last 16 and then spoke of his anguish at having to watch Russia's political turmoil on television from the other side of the world.

"I have friends in Moscow on the edge of death," said 19-year-old Medvedev. "It's hurting me, it's hurting a lot. It's hurting everyone, but during a match you have to think of other things."

Medvedev is from Ukraine, but says he regards himself as Russian. "I represent Ukraine, but I'm a Russian," he said. His grandmother currently is in Kiev.

Playing in his first tournament for three weeks after being sidelined with a shoulder injury, Medvedev said there was room for improvement in his form.

"Definitely, I can play much better," he said after playing most of the contest against 27th-ranked Denman from behind the baseline. "I need to be more aggressive. To come to

the net more than I did today."

French Open semifinalist Medvedev, who already has earned \$85,000 this year, said his financial future now was secure after only three years on the IBM/ATP tour, making him more relaxed on court.

"I don't care any more about paying my hotel bills or saving on the telephone calls. I can do it. It makes it easier to play tennis," he said.

Petr Korda of the Czech Republic, seeded sixth, advanced to the round of 16 with a 6-3, 6-1 win over erratic Dutchman Paul Haarhuis.

American qualifier Jonathan Canter and South African Wayne Ferreira also won first-round matches played early Tuesday.

Canter, making a comeback after an 18-month break from tennis, upset Swede Henrik Holm 4-6, 6-3, 6-4, while Ferreira downed American Richey Reneberg 6-4, 6-2.

Canter, ranked 284 in the world, kept pressure on 22nd-ranked Holm throughout the match and the Swede tightened up at the end as his error-rate mounted.

Canter said his new carefree attitude was helping him enjoy his return to tennis after he became disillusioned with the sport.

Canter, a part-time rock musician from Los Angeles, planned to play satellite tournaments in Australia this month, but changed his focus after making the final of a satellite event in Singapore.

"Now I'm taking a different point of view," he said. "I'm really enjoying my comeback because nothing will ever be as exciting for me as tennis."

"I know how to handle the pressure now and I can take advantage when the other guy gets tight — like Holm did today. I just don't think about losing."

Ferreira, ranked 23rd in the world, said he also was trying to be more relaxed.

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.

Top seed Jim Courier of the United States beat German qualifier Alexander Mronz in his first-round match Monday and was inactive Tuesday.

Two-time champion Boris Becker of Germany, who withdrew from his scheduled doubles match Monday with a stomach upset, practiced Tuesday and is expected to be fit to play his first round singles against Australian wild card Neil Borwick on Wednesday.

The tournament continues through Sunday, October 6-10.

Wrong time, wrong person

CARDIFF, Oct 5: Jahangir Khan makes his long-awaited comeback in next month's Qatar International, but could have wished for better luck on Monday when he was drawn to face his great Pakistani rival Jansher Khan in the first round, reports Reuter.

Jahangir's name was first out of the hat to face top seed Jansher when the draw was made at the Professional Squash Association headquarters.

Jahangir, six times world champion, has been ruled out by a back injury since reaching the quarter-finals of a tournament in Cardiff in February, his only tournament appearance this year.

The last time the two great Khans met was in the final of the Pakistan Open in Karachi last November when Jansher won.

Since then Jansher, five years younger than his rival at 24, has taken over as world number one and claimed the World and British Open titles among a string of victories worldwide.

Jahangir has slipped to world number 18 and is not seeded in the Qatar event while Jansher is the clear favourite.

The winner should meet England's Simon Parke in the second round with a scheduled semifinal against Australia's world number three Rodney Martin.

In the other half of the draw, world number two Chris Dittmar is due to face fellow-Australian Brett Martin, winner of the recent Hong Kong Open, in the semifinals.

Dittmar has just resumed training after a knee operation which caused him to miss the tournaments in Hong Kong and Dubai.

IBF rankings

CHELTHAM, England: Oct 5: Leading world rankings issued by the International Badminton Federation after the German Open, the 11th event in the Grand Prix series, at the weekend, reports Reuter.

Men

- 1. Thomas Stuer-Lauridsen (Denmark) 1,460 points
- 2. Heryanto Arbi (Indonesia) 1,380
- 3. Ardy Wiranta (Indonesia) 1,080
- 4. Poul-Erik Hoyer-Larsen (Denmark) 1,005
- 5. Joko Suprianto (Indonesia) 880
- 6. Allan Budt Kusuma (Indonesia) 825
- 7. Fung Permadi (Indonesia) 755
- 8. Kim Hak-Kyun (South Korea) 540
- 9. Rashid Sidek (Malaysia) 490
- 10. Sompol Kookasemkit (Thailand) 485

Women

- 1. Susi Susanti (Indonesia) 1,600
- 2. Lim Xiaoping (Sweden) 1,385
- 3. Ye Zhaoying (China) 1,150
- 4. Yulianti Santoso (Indonesia) 925
- 5. Bang Soo-Hyun (South Korea) 860
- 6. Christine Magnusson (Sweden) 845
- 7. Somharuthal Jaroensri (Thailand) 615
- 8. Minarti Timur (Indonesia) 590
- 9. Zarinah Abdullah (Singapore) 565
- 10. Camilla Martin (Denmark) 515

Next Event: Dutch Open, October 6-10.

Intriguing German choice

SYDNEY, Oct 5: Australian Davis Cup tennis captain Neale Fraser said Tuesday he was "very surprised" that Germany had elected to play the Davis Cup final on a slow clay court, reports AP.

The Australians will face Germany in the final in either Dueseldorf or Hannover from Dec 3-5. The German Tennis Federation has advised the Australians of the surface, but has not yet confirmed the venue.

Fraser said he had expected Germany to prefer a faster surface to suit power-hitters Michael Stich and Marc Goellner.

"...They obviously think it's their best surface to beat us on," Fraser said. "I'm hoping we're going to give them a big surprise."

"I thought with the Grand

Slam Cup the following week in Munich, in which Stich is the defending champion, that he probably would have liked to play on that surface a couple of weeks in a row."

The Grand Slam Cup is contested on a fast synthetic indoor surface.

Richard Fromberg, a clay-court specialist, will be an automatic selection on the Australian team, with Wally Masur and Mark Woodforde likely to contest the other singles spot.

"I think it's a lousy decision," said Masur, who favours faster surfaces.

Masur said the versatility of the Australian squad would stand it in good stead in the final.

"We (the players) heard early on it was going to be clay — it's a healthy situation now in the Australian Davis Cup team

where we've got two singles players who can play on every surface in every tie.

"I would have liked a faster surface because I would have had a better chance of playing, but the fact they've chosen clay just means I have to work hard to get on the court."

Fromberg, who guided Australia to a 3-2 win over Italy in the quarter-finals and is ranked 43rd, will warm up for the final by competing in three clay court tournaments in South America.

Fraser said Germany would be favoured to win the final.

"We're the underdogs. We're unseeded, they're playing at home," he said.

"But they've selected a surface which may cause a little surprise around the world and that might put a bit more pressure on them."

Ego, Cruyff's only concern

BARCELONA, Spain, Oct 5: Holland have a fighting chance of keeping their World Cup dream alive against England next week. But only if they win a battle against their own egos first, reports AFP.

That is the warning from former Dutch superstar Johan Cruyff in the build-up to the crucial Group Two qualifier in Rotterdam.

Defeat for either side will mean disaster. But the manager of Spanish champions Barcelona, set to take charge of the Dutch side if they reach next year's finals, believes it is the run-up to the match which will hold the key for the home side.

"The talent is not in question... It's simply they have shown a bad psychological approach in some of their matches," he said.

"Dutch players often find it hard to concentrate and have a tendency to think that everything is going to be easy."

"In fact, in their World Cup qualifying group, they showed an unparadise superiority complex before their games against Poland and Norway."

But the 47-year-old Cruyff is in no doubt that the Dutch will go through.

"I don't envisage Holland not making it. The players are good and some of them, like Dennis Bergkamp, are excellent. They will be in the United States."

With group leaders Norway

all but qualified, Cruyff's confidence suggests he cannot see Graham Taylor's England coming away from Rotterdam with a point, let alone two, from the October 13 match.

That belief is no doubt strengthened by England playmaker Paul Gascoigne's suspension, forcing him to sit out the match.

Cruyff, who played 48 times for his country, is a big admirer

of Italian-based Gascoigne and his creative play, explaining: "I like watching artists, guys who can control the ball and play positively. They're masters of the game."

"I saw some nice things at the end of last season from Lazio, with Gascoigne and Thomas Doll."

If Gascoigne's absence proves crucial in helping Holland



JOHAN CRUYFF

reach the World Cup final, it will also probably prove crucial in bringing Cruyff, fully recovered from heart surgery, back into the national set-up.

Astonishingly, national coach Dick Advocaat's reward for qualifying will probably be the sack and all the signs suggest he will be replaced by Cruyff.

Advocaat's reign has been blighted by a series of rows with his players, including stars Ruud Gullit and Frank Rijkaard, both of whom refuse to play under Advocaat.

Cruyff's return would allow them to return to the fold without losing face.

Cruyff admitted: "It's probable I'll take charge of the national side in the World Cup. It's exciting, but there's no question of me taking on the job full time."

"I'd rather devote myself to my club."

World Cup success would certainly help him to forget his worst footballing memory, when Holland's "Total football" side lost the 1974 final to Germany and Gerd Muller.

A storming Cruyff run in the opening minutes ended with him being up-ended in the penalty area, giving Holland the lead from the spot before a second penalty and a shot on the turn from Muller saw the Germans home.

"We had played so well and everybody seemed to be supporting us so much, it made defeat difficult to take," he said.

Geet Sethi leaves his mark

BOMBAY, Oct 5: Geet Sethi of India retained the world professional billiards title Tuesday with a crushing 999-point over England's Mike Russell, coming from behind in the final here, reports AFP.

The in-form 32-year-old galloped to an easy 2,139-1,140 victory in the four-hour match to pick up the winner's purse of 13,500 dollars at the same venue where he was crowned world champion last year.

Second-seeded Russell led 926-628 after the first session but then found himself reduced to the role of a spectator as Sethi dominated the second session with a string of century breaks.

The Indian compiled five three-figure breaks in the second session, including a superb 774 on his third visit, the tournament's highest.

"It feels good to keep the title in India," said a delighted Sethi, India's only world champion in any sport. "I hope it will encourage others in the country to take to the game."

"I was not really worried trailing early in the match. I was in good touch and knew the deficit could always be reduced in the second session," he said.

Sethi was in awesome touch through the five-day event. He trounced Clive Everton by over a thousand points in Friday's opener and then thrashed veteran compatriot Michael Ferreira by 1,432 points in the quarter-finals.

In the semifinals played late Monday, Sethi ended English rookie Roxton Chapman's dream run while Russell overcame fellow Englishman and former world champion Norman Dagle.

The 20-year-old Chapman, who scalped fourth seed Peter Gilchrist in the quarter-final,

began well by taking a 450-point lead within the first hour, but Sethi's experience told in the end.

The Indian sealed the young pro's fate by hitting up a valuable 367 on his sixth visit and then kept the pressure on to win 1,598-1,024.

The 63-year-old Dagley matched Russell's steady play through the engrossing four-hour encounter, before going down by just 80 points. The final score read 1,317-1,237 in Russell's favour.

RESULTS

Final: Geet Sethi (India) beat Mike Russell (England) 2,139-1,140

Semifinals: Geet Sethi (India) beat Roxton Chapman (England) 1,598-1,024

Mike Russell (England) beat Norman Dagle (England) 1,317-1,237

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

- 1 Basketball infractions
- 6 Baby bear
- 9 Singer Davis
- 12 "Sink"
- 13 Simile center
- 14 Guionian note
- 15 Acid type
- 16 Ariel, for one
- 18 Curve up in the middle
- 20 Lip
- 21 Addition-ally
- 23 Each
- 24 Lacks
- 25 Mint or basil
- 27 Slackened
- 29 Tubb or Truex
- 31 Bowler's award
- 35 Singer Spring-field
- 37 Giddyap opposite
- 38 Viewpoint
- 41 Math. branch

DOWN

- 2 Lead-in to pah-pah
- 3 Symbol of chastity
- 4 Moth variety
- 5 Savoy dance
- 6 Item for Ansel Adams
- 7 Exploiter
- 8 Prohibit
- 9 Honeyed drinks
- 10 Straighten
- 11 West Pointer
- 17 Grassland
- 19 Exemplars of redness
- 21 Article in

Time? "— the ram-parts..."

24 "Leave — to Heaven"

26 Mad-house concern

30 Take to court

32 The firebird?

33 Perp. vertical

34 "Yippee!"

36 Mexican entree

38 Neckwear

39 Indra's father

40 "Peer Gynt" composer

42 Mill fodder

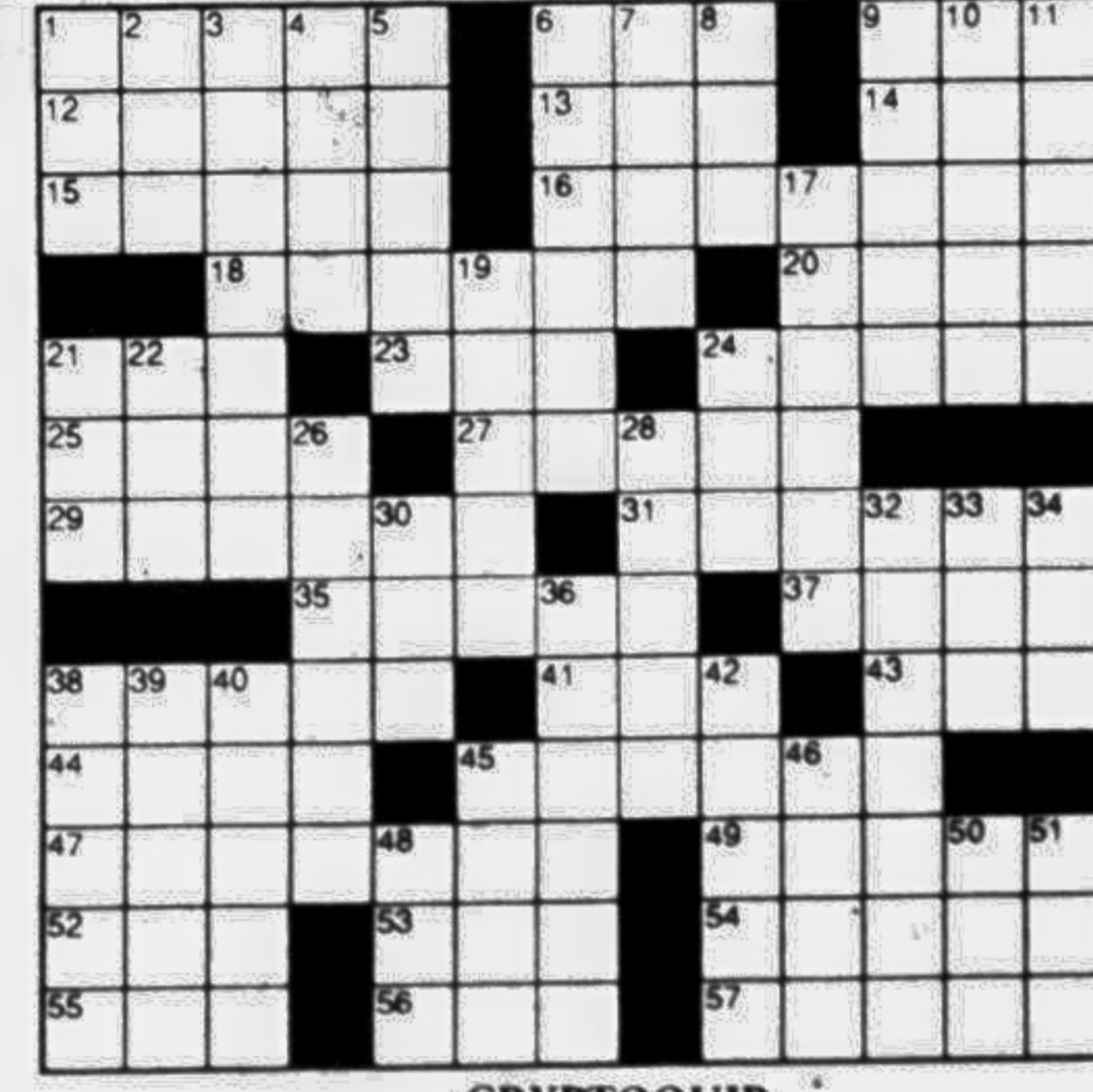
45 Perry's creator

46 Part of GWTW

48 Chow down

50 Mrs. Eddie Cantor

51 DDE's opponent



Solution time: 26 mins.

LOBE BED ADAY
APEX LOU TOGO
MESH ISM OWEN
ERSATZ PANNED
LIZ PEP
MIME ASTEROID
ADO ROY UKE
TANKEDUP FREE
SIX HAI
CLOSET OXFORD
ROOM WHO THEA
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CRYPTOQUIP

PDZC KIT H DUDX AEGZPG
GK DIKGATU: "CK CUKH
ZI DIC PTT EP
PKOTGZOT."

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: HE HEARD THAT PLANS TO OPEN A LOCAL SHOE FACTORY ARE AFOOT.

Today's Cryptoquip clue: O equals M.

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.