

Edberg ends title drought



DOHA, Jan 10: Sweden's Stefan Edberg clinched his first title in nine months Sunday when he brushed aside Holland's Paul Haarhuis 6-3, 6-2 in a one-sided final at the Qatar Open tennis tournament, reports AP.

Edberg, ranked No. 5 and the No. 3 seed here, took just 74 minutes to overwhelm Haarhuis, ranked No. 42, to clinch the \$71,000 first prize.

Haarhuis, who beat No. 4 seed Goran Ivanisevic of Croatia in the semifinals, earned \$42,000 at only his second appearance in a major final.

Edberg hadn't won a title since the Madrid clay court crown in April. But he said the victory was a timely boost to his chances of capturing his third Australian Open title. That Grand Slam tournament

begins in Melbourne on Jan. 17.

"This win is a relief to me because I have had a problem winning tournaments," said Edberg.

"It's great for my confidence and it's a good sign. I had a fight yesterday in the semifinal, playing three sets against (Austrian) Gilbert Schaller but I think that helped me today," he said. "I always knew I would win another tournament. I was waiting for it to happen," he added.

Despite his recent drought of titles, Edberg said he never lost hope that he would win again, adding "now it's important for me to keep my fitness and concentration."

He was confident because even though he was not win-

ning "I was always playing well. I kept working hard. Winning today is a relief."

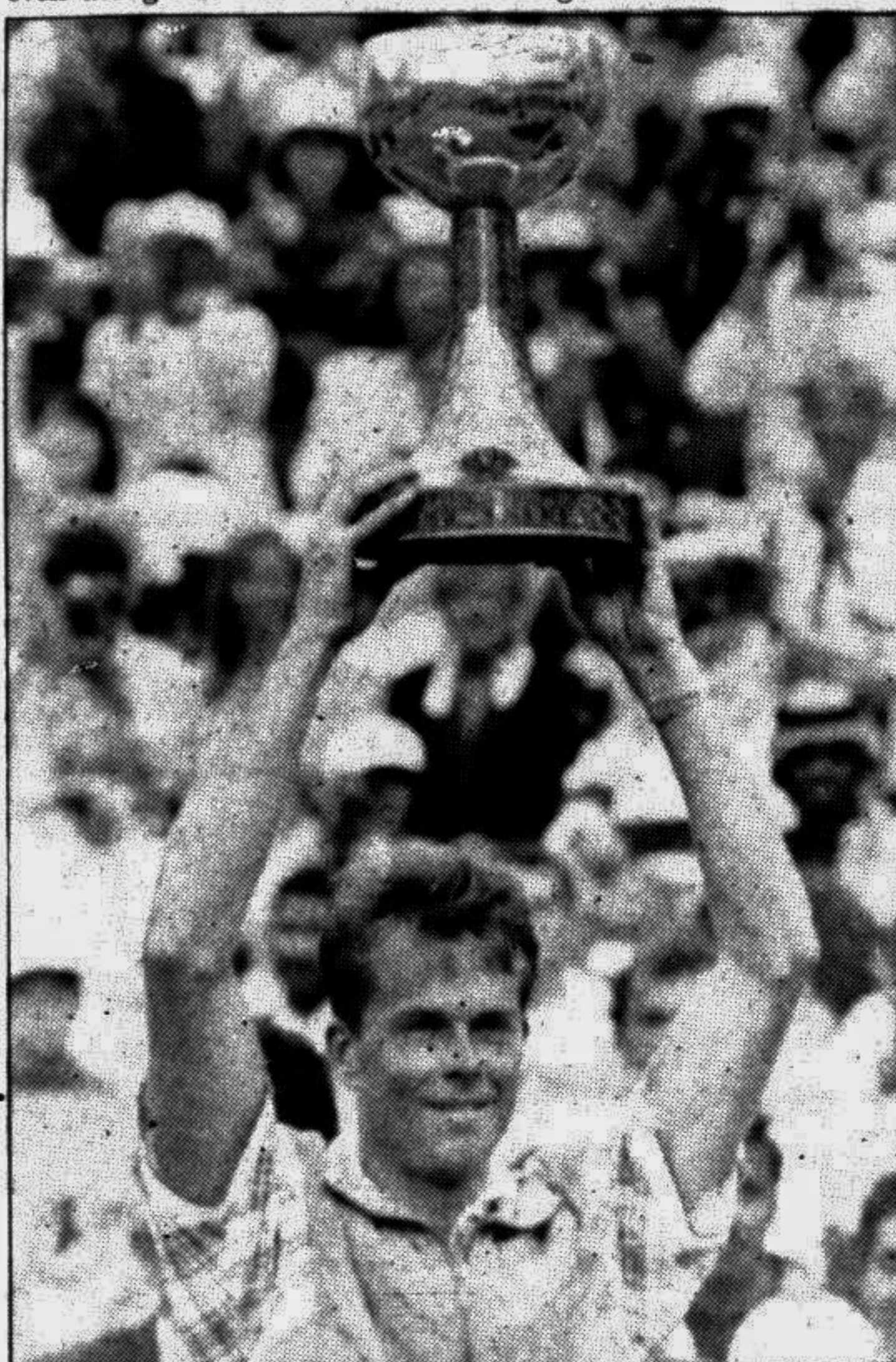
Haarhuis said Edberg is still one of the top players in the world.

"He's still world class. He has a chance to win in Australia," said the Dutchman.

The final was controlled by Edberg from start to finish. He gained the only break of the first set in the eighth game and went on to win in 34 minutes.

He won a further two breaks in the second, race into a 4-0 lead before his opponent staged a late rally. But it was too late for the dispirited Haarhuis.

"I would have liked to have got a draw," joked Haarhuis. "I tried to go past him, through him and even over him, but nothing worked."



Stefan Edberg of Sweden proudly hoists the trophy after defeating Holland's Paul Haarhuis in the final of the Qatar Open in Doha on Jan 9. Edberg won the match 6-3, 6-2. — AFP photo

A first for Israel, PLO

TOKYO, Jan 10: Palestinian and Israeli sportsmen met for the first time since 1948 at a table tennis match in Tokyo on Monday, thanks to last September's historic peace accord, reports Reuter.

The two had not faced each other in any international sports event since Israel was founded in 1948.

But last September's agreement between the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and Israel allowed them to compete for the first time at the Global Youth Table Tennis Championships in Tokyo.

Israel's Yaniv Sharon beat Palestinian Mohamed al Turk in a men's singles preliminary round match.

Afterwards Sharon told reporters he felt nervous before the match but was glad to have had such an opportunity.

Al Turk said he did not care about the result because it was a match for peace and sport.

Ben Johnson's doc arrested

NEW YORK, Jan 10: Dr. James Astaphan, who prescribed steroids to Ben Johnson and other athletes, was arrested on drug charges after bad weather diverted his plane here, authorities said Sunday, reports AP.

Astaphan, who was flying from Antigua to Toronto, was wanted for importing and distributing steroids and conspiracy to distribute steroids and cocaine.

FBI agents in Barbados notified US drug enforcement agency officials he was on the plane.

Astaphan, 47, will be held here for several weeks until being sent to the custody of federal officials in Buffalo.

Johnson, his most famous patient, won the 100 metres, gold medal in a world record at the 1988 Seoul Olympics but was then stripped of his medal and all records for using anabolic steroids.

Gilbert rallies

AUCKLAND, Jan 10: Frenchman Rodolphe Gilbert rallied to upset fifth-seeded Canadian Greg Rusedski 5-7, 7-6 (7-2), 6-2 Monday, opening day of the \$133,750 New Zealand Open tennis championship, reports AP.

Rusedski slammed down 18 aces but negated his good work with 13 double faults.

Left-hander Gilbert, 25, used effective groundstrokes to take control of the match.

South African Marcos Ondruska, the only other seed in action, was more successful than Rusedski.

The fourth-seeded Ondruska struggled early on against German qualifier Lars Burgsmuller before winning 7-5, 6-3.

Burgsmuller, 18, served for the first set at 5-2 before his game faded.

"I've only played one match this year so I was a little uneasy," Ondruska said. "I wasn't sure what was happening and I needed to find my rhythm."

Other first-round winners Monday were Tomas Carbonell of Spain, Swede Thomas Enqvist and American Jeff Tarango.

Carbonell downed Czech-born German David Prinosil 6-2, 6-3, while Tarango scored a 2-6, 6-4, 6-2 triumph over Italian Gianluca Pozzi.

Enqvist downed rising Italian star Andrea Gaudenzi 7-5, 7-5.

The top two seeds — Magnus Gustafsson of Sweden and defending champion Alexander Volkov of Russia — play their first-round matches on Tuesday.



Mohammed Al Turk (2nd L) of Palestine shakes hands with Yaniv Sharon (2nd R) of Israel after their men's singles match in the Global Youth table tennis championship yesterday. It is the first time in the history of any sport that two former enemies have competed against each other. — AFP photo

Davenport to good in the end



BRISBANE, Jan 10: American teenager Lindsay Davenport rallied from a second-set slump to blast Flo-

ncia Labat off the court Sunday and win the \$150,000 Australian Women's hardcourt tennis championship, reports AP.

Davenport, 17, won the second title of her short career by defeating Labat, the No. 11 seed from Argentina, 6-1, 2-6, 6-3.

The tall, powerful American still is in her first 12 months as a professional but she out-thought and out-fought her Argentine opponent in difficult, sultry weather.

Davenport had not dropped a set throughout the tournament, but left-hander Labat, the world's No. 1 junior in 1989, made her fight hard.

Davenport, who combines playing tennis with her studies at Murrieta Valley High School in California, used her powerful groundstrokes to grind down Labat and keep her smaller but more experienced rival pinned behind the baseline.

She earned \$27,000 for her victory, while Labat earned \$12,000.

"The heat was getting to me a little," Davenport said. "I lost concentration in the second set, but then I came out really focused."

The American, who has risen from 171 to 20th in the rankings in 10 months, raced through the first set in 28 minutes. She moved Labat from side to side and then hammered the ball past her.

Labat fought back in the

A day of upsets

HOBART, Jan 10: Rising Romanian star Ruxandra Dragomir and Nicole Mus-Jagerman of the Netherlands both upset seeded players in first-round matches Monday at the \$100,000 Tasmanian International Open women's tennis tournament, reports AP.

Dragomir defeated fifth-seeded American Linda Harvey-Wild 6-3, 2-6, 6-3, while Mus-Jagerman downed No. 8 Ines Gorrochategui of Argentina 6-4, 7-5.

second set by mixing up her attack, disrupting Davenport's rhythm with junk balls. Labat managed to keep the ball in play and Davenport began to make unforced errors.

"I just wasn't thinking properly," Davenport said.

Davenport recovered her composure in the third set, however, racing to a 3-0 lead and impressively winning the final two games after Labat struggled back to 3-4.

"She hits every ball very hard, so it is very difficult to move her around," Labat said. "It isn't easy to do what you need to do against her."

The match was played in extreme heat that saw six ball girls faint from heat exhaustion and both players slow up as the contest progressed.

— AFP photo

Sanders calls it a day



WASHINGTON, Jan 10: Olympic gold medalist Summer Sanders says she won't compete in swimming any more, reports Xinhua.

"I'm retired," she told the Daily Democrat of Woodland

before addressing an awards banquet at the Yolo County Fairgrounds on Saturday. "I wasn't loving it anymore."

Sanders, 21, won two gold medals, a silver and a bronze in the 1992 Olympic Games in Barcelona. She also was a six-time NCAA champion while at Stanford and twice named

NCAA swimmer-of-the-year.

Mike Hastings, Sanders' Olympic coach, said it was time for Sanders to move on.

"She's given the best she could, and she couldn't give anymore," Hastings said. "She understands all the processes. The reason she retired was that she lost that extra 5 per cent to be competitive (at the international level)."

Chairman Snyder, communications director for US swimming, had not yet heard about Sanders' plans.

Sanders told the Daily Democrat she did not want to elaborate about her retirement or "make it a big deal." She spoke before 250 people for the Sierra Nevada swimming awards banquet.

"Just print that I'm retired," she told the newspaper. The Associated Press could not reach Sanders for further comment Sunday night.

Sanders, a communications major at Stanford University, last competed at the nationals last spring in Nashville, Tenn., winning the 100-metre butterfly.

In Barcelona, Sanders won gold medals in the 200-metre butterfly and as an alternate in the 400-metre relay. She won a silver in the 200 individual medley and a bronze in the 400 individual medley.

Seles won't return till March: Shriver

SYDNEY, Jan 10: Women's Tennis Association president, Pam Shriver said Monday she expects that Monica Seles will not return to tournament play until mid-March, reports AP.

Shriver, who lost her first-round singles match Monday at the New South Wales Open, said Seles had planned a comeback at the Sydney tournament in preparation for the Australian Open.

"The obvious time for me seems to be between the Australian and Lipton. We're talking sometime between mid-February and mid-March," said Shriver.

"I think she had a hard time letting go of the Australian Open, because when I spoke to her she knew she wouldn't be ready for here."

"She wanted so badly to play the Australian because it's been such a favourite — it was hard to let go of it. I think she'll just make a decision four or five days before an event — she'll have a wild card held for every event."

The former No. 1 women's player has been sidelined since last April, when a spectator reached from the stands and stabbed her in the shoulder during a tournament in Hamburg, Germany.

"I talked to Monica before Christmas because I wanted her to know how much she was missed," Shriver said.

"We missed her for a couple of reasons. You're going to miss your No. 1 player in the world tremendously but you're also going to miss someone who brings that extra aura, charisma and personality. She had grown into a real superstar and we missed that very much."

Shriver, 31, said increased security since the Seles attack had eased the fear factor, but an attack on American figure skater Nancy Kerrigan had again heightened anxiety for many players.

Kerrigan was attacked with a metal bar after training for the US championships in Detroit.

Shriver said players will never be 100 per cent safe.

Pioline an early loser again



SYDNEY, Jan 10: Frenchman Cedric Pioline, struggling with form and racket in Australia, became the first men's seed to fall at the New South Wales Open on Monday, reports Reuter.

Fourth-seeded Pioline, whose old-fashioned magnesium racket caused chaos with the experimental line call system at the Hopman Cup last week, was still looking for his first singles win of 1994 after a 6-1, 5-7, 6-4 defeat to Russian Andrei Chesnokov.

The only other seed to fall was South African Amanda Coetzer, seventh in the women's list, who faded after a promising start to a 4-6, 6-3, 6-3 loss against Japan's Naoko Sawamatsu.

Shuzo Masuoka made it a notable day for Japanese players, by defeating an opponent 102 places higher in the computer, sweeping aside 25th-ranked Amos Mansdorf 6-4, 6-2.

World number 10 Pioline's departure was largely self-inflicted, a high number of er-

rors flowing from his now infamous white racket.

Chesnokov, nevertheless, still looked capable of blowing a 4-0 lead in the final set as his opponent drew back to 4-3, but four consecutive errors from the increasingly frustrated US Open finalist in the final game were sadly predictable.

Women's top seed Conchita Martinez, back to full fitness after a bout of flu, was meanwhile an impressive 6-3, 6-0 winner over Germany's Sabine Hack. The world number four hinted there was more to come, saying: "I think I can improve a lot as a player."

Her compatriot Emilio Sanchez and American Aaron Krickstein, both former winners of the event in 1992 and 1989 respectively, had straight set victories in their opening matches.

Sanchez was forced to save two set points in the second set before removing Briton Andrew Foster 6-3, 7-6, but his brother Javier was less fortunate against Frenchman Arnaud Boetsch who won 6-4, 6-2.

6-3.

Last year's losing finalist Thomas Muster, back in Sydney as the third seed, also won his opening match in straight sets on a day when over an hour and a half was lost to rain, an ironic postscript to the area's bushfire problems.

Australian players had earlier continued their recent monopoly on remarkable fight-backs when Jason Stoltenberg recovered from a set and 5-0 down to defeat Tasmanian Richard Fromberg 6-7, 7-6, 6-3.

It was the most dramatic reversal of fortune since last year's US Open when Australia's Wally Masur, two sets down early on, rallied from 5-0 down in the final set of his fourth round match against yet another compatriot Jamie Morgan.

The bigger names appear on Tuesday, with Pete Sampras, Ivan Lendl, Mats Wilander, Pat Cash and Gabriela Sabatini all in first round action on the centre court at White City.



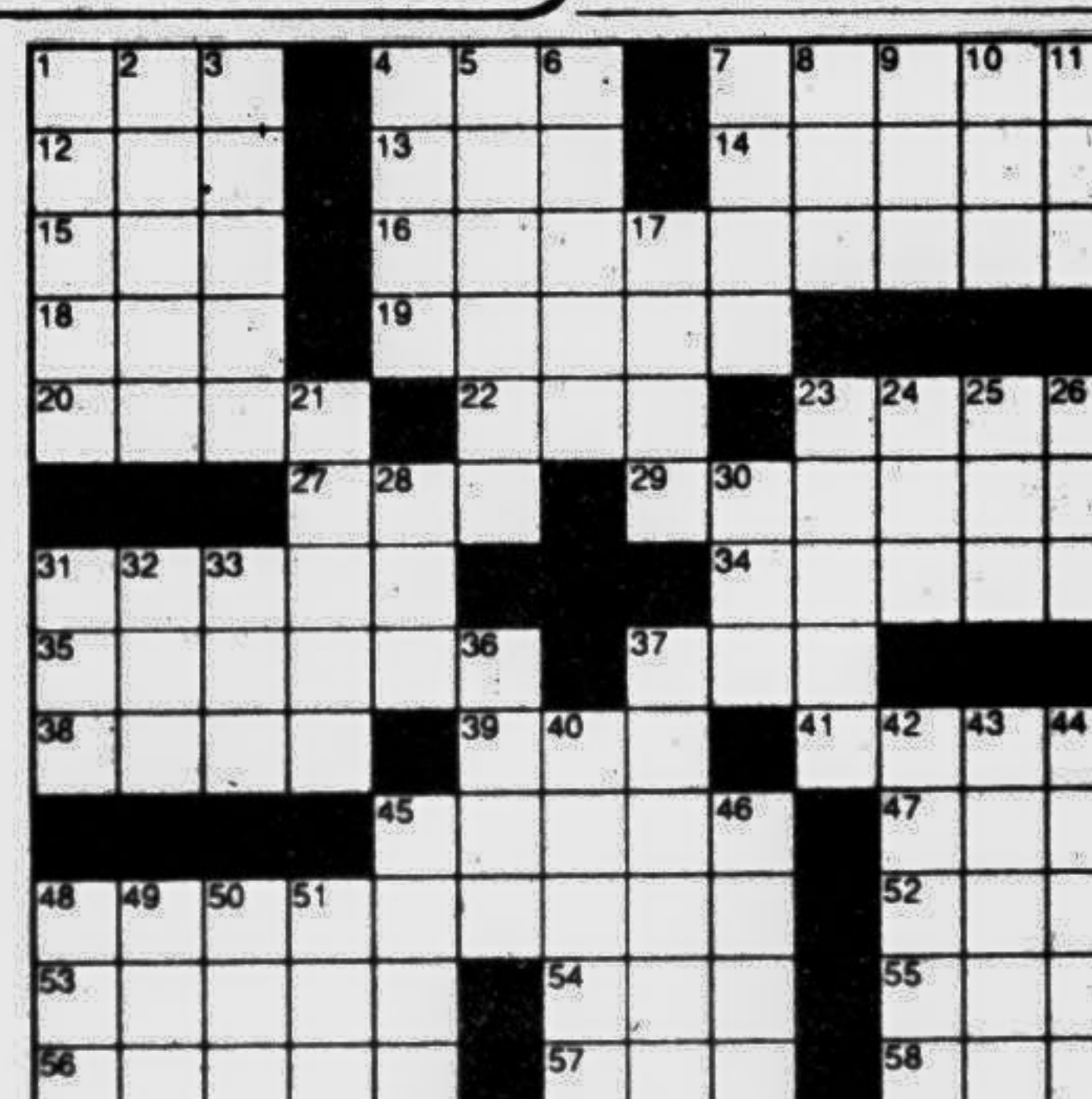
Top seed Conchita Martinez of Spain hits a forehand return on her way to a straight-sets victory over Germany's Sabine Hack in the first round of the New South Wales tennis tournament in Sydney yesterday. Martinez won 6-3, 6-0. — AFP photo

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

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37 Hot tub						51 Kibosh	
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39 Insubstantial ideas							
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Solution time: 25 mins.

ASS PIKE BAGS
RIP AGES OPIE
FLUTTERS NELL
TOR NATURAL
RETTON YES
USE LAB DECAL
EARS MOW SLUE
DUSTY WAR URN
CALUM DELTAS
RUM COT
AIDE SHUTTERS
SOME ARNO REO
AWOL SUER SAX



CRYPTOQUIP

DSYD EKY LHKO AYH -
OKLKL AYN TYEEKO Y
LJYON NTSJEYL

Yesterday's Cryptquip: WHEN GOLF PRO ARNOLD PALMER'S GARAGE IGNITED, WERE THERE MANY IRONS IN THE FIRE?

Today's Cryptquip clue: L equals R

The Cryptquip is a word puzzle 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 words. Solution is by trial and error.