

# Sampras serves a warning

**SYDNEY, Jan 16:** Pete Sampras has warned his Australian Open rivals that he fears no-one as he heads towards Melbourne for the first Grand Slam tournament of the year, reports Reuter.

After beating Ivan Lendl in the final of the New South Wales Open on Saturday, the 22-year-old world number one also revealed his desire to be regarded as one of the best players of all time.

"No, I'm not frightened of anyone. I feel that if I play my tennis, I can win," said Sampras simply. "I think I'm the favourite and I'm going to Melbourne with confidence."

Asked to respond to suggestions from his coach Tim Gullikson that he could become one of the greatest players the game has ever seen, he replied: "I've thought about it, particularly winning on clay at Roland Garros. Winning on every surface, that would prove to me I'm one of the greatest of all time."

"I'm only 22. As I mature I think I'll get better and better. Hopefully this will be another good year for me, like 1993 was."

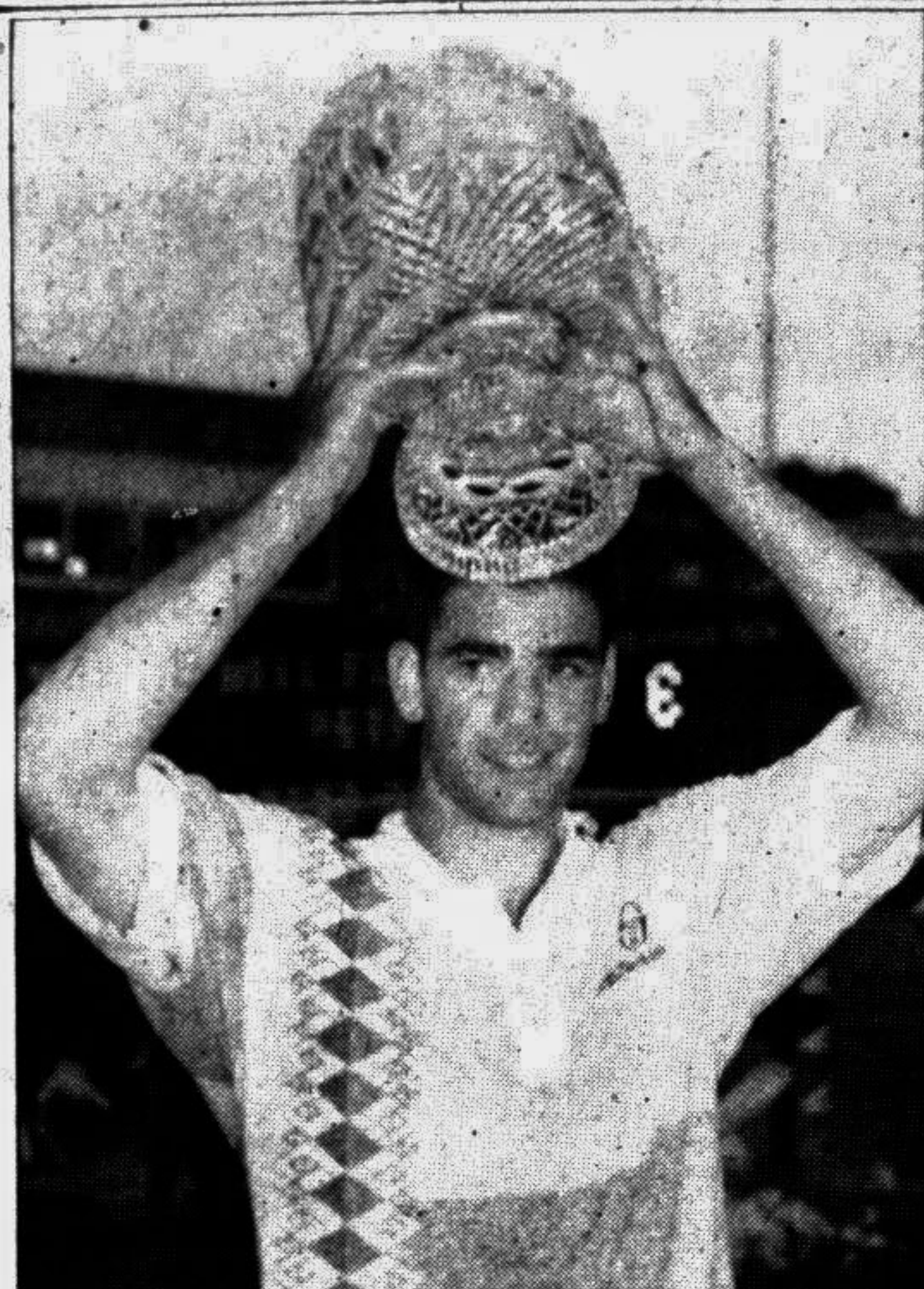
Lendl, who has taken an interest in Sampras's progress from an early age, hailed Sampras as "One hell of an athlete" and poured scorn on those who think his now fellow-American is short on personality.

"From what I read in the papers, a personality in tennis is someone who swears, shouts, yells and throws tantrums," he said.

"It's sickening that someone who's down to earth, polite, behaves well, is reasonably clever and wears nice clothes has to apologise for the way he is."

Before linking up with Gullikson, Sampras once accepted Lendl's invitation to come and stay at his Connecticut mansion for a few days.

The master informed the pupil he possessed all the shots but needed to be more disciplined in his use of them. He had few problems getting the message across. "When I looked round the house and saw everything Lendl has got," recalled Sampras, "I thought to myself, 'If I knuckle down, I can have the same.'" Lendl has also spent time in recent days giving an insight into the pressurised world inhabited by those who reach the coveted number one spot. Having spent



World number one Pete Sampras of the United States holds aloft the Waterford crystal trophy after beating compatriot Ivan Lendl in the final of the New South Wales Open in Sydney on Jan 15. Sampras defeated Lendl 7-6 (7-5), 6-4.

stay at number one. It's just a ranking... winning the major titles is more important.

"The expectation has been there for some time. I feel I've been a target for some time now, but I'm getting used to it. It's part of my job."

The scorn which greeted the American's loss to 204th-ranked Karim Alami of Morocco in the first round of the Qatar Open this month was typical, Sampras, not surprisingly, prefers to draw inspiration from happier matches.

"Wimbledon was as big a victory as I've ever had," he said recalling his win over Jim Courier last July.

"I needed another Slam to prove to people that I'm not going to crack under pressure. It was huge, especially mentally, probably the biggest victory of my career."

It also left the Australian Open, along with the French, as one of the few Sampras has still to crack.

Free of the shin splints

# Aussie Open needs a star

**MELBOURNE, Jan 16:** The Australian Open needs a personality. With most of the captivating characters of tennis skipping the first Grand Slam event of the year, the tournament seeks an interesting individual or two as it opens Monday, reports AP.

The list of no-shows is a virtual Who's Who of the sport's most popular players — Andre Agassi, Boris Becker, Michael Chang, Monica Seles, Jennifer Capriati, Martina Navratilova.

Agassi is recovering from surgery on his right wrist. Becker is in Europe awaiting the birth of his first child. Chang couldn't fit the US \$3.7 million Australian Open into his schedule.

Other top men are out because of injury. Spain's Sergi Bruguera has a bad shoulder. Richard Krajicek of the Netherlands and Andrei Medvedev of Ukraine have knee problems, and David Wheaton of the United States has a hip injury.

Seles had hoped to make her comeback at the Australian Open, which she has won three straight times, but still has not recovered from being stabbed in the back by a spectator during a match last April in Hamburg, Germany.

Navratilova, who won three Australian Open titles in the early 1980s, has not played in Melbourne since 1989. Capriati, fighting burnout, is taking some time off from tennis.

Few of the top players in Melbourne can match the pas-



Michael Chang of the United States holds the trophy after beating Czech David Rike in the final of the Indonesian Open in Jakarta on Jan 15. Chang won 6-3, 6-3.

## Gustafsson wins New Zealand Open

**AUCKLAND, Jan 16:** Top seeded Magnus Gustafsson of Sweden swept past American Patrick McEnroe 6-4, 6-0 Sunday to win the \$13,750 New Zealand Open tennis title, reports AP.

Gustafsson, ranked 14th in the world, showed he is in top form going into the Australian Open, which begins Monday in Melbourne.

Gustafsson won the sixth title of his career, while McEnroe has yet to win a title.

McEnroe's serve was broken in the first game of the match — and that set the pattern.

Gustafsson, playing in his 15th final, controlled proceedings from the backcourt with his lethal forehand and solid serving. Anything too short from McEnroe was rocketed straight back with pace and accuracy.

McEnroe, ranked 73rd coming into the tournament, tried to mix his game up and was keen to attack the net, but the accuracy of Gustafsson's passing shots didn't allow him many opportunities.

When he did get to the net, he missed a number of easy volleys.

"I am so happy," said Gustafsson, who had not previously won a hard court event. "It is a big surprise for me, a very big surprise."

"But also it's a big advantage to be seeded. You don't have to play the best guys in the first rounds."

Gustafsson, 27, said being the top seed had placed a little more pressure on him to win and he had been very nervous before the start.

"Most other times I have been the underdog in the finals. This time being the favorite I got a little bit more nervous," he said.

McEnroe said his poor start put him in trouble.

"Once he won the first set he started playing a lot better," he said.

## Indonesian shuttlers in fine form

**TAIPEI, Jan 16:** Indonesia dominated the finals of the Taipei Masters Invitation badminton championships on Sunday, winning four of the five events, reports Reuter.

Defending champion Heryanto Arbi, attacking from the start with powerful cross-court smashes, cruised to a 15-3, 15-2 victory against Denmark's Thomas Stuer-Lauridsen in the men's singles.

The lanky Stuer-Lauridsen, who also lost to Arbi in last year's final, looked slow and made many unforced errors.

"I was in pretty good shape today and was able to concentrate," Arbi, who took home a first prize of 7,150 dollars, told a news conference.

Top seed Susi Susanti had an equally comfortable victory against Kim Ji-Hyun of South Korea in the women's singles, winning 11-2, 11-5.

Kim rallied from 1-4 down to 4-4 in the second game, but Susanti retained her composure and finished off the match by alternating smashes with drop shots.

"I never felt intimidated... I just became more and more used to the court," Susanti said.

Top seeds Bambang Suprianto and Rudy Gunawan beat Christian Jacobsen and Jens Eriksen of Denmark 15-1, 15-8 in the men's doubles.

The Indonesians' aggressive smashing overwhelmed the Danes, who played a defensive game which relied mainly on drop shots.

In the women's doubles, Finarsih and Lily Tampi overcame a stiff challenge in the first game to beat Denmark's Lotte Olsen and Lisbet Stuer-Lauridsen 15-9, 15-4.

## 2 Algerian coaches banned

**ALGIERS, Jan 16:** Algeria have banned two coaches from the national soccer team for life for their part in Algeria's disqualification from the African Nations Cup, the Sports Ministry said on Saturday, reports Reuter.

The ministry said Mezziane Ighil and Abdelrahman Mehdaoui has also been barred from any coaching in Algeria for a year and the team's administrative manager Mustapha Mechouar had been banned for life from Algerian national sports.

The ministry has also banned Reda Abdouche, former secretary general of the National Soccer Federation, from Algerian sports for a year.

Algeria were expelled from the competition for fielding a suspended defender, Mourad Karouf, in a qualifier in Dakar in January 1993 when they beat Senegal 2-1.

They would have qualified for the 12-team finals in Tunisia next March after taking second place in their group.

# Date's first major title

**SYDNEY, Jan 16:** Kimiko Date won her first major singles title outside Japan today when she upset American Mary Joe Fernandez 6-4, 6-2 in the women's final at the New South Wales Open, reports Reuter.

Date's two previous career victories came in the 1992 and 1993 Japan Opens. Her unexpected success on a hot day at White City was the highlight of the 23-year-old's career.

It was never a classic final and Fernandez, an impressive semifinal winner over Gabriela Sabatini, was a big disappointment after taking an early 3-0 lead in the first set.

The delighted Date's reward was a cheque for US \$60,000 dollars, US \$18,000 dollars more than Pete Sampras received for winning Saturday's men's final. The women's event has a higher rating on the WTA tour than its male counterpart has in the ATP calendar.

Date's win confirmed the rising profile of Japanese players in Australia following her compatriot Mana Endo's success in the Tasmanian Open earlier in the weekend.

The champion's limited knowledge of Australian tennis history, however, was exposed after the prize-giving ceremony. Asked if she enjoyed meeting ex-champion Evonne Cawley, formerly Goolagong, who presented her with the trophy, Date confessed she had never heard of her.

Speaking via an interpreter, she also revealed she would be putting the biggest cheque of her career straight into a deposit account and was hoping for more success in Melbourne.

In the opening games, however, such a scenario looked unlikely as Date's almost embarrassing early attempts to volley at the net helped give Fernandez an instant advantage.

The American world number seven was two breaks up within minutes, allowing Date just six points, and even slipped in a couple of aces on her way to a 4-2 lead.

At that point, however, her game fell apart for no obvious reason, allowing Date to reel off four games in a row and take the set in 47 minutes.

Fernandez instantly broke her opponent's serve at the start of the second set but again it proved a false dawn. Date, still mixing the occasional dramatic mishit onto her steady baseline game, won six of the last seven games and hustled to victory in 84 minutes.

Date, seeded fifth and ranked 13th in the world, also seems to respond positively to playing higher-rated players. She conceded only nine games in total during wins this week over Fernandez and world number four Conchita Martinez.

Fernandez and Australian men's player Sandon Stolle later presented a cheque for over US \$25,000 dollars to Sydney's bushfire appeal on behalf of the tournament and players.



Kimiko Date of Japan plays a backhand return to Mary-Joe Fernandez of the United States in the women's singles final of the New South Wales Open in Sydney yesterday. Date defeated Fernandez 6-4, 6-2.

## Usha not in a hurry

**PUNE, Jan 16:** Track queen P T Usha, whose promised return to the track last November did not materialise, plans to enter competitions from June-July next, reports PTI.

"I was keen to come back in November (last) but I was not fully satisfied that I could touch my previous best performances. So I gave up plans to return in a hurry," Usha who is here as part of the four former internationalists who would bear the torches into the stadium at the opening of the third National Games said yesterday.

Usha told PTI that she had gone back to pre-season workouts once she decided not to return immediately. "Though I could have easily won my event, especially 400 metres at the national level, it would not have been adequate for international meets."

A trimmer looking Usha said she had now reduced her weight to a mere 59 kg from 74 kg she weighed when she set out on training in Jan '93 after giving birth to her son.

The ace athlete had been on continuous training at the sports authority of India (south) centre in Bangalore, mainly concentrating on strengthening exercises, weights and endurance training.

"I did not get much time for speed-work with the trials for the Manila ATF meet approaching and I was barely able to come under 53 sec for 400 metre in practice. So I dropped the plan and went back to strength workouts," Usha said.

However, Usha, who also plans to add 800 metres to her disciplines along with the one-lap event by omitting the sprints, said she was now fully fit and was about to start speed training.

She said "during training I clocked one min 37 secs for the 600 metres", an intermediate event to gain endurance at high speed.

## Dispute over body to fix disputes

**LAUSANNE, Switzerland, Jan 16:** Soccer, basketball, volleyball and badminton were the odd men out when sports administrators agreed here Thursday to new procedures for settling disputes, reports AFP.

The four sports expressed reservations about which cases exactly the new body could handle.

The organisations governing sport world-wide, who have been looking for ways of keeping conflicts out of civil courts, set up the International Council of Arbitration for Sport.

Athletics, for example, is still plagued by the Butch Reynolds case. The American 400m world record holder was a 27 million dollar suit for unlawful restraint two years ago after convincing a US court the International Amateur Athletic Federation had bungled a drugs test.

The International Olympic Committee, Summer Olympic sports federations, Winter Olympic sports, Federations, international federations, association of National Olympic Committees and athletes' representatives approved the new set-up.

Keiba M'Baye, a Senegal judge and IOC member, said they aimed to give the new arbitration body the final word in disputes by making it more independent.

# Smirnov keeps on winning

**OSLO, Jan 16:** Vladimir Smirnov beat Norway's two-time defending World Cup overall champion Bjorn Dahlbe by 22.2 seconds to win a men's 15-kilometer cross-country freestyle race Saturday at the Holmenkollen Nordic Ski Festival, reports AP.

It was the fifth victory in six races this season for Smirnov, a Swedish-based former Soviet competing for Kazakhstan. The victory Saturday, the last event before the Winter Olympics, increased his overall Nordic World Cup lead over Dahlbe to 550-396.

"Everyone is asking me if I can keep my form until the Olympics," Smirnov said. "They've asked that question since I won my first race in December. I have the same answer now: I'm going to Lillehammer to win medals. If it's gold, silver or bronze doesn't matter."

Lyubov Egorova of Russia cruised to a 39.8-second victory over Italian Manuela Di Centa in the women's 15k free. Egorova's second straight win gave her 360 points and a tie for the overall lead with fellow Russian Elena Valbe, who finished one minute, 18.7 seconds behind in sixth place.

Mario Stecher of Austria topped the Nordic combined's ski jumping portion with 257.5 points after jumps of 116 and 126.5 meters.

Stecher will start four minutes and 38 seconds ahead of Japanese Takanori Kono in the final 15k cross-country freestyle ski race Sunday. Kono jumped 106 and 108.5 meters for 215.7 points.

Norway's Fred Borre Lundberg was third with 209.3 points (101.5 and 106.5 meters) and will start 5:21 behind Stecher.

World champion Kenji Ogawa of Japan, who has won all four meets this season, was only 11th and will start 8:04 behind.

Smirnov, 30, who won his only Olympic gold medal when he competed for the Soviet relay team in the 1988 Calgary Games, covered the race in 36 minutes, 44.7 seconds. It was Smirnov's first victory in eight starts at Holmenkollen.

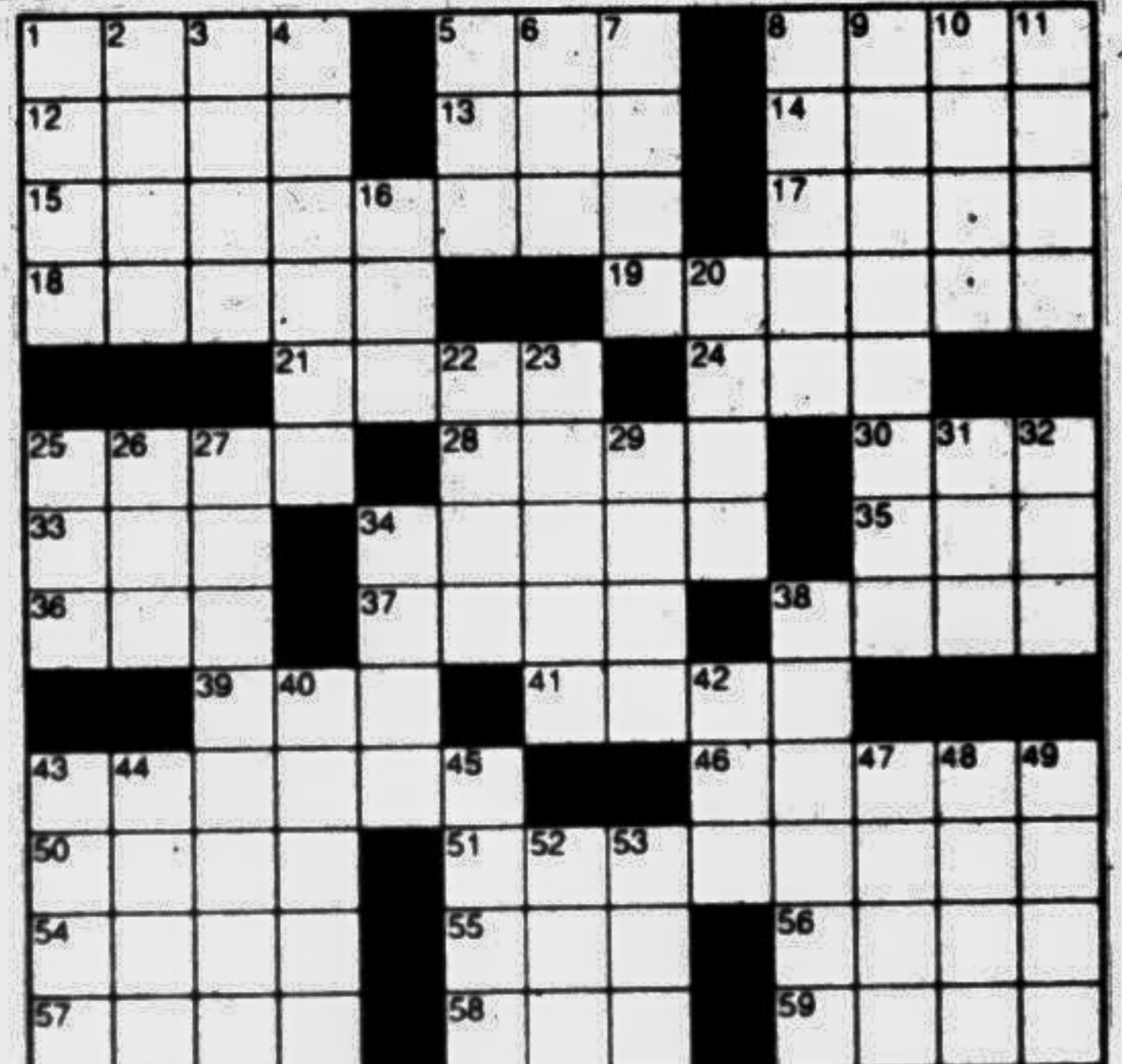
Finns Mika Myllyla and Jari Isometsa were third and fourth, 29.5 and 38.2 seconds behind. Italians Silvio Fauner,

## CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS										DOWN																																	
1 Barracks array	5 Jazz style	8 BB, for instance	12 Touch	13 Carnival setting	14 Emulated	15 Quartz and feldspar	17 Active with	18 Source of annoyance	19 Less relaxed	21 Advantage	24 Old hand, for short	25 Choir's rendition	28 Croupier's tool	30 Charles Dutton sitcom	33 "Blue?"	34 Poe's bird	35 Mess up	36 Ashen	37 Portent	38 Duck's lack	39 Manhattan, e.g.																						
41 Unspecified	43 Rook	46 "— World Turns"	50 Gridlock	51 Labyrinth	54 Cauldron	55 Hawaiian music-maker	56 Ending for cod or seed	57 Several in a row?	58 Ply a needle	59 Benevolent group	1 So bad it's good	2 Theater trophy	3 Choreographer	4 Spielberg	5 "Unmentionable"	6 Ewing	7 Mail	8 Dress style	9 Medieval balladeer	10 Apportion	11 Bloodhound's cue	16 Embarrassed	20 Avenged	22 Metric	23 Rain gutter's place	25 Ham's partner	26 Singer	27 Serve	29 Gambling game	31 Man-mouse link	32 Turn on the water-works	34 Hot-dog holder	38 Mortar's mate	40 Acts the longshoreman	42 Name in China's history	43 — Rojo, P.R.	44 Emanation	45 Ostriches' kin	47 Do surveillance on	48 Beefcake	49 Work units	52 White House nickname	53 Just out

**Solution time: 21 mins.**

SHAW	BOS	PALL
RARE	OUT	OBIE
SYCAMORE	DUNE	
KAT	EDITOR	
HALEY	FRAUD	
IRON	CLAYMORE	
PEN	SHAGS	MID
SAGAMORE	SEED	
MULE	BUNNY	
DAMAGE	IAM	
ARIZ	RUSHMORE	
BIKO	IFI	EWER
SEEN	COT	REAR



**CRYPTOQUIP**  
DWJEHOM, U DMVKDOMVJK  
HJKPSOKKEUS, HMUYOZ  
QV LPK BMPOSZK  
"P E B W J K L"  
Yesterday's Cryptogram: FUSSY PALEONTOLOGIST IS WONDERING WHICH KIND OF PAINT WOULD BEST STICK TO HIS RIBS.  
Today's Cryptogram clue: H equals B  
The Cryptogram 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.