

Gariba, Hilner run the show



MADRAS, Feb 5: Salaam Gariba of Ghana and Celena Mondie Hilner (USA) emerged the fastest man and woman of the 33rd Open National and International Invitation meet here today, both posting a virtually start-to-finish win in 100m, reports PTI.

In the first finals decided in the afternoon, Salaam exploded off the blocks for a clear lead and maintained good acceleration to clock 10:47 secs for the win, upsetting the more reputed Chidi Imoh (Nigeria) by pushing him to second spot. Chidi, as in the semifinals, failed to get a good start but his desperate effort in the last 40m enabled him to just overtake Tao Wo Shihun (Chinese Taipei) who was third.

Chidi, credited with a best of 10 seconds flat and twice winner of the World University sprint title, clocked a slow 10:67 secs to Tao's 10:73. India's R Selvaraj (Services) was fourth at 10:84 sec, rolling the best among three Indian runners, two of whom took the start in the final.

Celena, the American varsity woman's champion, kept her concentration over two false starts to sprint away clear five metres ahead of Jamaica's

Twilet Maleon and claim the women's sprint. Celena timed 11:75 to Twilet's 11:89. EB Shyla (FCI) failed to sustain the acceleration in the last 20m to finish fourth at 12:08 secs.

Bahadur Prasad continued his meet record erasing routine for the second consecutive day in the 5000m, despite a second place finish as in the 1500m yesterday.

Kenya's Ibrahim Kinuthia powered past Bahadur Prasad (Rly) in the last 100m to win, but Bahadur, who won the event in the Manila Asian Track and Field meet, warmed the hearts of the large crowd by eclipsing the meet mark.

Ibrahim, whose best is 13:09 in the event, took the lead from the start, with Ireland's Paul Donovan and K Shankar (LIC) keeping him company. Bahadur comfortably placed a few yards behind, closed in after a few laps.

Ibrahim, Paul and Bahadur then slowly drew away from the pack to set up a clear lead. With four laps to go, Bahadur took the lead and set up a fast pace. Unable to withstand it, Paul faded away. However, Ibrahim stuck to Bahadur. With 300m left, Bahadur began sprinting home, but Ibrahim kept company and nearing the final bend, 'kicked' to overtake the Indian runner and finish five metres ahead.

Ibrahim clocked 13 min 54.41 secs while Bahadur

timed 13:54.72, a big improvement, on Edward Vincent's (Services) meet mark, set in 1982. Paul was third, with a timing of 14:18.19 secs.

TM Martin (Ker) took the triple jump title with a modest effort of 15.41m achieved in his fourth try. TM Thangavelu (TN), with 15.36 metres, was second, while Rambir Singh (Rlys) finished third. The experienced Rajinder Singh (Steel Plant) with a poor 15.29 metres was pushed to the fourth spot. In a contest confined to Indian athletes.

The women's discus throw produced a surprise winner in Myanmar's Hye Aye Nne, who cleared 50.46 metres to erase the meet mark of 45.60 standing in the name of Gurmeet Kaur (All India Varsity), set in 1990. Neelam J Singh (Rlys) with 48.10 with 48.10m, also bettered the mark to come second, while her teammate Promila Bharami was third, with 44.14 metres.

R Chitra (Rlys) clinched the title of the most proficient woman athlete of the meet when she comfortably won the heptathlon.

Chitra tallied 4805 points to retain a comfortable lead over second-placed B K Sumavathi (Kar) (4711 pts) despite the latter's all-out run in the final 800 metres event. Anny Philip (4539 pts) was third.

Ottey's record

MOSCOW, Feb 5: Jamaican Merlene Ottey set a 50 metres world indoor record on Friday when she clocked 6.00 seconds, reports Reuter.

Her performance at an international athletics meeting in Moscow beat the previous record of 6.03 second set on Tuesday by Russia's Irina Privalova.

Russia broke the world indoor record for the women's 4X800 metres relay on Friday with a time of eight minutes 18.71 seconds.

The record broke the previous best of 8:25.05 by the United States in 1987.

TT meet/

Sports Reporter

A table tennis tournament organised by Dhaka Mariner Youngs Club will begin on Monday at the Dhanmondi wooden floor gymnasium.

Druti Paribahan has sponsored the meet.

State Minister for Textiles M A Mannan will inaugurate the meet.

Maradona barred from leaving Argentina

BUENOS AIRES, Feb 5: Soccer star Diego Maradona, in hiding after firing an air rifle at reporters, was barred from leaving Argentina until the courts rule on charges filed by his victims, a judge said on Friday, reports Reuter.

"He cannot leave the country," judge Francisco Lilo, in charge of the case, told Reuters, "he must settle his judicial situation first."

The diminutive captain of Argentina's national side and his family fled their country home in a pickup truck under cover of darkness early Thursday.

Judge Lilo said Maradona, who threatened at one point to switch from the air gun to real bullets, would not be arrested because the charges — bodily harm and minor injuries — carry a maximum two-year prison sentence which is not usually enforceable.

Maradona's career has been in decline since the 1990 World Cup in Italy. He failed a routine dope test for cocaine while playing for Napoli in March 1991 and was banned for 15 months by FIFA, world soccer's governing body.

He returned to Argentina, declared he had retired and entered a treatment programme.

He came out of retirement in Spain with Sevilla last season but was sacked in June and returned again to Argentina.

After a four-month break followed by an intense slimming and fitness programme, Maradona signed with Newell's Old Boys in October, then inspired Argentina to victory over Australia in a critical World Cup playoff.

Gregs Club march on

Sports Reporter

Title-aspirants The Gregs Club maintained their all-win record intact but not before surviving a scare from down-the-table Eagles Club, winning the day's first of the two engagements of the Partex First Division basketball league that resumed after a two-day gap at the Outer Stadium wooden-floor gymnasium yesterday.

Gregs won the keenly-contested match 76-73 after narrowly leading the first half 37-36.

In a pulsating encounter, Gregs, who, before yesterday's match, had full ten points in their kitty from five matches, had the saviours of the afternoon in Iqbal and Anup.

Iqbal, in fact, emerged the topscorer of the match with 29 points followed by Anup, who had 23 points to his credit.

The two cagers, who led a spirited campaign for the valiant vanquished, were Toufique and Kabir.

Toufique scored 22 followed by Kabir, who caged 18 times.

The win catapults Gregs to the top of the points table with 12 points from six outings. Gregs along with Azad Boys and Angels are the three unbeaten sides in the fray. Both Azad and Angels have eight points, having played four matches each.

Eagles, on the other hand, went down to their second defeat in four matches and, by virtue of one point provisioned for the losers, up their tally to six points.

In the day's other match, played at the same venue later in the day, Dhurmetu careered to an easy 64-44 win against Kurmitola Apollo Club.

The winners led the first half 36-21.

Nahad and Titus were the leading scorers with 29 and 22 respectively.

Khokan and Tuhin were the notable cagers for Kurmitola Apollo Club with 23 and 12.

Dhurmetu have now eight points from six matches.

Kurmitola Apollo have seven points from six encounters.



US Olympic figure skater Nancy Kerrigan performs a flawless routine before a sold-out crowd at Boston's Northeastern University on Feb 4. This is Kerrigan's first engagement since she was attacked before the national championships. — AFP photo

IOC won't get involved unless...



LILLEHAMMER, Norway, Feb 5: It's unlikely the International Olympic Committee will step in and

bar US figure skater Tonya Harding from the Lillehammer Games, IOC officials said Friday, reports AP.

IOC executive board members said that decision on Harding's participation rests with the US Olympic Committee. While the IOC has the final authority to accept or refuse an entry, members said they would be reluctant to overrule the USOC if it clears Harding to compete.

"If the US enters her, that's a US decision," said Dick Pound, a senior IOC board member from Canada. "It would be very difficult for the IOC to say to the US: We're sorry, you have someone on your team that we don't think is right. Your full structures have decided she's OK, but we don't agree and were going to eliminate this competitor. Hah."

Anita DeFrantz, the lone US member on the IOC, agreed the IOC would probably not seek to bar Harding from the Feb 12-27 Games.

The IOC has the final au-

thority during the Games, so if it (the Harding controversy) continues, that's a possibility, but I think that's very unlikely, she said.

Harding's name was included on the American team roster submitted Monday by the USOC to the Lillehammer organizing committee. However, she could still be removed from the team by Feb 21, two days before the start of the skating competition, if the USOC determines she was involved in the Jan 6 attack on rival skater Nancy Kerrigan.

Pound, a lawyer, suggested Harding should be able to skate unless proven guilty. Absent a confession or conviction, it seems to me that the system in the United States is based on presumption of innocence, he said. "It's simply an accusation and you have to consider the source of the accusation."

However, Pound indicated the IOC could be in a position to take action after the Games if Harding wins a medal and is later convicted.

If she were to compete and win or get some result, and later it turns out it shouldn't have happened, perhaps the IOC should say it should make

some decision in the interest of the Olympic movement, he said.

Kevan Gosper, an executive board member from Australia, said the IOC will let the case run its course in the United States before considering whether to get involved.

The possibility of involvement could be in the event that the person is still considered appropriate to compete, and then it may be a matter for us, he said. But for the moment it's not a matter for us.

The IOC doesn't need to get involved at this stage because the matter is being considered absolutely appropriately in the United States, Gosper said. "Our position is to wait and see the outcome of that. The worst thing we could do is make any observations or interfere with that process at this stage."

A rule in the Olympic Charter states that the "the right of final acceptance of entries rests with the IOC executive board."

If the IOC were to act, it could conceivably cite a regulation in the Charter that says athletes must "respect the spirit of fair play and non-violence, and behave accordingly on the sports field."

Pakistan lead

SINGAPORE, Feb 5: Pakistanis Muhammad Khalique and Omer Rashid defeated Singapore's Sherman Lim and Lim Wai Yaw 6-3, 7-6 (7-5), 6-3 in the Davis Cup first round doubles match held at Bukit Course Saturday, reports AP.

The Pakistanis played strongly to win the first set 6-3 before a crowd of 250 spectators.

In the second set the Singaporeans fought back with strong support from the spectators 7-6 but lost out tie break (7-5), 6-3.

Five players each from Pakistan and Singapore are taking part in the Davis Cup Asia-Oceania Zone Group II first round three-day tournament that ends Sunday.

Second day doubles match results:

Pakistanis Muhammad Khalique and Omer Rashid defeated Singapore's Sherman Lim and Liu Wai Yaw 6-3, 7-6 (7-5), 6-3.

Malaysia consolidate

TAIPEI, Feb 5: Malaysia beat Taiwan in the doubles Saturday to take a 2-1 lead in the first round of the Davis Cup Asia-Oceania Group 2 tennis competition, reports AP.

Malaysia's Adam Malik and Ramachandran Ramaiah beat Lien Yu-hui and Chan Chih-jung 6-4, 3-6, 6-1, 7-6 (7-4) at Taichung's Chungshing Tennis Center in central Taiwan.

On Friday, Malik beat Lien 6-7 (4-7), 6-2, 7-6 (8-6), 7-5 and Chen beat Ramaiah 6-3, 6-1, 6-3 in the opening singles.

Chang prevails

SAN JOSE, Calif., Feb 5: Michael Chang, forced into a near three-hour match when he lost an opening-set tie-breaker, hung on to beat unseeded Frenchman Jean-Philippe Fleurian 6-7 (8-6), 6-1, 6-3 Friday night in the quarterfinals of the San Jose Open, reports AP.

Two other seeded players, Richey Reneberg and Renzo Furlan, advanced to the semifinals with afternoon victories. Reneberg fought off an early charge from hometown favourite Bryan MacPhie and rallied to win 3-6, 6-4, 6-2. Furlan, from Italy, beat Jeff Tarango 1-6, 6-1, 7-5.

In Saturday's semifinals, Furlan faces Reneberg while Chang will meet the winner of Friday night's late match between Bryan Shelton and Karsten Braasch.

Chang entered the match having beaten all seven of his opponents this season in straight sets, never losing more than three games in a set.

That all changed when Fleurian, demonstrating the form that once helped him beat Boris Becker, broke Chang twice in the first set to go up 3-0.

Chang recovered, winning five games in a row. He appeared poised to take control of the match before Fleurian broke him again, cutting it to 5-4.

Ahead 6-5 and 15-40 with Fleurian serving, Chang proceeded to lose four straight points as Fleurian forced a tie-breaker and then won it, 8-6.

Chang breezed through the second set before finally finishing off the Fleurian in the third, breaking him in a 16-point eighth game to go up 5-3.

The 21-year-old MacPhie, who entered the tournament as a qualifier, had upset eighth-seeded Luiz Matter on Thursday to reach the quarter-

Moorer, Holyfield's worry



NEW YORK, Feb 5: If number one contender Michael Moorer treats Evander Holyfield the way he treats furniture the heavyweight champion may have good reason to worry about their April 22 title fight, reports Reuter.

Moorer was finishing his statement at a news conference on Thursday to promote the Las Vegas title bout and brought his fist down on the lectern to punctuate his final point. The microphone went flying and the podium was instantly turned to rubble — seven or eight pieces of shattered wood scattered at his feet.

Stunts like this are not uncommon in boxing promotion but the reaction of all concerned made it clear that this was an unheeded example of a heavyweight fighter who simply doesn't know his own strength.

The menacing look on the face of the undefeated challenger immediately turned sheepish and Holyfield became convulsed with laughter, as did everyone else on the dais.

It was then the champion's turn to speak with nothing to lean on or hide behind. Holyfield, holding the microphone himself, started by apologising to the hotel for the

destroyed furniture.

"I'm glad that I have an opportunity to display my talent and I'm glad that I'm not a podium. I might get broke up," he said, bringing another wave of laughter in the room.

The difference in styles of the two fighters was apparent in their attire.

Holyfield, 31, looked relaxed and distinguished in a designer tie and dark suit that was clearly custom made for his sculpted frame.

Moorer was ready for combat, dressed in full army camouflage with combat boots and a green beret. The 26-year-old challenger appeared a bit uneasy and had the menacing look of a hungry, young fighter.

For all his fierce looks, however, there was no pre-fight acrimony.

"Evander, I respect you as a man, I respect you as my brother and I respect you as a champion," said Moorer, who will try to become the first left-handed heavyweight champion in boxing history.

"The time has come to put the respect aside," he said.

"Evander, come April 22, my brother, it's all going to be business. When hammer and nails hit, it's going to be a force, brother, and I mean it," he said, crushing the podium.

Holyfield, who will put his World Boxing Association and

International Boxing Federation titles on the line, knows it is risky fighting a younger, undefeated heavy puncher like Moorer, and a left-hander at that.

But he craves the respect he feels he finally earned by beating Riddick Bowe in November to become only the third heavyweight ever to regain the crown from the man he lost it to.

"I'm more excited (about boxing) now because after beating Bowe I have respect. The media knows I do have boxing ability," Holyfield told reporters.

"I didn't want to retire after fighting a bunch of old guys I want to fight guys that have a chance to beat me," he continued.

Holyfield, who beat an out-of-shape "Buster" Douglas in 1990 to first win the world heavyweight crown, did little to enhance his reputation with points victories over ageing former champions George Foreman and Larry Holmes.

"The media felt the people I fought weren't worthy," he said. "People questioned my ability because George Foreman fought a good fight, they questioned my ability because Larry Holmes fought a good fight."

Graf, Martina renew rivalry



TOKYO, Feb 5: Steffi Graf and Martina Navratilova on Saturday scored easy victories and meet in the finals of the \$1.75 million Toray Pan Pacific Open Tennis tournament, reports AP.

In their first showdown, top-seeded Graf of Germany, the world's top-ranked female tennis player, needed just 55 minutes to beat Kristie Boogert of the Netherlands 6-2, 6-2 in the semifinals.

Second-seeded American Navratilova spent just one hour before downing sixth-seeded Manuela Maleeva-Fragniere of Switzerland — who is getting ready to retire — 6-2, 6-3 in other semifinal.

Navratilova, who is seeking her second consecutive victory in this tournament, meets Graf in the finals on the artificial court of Tokyo Metropolitan Gym on Sunday.

Graf broke the first and

third games of the first set. In the second set, she broke the third and seventh games with powerful ground strokes.

"We don't play each other so often so it's good chance of playing with her (Navratilova). We played big and close matches in the past," said Graf, who was eight wins, nine losses against Navratilova.

"I returned well and am satisfied with today's match. I am not tired at all because I played short matches. I'm mentally motivated," said Graf, who won the Australian Open a week ago.

"The surface is fit for both of us and Martina playing very well this tournament. See which will play better tomorrow," said Graf of the finals.

Navratilova, playing her last season in the singles, said, "I beat her (Graf) in this tournament last year. I am really playing well — playing better every day. I will play with serve-and-volley tomorrow."

In their 15th and final match between them,

Navratilova played her trademark serve-and-volley game to overwhelm Maleeva-Fragniere.

Navratilova quickly broke the first game of the first set and kept the second game at love to gain her rhythm against erratic Maleeva-Fragniere.

Maleeva-Fragniere said she would retire after playing her last match in Osaka, in western Japan, next week.

She said she decided to retire because I am getting tired mentally.

I had expected the better match but I was disappointed as I could not play so. It was her (Navratilova's) first match of the season but it was one of her best matches against me. I served well but she returned much better, said Maleeva-Fragniere.

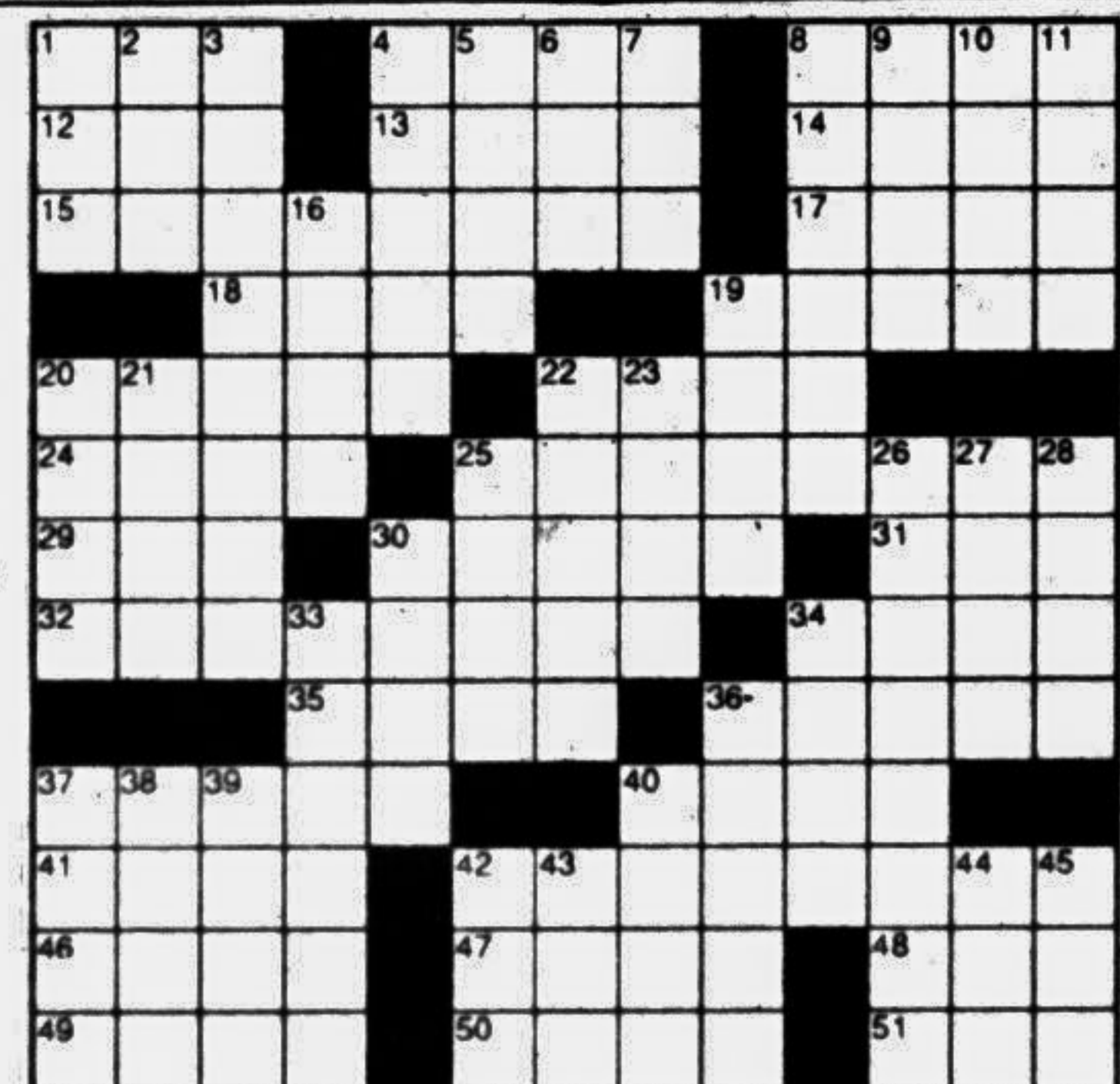
Maleeva-Fragniere received the bouquet of flowers after the match and she thanked the Japanese spectators — about 8,500 of them — for their support and encouragement when she played in Japan.



World number one Steffi Graf of Germany plays a backhand-sliced return to Kristie Boogert of the Netherlands in their semifinal match of the Toray Pan-Pacific Open yesterday. Graf defeated Boogert in straight sets 6-2, 6-2. — AFP photo

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

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CRYPTOQUIP
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R J W F G F O I P J Z E
P R N O Z H R F R C S W R
W U Z C G N Z ?
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: TWO-FACED SHOE
SALESMAN EVEN GAVE HIS WARM GIRLFRIEND
THE SLIPPER.
Today's Cryptoquip clue: H 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.