

Rothenberg on his own now

LOS ANGELES, July 19: The World Cup's rave reviews are ringing in Alan Rothenberg's ears, but the mastermind of USA '94 will find it harder to establish his major league soccer next year, reports AFP.

By most measures the cup has been a spectacular success. Though Rothenberg's hope for 100 per cent sell-out of all stadiums did not materialise, organisers could boast of a record total attendance of 3,567,415 through 50 matches, well above the 2,517,348 total in Italy in 1990.

US television ratings have also exceeded expectations, confounding critics who said football could never catch on as a spectator sport here.

ABC's network coverage averaged 4.45 million households for 10 games, including the hugely popular United States v Brazil second round match on the July 4 holiday.

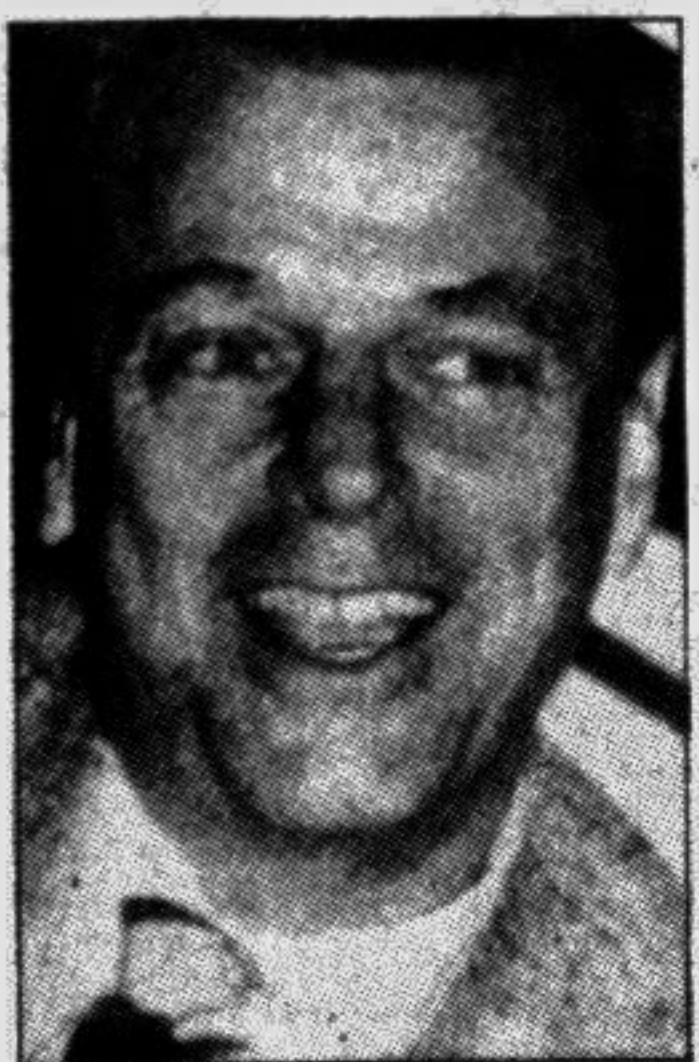
"We still face the fact some people hate soccer," said FIFA spokesman Guido Tognoni. "But now we can sell soccer in the United States."

But Tognoni knows that the new pro league will have to be sold on a much smaller scale than the cup, which drew fans as much for its air of spectacle as for its football.

"If 20 per cent of the fans who attended the World Cup come back for Major League soccer, it will be a success," Tognoni said. "But it is a difficult job for Alan to preserve the support and enthusiasm

he has gained. It is more difficult to start a league than it is to put on a World Cup.

"He had our support and we brought the teams. From now on, he will be a lonely man. He will be alone wolf."



ALAN ROTHENBERG

Some critics say Rothenberg's high-handed attitudes in organising the cup will isolate him once the event is over.

Organisers have been perceived as greedy in their response to problems with ticket distribution and hotel overbooking.

Sponsors, who bankrolled the event, have complained organisers failed to spend enough on promotion, instead letting the sponsors' advertising carry the load.

"They have burned bridges beyond recognition," said Nye Lavalle, head of the Dallas-based sports marketing group.

"A lot of people don't want to work with them any more. When you start alienating key constituencies, how much support can you get for your efforts in the future?"

As usual, Rothenberg is undaunted. With the new league still deciding where to locate five of its 12 teams, Rothenberg has announced a four-year deal with Nike to outfit six clubs for four years.

"We're going to be a speeding train over the next couple of months," he said of the league.

But questions remain about where the players will come from.

Six of the United States 22-man World Cup squad already play overseas and many more hope to sign with foreign clubs on the basis of their World Cup performances.

Top players are concerned about salaries and the level of play in the MLS, and are waiting to see how the first season goes before committing themselves.

"They have to come up with the money," says John Harkes, now with English league club Derby County.

The US Soccer Federation will also have to settle on a direction for the national team.

Serbian Bora Milutinovic, who was overseen the World Cup campaigns of three countries, says he would like to stay on as US coach, but nothing will be decided until after USSF elections later this summer.

"We can't stop here," says midfielder Mike Sorber. "We have to build."

Swedes get heroes' welcome

STOCKHOLM, July 19: More than 100,000 Swedes cast off traditional reserve today to cheer their national soccer side through the streets of Stockholm on their return from the World Cup, where the team reached the last four, reports Reuters.

Two Swedish airforce jets accompanied a Boeing 767 plane carrying from the United States, where Sweden were beaten 1-0 in the semifinals by eventual winners Brazil.

Sweden beat Bulgaria 4-0 in the play-off for third place, completing the country's most successful World Cup since 1958, when they were beaten in the final, also by Brazil.

The Swedish team, which had not been expected to get as far as the semifinals, drove in a cortege of vintage cars through Stockholm streets lined a dozen deep with cheering people.

Office workers leaned from their windows, cheering as the team drove by.

The team then drove to a central Stockholm Park, where around 50,000 fans reserved the loudest cheers for team coach Tommy Svensson, strikers Tomas Brolin and Martin Dahlin and charismatic goalkeeper Thomas Ravelli.

Prime Minister Carl Bildt, lagging in opinion polls, followed the team from Stockholm Airport to the city centre, possibly hoping some of the soccer team's popularity might rub off on his government.

"I've never seen anything like this in Stockholm," he said.

Lalas may join Coventry

LONDON, July 19: US World Cup defender Alex Lalas is considering a 500,000 pound (782,000 dollars) move to the English Premier league side Coventry, reports Reuters.

Manager Phil Neal and chairman Bryan Richardson met goat-bearded Lalas in Los Angeles at the weekend and Coventry hope to finalise a deal within a fortnight.

Lalas, whose wild appearance turned him into something of a celebrity, is wanted to partner three million pound (4.7 million dollars) rated Ireland centre-back Phil Babb, who is set to stay with Coventry despite the interest of Blackburn, Liverpool and Everton.

MCC honours Botham, Gower & Randall

LONDON, July 19: Ian Botham, David Gower and Derek Randall, three of English Test cricket's great entertainers, have been made honorary cricket members of the MCC, reports Reuters.

The three men, who won a combined total of 266 Test caps, all retired from the game last season.

Their membership of the world's most famous cricket club was confirmed on Tuesday by MCC (Marylebone Cricket Club) secretary Roger Knight.

Meanwhile, a head of South Africa's first Test at Lord's for 29 years, former Springbok stars Graeme Pollock and Barry Richards have been made honorary life members of the club.

The same tribute has gone to Jeff Dujon (West Indies), Norman Gifford, Derek Shackleton (England), Mudassar Nazar, Abdul Qadir, Wasim Raja (Pakistan), Ian Smith (New Zealand) and Harbans Singh (Singapore).

Big bonus for Lara

LONDON, July 19: World number one batsman Brian Lara pocketed a 500,000 pounds sponsorship deal here on Tuesday, and then admitted he was feeling the pace of constant playing and travelling, reports AFP.

The West Indian phenomenon confessed: "I'm exhausted. I have never played this amount of cricket before, and it is tiring at the moment. But if I can get the right amount of rest I will be all right."

He added: "It is difficult playing cricket six hours a day for six days a week."

"It makes it hard to work out your problems, because you are always out in the middle. But I'm happy with things. I came here knowing the system and I have got to get on with it."

Lara enjoyed a spell binding start to his English county career, equalling Don Bradman's record of eight centuries in 11 first-class innings including a world record 501.

But a lean spell has followed, on top criticism over his absences from the field and whispers of preferential treatment over his Egbaston teammates.

The Trinidadian's latest commercial deal with a city investment company, lasts until the end of the 1996 season.



HEROES' WELCOME: Players of the Swedish World Cup team are surrounded by thousands of frantic fans in central Stockholm after arriving from the United States on July 18. Sweden finished third in the tournament. — AFP photo

Days of penalty shootout may not be over yet

PASADENA, Calif July 19: The World Cup will have a sudden-death overtime format by the next edition but it could still end in a shootout, officials said Monday, reports AP.

A day after penalty kicks decided soccer's world championship for the first time, Joseph S. Blatter, general secretary of the governing body FIFA, said changes would be made to the overtime system by the 1998 World Cup in France.

He said Brazil's victory in a 3-2 shootout over Italy after the teams played 120 minutes to a 0-0 tie had left a hollow feeling among players, coaches and officials and that something must be done.

"We are not happy and the teams are not happy to go to penalty kicks, but we have to have a winner," Blatter said. "So far, we have no better solutions."

Blatter said FIFA would study various alternatives and have a new system in place by 1998.

He said the replacement probably would be modeled on

the "Golden Goal," FIFA's version of the sudden death overtime of football and hockey, which has been used on an experimental basis in various youth tournaments.

"It will certainly be in the regulations by 1998," Blatter said. "But maybe there will be added minutes of extra time."

FIFA implemented shootouts when it went to knockout rules in the later rounds of the cup in 1986. While the shootout has decided several quarter-final and semifinal matches since then, it never before had decided the champions.

Blatter said the shootout would probably remain on the books but FIFA would try to make it a more remote option.

"We want to find the best solution," he said. "But for the time being, I can offer you nothing better. For drama, for TV viewers and the fans, it was tremendous. But it was not what we hoped for at the end."

Blatter also said FIFA would not go back to the old system never used — of deciding the championship on a replay or adopt an endless overtime where sudden death would de-

cide. There had to be a time limit and some way to determine a winner on goals, he said.

"We can't play indefinitely. We might have a death on the field," he said. "We can't take that responsibility."

"Yesterday it would not have been possible to add more time because in these conditions playing for more than two hours would affect the health of the players," he said.

If no goal fell in extra time, teams should accept the penalty shoot-out," Blatter added.

"We were not happy yesterday ... but we had to have a winner and you can't repeat the match."

Choosing the winners on the strength of corners won or fewer bookings would also be unsatisfactory, he said.

FIFA has already introduced "sudden-death" in Youth competition. It is used in Japan and the European football Union (UEFA) will operate it at the 1996 European Championship in England.

FIFA would also study further future options consulting players, coaches and the media, Blatter said.

Return of vanquished

SOFIA, July 19: Tens of thousands of ecstatic Bulgarians welcomed their footballing heroes home on Tuesday while the nation's leaders heaped honours on the team which unexpectedly took fourth place in the World Cup, reports Reuters.

President Zhelyu Zhelev met the team at Sofia Airport with a red carpet and full military honours normally reserved for visiting heads of state.

"Never has Bulgaria scored such an achievement and such international acknowledgement," Zhelev told the players.

Before this year, Bulgaria had never won a match in the World Cup finals, the four consecutive victories, which took them to the semifinals, have sparked a wave of celebrations not seen here since the fall of communism.

The players, wearing matching beige shorts and sunglasses, hugged joyful relatives after goalkeeper Borislav Mihailov raised the country's flag to the strains of the national anthem.

Midfielder Krasimir Balakov, elected along with striker Hristo Stoichkov to FIFA's ideal world team, told reporters he was overwhelmed by the welcome.

"I'm speechless... I did not expect our victories to bring such joy. I am happy that we can offer so much joy to the Bulgarians who are going through a hard time now," he said.

A line of Soviet-made black limousines once reserved for former communist leaders drove the team through streets lined with cheering fans, who threw flowers and waved flags.

One enthusiastic fan, 58-year-old Vasil Chorlev summed up the joy and longing of the crowd. "The most important thing is that those who did not know where Bulgaria was have checked out their maps," he said between cheers.

Meola moves to NY Jets

HEMPSTEAD, NY, July 19: Tony Meola, the only player on the US soccer team who could touch the ball with his hands, is now a kicker for American football's New York Jets, reports AP.

The Jets announced Monday that they signed Meola, goalkeeper for the American World Cup team, to a contract at an undisclosed amount.

"We gave Tony quite an extensive workout late last week and were really impressed by his leg strength and accuracy," Jets general manager Dick Steinberg said. "We feel that with experience and some technique work, he has the potential to be a solid NFL (National Football League) placekicker."

The 25-year-old was one of the most high profile members of the US team that made history by reaching the second round of the World Cup.

A national team member since 1992, he is among the team leaders in all-time appearances in international matches and held the eventual champions from Brazil scoreless for the first 80 minutes of their 1-0 loss in the second round of the World Cup.

In June, Meola said this would be his final World Cup. At the time, he said he still might be willing to play in the pro league that's supposed to start in the United States in April.

War won without a prisoner

LOS ANGELES, July 19: If not for anything else, the 1994 World Cup will be chronicled as the tournament where FIFA took no prisoners in its fight against foul play, reports AFP.

Yellow cards were up by almost a third on Italia '90 and although dismissals from red cards were much the same as four years ago, transgressors felt the full weight of judicial retribution.

Italian defender Mauro Tassotti created World Cup history when he became the first player suspended after trial by video.

In a decision that even Tassotti's bloodied Spanish victim, Luis Enrique, called excessive, the 34-year-old AC Milan rightback was banished for eight matches, effectively ending his international playing days.

"We decided we had to make an example of him," said disciplinary committee chairman Marcel Mathier, whose panel reviewed the videotape 10 times before reaching its decision.

Defender Leonardo missed out on Brazil's first World Cup final in 24 years when he was booted out for four matches for elbowing US midfielder Tab Ramos in a second round game.

Ramos was concussed and detained overnight in hospital

with a hairline fracture of the skull sidelining him for between three to six months.

Romanian forward Ion Vlადu's World Cup ended in ignominy when he was sent home after incurring a three-match ban for a wild thigh-high challenge on Swiss striker Stephane Chapuisat. He had only been on the field for three minutes as a second half substitute.

Conversely, there were dismissals that looked harsh. Sometime nervy match officials obeyed FIFA's foul play edict to the letter. The red-carding of Sweden captain Jonas Thern is a case in point with his innocuous-looking challenge on Brazilian Dunga in the semi-finals.

FIFA trumpeted that never before had referees been more intensively drilled in preparation for a World Cup.

In a release at the start of the tournament, the sport's governing body said: "The 1994 World Cup symbolises a new generation of younger, more dynamic match officials — not just outwardly recognisable by their colourful, stylish uniforms, but by their readiness to implement the laws more positively."

That means, quite simply, encouraging attacking play and shielding creative genius on the field more effectively from technically inferior opponent, who delve in dirty tricks to stop it."

Batten makes Gunnell bow

NICE, France, July 19: Running the fastest time this season, American Kim Batten handed world and Olympic champion Sally Gunnell her first defeat in nearly a year in the 400 metre hurdles on Monday, reports Reuters.

Second to Briton Gunnell in their last three meetings, Batten surged past her rival at the final hurdle, winning in a personal best time of 53.72 at the Nice Grand Prix.

Gunnell was a close second in 53.91. It was the first time Gunnell had tasted defeat since American Sandra Patrick-Farmer beat her in the Grand Prix final last September.

"I just knew at the eight hurdle I had a lot left so I just lifted my knees and ran," said Batten. "This was one of my main goals to beat Sally. It really boosts my confidence."

"I knew I could beat her, it was just a question of what race it would be."

"I really didn't feel like running today but I got into the starting blocks and something told me I'm going to have to do this anyway."

"I hope this means that people will start to notice me."

What the large crowd did notice was the absence of the person they had come to see. Olympic 400 metres champion Jose-Marie Percec of France.

Still hampered by a broken toe sustained in a household accident three weeks ago, Percec was a late scratch, catching everyone, even officials off guard.

With television cameras and photographers hovering around Percec's empty starting blocks, officials delayed the start of the race briefly before finally proceeding without their star attraction.

Without Percec in the line-up, Americans swept the top three places, Natasha Kaiser-Brown leading the way with a winning time of 50.92.

"I'm very disappointed I couldn't run today," said Percec. "But I will compete at the European Championships."

The men's 100 metres was also missing its star attraction, Olympic champion Linford

Christie having withdrawn earlier because of a pulled hamstring.

In the men's high jump, Cuba's Javier Sotomayor continued to flirt with breaking his own world record, easily winning the competition with a height of 2.40 metres. Troy Kemp of the Bahamas was second at 2.34.



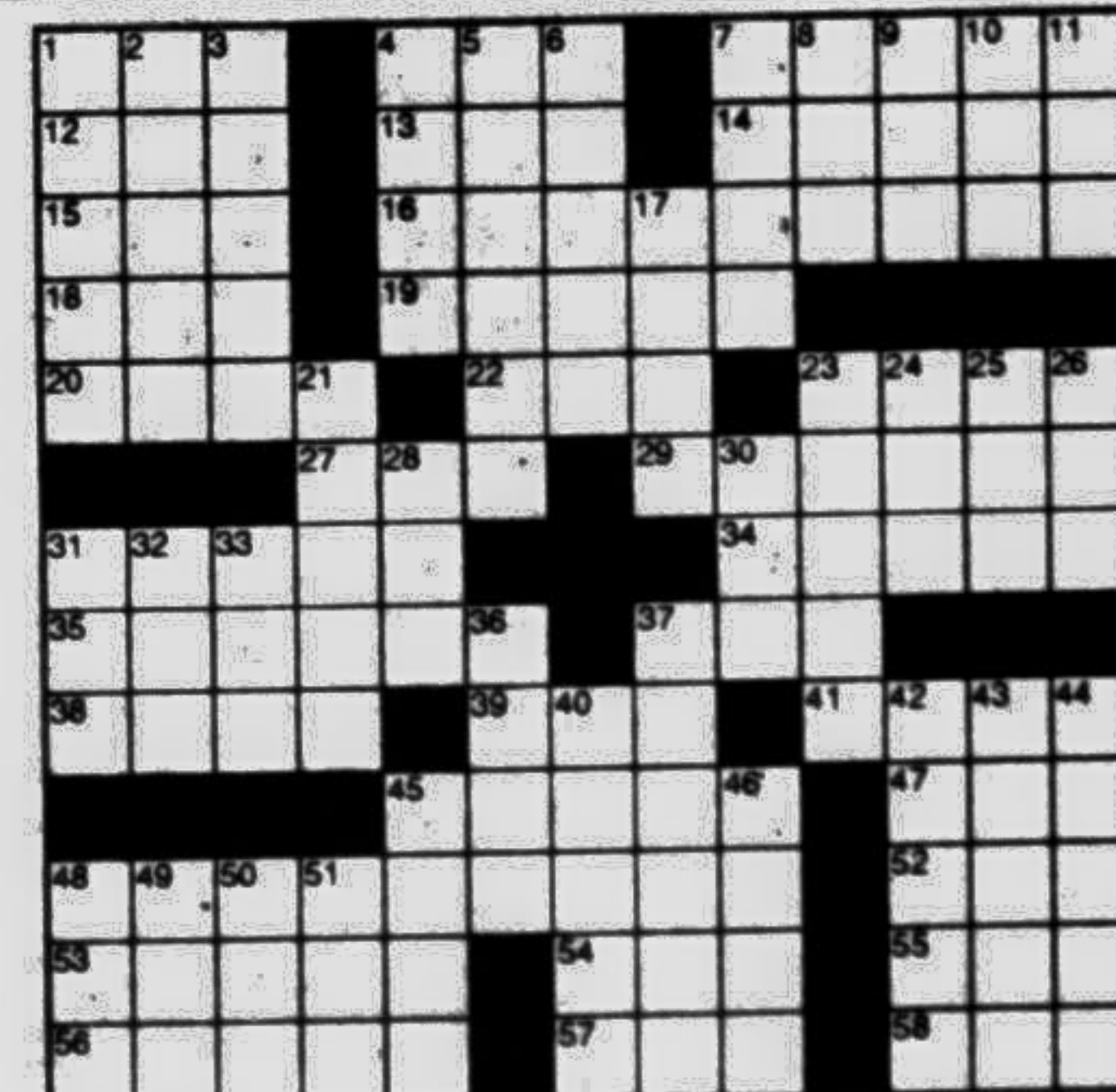
American Kim Batten exults after winning the women's 400m hurdles clocking the year's best time of 53.72 seconds at the Nice Grand Prix on July 18. Olympic and world champion Sally Gunnell of Britain came second. — AFP photo



SENNA... WE ACCELERATED TOGETHER, THE FOURTH TITLE IS OURS... Read the banner, Brazil, the first team to have won the World Cup for the fourth time, dedicated the cup in the memory of the late Formula One driver Ayrton Senna, who was killed in a car crash earlier this year. — AFP photo

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS	Boys'	58 First State:	selection
1 Gal of song	"Barbara"	abbr.	21 Repeat-
4 1940s headline stealer	41 Commiserate with	DOWN	edly
7 Nebraska city	45 Change channels?	1 Paid attention	23 The pause that refreshes?
12 Mr. Baba	47 Teeter-totter	2 Excuse	24 Ashen
13 Prior night	48 "American Gothic"	3 The sky, sometimes	25 Centenarian's statistic
14 Refugees	prop	4 Sobbed	26 Deviate
15 Comical Conway	52 Stashed	5 It's for the birds	28 Fool
16 Black as night	53 Farewell	6 Fix a stubborn shoelace	30 Clumsy craft
18 Where, to Caesar	54 Ar	7 Ahs	31 Bother
19 Coin-toss call	55 Actress Sue	8 William Gaines' magazine	32 Flee from the fuzz
20 Pocket bread	56 French Impressionist	9 Simile center	33 One — million
22 Actor Stephen	57 Emulate	10 That girl	36 Fair share, perhaps
23 Move in the breeze	Betsy Ross	11 Invite	40 Crannies
27 Festive	Solution time: 25 mins.	17 Seafood	42 "— to Be You"
29 Sweet Spanish wine	G I S B U M P A F R O		43 Cord
31 Rap-sheet datum	A C H A R I A C L A W		44 Mountain air?
34 Get more issues	S H E R I L L R O V E		45 Seal
35 Breakfast pastry	R U B L I M O G E S		46 Distort the stats
37 Guitar's little cousin	C H A N E Y N A B		48 Tills of C&W
38 Muscat's land	L O T R A M W A S P S		49 Altar affirmative
39 Beach	A L O E W O O T H E E		50 10th anniversary gift
	P E N N Y B U S E S E		51 Average grade
	D E M T E R R O R		
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	T I M S T A L E C U E		
	H O P E S P I T K I N		



CRYPTOQUIP

T N N U I W Z Q Q O ' C C I V Q B X
D I X X H B W , T V P N P F
F Q C N I X T C H W B : " P B X I Z
B I D O T B T W I O I B N .
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: REMARKS BURLAR,
ROBBING THE BURSAR'S OFFICE: "I'M WORKING
MY WAY THROUGH COLLEGE."
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.