

Eng-SA first Test begins today

History beckons S Africans

LONDON, July 20: South Africa's cricket odyssey out of exile and back into the international fold reaches its emotional climax at Lord's on Thursday, reports Reuter.

The players and officials from the Republic have experienced some compelling moments since being readmitted to the world game three years ago but none will compare to their first appearance for 29 years at cricket's spiritual home.

"It will be an unforgettable occasion for our players," said South African coach Mike Procter.

"This is the tour of tours and Lord's is the ultimate place to play Test cricket." When captain Kepler Wessels and his side walk out for the first Test of the three-match series it will truly signify to South Africans that they are back among the sport's elite after two decades of apartheid-enforced absence.

Few among the touring party will feel the immense sense of occasion more than Ali Bacher, the single-minded man of vision who played the most influential role in South Africa's return from the wilderness.

Now managing director of the United Cricket Board of South Africa, Bacher was at

Lord's on the emotive day in July, 1991, when the International Cricket Council sanctioned his country's return to the international arena.

Subsequently, memorable landmarks came thick and fast for South African cricket as it offered a much-needed fresh element to the world scene.

A one-day series in India marked their official playing return, followed by the 1992 World Cup debut, their first-



KEPLER WESSELS

ever Test against West Indies, and their first Test series on home soil — against India — since readmission to ICC.

Yet Bacher and his party are sure to cherish above all the moment at Lord's on Thursday when the South African team step out on the ground that

conjoins an extraordinary depth of feeling among cricketers.

"It is possible our players will freeze, but I like to think the atmosphere will inspire them," said Procter.

"I think England will be caught up in the atmosphere as well. A lot will depend on which team keeps its cool the best."

One South African, at least, has experience of appearing in a Lord's Test.

Wessels, who had a 24-Test career with Australia, played for his adopted country in the 1985 Ashes Test against England at the game's traditional headquarters.

South Africa's skipper leads a combative set of players who should provide an authentic test for an England side battling to restore their status among the international heavyweights.

"There's just the right sort of tension in our camp," said Wessels.

"Nerves could be a factor, particularly in the first hour, but we've been involved in a few special occasions during the past couple of years so we should be getting used to them."

"It's the ultimate experience to play a Test at Lord's, but we have to look past the emotion of the occasion. We can savour that after the match is over."

Richards' wish fulfilled

LONDON, July 20: Former West Indies captain Viv Richards, who vowed never to play in South Africa until a black president was elected, is set to sign a six-month contract for Western Province, reports Reuter.

In a statement issued through his British agent Antiguan Richards, 42, said he was "delighted to play out his career in South Africa."

Cricketing sources said Richards would sign the contract, estimated at 100,000 dollars, on Friday.

Richards, who averaged 50.23 in his 121 Test matches with 24 centuries, consistently refused to join rebel tours of the Republic during the 1980s.

Despite the subsequent dismantling of apartheid, he declined to join a pre-season tour with English county Glamorgan last year, saying he would not even consider a trip until South Africa elected a black president.

With the election this year of Nelson Mandela, Richards' criteria have been met and Ali Bacher, the director of the United Cricket Board of South Africa, said his decision was the final vindication of the changes in South African cricket.

"It means total acceptance," Bacher said. "His presence in our country will be enormously beneficial to the development of the game and we cannot do anything but benefit from his knowledge and experience."

D'Oliveira won't be there

LONDON, July 20: Basil D'Oliveira, the Cape coloured who played 44 Tests for England, looks likely to snub South Africa's historic return to Lord's this week.

The former Worcestershire and England all-rounder has been invited to attend South Africa's first Test at Lord's for 29 years, starting on Thursday.

But D'Oliveira, who in 1968 became the central figure in a mounting campaign against South Africa's regime of apartheid, seems likely to stay at home in Worcester.

"We've had no replay to the invitation we sent out more than a month ago," said Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) secretary Roger Knight.

Following the dismantling of apartheid, 62-year-old D'Oliveira said in a rare, recent interview on the subject of South Africa: "People say I should forgive and forget."

"Well, that's fine. I can forgive, but don't ask me to forget because I can't."

"I've had no contact with South Africa. They haven't asked me or invited me to the Test so I have no great desire to watch them. They are just another touring side as far as I'm concerned."

D'Oliveira, who moved to this country in the mid-60s and played Test cricket from 1966-1972, aroused a storm of protest when he was overlooked for England's 1968-69 tour of South Africa.

The selectors denied leaving him out to avoid a political confrontation.

However, when pace bowler Tom Cartwright withdrew from the squad because of injury and D'Oliveira replaced him, South African Prime Minister John Vorster said the all-rounder was not acceptable.

England cancelled their tour, and also the South Africans' return visit in 1970, and the Republic subsequently found itself in total sporting isolation.

More bad news for Christie

LONDON, July 20: World and Olympic 100 metres champion Linford Christie had his hopes for defending his European crown in Helsinki next month dampened when it was confirmed Tuesday he has a hamstring injury, reports AP.

Christie pulled up clutching his left hamstring when he was beaten by Jon Drummond at the Grand Prix meet in London last Friday and flew to his specialist in Germany on Tuesday.

He has already withdrawn from Wednesday's Britain versus United States meet, Friday's Grand Prix event in Oslo and the Goodwill Games which start in St Petersburg on Sunday.

Christie said he does not plan to run again until the heats of the European titles on August 7.

The British track team captain is scheduled to return to Munich next week for further treatment from Dr Muller Wolfhardt, who was with the German soccer team in the World Cup finals.

When he returned home from Germany Tuesday, Christie would not elaborate on the extent of the injury, but said he was still hopeful of competing at Helsinki.

If he's fit, he may run at an IAAF permit event in Sestrier, Italy, on July 31 or the Monte Carlo Grand Prix two nights later, to ensure he has some competition before his championship defence.



Sheffield Wednesday forward Gordon Watson (R) shrugs off a challenge from Kawasaki Verdy's Capitao during a pre-season match at the Tokyo Dome on July 19. Verdy won 2-1. —AFP photo

Cascarino joins Marseille

MARSEILLE, France, July 20: Irish striker Tony Cascarino signed a one-year contract with French ex-European champions Marseille on Tuesday, reports Reuter.

Cascarino could stay an extra year with Marseille if the club, relegated to Division Two because of a bribery scandal, regains a place in the French First Division next season.

Cascarino, 31, ended his contract with English Premier league side Chelsea before he flew with Ireland to the World Cup.

Capped 48 times for Ireland, Cascarino was previously with Glasgow Celtic and England's Aston Villa and Millwall.

Marseille's vice-president Leveau said that talks with the German striker Rudi Voeller had got bogged down.

"He received offers from Genoa, Benfica, Lisbon and Bordeaux. Marseille can't compete financially against these prestigious teams," he said.

Boxer arrested

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. July 20: Johnny Tapia, who last week won the super flyweight title of the North American Boxing Federation, was arrested Tuesday on charges he and two other men allegedly tried to sell what they claimed was crack cocaine to an off-duty police officer, reports AP.

But a police report filed by the arresting officer identified the substance as soap.

The incident was another in a string of drug and crime-related setbacks for Tapia.

The 27-year-old boxer was being held at the Bernalillo County Detention Centre along with David Brooks, 25, and Gary Smith, 25, both of Albuquerque.

They were charged with possession of a controlled substance and conspiracy to distribute, both fourth-degree felonies. All three were jailed on \$5,000 bond. An arraignment was not scheduled.

In filing a criminal complaint, officer Mike Scheel wrote: "Smith was found with a razor blade which can be used to cut the soap, which was cut in a manner of crack cocaine." Scheel described the substance as "imitation cocaine."

England squeeze home

KUALA LUMPUR, July 20: Defending champions England fought tooth and nail to overcome Nigeria 59-49 in their opening match of the six-nation commonwealth basketball '94 championship Tuesday, reports AP.

The mighty Nigerians found the basketball four times before the English could put a resistance.

England then worked their way back into the game and were ahead 26-22 at half-time.

But the Africans returned after the breather with some captivating play and threatened to eliminate the title holders before being stopped at 59-49.

Canada thrashed Singapore 107-42 while Malaysia fought another heated battle with Hong Kong for a narrow 88-72 win in two other opening day matches Tuesday.

England play Hong Kong, Malaysia meet Singapore and Nigeria face Canada today.

In the six-day tournament, the team with the highest number of wins and points will emerge overall champion.

Soccer is their new cult

NEW YORK, July 20 (AP): Where communism failed, soccer has prevailed.

After enduring decades of god-less totalitarianism, eastern Europeans have found an icon in professional soccer. With the changes have come stars, national prestige, proud politicians and money.

Europe's formerly Marxist countries had banned and ridiculed sports as a capitalist evil. But now that communism was defeated on its home ground, soccer players have found new and lucrative opportunities by signing up with Western clubs.

For eastern Europe's fledgling democracies struggling with high unemployment and inflation, soccer offers material rewards such as pricey cars. For instance, a businessman has given each Romanian player a Mercedes Benz, a lavish gift in a country where even domestic cars cost up to 10 years' savings for average Romanians. With such lucrative benefits, soccer has helped

worse inequality between the new classes, creating envy. The World Cup was Bulgaria's moment of ecstasy. Never having won a World Cup game in 16 attempts since 1962, the Bulgarians found themselves in the 1994 semifinals against Italy after victories over two-time champions Argentina and three-times champions Germany.

Bulgaria were defeated by Italy 2-1 in the semifinals, but the Bulgarians blamed the French referee for not awarding them a penalty shot for an

Italian hand ball in the box.

After losing their biggest motivation (and bonuses), the Bulgarians fell 4-0 to Sweden in the consolation game and finished fourth, still an honorable result.

But Bulgaria are not alone in celebrating this World Cup. Had it not been for the heroics of Swedish goalkeeper Thomas Ravelli who saved two penalty shots, Romania, too, would have played in the semifinals.

Some even talked about a Romania-Bulgaria final at the Rose Bowl — the Balkan Bombshell, as Romanian sports reporters called it.

Why were the underdogs from eastern Europe suddenly in the limelight?

Bulgarian President Zhelyu Zhelev, who watched his team's match against Italy at Giants Stadium, offered an explanation.

"When the Bulgarian people see the team have such great successes in such a popular sport, they feel we have actually one of the powerful countries in the world," he told reporters.

Thirteen players on the Bulgarian roster have signed with clubs in England, France, Portugal, Spain, and Germany. Of Barcelona's Hristo Stoichkov, who led the Spaniards to four consecutive league titles, and Hamburg's Yordan Letchkov are the new sports icons in eastern Europe.

Being a star is lucrative. Romanian midfielder Gheorghe Hagi, who plays for Italy's Brescia, reportedly makes \$100,000 a year — a fortune for Romania, where the average monthly salary is the equi-

valent of \$175. Another rising Romanian star, AC Milan's Florin Raducioiu, is looking for another club — and a fatter contract.

Such players and others are making their nations proud. Eastern Europe has become a favourite territory for scouts in search for sprouting soccer talent.

The question is what will happen next? Will these countries fade into obscurity?

Sports experts say European soccer is undergoing a change. The end of communism and the breakup of the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia have deeply altered the international sporting landscape.

Until the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, Europe consisted of 34 countries. Now there are 50. A host of new or resurrected nations are on the scene, many from what used to be called "behind the Iron Curtain." In these economically struggling countries, soccer provides financial escapism for a few.

If Yugoslavia had not degenerated into a civil war, it would have provided a much better team in the tournament than Greece, which benefitted in World Cup qualifying from Yugoslavia's absence.

Russia could have brought a better team to the World Cup had players not become embroiled in an internal squabble with its head coach resulting in the loss of the team's best forwards.

The next show to watch is the 1996 European Championship in England, for which qualifying begins in the fall.

Spain, United States roll on

FRANKFURT, July 20: Spain and the United States, the top two seeds, and No. 13 Canada were the only teams to sweep their first-round Federation Cup matches Tuesday, reports AP.

Defending champion Spain, represented by Wimbledon champion Conchita Martinez and Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario, beat Chile 3-0, while Mary Joe Fernandez and Lindsay Davenport led the United States to a 3-0 victory over the Czech Republic.

Rene Simpson-Alter and Patricia Hy took Canada to the 3-0 victory over Switzerland. There are two singles

matches and one doubles match to account for the three available points in the annual 32-country competition.

In their first-round matches Tuesday, No. 15 Indonesia defeated Taiwan 2-1; No. 8 Austria beat Poland 2-1; and No. 10 Australia edged Latvia 2-1.

In matches that resumed Tuesday after being halted by rain Monday, Sweden defeated No. 9 Belgium 2-1 and No. 7 Netherlands ousted Belarus 2-1.

In Wednesday's second-round matches it will be Germany against Slovakia, France against Italy, Japan playing Sweden and the Netherlands facing South Africa.

On Thursday, Spain meets Argentina, while the United States faces Canada.

Germany is minus world No. 1 Steffi Graf, who said she needed a rest after losing in the first round at Wimbledon as defending champion. Argentina is also without their top player, as Gabriela Sabatini pulled out last week with reported shoulder problems.

Martinez, the third-ranked player in the world, defeated Alejandra Guevara 6-1, 6-0 and Sanchez-Vicario, ranked one place higher, beat Paula Cabezas 6-1, 6-0 to lead Spain. They won the doubles match 6-0, 6-1 over Cabezas and Barbara Casto.

In the US sweep, Fernandez defeated Petra Langrova 6-2, 6-4 and Davenport had to rally for a 4-6, 6-1, 6-4 victory over Ludmila Richterova before Gigi Fernandez and Zina Garrison-Jackson beat Langrova and Eva Martincova 6-4, 7-5.

Fernandez had little trouble controlling the first set, but in the second set Langrova broke her serve three times. Fernandez then broke back four times to take the set.

"It was a tough set," Fernandez said. "She played very well, then she picked up her

game a little bit. Everytime I got up she played harder and went for more. Fortunately, I was returning well as well and it just came down to holding her at the end."

In Canada's sweep, Simpson-Alter easily beat Geraldine Dondit 6-0, 6-2 and Hy defeated Emanuela Zardo 6-3, 6-4.

Simpson-Alter and Jill Hetherington took the doubles match, 6-2, 7-5 over Manuela Schwermann and Miroslava Vavrinec.

Bulgaria struggled to defeat Croatia as Katerina Maleeva beat Nadin Eregovic 6-0, 6-3 in the first singles match, but Magdalena Maleeva lost to Iva Majoli 6-3, 4-6, 4-6. The sisters then teamed up to take the doubles 6-2, 6-3 over Majoli and Maja Muric.

Agassi struggles

WASHINGTON, July 20: Fifth-seeded Andre Agassi struggled with his groundstrokes but defeated Maurice Ruah of Venezuela 6-2, 7-6 in 62 minutes in the second round of the \$25,000 dollars DC tennis classic on Tuesday, reports Reuter.

Ninth-seeded Malival Washington outlasted Roberto Jabali of Brazil 6-7 (5-7) 6-2, 6-3 in just inside two hours in a first-round match at the 56-player hardcourt tournament, where the top eight seeds received first-round byes.

Unseeded Jonas Bjorkman of Sweden eliminated 10th-seeded American Brad Gilbert, who coaches Agassi, 6-1, 7-5 in another first-round match.

Top-seeded Pete Sampras withdrew from the tournament on Monday due to tendinitis in his left ankle, an injury he sustained while winning Wimbledon and further aggravated last weekend during a US Davis Cup tie.

Agassi repeatedly misfired when he tried to attack the net throughout the second set, as Ruah played defensively and brought the score to 5-6.

Tracy Austin calls it a day

MAHWAH, N.J. July 20: Saying she didn't love the game as much as she once did, Tracy Austin

bid a tearful goodbye to professional tennis with an unexpected retirement announcement, reports AP.

Tuesday's night's announcement at the Pathmark Classic marked the second time Austin has announced she is quitting tennis.

One of the game's best young players in the late 70s and early '80s, Austin quit in 1983 before making two comebacks. One ended because of injuries she suffered in a car accident; the latest began 1½ years ago.

"This is my last match. I came back because I was enjoying it," Austin said. "And about three months ago, I stopped enjoying it."

Austin then cradled her head in her hands, asking for a towel to wipe away tears. "I can't believe I'm upset," she said. "It's the end of a long, good career."

Austin, 31, made the announcement after retiring from her opening round match against Manuela Maleeva-Fragniere because of a reinjured groin muscle. Maleeva-Fragniere was leading 6-4, 2-0. When she was 16, Austin

became the youngest player to win the US Open in her defeat of Chris Evert in 1979. The record that still stands. In 1980, she was ranked first in the world.

Austin stressed that the retirement has nothing to do with her injury, originally suffered 10 days ago while playing Pam Shriver in Newport, RI.

"Those of us who are over 30 are trying to figure out how to manoeuvre this last stage and move to," said Shriver, admitting that the three Wimbledon semifinalists over 30 (Lori McNeil, 30; Martina Navratilova, 37; and Gigi Fernandez, 30) have provided inspiration.

Lisa Raymond, the 1992 and 1993 NCAA champion, defeated Sandy Collins, 6-2, 6-0. In the round of 16, Raymond will meet Pat Fendick, who defeated Angela Lettner 7-5, 6-2.

In other first-round matches, eighth-seeded Marketa Kochta bounced back from a slow start to defeat Jessica Emmons 4-6, 6-3, 6-1. Kochta meets Stephanie Rotter in the second round.

Japan's Ai Sugiyama also bounced back from a first-set loss to defeat Kerri Phebus 4-6, 6-3, 6-0. The 19-year-old next faces third-seeded Amanda Coetzer.

Austin plans on continuing her commenting career with



TRACY AUSTIN

This time, Austin said, she is leaving the game on her own terms.

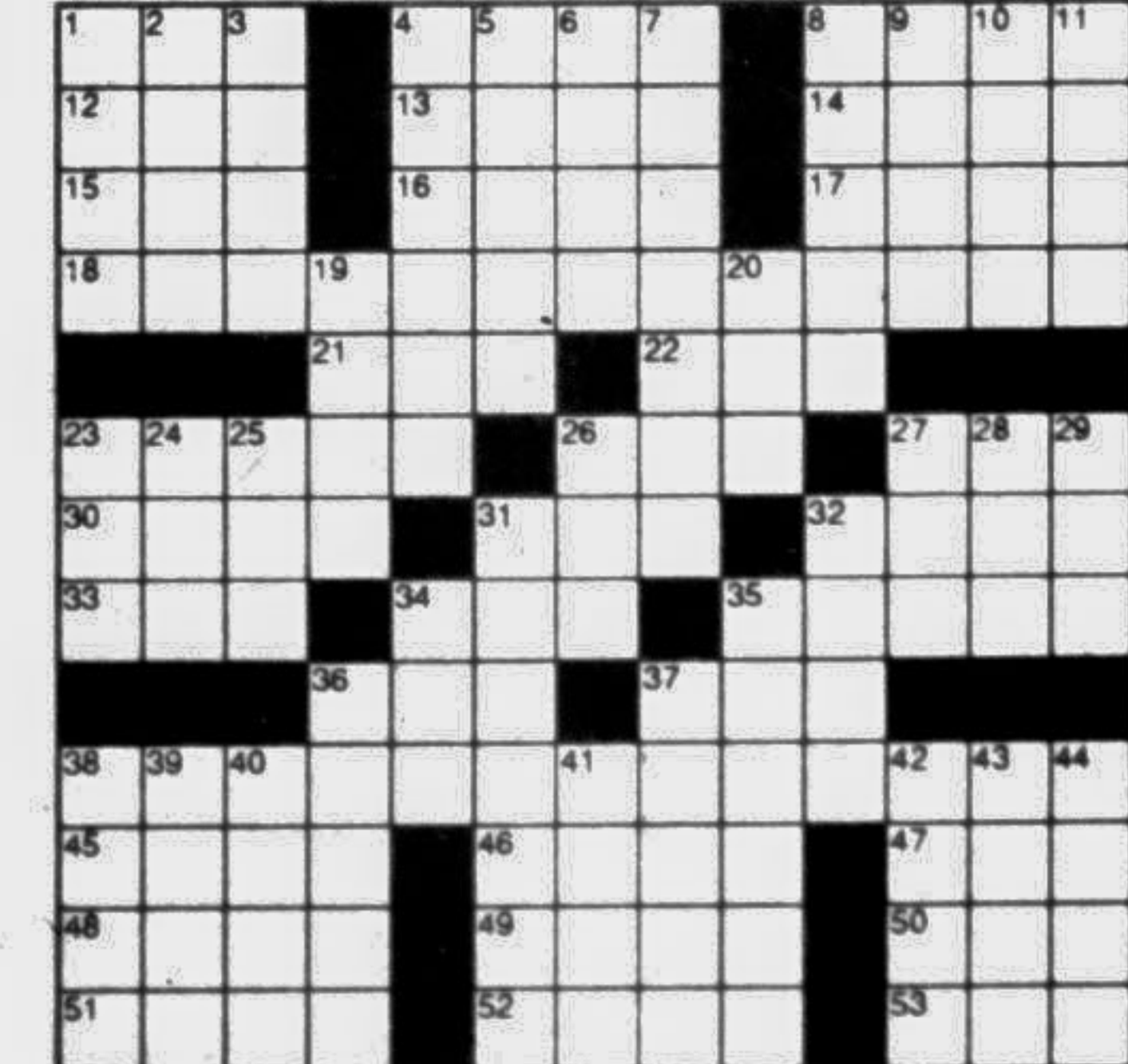
"Now it feels like closure on a career. It feels good to walk away from it rather than have it taken away from me."

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS										DOWN									
1 Family member	34 Career, for short	1 Persian cat?	20 Shooter ammo																
4 Poker hand	35 Over half of us	2 "Field of Dreams" locale	23 Moment in the pool																
8 Throat clearer	36 "Alley —"	3 Fume	24 Sapporo sash																
12 Stolen	37 Uncultured	4 Cauldron concoction	25 "Pal Joey" song																
13 Lecherous look	38 Roarke's resort	5 Encore	26 He created																
14 Vega's constellation	45 Came down to earth	6 Chase of Hollywood	33 Across																
15 Reverential reaction	46 Pompom	7 Astro-naut's downfall?	27 Japanese flower, for short																
16 Total receipts	47 Stereo-typical GI	8 So all can hear	28 The time of your life?																
17 Drop	48 Christie title end	9 Choir's rendition	29 Thither																
18 Fruity quaff	49 La femme	10 News-caster	31 Racetrack tout																
21 Anti	50 Brewery product	11 The numbers racket?	32 Bay																
22 Kennedy or Koppel	51 Prog-nosticator	12 The numbers racket?	34 Fluffy wrap																
23 They're a dirty group	52 Oboist's essential	13 Dog-	35 Spent foolishly																
26 Lingerie purchase	53 Sartorial woe	14 Dog-	36 Playful aquatic animal																
27 New Jersey cape		15 Dog-	37 Ransack																
30 Wading bird		16 Dog-	38 Bleach-rites																
31 Stocking stuffer		17 Dog-	39 African lily shrub																
32 "Les Mis-erables" author		18 Dog-	40 Mets or Cards																
33 "Great Expecta-		19 Dog-	41 Year-end festival																

Solution time: 23 mins.

Yesterdays answer 11-20



CRYPTOQUIP

DLTW IHDC ILSV UYEEYZ
U Q A T S T D U Y Z , T S
B R L U W Y S Q A T S L U T Q S D

B Q H E W C Q H E T V Y T U ?
Yesterday's Cryptogram: AT THE GROOM'S SECOND WEDDING, A CUTUP POSTED A SIGN: "UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT."

Today's Cryptogram clue: E equals I.
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.