

# Champions push further up

ZURICH, Switzerland, July 22: World Cup champions Brazil moved up two places to take over as the top team in FIFA's monthly world rankings released Thursday, while Bulgaria, Sweden, Belgium and Saudi Arabia made some of the biggest jumps of the World Cup participants, reports AP.

July's rankings for the top three teams mirror the final World Cup classification since World Cup matches are given the most weight in the mathematical formula.

Brazil, which have 65.21 points, have the largest lead of any top-ranked teams since the rankings were first computed in August 1993.

Italy, which lost Sunday's World Cup final 3-2 on penalty kicks to Brazil, was second with 62.89 points, followed by Sweden (61.28), Germany (60.97), Spain (59.74), Romania (58.20), Norway (57.52), Argentina (57.46) and Nigeria (56.28).

Sweden's third place were up seven spots from June, while surprising World Cup semifinalist Bulgaria rose to 14th, 15 places above their June ranking.

Saudi Arabia, which upset Belgium in the World Cup and reached the second round in their debut in the World Cup, moved up to 29th from 34th.

Bolivia moved up two spots to 41st while fellow World Cup participants Switzerland (11th), Ireland (13th), Mexico (15th), the United States (22nd) and South Korea (36th), all moved up one notch.

Romania (seventh), Colombia (17th) and Russia (19th) remained in their positions while Germany fell four places from their top spot last month.

Other World Cup participants also dropped.

The Netherlands slipped three places; Spain fell one.

# Taffarel's hero of heroes

LOS ANGELES, July 22: Claudio Taffarel, hailed as a hero in Brazil's World Cup victory, says a real hero is the cab driver who returned his victory medal and \$60,000 in cash, reports AP.

A day after the goalkeeper survived a penalty-kick shootout against Italy, he left his passport and treasure in Juan Blanco's taxi.

"My feeling was, I got to give this back to this guy," Blanco, 32, said in a telephone interview Thursday night from his home in suburban Santa Ana, 30 miles (45 kms) southeast of Los Angeles.

"When I talked to him," the Mexican-born cabbie said, "I said I thought twice about going back to Mexico. We were joking. But inside me it wasn't to do that."

Blanco, who said he is a big soccer fan, watched Sunday's final on television because he couldn't afford tickets. He had been rooting for Brazil since Mexico was eliminated.

The next morning, Taffarel stepped into Blanco's cab with his wife and daughter, riding from a hotel in Anaheim to Fullerton.

Blanco knew the man looked familiar, but couldn't place him.

He said it clicked when they arrived at the hotel, and Taffarel asked him to go to the back entrance to avoid the crush of fans. Blanco was impressed then, but he went home for breakfast and a nap.

When he returned to his car, he saw a pink-and-black fanny pack in the back seat. In one zipper, he found key chains and tie clips with the Brazilian flag. In another, he found passports with visas for Taffarel, his wife and daughter.

Then, in the back pocket, Blanco saw a ribbon, and attached to it was a gold medal. And then he counted out the \$60,000 in cash crammed into the pack.

"I thought, This is a lot of money," Blanco said. "That's when I started shaking and just getting very, very nervous. I was thinking I have to go back and return this."

Blanco ran inside to tell his brother about his find, and his brother was dubious.

"I said, 'Check it out,' and handed him the gold medal. I told him 'Check the back' and he opens it and said, 'Wow,'" Blanco said. "Then he gets more crazy than me."

The two calmed down and set out to return the belongings, and heard over the car's radio that police were looking for the driver who had given Taffarel a ride that morning. Blanco radioed that he was on his way.

At the hotel, police seized the fanny pack, but the cab driver insisted on meeting the soccer star, who was doing an interview with a Brazilian television station.

"After his interview he shook my hand and gave me a pretty tight hug saying not many people like me are around," Blanco said. "Then he gave me a sweater with his autograph, he signed my videotapes and he signed my T-shirt that I was wearing."

Blanco also received a \$1,000 reward.

The television reporter even interviewed Blanco.

"Believe me, it's something that I will never forget," Blanco said.

# One Brazilian who refused to get carried away

SAO PAULO, July 22: Brazil's government tax chief resigned Thursday in a dispute over the failure of the victorious Brazilian World Cup soccer squad to pay nearly 1 million dollars of customs duties on excess luggage brought from the United States, reports Reuter.

The dispute threatened to spoil the mood of euphoria that had greeted Brazil's fourth World Cup title.

Federal revenue secretary Osiris Lopes Filho told reporters he was quitting over "differences" with president Itamar Franco. He was due to hand in his resignation later Thursday.

Lopes said the "last straw" had been the president's decision to overrule his order that 17 tons of luggage brought back from the United States by the Brazilian soccer delegation should be subject to normal Brazilian customs inspection and duties.

"One of my objectives as a member of the government was to show that the law could be carried out in Brazil," said Lopes, who has spearheaded a government drive against tax evasion.

Brazilian newspapers ran front-page stories Thursday on how the players and soccer federation officials had refused late Tuesday in Rio de Janeiro to allow customs officials to inspect their luggage, which was carried in five trucks to their hotel.

The delegation arrived in Rio on the last leg of a marathon three-city homecoming celebration to mark the World Cup victory.

In addition to the World Cup, the squad brought home a selection of refrigerators, televisions, videos, washing machines and microwave ovens, which customs officials estimated would be subject to duties of nearly 1 million dollars.

Brazilian customs laws require the payment of duties on any purchases made abroad over the value of 500 dollars per person.

"The officials, coaches and players are making a bad start to their careers as four-time world champions," Brazil's O Globo newspaper said in a front-page editorial.

"They achieved a great feat and deserve the gratitude of their compatriots but neither one thing nor the other makes them into special citizens," the newspaper said, adding they should set an example by paying the customs duties due.

# Lee, a super sub

DUBLIN, July 22: Substitute Ji-Young Lee scored a hat-trick in South Korea's 4-1 win over China in the women's World Cup Hockey tournament on Friday, reports Reuter.

The victory, in the first match to decide fifth to eighth places ensured the Korean's an automatic place in the next World Cup.



Helen Alfredsson of Sweden chips on to the 12th green during the first round of the US women's open golf championship at Indianwood Golf and Country Club on July 21. — AFP photo

# Hagi in Barcelona

BARCELONA, Spain, July 22: Romanian midfielder Gheorghe Hagi, who was back to his magical best at the World Cup, arrived here on Thursday to negotiate a possible transfer to the Spanish champions, reports AP.

The 29-year-old, who played for Italian club Brescia last season, said he was only here to talk and not to sign a contract.

Barcelona vice-president Joan Gaspart said: "Hagi is one of the players that our coach Johan Cruyff is after. But nothing has been agreed yet."

Last season's European Cup finalists have offered 350 million pesetas (2.75 million dollars) for the player but Brescia are holding out for a further 25 million pesetas (200,000 dollars), according to Spanish press reports.

In an attacking midfield role, Hagi would be the ideal man behind Barca's fearsome strike force of World Cup stars — Brazilian Romario and Bulgarian Hristo Stoichkov.

# CONCACAF Gold Cup deferred

NEW YORK, July 22: The CONCACAF Gold Cup, the championship of football's North and Central American and Caribbean region, will be pushed back from next July to January or February of 1996, reports AP.

Chuck Blazer, general secretary of CONCACAF, said the calendar for next June, July and August is too crowded with the US Cup exhibition tournament and the Copa America South American championship.

# Luis Garcia joins Real Sociedad

MADRID, Spain, July 22: Mexican striker Luis Garcia agreed to a three-year contract Friday with the Spanish First-division club Real Sociedad, leaving behind a mixed record at Atletico Madrid, reports AP.

Atletico spokesman Antonio Olano confirmed the deal, but refused to give any financial details.

Real Sociedad President Luis Uranga told the state news agency EFE that the whole deal had cost the San Sebastian-based club 270 million pesetas (dls 2.1 million), but did not specify how that broke down between transfer fees and salary.

The negotiations were reportedly long and difficult, with Atletico President Jesus Gily Gil apparently hesitant to complete a deal.

"Luis Garcia's position was very important and he saw his future in the sport more clearly with Real Sociedad than with Atletico," Uranga said. "As far as his spirit is concerned he's arriving with a positive attitude ready to benefit the team."

Garcia, 25, scored 17 goals during the 1992-93 season with Atletico, which he joined after leaving the Mexican side UNAM.

But his second year was marked by injuries and the dismal performance of Atletico, which barely escaped relegation. Garcia scored 11 goals, five of them on penalty kicks.

In the World Cup, Garcia scored both goals in Mexico's 2-1 victory over Ireland. Mexico was eliminated in the second round by Bulgaria on penalty kicks.

# Spain move into Fed Cup qtrs

FRANKFURT, July 22: Title holders Spain swept through to the quarter finals of the Federation Cup women's tennis event on Thursday, knocking out Argentina 3-0, reports Reuter.

Wimbledon champion Conchita Martinez put the Spaniards ahead after fighting off a spirited counter-attack by Patricia Tarabini in the first singles.

Tarabini won a second-set tie-break 8-6 to level their clash 1-1, but Martinez stormed back in the final set to win 6-3, 6-7, 6-2 clash.

Aranxa Sanchez Vicario easily beat Florencia Labat 6-1, 6-4 to ensure Spain's place in the last eight and Maria Montolio and Nieves Avila made it 3-0, winning 6-1, 6-4 against Labat and Bettina Fulco.

The second-seeded United States and Bulgaria also reached the quarter-finals with 3-0 victories.

The US will meet eighth-seeded Austria, who beat last year's finalists Australia 2-1.

Mary-Joe Fernandez led the US towards victory with an easy 6-1, 4-1 win over Canada's Helen Kelesi, who retired with a thigh injury.

Lindsay Davenport followed up by crushing Patricia Hy 6-2, 6-4 while Gigi Fernandez and Zina Garrison demped Jill Hetherington and Rene Simpson after 6-1, 7-6 (7-3).

Bulgaria, seeded sixth, routed Indonesia.

# It's crunch time for Anand

HYDERABAD, India, July 22: Indian Grandmaster Viswanathan Anand's bid to become the world's best chess player will be put to a severe test when the International Chess Federation (FIDE) Candidates quarter-finals open on Sunday, reports AP.

The 24-year-old Indian whizid is pitted against the fast-improving American Gata Kamsky in an eagerly-awaited match that will be played over eight games at the Sanghi Nagar township near this southern Indian city.

The two other quarter-finals in the official World Championships feature Boris Gelfand of Belarus against Vladimir Kramnik of Russia and Jan Timman of the Netherlands against Russian Valery Salov.

The three winners will be joined in the semi-finals by former world champion Anatoly Karpov, FIDE's top-ranked player after Gari Kasparov was stripped of the title when he formed the breakaway Professional Chess Association (PCA).

Anand, who has already made it to the semi-finals of the PCA cycle that will throw up a challenger to Kasparov, was wary of the Siberian-born Kamsky despite a 6-1 record against him.

"Numbers are meaningless in chess," Anand said. "I feel good going into the match but the bespectacled Kamsky, coached by his father Rustom, goes into the match against Anand unbeaten since July last year and fresh from a shock win over highly-fancied Kramnik in the PCA quarter-finals in New York last month."

"Kamsky's easy win over Kramnik with two games to spare cannot be taken lightly," said Anand. "He will prove a tough customer."



V ANAND

The other two quarter-finals also promise a keen tussle.

Kramnik, 19, faces a reluctant challenger in Gelfand, who said: "I don't like to play Kramnik since we are such good friends. But one has to accept these things and get on with the job."

Salov has a score to settle with Timman, the most experienced of the six players on view with two decades of top-level chess behind him. Salov lost to the Dutch Grandmaster in the Candidates match in 1987.

"Salov is in top form. He is one of the toughest opponents you can get," Timman said.

Meanwhile, Gari Kasparov has turned down India's invitation to witness the official World Championship chess matches here from Sunday.

His rejection has scuttled moves for a patch-up between his breakaway Professional Chess Association (PCA) and the International Chess Federation (FIDE).

Ravi Sanghi, chief organizer of the FIDE Candidates quarter-finals here ending August 9, said today Kasparov had cited prior commitments as the reason for his inability to make the trip, but "wished the tournament well."

India were hoping to get the former-world champion to Hyderabad for a summit meeting with FIDE president Florencio Campomanes, who will be the chief guest at India's biggest chess event.

# A watershed in US TV annals

NEW YORK, July 22: The World Cup final between Brazil and Italy set a US television ratings record for soccer with a 9.5 and the 11 games on ABC averaged a 5.3, 18 per cent above what the head US organizer said was the network's pretournament estimate, reports AP.

Sunday's game received a 24 share, Nielsen Media Research said Thursday, easily beating golf tournaments on CBS and NBC, the two other major commercial networks in the United States.

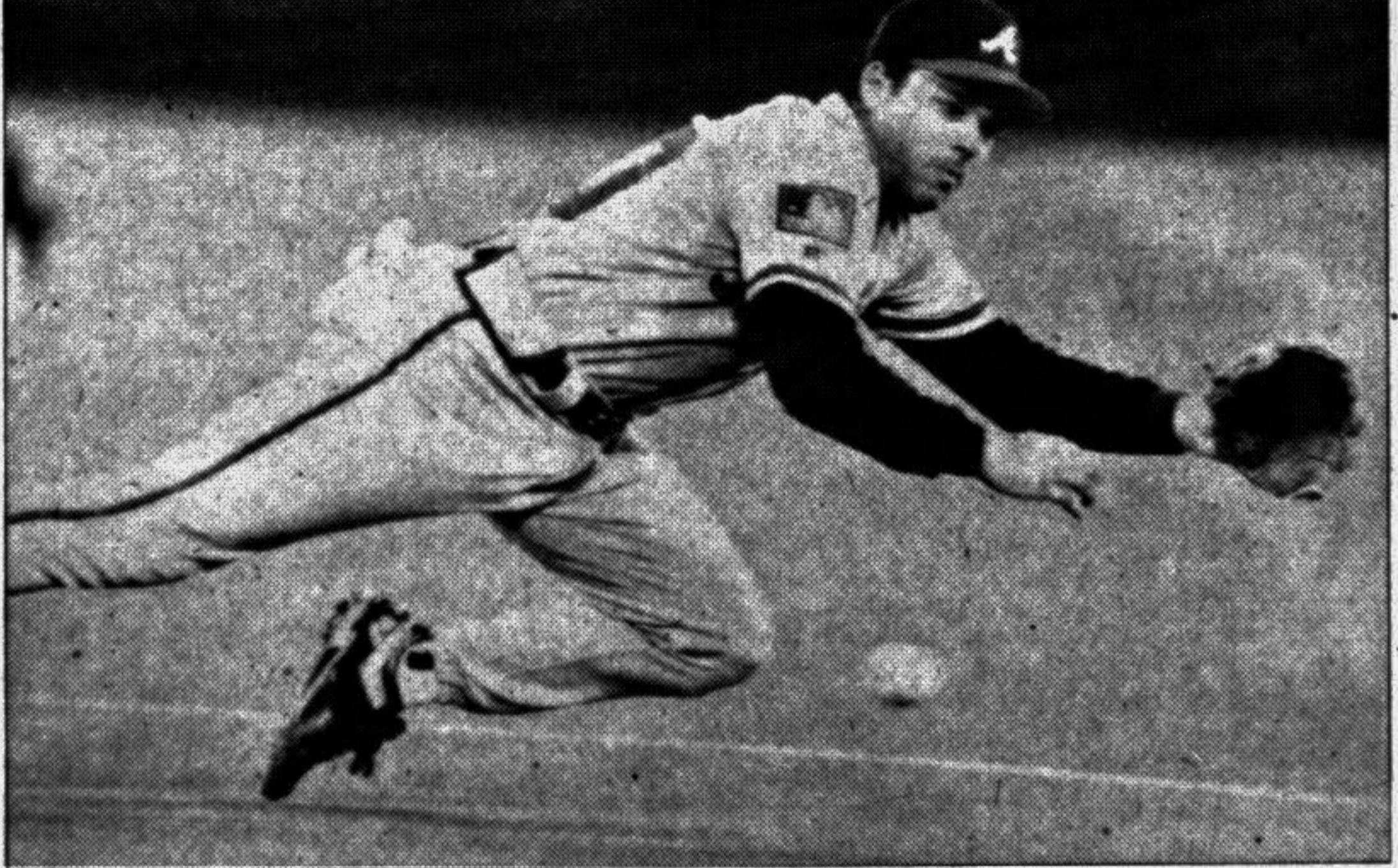
The rating is the percentage of television households in the national watching a programme and the share is the percentage tuned in among those, homes watching television at the time. Each ratings point represents 942,000 homes.

The ratings do not include the number of people which watched the games in Spanish on Univision or in Italian on RAI America.

The rating for Brazil's shootout victory over Italy narrowly topped the 9.3 rating for Brazil's 1-0 victory over the United States in the second round. The national rating for the final dropped 23 per cent from the 12.4 overnight sample from 32 major markets, which was released Monday.

The overnight ratings are a sampling of major metropolitan markets, an indication that the game was watched far more widely in large cities and suburbs than in rural sections of the United States.

Before the tournament began, Alan Rothenberg, head of the US organizers, said ABC projected an average rating of 4.0-4.5 for its 11 broadcasts. The network wouldn't confirm or deny Rothenberg's statements.



An undated AFP photo shows Atlanta Braves second baseman Mark Lenke diving to stop a single hit by St Louis Cardinal's Gerald Young in the first innings of the second game of their NBL double header in St Louis. The Braves won.

# Graf back on song

MAHWAH, New Jersey, July 22: Steffi Graf, saying she was "mentally relaxed" after a month off, scored an easy 6-2, 6-1 second-round victory over Nicole Provis of Australia at the 150,000 dollars Pathmark women's tennis classic on Thursday, reports Reuter.

The world number one unleashed a powerful serve and a lethal forehand in demolishing Provis in 49 minutes.

It was the German star's first appearance since being upset by American Lori McNeil in the first round at Wimbledon a month ago.

"I didn't touch a racket for three weeks and just started to practise about nine days ago," said the 25-year-old Graf, who will face 49th-ranked American Pam Shriver in a quarter-final tonight.

"My game felt pretty good," said Graf, who is seeking her fifth title here.

"I took care of some business matters in Germany, vacationed in Florida and Sardinia and just did anything I wanted, going to the beach roller blading and going to the movies. I needed to come back now as I needed to stay away."

Wimbledon is my favourite tournament and it hurt to lose. But the time off allowed me to relax."

Graf admitted that "The vacation was wonderful," but she missed the tennis.

"I needed to come back," she said. "I enjoy the game so much. I wouldn't be doing it for 21 years if I didn't."

Graf felt she needed only a short preparation period in her first match here since beating Jennifer Capriati in the 1990 final. "I don't need much time to get ready for a hard court match," said Graf. "Hard courts suit my game."

Provis, who beat Graf on Clay last year in the Federation Cup in Frankfurt, was completely outclassed this time as she held her serve only once in each set.

Graf closed the match out in solid fashion. She went to a 5-1 lead with a love game fashioned on an ace, two service points and a smash, and broke in the final game with three trademark winners off her forehand.

Today Amanda Coetzer of South Africa will go against Manuela Maleeva-Fragniere of Switzerland. Helena Sukova of the Czech Republic will play American Lisay Ramond and German Marketa Kochta will meet Nino Louarsabishvili of Georgia.

Coetzer needed only 64 minutes for a 6-1, 6-1 win over Ai Sugiyama of Japan. Raymond won an abbreviated 6-4, 4-2 decision over American Patty Fendick, who was forced to retire due to a pulled stomach muscle. Kochta won on the fifth match point in turning back Dutchwoman Stephanie Rottier 7-6 (7-5), 6-4.

# New world mark

LISBON, July 22: Russian Yelena Lysak set a wind-assisted 14.43 metre mark in the triple jump at the World Junior Athletics championship on Thursday, reports Reuter.

She jumped further than the world junior triple jump record of 14.29 set by China's Ruiping Ren on September 1993 in Beijing and improved her own personal best of 14.36.

Ren finished in second place after marking up 14.36, also wind-assisted.

# CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS 40 Tolkien creature 59 Kyser or Kendall 20 Part of TAE 21 Exemplar of redness 22 Shot 23 Arrogant 27 "— was saying..." 29 Bath aftermath 30 Head of the Surete? 32 Veers off course 34 Surgical tool 37 They're dead on their feet: alt. sp. 39 Winter forecasts 42 The first of march? 44 Top 45 "I— Little Prayer" 46 Hollywood clasher 50 Roman 1,051 51 Sturdy wood 52 Peninsula St. 53 Emulate Earhart

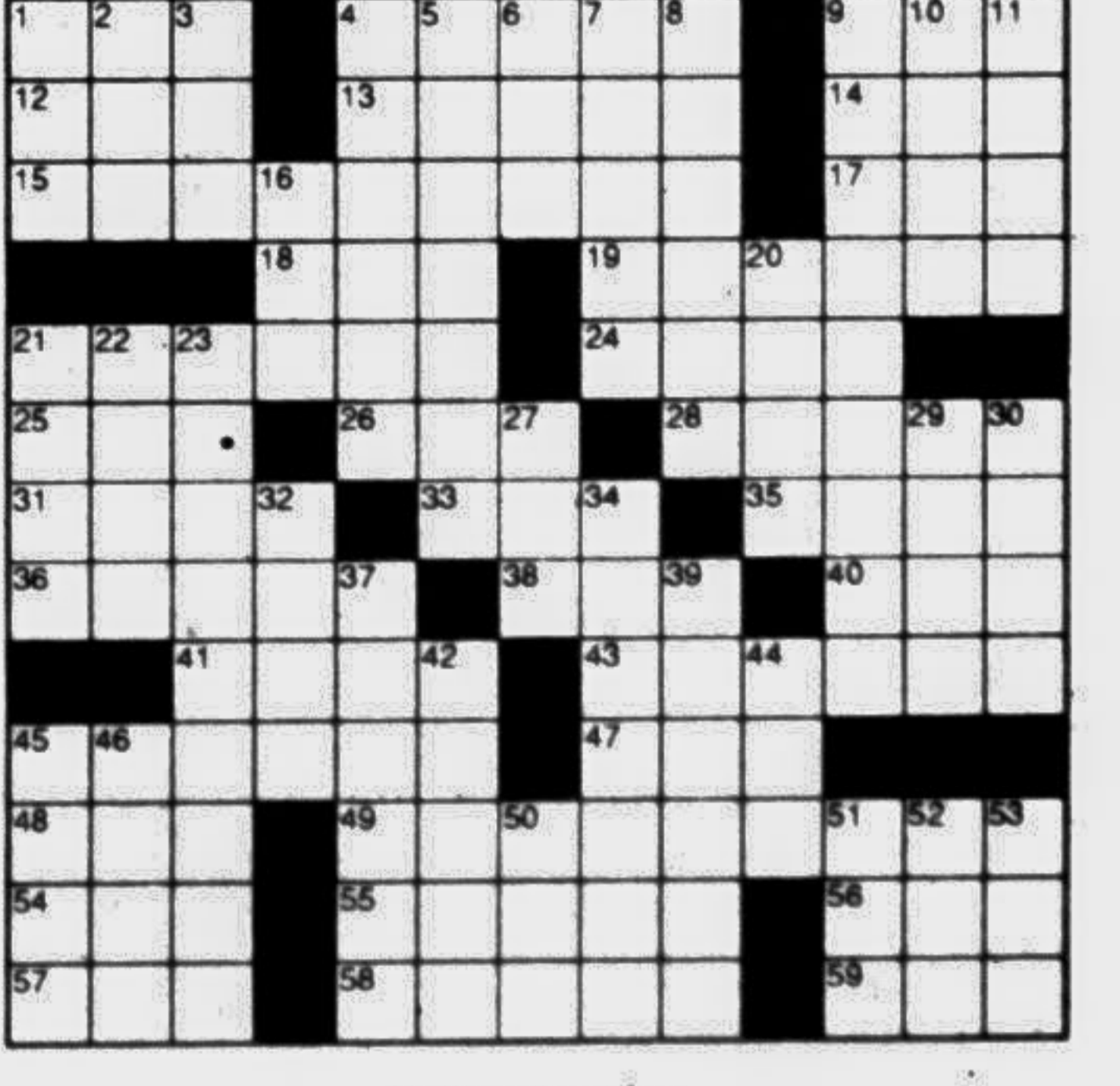
DOWN 1 Arthur or Lillie 4 Blind parts 9 Prop for Isaac Stern 12 Scull need 13 Chaplain 14 Swiss canton 15 Real disappointed 17 "You are here" draft 18 In need of repair 19 Not wobbly 21 Talk on and on 24 Broker's advice 25 Flightless Aussie 26 Mme., across the Pyrenees 28 Chris of tennis 31 TV trophy 33 Draft initials 35 Rose's love 36 November birthstone 38 Computer chips: abbr.

Sights the scene

Solution time: 27 min.

SIS PAIR AHEM  
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ALIT TUFT JOE  
NONE ELLE ALE  
SEER REED RIP

Saturday's answer 11-22



CRYPTOQUIP  
Q W V W K O X L O L M X J A K A W T -  
D X T X M O B K D W F A W Q P  
Q O B O K P Z W V W J K O Q W K -  
O L M P F P T W L Z

Saturday's Cryptoquip: SAID BUSY BANK TELLER TO MINISTER, "IN WHAT DENOMINATIONS WOULD YOU LIKE IT?"

Today's Cryptoquip clue: V equals C

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.