

Algeria's Nouredine Morceli crosses the finish line to set a new world record in the 3,000m during the Monaco IAAF Grand Prix on August 2. Morceli clocked 7 min 25.11. — AFP photo

The world is his oyster

MONTE CARLO, Aug 3: Nouredine Morceli says he can break every world record from the 800

to the 5,000 metres before he hangs up his running shoes, reports Reuters.

And on the evidence of his staggering Grand Prix on Tuesday night, it would be hard to find anyone to disagree with him.

The 24-year-old Algerian, who already holds the world mile and 1,500 metres records, demolished Kenyan Moses Kiptanui's 3,000 record of seven minutes 28.96 seconds when he sped round seven and a half laps of the Louis II Stadium track in 7:25.11.

He ran the last lap in only 55 seconds and earned himself a place in the record books alongside such illustrious names as Michel Jazy of France, Kip Keino and Henry Rono of Kenya and Said Aouita of Morocco, who have also held the mark.

Morceli's performance came one day before the 20th anniversary of another 3,000 metres world record — the 7:35.2 set by Britain's Brendan Foster on August 3, 1974.

It is a measure of Morceli's greatness and how far the event has moved in two decades that Foster would have finished 50 metres behind the Algerian on Tuesday.

"It was a perfect night, there was a very nice breeze, just perfect for a record," said the Algerian after setting the sixth official new world record of 1994.

Morceli believes he is capable of holding every middle-distance record in the book and repeated that claim on Tuesday.

"I can break 10 world records," he said. "Personally I think I can run the mile in 3.34 and improve all the others up to 5,000 metres."

His current mile record is 10 seconds outside that predicted time, but his self-belief mirrors that of Aouita, another North African runner who often made outrageous claims — and then achieved them.

Aouita set five world records during his heyday in the 1980s: the 1,500m, 2,000m, 3,000m, two miles and 5,000m.

The one that still stands is the 2,000 metres, and it must only be a matter of time before that mark, set in 1987, falls, probably to Morceli.

Tuesday's attempt was superbly stage-managed. A year ago at the same meeting, Morceli missed breaking the same record by just 0.28 of a second.

This time he began more cautiously with early pace-maker Joseph Cheshire of Kenya taking him through the first 1,000 metres bang on schedule in two minutes 28

seconds, and Moroccan Mohamed Choumassi guiding him through 2,000 metres less than a second over their target time of five minutes. With Ethiopian Haile Gebreselassie, the 5,000 metres world record holder, pushing him along for the next lap, Morceli gradually accelerated away to run the last 550 metres against the clock.

He hit the bell at six minutes 30 seconds, knowing he needed to run the last lap in under 58 seconds, and never faltered as he crossed the line 55 seconds later. The time on the trackside clock which initially showed 7:25.13, was then rounded down to an even more impressive 7:25.11.

A week ago Morceli became embroiled in a row at the Goodwill Games for using pace-makers in a championship race when he set the year's fastest mile time of 3:48.67. This time there was no argument about the pacesetter, an integral part of the Grand Prix circuits. There was just talk of the next world record.

Morceli's sights are now set on Gebreselassie's two-month-old 5,000 metres record of 12:56.96, set at Hengelo in the Netherlands on June 4.

Only Gebreselassie and Aouita have ever run the distance in under 13 minutes. Morceli intends to join there exclusive club at the Weltklasse meeting in Zurich on August 17.

A first for France

CALAIS, France, Aug 3: A 17-year Tuesday became the first French woman to swim the English Channel with her second attempt at the crossing, reports AFP.

Marion Hans made the 21-mile (34-kilometre) crossing in nine hours 42 minutes.

At 5:35 am (0435 GMT) she stepped into the sea at Dover, Southeast England, her skin covered in five kilos (11 pounds) of grease to protect against the cold. She arrived in Sangatte in France at 16:17 (14:17 GMT).

According to observers on safety boats which accompanied her, Hans swam almost continuously with few rest stops.

Hans failed in an attempt to make the same crossing last summer.

Chang crashes out

LOS ANGELES, Aug 3: Mark Petchey of Britain upset an error-prone Micheal Chang, the top seed, 7-5, 6-2 in the first round of the \$13,750 dollars Los Angeles Open on Tuesday, reports Reuters.

Second-seeded Boris Becker of Germany showed no effects from a four-week layoff and defeated Grant Stafford of Canada 7-5, 6-3 in the first round of the 32 player, Hard Court tournament.

Third seeded American Andre Agassi, fresh from winning the Canadian Open last week, eliminated Nicklas Kulti of Sweden 6-2, 6-1 in another first-round match.

Jared Palmer upset fellow American Brad Gilbert, the seventh seed, 6-7 (5-7), 6-3, 6-4 in the only other surprise of the day.

Chang, the runner-up here last year, struggled with his serve and his normally reliable passing shots, while Petchey added to his discomfort by covering the net like blanket.

Petchey, ranked 89th in the world, captured the only service break of the first set in the 11th game after holding three previous break points against Chang, whose serve wavered between inconsistent and weak the entire match.

Chang, ranked sixth, won his serve only once in four second-set service games as Petchey repeatedly attacked the net and created problems for the American's passing shots.

Chang gave credit to his opponent for taking advantage of his own poor play in the 72-minute match.

"It's tough when you're not able to do what you want to do," Chang said. "Some of the shots I was hitting were missing by five feet. That's frustrating when you're playing a guy who's coming into the net and you only have the smallest margin for passing shots."

Becker's only problem against Stafford, ranked 98 spots below him at number 109, was stepping up to the line and serving within the allotted 25 seconds.

Hy Vandenberg dead

BLOOMINGTON, Minn, Aug 3: Hy Vandenberg, a pitcher with the Chicago Cubs when they last made it to the World Series in 1945, has died of cancer. He was 88, reports AP.

Vandenberg, who died Sunday at his home, pitched six scoreless innings in three games in the series, which the Cubs lost to Detroit. In his six year in the majors, he also played with the Boston Red Sox and New York Giants.

Morceli does what he says



MONTE CARLO, Aug 3: Algerian Nouredine Morceli shattered the world 3,000 metres record with almost contemptuous ease when he clocked seven minutes 25.11 seconds on a perfect night for athletics by the Mediterranean on Tuesday, reports Reuters.

Morceli, 24, who already holds the world record for the 1,800 metres and mile and has made no secret of one day wanting to own every middle distance mark in the book, took another step towards that ambition when he wiped out Kenyan Moses Kiptanui's record of 7:28.96 set two years ago this month in Cologne.

Morceli came home nearly four seconds inside Kiptanui's time and erased the memory of a year ago when he missed the same record on this track by just half a stride — 0.28 seconds.

But the men's 5,000 metres world record stayed intact. Kenyan Simon Chemoyiwo winning but well outside the 12:56.96 mark of Ethiopia's Haile Gebreselassie set in June this year. Morceli was the star of the night with the world record attempt going almost precisely to plan.

Pace-maker Joseph Cheshire of Kenya took the Algerian through the first 1,000 metres bang on schedule in 2:28. Then Choumassi of Morocco guided him through 2,000 metres less than a second over their target time of five minutes in 5:00.97.

Morceli, who added the Goodwill Games crown to his growing list of honours last week, scorched round the final lap on his own and came home in an almost effortless sprint.

"It was a perfect night. There was a very slight breeze. It was all just set for record," he said after setting the sixth official world record of 1994.

"Obviously it went better than last year because I was in great shape and the pacing was exactly right."

Ethiopian Gebreselassie was a distant second in 7:37.49 but had reason to be delighted half an hour later.

His 5,000 metres world record was barely threatened

as a somewhat lacklustre attempt from Kenyan William Sigei fizzled out.

Sigei, who smashed the 10,000 metres world record last month, could only finish second behind compatriot Chemoyiwo in 13:11.46. The winner's time was 13:07.57.

Sigei looked tired at the end of the 12 lap race but could place no blame on the pacing of Ireland's Paul Donovan and Kenyan Paul Bitok who took him through the first 3,000 metres exactly on schedule in 7:49.

Sigei never seemed likely to respond to their efforts and Chemoyiwo led the field home at the head of a pack of six Kenyans.

BUBKA BEATEN

After his latest pole vault world record of 6.14 metres at Sestriere on Sunday, there was the rare sight on Tuesday of a Sergei Bubka defeat.

The Ukrainian failed at three of his four attempts at different heights, finishing joint third in the pole vault on 5.70 metres. American Kory

Russian gymnasts reign supreme

ST PETERSBURG, Aug 3: Russia's male gymnasts won the Goodwill Games team event with almost embarrassing ease on Tuesday, cruising to victory over Belarus in an anti-climatic competition which was effectively over shortly after it began, reports Reuters.

The Russian four-man squad, featuring three athletes who finished in the top 12 of this year's World Championships, overwhelmed the remainder of the competition and won five of the six events with a final total of 171.200.

The Belarus side, minus world champion Ivan Ivankov and world number three Vitaly Scherbo, steadily improved to finish second with 167.875, ahead of the United States who scored 165.525.

Top individual scorer was Ukraine's Georgy Misutyn, competing as an independent, who scored 57.100, just ahead of Russia's Yevgeny Shabayev with 56.925.

Tarpenning won with 5.80. Although Sigei and Bubka disappointed, there was no stopping the winning streak of Britain's world record holder Colin Jackson in the 110 metres hurdles.

Jackson's stated aim this season is to win every race he competes in, including the European title. He made it nine straight victories when he clocked 13.26 seconds to finish just ahead of his friend and training partner Mark McKoy, the Olympic champion.

Although Jackson's performance was a little ragged he still did enough to beat McKoy who clocked 13.30 with Britain's Tony Jarrett third in 13.33.

World 400 metres champion Michael Johnson returned to the victory podium in the 200 metres after losing out to Britain's John Regis in Sestriere on Sunday.

The American won in 19.94 seconds — the fastest time at level sea in the world this year — and gained a narrow victory over Regis who clocked 19.87 in the rarified atmosphere of Sestriere, and a respectable 20.01 here — his third best ever.

With the European Championships starting on Sunday, the meet was a final testing ground for the continent's top athletes.

But Germany's Heike Drechsler had an easier workout than expected when her main rival Jackie Joyner-Kersey of the United States failed to compete.

Drechsler, beaten by Joyner-Kersey in Sestriere on Sunday, was denied the chance of a quick revenge meeting, winning the long jump easily with a leap of 7.15 metres.

Joyner-Kersey, and American 400 metres Olympic champion Quincy Watts, who are both coached by Joyner-Kersey's husband Bobby, pulled out of the meeting although neither athlete appeared to be suffering from any injury when they arrived in Monte Carlo on Monday.

Although there was no official comment, it was widely believed the pair quit after organisers refused their demands for increased appearance fees.

Murky water turns to soft ice

ST PETERSBURG, Aug 3: Soft ice replaced dirty water on Tuesday as a source of embarrassment for the Goodwill Games organisers, reports Reuters.

The swimming competition, scheduled for the opening day of the 16 day Games on July 23, was postponed for 24 hours because the water in the pool was too murky.

On Tuesday the organisers were forced to switch the venue for the start of the short track speedskating competition because the ice at the Yubileiny Palace of Sports was too thin and soft.

The first session had already been postponed from the afternoon to the evening because the original rink was not ready but despite frantic efforts the ice was still not thick enough to allow the competition to begin.

Officials decided instead to stage the competition at the practice rink at the Palace of Sports of the Soviet Army Club and competition finally began 90 minutes late with water still lying on the sides of the rink.

Competition finally began 90 minutes late although water was lying on the surface on the sides of the rink.

"Welcome to my nightmare," groaned one television executive.

American athlete Andrew Gabel said "The ice is very soft and there are lots of people out walking on the ice. But it's hard in the summer to keep the ice hard."

Temperatures in St Petersburg have soared to 30 degrees Celsius in the hottest summer here for 22 years.

Taylor gets his chance

PHILADELPHIA, Aug 3: Meldrick Taylor finally gets a chance to avenge the most disappointing loss of his career next month when he fights Julio Cesar Chavez for the World Boxing Council super-lightweight title, reports AP.

The rematch between two of the top fighters in the weight class comes Sept. 17, about 4 1/2 years after Taylor was knocked out by Chavez with two seconds remaining in the final rounds.

"This is something that I've been thinking about for the last four years," Taylor said Tuesday. "I eat, sleep, walk it — everything, I've been waiting for this a long, long time."

Taylor was ahead on two of the three judges' scorecards when referee Richard Steels called the fight in the 12th round March 17, 1990. The 1984 gold medalist rose to his feet before the count reached eight but was not allowed to continue.

A rematch fell through shortly after their first fight, and Taylor moved up a weight class before returning to the super-lightweight division, where Chavez defended his title 12 times before losing in January.

The fight will be held at the MGM Grand Hotel in Las Vegas. Promoter Don King made the announcement at a news conference in Philadelphia Taylor's hometown.

Chavez, 34, of Culiacan, Mexico, has been considered a top boxer for much of his 13-year career. He has won five titles in three weight classes en route to a 90-1-1 record with 77 knockouts.

"I'm fortunate enough to go against the best because I always wanted top fight the best," Taylor said.



Kansas City chief quarter back Joe Montana (R) gets a welcome kiss from his wife Jennifer who arrived earlier in Tokyo, upon the arrival of the American football team yesterday. — AFP photo

Easy wins for Graf, Davenport

CARLSBAD, California, Aug 3: Top seed and world number one Steffi Graf and fourth-seeded American Lindsay Davenport rolled to straight-set second-round victories on Tuesday at the 400,000 dollars Toshiba tennis classic, reports Reuters.

Graf, the three-time and defending champion, cruised past an admittedly intimidated Alexia Dechaume-Balleret of France 6-0, 6-1 in 47 minutes. Davenport, the world's sixth-ranked player, overpowered Stephanie Rottier of the Netherlands 6-2, 6-3.

Graf, who won an exhibition tournament in New Jersey two weeks ago, looked impressive in her first sanctioned tournament since being stunned by American Lori McNeil in a first-round match at Wimbledon on June 20.

"It was easy out there," said Graf. "I felt from anywhere I could hit winners, especially off my forehand. It was a really good feeling out there. I just go for it and it just went wherever I wanted it to."

The 25-year-old German began slowly, committing two of her four double faults in the opening game but surviving her only break point of the match.

After that, the reigning Australian Open champion went into high gear. Displaying her signature laser-like forehand, Graf won 11 successive games before Dechaume-Balleret held for her only game.

It was Dechaume-Balleret's first match against Graf. "I was so nervous I couldn't serve much of the time," said the 85th ranked Frenchwoman, who won just 29 of 88 points and was broken five times. "My hand was so tight, so heavy. It was very, very difficult."

"I would be up 40-15 and normally would just serve the ball. Against her, I had to think about everything else, and that didn't give me much of a chance."

Davenport, 19, had not played a hardcourt match

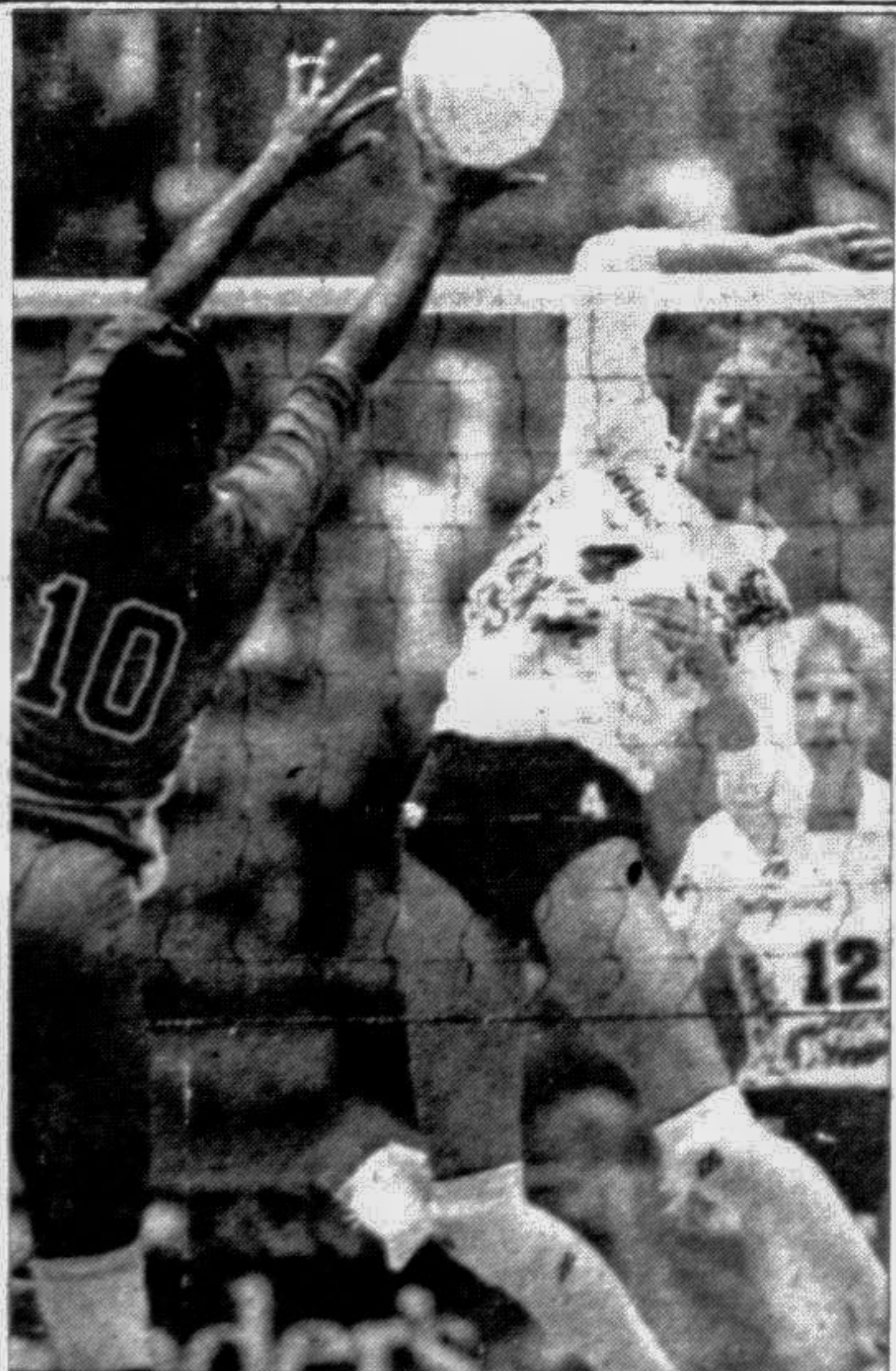
since Lipton Championships in March. But the powerfully-built six-foot-two (1.88 metres) baseliner was sharp while banging out a convincing victory against the Dutch player, ranked 60th.

"I thought I played pretty well today," said Davenport, a member of the US federation Cup team.

In other second-round contests, sixth-seed Julie Halard

of France ousted Elena Likovtseva of Kazakhstan 6-1, 2-6, 6-0 and 16th-seeded American Lisa Raymond beat Andrea Strnadova of the Czech Republic 6-3, 6-1.

French open champion Arantxa Sanchez Vicario and Wimbledon winner Conchita Martinez, the world's number two and three players, both from Spain play second-round matches today.



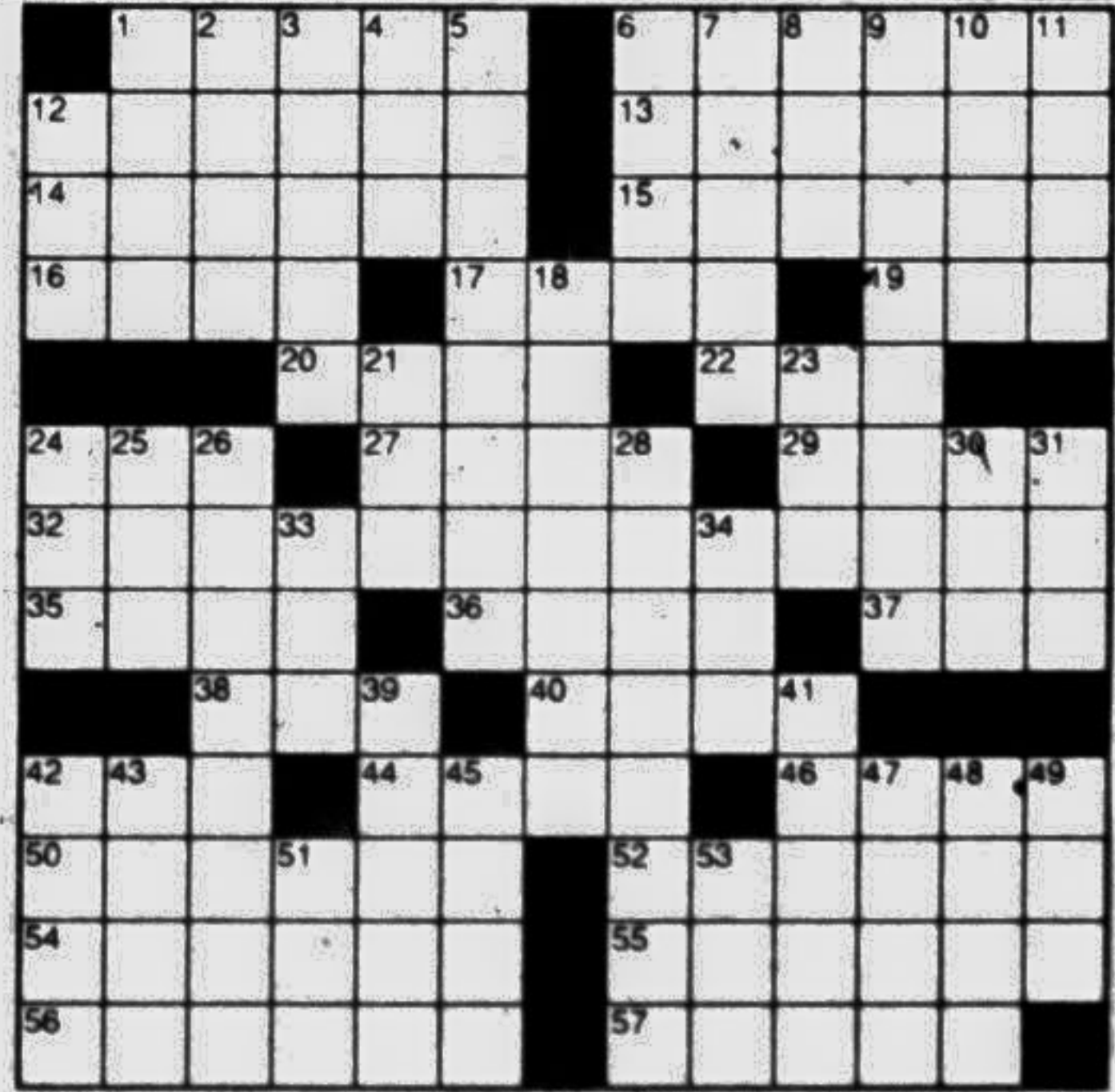
Cuban Isel Saavedra (L) passes the ball after the Netherlands' Erna Brinkman strikes during the semifinal match of the Goodwill Games volleyball event between Cuba and the Netherlands yesterday. Cubans won the match. — AFP photo

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

- | | | | |
|----------------|---------------|---------------|-----------------|
| ACROSS | container | DOWN | 21 DDE's |
| 1 Filled | 40 Jannings | 1 Rent | opponent |
| tortillas | 41 Hollywood | 2 Russian | 23 Bill's |
| 6 Lamont | 42 Egg-yung | inland sea | partner |
| Crantson's | 43 a/k/a | 3 Big barrels | 24 Pen |
| 12 "Breaker" | 44 Tops | 4 Inseparable | 25 Seine |
| — (movie) | 45 Actress | 5 Poker | stuff |
| 13 Pompous | Nazimova | holding | 26 Versatile |
| display | 50 Fructose- | 6 Incentive | 28 Bikini, e.g. |
| 14 It gets the | yielding | 7 Vietnam | 30 Depot: |
| lead out | compound | city | abbr. |
| 15 Loosen | 52 Free of | 8 Clumsy | 31 Psychic's |
| 16 "Wunner- | letters | craft | skill |
| ful" band- | 54 Soprano | 9 Foplike | 33 Crucial |
| leader | Tibaldi | 10 Skunk's | 34 — polli |
| 17 Ethnic | 55 Spain + | defense | 39 The 400 |
| hairstyle | Portugal | 11 Moistens | 41 Subse- |
| 19 AMA | 56 Incense | 12 Catcall? | quently |
| people | 57 Weight al- | 18 Flabber- | 42 Solid as |
| 20 Take to | lowances | gasted | a rock |
| the lake | | | 43 Highly |
| 22 Hardly | | | rated |
| friendly | | | 45 1939 |
| 24 Mariner's | | | song, — |
| place | | | Old Dutch |
| 27 Is? | | | Garden |
| 29 Seine | | | 47 Trevi |
| feeder | | | tosses |
| 32 Geraldo, | | | 48 Pacific |
| Sally, etc. | | | garlands |
| 35 Christmas | | | 49 Oklahoma |
| 36 Kingston | | | city in |
| group | | | a kilt |
| 37 Chance | | | 53 Cagers' |
| 38 Reuben | | | org. |

Solution time: 24 mins.

SPA BAIL LAIR
AID USDA OGLE
STARKES GOLD
STROKES TAI
ALS ITHES
OBESE ONE EVA
KEPT RIG MEEK
LEI GEL PADRE
ARCHES FOG
AMI ARISTA
FRIZ STITCHES
RISE TIRE ELK
OPAL BEER DES



CRYPTOQUIP

OCV HLANVO FFOVFOV
JEVGO NCYN YLV
REGJTVNVTQ HANCEMN
LCQGV EL LVYOEF

Yesterday's Cryptogram: OUR DIET COUNSELOR HAS AGREED SHE WILL STICK WITH US THROUGH THICK AND THIN.

Today's Cryptogram clue: J equals P

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.