6: This was the

Andre Agassi who

won Wimbledon,

the one who once

threatened

rule tennis, the one US Open

laus have been waiting to see

over since Pete Sampras blew

the start, another at the end,

and three gruelling sets in the

middle, Agassi put on a show

Monday that rivalled the best

matches of his career as he

beat No 6 Michael Chang 6-1.

Agassi, unseeded at the

Open for the first time since

1987, knew he was playing

well before this match but re-

alised "you don't really know

that for sure until you are

pushed" the way he was against

erything to me," he said. "It

allows me to believe that I can

win the tournament. This is a

perfect example of a match I

never would have gotten

through even a year ago.

should say, especially a year

ago, with the year that I had

hit the tennis ball, absolutely.

You've got to understand, this

It was fun

while it lasted

tractive young couple looked

like they were having one ter-

rific date at the US Open. They

giggled, they clowned around.

they whispered, they flirted,

playing a mixed doubles quar-

Oh, yes. They were also

Mary Pierce, the fourth-

ranked woman in the tourna-

ment, and Murphy Jensen, half

of the flamboyant Jensen

brothers doubles team, lost on

Monday to Gigi Fernandez and

Cyril Suk, 6-3, 6-4. But from

the fun they were having, you

never would have known they

cry from the serious, intense

young woman who until re-

cently seemed overwhelmed

by her very public problems

with her overbearing father.

This Mary Pierce was having a

face, whether her team was

winning or losing points. After

in mock anguish. The crowd

dozens of young kids screamed

for autographs. "Mareee!" they

screamed. "Murpheee!" The

pair had to stick around for 20

minutes before they finally

Imagine if they had won.

When the match was over,

A grin never left Pierce's

This Mary Pierce was a far

NEW YORK, Sept 6: The at-

"This is the best I have ever

"And to get through it is ev-

For one nearly perfect set at

vears ago.

ports AP.

Chang.

last year.

reports AP.

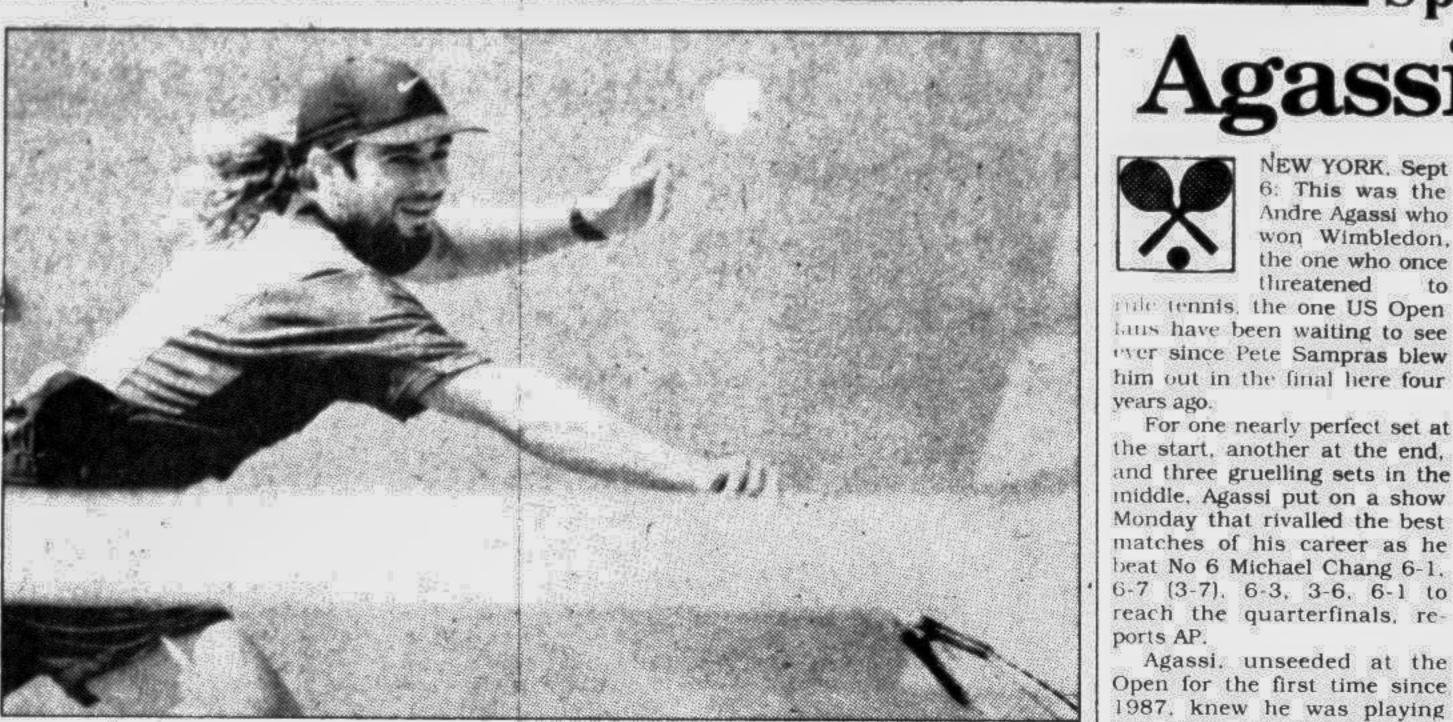
were losing.

the same thing.

escaped.

she was unconscious.

terfinal.



Unseeded Andre Agassi of the United States stretches to make a return against sixth-seeded countryman Michael Chang during their fourth-round match at US Open in New York on Sept 5. Agassi prevailed 6-1, 6-7, 6-3, 3-6, 6-1.

# Laver feels Sampras has it



NEW YORK, Sept 6: Rod Laver, the colourful Austra ian who once ruled the world's tennis courts and

the last man to complete a Grand Slam, thinks that Pete Sampras has what it takes to duplicate his sweep of the four major titles, reports Reuter.

Sampras, the world number one who often cites Laver as the champion he most wants to emulate, has won four of the last five major titles, beginning with the 1993 Wimbledon

Sampras, currently bidding for his third US Open title. won the Australian Open and Wimbledon this year, but was derailed in his bid for a rare calendar year Grand Slam in the 1994 French Open quarter-finals.

Only two men in tennis history have claimed the four major titles in a single year. Don Budge did it in 1938, the year Laver was born. Laver accomplished the feat twice - first in 1962, during the pre-Open era, and again seven years later after Open tennis came on the scene.

Although it has been a quarter century since Laver's last Grand Slam, he thinks there is one man on the scene who can pull it of.

"I'd have to say Sampras. he has already proven he can win Australia, Wimbledon and the US Opens. He has to prove it on French clay and to stay fit," he said. Laver's alternative predic-

tion to follow in his Grand Slam footsteps was a bit more surprising.

"I'll pick a long shot for the future," he said. "Michael

Chang. "He has proven he can win

the French Open and right now he's probably the fastest player on the courts, he has shown a great ability to play under pressure. He's a real good counter-puncher.

6 (AP) Nobody

boomed serves

like Roscoe Tan-

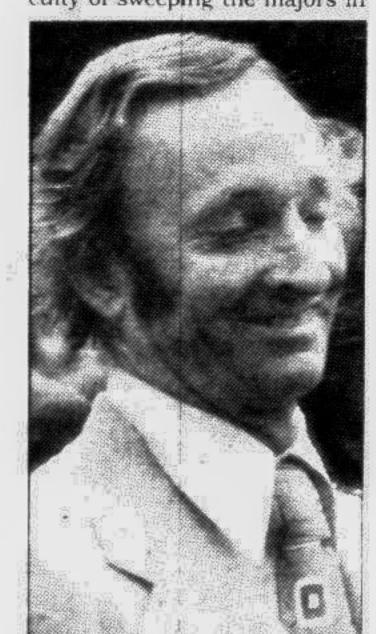
When he was at

the top of his game more than

a dozen years ago. Tanner wou-

"But he needs to develop a

little more." Laver, who is cutting short a fishing trip in Oregon to be honoured at the US Open on Wednesday in commemoration of the 25th anniversary of completing his second Grand Slam, reflected on the difficulty of sweeping the majors in



ROD LAVER

the 1990s.

Nobody is going to come up suddenly and become the next Grand Slam winner," he said. "It takes more experience than we needed. And it takes someone who suddenly doesn't get hurt along the way

"It doesn't surprise me that no one has won the Slam since I did." Laver said a few days before the US Open began. The tennis scene is a much tougher one than we competed

Laver had come east from his home in Rancho Mirage, California to watch some of the young players prepare for the Open at the Hamlet Cup in late

"Look at these players today, with their incentive for big money prizes," the redheaded southpaw said. "There are so many of them. In my day we had maybe 30 players to worry about," he said. "Today there are a great number who can push a top player around."

The growing cast of talented players is only one reason Laver feels winning the four major championships in one season has become more difficult.

"Also, and this is a big reason, in my day we had three tournaments on grass courts ... Australia, Wimbledon and Forest Hills (US) and one, the French, on clay, he said.

"Now there are four different surfaces.

"We have a hardcourt in Australia that has a rubberised surface. The weather affects it. It's sticky and slow in hot and humid weather, faster in dry cool weather.

You have the fast hardcourt in the US. The grass at Wimbledon is always a challenge, with odd bounces. The clay at the French is slow and tough for the serve and volleyer," he continued.

"A guy has to be an all-court player now," said Laver, who says he hasn't been to the US Open in several years.

"Actually, I seldom watch tennis on television either," he added. "We own a camper and drive around. I'd rather go fishing," he said.

But he promised to be on hand as the tennis fraternity honours him.

Laver, who grins when he starts spinning stories of his playing days, still plays tennis for fun, competes in an occasional senior event and is involved in various tennis affiliated ventures

But it takes a special occasion to interfere with a fishing

#### a good shot, they would trade high-fives, laugh and skip back to position. After a bad shot, per cent. they would do pretty much Late in the second set,

Jensen accidentally hit Pierce in the back with a ball. She lay "I don't really feel like flat on the ground, pretending "Doctor!" Jensen screamed,

> the women's draw were No Steffi Graf, No 4 Mary Pierce. No 7 Jana Novotna and No 11

Graf had the toughest opponent but an easy time beating Zina Garrison-Jackson 6-1 6-2 to set up a match against Coetzer, a 6-3, 6-0 winner

"I felt happy to be able to play like that, really." Graf said "It is not the easiest conditions out there with the wind, and to be able to adjust perfectly to it. I think that is all I wanted."

6-2 and will next play Novotna,

ACROSS

1 Skelton's

hopper

Kadiddle-

is the culmination of a lot of 6-0, 6-4 victor over things. I have hit the ball Magdalena Maleeva. pretty good before, but it was

Agassi never had it so good

not balanced with that

competitive spirit, not

balanced with that focused

concentration. It is like hitting

50 aces a match, but if you lose

the match, it doesn't matter.

You've got to put it all

and a greater longshot, Richey

Reneberg, seemed on his way

to the quarters when he beat

first set at night. But

Reneberg, who upset No 7

Boris Becker in the first

round, felt a pop in the upper

part of his left leg in the last

game of that set, got treatment

from a trainer at courtside

twice, then retired after losing

No 9 Todd Martin 6-3 in the

Another unseeded player

together.'

Agassi won Wimbledon playing this way in 1992, but injuries and extra weight sent him through a miserable tailspin last year that ended with his first-round exit at the US

In a "zone" from the beginning of this match, Agassi teed off on shots almost recklessly but couldn't miss early in the first set. Chang didn't score a point in the first three games. and Agassi didn't hit a single ball out for 15 straight points. Throughout the whole first set, Agassi made only three unforced errors - an incredibly low number in a match of such heavy slugging. "For some reason, I wasn'

quite used to Andre's ball.



Zina Garrison-Jackson of the United States during their fourth round encounter at the US Open on Sept 5. Graf gunned Jackson down in straight sets 6-1, 6-2. - AFP photo Chang said. "I was on my heels

a little bit and wasn't quite able

to set my feet straight. Against

Andre, you have to get on top

of him fast. He doesn't play as

well when he is down. He is a

much better player when he is

minutes, but Agassi and every-

one else knew that level of

perfection couldn't last. Agassi

couldn't play better, and Chang

could only get better, though

in truth he played well enough

tor, clawing back to push the

brilliant match — the best by

far at the Open this year - that

had fans gasping and cheering

at the way Agassi and Chang

each covered so much ground

chasing balls and hitting win-

point against Chang exactly

26 Towel

word

There were points in this

second set to a tiebreaker.

to beat many others.

Michael," Agassi said.

The first set lasted only 23

a front-runner.

the first three games of the second set.

"It's very frustrating." Reneberg said 'I felt something in my inner leg snap. I just can't move. So I don't see any point in trying to play him on one leg. I can't even play 75

Martin will play unseeded Bernd Karbacher, who beat Gianluca Pozzi 6-2, 4-6, 6-3,

won," Martin said. "He seemed really eager for the occasion. He played better than I did." .

Reaching the quarters in Amanda Coetzer.

against Mana Endo.

Pierce beat Iva Majoli 6-1.

ners on the run. Agassi got a crucial break that way in the third game of the fifth set when Chang popped up a defensive half-volley near the net. Racing diagonally across the court from the baseline, Agassi hammered a forehand at Chang's feet that brought a standing ovation from the crowd and a glare

from Chang. Agassi went on to break Chang at love, then put on another show of athleticism to hold serve to 3-1 with a rapidfire exchange at the net that ended with a backhand volley by Agassi. He raised both hands in triumph, jumped a few times and heard the crowd's cheers sweep down on him.

The match, which began in brilliant sunshine, ended after just over three hours with shadows covering more than half the court as Chang slapped a forehand wide.

Agassi's next opponent is No. 13 Thomas Muster, who beat two-time French Open champion and No 3 seed Sergi Bruguera 6-4, 7-6 (7-4), 6-6.

"I am playing well, I am moving along. Watch out," Agassi said. "That is how I feel. When I step on the court I feel like I can win these matches.

# Graf takes a fancy to NBA stars

NEW YORK, Sept 6: A brief encounter with basketball star Patrick Ewing has made lasting impression on Steffi Graf. reports Reuter.

"I saw the (New York) Knicks play at San Antonio and I was sitting courtside and he was getting a ball close to me and how do you say "twinkles" the eye to me," a beaming Graf said after the defending US Open champion cruised into the quarter-finals by beating Zina Garison Jackson on Monday.

Graf, who is not especially demonstrative on the court, Admires Ewing's similar playing manner.

"What I like about him is he very quiet," said Graf of the Knicks centre.

"I think he is not the kind of guy that has a lot of hype around him. He is very calm and I think I like that about a person.

Graf has become a NBA fan by attending games near her homes in New York and southern Florida.

She appreciates the way superstar Michael Jordan abruptly left the game before the last season.

"He left the game at his best so you can always remember him as the best basketball player and I think that is great," she said of Jordan, who led the Chicago Bulls to three consecutive NBA championships before retiring to play minor league baseball.

"The last thing I wanted is You take the chance and for Michael to just rally with me until he gets his ball, be leave something that is really difficult to leave because you cause there is nobody better at know you could have things seizing an opportunity than \*ahead of you, a lot of great Chang lived up to his repugames or whatever, titles tation as a relentless competi-

ahead and he just leaves it. "I think that is a difficult step.

Having won 15 major titles including a Grand Slam sweep in 1988, Graf too stands at the pinnacle of her sport.

Despite her admiration of Jordan, the 25-year-old Graf is not ready to follow him into early retirement. "That is not the way

would end my career.

# NEW YORK, Sept 6 (AP):

Highlights of Monday's play at the dlrs 9.36 million US Open tennis championships: Weather - Sunny and cool.

High temperature was 71 degrees (21 C).

Attendance - 22,791 (day). Results - Men's Singles, Fourth Round: No. 13 Thomas Muster def. No. 3 Sergi Bruguera, Andre Agassi def. No. 6 Michael Chang, Bernd Karbacher def. Gianluca Pozzi.

Women's Singles, Fourth Round: No. 1 Steffi Graf def. No. 10 Zina Garrison Jackson, No. 4 Mary Pierce def. Iva Majoli, No. 7 Jana Novotna def. No. 15 Magdalena Maleeva, No. 11 Amanda Coetzer def. Mana Endo.

Stat of the Day - This marks the second time at the US Championships - 1993 was the first - that eight women quarterfinalists represent eight different countries. Steffi Graf, Germany; Amanda Coetzer, South Africa; Mary Pierce, Prance: Jana Novotna, Czech Republic: Gabriela Sabatini, Argentina; Gigi Fernandéz, United States; Kimiko Date, Japan; and Arantxa Sanchez Vicario, Spain.

· Quote of the Day - "I am playing well. I'm moving along. Watch out," - Andre Agassi. after beating Michael Chang and advancing to the quarter-

#### Tyson likely to fight outside US HONG KONG, Sept 6:

Former heavyweight champion Mike Tyson's first fight when he leaves prison is likely to be held outside the United States due to fears of a hostile home crowd reception, a leading boxing presenter said on Monday, reports Reuter. John Daly, the man who

staged the "Rumble in the jungle" between Muhammad Ali and George Foreman in Zaire in 1974, said he was keen to put on Tyson's comeback bout. "There is a very good

chance that the fight would be outside of America," said Daly. chairman of a United States based special events company. "He would feel there would be less pressure.

"It is not known what the crowd reception could, be," Daly said. There could be booing and hostility and the opposition camp could come upwith things that would upset

"I believe he would try and box somewhere that they would focus on his boxing, not his conviction.

Tyson was jailed for six years in March 1992 for the rape of a beauty pageant contestant. He is expected to be released on parole next

January or February. Daly was in Hong Kong to publicise the World Boxing Organisation heavyweight title bout between holder Herbie Hide of England and American

Tommy Morrison on October The winner will improve his chances of a multi-million dollar payday against Tyson in

what would be the richest fight of all time. "If this bout is successful

there is no reason why you could not see Mike Tyson in Hong Kong," said Daly, who said he was in contact with the

boxer in prison.

#### ld crank up that left-handed grandstand court at the US Open, he teamed with Vitas serve, regularly reaching 140 mph (225 kph). No one else came close. One time, in the desert air of palm Springs, Calif., Tanner's serve was timed at 153 mph (246 kph). It was more and exercise in ballistics than Tanner had plenty to show for it. He won the Australian

Open in 1977, beating Guillermo Vilas in straight sets. In 1979, he took Bijorn Borg to five sets in the Wimbledon A couple of months later.

Tanner, his serve a blur in the New York night, knocked off Borg in the US Open quarterfinals, his serve on match

### Asian Games tickets almost sold out

HIROSHIMA, Sept 6: Tick ets for most of the events of the forthcoming Asian Games beginning here on October 2. are already sold out, the orgamisers said yesterday, reports

Swimming, rhythmic gymnastics, badminton and karate events were almost sold out, Kyodo said quoting the Hiroshima Asian Games Organizing Committee officials

The officials said a few tickets are still available for the men's and women's volleyball. cycling and sepak takraw, a foot yersion of volleyball, Kyodo reported quoting the Hiroshima Asian Games Organising Committee.

The committee said only a few tickets were left for the first half of the wrestling and weightlifting events.

Tanner was one of a kind point actually knocking down the net. That year Tanner was the No. 5 player in the world.

Tanner turns 43 next month and is moving at a more leisurely pace these days. On Monday night, before a

thousand or so fans on the

ROSCOE TANNER

Gerulaitis to beat Jaime Fillol and Manuel Orantes 6-1, 6-4 in the men's 35 and over divi-

Tanner's serve no longer pushes the envelope. He was timed as high as 99 mph (160 kph) in his doubles match, according to the courtside clock. He had a couple of second serves in the second set that crawled in at 58 mph (93 kph].

"I can still get in the 120s (1990s)," he said.

Afterward, Tanner stood in a courtside corridor and talked about the thing he knows best - serving. Big serving and power tennis are all the rage now. In the men's game, if a couple of heavy hitters are on court, there may be nothirfg resembling a rally all match.

At this year's Open, the fastest serve so far has been by Richard Krajicek at 131 mph (209 kph). Among the women. Brenda Schultz leads the way at 114 mph (182 kph).

Tanner, a connoisseur of serves, is impressed with Pete Sampras, who can go outside or down the middle. He also likes Krajicek and Goran Ivanisevic, the fastest server on the circuit.

"It's placement," he said "You have to move it around. You have to put it where someone doesn't expect it. Anyone can get an ace if your catch someone leaning the wrong

Tanner began playing tennis during the Paleozoic Era of wooden rackets. When he switched to metal he said his serve kicked up from 110 mph (176 kph) to 130 mph (208 kph). The metal rackets have given way to graphite, and he wonders it the men's game has gotten power drunk.

That's serious criticism coming from someone whose bread and butter was the bullet serve. Tanner wonders whether it might be a good idea to shrink the service box.

Still, Tanner questions those who sneer at the power servers. He thinks it's an art in need of an image makeover. Tennis should publicise its big hitters, he says, not apologise

He likens a fierce winning serve to a strikeout in baseball. The strikeout, he says, is exciting, and nothing was more exciting than watching Nolan Ryan at work. "A perfect game is history."

Tanner says. "But in tennis

they call that boring."

Tanner rode his serve to the top but he says there is more to it than that. A serve is a weapon with limitations. "In tennis, you can't win ev-

ery game on a serve, he said "You don't get to the top 50 or some serves, and, soon after, top ranked Frenchwoman 100 by being a one-dimen-Mary Pierce blasted top-spin sional player. You have to win on the other player's serve." forehands.

# Side courts best place to be

NEW YORK. Sept 6: While Zina Garrison Jackson battled top seed Steffi Graf in the showcase Stadium court, some of the most diehard fans at the US Open stood, enraptured, next to Court 9 instead. reports AP.

Andre Agassi was practic-

"It's probably the closest you'll get to him the whole day. You can see his expressions, said Cindy Cosgrove, a secretary from Jersey City. NJ. standing just 30 feet 110 metres) from where the American rocketed backhands to practice partner Philipp Oussis, a top junior and budding professional from Australia.

Cosgrove, and companion

Joe Malinchak, were two of

about 400 people crowded in and around a grandstand built to hold 200. They'd discovered that the best players warm up their spitfire serves and topspin lobs no more than a racket's

from spectators

crowded around waist-high fences. Both men and women players, before they've donned their fashion-statement sponsor's clothes, sport simple Tshirts and plain shorts while relaxedly chatting with coaches and trainers, or, occasionally, playing 'air guitar' or taking golf swings with

their rackets.

Court 9, at Court 11, on Monday saw Michael Chang, soon to be Agassi's victim in five sets in the stadium, fire balls at his hapless father, who had been made a racket-toting target for his sixth-seeded son. On Court 10, top men's seed Pete Sampras boomed

Fans two courts over from

#### CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer 39 Spy author **24 MGM** 3 VIP in Deighton 40 Gladiators' daremascot devilry 25 Doggiemilieu

43 Prank with 4 Cow-feed-5 "Beverly teria? a match 5 Chocolate 47 Lack of 8 Popeye source Doyle's courage prototype 49 "- want 12 Center of Christactivity 13 Fuss mas... 14 Logical 50 Follow closely 15 Inventor's

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**CRYPTOQUIP** 

ZUNNKLRUBX

URLBWXI: UIBKNB BL ZUKRB B W X C X B ' N

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: CYCLOPS COMPLAINED THAT HE AND HIS MATE DIDN'T SEE EYE TO EYE. Today's Cryptoquip clue: M equals W

IXV.

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.