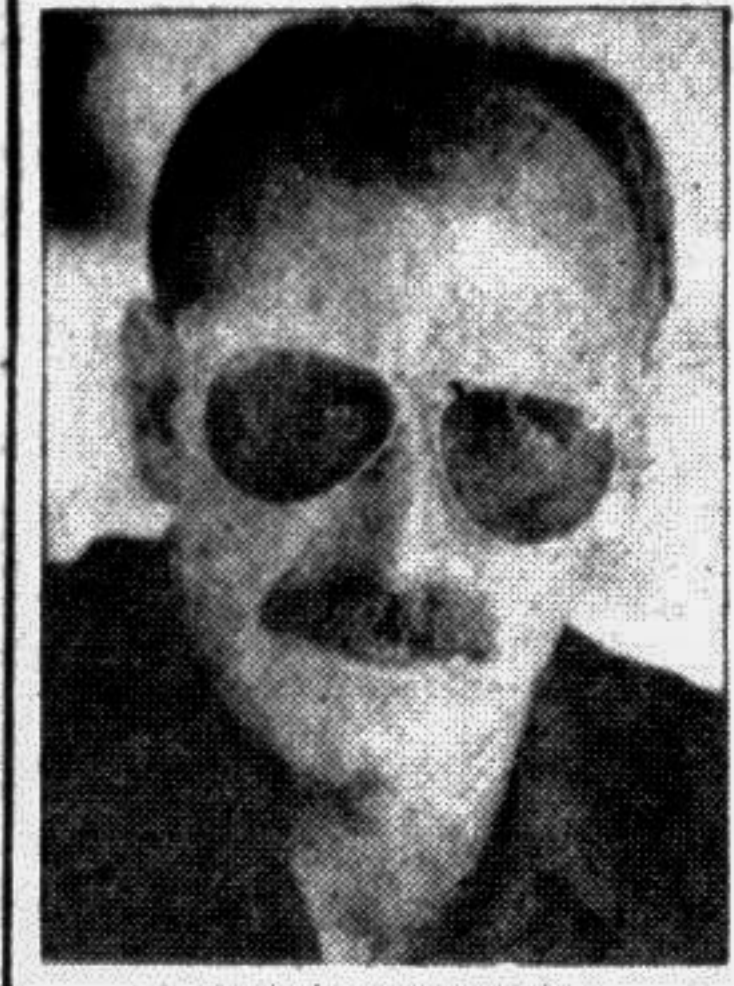


Enter Lillee, Chappell



DENNIS LILLEE
ettaker ridiculed Fletcher's claim that the tourists' attack was capable of generating as much pace as Jeff Thomson. Lillee's new ball partner during the 1970s.

ENGLAND have a handy pace attack but I have never seen anyone bowl as fast as Thomson," added Lillee, who captured 355 wickets in 70 Test appearances.

PERTH, Oct. 24: Former Australian fast bowler Dennis Lillee poured scorn today on England manager Keith Fletcher, stepping up the verbal justing before the Ashes series, reports Reuter.

On the eve of England's opening tour fixture, the one-time world record Test wicket-taker ridiculed Fletcher's claim that the tourists' attack was capable of generating as much pace as Jeff Thomson. Lillee's new ball partner during the 1970s.

"England have a handy pace attack but I have never seen anyone bowl as fast as Thomson," added Lillee, who captured 355 wickets in 70 Test appearances.

Thomson, who will team up with Lillee in the Australian Cricket Board Chairman's XI for the one-day fixture at Lilac Hill in Perth on Tuesday, joined the fray, suggesting: "Keith Fletcher may have had a memory lapse since the mid-70s."

"No-one got close to Thomson's pace," added former Australia captain Greg Chappell, who will also play against the tourists in Perth. "He was different class."

Fletcher sparked the debate on England's arrival in Perth last week, describing his country's attack as comparable to Thomson and Lillee in terms of sheer pace.

"We certainly have the pace of Dennis (Lillee)," Fletcher was quoted as saying on Saturday.

"You can't compare our bowlers with Lillee (for talent), but you can compare them with Thomson for sheer speed, especially Devon (Malcolm), Fletcher added.

Malcolm will spearhead England's attack in Australia, with support from Darren Gough, Martin McCague, Joey Benjamin and Craig White.

Chappell added fuel to the fire when he also questioned the wisdom of Graham Gooch's selection for England, suggesting the veteran batsman may be too old to make a telling impact during the Ashes series.

Chappell raised doubts about Gooch's ability, at the age



GREG CHAPPELL
has been around for that long time can still do it," said Chappell, referring to Gooch's record of 113 Test matches dating back to 1975.

But the Essex opener challenged Chappell's statement, saying: "I think my mental approach is as good as it's ever been. I will know when it's time to pack up."

Sharavanan joins Reefat at top

Sports Reporter

Sharavanan, a maiden IM norm aspirant from India, tied up with Bangladeshi International Master (IM) Reefat bin Sattar at the top of the points table as the duo had five points against their names at the end of the sixth round of the eleventh Dr Q M Hossain chess tournament at the conference room of the National Sports Council yesterday.

A relative rookie in an experienced Indian contingent pulled off an upset win against holder Mahmood Ahmed Khan Lodhi from Pakistan. The match between local stars Reefat and fellow Ziaur Rahman was adjourned after 61 moves.

In another match involving compatriots, Indian IM Lanka Ravi beat Ravi Hegde.

The veteran Indian IM Shekhar Chandra Sahu made short work of Bangladesh's Hasibul Hassan Hanif.

Tayebur Rahman Suman downed fellow Fide Master Tahmidur Rahman while Kalimullah Khan carved out a victory at the cost of countryman Abdullah Al-Rakib in another battle of Bangladeshis.

However, the other all-Bangladeshi affair between Miyazid and Maruf ended in a draw.

Bergkamp may join Bayern

ROME, Oct. 24: Inter Milan may be about to sell Dutch forward Dennis Bergkamp to Bayern Munich, the Corriere dello Sport reported Monday.

The club would not comment on the report but Bergkamp has never won a permanent place in the side and Inter were reportedly ready to accept Bayern president Franz Beckenbauer's offer of eight million dollars.

Bayern's French signing Jean-Pierre Papin, who played for Beckenbauer when he was in charge of Olympique Marseille, has played only a handful of matches because of injury and has been labelled the flop-of-the-year by the German press.

Francis' playing career over

LONDON, Oct. 24: Sheffield Wednesday manager Trevor Francis, England's first one million pounds sterling (£1.62 million dollars) player, has decided to end his playing career at the age of 40, reports Reuter.

The former England striker said on Monday he had decided to devote his time to management because he would never again be fit enough for top level soccer.

"I don't think I'll play again. Last season if I had been needed I could have probably played comfortably for an hour, but I have not trained much this season and I am not fit enough to be called upon," Francis said.

"I have been concentrating on the management side. Whether that means that I can no longer be described as a player-manager I don't know."

Novotna keeps Brighton crown

BRIGHTON, England, Oct. 24: Jana Novotna celebrated two personal milestones on Sunday by retaining her Brighton International crown with a hard fought 6-7, 6-3, 6-4 victory over fellow-Czech Helena Sukova, reports Reuter.

The victory marked the first time in her career that Novotna had successfully defended a title and the first time she had won consecutive tournaments following her win in Leipzig three weeks ago.

The triumph also confirmed Novotna's status as the best serve-and-volley player in the game with the imminent retirement of Martina Navratilova, yet another player who learned her trade in Czechoslovakia.

Sukova, 29, who has been playing on the women's tour since 1981, opened an early 3-1 lead before Novotna broke back to force a tiebreak.

Sukova seized control of the tiebreak, earned set point when Novotna netted a forehand volley and forced the second-seed to overhit a backhand volley to clinch the shoot-out 7-4.

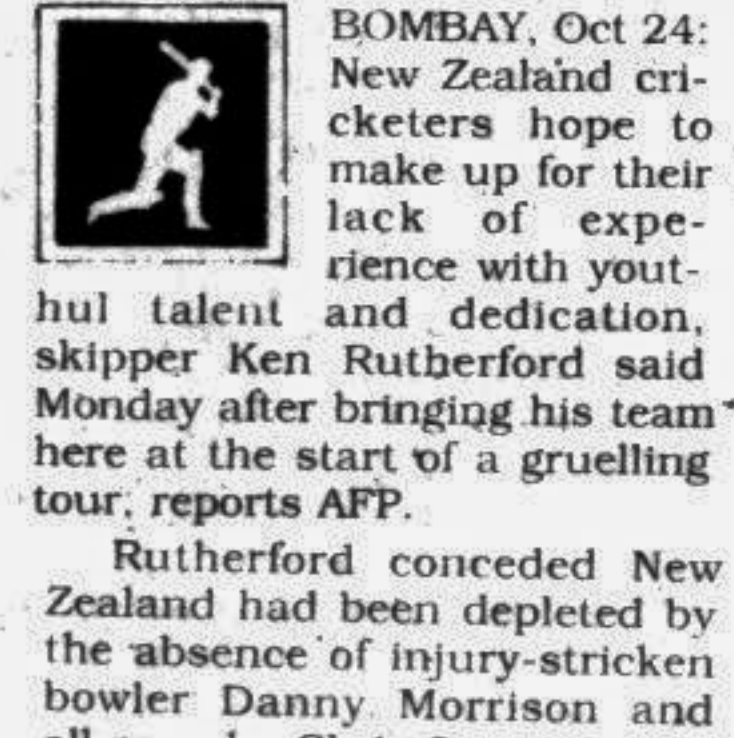
Novotna, serving better in the second set, levelled the match and she captured the only break in the third game of the decider to set up her victory, wrapping up the match in a little over two hours with a sharply angled forehand volley.

"It feels absolutely incredible. I wish I could do this more often," Novotna said.

"I knew it would be difficult to play Helena because the way she plays is totally different from anything else I have faced all week and it meant having to adjust."

"I knew I would have to serve very well and I did that in the second and third sets when I really needed to."

New Zealanders in India



NEW ZEALANDERS IN INDIA
Rutherford, who will lead the Kiwis in a triangular, limited-over series against India and the West Indies followed by the trip to South Africa, also cited the difficulty in adjusting

BOMBAY, Oct. 24: New Zealand cricketers hope to make up for their lack of experience with youthful talent and dedication, skipper Ken Rutherford said Monday after bringing his team here at the start of a gruelling tour, reports AFP.

Rutherford conceded New Zealand had been depleted by the absence of injury-stricken bowler Danny Morrison and all-rounder Chris Cairns.

Star batsman Martin Crowe opted to stay out of the Indian leg of the tour, which will also take them to their first series in South Africa in 32 years, so as not to strain a chronic knee problem.

Rutherford, who will lead the Kiwis in a triangular, limited-over series against India and the West Indies followed by the trip to South Africa, also cited the difficulty in adjusting

to competition after a long winter lay off.

"We are the underdogs for the first two games of the tournament, as we are short of competitive cricket," said the right-hand batsman, who will celebrate his 29th birthday Wednesday when New Zealand play the West Indies in Goa.

"We also are coming straight from winter temperatures of 10 degrees (Celsius, or 50 deg Fahrenheit), rain and snowfall at home, to hot conditions," he said.

But the team will try to adjust quickly to the playing conditions and strive not to be a bunch of pushovers.

Rutherford said, adding it will make up for its shortage of experience with talent and devotion to the job.

"We are a young and exciting team and are looking forward to the tour," he said. "We are taking the tour seriously."

He picked Dion Nash,

Mathew Hart, Stephen Fleming and Adam Parore for special mention as players to watch out for.

Manager and ex-Test player Geoff Howarth described it as a "team of the future" which would provide the nucleus for New Zealand's 1996 World Cup squad.

"It has a lot of talent and should develop into a good side after gaining experience," Howarth said.

India beat the West Indies by four wickets Sunday in the opening match of the three-nation series.

WC slots on FIFA's agenda



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The South American Confederation is in favour of one more berth for each confederation — Europe, Africa, Asia, South American and CONCACAF — and wants the top three teams from the US World Cup — Brazil, Italy and Sweden — to qualify automatically.

NEW YORK, Oct. 24: The allocation of eight additional berths for the next World Cup finals is the top item on the agenda at FIFA's executive committee meeting which starts here on Tuesday, reports Reuter.

The World Cup, which saw this year's host United States reap profits of 60 million dollar, will be expanded from 24 to 32 teams for the finals in France in 1998 and regional confederations are campaigning aggressively for the extra places.

UEFA, Europe's ruling body wants three of the additional eight berths to make a total of 16 European teams in the tournament — 15 qualifiers plus hosts France.

But their stand will be opposed by the African and Asian confederations. Both want two more places for their own teams and only two more for European sides.

The South American Confederation is in favour of one more berth for each confederation — Europe, Africa, Asia, South American and CONCACAF — and wants the top three teams from the US World Cup — Brazil, Italy and Sweden — to qualify automatically.

Other matters to be addressed during the three-day meeting include plans for the 1996 Atlanta Olympics soccer tournament, status of the start-up US professional league and analysis of the past World Cup, which was marred by the banishment of superstar Maradona for testing positive for banned stimulants.

The profits made from the World Cup this summer have been warmly welcomed by FIFA, and chief organiser Alan Rothenburg, who had declined a salary and said he would accept compensation only if a surplus was generated, has his patience rewarded to the tune of 3 million dollars.

Rothenburg, however, is finding less success in his effort

forts as US Soccer Federation president to kick-start a US professional league — one of the conditions FIFA imposed when it awarded the 1994 World Cup to the United States back in 1988.

Only seven of 12 teams have been announced and at least one of them is already in financial trouble. The lack of major sponsorship money is raising questions about whether Major League Soccer will get off the ground as scheduled next April.

FIFA officials were expected to report on inspections made facilities that may be used of the 16 team Atlanta Olympic tournament including Legion Field in Birmingham, Alabama.



Czech Jana Novotna exults after beating compatriot Helena Sukova 7-6, 3-6, 6-4 in the final of the Brighton international women's tournament on Oct. 23. —AFP photo

Novotna keeps Brighton crown

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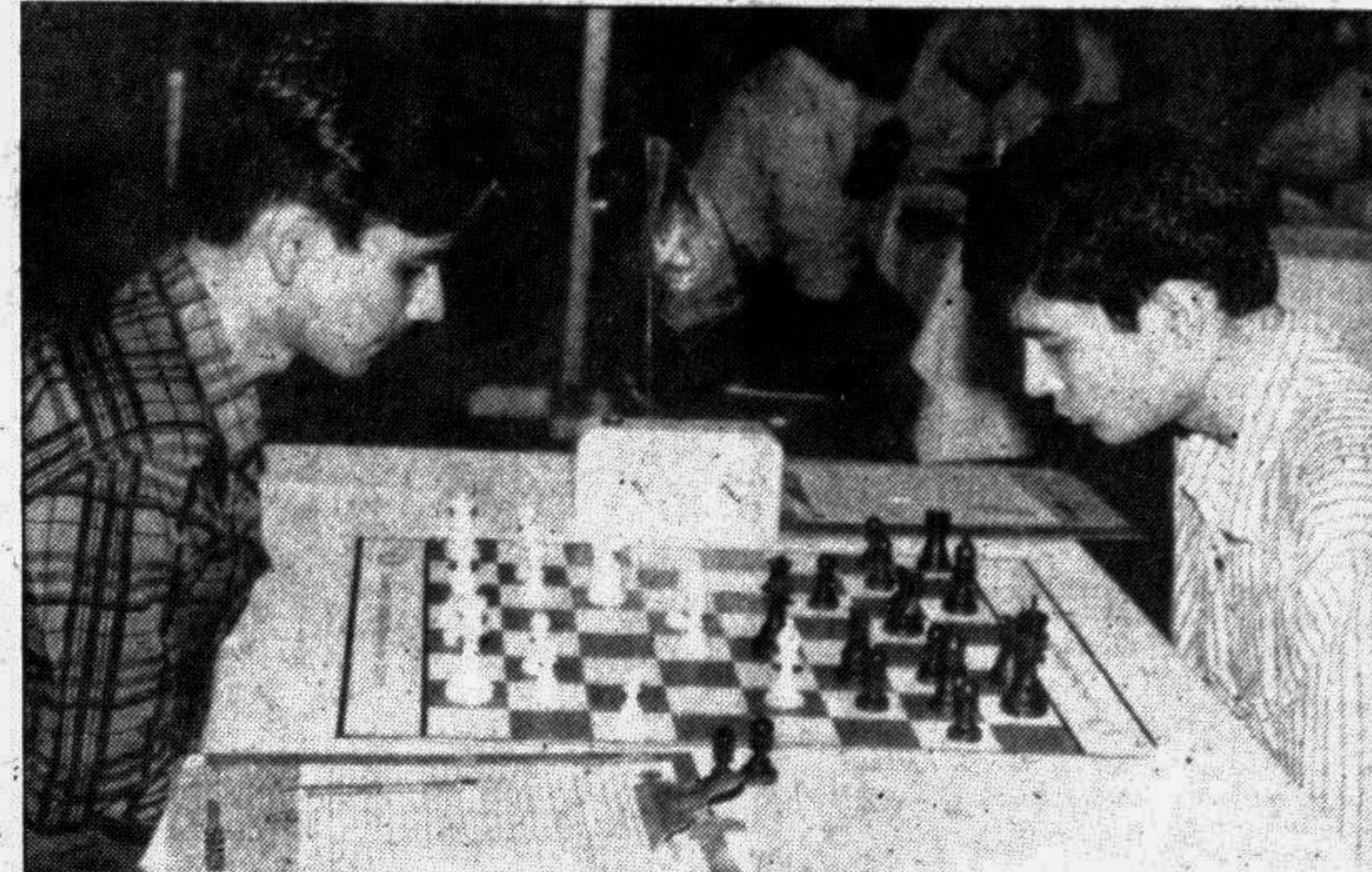
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International Master (IM) Reefat-bin-Sattar (R) and defending champion Ziaur Rahman brood over strategies during the sixth round of the QM tournament at the NSC chessroom yesterday. The game was adjourned after 61 moves with Reefat enjoying the upper hand. —Star photo

Agassi outsmarts Stich



VIENNA, Oct. 24: US Open champion Andre Agassi repeated his Flushing Meadows triumph on Sunday by beating Michael Stich in four sets in the final of the 410,000 dollars CA men's tennis trophy in Vienna, reports Reuter.

Agassi won a two hour 48 minute contest 7-6, 4-6, 6-2, 6-3, when his opponent hit a backhand return of serve long, stretching his unbeaten run against the German to six matches.

The 24-year-old American, who climbs two places in the ATP rankings to eight, outwitted Stich, 26, with sharp service returns stinging passes and cunning lobs over the tall German.

Stich, supported both by wife Jessica and pet dog Tessa, hit 18 aces and his backhand worked well for much of the match, but he was often caught

out-rushing the net by Agassi, whose film star girlfriend Brooke Shields was not in attendance.

Both players started nervously in what was a prestige rematch.

Each dropping serve once in an 85 minute first set, the set went to a tiebreak which Agassi took 7-4 on his own serve after Stich double faulted to go 4-5 down.

"Michael Stich is a very tough player indoors and he started off serving so well and I was a little bit lucky to get back into the first set," Agassi said after the match.

In the second set, Stich, seeded second, fought back from 3-0 behind to square up at 4-4. He then blasted consecutive backhand and forehand long line winners to lead 5-4 and served out the set with his 17th ace.

Clearly annoyed with giving away the second set, third-seeded Agassi picked up a warning at the beginning of

the third set for swearing at American umpire Steven Ullrich.

Ullrich also drew the wrath of Stich for failing to call for silence after taunts of "Boris, Boris" a reference to fellow countryman Boris Becker — from a group of fans in the 8,000 crowd in the Vienna Stadthalle.

Agassi regained his composure and broke in the sixth game, of the third and Stich served his fourth double fault on break point to give away the set 6-2.

In the fourth set Stich failed to convert three break points in the third game, while Agassi set the scene for his win, breaking in the next game when Stich volleyed a gentle return of serve in to the net.

"I played very good, had a lot of energy, but then in the second I got a little tired and a little loss of concentration. But then I pulled it back together and I played really well today to win," Agassi said.

Bebeto buries Valencia



MADRID, Oct. 24: Two second-half goals from Brazilian World Cup striker Beбето helped Deportivo Coruna see off Valencia on Sunday and leapfrog over Real Madrid to the top of the Spanish League, reports Reuter.

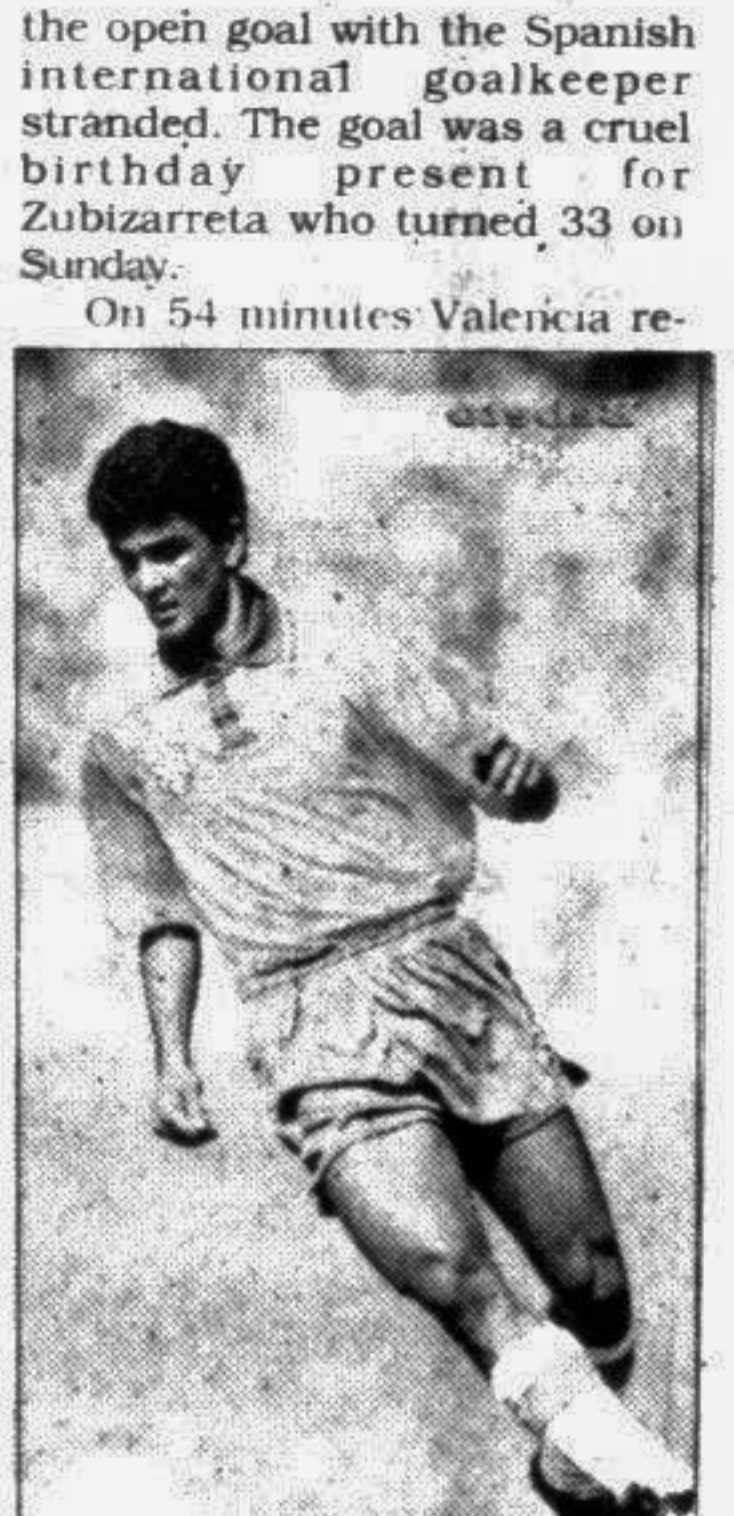
The Galicians 3-1 win gave them 13 points, one more than Real who slipped up badly against First Division newcomers Compostela earlier in the day, drawing 1-1 at home.

Barcelona took full points from their match against Tenerife. The Spanish champions won 1-0 and moved up to fourth place on 11 points, a point behind Real Zaragoza, who notched an impressive 1-0 away win at Real Betis.

Deportivo opened the scoring from the penalty spot just before the half hour, Donato striking the ball home after Beбето was tripped in front of goal.

They extended their lead six minutes after the break when Andoni Zubizarreta hurried out of his goal to tackle Deportivo's pre-season signing Emil Kostadinov.

The ball fell kindly to Beбето who knocked it into



BEBETO
duced the deficit from a well worked corner. Enrique Romero flicked the ball on at the front post for Roberto Fernandez to score.

the open goal with the Spanish international goalkeeper stranded. The goal was a cruel birthday present for Zubizarreta who turned 33 on Sunday.

On 54 minutes Valencia reduced the deficit from a well worked corner. Enrique Romero flicked the ball on at the front post for Roberto Fernandez to score.

But Beбето made the game safe for last season's runners-up 11 minutes later.

In the Bernabé Stadium Madrid flopped to a disappointing draw and finished the match with 10 men after a farcical substitution mistake.

Real got off to a flyer with Jose Amavisca scoring after just four minutes, but a lengthy interruption when the referee pulled a muscle and was replaced, appeared to knock them out of their stride.

And as they sought a winner following Compostela's 56th minute equaliser from Nigerian striker Christopher Oden, trainer Jorge Valdano cost Real any chance of victory by breaking the rules over the number of foreigners on the field.

Tenerife's midfielder Felipe Minambres was sent off in the 63rd minute for a second yellow card, but even against 10 men, Barcelona struggled to survive, and only poor finishing from their opponents saved them.

Real Zaragoza's victory against Real Betis in Seville's Benito Villamarín Stadium came through a goal two minutes from time by Spanish international Francisco Higueras.

Gothenburg still Swedish champs

STOCKHOLM, Oct. 24: Gothenburg clinched the Swedish league title on Sunday with a goal 15 minutes from time on the final day of the season for a stirring 2-1 away victory at championship-rivals Malmö, reports Reuter.

The defending champions, who needed a win to claim their 15th league title, looked like missing out until Mikael Martinsson, struck the decisive goal in the 75th minute.

Örebro, who began the day level with Malmö and a point behind Gothenburg, won 3-0 at Landskrona to finish runners up.

Gothenburg took the lead in the 21st minute through Stefan Lindqvist, but Malmö, paying in front of 25,500 partisan fans, equalised just three minutes later with a goal from Jorgen Pettersson.

Gothenburg are currently second in Group A of the European Champion's League, level on points with Manchester United after victories over Barcelona and Galatasaray.

How Senna was killed

BOLOGNA, Italy, Oct. 24: Ayrton Senna was killed when a piece of front wheel suspension went through his helmet when he crashed in the San Marino Grand Prix in May, legal sources said here Monday, reports AFP.

An autopsy report has apparently confirmed the cause of death but findings into the cause of the accident were incomplete.

Examining magistrate Maurizio Passarini would not comment on reports of a failure in the Williams steering column causing the Brazilian world champion to lose control and crash at 280 kmh (174 mph).

Passarini was waiting for a final report from the accident investigators who have also examined film from the on board camera and the computer readout of how the car was performing when it crashed.

He was expected to publish his findings next month when he will also say if legal proceedings will be brought against anyone.

Gonzalez defies elements

WASHINGTON, Oct. 24: Graciano Gonzalez defied a steady downpour to win the Marine Corps Marathon here Sunday, becoming the third Mexican in four years to win the race, reports AFP.

Gonzalez, a 34-year-old Mexican army sergeant, pulled away in the last five miles to win in an unofficial time of 2hrs 22mins 51secs. American Gordon Sanders was second in 2:25.06, followed by compatriot Bob Schwin in 2:25.37.

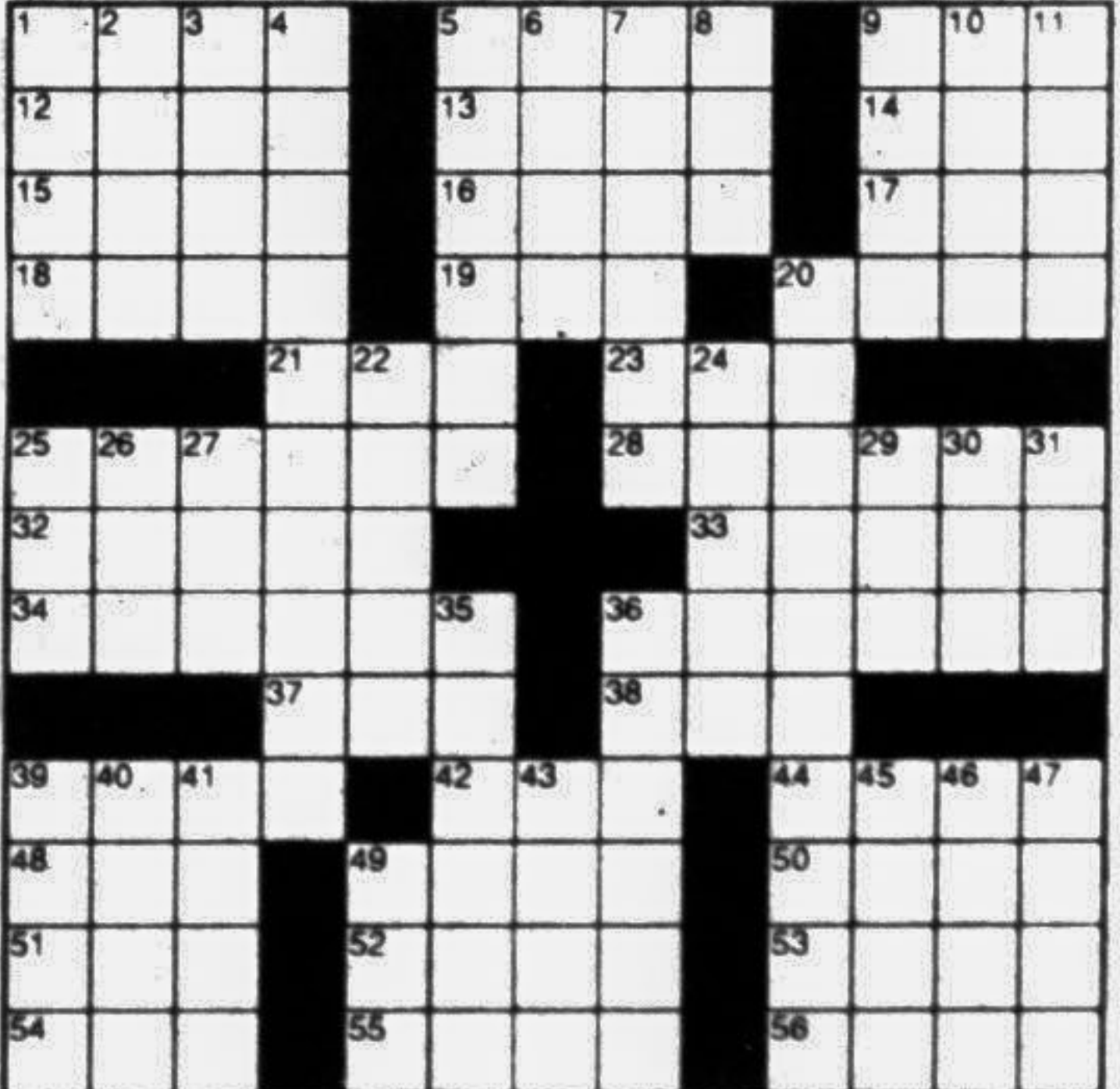
American Susan Molloy won the women's in 2:39.34.

Gonzalez, racing in his second marathon in the United States, started working his way up the field shortly after the halfway point.

"The rain bothered me a little bit at first, but only because I wasn't used to running in it," he said. "Since we train at much higher altitude we were able to run much faster than at home."

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS	relative	and Ruby	20 Papal
1 Temple	39 Knave	DOWN	protector
University	42 Bother	1 Racetrack	22 Supermarket section
team	44 Involved	2 Skid Row	24 Lt. Ellen Ripley's foe
5 Huck's	with	denizen	25 7, on the phone
transport	48 Uruguay-	3 Reply	26 Same old same-old
9 — Mahal	an's year	to "Shall we?"	27 Indivisible
12 Aspect	49 Rainstorm	4 Beef	29 Language suffix
13 Incessantly	minutia	5 Just say no	30 Eccentric
14 — pro nobis	50 Inter-follower	6 Acknowledge	31 Scone wash-down
15 Oppositionist	51 Wildlife conservation park	7 Playwright	35 Hard to come by
16 Victor of the late show	52 EPA concern	Molnar	36 Streisand hit
17 Quick drink	53 Workplace for Witt	8 Play judge and jury	39 Satchmo's style
18 Privation	54 Bypass the commercials	9 Nobelist	40 Celebes ox
19 Ram's ma'am	55 "The Way We —"	Morrison	41 Hen pen
20 Label datum	56 Sandra mockery	10 Neighbor of N.Mex.	43 "Let's Make a Deal" choice
21 Pouch	Solution time: 27 mins.	11 Bit of	45 Ballet bend
23 "Unh-unh"		mockery	46 Prong
25 "Cheers"			47 Epsom race, with "The"
28 Customer			49 Lawn sprinkling?
32 Litters' littlest			
33 Offspring			
34 Renders inflexible			
36 Spanish coin			
37 NRC's forerunner			
38 Chang's closest			



CRYPTOQUIP

N M A Y X R X E J X L T K J
C T Q X Z A J E N O R V T K Z Q
L T K B Z X E R X F X X B
A J E V F T M A Y X C ?

Yesterday's Cryptquip: TOO MUCH INCENSE AT CHURCH SERVICES SMELLS TO HIGH HEAVEN.

Today's Cryptquip clue: C equals M

The Cryptquip 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.