



Bochum's American World Cup star Eric Wynalda (L) outpaces his FC Kaiserslautern marker during a German Bundesliga league match on Oct 28. — AFP photo

Europe, CONCACAF losers

NEW YORK, Oct 29: If Africa was the big winner, Europe and CONCACAF were the big losers in the World Cup sweepstakes.

By getting a total of five berths in the next two World Cups - now expanded from 24 to 32 teams, Africa has almost tripled its allotment since 1990, when it had two, reports AP.

The "Justification" by FIFA secretary general Sepp Blatter was that Africa was the big winner, and many of its players are making their living in European leagues: Ghana's Abidie Pele with Torino in Italy; Nigeria's Rashidi Yekini with Olympiakos of Greece; Nigerian Daniel Amokachi with Everton in England; and Zimbabwe's Bruce Grobbelaar at England's Southampton.

With only 10 nations, South America seems content with four guaranteed berths and an extra for defending champions Brazil. Half of its membership will be in France.

Asia seemed to make out well too, getting three guarantees for 1998 with a good possibility of a fourth if one of its teams can beat Australia or New Zealand. Four are guaranteed for 2002 with a possible fifth when the World Cup is guaranteed to be played in Asia.

The Asian Football Confederation (AFC) governs a continent, which despite having over half of the world's population, doesn't have a team rated higher than 38th in the all-time World Cup rankings.

On the losing side, Oceania still is not guaranteed a spot at

the big party. It has only 10 member nations, most of them the likes of micro-minnows Fiji, Tahiti and Vanuatu, and Blatter said that would be essentially assuring Australia of a trip once every four years.

Legitimate losers were Europe, who had seven of the eight quarterfinalists at the 1994 World Cup, and CONCACAF, who had both of its teams advance to the second round of 1994 before being eliminated by eventual semi-finalists.

With 49 nations, Europe is second only Africa (51) in FIFA membership.

It has won seven of the 15 World Cup titles and unquestionably has the best professional league in the world.

FIFA president Joao Havelange, a Brazilian, suggested to the executive committee that Europe get 16 berths (including the host in 1998) and CONCACAF four, while limiting Africa to four.

A second proposal by the confederation presidents to the committee, according to CONCACAF head Jack Warner of Trinidad and Tobago, had 15 for Europe, five for South America, three for Asia plus a playoff with Oceania, Africa with only four, and CONCACAF three.

The remaining berth was to be decided in playoff between CONCACAF and Africa. UEFA president Lennart Johansson, a Swede, says he's happy with Europe's 15. Apparently, most other Europeans are not.

French daily L'Equipe on Friday called the outcome of this week's meetings a big loss for Europe and Havelange.

While South America is as-

sured, at least for 1998, of half of its membership, Europe gets less than a third of its members in.

While CONCACAF might be content with only three, it may have deserved better.

In the all-time World Cup rankings, Mexico is the highest rated team (18th) of any nation in North-Central America, Asia or Africa.

Africa's highest-rated team is Cameroon, 28th, only one spot better than the United States. Saudi Arabia is Asia's best (38th), only one place better than Costa Rica (39th).

Africa has been making its claim for more representation at the World Cup ever since Cameroon reached the quarterfinals in 1990. But the "Indomitable Lions" finished a poor 22nd in 1994. Only one of Africa's three teams, Nigeria, made it out of the first round in the United States, and advanced no further than the second.

"You win some and you lose," Warner said.

Perhaps the best thing to come out of this week's meeting in New York was Havelange's suggestion to put the FIFA presidential election in a four-year cycle opposite that to the World Cup.

Havelange won a sixth term in June, some say, because he "bought" smaller confederations like Africa and Asia, with promises of more World Cup berths.

The argument for changing the cycle of the election was depoliticise the World Cup. The idea might be accepted, since FIFA has seen how one person already has made the World Cup a political issue.

Vogts opens up a can of worms

BONN, Oct 29: Germany coach Berti Vogts, already under fire after a disappointing World Cup, has opened up a can of worms by suggesting his players should be paid to show more character, reports Reuter.

Vogts, whose job could be in danger if the Germans make a poor start to their European Championship qualifying campaign in Albania next month, suggested players be paid bonuses in friendly games, to give them an extra edge.

"It could be that we are going to have to give up the idea of appealing to the honour of the players and the idea of 'we are a team' and play them bonuses for friendlies as well as at championships," Vogts said.

"That could be a way of squeezing the last five per cent out of them that is missing."

Vogts' suggestion follows a disappointing, goalless draw with Hungary in a friendly earlier this month and several unconvincing performances during two years of friendlies before this year's World Cup finals.

It is normal for the Germans to pay their players premiums for performances at European Championships and World Cup finals a common practice for all international teams.

But Vogts has upset the German soccer world by suggesting it is necessary to effectively bribe players to perform in a shirt which has been worn with pride by the likes of Franz Beckenbauer, Uwe Seeler and Gerd Mueller.

"It should be an honour for very footballer to play for Germany," Seeler told the German newspaper Bild on Friday. "Footballers get enough money."

Germany captain Lothar Matthaus added: "I don't want any money for friendlies."

"I would take the bonus, but you don't need an extra incentive because everyone likes to play in the national team," Eintracht Frankfurt's World Cup player Maurizio Gaudino said.

German Soccer Federation (DFB) boss Egidius Braun is also against the idea, and the German media, some of which has already turned against Vogts, gave the suggestion a cool reception on Friday.

"Is it no longer an honour to play for Germany now?" Bild asked.

"People who talk about bonuses after nothing matches, would be better off talking about compensation for the spectators who pay money to watch a game like the Bundesliga," the Frankfurter Allgemeine added.

German coaches prefer old one

BONN, Oct 29: FIFA's decision to make three points for a win standard in every soccer league in the world has been given a cool reception by some coaches in Germany where the old two-point system operates, reports Reuter.

"I prefer the old system," Eintracht Frankfurt and former Bayern Munich coach Jupp Heynckes said on Friday.

"The games won't get better with the new three-point rule," Schalke's manager Rudi Assauer added: "The other leagues have shown that the three-point rule doesn't help."

In Europe, among the major leagues, the English Premier, Scottish Premier and Italian and French First Divisions already operate three points for a win. The Spanish League, like the Bundesliga, retains two points for a win.

Soccer's ruling body made the decision to introduce the system worldwide at a meeting in New York on Thursday.

Arnot's new job

ATLANTA, Oct 29: Atlanta Olympic organisers on Friday named US World Cup official Doug Arnot to be Director of venues for the 1996 Summer Games, reports Reuter.

Arnot, who held the post of executive vice president of World Cup USA 1994, will be responsible for overseeing the 31 venues where competition will take place during the 1996 centennial Olympics as well as more than a dozen non-sports venues, the Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games (ACOG) said in a news release.

The 44-year-old Arnot held a similar post during the World Cup soccer tournament in the United States this past summer. Arnot worked for US World Cup organisers from 1992 to 1994, managing the nine venues for the month-long competition.

"Doug brings exactly the right kind of talent and experience we need at ACOG as we begin to focus more heavily on the venue management element of our mission," ACOG chief operating officer A'D Frader said.



Germany's Boris Becker stretches for a volley during his quarterfinal match against compatriot Michael Stich at the Stockholm Open on Oct 28. Becker won 7-6, 6-3. — AFP photo

Ivanisevic in superb nick



STOCKHOLM, Oct 29: Goran Ivanisevic edged US Open champion Andre Agassi 10-8 in a see-saw quarterfinal night to gain the semifinals of the Stockholm Open, reports AP.

Each player blew a match point in the tiebreak before the world's second ranked player connected with a cross-court forehand to win the quarterfinal 6-1, 3-6, 7-6 (10-8).

"It was very close, obviously it could have gone either way," Agassi said. "It went his way and there's not much you can do about it."

Agassi, who rallied from a set down to win his first two matches here in three sets, came close again.

He had a match point leading 8-7 in the tiebreaker. But Ivanisevic, one of the biggest servers in the game, tied it 8-8 with an ace. Another ace by the tall Croatian gave him an 9-8 edge.

"Those aces gave me more confidence," Ivanisevic said. "It meant a lot."

Ivanisevic, the 1992 Stockholm Open champion, had a match point at 7-6 in the tiebreak, but his forehand sailed long.

Ivanisevic's victory snapped Agassi's 14-match winning streak that started in the US Open, where the American became the first unseeded player to win the men's singles in the open era.

"I don't want to complain but it was unbelievable that they changed the court in the middle of the tournament," Ivanisevic said.

One Green Set Trophy court was installed overnight, replacing the two parallel courts used earlier in the tournament. Although the surface was the same, several players complained it was faster in the opening rounds.

Agassi, seeded No. 9, won his last two matches against Ivanisevic, in the 1992 Wimbledon final and the semis in Vienna, Austria, last weekend.

"It was nice to cut him

when he was an a roll," Ivanisevic said. "Last week had no chance."

Ivanisevic will play Russia's rising star Evgeny Kafelnikov in Saturday's semifinals. They're 1-1 lifetime.

Kafelnikov, seeded No. 11, rallied from a set down to defeat No. 4 Sergi Bruguera 6-7 (4-7), 6-4, 6-2.

Top-seed Sampras rode his big serve to an easy victory over Magnus Larsson Friday and a berth against Boris Becker in the other semifinals of the dlr's 1.72 million tournament.

The world's top-ranked player won 6-1, 6-4 on the Globe Arena's fast carpet, dropping only five points in his own service games. Two of them were double faults.

"I think I really played well today against a very tough opponent who's been playing well this week, beating (Michael) Chang," Sampras said.

The American needed four sets in the opening singles against Larsson in the Sweden-United States Davis Cup semifinals at Goteborg last month. But he was never challenged by the lanky Swede this time.

"I knew it would be a tough match and I kind of surprised

Vietnamese shuttlers turn to Indonesia

JAKARTA, Oct 29: Vietnam wants to send badminton players to Indonesia, one of the world's strongest badminton nations, to improve their skills by playing for local clubs, the Antara news agency said today, reports Reuter.

Ho Chi Luong, of the Vietnam Badminton Federation, said he also hoped Vietnamese shuttlers could benefit from Indonesia's facilities and training methods, Antara said.

Soerjadi, chairman of the All Indonesia Badminton Association, said after meeting Luong that he did not object to the request.

"Cambodia has also the same interest in sending badminton players here. If Vietnam is also interested,

myself a little bit as far as how well I played today," Sampras said.

Larsson, who clinched Sweden's 3-2 Davis Cup victory over the United States by defeating Todd Martin in the fifth and decisive match, knocked off Chang in the second round. The unseeded Swede is ranked 28th in the world.

Becker, a three-time Stockholm Open champion in 1988, 1990, and 1991, also won his quarterfinal in straight sets, 7-6 (7-3), 6-3 over defending champion and fellow German Michael Stich.

Sampras has yet to lose a set in the tournament, but has only played two matches. He received a first-round bye as all other 15 seeds and then Marc Rosset withdrew because of the flu, giving the American an extra day or rest Thursday.

That's the last Sampras wants. He was sidelined 45 days in the summer because of tendinitis in his left ankle, then came back for the US Open and was upset by Jaime Yzaga in the round of 16.

Then, playing the next two last singles in the Davis Cup semifinals five weeks ago, Sampras pulled a hamstring against Stefan Edberg as Sweden won the match 3-2.

Sampras didn't return to competitive tennis until last week, when he reached the semifinals in an exhibition in Hong Kong.

Becker is likely to be Sampras' toughest opponent in the tournament. The sixth-seeded German always plays well on carpet and has the highest won-lost ratio in Stockholm (20-3).

Becker, who has won three ATP singles titles this year, is one of 12 players looking for one of the remaining five spots in the ATP Tour World Championship in Frankfurt next month.

"I've played Boris a number of times and I feel good about my chances," said Sampras, who has won a tour leading eight events this year. "The court plays a little different now. It's slower. It's good or the fans."

Russia, Cuba in eves' v'ball semifinals

SAO PAULO, Brazil, Oct 29: Russia beat the United States 3-1 and Cuba remained unbeaten with a three-set sweep of Germany on Friday in the quarterfinals of the women's World Volleyball championship, reports AP.

Russia's 15-9, 9-15, 15-9, 16-14 victory moved them into Saturday's semifinals against Brazil, who beat Japan 15-10, 17-15, 15-7.

Cuba, the only undefeated team in the 16-country tournament, won its quarterfinal match 15-9, 15-5, 15-5 in just 67 minutes. In the semifinals, Cuba will play South Korea, who beat China 15-5, 4-15, 15-5, 15-11.

The quarterfinal losses continue play Saturday in a consolation round to determine fifth through eighth place.

Jansher to take part in Japan Open

ISLAMABAD, Oct 29: Squash world number one Jansher Khan will participate in the forthcoming Japan Open squash championship next month, the official Associated Press of Pakistan news agency said Saturday, reports AFP.

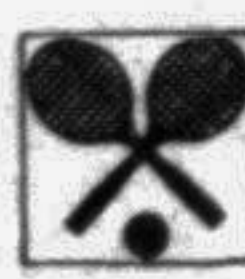
Another Pakistani, Zarak Jehan Khan, will also take part in the 90,000 dollar prize championship scheduled to commence November 1 in the Japanese port city of Yokohama.

Jansher is to play his first match against South Africa's Craig van Der Walt.

The agency quoted Jansher as saying "There is so much of squash — and money — in the international circuit that one could not afford to miss a major tournament."

He said he was confident that he would win the Japan Open. The finals of the championship will be held on November 13.

Risks, rewards & Williams



OAKLAND, Calif. Oct 29: The children pressed against the net and gazed up at towering Venus Williams, at 14 just a little older than they are and on the verge of a tennis career that carries as much risk as rewards, reports AP.

"All you have to do is look at me and visualise yourself in me," Williams told the kids, most of them blacks like her, on Thursday.

There were dozens of youngsters who were part of an inner-city park programme. None of them was 6-foot-1 (1.8 metres) as Williams is, and perhaps few will have the opportunity she'll have to make millions of dollars before she gets her driver's license. But her roots were just as modest growing up in Southern California, and she is getting adept at giving inspirational talks.

The kids looked starry-eyed at Williams. She handed a microphone back to her father, Richard, who acted as emcee for the occasion. The Williams family isn't so much a budding tennis conglomerate, with Venus turning pro next week, and 13-year-old sister Serena in perhaps a few years, as they are devout Jehovah's Witnesses

and they carry their religious zeal wherever they take their rackets.

Venus, statuesque and poised, is at a turning point in her life, a few days from her first tournament as a professional, her first tournament of any kind since she was 11. She has the talent aggressive and speed to be a fine player, sizzling ground strokes, an aggressive net game and a decent serve.

But her serve-and-volley style is also likely to take a long time to develop, and the chances of early success are slim. She wanted to play in the Bank of the West Classic in Oakland to measure herself against some of the best pros - Arantza Sanchez Vicario and Martina Navratilova lead the 28-player field — but it would not surprise Williams' coach, Rick Macci, if Williams got blown out early in the tournament.

"She plays a game that's drier, more adventurous, and unfortunately she's more vulnerable," Macci said, comparing Williams with another phenom he coached, Jennifer Capriati, who gained success at 14 by slugging from the baseline. "Venus is not going to just knock people over."

Regardless of how she does next week, the greater test for Williams will come in handling

the pressures of pro life, the expectations she puts on herself and the expectations of others. The Women's Tennis Council issued a report during the US Open warning of the many perils young pros face, a warning that Williams is choosing to ignore somewhat. By turning pro now, she also is jumping the gun on the WTA's pending change to a 16-year-old minimum age for professionals.

Williams said she may not play again for five months and will limit herself to five or six tournaments next year. She expressed confidence that she can handle the stress that led to the burnout of Capriati last year and other players in the past.

"You can avoid it," Williams said. "By not saying 'I've seen that and it's not going to happen to me because I'm a different person.' If you say that, you're totally vulnerable to it. If I can look at these situations and avoid it, that means I can avoid it. I've learned a lot from other people's mistakes. Of course, I'll make a few, but I don't think they'll be major mistakes."

Williams believes she is more mature than most girls her age because she reads a lot. Instead of going to school, she's being educated at home by her mother, Brandy.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

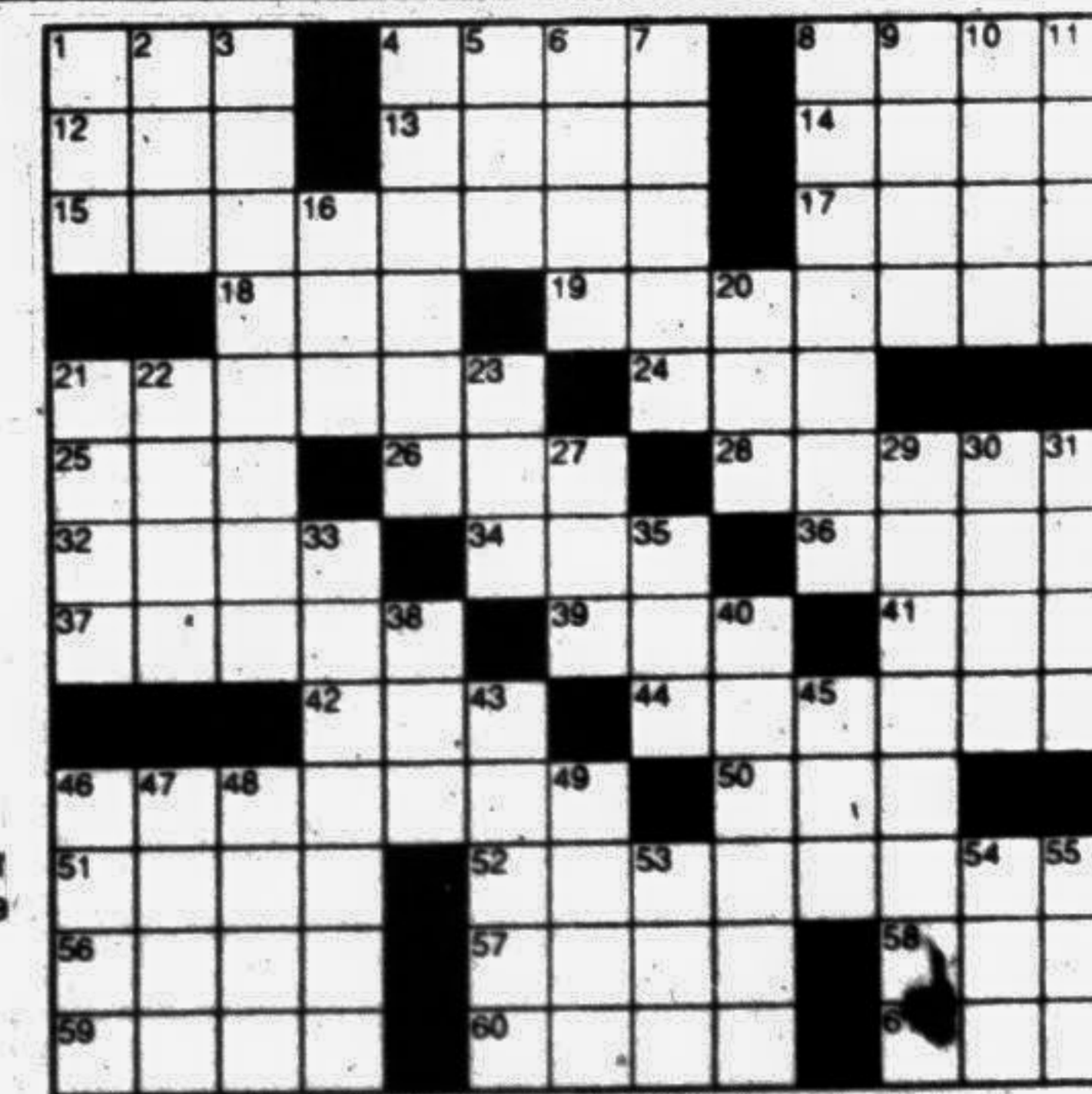
- Symbol of intrigue
- Miffed
- Dressed
- Asian river, 46
- Carina
- Base-runner's goal
- Barely burned
- Port of Yemen
- Pull
- Lot
- TV producer
- Get too ripe
- Crew member
- Difficulty
- Present with a carrot
- Bakery employee
- Playing thing
- Waikiki wingding
- DeMille Copland work
- Use a ray gun
- Vessel for three men
- The —

DOWN

- the grass
- Humorist
- Flightless Aussie
- Not dry, as popcorn
- Shish kebab need
- "— the ramparts..."
- Obsolet's need
- Senior
- Tangible property
- New Jersey city
- Congregational cry
- Just say no
- "Mazel —"
- Tooper
- Hoosegow
- Mold on the dinner table
- Ball-bearing item
- Tote-board tally
- Worm, often
- Sea bird
- Acclaim
- Tabby's companion
- Prior to
- Margery of rhyme

SAC GAZA BLOW
PEA ERIN RAVE
ARP EMPANADAS
TOPAZ GOI
HENS SNAPU
ESCAROLE SOIN
XII SPIRO UNI
PATE EGGPLANT
OMENS OOPS
TIA ODDLY
ESCARGOTS RUE
TORTI OBOE ANA
AWOL GIRD WAR

Yesterday's answer 2-10



CRYPTOQUIP

RSUI QBPOWTPV XQRGHS
TBU LBDSBZS KBGZK
WB X HBLWPS EXUWJ
"OS JBPULSVT."

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: MOST PEOPLE WOULD REFUSE LION FOR SUPPER. "WE DON'T EAT ROAR MEAT."

Today's Cryptoquip clue: O equals 8

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.