

Maradona bids Racing adieu

Buenos Aires, May 7: Former soccer star Diego Maradona said Saturday he was resigning as coach of Argentine team Racing Club, reports Reuter.

Maradona told reporters at the Boca Juniors Stadium where he was watching a match that he was quitting because Racing Club president Juan Destefano lost the election in which he was seeking a third term.

Maradona had warned earlier that he would quit if Destefano was not re-elected. The outgoing Racing Club president lost his re-election bid earlier in the day to Ossvaldo Otero.

Otero offered an olive branch to the 34-year-old Maradona, who led Argentina to the 1986 World Cup victory, saying he would like to have him playing in the team.

"Diego could play, provided we can strike a financial deal that is suitable for him and for us," Otero said.

Maradona has said time and again he would like to play again in September after a ban eloped on him by the world soccer federation FIFA for failing a drug test in the US World Cup finals expires.

Maradona, who became Racing Club coach in January, did not say when his resignation would become effective.

He moved onto Racing after a short but disastrous spell coaching Deportivo Mandiyu, a small team from northern Argentina.

Bayern stay in contention

Bonn, May 7: Bayern Munich beat struggling Bayer Uerdingen 2-1 on Saturday to keep up the challenge for a place in European competition which could be crucial in luring Juergen Klinsmann back to the German Bundesliga, reports Reuter.

Mehmet Scholl's 51 minute winner kept Bayern in sixth place but put them level on points with Moenchengladbach in fifth place, the last spot to guarantee participation in next season's UEFA Cup.

Striker Klinsmann is considering leaving England's Tottenham Hotspur, also seeking a UEFA Cup place, for Bayern Munich.

Bayern are already out of the running for the title, which is likely to go to either Borussia Dortmund or Werder Bremen, who meet in a virtual title decider in Bremen on Sunday.

If both lose their nerve in the remaining six matches, the season's surprise side Freiburg have left themselves ready to pounce with a vital 4-1 home win on Friday against fourth-placed Kaiserslautern.

Dortmund lead the table with 41 points from Bremen on 40, both from 28 matches.

Freiburg and Kaiserslautern follow a point behind but have played one game more.

Moenchengladbach and Bayern Munich both have 37 points from 29 matches.

Munich showed the confidence which has characterised their late season performances, coming back from the psychological blow of having a league win converted into a defeat by the German Football Association (DFB) on a technicality.

The DFB on Tuesday cancelled Bayern's 5-2 away win at Eintracht Frankfurt three weeks ago because Bayern inadvertently brought on a fourth amateur, one more than the rules allow.

But Bayern, who have already spent big on shaping a new side for in coming coach Otto Rehaagel next season, can ill afford to miss out on money-spinning European soccer.

Christian Nerlinger poked a long throw from Christian Ziege in to the net to give Bayern the lead in the 13th minute, but the reigning champions squandered a host of chances before Horst Steffen equalised with a penalty five minutes before halftime.

However, shortly after the break attacking midfielder Mehmet Scholl, named by national coach Berti Vogts as his player of the month, latched onto a cross from Ziege to score from three metres (yards) and give Munich both points.

Knights lift soccer title

Adelaide, Australia, May 7: Andrew Marth and Joe Spiteri scored first-half goals Sunday as the Melbourne Knights defeated Adelaide City 2-0 in the Australian National Soccer League championship game, reports AP.

Defender March struck a volley from 30 metres in the 36th minute and striker Spiteri scored from close range six minutes later.

Adelaide City had beaten the Knights in 1992 and 1994 to win the championship.

The Knights won the title for the first time after being defeated in three of the last four championship games.

Portugal U-16 Euro champs

BRUSSELS, May 7: Portugal won their fifth major youth soccer title in a half dozen years Saturday, beating Spain 2-0 in the final of the under-16 European Championship, reports AP.

Zefirino Soares, named the outstanding player of the tournament, scored one of his six goals in the two-week event to lead Portugal.

Capitalising on two blunders from error-prone Spanish goalkeeper Joaquin Moso, Zefirino and Miguel Vargas scored in the second-half to give Portugal the title in front of 4,000 fans.

"Now we will continue to work with the young and progress with them," coach Rui Manuel Cacador said. In five years we can be very, very good at the highest level.

"Now they are coming," UEFA president Lennart Johansson said. "You just watch them."

Since 1989, Portugal have

twice won the under-20 World Championship with coach Carlos Queiroz. Add to that the under-16 European title in 1989 and the under-18 European Championship last year, and many wonder why the senior international side can't win a major title.

Portugal's brightest hour came in 1966, when Eusebio led the team to the third place in the World Cup. They also reached the semifinals of the 1984 European Championship, but their last noteworthy feat was a threat to strike during the 1986 World Cup ahead of an early exit.

Cacador blames inefficient funds to follow up talent and a glut of foreign players in the domestic league for the national team's misery.

Of the players who were on Portugal's last team to win the U-20 World championship, only two now play in the Portuguese First Division, Cacador said.

Until two years ago, there

were few restrictions on Brazilian players in the Portuguese league and little homegrown talent could develop. Over 100 foreigners flooded the league and, with only three big clubs in the country — Porto, Benfica and Sporting Lisbon, too much talent withered early.

"Precious few of our best players could reach the first team, so they just didn't get a chance," Cacador said.

And, even with a reputation as superb technicians, Portugal too often relied on dour defense.

"At the top level, they played too negatively, too destructively," said famed former Dutch coach Rinus Michels.

"Now we will try to play more offensively," said Cacador. It was evident in Saturday's final. Even with a comfortable lead, Portugal kept Spain pinned on their own half for most the second half as created a flurry of chances.

Star strikers' soap opera

LONDON, May 7: Juergen Klinsmann, Les Ferdinand, Stand Collymore and Chris Armstrong — some 20 million pounds sterling (32 million USD) of talent — had Premier League managers enthusing and worrying at the same time on Saturday, reports Reuter.

Will Klinsmann stay at Tottenham, can Ferdinand be prevented from leaving Queen's Park Rangers, is Collymore for sale, where will Armstrong go if Crystal Palace are relegated?

The relegation issue has still not been fully settled with

thought that Villa would be concentrating their efforts on staying in the Premier League without revealing their thoughts on trying to sign players. I don't think Stano would fancy playing in the First Division.

He also revealed he is hoping to re-enter negotiations with Collymore over a new deal within the next two weeks.

It is hardly surprising, however, if manager Brian Little has been looking at strikers. His own had not scored a goal since February until Dwight Yorke's brace of headers in the 2-0 win over Liverpool.

a goal drought of three matches with two in the 2-1 home victory over Tottenham.

Rangers manager Ray Wilkins said he was determined to keep hold of Ferdinand. He also revealed that negotiations to sign Paul Gascoigne have already begun with Lazio.

Wilkins said: "Les showed his class. He is the cream and, as they say, cream always rises to the top."

"I want to keep Les here. I'll be sitting down with Les to see what his plans are in the next couple of weeks."

"He's an ambitious man but hopefully the owner of this



Liverpool's Steve McManaman (R) and Ian Wright of Aston Villa try to take control of the ball during their English Premier League match at Villa Park in Birmingham on May 6. Villa won the match 2-0.

one club yet to join Ipswich, Leicester and Norwich, whose fate was sealed in a 2-1 defeat at Leeds.

Crystal Palace and Aston Villa are among the threatened sides, yet Villa have allegedly already been sounding out the availability of Collymore.

Nottingham Forest are considering a protest to the Premier League over the alleged illegal approach from Villa for their seven-million-pound (£11.7 million USD) rated striker.

Forest manager Frank Clark, concerned at Villa reports that they are "planning a move for Collymore," revealed his anger after his striker had scored his 25th goal of the season in the 1-0 win over Manchester City, securing a UEFA Cup berth.

Clark said: "I would have

Armstrong, caught up in a drug scandal earlier in the season and criticised lately for an apparent lack of effort, scored his first goal in five games in Palace's 1-0 win over West Ham to lift the gloom over manager Alan Smith.

"I'm chuffed to bits about our performance. It has given us a bloody good chance of staying in the Premier League," said Smith, whose side occupy the fourth relegation spot, one point below Everton, Coventry and West Ham and two adrift of Villa.

Smith's job is on the line, but the five-million-pound (£8 million USD) rated Armstrong's future is surely secure regardless of Palace's fate.

Ferdinand, who has already won several England caps while the other two are still vying for their first, also ended

club, Richard Thompson, has shown his ambition by contacting Lazio about Paul's availability."

Klinsmann, who joined Spurs for what now looks a bargain two million pounds (£3 million USD) after last year's World Cup finals, could be going in the other direction from Gascoigne.

He will begin talks on Sunday with Tottenham manager Gerry Francis and club chairman Alan Sugar, who are determined to persuade the popular German star to stay in the English game for another season.

What may be lacking is the incentive of European competition that Tottenham lost out on with defeat at Loftus Road. Klinsmann could find with Bayern Munich and Collymore secured for Forest.

Fredericks' fine feat

MITO, Japan, May 7: Frankie Fredericks of Namibia edged American Tim Montgomery by 0.12 second Sunday and won the men's 100-meter dash in the Mito International Track and Field meet, reports AP.

Fredericks finished in 10.18 seconds to Montgomery's 10.30.

"I ran pretty well in my first outdoor race this season," said Fredericks, whose best time is 9.95.

Samuel Matete of Zambia, the 1991 world champion in the men's 400-meter hurdles, won the event in 49.18 seconds, much slower than his winning time of 47.64 in Tokyo in 1991.

Derek Mills beat American compatriot Lamont Smith in the men's 400 meters for the second time in five days. He won in 45.56 seconds. Smith finished third in 46.49.

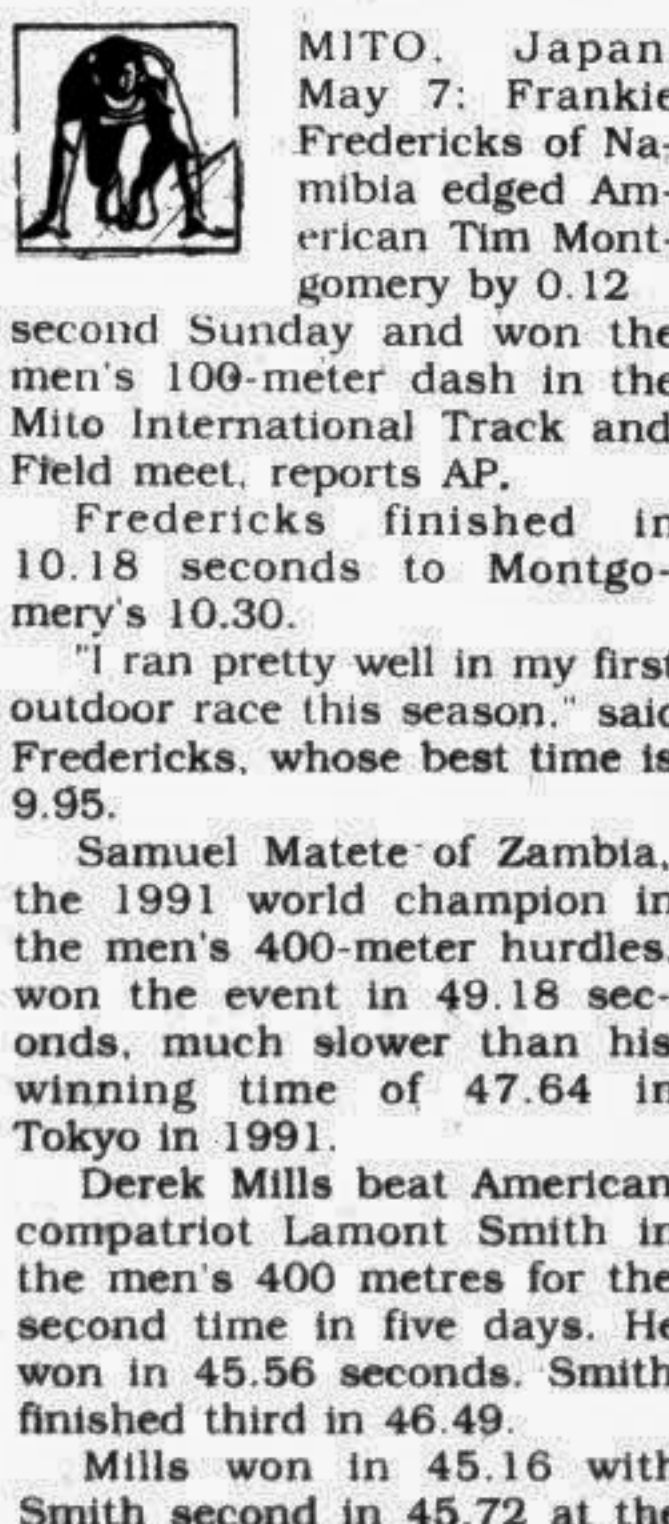
Mills won in 45.16 with Smith second in 45.72 at the

Shizuoka International Meet on Wednesday.

American Ron Clark won the men's 200 metres in 20.81 seconds.

In the women's competition, Yolanda Chen of Russia, who holds the indoor world record of 15.03 meters (49 feet, 3 3/4 inches) in the triple jump, took the long jump at 6.33 meters (20-9 1/4).

Derartu Tulu of Ethiopia, 1992 Olympic gold medalist at 10,000 meters, took the lead in the last 200 meters (660 feet) and won the event in 31 minutes, 27.58 seconds.



FRANKIE FREDERICKS

Atlanta Olympics tickets on sale

ATLANTA, May 7: Let the ticket sales begin, the Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games (ACOG) announced on Monday, reports Reuter.

The process for ordering tickets for the 1996 Summer Olympics was initiated Monday as ACOG said that 36 million 48-page informational brochures on ticket buying procedures were available for distribution.

Russia rout Faroes

MOSCOW, May 7: An under-strength Russian side scored three second-half goals to beat the rank outsiders from the Faroe Islands 3-0 in a European Championship Group Eight qualifying match on Saturday, reports Reuter.

Russia, who played with only one of their foreign-based players, moved into third place with 11 points from five games, one fewer than joint group leaders Finland and Greece.

Spartak Moscow midfielder Valery Kechinov broke the deadlock in the 53rd minute when he hooked the ball home from six metres out after the Faroes defence failed to deal with a deep left wing cross from Dmitry Cheryshev.

Teammate Nikolai Pisarev doubled the spare in the 73rd minute with a left foot shot from just outside the area which caught 'keeper Jens Martin Knudsen by surprise.

Spartak striker Mukhsin Mukhamadiyev, top scorer in the Russian Premier League, wrapped up the win in the 80th minute with a close range header past the demoralised Knudsen.

The result was rough justice for the Faroes, who could easily have scored in the 50th minute when striker Jens Erik Rasmussen fired in a 10-metre shot Russian goalkeeper Stanislav Cherchesov did well to deflect past the post.

Cherchesov also saved his side's blushes in the 35th minute when he used his legs to stop another shot from Rasmussen, who ran 40 metres towards the goal before shooting.

Russian coach Oleg Romantsev had rested virtually all his foreign-based stars, many of whom were involved in crucial championship and relegation battles this weekend.



Spanishiard Conchita Martinez plays a forehand return against Bulgarian Magdalena Maleeva during their semifinal match at the Hamburg Open on Saturday. Martinez won 6-0, 6-0. — AFP/UNB photo

North Melbourne end losing streak

MELBOURNE, May 7: North Melbourne ended a three-match losing streak in emphatic style Sunday, scoring a 47-point Australian Football League victory over Hawthorn at the Melbourne Cricket Ground, reports AP.

Mark Roberts kicked five goals and Wayne Carey four as the Kangaroos defeated the Hawks 22.12 (144) to 14.13 (97).

Eleven players shared the scoring as Carlton defended brilliantly to defeat the injury-plagued defending champions West Coast Eagles 13.12 (90) to 10.7 (67) at Princes Park, but the Blues lost captain Stephen Kernahan with a shoulder ailment and centerman Greg Williams with an arm injury.

The win was the sixth straight for Carlton — a record matched only by Richmond, who outplayed Collingwood.

The Tigers got three goals each from Matthew Richardson and Nicholas Daffy as they triumphed 13.16 (94) to 12.10 (82) in front of a 60,000 crowd at the Melbourne Cricket Ground on Saturday. Saverio Rocca potted six goals for the Magpies, who have to win this season.

Full-forward Gary Ablett kicked nine goals and took his tally for the season to 35 as Geelong trounced Footscray 22.18 (150) to 8.14 (62) at Western Oval.

Ruelas wins, Ruelas loses

LAS VEGAS, May 7: Oscar De La Hoya cemented his claim as boxing's fastest rising star in smashing fashion Saturday night.

De La Hoya knocked Rafael Ruelas down twice in the second round, then stopped him with a barrage of punches in a shockingly sudden end to a battle of two lightweight champions, reports AP.

A devastating left hook that put Ruelas on the canvas started the onslaught, which ended with referee Richard Steele wrapping his arms around Ruelas to protect him from further punches at 1:43 of the second round.

The pro-Ruelas crowd of some 13,000 at Caesars Palace watched stunned as De La Hoya leaped in the air in glee after winning his biggest fight since capturing an Olympic gold medal in 1992.

"I had him," De La Hoya said. "It was a matter of time. Ruelas is a very strong will-powered fighter. If I didn't OK him early, he was going to beat me."

Ruelas, who lost his IBF lightweight title, was trying to press the fight against De La Hoya early in the second round when the WBO champion crashed a left hook to the side of his face that put him on the canvas.

Ruelas, a 2-1 underdog, was up on one knee at the count of five and got to his feet to continue, but it wasn't long before he was down again, this time from a left hand followed by a right.

He got up once more but De La Hoya was all over him when Steele moved in to stop the fight.

"I knew that he was strong and fast," Ruelas said. "I didn't think that it should have been stopped, but what can you do? I felt I could have continued."

De La Hoya, who upped his record to 18-0 with 16 knockouts, boxed Ruelas from the opening bell in what had been expected to be a classic battle of boxer versus puncher.

Ruelas tried to pressure his lankier opponent, but came out on the losing end of most exchanges, while getting warnings for using his head and hitting while holding.

Just two fights earlier, Ruelas' brother, Gabriel, gave

Another gold for Greek lifter

WARSAW, May 7: Kachi Kakiavilis of Greece won the European 91 kg weightlifting title on Friday with a total of 407.5 kg, adding a gold to those he won in 1992 and 1993, reports Reuter.

The Olympic champion in Barcelona also took the world record in the clean and jerk with 228.5 kg, half a kg more than previous holder Alexi Petrov of Russia.

Jimmy Garcia of Colombia a beating that left Garcia hospitalized in critical condition with a blood clot on the brain.

Garcia collapsed in his corner after the fight was stopped in the 11th round of the WBC super featherweight title fight and was taken unconscious on a stretcher from the ring. He was scheduled to undergo surgery at University Medical Center.

He's critical," said ringside physician Flip Hgmansky, who declined to comment on Garcia's chances for survival.

The fight between De La Hoya and Ruelas had been billed as matching the two best lightweights in the world, both Hispanics from the Los Angeles area.

But Ruelas was clearly the favourite of the mostly Hispanic crowd, with De La Hoya getting mixed boos and cheers as he entered the ring.

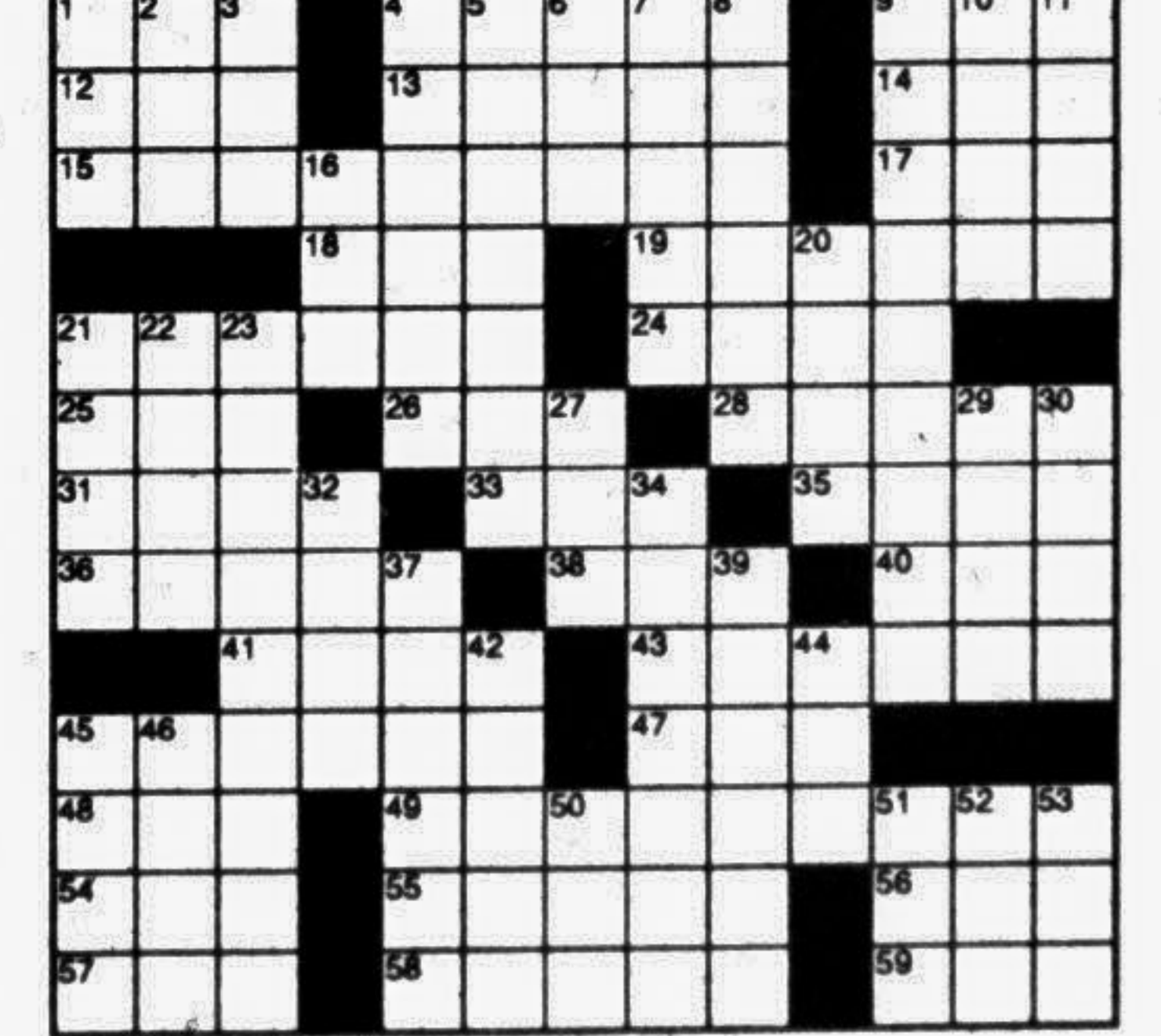
De La Hoya, who earned at least 01.75 million dollar for the fight, had said he was going to box the brawling Ruelas and he was good to his word in moving backward and sideways through the first round and the early part of the second.

That stopped, however, when he shot out the left hook that was the beginning of the end for the challenger.

The 22-year-old De La Hoya, 134, moved to 18-0, while Ruelas, 135, fell to 43-2. Ruelas earned some 1 million dollar for the bout, his richest purse ever.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

- ACROSS
- 1 Wood-shaping tool
 - 4 North American highway
 - 9 Triangular sail
 - 12 Aussie hopper
 - 13 The French Connection author
 - 14 Aitdorf is its capital
 - 15 Large, loud radios
 - 17 Heyer-dahl's "—Tiki"
 - 18 Wapiti
 - 19 U. of Georgia locale
 - 21 Falls
 - 24 Oscar Madison type
 - 25 Botheration
 - 26 Slight amount
 - 28 Overact
 - 31 Enjoyed Dickens
 - 33 Summit
 - 35 Semester's end worry
 - 36 Isle known
- for grottoes
- 38 Scroogean cry
 - 40 Yale
 - 41 Bronx or Brooklyn, headline-style
 - 43 Brownish apple
 - 45 Torrid Zone boundary
 - 47 Latin I verb
 - 48 "La Cage — Folles"
 - 49 Where some people build castles
 - 54 1917 O'Neill play
 - 55 Eero Saarinen's father
- 56 "— Little Teapot"
- 57 "— Miserables"
 - 58 Annie's pet
 - 59 Bottom line DOWN
 - 1 Wall St. wheeler-dealer
 - 2 "Cock-a-doodle —"
 - 3 Menagerie
 - 4 Sauntered
 - 5 Eyeballs
 - 6 "Mr. Peepers" star
 - 7 Regions
 - 8 Get close and snug
 - 9 Record-holders?
 - 10 Golf-bag occupant
 - 11 Compart-
- 16 French possessive
- 20 Base-runner's goal
 - 21 Playwright Connolly
 - 22 Notion
 - 23 Orators' perches
 - 27 Cut short
 - 29 Canterbury offering
 - 30 Send forth
 - 32 Flood
 - 34 Showed off ostentatiously
 - 37 Van Gogh painting
 - 39 Sans arrogance
 - 42 City near Gainesville
 - 44 "Barney Miller" actor
 - 45 Mermaid's pride
 - 46 Hold the scepter
 - 50 Diarist Anais
 - 51 Greek consonants
 - 52 Ostrich's cousin
 - 53 Actor-playwright Shepard
- Solution time: 27 min.
- DAN JAMB CHIP
ETA ALOE HERO
SOS POND AMOR
IMAGINARYLINE
ENE OAK
SWING MOM OAT
PAST LAM WINE
ARM DAY CALYX
WOW BAR
ALLINYOURMIND
BOON EDGE DNE
BOOK FILE ONS
AMPS SEER LAK



CRYPTOQUIP

E W L O K G M E Y K, M E Y

W F M Y S S Y I M N P S, I P F O G K Y

X G N G F Q N L M P O G N M

P F X L N O Q Y I M

Saturday's Cryptoquip: SAID HUMBLER LOSER AT URBAN FENCING MATCH: "FOILED AGAIN!"

Today's Cryptoquip clue: O equals B

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.