

Sport

Vieira charged

LONDON, Oct 7 (Reuters/Internet): Arsenal's French midfielder Patrick Vieira has been charged with misconduct by English soccer chiefs...

The decision was announced by English Football Association (F.A.) spokesman Steve Double on Wednesday.

During the game last month Vieira was involved in the incident, which led to Wednesday's Italian Paolo Di Canio being sent off.

Di Canio was later charged with misconduct for pushing the referee to the ground in one of the most spectacular sendings-off in English soccer history.

The problems began when Vieira angrily pushed Wim Jonk to the ground after the Dutchman pulled the Arsenal players' shirt...

They (the commission) were not convinced Martin Keown had acted deliberately, the F.A. said. The sending off will stand, but the commission has decided that no further punishment will be appropriate.

Ronaldo, who is suffering from knee tendon trouble, has only played one league match this season against Piacenza when he scored from a penalty.

But he said on Tuesday: 'It's getting better, but there's no point pushing it.' The official club doctor Piero Volpi confirmed Ronaldo's comments, saying: 'He will try to run today but with a bandage on his knee but we do not want to push things too far for him to play at any cost.'

McManaman may leave Liverpool LONDON, Oct 7: England midfielder Steve McManaman may leave Liverpool should the English Premiership side fail to agree terms on a new contract with the player by January, reports AFP.

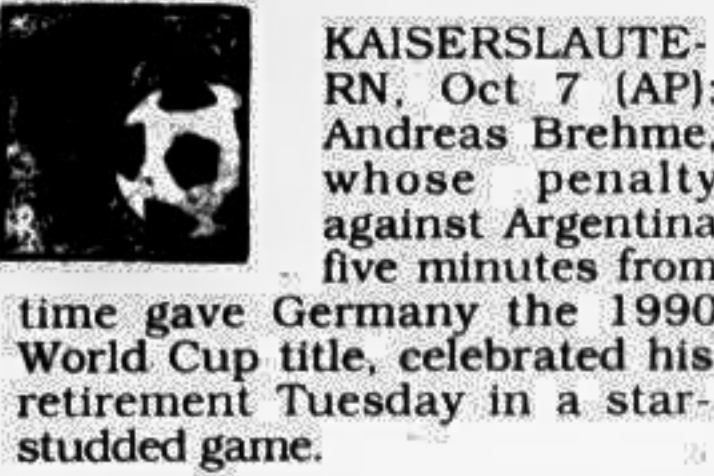
Although the 26-year-old's contract expires next June, FIFA rules allow him to sign a pre-contract for any club he chooses from the first day of the new year.

And this would open the door for Real Madrid who have already made McManaman aware that he is one of their most prized targets.

The Liverpool player indicated his willingness to experiment with Spain's star-studded Primera Division last season when he flew to Barcelona for talks.

McManaman has often spoken about his commitment to the club, but the test is now whether he believes that the emergence of Owen and the return of Robbie Fowler, plus the club's new managerial partnership of Gerard Houllier and Roy Evans is enough for him to commit his long-term future at Anfield.

Brehme hangs up his boots



KAISERSLAUTERN, Oct 7 (AP): Andreas Brehme, whose penalty against Argentina five minutes from time gave Germany the 1990 World Cup title, celebrated his retirement Tuesday in a star-studded game.

The match before 36,825 fans involved his last club FC Kaiserslautern, the reigning German champion, and an international all-star selection.

Among others, the selection included Ivan Zamorano, Christian Karembeu, Giuseppe Bergomi, Franco Baresi, Jurgen Klinsmann, Pierre Littbarski, Nicola Bertl, Karl-Heinz Rummenigge, Rudi Voeller, Toni Schumacher, Thomas Haessler and Brehme himself.

The all-star selection had Franz Beckenbauer as coach, and clinched a 4-4 draw on two goals by Voeller and one each from Rummenigge and Toni Polster.

Brehme played 86 games for Germany and was one of the country's best defenders in the 1980s and early 1990s. He retired after the 1994 World Cup, following Germany's ouster in the quarterfinals.

But he stayed in club soccer, returning to his original Bundesliga club, Kaiserslautern. Brehme had tears in his eyes as Kaiserslautern dropped out of the Bundesliga for the first time in its history.

While Kaiserslautern was winning the title, Brehme was gradually being phased out of the team by coach Otto Rehhagel and retired at the end of the season.

He also played for Bayern Munich, Inter Milan and Real Zaragoza, and later said his years in Italy were the most important for his career.

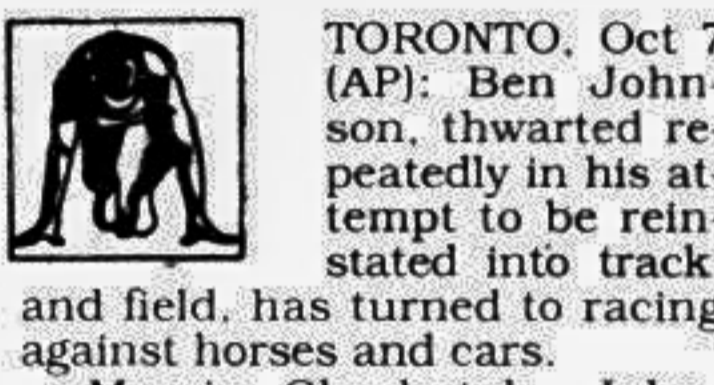
By a strange coincidence, Brehme's first international — in 1984 — was against the same team as his last official game, the 2-1 quarterfinal loss to Bulgaria at the 1994 World Cup in the United States.

Brehme will be remembered in Germany for his cool poise when he took the penalty kick against Argentina at Rome's Olympic stadium in the 1990 World Cup final, driving a low shot into the right post when no other German dared to take the shot.



BYE BYE BREHME: Former German international defender Andreas Brehme saying goodbye to the 36,000 odd fans present at the Betzenberg Stadium in Kaiserslautern on October 6.

Johnson's unique race



TORONTO, Oct 7 (AP): Ben Johnson, thwarted repeatedly in his attempt to be reinstated into track racing against horses and cars.

Johnson has continued to train and Chrobotek contends his client can still compete with the world's best sprinters. But the charity race promises to be a strange event, one that even Chrobotek can't resist joking about.

Morris Chrobotek, Johnson's agent, confirmed Tuesday that the 36-year-old sprinter will participate in a bizarre exhibition race Oct. 15 in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island.

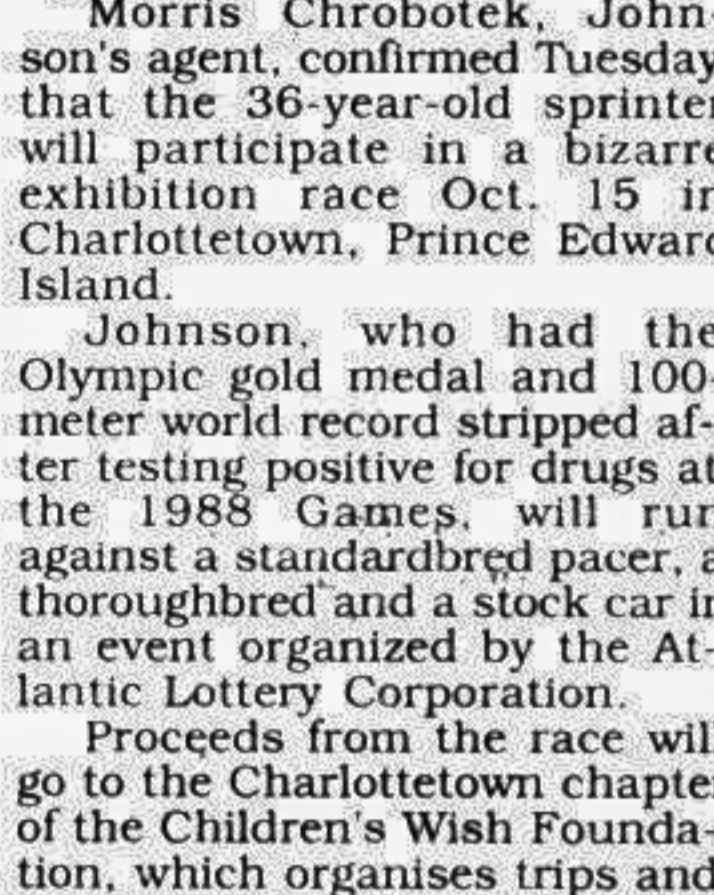
Johnson, who had the Olympic gold medal and 100-meter world record stripped after testing positive for drugs at the 1988 Games, will run against a standard pacer, a thoroughbred and a stock car in an event organized by the Atlantic Lottery Corporation.

Proceeds from the race will go to the Charlottetown chapter of the Children's Wish Foundation, which organizes trips and celebrity visits for terminally ill children.

Lottery spokesman Mike Randall said the idea for the spectacle came from his organization, which holds a fundraiser each year for the charity.

'I'd say it's probably the most unique event we've ever had,' he said, adding it will be a serious race. 'Ben is running to win, the horses are running to win and I know the driver always drives to win,' he said. 'It will be a lot of fun but what's important is we're going to be able to raise some money for a very worthwhile cause.'

Johnson hasn't competed since receiving a lifetime suspension from the International Amateur Athletic Federation in 1993 after a second positive drug test. His most recent appeal of the ban was denied last month in an Ontario court.



BEN JOHNSON

'I want the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport to test the horses,' he said Tuesday. 'We ask that the centre director Victor Lachance personally go out and take the urine from them, I want him personally to test the horses.'

'I want them to test the engine of the car to see if they're putting any special gasoline in there.'

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Pierce sticks to her guns

PARIS, Oct 7 (Reuters/Internet): France's Mary Pierce, who was kicked out of France's Fed Cup team this year after a row with Yannick Noah, will not reconsider her position next season despite Noah's recent resignation as captain.

Pierce, the world's number 11, said she had decided to shun the Fed Cup again next season to concentrate on her own game.

'I discussed it with Nathalie Tauziat and the other players and I told them I would not play next season,' she was quoted as saying by French daily L'Equipe.

'It is not a revenge for what happened last year but I want to improve my ranking, and given the way it is calculated now, you have to play a lot of tournaments,' she added.

Pierce made the comments after beating South African Amanda Coetzer in straight sets in Filderstadt on Monday.

Noah confirmed last month that he was resigning as France's Davis Cup and Fed Cup non-playing captain. He is likely to be replaced by another former player, Guy Forget.

'I do not have to make a choice but I like Guy. He's nice and I believe he can do well,' Pierce said. Pierce was part of the France team, under Noah, who won the 1997 Fed Cup, beating the Netherlands 4-1 in the final.

S Korea invited to Champs' Trophy

BRUSSELS, Oct 7: South Korea has been invited to play in the men's Champions' Trophy in place of England, field hockey's world governing body FIH announced here on Tuesday, reports AFP.

South Korea are expected to confirm by the end of the week whether they will participate in the tournament, which is to be held in Pakistan later this month.

South Korea qualify for the October 31 to November 8 tournament as the next highest ranked team after England in this year's World Cup.

England, who won the bronze medal at last month's Commonwealth Games, pulled out on Monday after government advice discouraging non-essential visits to the region.

Charbonnier shows his disgust

CLAIREFONTAINE, France. Oct 7: French goalkeeper Lionel Charbonnier on Tuesday stormed out of the French squad's training camp, apparently unhappy about not being the first choice for an upcoming European Championship qualifier, reports AP.

Charbonnier, who plays for the Glasgow Rangers, had hoped he would play against Russia on October 10 after Fabien Barthez pulled out of the squad this week with an injury.

But new coach Roger Lemerre instead called up experienced Paris Saint-Germain goalkeeper Bernard Lama, with Charbonnier on the bench.

'The competition here wasn't to his liking,' Lemerre told reporters at the camp outside Paris. 'He came to my room this morning to tell me the news.'

Kournikova scrapes thru'



FILDERSTADT, Germany, Oct 7: Anna Kournikova needed maximum effort and a lot of luck to survive a first round test from world number 29 Barbara Schett in the Porsche Grand Prix tournament here on Tuesday, reports Reuters.

The 18-year-old Russian somehow beat the Austrian 1-6, 6-4 7-6 after serving erratically, lacking concentration and making a dreadful start.

She won only one of the first nine games and served three double faults in the seventh game of the second set to go 3-4 down.

At that stage the world number 13 looked too out of sorts to pull the match round but was suddenly helped by an opponent who found it difficult to handle the prospect of winning.

Schett produced her poorest game to drop serve for 4-4, and then lost the second set on a double fault.

The third set saw Kournikova finally summon some passion for the contest to move 3-1 ahead before striking another uncertain patch.

Once she delivered a serve which hit the floor before the net, and double faults in both the fifth and seventh games contributed to breaks and a 3-5 deficit.

It was at this crucial stage that Kournikova played her best tennis taking 11 points in a row, and recovering from a 1-3 deficit in the tiebreak with some rousing forehand drives.

At least I played the important points well. That was the way I should have played before,' she said. 'When I was behind I relaxed and then I hit the ball better.'

Kournikova said that her game was not at its best even though Filderstadt is her fifth tournament since the eight-week absence caused by her thumb injury at Eastbourne in June.

The Williams sisters also had three-set escapes. Venus, winner of the 800,000 dollars Grand Slam Cup prize in Munich on Sunday, nearly had to make do with a 2,600 dollar first round loser's cheque.

She went within one point of going a break of serve down in the final set before recovering to win 6-2, 4-6, 6-3 against a persistent Italian world number 24, Silvia Farina.

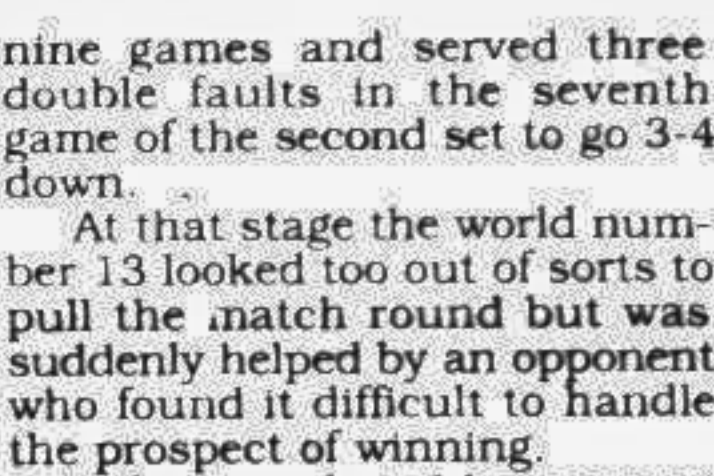
Serena needed almost two hours to eliminate an improving world number 64 Kveta Hrdlickova of the Czech Republic 7-6, 3-6, 6-0.

'Our mum said I missed too many opportunities in the second set but didn't criticise Serena,' said Venus.

Russian Anna Kournikova playing a backhand against Barbara Schett of Austria during their Porsche Grand Prix encounter at Filderstadt, Germany on October 6.

— AFP photo

Kiefer knocks Korda out



BASLE, Switzerland, Oct 7: Australian Open champion Petr Korda was the only seeded casualty on the opening day of the Swiss indoor tennis championship on Tuesday when he fell in straight sets to Germany's Nicolas Kiefer, reports Reuters.

Kiefer, a first-round loser in Toulouse last week, never looked in danger against the third-seeded Czech, brushing him aside 6-2, 6-4.

He will next play American Jeff Tarango, who beat Frenchman Nicolas Escude 6-3, 6-3.

'It's very satisfying to win against the world number five,' said Kiefer, ranked 32. 'It's likely due to my last three weeks of training which were very intense.'

'I have a 100 per cent record against Petr and I've had very tight matches against the other top 10 players here, including Andre and Yevgeny.'

Korda has won just one match in his last three tournaments, and looks set to lose his bid for a place in next month's season-ending ATP Tour World Championship in Hanover, which brings together the world's top eight players.

Korda entered the one million dollar tournament trailing Tim Henman by 11 points in the fight for the eighth and final spot in Hanover.

But the sixth-seeded Briton solidified his position with a first-round win, recovering from a sluggish start to beat Australia's Jason Stoltenberg 2-6, 6-3, 6-4.

Fourth seed Agassi, who lost to Marcelo Rios in the final of the Grand Slam Cup on Sunday, booked his place in the second round with a straight forward 6-3, 6-2 win over Roger Federer, the latest Swiss prodigy.

'I did what I needed to do,' said Agassi, chasing his fifth title of the season. 'But I didn't have to do too much.'

'I got in control of the match and stayed in control.' Coming off back-back grueling five-setters in Munich, Agassi needed just 55 minutes to dispose of the promising 17-year-old.

Federer has dominated the junior game this season, winning the Wimbledon junior title and reaching the final at US Open.

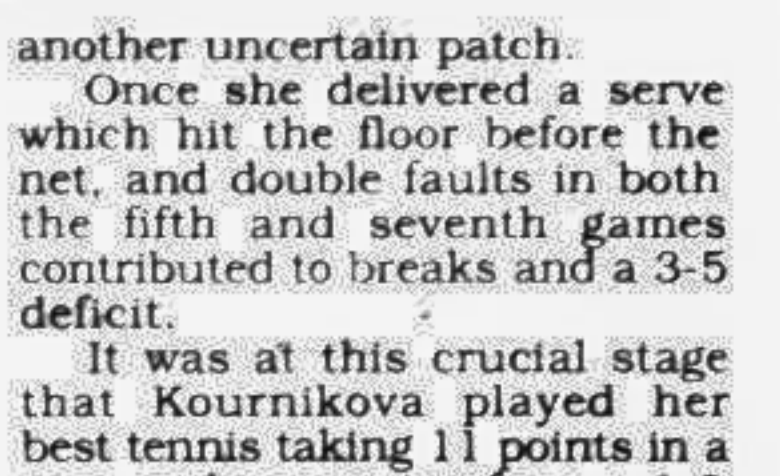
Federer exploded on to the professional scene last week in Toulouse, when he beat top-50 players Guillaume Raoux and Richard Fromberg in just his second senior tournament, his world ranking jumping from 878 to 396.

Born in Basle, Federer was noticeably nervous in front of a boisterous, near sellout, hometown crowd, allowing the 27-year-old American to claim his opening serve.

But the hard-hitting Swiss quickly settled down and refused to be trampled by the world number eight, breaking Agassi's opening serve of the second set and bringing the crowd to their feet.

'I was very impressed with him,' said Agassi, who last played in the Swiss tournament when he was 17. 'He hits well, moves well, has good presence on the court — I like that combination.'

Charbonnier shows his disgust



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But new coach Roger Lemerre instead called up experienced Paris Saint-Germain goalkeeper Bernard Lama, with Charbonnier on the bench.

'The competition here wasn't to his liking,' Lemerre told reporters at the camp outside Paris. 'He came to my room this morning to tell me the news.'

Charbonnier was seen speeding out of the training camp in his gray Mercedes.

Lemerre immediately called up Metz goalkeeper Lionel Letizi as cover. He declined to say whether Charbonnier would be fined.

Four days after playing Russia, France are to play Andorra. In their first European Championship qualifier last month, France drew 1-1 away to Iceland.

Lemerre, formerly the French team's number two, took over from Aime Jacquet, who quit after guiding France to victory in the World Cup in July.

SIX NO TRUMPS

A K Sayeedul Huq NORTH MADE A FORCING BID (Hand # 114) North: S: AQJ10XX, H: K86X, D: A9X, C: None. South: S: K, H: QJ109X, D: 7X, C: QJ106X. West (D): S: 86X, H: A, D: KQJ6X, C: AK97. East: S: 97X, H: 7XX, D: 108X, C: 8XXX. Bidding table and play details.

Kremlin Cup at stake

MOSCOW, Oct 7 (Reuters/Internet): Five of the world's top 10 women tennis players are due in this month, but Russia's financial problems mean the court may not be ready.

The indoor surface is being shipped to Moscow this week. But organisers of the country's top tennis event said on Wednesday that they could not afford the import duties.

'They are hoping customs officials will turn a blind eye. I'm hoping the customs people will understand our situation,' general director Yakov Shakhitin told Reuters.

'We simply don't have the money to pay the duties.' Corners have been cut elsewhere in both the women's event, which starts on October 19, and the men's, beginning on November 9, to keep the eight-year-old tournaments afloat in the midst of Russia's worst economic crisis since communism.

'The main thing for us right now is that the Kremlin Cup should go on,' Shakhitin said. 'Fortunately, the cuts will not affect the competition side, nor the players. But costs in other areas must be trimmed dramatically or cut altogether in order for us to survive.'

No change in Ger-Tur match schedule

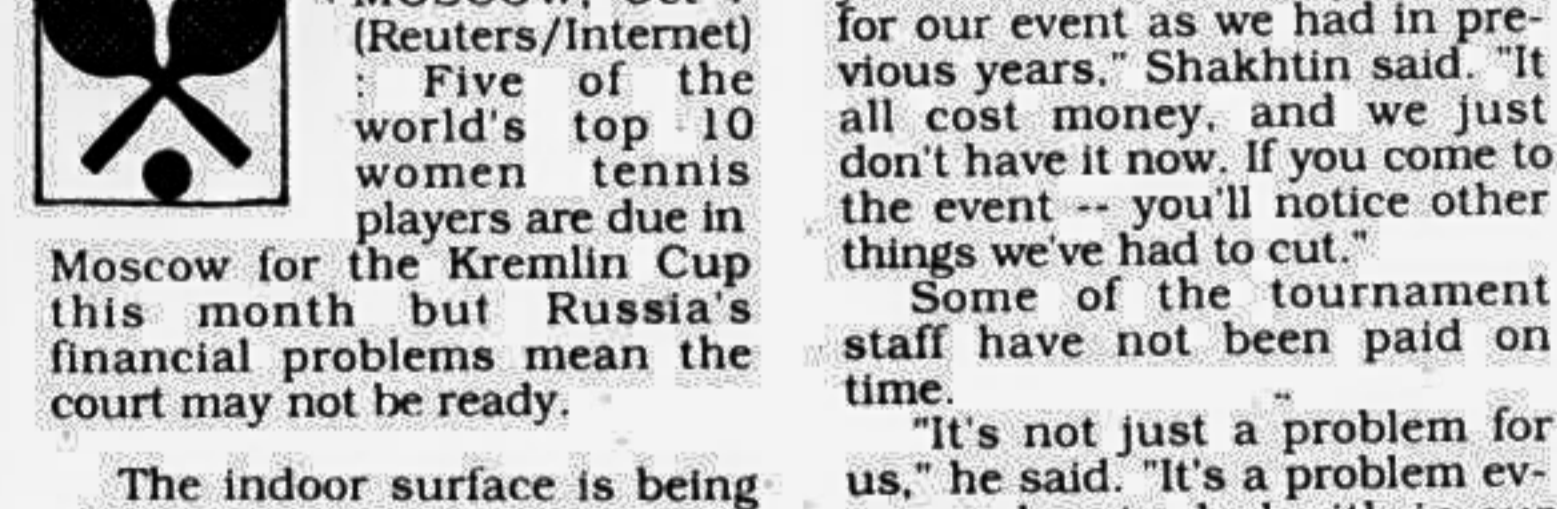
COLOGNE, Germany, Oct 7: Germany's Euro 2000 qualifier against Turkey this Saturday will not be affected by the tense stand-off between the Turks and neighbours Syria, reports AFP.

The German squad gathered outside Frankfurt on Tuesday and will fly to Istanbul on Thursday where they will then be taken by charter ferry and bus to the town of Bursa for the game.

'We are in contact with the German embassy. We never considered cancelling,' German Football Federation (GFF) director Bernd Pfaff said.

The bus and ferry option was chosen rather than flying directly to Bursa to offer the entourage a sense of security.

'Of course we have to keep an eye on what's happening but the Syrian border is 1,000 kilometres away from what's happening by the Syrian border is 1,000 kilometres away from Bursa,' Pfaff said.



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Prize money, which has lifted both men's and women's events into the top echelon in recent years, remain unchanged at \$950,000 for the women and \$1.2 million for the men.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer. ACROSS: 1. The Helvetic abby, 2. Zip, 3. Goldberg Doo-Dah, 4. Start a garden, 5. Cheese composer, 6. Moreover ingredient, 7. Wise lawgiver, 8. Crummet quaff, 9. Bravo, 10. Aviv lead-in, 11. Thanksgiving parade sponsor, 12. Got along, 13. Winter vehicles, 14. '88 Quail/Ryan movie, 15. Michaels' TV show, 16. The walls again, 17. On the qui vive, 18. Carolina college, 19. S.A. map abby, 20. Zip, 21. Goldberg Doo-Dah, 22. Start a garden, 23. Cheese composer, 24. Moreover ingredient, 25. Wise lawgiver, 26. Crummet quaff, 27. Bravo, 28. Aviv lead-in, 29. Thanksgiving parade sponsor, 30. Got along, 31. Winter vehicles, 32. '88 Quail/Ryan movie, 33. Michaels' TV show, 34. The walls again, 35. On the qui vive, 36. Carolina, 37. Seine port, 38. Twaain of C&W, 39. Culture variety, 40. Staff, 41. Boule's planet, 42. Lemieux milieu, 43. Fish hawk, 44. Texas metropolis, 45. How clumsy of me!, 46. St. Paul's designer, 47. And—the opposite shore..., 48. Unusual Susan, 49. Oration, 50. Quay, 51. Goes nowhere, 52. Mis-erables, 53. City on the Meuse, 54. Actress Jovovich, 55. Hear a Waltz?, 56. Bambi's aunt, 57. Shrink, 58. Hal again, 59. 12 Kings prophet, 60. Cheer-leader's prop, 61. La-la lead-in, 62. Author's mortal enemy?, 63. Cookbook infamy, 64. Intimistal, 65. Grit the teeth, 66. Albacore with 'up', 67. Kang's kid, 68. Old U.K. coin.

Yesterday's Cryptquip: I'D SAY THAT COLD CASH IS PROBABLY KEPT IN AIR-CONDITIONED BANKS. Today's Cryptquip clue: I equals P. 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.