Brian Lara says 'sorry'

were," Lara said,"We're here to

play cricket. It's important to

our country. It's an important

tour, a Test series, and we're

looking forward to giving it a

conference here after he and his

team arrived from London after

striking a late-night deal in

London with the West Indies

Cricket Board, ending pay dis-

pute that had led to his sacking

Lara was addressing a press

hundred per cent."

JOHANNESBURG.

Nov 11: Rein-

stated West Indian

captain Brian

Lara on Tuesday

apologised for the

delayed start of the West Indies

three-month cricket tour of

South Africa but said the team

were now ready to play cricket.

country for the delay in coming

"Sorry to the people of this

reports AFP.

Mobaraki CALCUTTA, Nov 11: Holders China, Japan, Qatar and Chinese Taipei moved into the semifinals of the 15th Asian Basketball Confederation (ABC) championship at the Netajee

Indoor Stadium here today. On the sixth day of the meet, Japan downed Kazakhistan 97-89. Qatar beat Chinese Taipei 68-54 while Bangladesh were outclassed by Lebanon 115-50.

Mobile phone dilemma

BELGRADE, Nov 11 (Reuters/ Internet): Yugoslavia's national coach Milan Zivadinovic plans to ban his players from using mobile phones before their European Championship Group Eight qualifier against Ireland next week.

"I want 100 per cent concentration for the match with Ireland and I am banning the use of mobile phones," Zivadinovic told reporters.

"I notice that after training sessions players spend all their time talking on their phones and losing their concentration -- to prevent this, their mobile phones will be put under lock and key," he said.

Earlier this week George Graham, the new manager of \ month jail sentence. English premier league side Tottenham Hotspur said he was banning is players from using their mobile phones while at the training ground or at the stadium on match days.

Warne being wise

SYDNEY, Nov 11 (Reuters/ Internet): Shane Warne said on Wednesday he did not expect to play in the opening two Tests of the Ashes series against Eng-

There had been speculation that Australia's leading legspinner may be rushed into the Australian team for the first Test in Brisbane next week.

But Warne, who makes his Sheffield Shield comeback against Perth on Friday, said he wanted to make sure his shoulder was completely healed before returning.

"I think the third or fourth test is a more realistic chance,' Warne said.

Rios escapes an upset

SANTIAGO, Chile, Nov 11 (AP/ Internet): Top-seeded Marcelo Rios narrowly escaped a first-round upset bid Tuesday and kept alive his quest for the world's No. 1 ranking.

Rios lost eight of nine games between the second and third sets' before rallying to defeat Brazil's Marcio Carlsson 6-2, 1-6, 6-3 at the \$315,000 Chevrolet Cup clay court tennis tourna-

Rios, who is battling Pete Sampras for the year-end top spot, won six of the final seven games in front of an enthusiastic hometown crowd.

All five seeded players in action Tuesday won their matches. Joining Rios in the second round were No. 2 Felix Mantilla, No. 4 Gustavo Kuerten, No. 5 Francisco Clavet and No. 6 Mariano Puerta.

Harvey doesn't give English a chance

SYDNEY, Nov 11: Former Australian Test cricket great Neil Harvey has dismissed England's chances of winning the Ashes, reports Reuters.

Harvey, who ranks among Australia's top players after scoring more than 6,000 runs during a 79-Test career, said England did not have enough quality bowlers to challenge Australia's batsmen.

"England won't win a Test, Harvey said "Their attack will let them down because they've no real speed ... and their spinners are very ordinary."

The 60-year-old Harvey. whose playing career spanned the 1950s when England's fast bowling attack was spearheaded by Frank Tyson and Fred Trueman, said he was saddened by the current state of English cricket.

England were a great side during the 1950s and to see where they've fallen to now, so low in world cricket, it's a

shame to see," he said. Australia have held the Ashes since 1989 and are favourites to win the upcoming

five-Test series which starts in Brisbane next week.

Kucera bites the dust

STOCKHOLM, Nov 11: Australian qualifier Wayne Arthurs ousted second seed Karol Kucera in straight sets in the first round of the 825,000 dollar Stockholm Open on Tuesday, reports Reuters.

Arthurs won 7-6, 7-6 against the Slovak who reached the quarterfinals of this tournament last year but seemed to lack motivation this time.

Ivanisevic staggers

MOSCOW, Nov 11: Thirdseeded Goran Ivanisevic of Croatia served eighteen aces but had to struggle through two tiebreaks to defeat Carsten Arriens of Germany on Tuesday in the 1.1 million dollar Kremlin Cup, reports AP.

The 1996 champion from Croatia never earned a single break of serve and needed an hour and twenty minutes to prevail 7-6, 7-6.

Bangladesh cagers keep on losing From Masood Akhter It never rains but it pours



commentator Geoff Boycott faced an uncertain financial future on Wednesday as media organisations distanced themselves from him after he was found

guilty of beating up his lover. A French court ruled on Tuesday after a retrial that the 58-year-old former England and Yorkshire cricket star did batter his former girlfriend, Margaret Moore, 45, during an

argument about money in 1996. Now, besides a three-month suspended sentence, Boycott faces more difficulties over

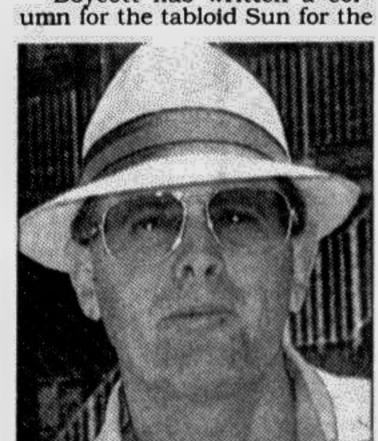
Apart from the 5,000 pound (\$8,300) fine imposed by the court in Grasse and the estimated 250,000 pounds Boycott spent on his defence, the commentator could lose another 250,000 pounds in earnings from broadcasters and newspa-

Britain's top-selling daily paper. The Sun, immediately announced it had sacked Boycott as a columnist.

In its Wednesday edition, the Sun said it would no longer employ Boycott after a court in southern France on Tuesday gave him a suspended three-

"Our readers would find repugnant the idea of us employing someone with a conviction for violence against a woman." it wrote in a front-page article.

"We will not turn a blind eye to violence against women. We are certain our decision will be applauded by women and men up and down the country." Boycott has written a col-



GEOFF BOYCOTT

past eight years. Boycott was in Lahore covering Pakistan-Australia cricket for television when the verdict was announced.

"Obviously I am very disappointed with the court's deci-

sion," he said. "But in view of the way the trial was conducted I suppose this is not a total sur-

Boycott was working for Trans World International, a sports broadcasting company, in Pakistan. TWI said there were no more cricket tours in

prospect for him. Boycott was suspended by the British Broadcasting Corporation as a Test match commentator as a result of initial adverse publicity. Although he was later reinstated, the BBC said he was not under contract and there were no plans to employ him in future.

Boycott, who denied beating Moore, has said he will appeal against the verdict.

Tuesday's sentence was exactly the same as that imposed at his first trial in January. Under French law, he was entitled to a retrial because he was not in court for the original hearing.

His lawyer, claiming he had been framed, promptly announced they would appeal against the ruling.

The 58-year-old former opening batsman, who played 108 Tests, captaining England four times, was also ordered to pay a symbolic franc in damages for assaulting Margaret Moore two years ago during a stay on the French Riviera.

"I had phenomenal success

"Next year, though, I will ar-

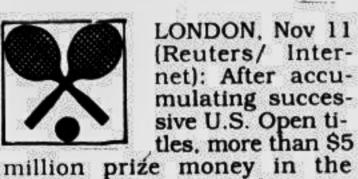
in the U.S. and played a lot of

tennis. That took its toll on my

ankle but I wouldn't swap those

range my calendar slightly dif-

Rafter savours royal life



net): After accumulating successive U.S. Open titles, more than \$5 bank and a luxurious home in Bermuda, Pat Rafter is savouring the good life.

The long-haired 26-year-old Australian, with his surfer's tan and dark good looks, is the undisputed sex symbol of the men's tennis tour. Voted by U.S. People maga-

zine as one of the world's "10 sexy men", Rafter is a major draw card, not just in his native land but wherever he plays. And now his on-court ability

has finally caught up with the off-court appeal that has won him so many fans. Ranked third in the world. an ankle injury aggravated in

Paris last week brought his season to a premature end and wrecked his dream of knocking Pete Sampras off the top of the rankings. Now he is determined to

claim the number one spot in front of his own fans at the first Grand Slam of the season in Melbourne in January. Just five months ago things were very different. Rafter had

sunk to an all-time low and was

questioning his future in the In June he crashed out of the traditional pre-Wimbledon tournament at London's Queens Club to a compatriot ranked more than 100 places below him prompting him to say: am as flat as I have ever been in

"Sometimes I feel that I would just like to be a burn for a

my career.

while. He packed his racquets, caught a plane to the Netherlands and turned around his fortunes in spectacular fashion. Rafter used his serve-andvolley game to perfection to win the title on the grass courts of Den Bosch before returning to

Wimbledon. A creditable display saw him reach the last 16 where he

including former Celtic star

Kenny Dalglish and pop star

Jim Kerr were considering a

consortium had asked for a

meeting with Celtic's majority

shareholder, "which may or

may not lead to an offer for his

shares and/ or an offer for the

entire issued share capital of

valuation being placed on Celtic

by the consortium was substan-

tially below its current market

earlier on Tuesday after a BBC

report had suggested that Dal-

glish and Kerr were leading a

consortium to launch a multi-

BBC Radio Scotland had re-

ported that Dalglish, who began

his professional career with the

Parkhead club, and Glaswegian

Kerr, the lead singer of rock

band Simple Minds and a life-

long Celtic fan, were involved

in a move to buy out current

estimated 80 million pounds

stake in Celtic, but plans to sell

his investment by next March

higher at 292 pence. Report of the bid, from Dal-

glish, who played 324 matches

for Celtic and scored 167 goals

for them between 1969 and

1977, and Kerr sent Celtic's

shares soaring by 90p or 34 per cent up to 352 1/2p at one point as a result of feverish trading

after the story broke earlier in

McCann, who has overseen

the re-building of the ground

and turned Celtic into a major

business, has never won the

trust or support of the fans and

is not expected to change his mind and stay on after March.

However, McCann has said

The deal would be worth an

McCann has a 51 per cent

Celtic shares stood 30 pence

chairman Fergus McCann.

(\$132.8 million).

the day.

and return to Canada.

million pound bid for the club.

The statement also said the

Celtic's shares had surged

the company."

price.

Celtic said in a statement the

possible offer for the club.

GLASGOW, Nov

11(Reuters/Inter-

net): Scottish soc-

cer champions

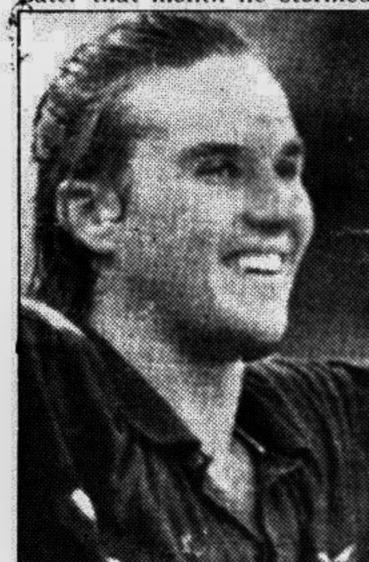
Celtic on Tuesday

said a consortium

bowed out to local hero Tim Henman. Then the American dream began.

First stop was Toronto and the Canadian Open. Rafter became the first player since Ivan Lendl 10 years ago to win the title without losing a single set.

A week later he took the ATP Championship in Mason, Ohio, beating Sampras in the final. Later that month he stormed



-PATRICK RAFTER* the Hamlet Cup in Jerioho, New York: beating Felix Mantilla for the title 48 hours before opening the defence of his U.S.

Victory at Flushing Meadow secured his berth in this month's \$3.3 million ATP Tour world championship in Hanover, although the ankle injury has now ruled that out.

Instead, Rafter will return to his home in Bermuda and contemplate an extraordinary season of ups and downs.

"I am more than happy to be in the position I am in now," he said in an interview.

"And now, I'm feeling pretty

good within myself. "It has been a very up and down year -- Queens was definitely the low point...I was desperate to rebuild my year. But

then a week later I had won a

tournament and everything

shares to smaller investors

rather than a major consor-

tium but fans are widely ex-

pected to support any plans

buy him out.

prices on Monday.

their old hero Dalglish has to

British football's most vibrant

businesses and were valued at

77.0 million pounds (\$128 mil-

lion), based on closing share

club ground in Britain, with

60,200 seats and also the largest

Celtic also have the largest

Celtic are currently one of

ferently. I just need to cut out some tournaments because it is very disappointing to be missing out on Hanover. "We play all year to win the

six weeks for anything.

championships. "To miss out on being there with all those guys is a great shame but it is just something I have got to cop on the chin and

chance to get to the world

think about next year." The candour and stoicism Rafter displays comes as no surprise to those who know him.

In a sport populated by in-

flated egos and multi-millionaires. Rafter is remarkably down to earth After his U.S. Open win he

donated a third of his winnings -- \$180,000 -- to help sick children at a Brisbane hospital. He also secretly donated \$180,000 to fund a leisure room

for terminally ill children at the same hospital when he beat Briton Greg Rusedski to win the U.S. Open last year. "I wanted to keep this thing

anonymous because there are so many other great people who do this sort of charity work." Rafter said at the time. "I didn't want it to be seen as some sort of publicity stunt."

Tournament organisers have also been the beneficiaries of his sense of fair play.

Last year in Lyon Rafter lost in the first round and handed back to organisers the cheque he had been offered to enter the tournament.

"I gave it back because I felt I was not well prepared enough for the tournament," he said.

If things go to plan, Rafter won't be handing back any more cheques. The rest of the world had better brace themselves for January. Celtic confirm the offer

season-ticket base of some

record 102 caps for Scotland.

has been out of football since

leaving the manager's job at

Newcastle United three months

man with subsequent manage-

rial jobs at Liverpool, Black-

burn Rovers and Newcastle but

his role at Parkhead is thought

to be more as a football director,

rather than coach.

He has become a wealthy

Dalglish, who won a joint-

55.000.

Euro booter-of-the-year France Football's preliminary 50

selected

PARIS, Nov 11: France Football magazine named 50 players on Tuesday as candidates for their prestigious Europeanfootballer-of-the-year award next month, reports Reuters.

World champions France have eight players nominated, including gifted Juventus midfielder Zinedine Zidane, third last year and one of the chief candidates to succeed 1997 winner Ronaldo. Liverpool teenager Michael

Owen, arguably the major revelation of this year's World Cup finals, is one of four Englishmen on the list which also includes Tony Adams, captain of Arsenal's double-winning side. With Dutchmen Dennis Bergkamp and Marc Overmars.

England goalkeeper David Seaman also on the list, Arsenal have five candidates. But the club most represented are European champions Real Madrid with seven; including Yugoslav Predrag Mijatovic,

Emmanuel Petit of France and

who was second last year and scored the winning goal against Juventus in May. South America is represented by nine players, including Italy-based Argentines Gabriel Batistuta and Ariel Ortega and Chile duo Ivan Zamorano

and Marcelo Salas. Inter Milan's Ronaldo is one of four Brazilians. The others are Real Madrid left back Roberto Carlos, Barcelona's Rivaldo and Denilson, the world's most expensive player who is now with Spain's Real Betis.

Hidetoshi Nakata Japan's Brilliant playmaker now with Perugia of Italy, gives Asia a rare entry on the list, while Ajax Amsterdam's Nigerian Sunday Oliseh is the only African candidate for a trophy won in 1995 by Liberia's George Weah.

Now what Diego?

LONDON, Now 11 (AP): Imagine: The man who scored the "Hand of God" goal that helped eliminate England from the 1986 World Cup playing soccer in England.

Former Argentine star Diego Maradona is being lined up to play in a new six-a-side, 35-and over indoor league in England. the London Evening Standard reported Tuesday.

The paper said organisers of Masters League Football, due to be launched in April 2000, were in discussions with Maradona. "We are very hopeful of get-

ting Maradona." Neil Black of Aladdin Management, one of the companies involved in the league was quoted as saying. "Negotiations are quite advanced and it's a sign of how serious we are about establishing this competition. Black said the league was

also talking to Brazilian star Dunga and former German captain Lothar Matthaeus.

Fiorentina vent their fury

ROME, Nov 11 (Reuters/ Internet): Fiorentina shrugged off a controversial UEFA Cup ban to win 4-0 at Lecce in the third round of the Italian Cup on Tuesday.

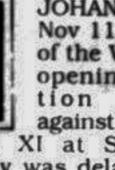
The emphatic victory took Giovanni Trapattoni's league leaders into the quarter-finals with a 5-0 aggregate score-line. All four goals came in the second half and all were scored

by different players. Portuguese midfielder Rui Costa put Fiorentina ahead from the penalty spot on 59 minutes after Lorenzo Amoruso was sandwiched between two Lecce defenders as he shoul-

dered his way into the penalty Italy international Moreno Torricelli made the tie safe with an opportunist goal a minute later, capitalising on a mistake in the home side's back four to score with a simple side foot shot from close range.

Brazilian Edmundo added a third on 79 minutes with a splendid free kick from 30 metres before his Argentine striking partner Gabriel Batistuta blasted home the visitors' fourth goal two minutes from time.

Difficulty everywhere about the agreement, and that it JOHANNESBURG. layed by a pay dispute.



opening exhibi-

match in South Africa yesterday.

against a Gauteng Invitation XI at Soweto on Wednesday was delayed when were missing their uniforms.

The gear apparently was lost at the airport on arrival Tues-When pacemen Curtly Am-

clothing was brought out with them and rushed to the Soweto cricket oval.

After an hour-long delay, won the toss and elected to bat.

quest - which was granted that he be allowed to use all his bowlers during the match. Lara wants his players to have as much practice as possible. The team's arrival was de-

SOWETO, South Africa, Nov 11 (Reuters/ Internet): Batsman Jimmy Adams was forced to pull out of West Indies' tour of South Africa on Wednesday when it was announced that the cut to his finger was more seri-

Adams sliced open his finger with a bread knife during the team's flight to South Africa on Monday and team manager Clive Lloyd said it had been discovered the 30-year-old lefthander had severed two ten-

"It will take six weeks to heal

consult with the West Indian Cricket Board to decide if a replacement would be sent for. "The board and the selectors will need to make that deci-

sion," he said It is likely one of the players from the West Indies A team in Bangladesh would be flown in to replace Adams.

so he is out of the tour." Lloyd said. Lloyd said he would have to

part of a settlement.

Lequay said.

43 Make

44 Hawk

sound

Crying

Game

Roland Holder, the secretary sociation, said he was happy

and that of his deputy Carl

He steadfastly fended off question on the deal, saying it was a private matter between

the board and the players. "The West Indies Cricket Board and the West Indies play-

ers have had a discussion, and

that discussion is totally confidential," he said "No one would like to start a tour that is originally to start on the 2nd of November, on the 9th of November, and I'm sure all parties involved do regret

that situation," he added. Lara, one of the world's best batsmen, and Hooper, were sacked after failing to turn up in South Africa last week and apparently they were backed by their teammates, who refused to

tour without them. After a week of wrangling, West Indies board president Patrick Rousseau said late Monday that a deal had been struck, including the reinstatement of Lara and Hooper, and that the tour was on again.

Dr Ali Bacher, managing di-

rector of the United Cricket Board of South Africa, teamed up with Rousseau to end the impasse, Bacher flew to London on Thursday with a letter from President Nelson Mandela requesting the players to tour. The social significance of the West Indies tour for South

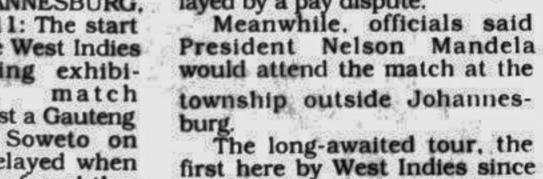
Africa's black population has been stressed during the past The West Indians are treated as heroes in South Africa.

where cricket chiefs have been criticised for failing to select black players who can act as role models for the majority population. Fittingly, the team will now play their first game today in

Sweto black township near Johannesburg, against a Gauteng Tuesday's planned fundrais-

ing opener against a Nicky Oppenheimer XI at Randjesfontein outside Johannesburg was cancelled. The opening first-class

match will be against Griqualand West on Saturday, with the first Test starting on November



the fall of apartheid, should decide the No 2 team after Australia. The first Test begins Nov The West Indies dominated cricket during the 1980s and early 1990s until slumping sev-

> by Pakistan 3-0, though the team beat England 3-1. The dispute between the players and the West Indies Cricket Board has been the talk

eral years ago. They lost to

Australia in 1995 and 1996-

1997, and this year was blanked

of the Caribbean. In Barbados, the two leading newspapers Tuesday reported calls for WICB president Pat Rousseau to resign. "Time for heads to roll," The Advocate said in a commentary by former Barbadian batsman Tony King, who quoted a friend as saying it was time Rousseau stopped treating the board as if it was his own company.

"Resign, Rousseau!" headlined a Daily Nation story saying Rousseau has been accused of misrepresenting the position of other board members. It quotes the past president of the board, Peter Short of Barbados, as saying, "I think the honorable thing to do in this case is to tender his (Rousseau's) resignation..." On the television pro-

gramme "Wake Up Caribbean. former WICB member Allan Lequay, who is president of the Trinidad and Tobago Cricket Association, questioned Rousseau's earlier statement that the dismissal of Lara and vice captain Carl Hooper as a unanimous. decision of the board. The two were fired when they refused to travel to South Africa in the pay dispute. though they were reinstated as

"When he chatted with our representatives, we were told that no vote was taken ..."

of the West Indies Players' As-

should help outline new negotiating procedures with the WICB.

"I think out of this there will more than likely be guidelines for future negotiations which both sides are going to have to follow." Holder said. Rain, Lara rule

tour opener SOWETO, Nov 11 (Reuters/ Internet): West Indies' tour of South Africa finally got off to a faltering start on Wednesday when rain cut short the opening fixture against a Gauteng X1 in

the largest of the country's However, there was sufficient time for Brian Lara to please the crowd of several thousand mainly black spectators with an aggressive 65 as West Indies made 258 for seven in 47 overs before heavy rain forced the match to be called

A band trumpeted a lively welcome to the visitors before the start of play at the Soweto Oval in the middle of the sprawling township where 22 years ago a school boycott sparked the massive black revolt against apartheid.

The start of the tour had been delayed by a dispute over pay and conditions between West Indies players and their cricket board. Lara, the captain, hit 10 boundaries in his 60-ball in-

Hooper was the next highest with an unbeaten 60 off 70 balls which included two fours and a Seam bowler Malan Morkel took two wickets, including

nings and his vice-captain Carl

that of Lara. Cuba, China set for final clash

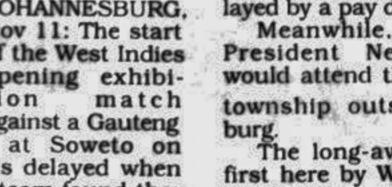
OSAKA, Japan Nov 11 (Reuters/ Internet): Cuba and China set up a rematch of the 1996 Olympic final by winning their semifinals at the women's world volleyball championship on Wednesday.



Real Madrid's Brazilian star Roberto Carlos with the 'Best American-libero' Trophy and his wife Alexandra Da Silva at the Spanish News Agency headquarters in Madrid on November - AFP photo in the past he wants to sell his 10,

Nov 11: The start Meanwhile, officials said President Nelson Mandela of the West Indies

- Internet photo



West Indies captain Brian Lara batting during a tour

the Caribbean team found they reports AP.

day, the South African Press Association said brose and Courtney Walsh, who missed the original flight, arrived Wednesday morning the

West Indies Captain Brian Lara Lara had made a special re-

Adams out of SA tour

ous than at first thought.

dons.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer 37 Superflu-10 Actress ACROSS Bundy Gardner 1 Wilander 55 Divulge ous DOWN 11 Chum of tennis member 1 "The Say 19 Crude 5 Newhart 40 Novelist Murdoch Hey Kid" stuff sitcom 21 Cleo's 8 Applaud 41 Considers 2 Lotion 45 Thought ingredient 12 Greatly vanguisher 3 Frat-party 23 Chicken 13 - de la 47 Main-Paix landers outfit serving 24 Wise one 14 Stromboli 4 Perpetual memento 49 Sheltered 25 "Zounds!" spillage 15 Meditator's 50 Apply 26 Complaint candidate discipline 5 Cheerful 27 Jai paint, one 28 Guiteau's part of 16 Man-NYC? mouse link 51 B&B 6 "- Town" 32 Marsh 17 Racetrack 52 "Hud" 7 Aground 18 Add salt marigold 20 A home 8 Garlic 33 Brave winner 35 Greek X 53 "- parin the portion 9 Pale 36 Price of tridge. **22** ESP 54 Mrs. Al admission purple 38 Refrain 26 Cream Solution time: 23 mins. cheese phrase holder 39 Southfork 29 With it,

30 Trygve's successor 31 Vivacity 32 Spanish 33 Singer Suzanne 34 Listening device Yesterday's answer 35 Gear tooth 36 Got along

once

CRYPTOQUIP ORDRYGCG 42 Reindeers

DIXZRZSI OXEGC ZRYEGL FG FRC JGY VX SGYP Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WHO WAS THE FIRST OF ALL POOCHES ELECTED PRESIDENT? ROVER CLEVELAND.

Today's Cryptoquip clue: S equals L
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

bigwig 48 Chemica words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to suffix locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.