

Radebe, Masinga to miss clash with Saudis

JOHANNESBURG, Sept 10: Key South Africa players Lucas Radebe and Philemon Masinga will miss the Afro-Asian Nations Cup match against Saudi Arabia on September 18 in Cape Town, reports AFP.

Radebe is needed by English Premiership club Leeds United for a UEFA Cup match against Partizan Belgrade of Yugoslavia while Masinga, who plays for Italian Serie A club Bari, is boycotting the fixture.

Masinga was booted by a section of the crowd at the Nelson Mandela farewell match in Johannesburg last month and has reacted by making himself available only for away matches.

Coach Trott Moloto, under pressure after a string of dismal results, must secure the release of several European-based professionals on UEFA Cup duty next week.

Dreadlocked midfielder Thabo Mngomeni from Orlando Pirates is favoured to lead Bafana Bafana (The Boys) in the absence of Radebe. The return game will be on September 30 in Riyadh.

SQUAD

Goalkeepers: Andre Arendse (Oxford, Eng), John Tiale (Sundowns)

Defenders: Mark Fish (Bolton, Eng), Pierre Issa (Marseille, Fra), Papi Khomane (Orlando Pirates), Aaron Mokoena (Ajax, Ned), Frank Schoeman (Sundowns)

Midfielders: Quinton Fortune (Manchester Utd, Eng), Ivan McKinley (New England Revolution, USA), Joel Masilela (Sundowns), Helman Mkhalele (Ankaragucu, Tur), Thabo Mngomeni (Pirates), Shoes Moshoeu (Fenerbahce, Tur), Eric Tinkler (Barnsley, Eng)

Strikers: Shaun Bartlett (Zurich, Swi), Benni McCarthy (Celta Vigo, Spa), Daniel Mudau (Sundowns), Pollen Ndlanga (Goztepspor, Tur)

World Club C'ships

Traffic gets broadcasting rights

ZURICH, Sept 10: FIFA and Brazilian television and marketing agency Traffic International signed a contract on Thursday, guaranteeing soccer's world governing body at least 60 million Swiss francs (39.71 million dollar) in broadcasting rights for the first World Club Championship, FIFA said, reports Reuters.

Traffic will now work with the European Broadcasting Union for the sale of European rights for the competition scheduled for January 5-14 in Brazil.

Five of eight teams — Saudi Arabia side Al Nasr, Brazil's Corinthians and Vasco da Gama, Spain's Real Madrid and English league champions Manchester United — have already confirmed their participation in the inaugural event.

The representative from the other confederations, Africa, North and Central America and Oceania, will be known in October.

The draw to determine the composition of the two groups of four teams will be held in Rio de Janeiro on October 14.

Lazio fans feeling used

ROME, Sept 10: Fans of Italian club Lazio plan to stage a silent protest during their Serie A game against Torino in opposition to what they see as exploitation of their loyalty to the club, reports Reuters.

Lazio supporters are angry over the cost of the club's organised travel scheme to away games and are also up in arms over a decision to sell the television rights to their Champions League games to pay-per-view channel Telepiu.

Lazio's ultras, the club's hardcore supporters, say they will take their place in their traditional home in the Olympic Stadium's Curva Nord (North End) for the Torino match on September 19, but will remain silent and will not show their support.

"We have had our feeling trodden over," Fabrizio, a leader of the Lazio ultras told the daily Corriere dello Sport, explaining the move.

(Lazio president Sergio Cragnotti has built a great Lazio and has spent a lot. We are grateful to him for that. But football is about passion and love," the fan added.

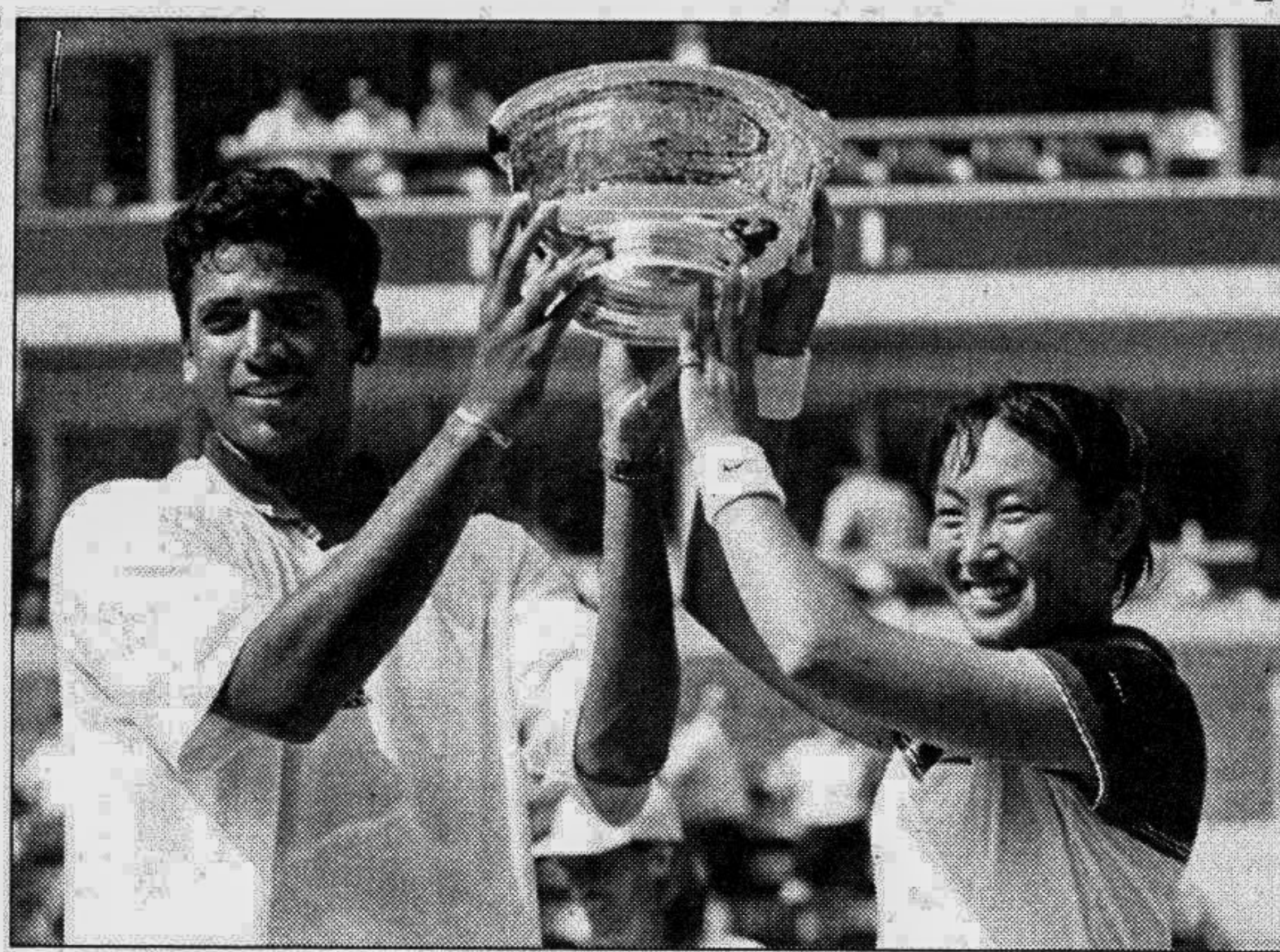
Relations between Cragnotti and the fans appear to have soured in recent weeks.

For the European Super Cup match with Manchester United in Monaco, Lazio were given 3,000 tickets from UEFA but Corriere dello Sport says that only 600 were sold by the club direct to the public, with the remaining tickets sold as a package through a travel agency contracted to Lazio.

Lazio fans are also furious at a late decision that they will have to pay to watch their team's Champions League games.

Italian television company Mediaset, controlled by AC Milan president Silvio Berlusconi, purchased the rights to Champions League games from UEFA earlier this year, but on Wednesday, Mediaset said it had sold the rights for Lazio games to subscription channel Telepiu, less than a week before the start of the Champions League.

While AC Milan and Fiorentina supporters will be able to watch their teams for nothing, Lazio fans will need to fork out for a decoder and a subscription to Telepiu.



Indian Mahesh Bhupathi (L) and Japanese Ai Sugiyama hold up the US Open mixed doubles trophy on September 9. — AFP photo

OPEN NOTEBOOK

NEW YORK, Sept 10 (AFP): Japan's Ai Sugiyama and India's Mahesh Bhupathi teamed up to lift the first title at the 1999 US Open Tennis Championships with a victory in the mixed doubles final.

The pair defeated Americans Kim Po and Donald Johnson 6-4, 6-4 on Thursday.

Sugiyama claimed her first Grand Slam crown, while Bhupathi added to the French Open mixed doubles title he won in 1997 with another Japanese player, Rika Hiraki.

"Japanese girls are lucky for me," said Bhupathi, who is also still in the hunt for the men's doubles title with partner Leander Paes. The two are trying to get their third men's doubles Grand Slam title of the year after winning at Roland Garros and Wimbledon.

He said Sugiyama and Paes were the "total opposite" as tennis players, with the Japanese woman preferring to stay back and let him take care of the net.

"I played really well from the back today," Bhupathi said. "She stayed back and ripped a lot of balls. Those guys kept coming at us, but she kept passing and lobbing them."

"I feel very comfortable play-

ing with him," Sugiyama said. "He's great, especially at the net. He's everywhere."

The pair share prize money of 124,000 dollars.

ACTUALLY 49 ACES

Richard Krajicek, who was credited with a record 48 aces on the scorecard of his US Open quarterfinal defeat to Yevgeny Kafelnikov, actually fired 49 tournament officials said Thursday.

On the first point of the 12th game of the fifth set, Krajicek was awarded an ace on an overrule after the line judge called it out.

Chair umpire Bruno Rebeuh called it an ace, but didn't enter the coding into the electronic scorecard.

After the unofficial statistics showed 49 aces, officials reviewed a videotape and found the discrepancy.

Krajicek surpassed the 46 aces served by Goran Ivanisevic in a first-round defeat at Wimbledon in 1997.

FILMSTAR DOSEDEL

Regardless of the outcome of his US Open quarterfinal against Todd Martin, Czech Slava Dosedel can always fall

back on his film career.

Dosedel, a claycourt specialist who reached the quarters of a Grand Slam tournament for the first time, has a role in the Czech film "Ziva Voda" (Life Water), about Czech doctor Vincenc Priesnitz.

The movie opens in the Czech Republic on October 3, and Dosedel said he spent some of his time on the ATP Tour preparing for his part.

"I had to learn during tournaments. I was always trying to get the dialogue every night with my coach," he said.

"It was very entertaining for me," Dosedel said of the filming. "It took me only five days, and every one of those days it was something else to do."

"And I played tennis my whole life, so I tried to do something else and it was very fun. I liked it very much. It was a good team, they were helping me a lot because I'm not really a professional actor."

He still thinks his performance in the US Open will attract more attention than his film debut.

"The quarterfinal of the US Open is much more prestigious," he said.

Kuerten pretty pleased

NEW YORK, Sept 10 (AFP): All in all, Gustavo Kuerten can't complain about his two weeks in New York City.

He saw a couple of shows, ate in some nice restaurants, and made it to the quarterfinals of the US Open for the first time in three appearances here.

His last match was a valiant but vain effort against Cedric Pioline, and even though things didn't go Kuerten's way on Thursday the Brazilian was pleased with his performance.

"I was really surprised. I never got so far here," said Kuerten, who became the first Brazilian to claim a Grand Slam title when he won the French Open as an unseeded player in 1997.

"It was a new experience, that's what I'm looking for in my career, to win matches, stay in the tournament as long as I can. I didn't have any expectation, I got really far."

He said his lack of success here previously -- he reached the third round in 1997 and the second round last year -- made things easier.

Here I was more underdog than at the French Open," he said. "I could take more time for myself, nobody paid too much attention to me. I could enjoy things in the city."

Kuerten said he had seen a couple of Broadway shows, and been out to dinner in Manhattan.

"From Monday to Sunday you can do whatever you want," said Kuerten, who hails from Florianopolis. "In my city, only from Friday and Saturday can you go in someplace. During the week, everything is closed."

While Kuerten didn't have a victory to celebrate on Thursday, his 23rd birthday on Friday offered a chance for further festivities.

"I think I had more chances today because I was younger," Kuerten said, but quickly reversed himself.

"I'm sure I'm wrong, because with more experience tomorrow it would be different."

On the brink of his 23rd birthday, Kuerten already displayed the wisdom of a veteran in the wake of Pioline's victory.

"It's always tough to get a loss in a Grand Slam especially," he said. "We're also ready to lose because we know nobody is unbeatable, especially me."

"I'm still growing, improving my game. I know that a lot of players can beat me," he said.

"For sure I'm going to think about it for a few days, but try to forget."

"I have more tournaments to play, so I'm going to lose again. There will come another loss in my mind."

"Life is like this."

Armenian passports for French duo

YEREVAN, Sept 10: France's Youri Djorkaeff and Alain Boghossian became honorary Armenian citizens on Thursday, reports Reuters.

The two French internationals were given special passports by Armenian President Robert Kocharyan in a ceremony to honour their Armenian ancestry.

"This is my first visit to Armenia and I'm very happy to be here," said Djorkaeff, whose grandfather was born in Armenia.

"This is a special day for me and my family."

Djorkaeff and Boghossian were in the Armenian capital as members of the French national team for the European group four qualifier.

Djorkaeff, who came with his family, scored France's first goal in a 3-2 victory over the hosts.

WC 2006

South Africa's Euro mission

JOHANNESBURG, Sept 10: South African World Cup 2006 bid officials are planning a charm offensive in Europe later this month, trying to convince European members of the FIFA Executive Committee of the merits of their candidacy, reports Reuters.

South Africa 2006 World Cup Bid Committee chief executive officer Danny Jordaan said today that senior officials would be visiting FIFA Executive Committee members in Malta, Spain and Turkey.

The meetings come in spite of the fact that two European countries — England and Germany — are among the front-runners in the battle for the 2006 finals.

"We believe that even if Europe has two candidates that are the one group within FIFA who have a wider vision on the future of soccer," said Jordaan.

"It's in the interests of the international football in Africa to be given the World Cup in order to develop the game worldwide."

"The globalisation of the game is essential and I'm confident that this message that we will take, will get a positive hearing at our meetings."

South African officials have already paid visits to FIFA executive committee members in 10 countries, placing emphasis on Asia and the Caribbean region, in an attempt to sell their candidacy.

The FIFA executive committee will vote next July on the hosting of the 2006 finals.

Brazil and Morocco are the other two candidates in the five-nation race. London bookmakers make South Africa even money favourites to win the vote, narrowly ahead of England at 11-10 with Germany at 4-1, Brazil at 14-1 and Morocco at 33-1.

Pioline takes tiebreakers



NEW YORK, Sept 10: France's Cedric Pioline used three titanic tiebreaker efforts and domination at the net to defeat fifth seed Gustavo Kuerten and reach a US Open semifinal match-up with Todd Martin, reports AFP.

Pioline broke Kuerten only once but made some dramatic shots when it mattered most to oust the Brazilian 4-6, 7-6, 7-6, 7-6 in three hours and 22 minutes at the Grand Slam tennis event.

"He played very good. He served very good. Maybe I've been lucky," Pioline said. "I just try to be aggressive, just don't

let him play, come in, then put pressure on his shoulder."

Seventh seed Martin hit 22 aces in beating 35th-ranked Czech Slava Dosedel 6-3, 5-7, 6-4, 6-4 to join Pioline in a Saturday match for a final berth Sunday opposite Andre Agassi or Yevgeny Kafelnikov.

Kuerten was conquered by a 30-year-old king of 6-6 success who rose to 6-0 in tiebreakers at this Open, 26-9 in 1999 tiebreakers and 128-107 in lifetime tiebreakers.

"Since the beginning of the year, I have a good tiebreaker record," Pioline said. "I feel good when it's coming, I'm not afraid. I know I can win."

Pioline also won 63 of 83

points when coming to the net, 76 per cent, using volleys and attacking play to keep the pressure on the former French Open champion.

Pioline, a first-round loser in four of his past five Slams, rose to 3-0 over Kuerten.

Pioline, who lost the 1993 US Open final and 1997 Wimbledon final to Pete Sampras, became the first man in US Open history to oust a defending champion in round one when Pat Rafter retired with a shoulder injury.

The dramatic third-set tiebreaker was among the longest in Grand Slam history, approaching the US Open record of 20-18 by Goran Ivanisevic over Daniel Nestor in the 1993 first round.

Pioline, ranked 26th at age 30, needed eight set points to outlast Kuerten in the thrilling third.

At 9-9 in the third-set tiebreaker, Pioline hit a running baseline forehand winner to reach his fifth set point. He slipped and fell but heard the cheers of the crowd and pumped his fists with joy.

"I run like crazy and I tried to make the shot," Pioline said. "It was good after a big rally. I knew I had to play some winners to beat him. I tried for it and it worked."

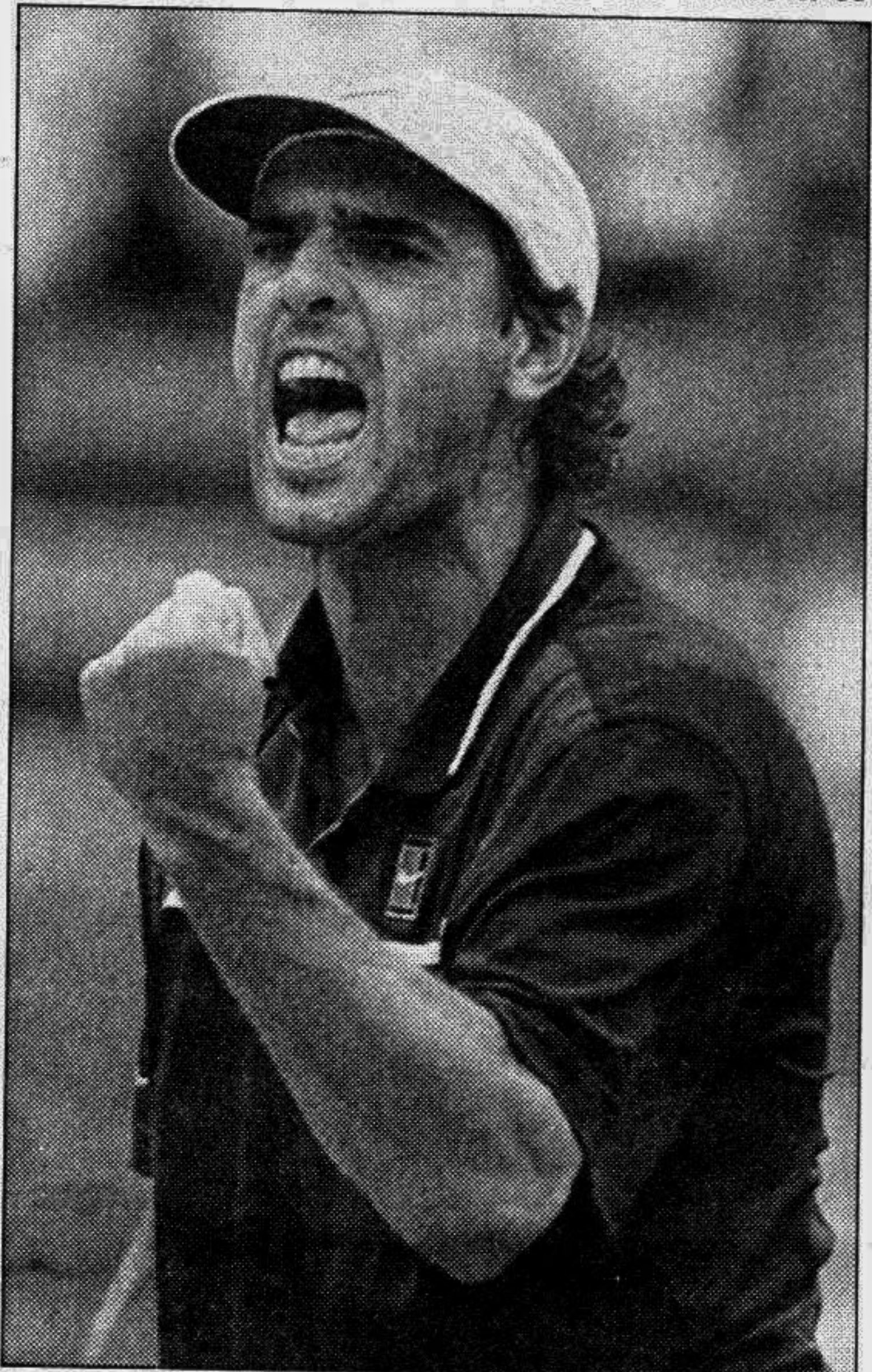
Martin rose to 5-0 in matches after those where he rallies from two sets down to win, a feat he achieved Tuesday with an exhausting effort against Britain's Greg Rusedski.

"I'm pretty tired. I felt better than I thought I would but not as well as I would like," Martin said. "When I practised I don't think I could have felt any worse. I was really spent. I was pooped and I didn't know how I was going to be able to play. But I didn't have a real fatigue then. Fortunately that kicked in."

Martin, whose best Slam showing came in losing the 1994 Australian Open final, reached his fifth career Slam semifinal after having lost in the Wimbledon and Australian quarters earlier this year.

After taking all 19 of his first serve points to win the first set in 31 minutes, the 29-year-old American gave Dosedel his lone break and dropped the set to a man with a smiley-face design on his racket strings.

Martin broke Dosedel in the penultimate game of each of the final two sets and hit a forehand winner on his third match point to advance after two hours and 33 minutes.



Frenchman Cedric Pioline roars in ecstasy after reaching the semifinals of the US Open. — AFP photo

Up against the top two



NEW YORK, Sept 10 (AFP): Venus and Serena Williams, the first sisters in the same Grand Slam semi-

finals in modern tennis history, have only two obstacles between them and a showdown for their first major title.

But those hurdles are world number one Martina Hingis and reigning US Open and Wimbledon champion Lindsay Davenport, so it's a bit early to crown the head-tressed black Americans as the new queens of the US Open.

The Williams sisters get the chance to make history here Friday in the women's semifinal, with the third seed Venus facing Swiss star Hingis and Serena meeting second seed Davenport.

"Lindsay hits the ball really hard. I hit the ball hard. It's going to be fun," seventh seed Serena Williams said. "It's pretty exciting for women's tennis. Again we're always carrying the men's tennis."

Serena, 17, had never reached a Slam quarterfinal before and Venus, 19, has yet to win a Slam title but has reached the quarters in seven of the past eight Slams, reaching the 1997 final and 1998 semifinal here.

"Now it's Venus and Serena's time," said nine-time Slam champion Monica Seles, Serena's quarterfinal victim. "Definitely Serena and Venus are up there. They have such an advantage to have each other just in terms of practice, pushing each other. I don't think it can

get better than that."

The Hingis-Venus Williams meeting is a bit of a grudge match. Hingis, called Venus a "big mouth" last week and Serena responded by saying the 18-year-old Australian Open champion needed to use her brain more.

Actually, both sisters praised Hingis for the mental aspects of her game.

"She probably can't hit the ball as hard as myself or Serena, so she has to use the other things because if she's not smarter, it's most likely she will get overpowered," Venus Williams said.

"Martina thinks very well on the court," Serena Williams said. "She is hitting balls harder. She is moving the ball around. She is doing a lot of good things. So Venus is going to have to attack, not make too many errors. I think she can do that. She has to stay mentally sound."

Hingis has a 7-3 career edge on Venus Williams, having won three of their past four meetings and both prior Slam match-ups in the 1997 US Open final and 1998 French Open quarterfinals. They are 1-1 this year.

"I lost to her in Rome but I won in San Diego, which was on the same surface as it is here," Hingis said. "It was a great match. I just played very well. I'll try to do the same thing as I did there, just basically go out and try not to miss much and make her play and see what happens."

Serena Williams has a 2-1 edge on fellow American Davenport and won both prior hardcourt meetings. But as she

did at Wimbledon, Davenport has allowed let others trade taunts and quietly reached the semifinals for the sixth time in her past eight Slams.

"There has been a lot of talking and it's like me, Serena, Venus but nobody really takes care of what Lindsay is doing," Hingis said. "She is like cruising through her draw and nobody takes her serious."

"This is not a mistake Hingis will make with Venus Williams," Hingis said. "I feel like a more experienced player with more confidence right now. Maybe her serve gets a bit shaky at some critical moments, but when she gets into a rally she is quite tough."

"She gets everything back. She's tall and she moves quite well for being such a tall person. When it gets really important, when she is down, she is able to pull it off and just not miss anymore."

Rajendra college sports

FARIDPUR, Sept 10: Anisuzzaman Mollah and Aklima Akhtar Mita were adjudged as the best athletes in the boys and girls group in the annual sports competition of the Government Rajendra College here yesterday, reports BSS.

Some 50 students participated in 20 events of the competition.

Principal of Rajendra College Prof. Subhash Chandra Ghosh presided over the prize giving ceremony.

Primera Liga preview

Anelka doesn't irk Toshack



MADRID, Sept 10: Real Madrid's French international striker Nicolas Anelka takes his rapidly-diminishing confidence to the Basque hotbed of Bilbao on Sunday - for a meeting against the Athletic Bilbao team coached by his former Paris St Germain mentor, Luis Fernandez, reports AFP.

The 20-year-old, who only this week suggested he was so unhappy that he could quit the sport only weeks after Real paid 23 million pounds for his services from Arsenal, reached rock bottom on Wednesday when he was dropped from the French national team after a poor performance against Ukraine last Saturday.

Anelka, however, will be hoping to repay the confidence expressed in him this week by Real's usually-impatient coach John Toshack.

"His lack of form doesn't worry me in the least. We signed him for seven years and not seven weeks," Toshack said. "He barely trained during the summer and was restricted to playing around in a park with a couple of chums... I know and he knows that he's a world class player with a great future ahead

of him."

Anelka's ability was certainly recognised by Fernandez when he had his successful spell at PSG. He played the then 16-year-old twice against the French heavyweights Monaco and Metz in 1996.

There will be no room for sentiment at the weekend, however, and Fernandez will be demanding that his leading striker Ismael Urzaiz translate

his form from the 8-0 midweek thrashing of Cyprus, where he scored a hat-trick, onto the domestic patch against the unbeaten league leaders.

Real's arch-rivals Barcelona, who are also unbeaten, entertain city neighbours Espanyol and will have on-fire playmaker Rivaldo back after he scored a hat-trick for Brazil against Argentina in midweek.

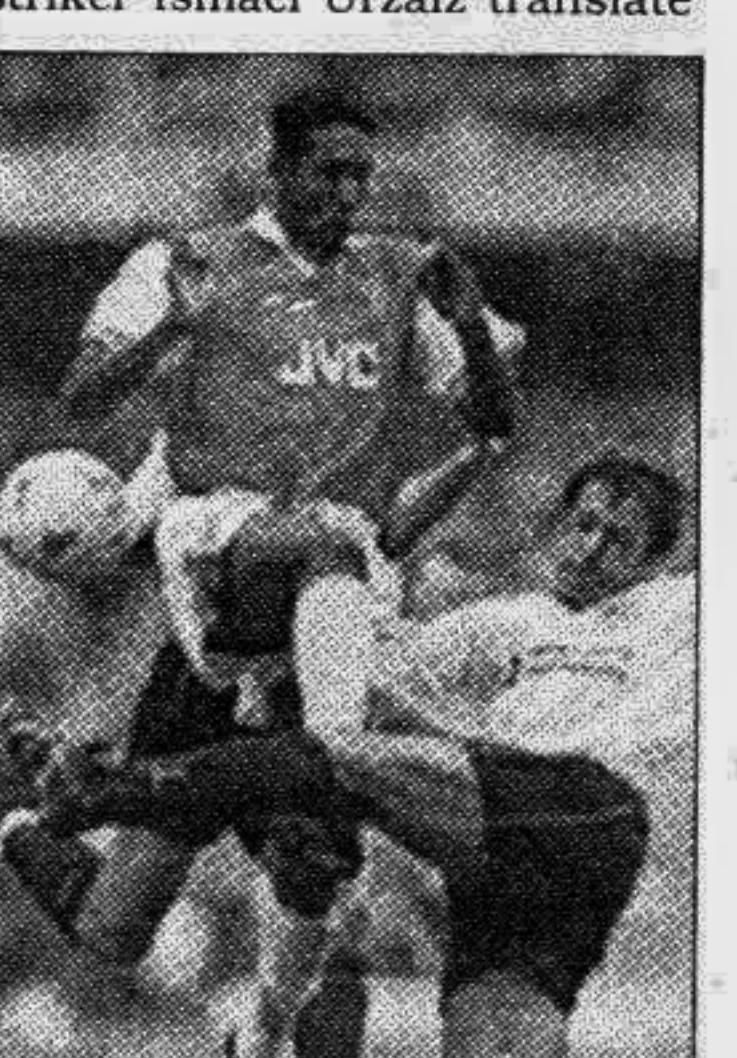
The other unbeaten side are the surprising Rayo Vallecano, who host Real Sociedad. Real Mallorca, without a point after two games, at least now have a coach in Fernando Vazquez after their original choice Carlos Gomez failed to satisfy the Spanish Football Federation's rules.

Mallorca will try and get their season started against newly-promoted Numancia.

Primera Liga fixtures over the weekend:

Saturday: Barcelona v Espanyol, Deportivo La Coruna v Valladolid, Valencia v Alaves (all evening kick-offs)

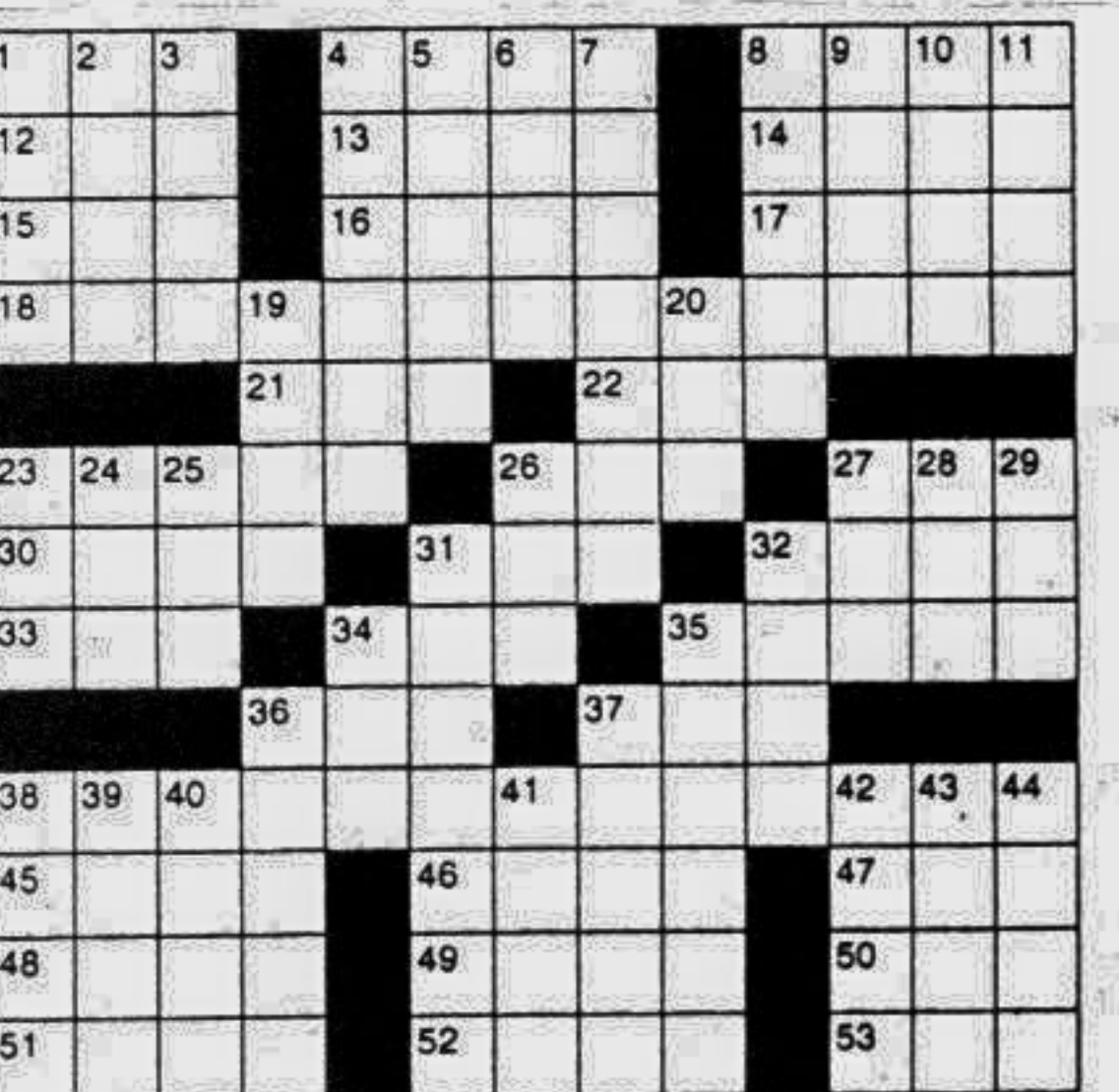
Sunday: Rayo Vallecano v Real Sociedad, Atletico Madrid v Celta Vigo, Sevilla v Real Zaragoza, Oviedo v Racing Santander, Malaga v Real Betis, Athletic Bilbao v Real Madrid, Real Mallorca v Numancia



NICOLAS ANELKA

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS	DOWN
1 Surprised reactions	1 Arab org.
4 Café additive	2 Kachina worshipper
8 Sunup	3 Some homes are built on it
12 Swab	4 Elegize
13 Taj Mahal site	5 Spry
14 Fraternal fielder	6 Cook-book needs
15 Mimicry specialist	7 Infected
16 Drew Carey's nemesis	8 Pop
17 Brunette	9 Jai
18 Trivial	10 Rodman
21 "A Chorus Line" song	11 Use the micro-wave
22 Stocking stuffer	19 Oddball
23 Blouse ruffle	20 Pooh
26 Obedience school lesson	23 Binge
27 End of a Dr. Seuss title	24 Docs' org.
30 Frenzied	25 Jazz style
31 Beatniks' abode	26 Forbid
32 Note from the boss	27 Whammy
	28 Parisian
	29 Prouette
	31 Do
	32 One may come out of the closet
	34 When's Mother's Day?
	35 Engines
	36 Over
	37 Pay for all
	38 Legume holders
	39 It's not good
	40 Pleasant
	41 Sheltered
	42 Between
	43 When shadows are shortest
	44 Under-stands



CRYPTOQUIP

BQWYZOK JBNQXTNUDN EBIYY
EBRRID XZRF B YDOYD TJ
FWQTN IBWKZFZO YRTEU
Yesterday's Cryptogram: PHOTOGRAPHS ARE ABOMINABLE GUYS: THEY WILL SHOOT PEOPLE, THEN BLOW THEM UP.
Today's Cryptogram clue