said. "I was going to prove it and

I did tonight. It took me time to

go through my game plan, but in

the last four rounds all he did

Hoya said : "I know I won. He's a

great fighter, very strong. I hurt

inside, emotionally. I thought I

boxing show. But I guess it didn't

work. To my fans, I'm very

sorry. I love you guys. I'll be

back. Some people didn't ap-

had the fight easily.

A very disappointed De La

"I wanted to demonstrate a

was run.

Villa might not like it

LONDON, Sept 19: Reformed alcohol and drug addict Paul Merson has admitted that his new autobiography, due to be serialised in a tabloid newspaper from Monday, could upset his English Premiership club Aston Villa, reports AFP.

Merson said the book "will give you everything" about his first 12 months at Villa Park following his 6.75 million pound (10.8 million dollar) move from Middlesbrough and said it was "maybe too honest".

Merson's first year with Villa has been a typical rollercoaster ride with patches of onthe-field brilliance mixed in with off-the-pitch problems. He was involved in a bust-up

with Villa manager John Gregory over a "pick me up" weekend trip to New York by Concorde when he was recovering from a long injury lay-off which had left him feeling "down and depressed".

Then Merson admitted he hit the booze again in a one-off drinking bender in April after his marriage to wife Lorraine hit a rocky patch and left him "battling from one day to the

The last thing Gregory will want is another bust-up with wayward genius Merson, particularly as it is so soon after the Villa chief's recent public row with club chairman Doug

Merson said: "Some people might be upset by the book but it's not meant to be directed at them. It's about me.

"If I am okay with myself then everybody is okay. If I am not then everybody is a bit of a

"The book will give an account of how unbalanced I was last season and let people know

what was going on in my head and my life. "I could have changed the book around and have everyone love me but this is an honest ac-

count - maybe too honest. "Sometimes I am right, sometimes I am badly wrong. know if I am pointing the finger then there are three fingers waiting to be pointed back at

"It's about the day-to-day life of a professional footballer who is struggling. The book will give you everything.

"Just because we earn a lot of money doesn't mean we are all robots. It's a story of a professional footballer who had it all and could have easily thrown it all away."

Bundesliga

Tough win for Bayern

COLOGNE, Germany, Sept 19: European Cup runners-up Bayern Munich stayed within a point of Bundesliga leaders Bayer Leverkusen on Saturday after beating Eintracht Frankfurt 2-1 - despite playing the last half hour without a regular goalkeeper.

Bayern, who put Michael Tarnat in goal after losing first choice keeper Oliver Kahn with a head injury in the 53rd minute and his replacement Bernd Dreher six minutes later with a knee injury, made light of their misfortune to score twice in the final 25 minutes through Brazilian Giovane Elber and Ghanaian Samuel Kuffour to take the three points.

Kahn, who had just returned from a long absence with a knee injury, had prevented Eintracht from going two goals up when he saved an Alexander Kutschera penalty a minute before his unfortunate exit - Togolese striker Bachirou Salou had put the newly promoted side ahead in the 20th minute.

Earlier injury-depleted Hertha Berlin put in a solid display to hold Bayer Leverkusen to a 0-0 draw at home, while VfB Stuttgart got off the bottom of the table with a 4-2 win over Duisburg.

Leverkusen, who lost Brazilian Ze Roberto for several weeks when he injured knee ligaments, move to the top on 11 points, one clear of Hamburg who travel to Kaiserslautern on Sunday, Borussia Dortmund and Bayern Munich.

But coach Christophe Daum was angry at the dropped points.

"Despite our high degree of possession and shots on goal we still failed to score and therefore open the game up," Daum complained, lamenting the draw as more of a defeat.

"As long as it was 0-0 Hertha could close things up, which they did very well, and we just kept pounding our heads against a brick wall. It wasn't an attractive game, especially for us when you look at the re-

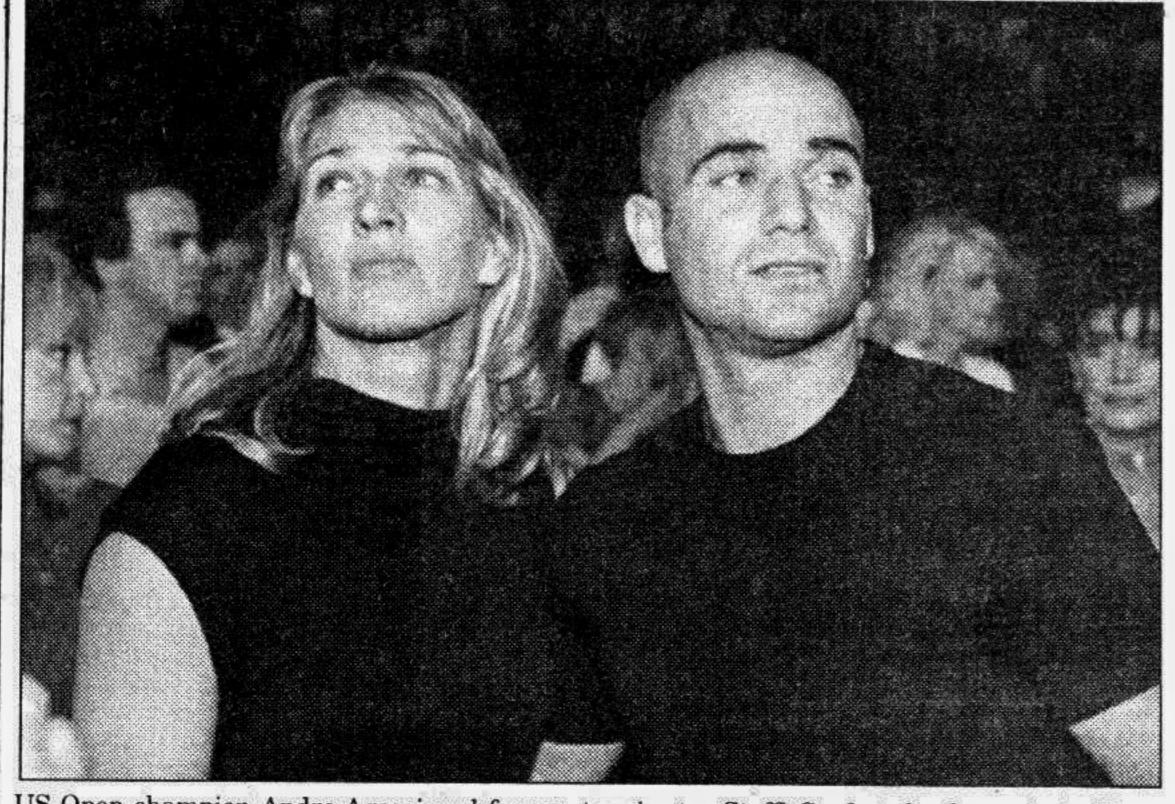
Both teams played in the Champions League mid-week. Whilst both emerged with draws. Hertha emerged psychologically and physically battered from their game at

Galatasaray in Turkey. As a result Dariusz Wosz, Thomas Helmer and Michael Hartmann were all missing on Saturday because of injuries picked up in Istanbul adding to an already lengthy list of walking wounded which has almost

wiped out Hertha's defence. in a precautionary move, 19year-old German star Sebastian Deisler - who is still regaining full fitness after a muscle tear was rested until the 62nd minute to keep hinr fresh for Tuesday's Champions League

game at Chelsea. Coach Jurgen Rober responded in the only way he could and gave his midfield express instructions to automa ically drop back and prop up their makeshift back line whenever Leverkusen had the

Rober apologised for the negative tactics but stressed he had no other alternative.



US Open champion Andre Agassi and former tennis star Steffi Graf at the Oscar de la Hoya and Felix Trinidad bout in Las Vegas on Sept 18. - AFP photo

Venus, Lindsay coast

fornia, Sept 19: Lindsay Davenport and Venus Williams put US Open disappoint-

ments behind them Saturday and won their opening singles to give the United States a 2-0 lead over Russia in the Fed Cup final, reports AFP.

With US Open champion Serena Williams on the singles sidelines, her elder sister Venus opened the best-of-five match tie with a 6-3, 6-4 victory over Russian number one Elena Likhovtseva. Davenport, who relin-

quished her US Open title last week as she lost to Serena Williams in the semifinals. then defeated 17-year-old Russian Elena Dementieva 6-4, 6-0.

"There's so much emphasis on the Grand Slams, it's good to come back the next week and go on," said Davenport, the reigning Wimbledon champion. "Tennis is a sport that we play 11 months out of the year. You have to move on after every event. It's a little difficult, but with this team we've done a great job about getting everybody up.'

Venus Williams, whose world number three ranking insured her singles selection ahead of her sister, was given no time to brood over her Open semifinal loss to Martina

I think her serve is a lot better than it was at the US open." said US FedCup captain Billie Jean King, who took Williams in hand as soon as she arrived in Stanford.

"I think it's much more connected," King said. "Percentage is definitely up compared to then. They didn't get here until Wednesday night because of the hurricane (on the east coast). "We've only had two days to work on the serve. She wants to be a serve-and-volleyer. At least she's trying."

Williams didn't exactly look assured at the net, but she said she was glad to get the chance to try out her serve-and-volley technique in the support of a team environment.

"It's not that easy just to all of a sudden do something that you're not, accustomed to." Williams said. "Because it's a different ballgame, things look a little different at the net.

"I have to get in there and get experience. King leapt up from her courtside seat and cheered every time Williams won a point at the net, but Williams said her captain didn't pressure her to

attack too much. "She wanted to make sure I would serve-and-volley at the point I was comfortable," Williams said. "I haven't done a lot of serve-and-volley in my

Big spending Lyon

went top of the

French League on

Saturday after

comprehensively

beating champions Bordeaux 3-

l - they lead Auxerre, who beat

Paris Saint Germain, who

Lyon, who were knocked out

St Etienne 2-1 also on

Saturday, on goal difference,

trail by a point, can replace

them at the top if they beat

of the Champions League in the

preliminary round by unher-

alded Slovenian outfit Maribor.

took control of the match in the

first-half as Patrice Carteron

and Brazilian star Sonny An-

derson gave them a two goal

a corner with Bordeaux 'keeper

Ullrich Rame stranded while

Anderson won the ball in mid-

field played a one-two with fel-

won, drawn, lost, goals for, against points):

Carteron headed home from

Strasbourg on Sunday.

lead by halftime.

Auxerre

Paris SG

Monaco

Nantes

Bordeaux

Marseille

Montpellier

St-Etienne

Sedan

Bastia

Rennes

Nancy

Lens

Metz

Troyes

Le Havre

Strasbourg

reports AFP.

STANFORD, Cali- life. I'm actually pretty good at it, but I don't do it a lot.

"But at the point I'm 30-love, 30-15, when I'm comfortable, I can get in and make some nice shots, and then do it at different points like 30-all, 30-40." Williams stretched her

winning streak over the 17thranked Likhovtseva to four victories in four meetings. The American dropped her serve in the first game of the second set, and didn't get back

on terms until she broke back

in the eighth for 4-4. She held to take the lead for the first time in the set, then closed out the match with another service break that included two service return winners and a forehand winner on match point.

Likhovtseva, who saw a

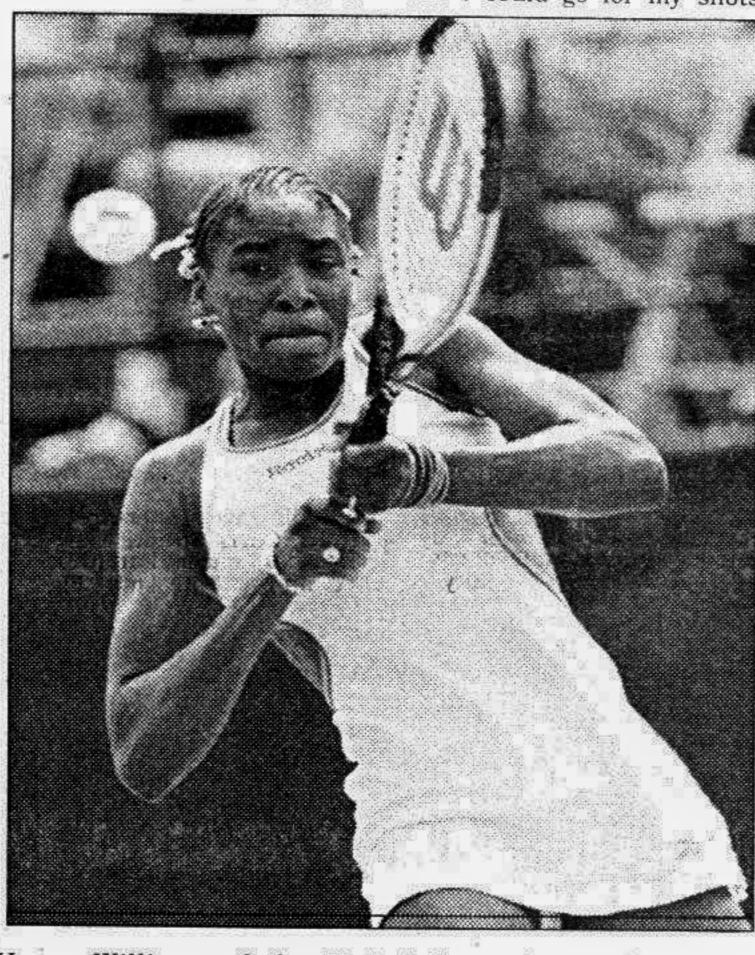
to the 1994 World Group final against Spain.

Dementieva, making her FedCup singles debut, displayed the same power that took her to two match victories and saw her take a set off Spanish veteran Conchita Martinez before losing in the third round of the US Open.

"I wasn't scared," said Davenport, who was served for the first set at 5-2 but lost that game and the next before closing it

"I knew she was a hard-hitter. She was hitting some great shorts today and was hitting the ball deep. "After I closed the first set

out 6-4, I felt a lot of pressure off, that I pulled out the close set and I could go for my shots



Venus Williams of the United States hits a backhand against Russia's Elena Likhovtseva. - AFP photo

three-match FedCup singles winning streak end, said she was never really in control in the second set despite the early break.

"It seemed like I was controlling the situation, but I don't think I was," she said. "Maybe I was just a little bit too nervous or I just wanted to win the set and I was thinking that too much.

Davenport extended her FedCup singles winning streak to 11 matches, stretching back

low summer signing Tony

Vairelles and slotted home

Barcelona in the summer,

added a second in the second-

half, his fourth of the season,

after another Bordeaux defen-

sive blunder gave him the ball

on the edge of the area and he

scored with a shot that went be-

last season with a win in their

last match, were fortunate to

take the three points against a

plucky and skillful St Etienne

took the lead through Brazilian

Alex, who headed home after

his point blank shot had been

blocked on the line, but a

penalty, for a foul which ap-

peared to happen outside the

area, by World Cup winning

striker Stephane Guivarc'h

Former Monaco midfielder

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13

10

10

12

13

brought the sides level.

The newly promoted side

Auxerre, who only stayed up

Anderson, signed from

from the edge of the area.

tween Rame's legs.

outlit.

STANDINGS

French First Division table after Saturday's matches (played,

more and play a little more aggressive in the second set."

Today the US team will try to claim the FedCup, the women's equivalent of the Davis Cup nations trophy, for the 16th time. Davenport will play Likhovtseva in the day's opener, followed by Venus Williams v Dementieva.

The closing doubles match pits the Williams sisters — the US Open women's doubles champions - against Dementieva and Elena Makarova.

Lyon gain slender lead

Stephane Carnot grabbed the ill

deserved win for the 1997 league

and Cup winners in the 76th

minute.

Afro-Asian Nations Cup Hosts edge Saudis

CAPE TOWN, Sept 19: South Africa survived a late scare to defeat Saudi Arabia 1-0 at Newlands Stadium here on Saturday in the first leg of the Afro-Asian Nations Cup, reports AFP.

Goalkeeper John Tlale produced a brilliant reflex save after 88 minutes and prevented substitute Obied al-Dossary earning the Saudis a draw they did not deserve.

Al-Dossary had come on early in the second half for Marzouk al-Otaibi, a highlyrated striker who made little impression on the Mark Fishled South African defence.

After an even first half in which the Saudis forced six consecutive corners, Bafana Bafana (The Boys) took control and man-of-the-match Pollen Ndlanya headed them into the lead after 47 minutes.

Benni McCarthy set up Quin-ton Fortune, a half-time substitute for injured debutant Ivan McKinley, and Ndlanya powered his cross past Saudi goalkeeper and captain Mohammed al-Deayea.

McCarthy hit the base of a post and had the ball in the net only to be ruled offside as South Africa sought the assurance of a second goal before the return match on September 30 in Riyadh. The Saudis, who spent two

weeks in Zimbabwe preparing for the match, fought back in the closing stages and Tlale did well to push away a long-range drive from impressive defender Hussein Sulimani.

Cameroon, South Korea, Algeria, Japan and Nigeria won previous editions of the biennial clash between the champions of Africa and Asia.

All Africa marathon result

JOHANNESBURG, Sept 19: Ethiopia and South Africa dominated the men's and women's marathons run over a tough, hilly course at the All Africa Games in Johannesburg today, filling five of the six medal 'positions, reports Reuters. In the women's event, 20-

year-old Hiywot Gizaw led a clean sweep for Ethiopia with the North African country also filling second and third, while South Africa's Joshua Petersen won the men's event with compatriot Frank Pooe taking third. Tanzania's Focus Wilbroad won the silver. Gizaw's victory came after

she sensationally moved up from a distant third position inside the last two kilometres passing long-time leader Meseret Kotu with less than a kilemetre to go.

The police officer, who is part of the Ethiopian national squad headed by Olympic champion Fatuma Robi, clocked 2 hours 45.36. Meseret was second in 2:46.27 and Kore Elemu third in 2:48.29.

In the men's race, Petersen broke clear after 27km and was only chased by Tanzania's Focus Wilbroad over the final five kilometres. Peterson finished a respectable altitude time of 2:19.05, with Wilbroad second in 2:20.44 and Pooe third in 2:23.35.

Nigeria supports SA's bid for 2006 WC

JOHANNESBURG, Sept 19: Nigerian sports minister Damishi Sango repeated his support for South Africa's 2006 World Cup bid here yesterday following the organisers performance at the All Africa Games (AAG), reports AFP.

Sango said although there were teething problems he believed neutral observers would praise the organisation of the

"On the strength of their performance at organising these Games, I wish to re-state Nigeria's unflinching support for the South Africa bid for the 2006 World Cup," Sango said.



Francoise Mbang Etone of Cameroon leaps into the sand pit to set a new African long jump record on September 18. -AFP photo |

Felix stages late flurry



LAS VEGAS, Sept 19: Felix Trinidad of Puerto Rico. with a burst of activity in the last three rounds,

squeezed out a majority decision over Mexican-American Oscar De La Hoya to add the World Boxing Council welterweight title to his International Boxing Federation crown on Saturday, reports Reuters. The decision stunned many

ringsiders, who said they thought De La Hoya had built a substantial lead with hard jabs that appeared to keep Trinidad from getting inside for most of the 12-round battle of 26-yearold, 147-pound (66.6 kg) fight-

Trinidad won the last three rounds on two of the three judges' scorecards to gain the decision. And all three judges surprisingly gave Trinidad the second round, although he landed only a handful of

Trinidad suffered a bloody nose in the second round. But it didn't bother him. Neither did the swelling under his left eye that appeared in the sixth

round. The fight was one of the most eagerly anticipated bouts in recent years and is expected to be

a huge financial success. De La Hoya was guaranteed 15 million dollars and Trinidad and his father 10.5 million dollars. De La Hoya's promoter. Bob Arum, said this week that his fighter was certain to earn about 21 million dollars after his cut of pay-perview sales was collected.

Immediately after the decision was announced, Trinidad's promoter. Don King, shouted down to reporters, "One down, one to go," referring to a rematch for which he and his fighter will receive more money

"Oscar deserves a rematch but we need to talk about that." said Trinidad, whose expres-

preciate my boxing lesson. Boxing counts a lot, not just brawling. Next time I'll be a brawler." Trinidad is now 36-0 and De La Hoya is 31-1. De La Hoya seemed to be in control for most of the fight, using his jab to keep the persis-tently stalking Trinidad off him. De La Hoya, a counterpuncher, stood only briefly in front of Trinidad to exchange punches before spinning out of trouble and dancing away. By the third round, Trinidad's white satin trunks were splattered by blood.

In one of the more obviously strong punches from Trinidad. he landed a solid right hand in the fourth round that send De La Hoya backward. By the fifth round De La

Hoya, apparently brimming with confidence, was holding his gloves lower, almost daring Trinidad to come inside. At the end of the round, De La Hoya landed several solid jabs and a hard left-right-left combination near the end of the round.

In the seventh round there were scattered boos from fans who wanted more action from the hugely ballyhooed fight in the 12,000-seat arena at the new Mandalay Bay Hotel. Trinidad landed a solid right

hand to the head after the bell. prompting De La Hoya to wave his glove as in "naughty. naughty." Trinidad stepped toward De La Hoya, but referee Mitch Halpern stepped between the two men. The 10th round was punctu-

ated with a furious flurry of punches as both men battled toe-to-toe. Trinidad got the best of the round, opening up the round with a solid but rare combination that sent De La Hoya peddling backward Trinidad also was throwing more jabs and combinations. Trinidad continued throw-

ing and landing jabs in the 11th round and De La Hoya appeared to be tiring when he did not want to break a clinch. Trinidad also seemed to be

landing power punches in the 12th round, but it still appeared to many ringsiders that De La Hoya had built up enough of a lead to win the fight.

Scalpers were asking \$7,000 for tickets to the sold-out fight. The top price for a ticket had been set at \$1,500. The start of the bout was de-

layed for several minutes while Trinidad's corner retrieved his mouthpiece from the dressing room.

S Africa kings of Africa

sion immediately after the fight

had not appeared to reflect con-

hand, was grinning with confi-

dence before the decision was

beginning that I was the num:

ber one welterweight," Trinidad

De La Hoya, on the other

"I always said from the very

fidence that he had won.

announced.

-AFP photo

Felix Trinidad of Puerto Rico holds up the WBC

welterweight belt after defeating Oscar De La Hoya.

JOHANNESBURG, Sept 19: South Africa proved themselves the best sporting nation in Africa as they easily topped the medals table from Egypt and Nigeria in the seventh All Africa Games (AAG), reports

Judge Jerry Roth scored the

fight 115-113 for Trinidad and

fellow-American Glen Hamada

had it 114-114. Bob Logist of

Belgium scored it 115-114 for

in the fight and neither fighter

was injured seriously, although

There were no knockdowns

Trinidad.

The hosts were never really threatened in their supremacy during the 19-sport event, which began on September 9 and concluded today.

There were no world records broken, possibly because the track and field athletes have had an exhausting season and high altitude is of no help to swimmers. One world record was equalled by a Nigerian woman in a weightlifting event.

South Africa, who beat Egypt into second place in the medals race in Harare four years ago, did the same this time. Nigeria won seven gold medals on the last night of athletics but it was not enough to push them up from third spot, the same as in

Algeria came fourth in the table, like in Harare four years

The Games confirmed established stars such as South African swimmers Penny Heyas, who won the 100m and 200m breaststroke, and sixgold-medal-winner Mandy Loots, plus Mozambique's 800m runner Maria Mutola. Okkert

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PAPEREDESCRIP

LIGHTELABEMAS

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21 Enthusi-

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23 Taxi

26 Plead

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31 Miners

33 Wooden

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13 Raw rock

remarks? 47 Sale

14 Scallopini 51 "- It

Brits, one of the few men to have cleared 6m in the pole vault, successfully defended his title.

Ethiopia's Gete Wami won the women's 10,000m to add to the world title she won last month in Seville. The men's 100m and 800m.

however, saw the favourites not able to live up to their billing. World silver medalist Hezekiel Sepeng of South Africa, hampered by a left hamstring strain, could only claim bronze in the two-lap

event. Kenya's Japhet Kimutai, who was fifth at the World Championships in Seville, took gold ahead of world bronze medalist Djabir Said Guerni of Algeria.

There was doubt that Sepeng would make the final after collapsing in pain and clutching his left hamstring when he won his semifinal. Namibia's Olympic 100m and 200m silver medalist Fred-

ericks, believed to be still suf-

fering from a lower back problem, could only win bronze in the 100m. Ghana's Leonard Myles-Mills took the gold with 9.99sec, and Francis Obikwelu of Nigeria, the world 200m

Fredericks said afterwards: "I'm very happy. Considering

bronze medallist, earned silver

with 10.01.

46 Birth-

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astic

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my injuries I did well to get away with a medal. I was up against a lot of good athletes and I had a bad lane draw (lane 8), but I hung in there.

Obikwelu finally earned his individual gold in the 200m. winning in 20.06.

South African gymnast Tamaryn Schultz won six medals, but only two of those were gold. On the security front, hun-

dreds of soldiers and private security guards were drafted in to protect the athletes although any trouble was little publi-Gunfire rang out near a bus carrying athletes back to the

village and there was a carjacking of an official vehicle, but no one was hurt. There was controversy, however, surrounding the officials, first with a strike by judo referees and then a threatened strike

by their athletics counterparts,

both over expenses payments. The problems were soon solved. Tempers flared and a newspaper photographer was punched during a Karate event and Cameroon were threatened with exclusion from the basketball competition because of

violent play. South África media, meanwhile, gave the AAG the thumbs

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer 58 Conclude 16 Do finger-36 Dahomey, 59 Paradise 20 Scott 38 Cribbage DOWN Joplin's 1 Earring 23 Apprenlocale 2 Mountain 24 Noshed goat 25 With 3 A couple kindness 27 Bush cups 4 Harsh league? 5 Wet 29 Trivial 6 Curve Pursuit 7 Reach need 48 49 50 30 Pismire 8 Lind-32 Bucbergh caneers Earhart 34 Condescended 37 "Do disturb" 39 Annoying CRYPTOQUIP

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WOULDN'T YOU

THINK THAT STYLISH ATTORNEYS LIKED TO Today's Cryptoquip Clue: B equals I

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.

ZDO EGMKMBEBZTQS,

WEAR LAW SUITS?

Siskel 50 Hibernia 53 Still, in verse

NBZBPVS TGBOCMBEO DZQS KBPVIA CO UBE NDDA.

52 Stooped 54 Staminate 9 "Jaws" 55 Appomatauthor tox VIP 10 Dorsal 56 Fashion region for Ally 11 Reaction McBeal 42 Aristo-57 Pays for Yorick cratic 44 Wharton's Solution time: 25 mins. tragic hero 45 Owl's JETBLACK COCA AWE ERE DEWEY