

Lewis on top after Spa win

AFP, Spa-francorchamps

Lewis Hamilton pressed home his challenge for this year's drivers' world championship in emphatic style on Sunday when he won a dramatic and incident-filled Belgian Grand Prix.

The 2008 champion, in his McLaren, took the lead at the start and then controlled the 44-laps race through two safety car periods and some perilous weather conditions on his way to victory.

It was his first win in Belgium, his third win this season and the 15th of his career in his 64th Grand Prix.

Not only boosted his title hopes but also made up for his disappointment in 2008 when, after finishing first, he was deprived of victory by a controversial stewards' decision.

Hamilton rode his luck when he had to in the capricious conditions and came home a clear winner, 1.5 seconds ahead of Australian Mark Webber of Red Bull and 3.4 beyond third-placed Pole Robert Kubica.

The only scare for the Briton was when he slithered off into the gravel in the closing stages.

A thrilled Hamilton said: "It was a great weekend, a very tough race for me, the same for everyone."

"I was praying it would be a race that would go smoothly, but then the rain came late on and I locked my wheels at turn eight, but thankfully I got away with it."

"We didn't know what to expect, but fortunately I got

round and changed the tyres -- it was probably the best one this year.

"Again fortunately it didn't rain any more, and in the end it was about nursing the car home, making sure it stayed in one piece and bagging the points."

"I'm very proud of the job the team did, and I'm so glad to be here."

McLaren team principal Martin Whitmarsh reflected:

"Lewis drove a fantastic race. There was just one excursion which was a little heart stopping but apart from that he was in command right from the start."

Webber, who fought back after dropping to sixth after a poor start, paid tribute to his arch rival.

"Lewis did a great job," said the Australian.

Explaining his slow getaway he reported: "I had a big

bump on the formation lap, and although we altered the clutch, it was worse at the start."

"Once you have a micro-problem there it's massively exaggerated by the performance of the other guys."

"After that it was a pretty mixed-up race, so I'm happy with second in the end."

Hamilton now has 182 points and leads the championship ahead of Webber, who began the day as the leader, now second on 179 points.

German Sebastian Vettel, Webber's Red Bull teammate, remains third on 151 points after failing to score along with two other title hopefuls -- defending champion Jenson Button, in the second McLaren, and two-time champion Fernando Alonso of Ferrari.

Vettel finished 15th after an impetuous drive filled with incident during which he crashed into the luckless Button and sent the Englishman into retirement in a controversial accident after 17 laps.

Alonso, who struggled in the conditions, also retired after spinning his car out at Malmédy in the third heavy rain shower of a contest riddled with chaotic moments.

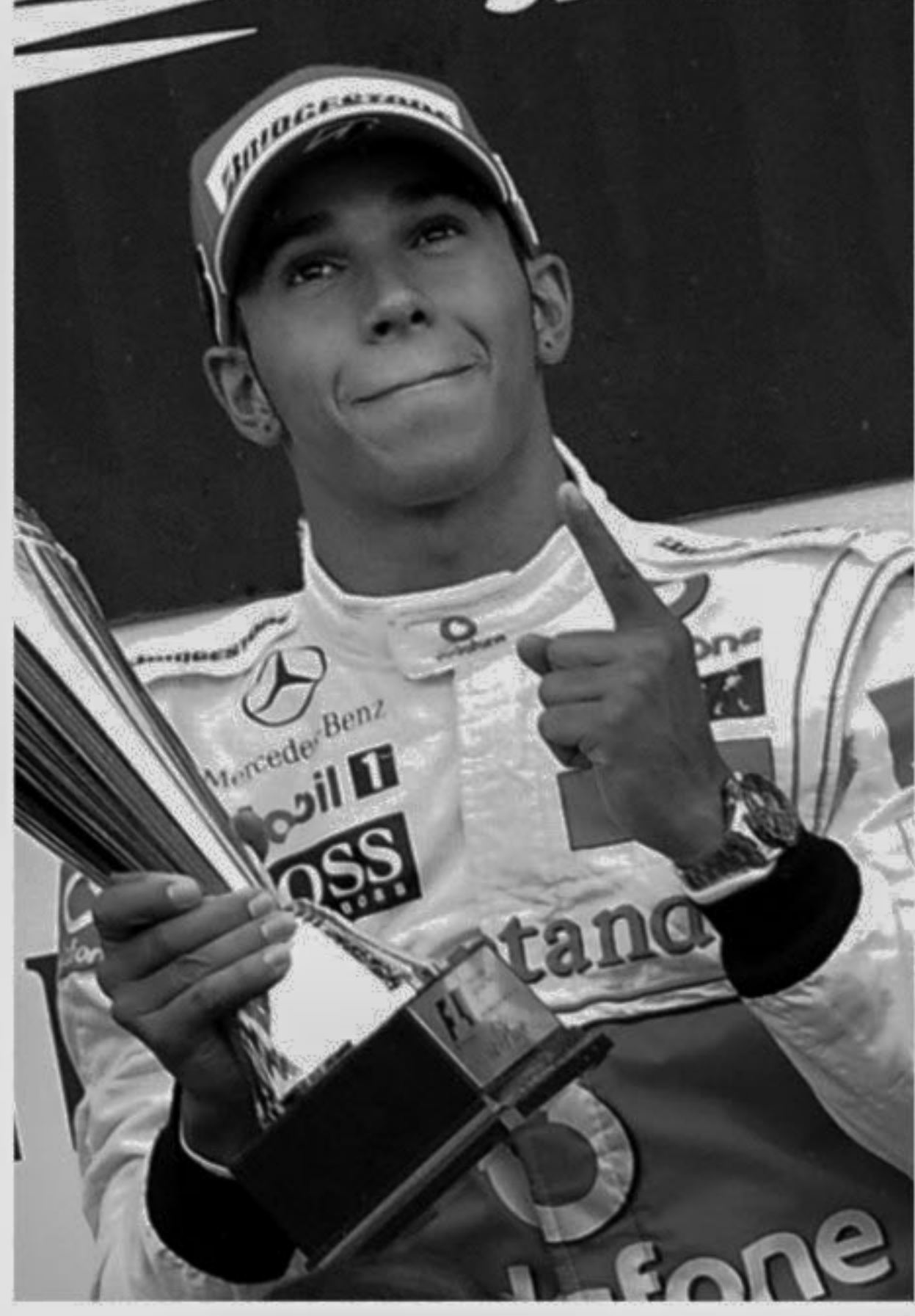


PHOTO: AFP
Lewis Hamilton of McLaren Mercedes celebrates on the podium after winning the Belgian Grand Prix at Spa-Francorchamps on Sunday.

Tigers shocked

FROM PAGE 17
Young paceman Shafiqul Islam was shocked by reading the name of Mohammad Aamer in the list.

"I still can't believe it. I think our players are very conscious about this match-fixing," said the lean and thin pace bowler.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) have vowed to take special measures so that they can avoid such incidents in the country.

"Definitely we will discuss the matter and take necessary steps to create awareness among the cricketers. We may ask the players to inform about sponsor agents. There is no scope for reluctance after this sort of an incident," said BCB's media committee chairman Jalal Yunus.

Rudisha betters own mark

AFP, Rome

Kenyan David Rudisha broke the 800m world record for the second time in a week, setting a new marker of 1min 41.01sec at a meeting in Rieti, Italy on Sunday.

It was only last Sunday in Berlin that the 21-year-old had set a mark of 1:41.09 to beat Wilson Kipketer's 13-year-old record by two hundredths of a second.

At Rieti last year the 2006 world junior champion set an African record as he exploded onto the scene in senior middle distance running.

Although he only reached the semi-finals at the 2009 World Championships, he continued to improve resulting in his eventually beating the record set by Kipketer.

Having done so, Rudisha had said he could go faster as it was his first attempt to break the record.

He was taken through the bell by compatriot pace-setter Sammy Tangui in 48.20sec before streaking away to win by almost two seconds from another compatriot Boaz Kiplagat Lalang in second.

American Nick Symmonds, third in 1:43.76, and Britain's Michael Rimmer, fourth in 1:43.89, both ran personal bests.

Tariku Bekele, the younger brother of Ethiopian great Kenenisa Bekele, won the

3000m in a world leading time of 7:28.70 with Kenyan-born American Bernard Lagat second in an American record 7:29.00.

Earlier, Jamaican Nesta Carter equalled Tyson Gay's world leading time of 9.78sec over 100m in a thrilling race that also saw two men set national records, five manage personal bests and two others setting season bests.

Carter's run broke his own previous best of 9.85 and came from lane seven.

American Ryan Bailey in second with 9.88 and Jamaican Mario Forsythe, third in 9.95, also ran personal bests.

France's Christophe Lemaire, the first white sprinter to run under 10sec, equalled his French record in the semifinal and then shaved one hundredth of a second off that in the final, finishing fourth in 9.97.

Norway's Gambia-born sprinter Jaysuma Saidy Ndure also set a national record, finishing seventh in 10.00.

Twice world champion Maryam Yusuf Jamal, an Ethiopian whose real name is Zenebech Tola and who now runs for Bahrain, cruised to victory in the women's 1500m in 3:58.93.

World bronze medallist Wallace Spearmon clocked a 19.85 to easily win the 200m ahead of compatriot Angelo Taylor (20.23).

David Oliver won the 110m hurdles in a meeting record 13.01, but well outside his world leading 12.89 set last month in Paris, the third fastest time ever.

Youth forms

FROM PAGE 17
have gained this tag after having played for Mohammedan and Abahani. We also believe that we have some talent and that's why Mohammedan has confirmed us. We will try our best to pay back the faith of the officials," said defender Ramjan Mollah.

Striker Akbar Hossain Ridon believes that success is inevitable if they disciplined and united from first to last.

Midfielder Kabir Hossain concurred stating that the players would have to back each other up and feel the spirit of the club.

There was also a call of unity among the club officials and convener Kutubuddin Ahmed at a meeting urged his colleagues to forget the previous mistakes and be united in a bid to obtain success in the coming days.



PHOTO: AFP
Kenyan runner David Rudisha poses near the timing board that shows his new world record for the 800 metres at the 40th IAAF Grand Prix at Rieti in Italy on Sunday.

Throw culprits

FROM PAGE 17
"Misgoverned for decades, Pakistan has a political class that contains few people whom anyone seriously looks up to for moral inspiration -- hence, in part, the almost fanatical devotion to a sport that supposedly incarnates the ideal of fair play."

"The people of Pakistan deserve better than to have it rubbed in their faces that this is not the case."

The Daily Telegraph said the claims undermined the integrity of the whole sport, not just Pakistani cricket.

"Many will see it as a mirror image of the political corruption that is endemic to that country," it said, calling for anyone involved to be punished.

"Only then can a start be made to remove the stain on cricket's reputation."

Pak tour of shame to go on

FROM PAGE 17
series against England from Sunday.

Somerset chief executive Richard Gould played down the prospect of further fan protests by saying: "We prepare for all contingencies but we think that is the furthest thing from what is likely to happen at Somerset". He added that he expected Pakistan to receive a "warm welcome".

Meanwhile, International Cricket Council (ICC) officials

were meeting counterparts from the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) in London on Monday to discuss the situation.

There have been suggestions that Butt, Aamer and Asif could be withdrawn from the Pakistan team to ensure that the two Twenty20 internationals in Cardiff on Sunday and Tuesday go ahead.

Butt was not, in any event, due to captain the side in the one-dayers, with Shahid Afridi

returning to lead the team.

But despite the calls from Vaughan and other top ex-players, Pakistan team manager Yawar Saad insisted that the remaining games would go ahead.

"As far as I'm concerned the one-day series is still on... We will play all the one-dayers and T20s," he said, speaking after the innings and 225-run defeat at Lord's which was Pakistan's heaviest Test loss of all time.

US OPEN ON Schiavone into round two

AGENCIES, New York

French Open champion Francesca Schiavone of Italy reached the second round of the US Open on Monday by defeating Ayumi Morita of Japan 6-1, 6-0.

Schiavone, who had previously won just three matches since her Roland Garros triumph, wrapped up the first set in just 29 minutes.

The number six seed was even more dominant in the second set as Morita, with only one grand slam singles victory in 10 attempts, proved unable to pose much of a threat.

She will play the winner of the tie between Maria Elena Camarin of Spain and Sophie Ferguson of Australia for a place in the third round.

NZC creates IPL window

CRICINFO

The creation of a participation window for New Zealand cricketers in the Indian Premier League (IPL) and the establishment of a players' retirement fund are among the salient features of an eight-year agreement between the national board, the players association and the six major domestic associations.

Justin Vaughan, the NZC chief, hailed the "ground-breaking" eight-year term of the deal that he said would provide stability to the country's cricketing structure.

"Through the eight years 65 million dollars is guaranteed to fund grassroots cricket and a further 25 million dollars is ring-fenced for NZC reserves. These elements underwrite the future of cricket in this country."

26 hockey players called up

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Hockey Federation yesterday picked 26 players for a trial in a bid to including test them for the national fold while the top players are taking part in the German second division.

The trial will be held Wednesday at Maulana Bhasani National Hockey Stadium and the players have been asked to report to coaches Barkatullah Chapal and Abdullah Piru.

Shakib knock

FROM PAGE 17
cheap dismissal, Shakib took the responsibility on his shoulders and batted till the 38th over to take the total towards 250-mark. Shakib's rollicking 69-ball knock consisted 10 boundaries. He was eventually bowled by the most successful Somerset bowler Alfonso Thomas who took 4 wickets for 49.

Earlier on Sunday, Worcestershire made it two wins in a row beating Unicorns by five wickets to snap a losing streak of seven matches.

Sydney Test was rigged?

Cricket

AFP, Sydney

Australian cricket officials on Monday expressed shock at a match-fixing scandal engulfing Pakistan and said they were awaiting evidence that this year's bizarre Sydney Test was rigged.

Cricket Australia (CA) chief James Sutherland said the body previously had "no doubt" about January's Test against Pakistan, when Australia overcame a 206-run innings deficit to record a stirring win.

But Mazhar Majeed, a property developer and players' agent, told Britain's News of the World he earned 1.3 million US dollars for rigging the match, where there were a series of dropped catches and suicidal batting by the visitors.

"CA had been in no doubt that Australia had won that game on the merit of their on-field performance and will now wait on evidence from UK and ICC investigations before making any further comment," Sutherland said.

Majeed, 35, was arrested on match-fixing charges in London and later bailed after the newspaper sting caught him being paid some 150,000 pounds (230,000 US dollars) to "spot-fix" three no-balls during the fourth Test at Lord's.

During the sting, he revealed details of the alleged Sydney plot, when Australia put on 124 for their last two wickets and Pakistan slumped to 139 all out.

"Let me tell you the last Test we did. It was the second Test against Australia in Sydney," he told an undercover reporter.

"Australia had two more wickets left. They had a lead of 10 runs, yeah. And Pakistan had all their wickets remaining."

"The odds for Pakistan to lose that match, for Australia to win that match, were I think 40-1. We let them get up to 150 then everyone lost their wickets."

Concerns were raised after the Test but an International Cricket Council (ICC) probe found no evidence of wrongdoing.

Former ICC boss Malcolm Speed said there was a compelling case to suspend Pakistan from world cricket.

"It looks as though it is endemic that several of the team members are involved and have been for some time," Speed told national radio. "So perhaps they need a rest. It looks a fairly compelling case."

Sutherland called the British report "most disturbing" and said CA would await further evidence before making any more comment.

"It is critical for cricket that the public has confidence in the integrity of the outcome of games, which is why CA and other ICC members have supported the significant world cricket investment in anti-corruption over the last decade or more," he said in a statement.

Australian captain Ricky Ponting said he feared some great individual performances by his players in the Sydney Test will be "tainted" if allegations of cheating by Pakistan were proven.

"You look at Mike Hussey's second-innings hundred (134 not out) and Peter Siddle's batting (38) and Nathan Hauritz taking five wickets on the final day to win us the game," he told national radio.

"All of those individual milestones will be tainted as well."

There have been lingering suspicions over the Sydney Test as Hussey was dropped three times by wicketkeeper Kamran Akmal on his way to an unbeaten century, with the aid of some unusually defensive field placings, to leave Pakistan chasing 176 for victory. Akmal put down a total of four catches and missed an easy run-out during the innings. Pakistan then lost their last nine wickets for 89 runs to hand Australia an unlikely victory.

The Australian newspaper said its own investigation had shown Majeed was in Sydney and visited Pakistani players in their hotel rooms during the Test.

'Spot-fixing prevalent'

Cricket

AFP, New Delhi

Spot-betting at the centre of allegations against Pakistani cricketers is widely prevalent and harder to detect than a fixed match, regular gamblers in India said on Monday.

India, the home to millions of fanatical fans and the lucrative Indian Premier League (IPL) Twenty20 tournament, is thought to host much of the worldwide network of illegal gambling on cricket.

"Betting happens in every match and does not always have to do with the end result," a regular gambler based in New Delhi told AFP on Monday on condition of anonymity.

"People bet on almost every delivery, whether it will be hit for a four or six, or whether it will be a no-ball or a wide, or if it will fetch a wicket."

"People like me just like to bet, and we ring our bookmakers constantly during a game. We have nothing to do with players, but it now seems obvious some big bookies are in touch with them."

The gambler said he makes many different spot bets during a match, often building up winnings or losses of several thousand dollars.

Betting on sports is illegal in India except at horse races, but major betting syndicates have been in operation for many years.

Cricket offers endless options for gambling on small incidents within the match, and

the IPL has massively increased the amount of money in the game.

Pakistani bowlers Mohammad Aamer and Mohammad Asif are in the spotlight after a man was arrested on match-fixing charges in London and later bailed.

Britain's News of the World tabloid said it paid 150,000 pounds (230,000 dollars) to a middleman in return for details about the timing of three no-balls in the fourth Test between England and Pakistan.

The report said Aamer and Asif delivered no-balls at the exact points in the match indicated by the alleged fixer in advance.

"It is not easy to catch spot-fixing," another gambler told AFP. "In some ways, the Pakistanis were unlucky. They were caught in a sting operation, after all."

The International Cricket Council's anti-corruption and security unit (ACSU), formed after a match-fixing scandal in 2000 that cost three Test captains their careers, reported that illegal betting was a multi-million-dollar industry.

Skippers Hansie Cronje of South Africa, Mohammad Azharuddin of India and Salim Malik of Pakistan were banned for life for alleged links with illegal Indian bookmakers.

But the purge and the ACSU's supposed strict policing of every international match has apparently not discouraged illegal bookies and punters -- or even cricketers -- from betting

on the game.

It is not just international cricket where betting takes place. In India, gamblers will even gather on the boundary of an amateur club game and bet on individual deliveries.

The punters insist they do it for fun, but uncertainty remains over whether deliveries are fixed in advance.

ICC awaits

FROM PAGE 17

Pakistani bowlers Mohammad Aamer and Mohammad Asif found themselves under a cloud over the weekend after a man was arrested on suspicion of defrauding bookmakers during the Lord's Test against England.

Pawar said he was unaware that the middleman, Mazhar Majeed, told the tabloid that he worked for an "Indian party".

"I don't know," the former Indian cricket chief said. "The BCCI (Board of Control for Cricket in India) will have to take a view on that."

"The BCCI is one of our members and I am sure if any serious matter is there, the BCCI will take cognizance of this."

"I can't come to a conclusion based on a video."

BCCI spokesman Rajiv Shukla had earlier on Monday dismissed any link to the middleman.

"The BCCI has got nothing to do with it," Shukla said. "Even if some Indian bookies are involved, the Indian police will look into the matter."

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

- ACROSS**
- 1 Scenery
 - 4 Encountered
 - 7 Stephen King territory
 - 12 Greek vowel
 - 13 Flightless bird
 - 14 Small studio's output
 - 15 Curved line
 - 16 Duke Ellington classic
 - 18 By way of
 - 19 Snag
 - 20 Deviates off course
 - 22 Whopper
 - 23 Space-craft compartments
 - 27 "— Miserables"
 - 29 Fool
 - 31 Really bad
 - 34 Heart line?
 - 35 Reasons
 - 37 Purchase
 - 38 China-town gang
 - 39 Shade
 - 41 Miss America ID
 - 45 Bridge positions
 - 47 Dance syllable
 - 48 Willy Wonka's creator
 - 52 Pitch
 - 53 Ballade ender
 - 54 "Holy cow!"
 - 55 Bobby of hockey lore
 - 56 Accomplish, biblically
 - 57 Bygone times, in bygone times
 - 58 Monterrey monarch
 - DOWN**
 - 1 Burden-some
 - 2 Court-yards
 - 3 Noisy bird
 - 4 Netting
 - 5 Computer letters
 - 6 — frutti
 - 7 Ho Chi —
 - 8 Moreover
 - 9 Bache-lor's
 - 10 Zero
 - 11 Slithery fish
 - 17 On the rocks
 - 21 Threw
 - 23 Stratagems
 - 24 "— Town"
 - 25 Insecticide letters
 - 26 Vast expanse
 - 28 Wapiti
 - 30 — Claire, Wisc.
 - 31 Lawyer (Abbr.)
 - 32 Personal question
 - 33 Half a sawbuck
 - 36 Roe provider
 - 37 Hallowed spot
 - 40 Grammarian's subject
 - 42 Thespian
 - 43 Don't hog
 - 44 Plague
 - 45 Tend texts
 - 46 Coaster
 - 48 Roulette bet
 - 49 Yoko of music
 - 50 Rd.
 - 51 Part of UCLA

Solution time: 25 mins.



1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12			13					14		
15			16			17				
18			19							
20		21	22			23	24	25	26	
		27	28			29	30			
31	32	33					34			
35				36		37				
38				39	40		41	42	43	44
				45			46		47	
48	49	50	51						52	
53						54			55	
56						57			58	

CRYPTOQUIP

O Z E E - J Y M O Y Y H P R S Z

H W Z D R K H Y O M W H Y O C M E M S Z F

P M N H D P R K R N H P Z R Y L M C Z W R H Y

F H Y K Z I ; N M E J H - C M Y P H I .

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: CLASSIC FILM ABOUT

THE DOMINATING MALE MEMBER OF A GROUP

OF LIONS: "FATHER OF THE PRIDE."

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: O equals W