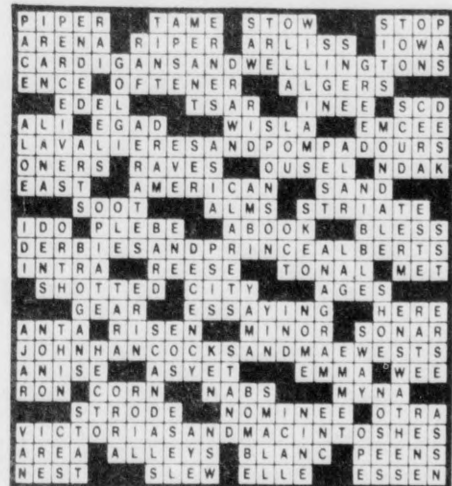


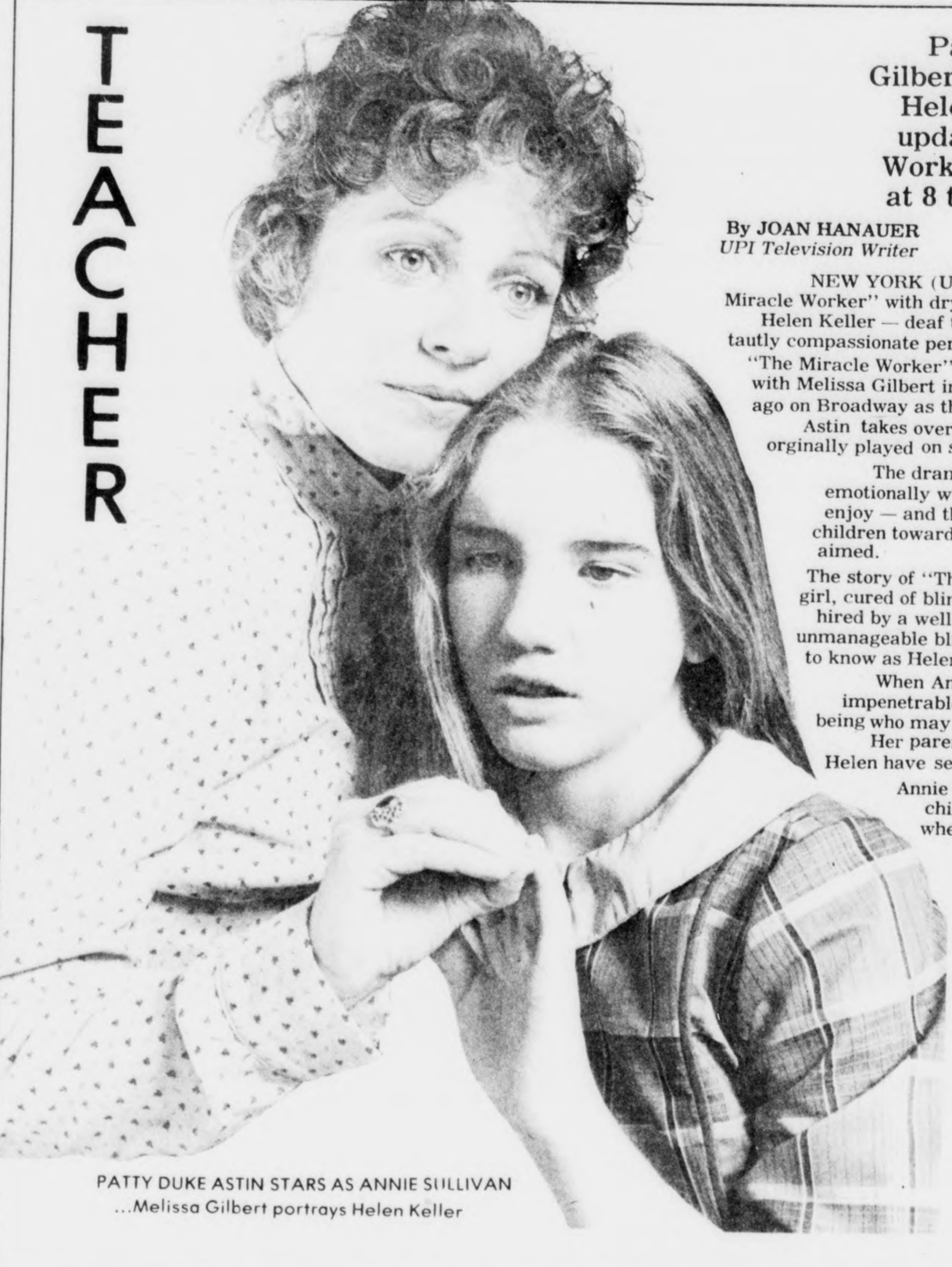
Here's today's crossword answer



TV chatter

Television actors Parker Stevenson and Robert Pine smashed their cars into the walls of the Ontario Motor Speedway during a celebrity race preceding the California 500 auto race. Stevenson, a star of the former 'Hardy Boys' series, suffered only bruises as his car bumped the outside wall on Turn Four. Pine, of the 'CHiPs' series, hit the inside wall as he swerved to avoid hitting Stevenson's car. He was unhurt. The race, in which celebrities teamed with Indy-car drivers, was won by actor Jan-Michael Vincent and a professional driver, Johnny Rutherford, with Vincent driving the first and last five laps of the 15-lap race.

TEACHER



Patty Duke Astin and Melissa Gilbert portray Anne Sullivan and Helen Keller respectively in the updated version of 'The Miracle Worker.' The story will be shown at 8 tonight on the NBC network.

By JOAN HANAUER  
UPI Television Writer

NEW YORK (UPI) — Anyone who can walk away from "The Miracle Worker" with dry eyes must be even more deaf and blind than Helen Keller — deaf to a heart-rending, uplifting story and blind to tautly compassionate performances.

"The Miracle Worker" goes on NBC Oct. 14, 8-10 p.m., Eastern time, with Melissa Gilbert in the role Patty Duke Astin portrayed 20 years ago on Broadway as the young Helen Keller. The now grown Mrs. Astin takes over the part of Annie Sullivan, Helen's teacher, originally played on stage by Anne Bancroft.

The drama is one of television's finest productions, an emotionally wringing experience that the entire family can enjoy — and that means the men and women as well as the children toward whom "family" entertainment most often is aimed.

The story of "The Miracle Worker" tells how an Irish orphan girl, cured of blindness herself but still with impaired sight, is hired by a well-to-do Tennessee family as governess to their unmanageable blind, deaf and mute child who the world came to know as Helen Keller.

When Annie arrives, she finds Helen living behind the impenetrable wall of her afflictions, a wild and primitive being who may be institutionalized if she can't be controlled. Her parents' pity and guilt about their feelings toward Helen have sealed her isolation.

Annie tells the Kellers that Helen is a badly spoiled child and asks, "What good will your pity do her when you're under the strawberries?" In a war of wills, fierce little Annie Sullivan forces Helen into obedience and — finally, blessedly — understanding.

The tension, the despair, the frustrations and the hope, are beautifully portrayed by Mrs. Astin. In beautiful counterpoint to Mrs. Astin's tough, practical Annie is Miss Gilbert's groping, stubborn, valiant and oddly graceful Helen. Miss Gilbert so far has been best known for her role as Laura in "Little House on the Prairie."

"The Miracle Worker" began life on television as a "Playhouse 90" in 1957, starring Teresa Wright and Patty McCormack. William Gibson adapted it for the stage in 1959, starring Miss Bancroft and Patty Duke, and in 1962 it became a movie, again starring Bancroft and Duke.

"The Miracle Worker" is more than good television — it is powerful, moving and superb theater.

PATTY DUKE ASTIN STARS AS ANNIE SULLIVAN ...Melissa Gilbert portrays Helen Keller

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**"10"** BLAKE EDWARDS

New part, new partner for Patty Duke Astin

A gold necklace peeks out of the collar of Patty Duke Astin's blouse. It's inscribed with the word, "TEACHER" — the word Helen Keller used affectionately to describe Annie Sullivan. On the back of the necklace, the word is also printed, but this time in braille. The necklace was a gift from Mrs. Astin's co-star Melissa Gilbert, who will portray Helen Keller in the teleplay, "The Miracle

Worker. The necklace is symbolic of the intimacy these two actresses shared in producing the show.

At 14, Patty Duke became the youngest actress ever to win an Academy Award for her portrayal of Helen Keller in the 1962 film version.

"I wish, and it's a fruitless wish, we didn't have to compare them," Patty declared wistfully, "but the comparison is inevitable."

Melissa Gilbert, the 15-year-old star of NBC-TV's "Little House on the Prairie," makes the comparison a pleasurable one, though. "There was very definitely a team when Annie Bancroft and I did it (in 1962), an there's very definitely a team here," Patty Astin said.

"The phrases are very tightly entwined. I guess I found that it can't be any other way and work," she continued, in a voice grown husky from the Muscular Dystrophy Telethon she and her husband had just completed.

"I think the original will stand on its own ground," she said. "I know for a fact there was no contest involved. I wasn't trying to say, 'OK, I'll play Annie better than Annie Bancroft.' I can't. I think I can play it as well, but in my own way."

Fred Coe, producer of the original Broadway play and later the film version of "The Miracle Worker," was also the driving force behind organizing the television production. Two fantasies collided when he brought this "team" together.

Both Patty and Melissa had dreamed of playing their respective parts for years, never believing it would actually come to pass. An added benefit by the sponsor, IBM, is distribution of scripts of the two-hour telefilm in braille and cassette versions to libraries across the country.

Patty Astin has obviously retained much of the same playfulness that made her popular back in the mid-sixties as the 'two-of-a-kind' twin cousins on 'The Patty Duke Show.' Some of that playfulness, as

well as John and Patty's zeal for acting, is apparently rubbing off on their children.

Sean, their 5-year-old son, tip-toes into the room wearing his mother's pale-blue high heels.

"Sir, may I help you?" Patty asks. Then shifting tones, "Would you please take my shoes off before you break them."

"I don't even want to talk about that," Patty says in an aside. "I had some lower shoes. At least he could have picked something a little more butch."

As Patty juggles the joys of motherhood with her busy schedule, she sees "The Miracle Worker" as a stepping off point to other things. In the coming months she would like to do more feature films and a stage production of an historical classic with her husband directing. "We love to work together," she said.

She's not promising any TV series for this season, but she says "I certainly have learned not to close any doors. Certainly if a miniseries came along, I would do it."

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Bridge

DEAR MR. GOREN

Q.—I am sure you have heard this plaintive cry before. My slam bidding is hopeless. I am never sure when to proceed beyond game to attempt a slam, or to push to the ultimate height—a grand slam. I know all about Blackwood, but that alone does not seem to be the answer. Without reference to specific hands, could you give me some general guidelines to improve my slam bidding? —L. Jacobson, Brooklyn, N.Y.

(This question has been awarded the weekly prize.)

A.—You are right in your belief that you are not alone. Indeed, as I said here two weeks ago, many expert pairs will candidly confess that slam bidding is the weakest part of their game. In addition, no aspect of the game has generated so many false precepts. The average player tends to look upon slam bidding as some mysterious ritual far removed from the normal course of the auction. This is a serious misconception. Perhaps this might seem like an oversimplification, but my feeling is that slams should be bid in much the same way as games are undertaken. After all, a slam is simply a game with one or two overtricks, depending on whether you are playing in a major or minor suit. Some players seem to believe that they must engage in a great amount of ceremony before bidding a slam. The mechanical devices for ascertaining the number of aces and kings are invariably trotted out, despite the fact that these will rarely determine whether slam can be made or not.

A much sounder policy to follow is to bid a slam when you think you can make twelve tricks, rather than employing your favorite convention. Always remember, however, this important proviso: Be quite sure that your opponents cannot peel off two fast tricks against you.

Here is one rule of thumb to determine whether or not you are in the slam zone. If your hand is worth an opening bid and partner opens the bidding, your combined holding merits playing in game, but not slam. If you hold the equivalent of an opening bid and partner opens the bidding and subsequently makes a jump rebid, your combined holdings are now likely to produce a slam.

What about hands that are more evenly divided, where each partner has a hand better than a minimum opening bid but neither partner has enough for a jump? If you find a fit and can determine that the partnership assets include about an ace and a king more than two minimum opening bids, you are again in the slam zone. That fits in well with what we stated earlier—a slam is simply a game with two overtricks!

Let's summarize briefly the most important features of successful slam bidding:

- 1) First and foremost, obviously, is the ability of the partnership to take twelve tricks before the opponents can collect two.
- 2) Secondly, a satisfactory trump suit must be found or, if there is none, there must be a source of tricks, perhaps in more than one suit, for a no trump slam.
- 3) Lastly, if either partner has a holding that might be subject to a fatal attack on the opening lead, such as an ace-queen combination or an unprotected king, every effort should be expending to make that hand the declaring hand at slam, so that the contract will not be destroyed at the outset.