

FACES AND PLACES

Melanie Oudin

This 17-year-old from Marietta, Georgia, has become an overnight sensation in the tennis world. Melanie Oudin — *OO-dan* — beat several tennis champions, including Maria Sharapova, and now advances to the quarterfinals of the U.S. Open. Oudin entered the tournament ranked 70th and is the youngest American to reach the quarterfinals since Serena Williams did so 10 years ago. “This is what I’ve wanted forever,” Oudin said. Oudin is known for her trademark pink-and-yellow sneakers, which have the word “BELIEVE” stamped near the heel. Now she is learning to deal with her newfound fame. **Do you follow women’s tennis?**

Sonia Sotomayor

The nation’s newest Supreme Court justice, Sonia Sotomayor, was sworn in last week at a special ceremony with President Obama. Sotomayor had already been officially sworn in last month; this event was a special ceremony called the investiture, involving long-standing rituals of the Supreme Court. Sotomayor, 55, is the nation’s first Hispanic Supreme Court justice, and only the third woman on the court. Sotomayor took her seat at the far left of the bench, the slot reserved for the court’s newest member. Sotomayor, accompanied by her mother and brother, was sworn in by Chief Justice John Roberts. Sotomayor replaces David Souter, who announced his retirement earlier this year. **What impact do you think Sotomayor might have on the Supreme Court? Do you think she was a good choice?**



Honduras

The U.S. State Department formally halted all non-humanitarian aid to this Central American country, citing the June 28th coup that removed the democratically-elected president, Manuel Zelaya, from power and forced him to leave the country. The State Department said the U.S. government needed to take strong action because the replacement regime had failed to restore “democratic, constitutional rule.” A temporary government has been set up, led by Robert Micheletti, who has refused to allow Zelaya back into the country. The U.S. government also said it wouldn’t support the result of a planned November presidential election here unless the vote is free and open. **Do you think U.S. officials made the right decision in this case?**

San Francisco

The San Francisco-Oakland Bay bridge re-opened last week after crews discovered a 2-inch-thick crack in a steel link while doing upgrades to make the bridge better able to withstand an earthquake. The 73-year-old bridge connects San Francisco to heavily populated cities to the east. It carries about 260,000 vehicles a day. Over Labor Day weekend, a football-field-sized, 3,300-ton section of the eastern part of the bridge was cut out and replaced with a new section. “The bridge has been inspected and it’s safer than it was when we closed it,” said a California transportation official. **Do you think most U.S. bridges are safe?**