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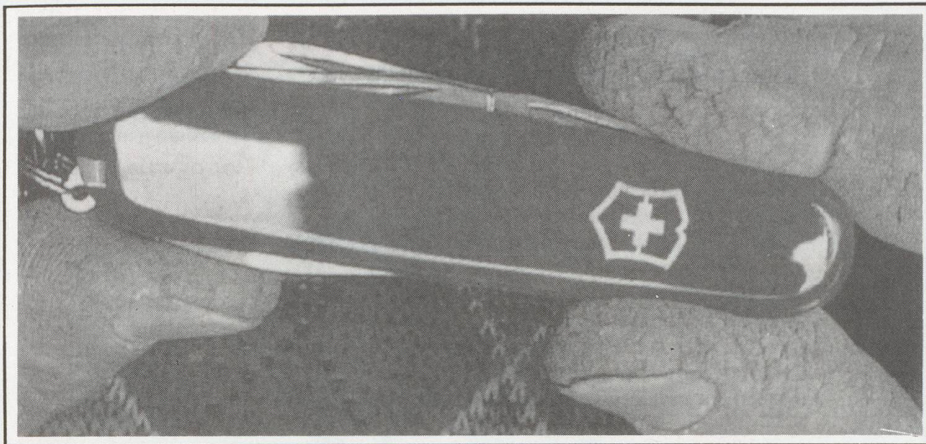
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Victorinox, the manufacturing firm in Ibach which started production in 1897, registered its knives under the name of "Officers Knives" (Offiziermesser). The name was always written with inverted commas to indicate that it was simply a brand name.

The name "Swiss Army Knife" only came after the 2nd world war when it became a standard article of sale through the US-Army surplus shops.

Today, carrying a Swiss Army Knife in your pocket can get you into all sorts of trouble, especially if you travel from one country to another. The obvious places where you will encounter trouble are airports when your knife triggers off detector alarms. Whilst you may consider your beloved pocket knife as an everyday tool to clean your finger nails, cut a string or pull a cork, the airport officials see it as a dangerous and offensive weapon. So, instead of carrying it on you, you have to put it into your suitcase and hope that no customs officer at the other end will find it when he rummages through your belongings.

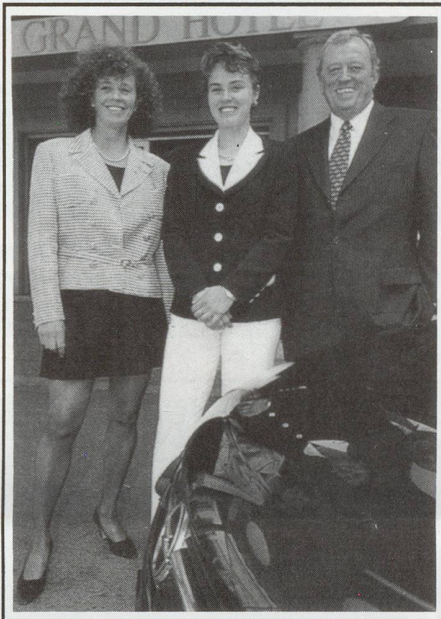
MARTINA HINGIS

Being a superstar at the tender age of 16 is great but it also brings along a certain number of problems. Martina finds it increasingly difficult to go shopping without being immediately recognised. What is a very simple activity for most of us becomes for Martina a real headache: trying to avoid the photographers and the autograph hunters is not an easy task for her.

On the other hand, being famous also opens new doors for promotional

The "Swiss Army Knife", for generations the proud possession of every boy and man. Today a dangerous and murderous weapon? It's hard to believe how much times have changed.

contracts. Martina just signed a million dollar deal with Opel Switzerland to promote their line of cars. As part of the deal, she also received a brand new Opel car. This was a great present for Martina who loves beautiful and fast cars. Small problem though: at 16 she is not allowed to drive in Switzerland. So she has to wait another two years before she can obtain her driving licence. In the meantime, Mum has to drive her around.



Picture taken at the Grand Hotel Dolder near Zurich after the signing of the contract with Opel Switzerland.

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SWISS MISS

Here are some extracts from an article by a Wall Street Journal reporter which illustrates quite clearly how the Americans view the Swiss and its present economy. Although some of it might be typical American exaggeration, the basis of the article sounds quite true and a bit frightening.

HOW THE RICHEST COUNTRY IN EUROPE WOUND UP IN A SIX YEAR RECESSION.

Banks Stumble and Workers Are Idled. Bern Has Army Stand By - Just in Case.

A Soup Kitchen for Geneva.

Late last year, the Swiss Army, famous for its knives (where did they get that one from?, Editor), drew up plans for how to counter an attack on the capital. It wasn't preparing for an invasion by Austria. Instead, the government wanted to be ready in case rising unemployment brought out violent protests.

Other European countries are suffering slow growth. But Switzerland, Europe's richest country in per capita income, is stuck in a six-year old recession. The trains are as punctual as ever, the streets remain the cleanest in

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