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ional" had been worn on a space flight.

The watch – which retails in Switzerland at Sfr. 750 (about £230) – is one of the very few products of regular and current manufacture included in the astronauts' official equipment.

Omega was selected by the US space authorities in the early sixties after rigorous testing of a series of competing products acquired locally in Houston from commercial sources without the knowledge of the manufacturers.

One of the watches was worn by Neil Armstrong on July 21, 1969, as he became the first man to set foot on the moon.

The Omega products were also on the wrists of American astronauts when they shook hands with Soviet cosmonauts during the 1975 Appollo-Soyuz space rendezvous.

But the Swiss chronograph played its most spectacular and dramatic role in April 1970 during the Apollo 13 mission.

Because of an oxygen tank explosion, the pilots of the lunar module had to depend entirely on the perfection and precision of "Speedmaster Professional" to refire the rocket at the precise moment – and enable the crew to return safely to earth.

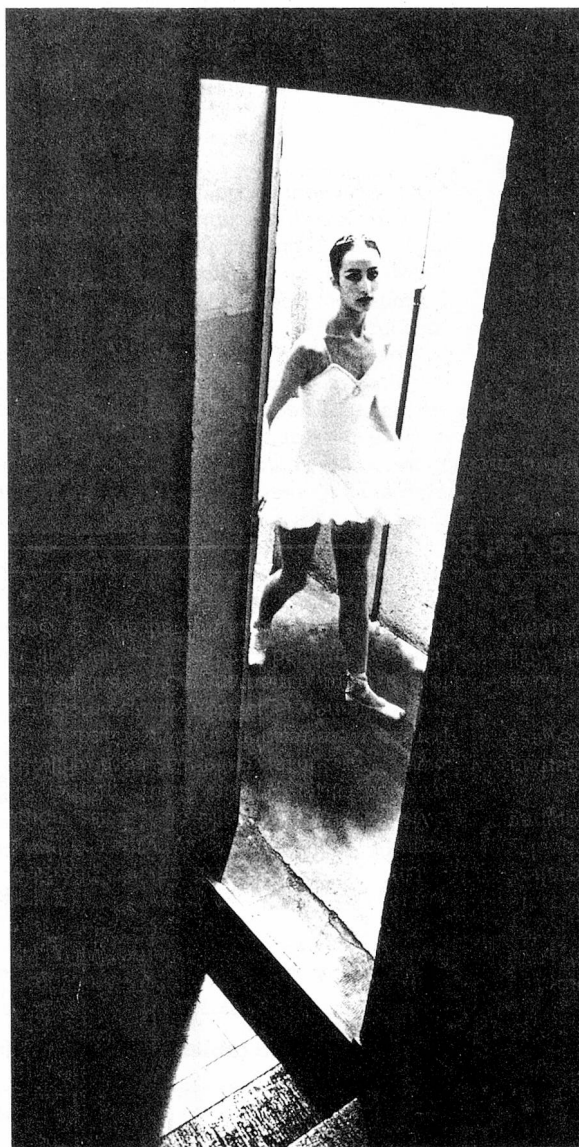
★ ★ ★

ENGLAND will have to wait a few more months before knowing if its application to stage the 1990 World Cup has been successful.

The Zurich-based International Football Federation (FIFA) was to have announced the host country a few weeks ago. But the volume of documentation and other paperwork to be studied made a December decision impossible. A FIFA statement said it was now hoped to make an announcement in May.

England is one of four countries which have submitted firm applications – the others are Greece, Italy and the Soviet Union.

THE ARTS



THERE are several ways of paying tribute to the opera and the ballet. Certain cities maintain permanent companies of their own, with varying degrees of success. Others have a tradition of welcoming companies from outside.

This is the case of Lausanne which, while boasting a Chamber Orchestra of international repute, the OCL (Orchestre de Chambre de Lausanne), and contributing to the Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, prefers – in the lyric and choreographic fields – to invite companies of no less international fame.

In addition to the various performances arranged throughout the year – with the important International Festival in the spring – a big ballet competition is organised at the end of January every year: the Prix de Lausanne.

Whether at Varna, Moscow, Tokyo, or Jackson, classical dance competitions abound all over the world. The Lausanne competition is nevertheless unique.

First of all because it is open exclusively to young dancers from 15 to 18 (for girls) and to 19 (for boys). Then because even though various prizes in the form of cash and medal are awarded, the main big prizes are scholarships.

This year the four prizewinners will have the pleasant task of choosing from the nine big ballet schools participating in the scheme the one where they wish to complete their training: the Princess Grace Academy in Monte Carlo, the Hamburg Ballet

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School, the Rosella Hightower Centre in Cannes, the "Opéra de Paris" School of Ballet, Mudra - Béjart's school in Brussels, the Stadelijk Instituut voor Ballet in Antwerp, the Royal Ballet School in London, and - on the other side of the Atlantic - the San Francisco School of Ballet and the School of American Ballet in New York . . .

Right from the start, the Foundation for the Promotion of Choreographic Art and its President, Mr Philippe Braunschweig, set their sights very high.

The Prix de Lausanne which they organise is of international standing. Only the "cream" of young dancers have any chance. Coming each year from 15 or so



countries - including those in the East - they are undoubtedly the stars of tomorrow.

And looking back on the eleven past editions of the competition it can now be said that many of these young hopefuls have since

confirmed their promise.

One example among many: in 1981, the Italian, Carlo Merlo, was awarded a scholarship to the School of American Ballet, a gateway to a certain extent to the legendary New York City ballet.

He is now a full-time member of that company.

There is no doubt at all: the Prix de Lausanne is a competition on the world scale. So much so in fact that the editor of the famous American periodical "Dance magazine" wrote: "Of all the ballet competitions held throughout the world, the one I find the most satisfying - and the most substantial for the art of the dance - is the Prix de Lausanne".

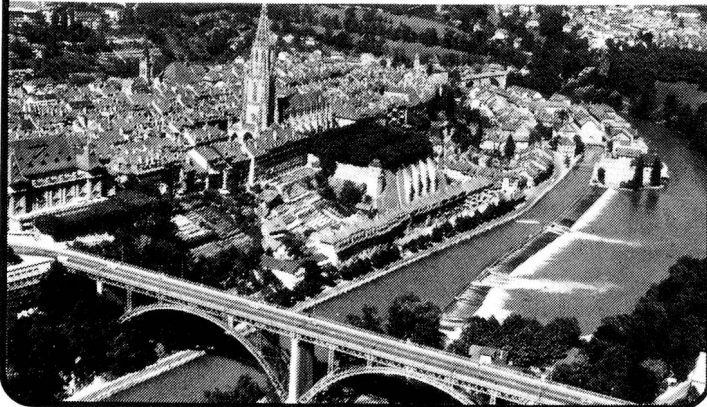
The next stage in the development of this event is therefore perfectly logical. In 1985, if nothing occurs to upset Philippe Braunschweig's plans, after the preliminary rounds in Lausanne, the finals could very well be held exceptionally in . . . New York!

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