

Ian Botham

(English cricket legend) "Nothing encourages a side more than to see the opposition chop and change and England too often has been confused."



TICK THE CORRECT ANSWERS Competition closes at 8 pm on

Competition-85

Dec 26, 1997 In which group have Brazil been drawn for France '98?

How many centuries has Atapattu hit in Test cricket to

Who is the national soccer coach of Saudi Arabia?

4 Who were Bangladesh's opponents in the World Youth Cup cricket qualifiers' final? How many teams are taking part in the

Premier Division cricket league?

CLASS ROLL NO. SCHOOL ADDRESS

NAME .

PHONE: (IF ANY)



cricket

From Our Correspondent

RAJSHAHI, Dec 24: River Wave Club defeated Surprise Sporting Club by 39 runs in the Shaheed Zia Smriti cricket tournament at the Rajshahi Government College playground today. Winning the toss, River Wave

made 139 for nine in the stipulated 25 overs. In reply Surprise Sorting were all out for 100 in 23.3 overs.

In the second match of the day, Zia Smriti Sangsad battled first and collected 75 in 20 overs. In reply, Malopara Sporting Club scored 77 for eight in 16.2 overs.

Pakistan's fluctuating fortunes

Consistency has never been a hallmark of the Pakistan cricket team. The team's

fortunes have fluctuated from stupendous victories to catastrophic defeats. Under Imran Khan, the team showed tenacity, discipline, team spirit, commitment, etc. Even under previous captains like Mushtaq Muhammed, Asif Iqbal, Javed Miandad (also Imran's successor), the team did not posses such qualities although there were talented players like Sadiq Mohammed, Majid Khan, Wasim Bari, Taslim Arif, Sarfraz Nawaz etc. This was exemplified by the team's performance: Series victories in India and England, three Test series drawn consecutively against the West Indies in their heyday (including one series in the West Indies), the 1992 World Cup, innumerable triumphs in one day tournaments in Sharjah and India etc. But for one controversial decision in the third Test at Barbados, 1988 Imran, not Mark Taylor the first captain to beat the West Indies in their own backyard. However it was not to be and the world had to wait for another 7 years before the men from "down under especially one Hercules, a Merlin and the "Mengle Twins" handed down to the calypso cricketers their first series defeat since the controversy marked New Zealand vs West Indies series in 1980-81. Nevertheless, it was Imran's men who burst the West Indies bubble on a fine, pleasant sunny morning in 1986 at Faisalabad. One could only look with admiration as Salim Malik, his left hand in a plaster, batted grimly against Courtney Walsh, Malcolm Mar-

shall, Anthony Gray and

Patrick Patterson in full flow.

Faisal M Rahman He remained unconquered. There were also many other acts of heroism which rose from desperate circumstances, but the message to their opponents and the cricket world was clear. Never say die!

It has been five years since Pakistan won the World Cup in Australia in 1992. A lot of water has flown under the bridge and very few teams have experienced such frequent dramatic "twists of fate" as the men with baggy green caps. Perhaps volatility, rushes of blood, unpredictability, etc is a way of life in Pakistan. Such traits are represented well by the Pakistani cricket team. There is no other explanation to explain the performances of a team which is so highly gifted but unpredictable. Invincible on one day and thoroughly pathetic on another. Matches have been thrown away from winning positions. In the recently concluded third test at Faisalabad, World Cup quarterfinal match against India, one day matches in Canada etc one could only look with utter disbelief as games which could have been won easily with a little application were squandered away. It would appear to be that all the players were in a rush to catch an evening plane or train. Even senior players like Malik, Rameez Raja, Saeed Anwar,

Aamir Sohail etc played irresponsibly. The current team is not what it used to be under Imran. It lacks grit, professionalism, commitment, discipline, etc. Since 1992 Akram, Malik, Rameez, Anwar have been sacked from the captaincy. Team performance and morale reached rock bottom when Malik was accused of bribery and betting by the Australian trio of

Tim May, Shane Warne and

are once again on the wrong path of justifying their mis-takes instead of rectifying it.

Does the certifi-

cate always bear

the real age of its

holder? In Ban-

gladesh, barring

the answer is negative. And that

is why sports lovers of the

country always have to revisit

In 1990, a juvenile selection

the odd memories of the Dana

of BKSP hogged the headlines

by winning two under-16 inter-

national football tournaments

in Denmark and Gothenburg.

Sweden. But in the process it

was discovered that most of the

so-called kids of the victorious

team easily could have partici-

pated in any under-20 spectacle.
And seven years later after

that mock celebration, the

weird selection syndrome re-

mains the same. On December

22, the selectors at the

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB)

set the stage for yet another

controversy by picking up

seemingly a few overaged players in a under-20 team that is to

play the World Youth Cup

cricket starting in South Africa

20 player in the team. We se-

lected them seeing the dates of

birth on their passport," said

Asaduzzaman Misha, one of the

selector, while justifying the se-

Misha is right, but in reality

things are different. Over the

years the selection procedures

in various sports federations in

Bangladesh have long been ac-

cused of furnishing false docu-

ments to justify the inclusion of

boys who clearly exceed the pre-

scribed age-limit. And it ap-

pears that the selectors at BCB

According to the document

"We did not include any over-

from January 11.

lection.

and Gothia Cups.

exceptions.

The Animadverter

Al-Shahriar Rokon appears to be one of the suspect names who has been in the fourteenman Bangladesh squad as cap-tain. While his inclusion is controversial in view of the fact he is replacing Sabbir Khan, the captain of the victorious team that toured Hong Kong recently. what is even more controversial is that he seems to be in his



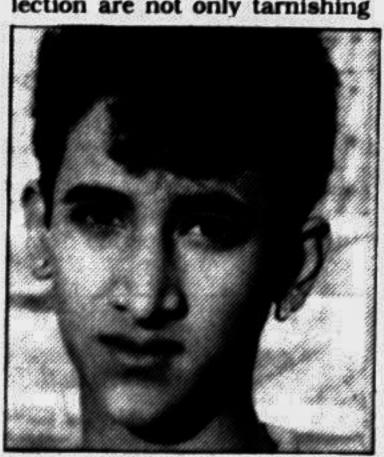
ROKON

early twenties, having included in an under-19 tournament three years ago. Al-Shahriar is a third-year student in the Dhaka University. On the other hand, Sabbir is attending second year classes of the Department of History in the Jahangirnagar University. A classmate of Sabbir, the another varsity-goer is pacer Shahnewaz Kabir

"By any logical scale, a boy who is attending the second year classes in the university can by no means be 20 years old, unless he is exceptionally brilliant," quipped a keen fol-

lower of the game. Also controversial is the inclusion of Mehrab Hossain Opee, the eternal under-nineteen who is accused of being even older than his captain. Saiful Islam, who was ignored for the Hong Kong tourney for being over-aged, somehow managed the South African ride as a stand-by player.

These games of suspect selection are not only tarnishing



OPEE

the image of Bangladesh internationally but also acting as a hindrance for numerous aspiring young cricketers across the country.

"We have had rigorous training, and have attended to our skills with much dedication and yet, when an international event comes along, older players are selected from the national team and various other clubs and we are dropped,' lamented a young lad preferring anonymity. Selectors axed five players from the Hong Kong

A dilemma over McGrath MELBOURNE, Dec bowling, the MCG Test looms as

24: Australia must decide whether to play a "twothirds fit" Glenn McGrath or run with the three pacemen from the last game leading up to Boxing Day's first Test against

South Africa here, reports AFP. McGrath, who has played just two one-day games in the last six weeks because of complications from a hernia operation 18 months ago, had two more workouts today in a bid to convince selectors of his fit-

The 27-year-old strike bowler said the felt two-thirds

Asked whether he was fit enough to play out the Test, Mc-Grath said: "I'd like to think so. We've got another training session tomorrow so hopefully that will build the fitness up and the rhythm. "I still wasn't at top pace but

it's getting up there.' Australian captain Mark Taylor kept his cards close to

his chest by saying that Mc-Grath and fellow new-ball quickie Paul Reiffel might both play on Friday. Reiffel was sporting a hor-

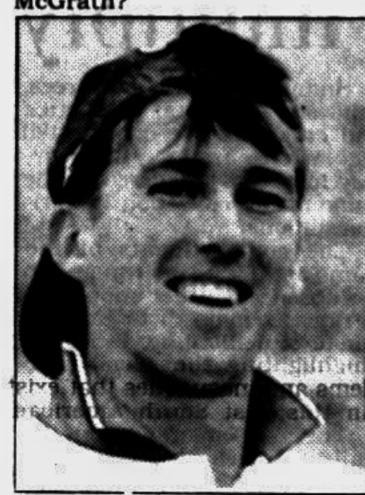
rendous black eye following a collision at a Victorian team training session last Thursday and also missed last weekend's round of Sheffield Sheild games.

"Paul would have played the first-class game in Hobart but there's still a good chance they'll both play," Taylor said. Michael Kasprowicz, Simon Cook and Reiffel played the last two Test against New Zealand

and it would be tough to leave one of them out to play an underfit McGrath. Taylor dearly wants to have

McGrath in the team but could only send out mixed messages. "We've still got the 12 blokes

from Hobart as likely starters." he said of the third Test team that drew with New Zealand. So was he resigned to losing McGrath?



GLENN McGRATH

"No, because I know how keen Glenn will be to play, which is what you want from all your players, particularly your fast bowlers," Taylor said. With Sydney and Adelaide traditionally favouring spin

Bookies bet on Proteas

MELBOURNE, Dec 24: South Africa are the bookmakers' favourites to beat Australia in the Boxing Day cricket Test at the Melbourne Cricket Ground. reports AFP.

Bookmakers have taken bets for Hansie Cronje's Proteas. firming their odds from 9-4 to 6-4. Australia are 13-8 to win the Test.

Mark Waugh. An enquiry

commission was formed and

investigations were conducted.

As no evidence was found and

the Australians were unwilling

to come to Pakistan and testify.

the case against Malik was

dropped and he was subse-

quently reinstated in the team.

but the damage had been done

Sohail also accused his team-

mates of rigging matches. This

only aggravated the team's

plight. Personality conflicts

and bruised egos have also been

a bone of contention. Sohail

has had conflicts with his cap-

tains Basit Ali and Rashid Latif

walked away midway from a

tour, the players revolted

against Akram, etc. He and

Waqar Younis were accused of

"ball-tampering." The accusa-

tions were baseless, but Irman,

in a rare moment of indiscre-

tion added fuel to the fire, when

he admitted to tampering with

the ball in county cricket. Given

his education, exposure,

charisma, etc one would have

expected Imran to be more dis-

cused of drug trafficking during

the 1993 West Indies tour. In the

recently concluded Sahara Cup

in Canada Inzamamul Haq

raised his bat to strike a specta-

tor. Although he is not be

blamed. One also sees that in

recent times player have

skipped tours to fulfill their

commitments in county

cricket. Players may have con-

tractual obligations to their

counties, but are these above

commitments to the national

team, especially as their skills

are desperately required. These

scandals, personality conflicts,

controversies, players revolts.

incidents of bad behaviour etc.

have demoralised the players

and undermined the team's

strength, especially the batting

strength. As a result, the team's

The team was even ac-

creet.

the one which South Africa must win to have a chance of adding Australia to the scalp of Pakistan last month. "We've been successful over

the past few years because we haven't relied on Shane Warne even though he has been a magnificent contributor for us. Taylor said.

"We've had the likes of Mc-Grath, Cook, Kasprowicz, Reiffel, Jason Gillespie who have won games for us on fast bowler-friendly wickets as well. "If the South Africans just rely on Allan Donald to win the series they won't win. If we rely on Warne or McGrath it won't happen."

However, a revitalised Taylor believes an enforced threeweek break from national team duties has done him immeasurable good.

"It's had a lot of positives for me," said Taylor.

"Obviously, I would have loved to have been there for the one-dayers but, from a selfish point of view, I feel really fresh and I'm really looking forward to this game," he said.

Taylor said the only days he did not enjoy during his three weeks out of the national spotlight were the days on which the Australians took on either the South Africans or New Zealanders in a one-day tournament. Steve Waugh will return to his normal role of Test vice-

captain. Taylor said he did not expect problems resuming the captaincy as Waugh had given him an update on the side during New South Wales' Sheffield Shield match against South Australia last weekend.

In 36 Test as captain, Taylor has led Australia to 20 wins and 10 defeats with six draws.

performance was poor and in-

consistent e.g. series loss in the

West Indies, Australia, a home

series loss to Sri Lanka, poor

performances in Sharjah, a

disaster in South Africa, etc. In

terms of talent the players are

arguably much better. Saglain

Mushtaq is the only quality off-

spin bowler in international

cricket, Mushtaq Ahmed along

with Warne, Anil Kumble and

Paul Strang have revived a dy-

ing art. Wasim and Waqar are

second to none. Anwar, Sohail,

ljaz, Inzamam, Malik form a

formidable batting lineup

which could give nightmares to

any opposition bowler of cap-

tain. With Muhammad Zahid

and Akram (unrelated) the fast

bowling department looks very

promising. Mohammed Wasim

and All Nagvi are among the

few Pakistani batsmen to have

scored centuries on debut.

Young Naqvi, however, must

learn that every ball does not

have to be belted to the bound-

ary. Wasim has not lived fully

up to his potential, but he can

only improve with time. In

Azhar Mahmood Pakistan have

discovered another useful

player who could fill up the role

of an all rounder in the time.

Groomed well, he could also be

another man with the "golden

arm," Moin Khan and Latif are

wicketkeepers comparable with

the best. They are also compe-

tent batsmen and give batting

depth to the team. Pride is a vice

which led to the downfall of

many men e.g. King Solomon

and King David. If Aaqib Javed

can remember this I am sure

that even he will be an asset to

the team. The sooner Shahid

Afridi realises that every ball

does not need to be sent out of

orbit he will be a much better

player. His leg-break bowling

could also be useful. Players

depth to the team.

Abahani Krira Chakra have asked the Dhaka Mahanagari Football League Committee to resume the Senior Division football league immediately.

In a press release yesterday, the Dhanmondi-based club said that all 20 teams in the league agreed to play at the Mirpur Stadium following Bangladesh cricket team's success in the ICC Trophy and to allow them to prepare for the 1999 World Cup at the Dhaka Stadium. And now there was no reason to reclaim the Dhaka Stadium and stop the league without any proper cause.

Abahani wants to finish the league according to its schedule. the press release added.

Nat'l youth hockey

Sports Reporter

Dhaka, Rajshahi and Chittagong won their respective first round matches of the Acme 16th national youth hockey championship at the National Hockey Stadium yesterday.

In a morning match, Dhaka whitewashed Dinajpur 10-0. Swapan and Mamun struck four and three goals respec-

In the afternoon, Rajshahi thrashed Barisal 7-0 while Chittagong registered a 3-1 victory over Jessore.

Age-group tennis **Sports Reporter**

Sheefat Nusrat Baishakhi and Esrat Jahan Eti moved into the under-18 girls' singles final of the Elite Paint national agegroup tennis circuit winning their respective semifinals played at the National Tennis Complex in Ramna yesterday.

Baishakhi eliminated Tania Farhan 6-1, 6-2 in the first semi-final while Eti ousted Dyuti in the next match 6-3, 6-

In the boy's under-18 singles, second seed Fahim Ahsan Khan Romi, Nadeem Kamran Khan, Rahat Kamal Islam and Sheikh Serajul made it to the last four. In the quarterfinals, Romi beat Muammer Hossain 6-1, 7-5, Nadeem defeated Ashfagur Rahman 6-4, 7-6 (7-5), Serajul

Besides, Mustafizur Rahman, Babu Lal, Alamgir and Kabir reached the boy's under-14 singles semifinals.

tamed Taswar 6-1,6-1 while

Rahat came from behind to

eliminate Yasin Huda 4-6, 6-3.

Juvenile kabadi team named Sports Reporter

Bangladesh Kabadi Federa-tion yesterday named a 16member Bangladesh juvenile kabadi team which will play four exhibition matches in Indian state of West Bengal next month.

The following boys have been asked to report to Golam Faruque, the sports instructor of Shaheed Nabi High School . at 5:30 pm on December 28:

Itteharul Islam of Shaheed Nabi School; Shahidul Islam, K Manjur Kader, Mazharul Islam and Ataur Rahman of Ansars and VDP School; Abdul Malek, Shafiqui Islam and Nazrul Islam of Sharmin Textiles School; Mohammad Tutul, Mahmudul Hasan and Motiar Rahman of Rifles Public School: Iqbal Hossain of Maniknagar Model School; Shahidul Islam of Haidar Ali High School; Abul Hossain and Ashish Kumar of Dulaipar High School and Ashraful Haque of Bhashantek High School.

Div I cricket

Sports Reporter Sadharan Bima Krira Sangha defeated Dhanmondi Club by eight runs in a First Division cricket league encounter at the

jinder Singh scored 69 as Bima, electing to bat, collected 177 before they were all out in 43.2 overs. In his 80-ball innings, Rajinder hit eight boundaries. Mintu (30) and Babu (20) were the other notable run getters.

muster 169 in 44.4 overs. Opener Anis fought a lone battle with 44 while Aslam scored 29 runs for Dhanmondi. Ratan was the most successful Bima bowler who finished with three for 29 while Moin and Rajinder equally shared four wickets.

ball tournament organised by RCC Employees' Union at Rajshahi Government College Hostel playground, Preserva-Supply Department 3-0 today. Supervisers' 3-0.

The national weightlifting championships begins at the Mohammad Ali Boxing Stadium in the city tomorrow, reports BSS. A S M Shahjahan, Secretary

of the Ministry of Youth and Sports and president of Bangladesh Weightlifting Federation, will inaugurate the championships at 10 am.

like Mahmood, Afridi can add ter for Youth and Sports will be the chief guest on the concluding day, December 29.



Naseem of Azad Sporting attempts a square cut during yesterday's Janakantha Premier Division league encounter against Agrani Bank at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium.

- Star photo by Amran

Agrani, Ajax win easily

Sports Reporter

BRIEF SCORES

AGRANI BANK: 74 all out in 48.1 overs (Shaheen Malik 32 Nahid 31, Sumit 30; Sabbir Khan 2/14, Shahab 2/19) AZAD SC: 87 all out in 39.2 overs (Shahab 19, Biplab 14 Sumit 2/15, Dofin 2/22) Result: Agrani Bank won by 87

VICTORIA SC: 101 all out in 41.5 overs (Asgar 24, Imran 16, Lalu 13; Dola 3/13, Raja 3/25, Vola 2/20) AJAX SC: 103 for no loss in 15.4 overs (Dola 56 n.o. Rafigul 42 n.o.)

Result: Ajax Sporting Club won by 10 wickets. Agrani Bank Sports Club and Ajax Sporting Club won their respective Janakantha Premier Division Cricket league matches played at different

venues vesterday. At the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium, Agrani Bank posted an 87-run victory over Azad Sporting Club.

Electing to bat, the bankers reached 174 before they were all out in 48.1 overs. Pakistani middle-order bat Shaheen Malik topscored with 32 off 49 balls which included three boundaries while one-down Nahid and lower-order Sumit contributed 31 and 30 runs re-

INDORE. India.

Dec 24: India's

second one-day

cricket interna-

specially...

Azad's medium-pacers Bappi, Shahab and off-spinner Sabbir Khan equally shared six wickets among themselves. In reply, Azad were bundled out for a meagre 87 in 39.2

Off-spinner Sumit and medium-pacer Dofin of Agrani Bank captured two wickets each conceding 15 and 22 runs respectively.

For the bankers, it was their fourth win in 10 matches while Azad suffered their ninth defeat against a lone victory so far.

Away at the BKSP ground in Savar, an all-round performance by Dola guided promotees Ajax Sporting Club to an impressive ten-wicket win over Victoria Sporting Club.

with three wins and eight defeats while Victoria suffered

Dola captured three wickets in the morning to help his side in booking the Victorians for a paltry 101 and then went on to

without losing a wicket. Dola and his partner Rafiqul, who scored a century in the previous match against Agrani Bank on Monday, faced only 94 balls.

In his 48-ball knock, Dola hammered a huge six and eight boundaries while Rafique's run-a-ball 42, included five four and a six.

Earlier, opting to bat, Victoria were shot out in 41.5 overs in the face of some inspirational bowling by Dola, Pakistani medium-pacer Maksood Raja and Vola who shared eight wickets among themselves. Dola finished with three for

Raja, who gave the early breakthrough, conceded 25 runs in nine overs for his three wickets. Besides, Vola captured two for 20 runs. With yesterday's victory, Ajax finished their first round campaign of eleven matches

13 from his 7.5 overs while

their ninth defeat in ten matches. TODAY'S FIXTURE

Janakantha Premier Division cricket league Wari Club vs Surjo Tarun Club (Dhanmondi Cricket Sta-

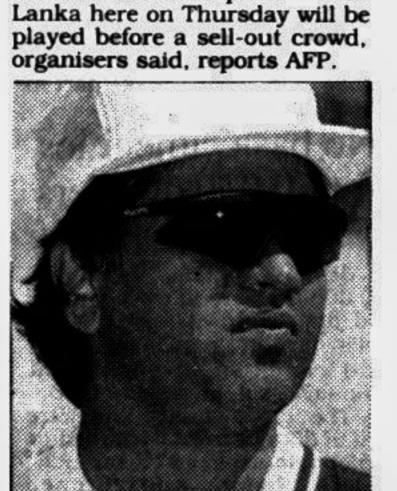
First Division cricket league City Club vs Bangladesh Railway (City Club)

3 2 4 2 12 12 BC 3 Second one-dayer today

score an unbeaten 56 as Afax

a reached 100 in the 10th wer

Lankans' back to the wall



City Club ground yesterday. Indian middle order bat Ra-

In reply, Dhanmondi could

RCC football

From Our Correspondent RAJSHAHI, Dec 24: In the Rajshahi City Corporation (RCC) inter-departmental foottion Department blanked Water In the second match, Public Health Department outplayed

Weightlifting begins tomorrow

Obaidul Quader, State Minis-

unlikely heroes, Sri Lanka will be desperate to rebalance their side to keep the series alive. has been under threat in recent

tional with world champions Sri

He scored a match-winning pace.

ARJUNA RANATUNGA

The hosts' victory in the first game has fuelled interest in the three-match series, with all 25,000 tickets at Indore's Nehru Stadium in central India sold

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Queen o'

Tendulkar, whose captaincy months after a string of fail-

ures, was one of the starts in new-look India's seven-wicket win at Guwahati on Monday.

82 not out after bowling heroics were served up by seamer Debashish Mohanty and allrounder Robin Singh. Mohanty, so often overlooked in favour of frontline pace duo Javagal Srinath and Venkatesh Prasad, removed Sri

Lanka's top three batsmen to set up the win, before Singh, better known for his hard-hitting batting, secured the player-ofthe-match award by taking five wickets with his gentle medium Sri Lanka, however, look

sure to ring the changes. Skipper Arjuna Ranatunga, who has vowed to bounce back and win the series 2-1, had chosen an extra spin bowler at the expense of a sixth specialist batsman at Guwahati. He was soon rueing that de-

cision after Mohanty sent back

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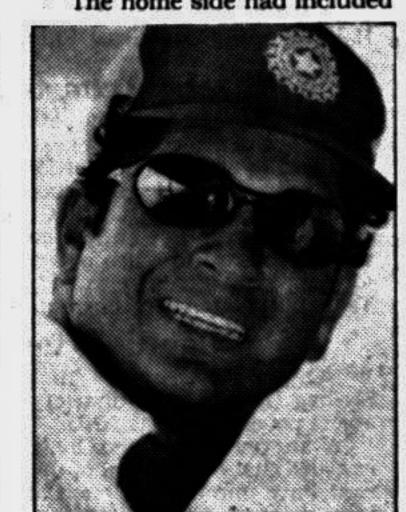
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Silva, all struggling with the slow-paced pitch, with only 30 on the board. Ironically, India had gone derdogs despite the home advantage, with the media speculating that a demotivated Mohammad Azharuddin and struggling Tendulkar could become the selectors' next vic-The home side had included

into the game as massive un-



SACHIN TENDULKAR

six changes after its whitewash in the Champions Trophy in Sharjah, where it was defeated by England, Pakistan and West

The final one-day international will be in Goa on Decem-

CRYPTOQUIP

OFKYX MFHJ DIPIYKGGZ HGKZ UFJE UFPFHFGSMI

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WHY WAS THE BRIDE SAD? SHE DIDN'T MARRY THE BEST MAN. Today's Cryptoquip clue: M equals C The Cryptoquip is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to

locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.