

Army, Faridpur

FROM PAGE 13  
Maulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium yesterday.  
Siddiqi and Shafiuzzaman scored one goal each for Army after a barren first-half.  
Army emerged Group A champions with their second consecutive victory in the super-league, followed by Bangladesh Navy who also reached the last four.  
In the day's other match, Faridpur defeated last year's runners-up Dhaka University 3-1 to become Group B champions.  
Hanif, Prashanto and Sham-suddin Tuhin scored for Faridpur who led 2-0 at the breather.  
Ariful Haque Prince scored the consolation goal for the vanquished.  
Dhaka University reached the semifinal despite this loss.  
Both the semifinals will be held today with Navy playing Faridpur (2.30 pm) and Army facing Dhaka University (4.30 pm).

Our cricket team

FROM PAGE 13  
down the wicket and drive the ball to off and on, not necessarily for a six.  
Of the batsmen Khaled Mashud has adopted this technique admirably. Most of our frontline batsmen don't move their left foot and body sufficiently to the line of the ball while negotiating an outswinger, resulting in getting a snick.  
I think we should be more careful before including a newcomer in the team. We must assess carefully his techniques and his capabilities and give him sufficient time to develop himself for any big encounters. In the last three or four years we have included a number of new players in the team only to find them dropping out later on.  
When given a chance one must be given a sufficient period of time to develop so that he may continue to play for the team.  
Lastly, I would say that to get a good consistent performance from a player we must develop our local cricket. In the eighties and nineties we had a number of very good cricketers who were the product of Dhaka Cricket League.  
It was very competitive and lots of foreign cricketers participated regularly in the league. Some of the products of that period were Gazi Ashraf Hossain, Minhazul Abedin, Akram Khan, Aminul Islam, Athar Ali Khan, Faruque Ahmed, Saiful Islam, Golam Nowsher Prince, Enamul Haque. Highly committed players like them are unfortunately no longer in the team anymore.  
Former Sri Lankan cricket captain Arjuna Ranatunga while commenting on Bangladesh team's performance in Asia Cup said that the team he saw in his playing days was much more capable and committed than the present one.  
The Dhaka League was very organised and competitive and staged regularly in eighties and nineties. Now it is absent. The idea of National League is a very impressive one but it cannot be a substitute for Dhaka League. Serious competitiveness is totally absent in the National League and it is staged mostly on under-prepared wickets, which does not serve the purpose at all.  
True, hard and fast wickets are an essential element for proper development of cricket where a batsman and a bowler will get an equal advantage. We should remember that there are no shortcuts to success and the organisers must have a clear vision of the problems and how to sort them out.  
I strongly urge the Bangladesh Cricket Board to publish a yearly cricket calendar and reintroduce the highly competitive Dhaka League. The BCB might also introduce another tournament (of three-day matches) on a regular basis with Bangladesh, Bangladesh 'A' and Under-19 taking part, which will definitely provide competitiveness among the teams and players and also be very helpful for the selectors.  
The writer is a former chairman of selectors, Bangladesh Cricket Control Board.



Action from yesterday's ANAS Group National Hockey Championship encounter between Bangladesh Army and Dhaka at the Maulana Bhasani National Stadium.

Athens starts countdown

AFP, Athens



The ancient city of Athens was beginning the biggest week in its modern history as it prepared to welcome the Olympic Games back to their spiritual home.  
After months of concerns that the venues would not be complete in time, almost everything is ready, excitement is mounting and the flame will be lit at a packed Olympic Stadium on Friday.  
Greeks have been rushing to snap up tickets in recent days, allaying fears that some of the 31 sports would take place in half-full stadia.  
More than 54,000 tickets were sold on Friday alone, compared with the

4,500 sold daily in June.  
The German coach of Greece's European Championship-winning football team, Otto Rehhagel, on Sunday carried the Olympic flame across a suspension bridge that was completed ahead of schedule in a symbol of the way Greece has speeded up its preparations in a bid to impress the watching world.  
The head of the International Olympic Committee, Jacques Rogge, paid tribute to the efforts made by Athens.  
Rogge said: "The IOC is extremely pleased by the preparations and we are very glad to see that the promises that have been made to us by the organisers have been kept.  
"We look forward to the Games. These Games will be very, very good."  
The security arrangements for the first Summer Olympics to take place

since the terror attacks on September 11, 2001, have received a guarded seal of approval from the United States.  
White House national security advisor Condoleezza Rice said Greece was doing everything possible to ensure the Games will be safe, though she said it was impossible to guarantee there would not be a terrorist attack.  
"We believe that they've put enormous resources into it," Rice told CNN.  
"In fact, we've been in very close cooperation with them for now a good deal of time. They have gone to NATO for some help. They really, I think, are doing everything that they can to make this safe Games," she said.  
Some of the security measures have met opposition from civil rights groups.  
A Greek judge was to rule Monday on whether a high-tech surveillance zeppelin should be allowed to remain airborne above Athens after it was alleged it invades people's privacy.  
The Democratic Rally rights group last week asked an Athens court for a restraining order to ground the blimp.  
"Our sources tell us that the zeppelin registers in detail our private life and can record telephone and private conversations," said Stratis Korakas, a former lawmaker for Greece's Communist Party (KKE) and a member of Democratic Rally.  
The Olympic movement will be hoping it has already weathered its worst storm, after a stormy weekend in which corruption again raised its ugly head.  
Bulgarian IOC member Ivan Slavkov was suspended after being captured by a BBC programme claiming that he was ready to help London win the battle to host the 2012 Games in return for a payment.  
An emotional Rogge could not hide his anger that the IOC had once again become embroiled in scandal.  
"You see in front of you an angry man. Angry at the behaviour of some people within and without the IOC. I'm angry because the behaviour of some is tarnishing what is a wonderful movement. It's also very sad to see some people don't respect the rules," he said.  
Ten IOC members were expelled or forced to resign after the Salt Lake City scandal in 1999 when members were caught selling bids to back the American city to host the Winter Games.

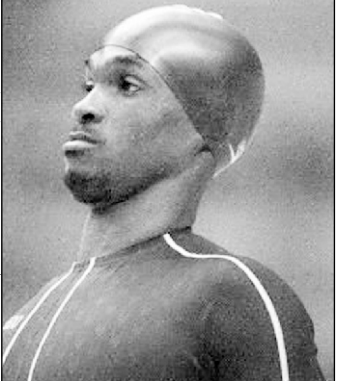
'Eric The Eel' will be missing

AFP, Sydney



A bureaucratic bungle will keep Eric 'The Eel' Moussambani, who won hearts at the Sydney Olympics with his slow but dogged performance in the swimming pool, from a repeat Olympic performance in Athens.  
The Sydney Morning Herald reported Saturday that Moussambani was devastated after the Equatorial Guinea Olympic Committee failed to submit his accreditation to Athens, making him ineligible to compete.  
The committee had been unable to find his passport photo, the paper reported.  
"I don't know what to do, there is disappointment now," Moussambani told the newspaper.  
Moussambani had been training in Spain when he was told to return home.  
"They told me I have to come back to my country so I can go with the other athletes to Athens. Now they say I can't go. It cost me a lot of money to fly from here to Spain."  
Moussambani shot to international fame as a wildcard entrant in the 2000 Sydney Olympics, where he flailed his way to last in the 100 metre heats in a time eight seconds slower than Australian Ian Thorpe's effort

over 200 metres.  
He had taken up swimming just nine months before the Games in a nation with just two pools and the Australian crowds cheered his plucky performance with enthusiasm rivalling that for a world-record swim.  
Swimwear company Speedo promptly sponsored him and over the next 12 months Moussambani was flown around Europe doing interviews and launching products.  
Moussambani, who claims to have almost halved his 100 metre time, had hoped an improved performance in Athens would reignite his career and allow him to pursue his dream of studying engineering in Florida, the Herald reported.  
But it said he was now considering retirement.  
"I would like to continue swimming, but I don't know if I can right now," he said.



ERIC MOUSSAMBANI

Full house Games

REUTERS, Athens

This week's Athens Olympics will see near-capacity crowds in most venues after a recent surge in ticket sales, Games organisers predict.  
A week after recording a sudden rise in daily sales, organisers rejected suggestions that several venues would be half-empty as still about half of the Games tickets remain unsold.  
"We have seen a great interest by the Greek public and we are very, very satisfied," ATHOC spokesman Michael Zaharatos told reporters on Monday.  
"We will have a full house in Athens." Organisers have sold just under half of the 5.2 million tickets but daily sales have increased 10-fold to over 45,000 a day in the past week.  
Organisers sold close to 300,000 over the last seven days and said demand would continue to grow.  
They aim to sell at least 3.4 million tickets by the start of the Games on Friday.  
"We have seen that many more (people) are interested. We are opening up four more ticket sales points in Athens today," he said.  
With most swimming and team sports finals and semi-finals sold out, Greeks were now turning to the qualifications for soccer, athletics and volleyball.  
"And we have almost another week in front of us until the Games start," he said.  
Thousands of Greeks have rushed to buy a ticket for the Games after snubbing Olympic tickets for over a year. Daily sales until August were about 4,000.

Odumbe included

FROM PAGE 13

"We will not be sure about his fitness."  
Odumbe, 35, faces charges of inappropriate contact with an Indian bookmaker, but his all-round prowess and ability to bowl tidy off-spin has won him a place on the plane to England, depending of course on the ICC decision. If found guilty of the charges, he could face a minimum two-year suspension or a life ban, as well as a fine.  
Josephat Ababu, who impressed in a four-day match against Pakistan A, has also been recalled to the team after two years. There is also representation for young talent, with Ragheb Aga, Malhar Patel -- both batsmen -- and Morris Ouma, a pace bowler, included. The team will warm up for the Champions Trophy with a triangular series against India A and Pakistan A which starts on August 11.  
SQUAD: Steve Tikolo (capt), Kennedy Obuya (wk), Ravindu Shah, Hitesh Modi, Maurice Odumbe, Ragheb Aga, Malhar Patel, Peter Ogondo, Josephat Ababu, Martin Suji, Thomas Odoyo, Morris Ouma, Lamech Onyango, Tony Suji.  
Abahani breeze  
FROM PAGE 13  
TEAMS  
ABAHANI: Nizam (Munna), Siraji, Hasan, Shawkat, Masud Rana, Parvez (Faisal), Joy, Nayan, Rakib (Pranotosh), Uzzal and Khokon.  
CHITTAGOING MOHAMMEDAN: Raju (Titu), Shafiqul Islam, Ramjan (Apu), Dulal, Prodip, Israfil, Arman Aziz, Zahid, Sharif (Nejamat), Johnny and Yusuf.  
Referee: Mansoor Azad

Faria is in love!

FROM PAGE 13

have not heard from him for quite some time - more than a week has gone by.  
"So that's why it tells me that no... he won't do anything with me."  
Asked how she feels about Eriksson's silence, she replies: "Well it's not very nice and it hurts but you have to carry on with life."  
Later Alam, who originally denied any affair with the coach, admits: "I do bear some responsibility. I guess some of this was bought on myself, my stupidity."  
"I don't know if it was naivety, I don't know. But at the time, as I said, I was in shock."  
"I thought I was doing the right thing...I didn't expect this to blow up in my face in such a big way."  
Alam, in a white shirt and tan trousers, confirms that the only time she and Eriksson had sex was at his home in Sweden after England were dumped out of Euro 2004.  
She says: "That was the only time that there was any sort of physical contact as such." He had previously flirted with her for months and told her she was "a very beautiful woman".  
Alam, who had a fling with then FA chief executive Mark Palios before her liaison with Eriksson, admits she is attracted to powerful men.  
"To be honest with you, when I was going out with Palios, my attraction with him was purely because he had a genius mind and he happened to be chief executive."  
She also confirms that she pursued Palios, initiating text-message exchanges, although she insists that at first they were innocent.  
Divorced Palios, 51, resigned a week ago after allegations of an FA plot to save him from public exposure by revealing full details of the Alam-Eriksson affair.

Publication of emails she had exchanged with a friend blew the scandal wide-open after her initial denials. Last Thursday £4million-a-year Eriksson was cleared by an FA inquiry of misleading bosses over his affair.  
Last night, after Alam's latest disclosures had failed to point the finger over a rumoured third affair, senior officials at the FA were breathing sighs of relief.  
She did accuse Palios and communications director Colin Gibson - who has also quit - of offering her a bribe to keep the relationship with Palios quiet. But she did not drag in any other officials by name - restricting herself to slamming the alleged "Benny Hill" culture at FA headquarters in Soho Square.  
PR guru Max Clifford claimed her revelations had destroyed the organisation's standing, adding: "The FA has had all its credibility destroyed by this. It has been torn apart."  
However, an FA source told the Daily Mirror: "We feared the worst, but Faria speaking out has not been nearly as bad as we thought it would be."  
"She criticised Mark Palios and Colin Gibson but both have already quit their jobs."  
"No one else is named and the hope is now that we can put this behind us and start to rebuild."  
Alam, who has already told a newspaper that Eriksson did not use a condom when he had sex with her in Sweden, denies she is pregnant by him.  
She says reports that she bedded a third FA official were wrong.  
Alam will collect a reported £100,000 for Monday's TV interview, on top of a claimed £400,000 payday for the interviews with two Sunday newspapers.

Agassi the master

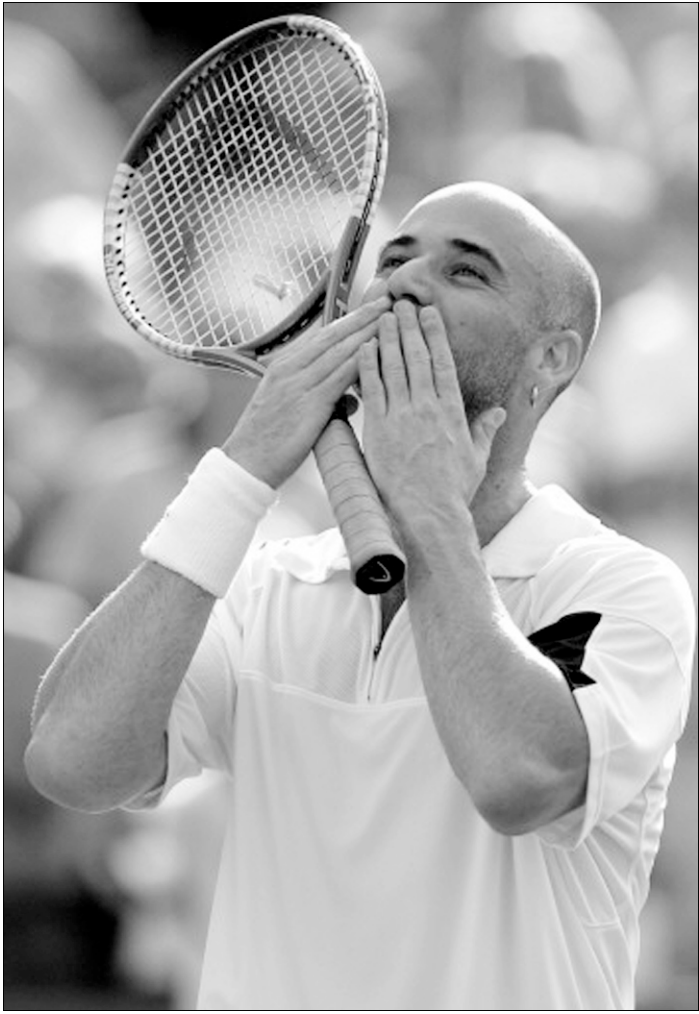


AFP, Cincinnati

American Andre Agassi defeated Lleyton Hewitt 6-3, 3-6, 6-2 in the final of the 2.4 million-dollar ATP Cincinnati masters tournament, ending a 16-month title drought.  
The 34-year-old Agassi, who has been coping with a hip problem since reaching three consecutive semifinals

at the Australian Open, San Jose and Indian Wells, showed no signs of the injury against Australia's Hewitt.  
His last tournament win had come at the US Clay Courts at Houston in April 2003.  
The title drought for Agassi extended over 17 tournaments, with his last shot at winning a title coming when he lost to Roger Federer in the Tennis Masters Cup final at Houston in November.  
Agassi has the most titles of any

active player and ranks seventh on the all-time list of title winners, past or present.  
Hewitt stands in second place for active players with the most titles at 21, and is now 21-8 in career finals.  
Agassi's stunning run to the final this week also places him in fifth position for all-time matches won with 808.  
At 34 years, three months, Agassi is the oldest player to capture a title since a 37 years, one-month-old Jimmy Connors won back-to-back titles at Toulouse and Tel Aviv in 1989.  
A former world number one, Agassi defeated three other former number ones to win his third career title at Cincinnati.



American Andre Agassi blows a kiss to the crowd after defeating Australian Lleyton Hewitt in the Cincinnati Masters final on August 8.

He beat fourth-seeded Carlos Moya in the quarterfinals, the second-seeded defending champion Andy Roddick in a momentous semifinal victory and the 10th-seeded Hewitt in the final.  
The final was an impressive and polished performance for the determined Agassi.  
In the first set, Hewitt was the first to show vulnerability, having to save a break point on his serve in the sixth game.  
Hewitt's luck was not as good in the eighth game when he lost only his second service game of the tournament.  
After serving two aces from 15-30 to go up 40-30, Hewitt lost the next three points to put Agassi at 5-3 and serving for the first set.  
But clinching the set was not easy for Agassi, who faced two break points before securing the win from deuce with an ace and a backhand crosscourt volley on a rare serve-and-volley moment for the American star.  
Hewitt, 23, who came into the match with a slight 4-3 career edge over Agassi, turned things around by winning the one service break in the second set.  
Agassi served a weak eighth game, making two errors -- netting a backhand and sailing a forehand volley wide.  
In the third set, Agassi pushed his cause again by breaking serve in the fourth and eighth games.  
Hewitt finally surrendered the match on a double fault in the final game.

Jones back with a bang

AFP, Munich



Embattled triple Olympic gold medalist Marion Jones won the long jump and helped the United States sprint relay quartet to victory in a pre-Olympics international match.  
Competing for the first time since the US trials three weeks ago, Jones produced a jump of 6.82 metres in the event she has been selected to contest in Athens, although she could not score points in the USA v France v Germany match as she was competing as a guest.  
Her fellow American Grace Upshaw was the 'official' winner with 6.74m.  
Jones jumped 7.11m to win the US trials last month.  
She then ran the second leg as the US team won the 4x100m relay in a time of 41.67sec ahead of reigning world champions France who fielded a reserve team.  
Jones looks set to compete in the long jump and possibly the relay in Athens despite facing accusations that she bought steroids and other drugs from the California-based BALCO laboratories, although she has never

tested positive for a banned substance.  
Ironically she could still be handed a chance to defend her Olympic 100m title because her American teammate Torri Edwards is set to be banned for two years for a doping offence, freeing up a spot.  
Gail Devers finished fourth in the event at the US trials but if as expected she opts to concentrate on winning an elusive Olympic sprint hurdles title then Jones, who was fifth, may be selected.  
A decision on Edwards is expected in the next few days.  
The Olympic athletics pro-programme begins on August 18.  
Four years ago in Sydney, Jones won gold medals in the 100m, 200m and 4x400m relay and bronze in the long jump and 4x100m relay.  
The reigning men's 100m champion, Maurice Greene, ran the anchor leg as the US 4x100m relay team scorched to a winning time of 37.92sec, faster than the US ran to win the world championships final last year.  
"I didn't have to do much here because the guys had done the work before me," Greene said.  
"Our race showed that if we get the baton round, there's no problem."



MARION JONES

Mauresmo lifts Montreal Cup

AFP, Montreal

France's Amelie Mauresmo, the second seed, overpowered Elena Likhovtseva 6-1, 6-0 in the final of the 1.3 million dollar WTA Montreal hard court tournament.  
Mauresmo needed just 51 minutes to register her third win of the year and the 13th of her career. It was also the second time in three years she has won in Canada.  
The unseeded Likhovtseva rolled through the previous rounds en route to the final, scoring upsets over American Jennifer Capriat in the quarters and compatriot Anastasia Myskina in the semis.  
She had defeated No. 8 Nadia Petrova of Russia in the second round, No. 11 Francesca Schiavone of Italy in the third round.  
Mauresmo, who became the favourite here when top-seeded Serena Williams was forced to withdraw with a knee injury, recorded her first win of the year on hard courts. In May, Mauresmo won both the German Open and Italian Masters on clay.  
On Sunday, Mauresmo and Likhovtseva got in two-thirds of their first serves but the Russian won just 37 per cent of the points on her first serve while Mauresmo won 72 per cent.

All one happy

FROM PAGE 13

The concept of providing accommodation for the athletes was first introduced at the Paris Games in 1924 but competitors largely shunned the offer.  
The Great Depression later that decade was the real spur behind the Village concept. Organisers for the 1932 Los Angeles Games, fearing low participation, came up with the idea of luring athletes with an offer to cover living costs.  
For two dollars a day they were fed, provided a bed, entertained and given access to local transport.  
In Athens, the Village takes up 306 acres and there are 2,292 apartments providing a total of 17,428 beds.  
"It is concrete proof that we keep the promise we made in 1997, that athletes will be the focus of our efforts," ATHOC president Gianna Angelopoulos said at the Village's inauguration ceremony last month.  
For the likes of Federer, it is a shot at normality after living the high life of an international sportsman.  
"It's probably the closest I will ever come to being a student, to living the life of an average 22-year-old," the Swiss said.

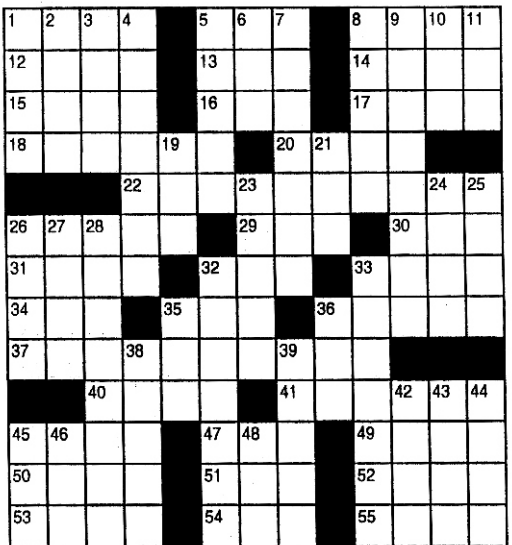
Fresh blood

FROM PAGE 13

Habibul Bashar's men will fly to England to play four warm-up matches against Ireland and Scotland two weeks before the starts on September 10.  
The Tigers play South Africa on September 12 and meet West Indies on September 15 in the Champions Trophy.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS  
1 Post-bath application  
5 Curved line  
8 Valhalla  
12 Asian nursemaid  
13 Scrooge's cry  
14 Long (for)  
15 VHS alternative  
16 Bee follower  
17 Basilica section  
18 Aggregate of e-forums  
20 Count counter-part  
22 Page 1 article  
26 Sidewalk eateries  
29 "Hagar the Horrible" cartoonist  
30 1990s jacket eponym  
31 Ship's framework  
32 Past  
33 Oodles  
34 Call-day link  
35 Badge earners' org.  
36 Top VIP  
37 Anti-erosion plantings  
40 Skunk's defense  
41 Takes the helm  
45 "Wozzeck" composer  
47 Biz letterhead abbr.  
49 Read — (study)  
50 Author James  
51 Downy accessory  
52 Soybean paste  
53 Pantheon group  
54 Foul up  
55 Picket-line crosser  
DOWN  
1 Forbidden (Var.)  
2 Iowa city  
3 Off schedule  
4 Altar area  
5 Jennings' employer  
6 Actress Charlotte  
7 "Farewell"  
8 Dizzying designs  
9 Ambassador  
10 Office-holders  
11 Born  
12 Dawn goddess  
21 Invite  
23 Whodunit writer's award  
24 100 South African cents  
25 Vacillate  
26 Fashionable  
27 Ford or Lincoln  
28 Having a taste  
32 Refer (to)  
33 Art houses?  
35 Street address?  
36 Make up your mind  
38 Borders  
39 AMPAS bestowal  
42 Big story  
43 Passenger Parks  
44 Nose-in-the-air sort  
45 Carry-on  
46 "I" trouble?  
48 Neither's mate



CRYPTOQUIP  
O X M E C S J E C S K Z P J Q M  
Z S Z M E Q V S K B C Y B Q M E  
V S K P X S K Y Q T Y O T V P  
O M T B T O M M Q J E C S O E  
Yesterday's Cryptiquip: IF A PERSON PREFERS HIS EMBELLISHMENTS QUITE ORNATE, IS HE GOING FOR BAROQUE?  
Today's Cryptiquip Clue: E equals N  
The Cryptiquip 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.