



Mohammedan forward Zahid Bin Talib races past Mariners defenders Hanif (on the ground) and Rajib (R) during their Premier Hockey League match at the Maulana Bhasani National Hockey Stadium yesterday.

Mohammedan keep the pressure

SPORTS REPORTER

Mohammad Sabbir inspired Mohammedan Sporting Club to come from a goal down and beat Mariner Youngs Club 3-1 in yesterday's Green Delta Insurance Premier Hockey League.

The Pakistani scored the equaliser to cancel Mariners' lead after Ranjan Banik's early strike and later set chances for Issa Mia and Golam Mostafa as the black and whites picked up their fifth victory in six matches.

Mariners, who suffered their third loss also in six outings, went ahead when Ranjan broke the 12-minute deadlock at the Maulana Bhasani National Hockey Stadium.

Sabbir, who made an impressive Dhaka debut, levelled the scores one minute from the short hotter with a powerful reverse hit after his colleagues had wasted three penalty corners.

Mohammedan did not take long to establish their domination as national defender Issa fired in a penalty corner after taking the ball from Sabbir in the 51st minute. Golam Mostafa finally sealed the victory four minutes later when he completed a move by Sabbir.

Mohammedan should have scored more but they showed lack of accuracy in short corners, squandering four chances.

Mohammedan reached within two points of archrivals and holders Abahani, who are on maximum 18 points while Mariners stuck to their previous collection of seven.

In the day's other match, bottom-table Wari Club climbed up two positions with their maiden victory, a 2-0 win over Sadharan Bima.

Faisal and Tapu scored either side of the break for the winners who moved to three points. Bima now shared the bottom place with Bangladesh Sporting on one point.

Raw deal

FROM PAGE 17 The rights with an offer of 95,000 dollars, which was far below from the floor price of 2,50,000 dollars.

Sajjad also informed that Matra won the Terrestrial TV rights with an offer of Tk 40 lakh.

But the board has yet to finalise the title sponsor for the mega tournament.

After evaluation of the offers the board had decided to go for re-bid for title sponsorship rights and in-stadia advertising rights packages as the floor price was not met in those categories initially.

3 cheers for

FROM PAGE 17 better to send a left-hander (Faisal Hossain) earlier to face their two left-arm spinners," explained the former national skipper.

On the other hand Abahani coach Aminul Islam said that his side played according to their plan to secure the massive victory.

"I am slightly surprised by the approach of our opposing batsmen. We always say that our national players like to play shots and I think it was a perfect surface for them to do that," contemplated Aminul.

SCORES IN BRIEF

MOHAMMEDAN: 133 all out in 47.2 overs (Anwar 34, Zunaed 2, Aqeel 13, Rokibul 0, Ashraf 24, Faisal 2, Aftab 26, Shuvo 3, Tapash 13, Dollar 3 not out, Tareq 2, extras 11; Zia 2-17, Talha 2-31, Rafique 2-15, Nazmul 1-23, Tushar 1-18, Sunny 1-28).

ABAHANI: 134 for 1 in 21.2 overs (Sahagiri 67 not out, Mahbulul 2, Nafees 62 not out, extras 3; Tapash 1-17). Result: Abahani won by nine wickets.

Waugh's kind words

Cricket

BBC ONLINE, undated

Former Australia captain Steve Waugh believes England have the talent to challenge the Aussies in next year's Ashes series.

But Waugh insists England need to rediscover their stability and have a fully fit Andrew Flintoff available if they want to wrest the urn back.

Waugh told BBC Sport: "Flintoff seems to lift the whole team."

"England have blown hot and cold the last couple of years. They've the talent but need to raise their game."

"I like Alastair Cook, and Paul Collingwood adds steel to the middle order and I've been amazed at how Ryan Sidebottom has improved and re-defined himself."

Sizzling Sanath

FROM PAGE 17

Tendulkar had decided to bat first, allowing Jayasuriya a full 20 overs.

The manner in which he treated his fellow Sri Lankan bowlers was interesting -- he attempted a couple of audacious reverse-paddles against Muttiah Muralidaran, before blistering Chamara Kapugedera for 26 runs in five balls.

His best day

FROM PAGE 17

both over point and square leg, and scored majority of his runs behind square: 33 on the leg-side and 31 on the off. He struck as many as 11 sixes and won his duels with every bowler.

Even Muttiah Muralidaran, Sri Lankan teammate and long-time friend, caused no problems for Jayasuriya. When Dhoni, desperate for a wicket, placed two slips for Murali who was spinning the ball across the left-hander, Jayasuriya chose to hit the ball towards the gaps on the leg-side. He even attempted to reverse-sweep Murali, twice.

Murali's introduction into the attack, though, was well after the game was up. When Chennai's inexperienced new-ball pair of Manpreet Gony and Albion Morkel were bleeding runs, Dhoni seemed reluctant to take them off. He would have done well to remember how Tendulkar had made frequent bowling changes to unsettle the

headed.

Although still a year away, the England and Australia line-ups will both look radically different to England's triumph in 2005 and Australia's 18 months later.

Australia on the other hand have waved goodbye to Justin Langer, Adam Gilchrist, Shane Warne and Glenn McGrath.

Waugh said: "It's been a smooth transition for Australia. The players have had a lot of experience at county level so they are not intimidated by moving up to the next level."

It is more than four years since record-breaking captain Waugh played in his 168th and last Test.

He played in two Lord's Tests for Australia, making 152 not out in 1989 and then suffering a first-ball duck in 1997, but there is no doubt the home of cricket still holds a special place in his heart.

The 42-year-old has been in

London at a meeting of the MCC's world cricket committee, a role which he takes very seriously, but will also catch the first Test between England and New Zealand.

He said: "There's definitely something about Lord's. It's a special place which has the X-factor."

"I have good and bad memories of my performances here but it certainly is a unique place."

Waugh has brought his family over and his eight-year-old son Austin will get his first taste of cricket at Lord's.

But Austin has his eye on a bigger sporting occasion -- Saturday's FA Cup between Portsmouth and Cardiff City.

"He's mad on soccer," sighed Waugh. "So I'm desperately trying to get tickets for the final so he can watch a live match."

few weeks back.

The bowlers deserve an honourable mention. It was a slew of medium-pacers who propelled Mumbai to an upset win over the Rajasthan Royals in the previous game and they utilised bowler-friendly conditions here too. The ball swung around through the innings and six medium-pacers shaped the ball either way to make life difficult for the batsmen.

Pollock turned in a typically miserly spell, including a maiden to finish off against a relatively new Dhoni. Dhoni, who said he would have fielded first had he won the toss, watched his side slump to 46 for 4 with the top order struggling against the accurate medium-pacers.

Pollock should have had Stephen Fleming in the first ball of the second over -- when an edge fell just short of first slip -- or even in the third -- when Jayasuriya muffed a skier at point -- but he had to settle for S Vidyut's wicket two balls later when Rohan Rajee clung on to another skier at mid-off. Suresh Raina fell poking to an away-swing from Dwayne Bravo before Kapugedera, the right-hander, did exactly the same to Dhawal Kulkarni's nippy away-cutter.

Dhoni and Badrinath redressed the balance somewhat. The pair improvised when the opportunity presented but it was Dhoni's fierce hitting that gave the bowlers no chance -- even if he wasn't in position, the power behind the shots was always going to take it to the boundary ropes. Badrinath, who repertoire ranges from the square drive on the back foot to the paddle over short fine leg, brought up his second successive fifty. It appeared as if it could be a defensible total but Jayasuriya's blitz sunk them in an trice.

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For batsmen like Jayasuriya, the hunger to succeed comes from the occasion. Mumbai needed to keep their momentum going into a crucial match against Kolkata on Friday, a game that is vital to their semi-final aspirations. Pollock was the inspiration behind their hat-trick of wins, and today it was Jayasuriya's turn. Even Tendulkar acknowledged that "It was nice to watch him."

SCORES IN BRIEF
CHENNAI SUPER KINGS: 156 for 6 in 20 overs (Badrinath 53, Dhoni 43 not out, Fleming 26, Vidyut 16; Kulkarni 3-33, Bravo 2-37, Pollock 1-9).

MUMBAI INDIANS: 158 for 1 in 13.5 overs (Jayasuriya 114 not out, Uthappa 16 not out, Tendulkar 12; Joginder 1-24). Result: Mumbai Indians won by 9 wickets.

Man-of-the-match: Sanath Jayasuriya.
Toss: Mumbai Indians.
Umpires: Billy Doctrove and Amiesha Saheba.

LOCAL SNIPPETS

SPORTS REPORTER

Prantik Krira Chakra registered a 112-run win over Green Leaf in the Second Division Super League at the Jagannath Hall ground yesterday.

Opting to bat first, Prantik were all out for 216 in 43.3 overs with Rakib contributing with 76 runs. Iqbal grabbed three wickets for 42. In reply, Green Leaf were skittled out for 104 in 34.4 overs with Naser claiming six wickets for 31 runs.

In the day's other matches, Prime Doleshwar (159-6) beat Kakrail Boys Club (156-9) by four wickets at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium while Dhanmondi Pragati Sangha (162-7) outclassed Gopibagh (159 all out) by three wickets at the Dhaka University ground.

PIONEER FOOTBALL
Bangladesh Sporting Club crushed Titu Smriti Sangsad 5-0 in the Dhaka City Corporation Pioneer Football League at the Dhupkhola Jagannath University ground.

Sunam struck twice, while Fazle, Zahed and Saddam netted one each for the winners.

In the day's other match at the same venue, Gandaria beat Adamjee 3-1 with Faisal, Raju and Babuscoring for Gandaria.

UNIVERSITY CRICKET

University of Liberal Arts crushed State University by 53 runs in the Fair Play Twenty20 tournament at the ULAB campus ground in Ramchandrapur.

Batting first, ULAB posted a competitive 129-8 in their 20 overs with Sujon top-scoring with 30. Martin took four wickets.

In reply, SUB were bowled out for only 76 runs in 17.1 overs.

DIVII KABADDI

Prisons Directorate and Institute of Kabaddi reached the semifinals of the Second Division Kabaddi League winning their respective quarterfinals at the Outer Stadium kabaddi court.

Earlier, on Wednesday, Arbachin and Swarnal Club confirmed their semifinal berths too.

In the first quarterfinal, Prisons crushed Bangladesh Boys 59-12 while Institute of Kabaddi beat Captain Bazar 43-38.

Reefat at 2nd

FROM PAGE 17

Among other Bangladeshi players, GM Ziaur Rahman was at third place with five points after beating local WGM Aarthie Ramaswamy. GM Abdullah Al Rakib, also on five points, suffered his first defeat when he lost to GM Safin Shukhrat of Uzbekistan, who has maximum six points to take solo lead.

Clubs accept

FROM PAGE 17

breaking former striker. "We have referred this to the league committee," added Salam who is also the chief of the B. League committee.

One team will be relegation from this year's B. League and if the team are from Dhaka, they will go back to the Senior Division while if an outstation team are demoted, they will return to their respective league. Promotion would be vice versa until a second division is opened.

Meanwhile, the B. League committee has accepted Diganta Prasari's application to join the fray. If the Rajshahi league champions can fulfil the criteria set by the BFF, they would become the first professional team from north Bengal, making this year's competition a 12-team event.

The transfer fee (club to club) for a professional league debutant has been reduced to Tk 25,000 from Tk 50,000 following an appeal of the clubs. This year's the clubs will also have to give Tk 10,000 as registration fee instead of Tk 25,000 which they had paid last year.

Still, the first day of the 35-day transfer expectedly ended without any activities.

Biman go

FROM PAGE 17

Away in Savar, former national captain Habibul Bashar and Shamsur Rahman smashed half-centuries to take Surjo Torun to an easy five-wicket win over City Club. The Dhanmondi-based club reached their target of 183 in only 43 overs, after City Club reached a moderate 182-8 in 50 overs.

The two right-handers added 93 for the third wicket as Shamsur (68) revelled once again in the opening role. Bashar, at the crease after Nizamuddin Ripon was removed in the 12th over after a rapid 33, slammed seven boundaries and a six in his knock of 60 off 105 balls.

Earlier, Mohammad Sharif and new Torun skipper Nayeem Islam took two wickets each.

SCORES IN BRIEF

BIMAN: 246-8 in 50 overs (Nafis 63, Kapali 45; Anas 2-33).

BKPS: 177-8 in 50 overs (Mushfigur 50, Mithun 34; Mosharrarf 3-24). Result: Biman won by 69 runs.

CITY: 182-8 in 50 overs (Rabiul 49, Rashedul 36; Nayeem 2-21).

TORUN: 183-5 in 43 overs (Shamsur 68, Bashar 60; Atiqur 2-28). Result: Surjo Torun won by five wickets.

Royals to stay put

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

The Indian Premier League's Jaipur franchise has discussed the sensitive security situation in the city with its players and is sure that all members of Rajasthan Royals, its Indian Premier League team, will be available for Saturday's home match against Bangalore Royal Challengers, a team official said.

"I can confirm that all players of the Rajasthan Royals team are available for Saturday's game," Narendra Joshi, the team's media manager, told Cricinfo. "We are talking with the players, who are in Goa right now for a break, and there are no issues regarding the match. All the players will reach Jaipur on Friday morning."

Darren Berry, Rajasthan's team manager, had told the Sydney Morning Herald from Goa that there is a "real option" three of the team's highest profile players will

not return to Jaipur following a series of bombs that killed about 80 people in the city on Tuesday. Berry is in Goa with Shane Warne, Shane Watson and Graeme Smith and said the group had considered "getting on the plane and getting out of here".

Bangalore, too, had expressed concerns over playing in Jaipur and requested the IPL governing council to shift the game to their home ground. However, their request was rejected by Lalit Modi, the IPL commissioner, and it's learnt that the Bangalore team management has informed the players and support staff -- most of them are currently in Delhi -- that the squad will proceed to Jaipur on Friday morning.

"We are not comfortable at all," Berry told the Australian newspaper. "This is an extremely uncomfortable situation. Cricket has been good to me, but I have a wife and three kids back in Melbourne and they are less than impressed with the part of the world I am in."

The IPL has said that there will be an increased security presence for the match. "I am not at liberty to describe security arrangements but yes, we have beefed up the security arrangements," Modi told PTL. "We are requesting everybody to come in the stadium without bags, lighters, matches or bottles. Also the players area would be totally cordoned off and nobody would be allowed to go near the players."

Meanwhile, Rajasthan Royals CEO Fraser Castellino said the franchise was in touch with the IPL and the state agencies and was satisfied with the security arrangements. "We are working closely with IPL and the state government agencies," he said. "We had sniffer dog squads and bomb disposal squads covering the stadium and outer perimeter areas, so we are taking it seriously."

"Security is a concern but we are satisfied that sufficient steps are being taken to look into the matter and ensure that no untoward incident happens."

India topple Pakistan

Hockey

INTERNET, undated

India thwarted a series of late charges from Pakistan to notch up a stunning 2-1 win over the arch-rivals and stay in contention for the title in the Azlan Shah hockey tournament here Thursday.

Indian drag-flickers - Sandeep Singh (6th minute) and Diwakar Ram (20th) - rose up to the expectation by scoring a goal apiece, while veteran Pakistani mid-fielder Mohammad Saqlain (58th) netted the lone goal for his side.

With their third straight win in the tournament, India have now garnered nine points from five matches.

The Indians were in the attacking mode from the beginning and Shivendra Singh led the forward line with command producing two good chances that went begging. But in the sixth minute, Sandeep unleashed a power-packed shot to convert India's first penalty corner and give his side 1-0 lead.

Three minutes later, Sandeep

had another chance to shoot at the Pakistani post, but this time his attempt was rather predictable and the rival goal-keeper Rashid had no problem in palming it away.

Banking on the short short corner, Diwakar Ram brought the second goal for India. With both Sandeep and Diwakar on guard to have a go at the goal, the Pakistanis had a little doubt about whom to tackle and the younger of the drag-flickers fired his shot which hit Rashid's shoulder before deflecting into the roof of the net.

The amateurish-looking Pakistanis were completely off-colour in their approach. While the defenders were too cautious, the attackers were half-hearted and tentative. They wasted as many as four penalty corners in the first half.

Pakistan's best chance of the session came towards the end when an experienced Saqlain sent in a beauty of a cross to Waqas Akbar on the top of the circle. But the latter could not utilise the opportunity to reduce the margin.

Pakistan adopted a comparatively aggressive approach in the second half and created several

forays though without tasting any success.

On one occasion, they had nearly scored a goal when a Shakeel Abbasi initiated move was marvelously taken forward by Mohammad Zubair. The ball then went to Waqas who guided it to Rehan Butt. But the attempt ultimately was foiled by Indian goal-keeper Adrian D'Souza to the utter frustration of his rivals.

The Pakistani forwards, who found some rhythm after the change of ends, showed more urgency to spirit several moves, but either their untidy finishing or the never-say-die Indian defence put out their ambitions.

Pakistan pulled one off in the 58th minute when they got a penalty stroke off a good move. Saqlain easily put it past Adrian to open the account for his side. A minute later, deliberate blocking of Sunil brought another penalty corner for India. But Diwakar's low drag-flick hit the Pakistan goalkeeper's heel to narrowly miss the target.

In their last league engagement, India will meet hosts Malaysia on Saturday.

Zenit outclass Rangers

FROM PAGE 17

Zyrianov sent him darting into the Rangers box.

Neil Alexander looked to have the danger covered but would still have been relieved to see Arshavin's shot from a tight angle slide into the side netting.

Rangers responded in similar fashion, Darcheville bursting through the inside left channel to deliver a low cross that left-back Radek Sirl nicked off the boot of Barry Ferguson as the Rangers captain slid in to meet it on the edge of the six-yard box.

A Sirl free-kick from the best part of 40 yards gave Alexander his first save to make and the hero of the semi-final shootout win over Fiorentina made light of a slight deflection and treacherous bounce.

Alexander also had to be alert to keep out a fiercely-struck half-volley from the Zenit right-back, Alexander Anyukov, although the fact that it took the Russians half an hour to turn overwhelming domination in terms of possession into their first shot on target was arguably an encouraging sign for opponents that have grown accomplished at grinding their adversaries into submission.

In a City of Manchester stadium bedecked by the banners of

Rangers supporters clubs from Melbourne to the outer Hebrides, the atmosphere in the nominally neutral venue had been expected to resemble their own Ibrox fortress on Glasgow derby day.

In reality, Zenit's boisterous 9,000-strong contingent more than made up for their numerical disadvantage.

Briefly silenced when Darcheville won a free-kick on the edge of their side's area - which Kevin Thomson blasted into the wall - the Russian side's supporters were given something to really shout about in first-half stoppage time.

Stretching to reach Roman Shirokov's cross from the left, Kirk Broadfoot met the ball with an outstretched arm just inside the area but Zenit's appeals for a spot-kick were waved away.

Swedish referee Peter Frøjeldt may have balanced out his mistake ten minutes after the restart when Rangers put together an attack of real menace, Steven Davis driving forward on the right before slipping Darcheville in behind the Zenit back four.

Goalkeeper Vyacheslav Malafeev blocked but could not hold the striker's low shot and, in the ensuing scramble, Rangers' players were convinced Denisov

had handled.

As the increased ambition displayed by Rangers began to unsettle Zenit, Steven Whittaker saw a goalbound effort deflected for a corner.

But the Scots were also leaving themselves more exposed at the back and they enjoyed a significant let-off in the 65th-minute when Sasa Papac headed Arshavin's shot wide on the left after the Russia star, chasing a long punt out of defence, had skipped round Alexander.

New Zealand

FROM PAGE 17

Extras: (b-4, lb-7, w-1, nb-2) 14 Total: (For 5 wks in 34 overs) 109 To bat: Vettori, Martin, Southee, Mills

Fall of wickets: 1-2, 2-18, 3-41, 4-76, 5-104

Bowler O M R W
Sidebottom 12 3 31 0
Anderson 10 3 27 3
Broad 9 2 34 2
Collingwood 2 1 6 0
Panesar 1 1 0 0

ENGLAND: Strauss, Cook, Vaughan, Pietersen, Bell, Collingwood, Ambrose, Broad, Sidebottom, Panesar, Anderson Toss: England.

Umpires: Steve Bucknor and Simon Taufel.

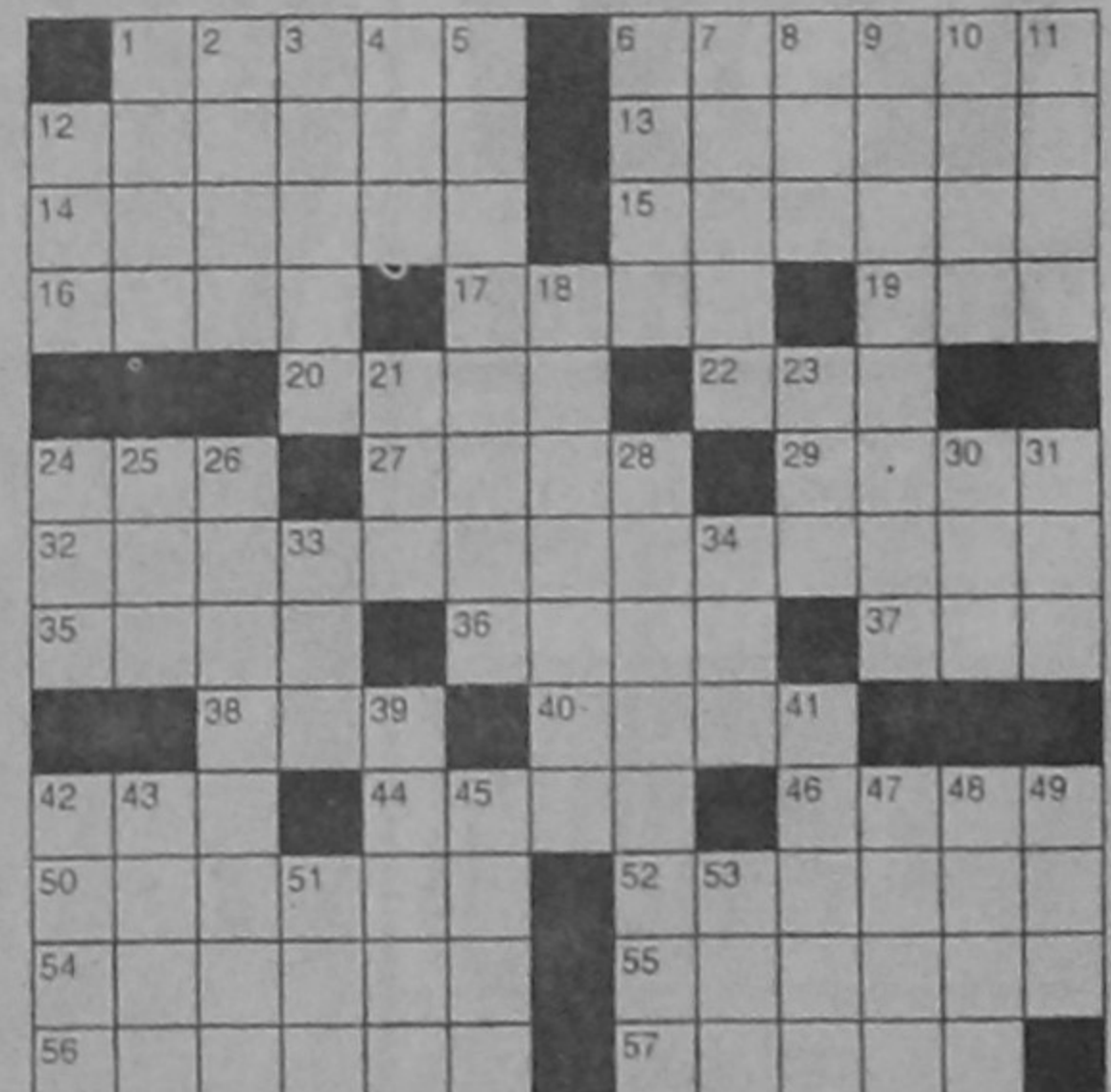
CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS 37 "Of course" 18 Taken out of context? 38 De-pressed 2 Killer whale (Fr.) 40 Whirlpool 3 Vibes (Fr.) 42 Blue 4 Freudian topic 44 Stash 5 Currently 6 Skilled 7 Drescher and 30 Blackjack part 16 Squad 52 Do 8 Ex-garment 9 Billing quality 10 Unembellished 39 Pule 22 Bro 56 Got 11 Formerly, formerly 12 Old hand 43 Farm fraction 45 On the rocks 47 Roll-call response 48 Raths-keller supply 49 Bond, for one 51 Homer's neighbor 53 Blackbird

DOWN 1 Silred 21 — Savar 23 Here 24 Doctrine 25 Mauna — 26 Malefactor 28 Seaside 29 "Arrivederci" 32 Monroe 33 "The" 35 Mansion employee 36 Norman-dy battle site

Solution time: 27 mins.

DATA PERIODICALS
ACROSS: 37 COURSE, 38 DEPRESSED, 40 WHIRLPOOL, 42 BLUE, 44 STASH, 46 RESISTANCE, 48 RATHSKELLER, 49 BOND, 51 HOMER'S NEIGHBOR, 53 BLACKBIRD.
DOWN: 1 SILRED, 21 SAVAR, 23 HERE, 24 DOCTRINE, 25 MAUNA, 26 MALEFACTOR, 28 SEASIDE, 29 ARRIVEDERCI, 32 MONROE, 33 THE, 35 MANSION EMPLOYEE, 36 NORMANDY BATTLE SITE, 18 TAKEN OUT OF CONTEXT, 19 KILLER WHALE, 20 FREUDIAN TOPIC, 22 BRO, 27 DRESCHER, 30 BLACKJACK, 31 PULE, 34 BILLING QUALITY, 35 UNEMBELLISHED, 39 FORMERLY, 40 WHIRLPOOL, 41 VIBES, 43 FARM FRACTION, 45 ON THE ROCKS, 47 ROLL-CALL RESPONSE, 48 RATHSKELLER, 49 BOND, 51 HOMER'S NEIGHBOR, 53 BLACKBIRD.



CRYPTOQUIP

AB M UGKTD PJD UKGTTGT
HDEK XRDJGT SMWGT PKH
PATGXKMXWT, AT LJML MO
AKDO-AX TGOTG DB JESDK?
Yesterday's Cryptquip: I OCCASIONALLY SPRINT THROUGH PAPER-PRODUCING FACTORIES. YOU COULD SAY I'M RUN-OF-THE-MILL.
Today's Cryptquip Clue: T equals S