

PHOTO: AFP
Roger Federer (second from R) of Switzerland gestures along with John McEnroe (R), Bjorn Borg (L) and James Blake after a joint press conference in Kuala Lumpur yesterday. The four players will play in a "Showdown of Champions" today.

Federer ready to roll

Tennis

AFP, Kuala Lumpur

Roger Federer winds down his tough season with Bjorn Borg and John McEnroe this week, playing a series of exhibitions despite the back injury that hampered his bid for a fifth Masters Cup.

The Swiss star graces Kuala Lumpur on Tuesday and Macau on Thursday then will rest and recuperate over the Christmas break before his focus turns to the first Grand Slam of the season in Australia in January.

While Federer has signed up for this week, which also features James Blake, he has made it clear that these sort of events will not be on his schedule next year, despite the lure of a fat pay cheque.

Instead, his focus will be on beating Pete Sampras' record of 14 Grand Slam singles titles. He currently has 13, with the Australian Open his next target. "I'm happy the season is over," he said after Andy Murray bundled him out of the Masters Cup at the round robin stage in Shanghai.

"I hope I can recover from all of what happened this week because it was tough," added Federer, who was also struggling with a stomach bug.

Now 27, Federer is already

treating his body more carefully, withdrawing from a tournament in Stockholm in October then pulling out of the Paris Masters this month ahead of his quarterfinal against Blake.

Despite falling to Murray, he said he was content with his season, even though he lost the top spot after 237 weeks and his five-year Wimbledon winning streak was ended by Rafael Nadal.

"I mean, it was a good season. I was happy I could win the US Open for the fifth straight and I'm looking forward to next year, you know, to go for six," he said.

"It was an incredible match at Wimbledon (against Nadal), to be part of, so that was good, as well."

"Obviously very emotional victories, again, in Basel, my hometown. And winning the Olympic gold for Switzerland was a big moment for me."

"It's been a good year. But tough to start off with, tough to end. So obviously a little bit of mixed feelings. But I think it gives me the opportunity to start over all new again next year."

The format in Kuala Lumpur will see one set between Borg and McEnroe followed by another set featuring Federer and Blake. This will be followed by a one-set dou-

bles pitting Federer and Borg against McEnroe and Blake.

For Borg and McEnroe it will be a walk down memory lane, revisiting the highs and lows of their bitter rivalry, typified by the 1980 Wimbledon final won by Borg in five gruelling sets.

The 49-year-old McEnroe, who won seven Grand Slam singles titles during his storied career, now works as a television commentator.

Borg, 52, captured 11 Grand Slam singles titles -- six at Roland Garros and five consecutive titles at Wimbledon, before walking away from the sport aged just 26 after seeing his Wimbledon reign ended by McEnroe in 1981.

McEnroe said he was looking forward to this week.

"I'm honoured to be part of such a great event. I'm going to give my best and am also looking forward to the clash against Borg," he said.

McEnroe and Borg were deprived of a warm-up after organisers scrapped a tournament in Penang over the weekend because Malaysian promoters failed to provide funds for the event.

The "Kings of Tennis" was scheduled to include McEnroe, Sampras, Borg, Stefan Edberg, Roy Emerson, Marcelo Rios, Ili Nastase and Mats Wilander.

Chess teams lose at Olympiad

SPORT REPORTER

Bangladesh men's and women's teams had a bad day at the 38th Chess Olympiad on Sunday, losing their fourth round matches to stronger opponents at Dresden, Germany.

However, the men's team snatched valuable points against 32nd-seeded Denmark in 2.5-1.5 defeat in the open section.

FIDE Master Minhazuddin Ahmed Sagar beat Danish International Master Glud Jakob Vang while Grandmaster Abdullah Al Rakib drew with GM Schandorff Lars.

The two Bangladeshi GMs suffered defeats, Ziaur Rahman going down to GM Hansen Lars Bo and Enamul Hossain Rajib losing to GM Nielsen Peter Heine.

The women's team lost to Austria 3-1.

WFM Syeda Shabana Parveen Nipa drew with Austrian WFM Novkovic Julia and WFM Tanima Parveen was held by Newkila Katharina.

WFM Shamima Akter Liza lost to IM Moser Eva while Nazrana Khan Eva lost to WFM Kopinitis Anna-Christina.

Yuvraj alone

FROM PAGE 17

Flintoff 9 0 49 0
Harmison 7 1 50 1
S Patel 5 0 37 0
Collingwood 8 0 43 1
Pietersen 5 0 20 1

ENGLAND

Bell run out 1
Prior b Yuvraj 38
Shah lbw b Yuvraj 58
Pietersen b Yuvraj 33
Flintoff lbw b Yuvraj 43

Collingwood c & b Harbhajan 2
S Patel c Gambhir b Sehwa 20
Broad c Raina b Pathan 3
Bopara b Sehwa 22

Harmison st Dhoni b Sehwa 6
Anderson not out 1
Extras: (lb-2, w-6, nb-3) 11

Total: (All out in 47 overs) 238
Fall of wickets: 1-6, 2-102, 3-109, 4-183, 5-184, 6-187, 7-191, 8-222, 9-233, 10-238.

Bowler O M R W
Zaheer 8 1 37 0
M Patel 7 0 31 0
RP Singh 5 0 49 0
Yuvraj 10 0 28 4

Harbhajan 10 0 45 1
Sehwa 5 0 28 3
Pathan 2 0 18 1

Result: India won by 54 runs and led the 7-match series 2-0.

Man-of-the-match: Yuvraj Singh.

Toss: India.

Umpires: Russel Tiffin (ZIM) and Amish Saheba (IND).

TV umpire: Suresh Shastri (IND).

Match referee: Roshan Mahanama (SRI).

Malik for hard work

Cricket

AFP, Abu Dhabi

Pakistan captain Shoaib Malik said Monday that hard work was needed ahead of next year's high-profile series against archrivals India, despite his team's 3-0 whitewash of the West Indies.

Malik led Pakistan to a clean-sweep of the West Indies here on Sunday, a victory he believed will lift the morale of the team for the January-February series against India, who recently completed a 2-0 victory in a Test series against world champions Australia.

"We need to work hard for the series against India and I am sure after this win with our morale high, we will put our best efforts in the next series," Malik said.

India are due to play an exhibition match, three Tests, five one-day matches and a Twenty20 international on their tour of Pakistan.

However the tour may be relocated to neutral venues in the wake of increased security fears in Pakistan.

Malik praised his Indian counterpart Mahendra Singh Dhoni who took over the Test captaincy from the now retired Anil Kumble.

"Dhoni is an excellent captain and under him India is a very strong side, but we have two months to get ready for India and I am sure that the boys will do their best and the team management [will] plan well for that series," said Malik.

Malik said Pakistan must continue the commitment and the team effort they showed against the West Indies in the three-match series.

"When we came here to play the West

Indies we had thought about commitment and team effort and I am pleased that the boys put up their best," he said. Pakistan beat the West Indies by 31 runs in the third and final match here on Sunday.

Pakistan's total of 273-6 was built around a brilliant hundred by Younis Khan and an unbeaten 79 by Misbahul Haq.

The West Indies were cruising as skipper Chris Gayle notched 122 and added 151 for the second wicket with Ramnaresh Sarwan (62), before collapsing to lose their last nine wickets for just 74 runs.

Younis, declared man-of-the-match, said he hoped Pakistan will carry on the good work against India.

"I hope the boys carry the momentum and do their best against India. I think India is the same team we played against last year so it will be a good series," he said.

Younis said Indian captain Dhoni was both aggressive and lucky.

"Whatever Dhoni does it clicks, but for me his real test will come when luck deserts him. We hope that comes against Pakistan," said Younis, who will return to South Australia to complete his maiden stint there.

"Playing in South Australia is great and it helped me in my batting."

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard in the third and final one-day international between Pakistan and the West Indies at Sheikh Zayed Stadium on Sunday:

PAKISTAN
Butt c Findlay b Powell 0
Manzoor c Nash b Gayle 30
Younis b Miller 101
Misbahul not out 79

Malik b Taylor 13
Afriidi c Chanderpaul b Baker 6
Akmal b Taylor 21
Extras: (b-1, lb-2, w-20) 23
Total: (For six wickets in 50 overs) 273
Fall of wickets: 1-3, 2-88, 3-191, 4-226, 5-233, 6-273.

Bowler O M R W
Powell 10 0 45 1
Taylor 10 0 50 2
Baker 10 0 70 1
Miller 10 0 55 1
Gayle 10 0 50 1

WEST INDIES

Gayle c Akmal b Gul 122
Chattergoon c Younis b Tanveer 6
Sarwan b Iftikhar 62

Chanderpaul c Haq b Iftikhar 3
Marshall b Iftikhar 0
Findlay c Malik b Iftikhar 5
Nash c Akmal b Afriidi 1

Taylor b Gul 17
Miller not out 5
Powell lbw b Gul 0
Baker b Tanveer 2

Extras: (lb-5, w-14) 19
Total: (All out in 46.3 overs) 242
Fall of wickets: 1-17, 2-168, 3-176, 4-177, 5-191, 6-193, 7-232, 8-239, 9-239.

Bowler O M R W
Tanveer 7.3 0 32 2
Gul 8 2 31 3
Iftikhar 9 0 59 4
Ajmal 10 0 35 0

Malik 3 0 29 0
Afriidi 9 0 51 1

Result: Pakistan won by 31 runs to take series 3-0.

Man-of-the-match: Younis Khan.

Man-of-the-series: Chris Gayle.

Toss: Pakistan

Umpires: Mark Benson (ENG), Daryl Harper (AUS)

Dyson blasts Windies

Cricket

AFP, Abu Dhabi

Frustrated West Indies coach John Dyson on Monday criticised the standard of the nation's domestic game, saying that it was failing to produce players ready for the rigours of international cricket.

The West Indies, with four debutants in the squad, suffered a 3-0 whitewash against Pakistan in the one-day series here on Sunday -- a defeat Dyson hoped will provide several lessons for the future.

"Unfortunately the frustrating part is that international sport is about winning, the frustration as coach is that the newcomers don't have the basic skills for this kind of cricket," said Dyson, a former Australian batsman.

All-rounder Brendan Nash, spinner Nikita Miller, and pacemen Lionel Baker and Shawn Findlay were the newcomers who all played in West Indies' 31-run defeat in the final match here on Sunday.

Chasing a target of 274 runs, the West Indies were boosted by a fighting 122 by skipper

Chris Gayle who added 151 runs for the second wicket with Ramnaresh Sarwan (62), before a collapse in which the last nine West Indian wickets



JOHN DYSON

fell for a mere 74 runs.

Among the newcomers, the 24-year-old Baker stood out with a three-wicket haul on his debut in the first international played Wednesday, a match Pakistan won by four wickets in a thriller that was decided in the final over.

Pakistan won the second match by 24 runs on Friday.

Dyson, who took over last year, said he has been telling the West Indies Cricket Board

(WICB) to improve the standard of regional cricket.

"If you look at the Australian system, by the time a player comes into the Australian team he has played umpteen number of matches in the Sheffield Shield cricket which is very good quality...so he is ready to play internationally."

Dyson, who also coached Sri Lanka, said that the quality of regional West Indies cricket was "nowhere near" the standard of Australian Sheffield Shield cricket, and was generating players that "are unprepared to play against international teams."

Dyson urged the newly called-up players to work hard.

"At this level it's about trying to win matches, it shouldn't be about trying to teach the players how to play international matches," said the coach.

"Our newcomers will have to learn the basics of international cricket, other countries have strong systems and have very strong basics, so they are doing well."

The West Indies play two Tests, two Twenty20 matches and five one-day internationals on their tour of New Zealand starting next month.

LOCAL SNIPPETS

FROM PAGE 17

League with a 1-0 win over Dhanmondi Club at the Birshreshtha Shaheed Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur.

Polash broke the deadlock for Boys after 73 minutes as the Gopibagh side took their tally to 27 points. Dhanmondi struck to 14 points after 14 rounds.

DIVIHOCKEY

UNB adds: Bachelors SC edged Uttara Hockey Club 2-1 in the only match of the Green Delta Insurance First Division Hockey League at the Maulana Bhasani National Hockey Stadium.

After a barren first half, Naser and Taleb Reza scored one goal each for the winners. Mohammad Jissa reduced the arrears for the losers.

Arun to be

FROM PAGE 17

was a bachelor, set a new world record of non-stop swimming for the longest period -- 90 hours and five minutes -- at the Lake Square in Kolkata to raise fund and create opinion the Liberation War of Bangladesh.

Bowling

FROM PAGE 17

"Imrul has a good chance to make his Test debut because I have faith in him. He looked very good against bowlers like Dale Steyn and Morne Morkel in the one-day series and made 86 runs in the practice match," said Ashraful.

He also praised Mushfiq Rahim's knock in the practice match.

"I think he (Mushfiq) scored the runs in right time. He played a brilliant innings and it could have been fantastic if he could have got the hundred," Ashraful said reflecting on the wicketkeeper-batsman's 89.

Sourav taking to field again!

PTI, Kolkata

Giving in to desperate requests from the Cricket Association of Bengal, former India captain Sourav Ganguly will return to cricket to represent Bengal, who are languishing in the Ranji Trophy Plate League.

Ganguly today conveyed his decision to don Bengal colours in their last Ranji Trophy Plate League encounter against Vidarbha from December 12-15 in Nagpur, where he played his swansong Test.

Should Bengal make the knockout stage, the left-hander will continue playing for his home state in his effort to take the team to Super League again.

Following a discussion with CAB joint-secretary Arun Mitra on the sidelines of Bengal's Ranji Trophy Plate Group match against Services at Eden Gardens, Ganguly showed his keenness to play for the state.

Tennis Serbia's fairytale

INTERNET, undated

The triumph of two Serbs at the Shanghai Masters over the weekend, two players on top of global rankings and another two with the throne in sight at the close of the tennis season drove Belgrade newspapers deeper into euphoria on Monday. "Shanghai fairytale," "Serbia's pride," "Serbian Shanghai," and "Best in the world" are some of the headlines in the newspapers, many of which allowed tennis to dominate front-pages instead of the usual, often grim political stories.

Novak Djokovic claimed the Shanghai title to come within a shot of Roger Federer and the number two ATP ranking, while Zimonjic, who won the title with Canadian partner Daniel Nestor, ascended to the doubles' number one position for the first time in his career.

Normally overshadowed by

the singles stars, Zimonjic got his fair share of limelight with the triumph he added to the win at Wimbledon and several other titles. "Zimonjic is the best in the world," says a huge headline in the daily Press.

Jelena Jankovic faltered in the Shanghai final, still secured the number one WTA ranking until 2009.

Ana Ivanovic ended the season ranked fifth by WTA, after being on top briefly following the retirement of Belgian Justine Henin.

Though Ana appears to have been free-falling since her Australian Open title, Serbian media have found consolation in her still good ranking and the informal title of the world's prettiest athlete.

Overall, Serbian tennis players won a total of 17 titles in the season - Zimonjic six, Djokovic and Jankovic three each and Ivanovic three - achieving "a feat for the history," the daily Blic concluded.

Simmo comes to his senses

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

Andrew Symonds has admitted that alcohol played a part in his poor attitude this year and getting axed from the squad in Darwin was the wake-up call he needed to address his behaviour. Symonds also conceded that he had hurt his relationship with his good friend Michael Clarke, the stand-in captain, when the Darwin decision was made.

Speaking for the first time about the reasons that led to his being sent home, Symonds said he had started drinking too much after last season's racism row with the India spinner Harbhajan Singh. Harbhajan was alleged to have called Symonds a

monkey during the Sydney Test and was suspended for three Tests but the ban was overturned on appeal.

"At times, I was drinking too much and I wasn't a good bloke to be around," Symonds said on Channel Nine. "I had turned bad, I think, with the buildup of the whole of last summer and the things that had unfolded."

"I wasn't in a great place. Looking back now it probably happened at the right time that I got sent home and told to straighten myself out. I feel much better within myself. Even if I don't come back and play great cricket, I know that I have done something that will improve what I need to be as a person."

It is not the first time Symonds has revealed his trouble with alcohol. In his 2006 autobiography,

Symonds recalled the sketchy details of a pub crawl in Cardiff the previous year that led to him being dumped from the side that played Bangladesh the next morning when he turned up at the ground drunk.

Having missed the recent tour of India, Symonds is likely to return to the Test side at the Gabba on Thursday, when Australia take on New Zealand. Symonds has not played a Test since the tour of the Caribbean and it was on that trip that reports emerged of a bar-room argument between him and Clarke.

It was Clarke who tried to help Symonds sober up after his Cardiff bender and on the 2006 tour of South Africa pulled Symonds away from a potential punch-up with a rugby player. But their relationship took another blow

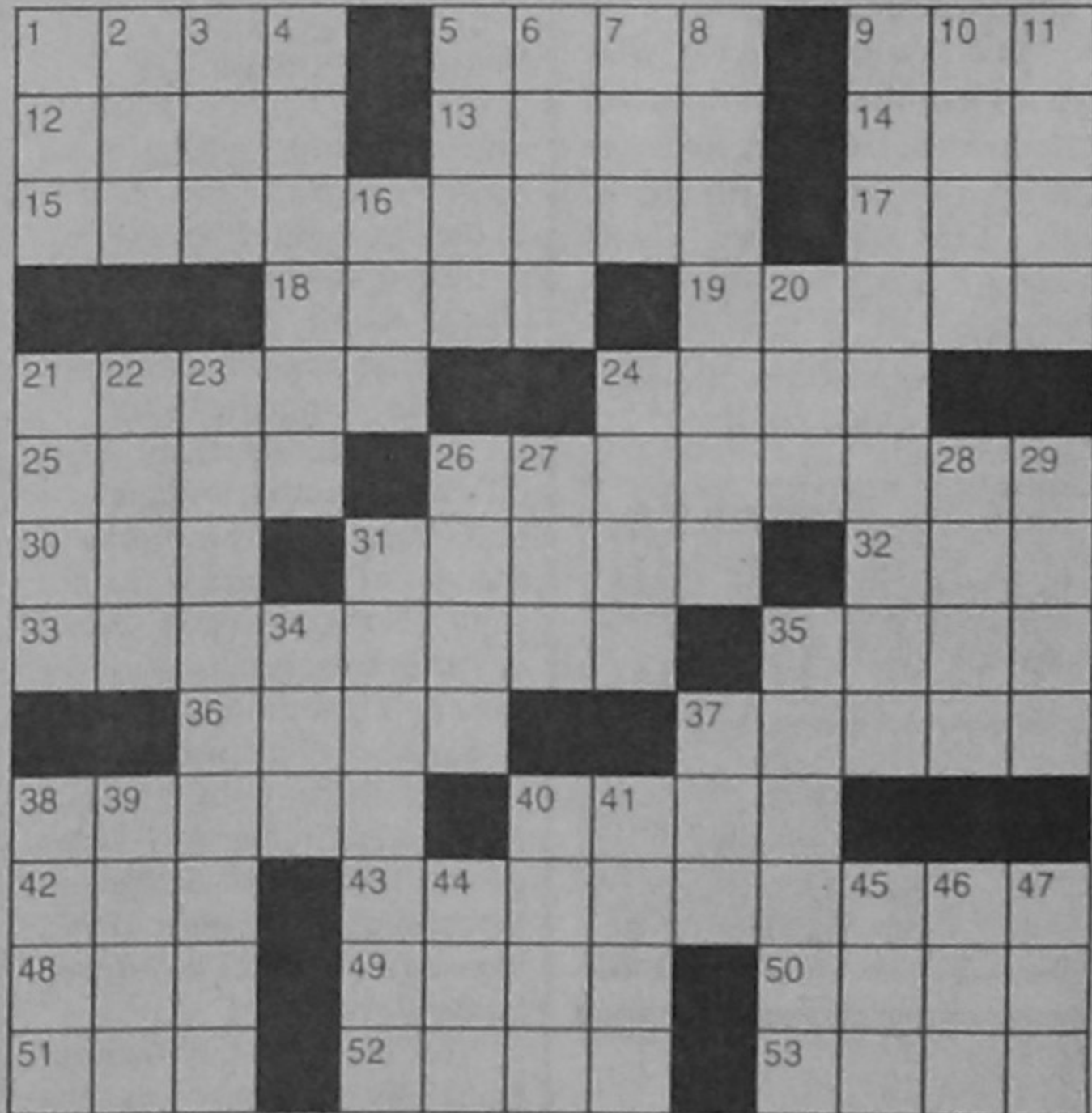
when Clarke was a key part of the team leadership group that sent Symonds home from Darwin following his fishing trip and Symonds said he had not treated Clarke, the team's vice-captain, appropriately.

"I did something silly with him one night and I suppose I was a bit disrespectful to him," Symonds said. "That relationship is still alive, but to be perfectly honest it is not what it was. We are both making efforts to get it back to where it was because that's a friendship I don't want to lose."

Symonds knows he cannot afford another behavioural slip-up or "it's not going to be a pretty ending". He made his comeback appearance in Australian colours in the All-Stars Twenty20 match on Friday, when he regained some of his lost form with 45 from 35 balls.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
36 King of Siam's employee
5 Dangling locale
9 Clothing protector
12 Tom Joad, e.g.
13 Slithery
14 Big fuss
15 Its participants must form a line
17 Fresh sin
18 A deadly sin
19 Within the rules
21 Cavalry sword
24 Golf legend Tony
25 Advertise
26 Burger flippers
30 A billion years
31 Casual pants
32 Keatsian poem
33 Paris airport, familiarly
35 Met melody
2 Tackle the slopes
3 -- rose
4 Pirate-costume feature
5 Small barrels
6 In good order
7 Shade source
8 Shoe-laces go through them
9 City of India
10 Notion
11 Cereal container
16 "Days of -- Lives"
20 Ostrich's cousin
22 Lotion additive
23 One-story houses
24 Highway division
26 Actress Ward
27 Chum
28 Tennis situation
29 Membership
31 Late-spring beetle
34 Response (Abb.)
35 Battery terminals
37 See 41-Down
38 Basketball team
39 Tiny particle
40 "Bus Stop" playwright
41 With 37-Down, way back when
44 Raw rock
45 Regret
46 Samovar
47 Witticism



CRYPTOQUIP

CL T MFORFD'E VKTI HFZ

VKYVDCVAOVM GVL R HFZ

XCRN ITAH BZVERCF AE, XTE

CR T BZCWWCOTG YNHECOTG?

Yesterday's Cryptquip: THE MINER, UPON TAKING SOME ORE TO THE BANK, HAD BEGUN TO MAKE REGULAR MINERAL DEPOSITS.

Today's Cryptquip Clue: B equals Q