

Kenya's Abel Kirui celebrates after winning the men's marathon at the IAAF Athletics World Championships in Berlin yesterday.

2 teams to be demoted in B. League

SPORT REPORTER

The B. League Committee of the Bangladesh Football Federation yesterday backtracked on their decision to relegate three teams in the professional football league.

The decision to relegate two teams was taken at the meeting as many clubs verbally approached the football's governing body to reconsider the decision on demoting three teams.

The meeting also vowed to start the season opening tournament, the Federation Cup, as scheduled on September 10 and the teams' draw and the tournament format would be declared this month, said BFF general secretary Al Musabbir Said.

It also decided to invite the possible teams this year for the second-tier B. League that will get underway in the next year.

Dhaka Club's sports day

SPORTS REPORTER

To mark the 98th founding anniversary, the Dhaka Club on Thursday organised a sports event consisting of billiards and snooker, squash, and tennis amid fun and festivity on Thursday.

The members of the club and their children took part in the competition.

Sadat Hossain Salim, president of the club, Abrar A Anwar, head of Global Cooperation and Commercial Bank, Citibank, N.A. Bangladesh and Ashrafuzzaman Khan were present during the prize distribution ceremony.

Reefat takes

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who started campaign bidding to earn his second norm for International Master, drew with GM Anuar Ismagambetov in his respective second round game.

In the 2nd round, Georgian Mchedlishvili beat Indian IM Vishal Sareen, Rausis beat Indian Praveen Kumar, Neelotpal beat Hasan Emam of Air Destiny, Dibyendu beat Nepalese Hamal Manish, FM Abu Sufian Shakil beat Nepalese Badre Nepali and FM Kh. Aminul Islam beat Jamal Uddin.

Maruful gets

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unpaid wages. But this time around Maruful could be rest assured that money would not be a problem with Mohammedan already luring last season's star striker Zahid Hossain Emily and star defender Wali Faisal from Abahani.

Besides, MA Salam said that that they were on the verge of retaining Nigerian striker Alamul Bukola Olateken, who scored the highest 18 goals in B. League last season.

Bangladesh

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wanted 20,000 dollars per team for 10 days, but the AFC awarded the event to Philippines and each participant will have to pay 22,000 dollars to the hosts for accommodation, food and local transportation," said BFF general secretary Al Musabbir Said.

"Now we will have to spend Tk 25 lakh if we want to take part in the meet. We are unlikely to send the team to the Philippines, but the decision has yet to be finalised," said Sadi.

The U-16 squad has been training in Khulna for one month.

Eng build big lead

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He struck North for several elegant, straight driven boundaries before holing out to Ponting for a 29 featuring five fours.

England resumed Saturday on 58 for three, already a lead of 230.

They were contemplating victory after pace bowler Broad took five for 37 on Friday in reply to England's first innings 332.

Although the pitch was not the ideal batting surface usually associated with the Oval, it was no terror track and the conditions could not explain a third first innings collapse by Australia this series.

Instead Broad, well supported by off-spinner Swann (four for 38), bowled with good accuracy and control.

Strauss, England's lone century-maker this series, resumed Saturday on 32 not out with Trotter unbeaten on eight.

Trotter survived a huge appeal for caught behind off the day's first ball from Siddle. But Pakistani umpire Asad Rauf was unmoved and replays suggested Trotter had missed the ball.

Australia, retaining the same side that won the fourth Test at Headingley by an innings and 80 runs, had chosen not to recall off-spinner Nathan Hauritz on a pitch with a reputation for taking turn.

Their decision to remain loyal to a four-man pace attack

left Ponting having to call upon the services of North. England were in danger of squandering their advantage when Trotter came to the crease. But the 28-year-old Warwickshire batsman held his nerve and a four off Michael Clarke saw him to a maiden Test fifty in 89 balls with five fours.

However, when it seemed England would get through the morning session without losing a wicket, Strauss guided North to Clarke at first slip after nearly four hours at the crease.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at tea on the third day of the fifth Ashes Test between England and Australia at The Oval in London on Saturday:

ENGLAND: First innings 332 (Bell 72, Strauss 55; Siddle 4-75, Hilfenhaus 3-71)

AUSTRALIA: First innings 160 (Katich 50; Broad 5-37, Swann 4-38)

ENGLAND: Second innings (overnight 58-3)

Strauss c Clarke b North 75  
Cook c Clarke b North 9  
Bell c Katich b Johnson 4  
Collingwood c Katich b Johnson 1  
Trotter not out 83  
Prior run out (Katich) 4  
Flintoff c Siddle b North 22  
Broad c Ponting b North 29  
Swann not out 34  
Extras: (b-1, lb-15, w-6, nb-7) 29  
Total: (For 7 wks in 83 overs) 290

To bat: Anderson, Harmison  
Fall of wickets: 1-27, 2-34, 3-39,

4-157, 5-168, 6-200, 7-243				
Bowler	O	M	R	W
Hilfenhaus	7	1	24	0
Siddle	15	3	48	0
North	30	4	98	4
Johnson	15	1	56	2
Katich	5	2	9	0
Clark	8	2	19	0
Clarke	3	0	20	0

Jadeja blames players

CRICINFO, undated

Ajay Jadeja, the former India batsman and captain of Delhi for two seasons, has backed Virender Sehwag in his criticism of the state's cricket administration but said players are to blame for the dismal situation that exists today.

"We need to look within ourselves," Jadeja was quoted as saying in the Hindu. "If we (cricketers) don't go begging for small favours from the administrators such situations would not arise at all. Can you have any selection in India without the involvement of a player? The selection committee is made up of former players only and if they don't do their job properly, who do you blame? This sports committee is elected by cricketers only. Why don't they send honest cricketers to do the job?"

PM calls cricketers

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promote sports and culture, a country cannot have significant achievements in the fields," she said.

Hasina stressed the need for introducing modern technologies and equipment in training facilities for the cricketers to keep the winning streak on stream in the days to come.

"From the government, we will do everything possible for development of the sports sector," she promised while announcing the perks.

She asked the developers to ensure playground whenever the real-estate companies implement any housing project. She also asked

for conserving water-bodies in and around project sites.

"It makes me unhappy when I see our children in the urban areas do not have enough space to play. Without involvement in sports, a child cannot grow up with full mental and physical health, confidence and bravery," she said.

The prime minister focused on the significance of media's role in flourishing sports in the country by saying that the media should play a proactive role through its reports aiming at encouraging the players. "Negative write-ups can discourage the players," she

said adding that loss and win will remain in competition.

Reciprocating her compliments, Ahad Ali Sarker and Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) president Lt General Sina Ibn Jamali also greeted the prime minister with flowers. She was also honoured with a crest from the BCB.

Chairman of the parliamentary standing committee on Youth and Sports Affairs Jahid Ahsan Russel MP also addressed the function moderated by Awami League sports affairs secretary Dewan Shafiul Arefin Tutul.

SL post easy win

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The Kiwis, who had 13 of their 15 players affected by a stomach bug and viral fever, had been left hoping the weather might do them a favour -- only for clear skies to break over the coastal town for the first time since the Test began.

Skipper Daniel Vettori battled bravely for two-and-a-half hours to make 67, his 20th Test fifty, sparking a brief resistance by the lower order after the Kiwis were reduced to 86-5.

Jesse Ryder, one of the players worst affected by the virus, defended for almost an hour to add 48 for the sixth wicket with his captain before he was caught behind off Muralidaran for 22 soon after lunch.

Jeetan Patel hit 22 and Brendon McCullum, who was confined to bed on Friday due to fever, made 29 before he was last man to be dismissed, a run-out victim of a direct throw from Muralidaran.

Wicket-keeper Prasanna Jayawardene, returning to the side after missing the previous series against Pakistan with a knee injury, chipped in with three catches and a stumping.

Vettori refused to blame illness for New Zealand's defeat, saying the lack of big scores cost the tourists the match.

"The key to the match was how well Dilshan played and

how poorly we responded to the challenge with both bat and ball," the 93-Test veteran said.

"We needed to bat long periods of time and the top order had to stand up and be counted."

"I think some of us tackled the spinners well but the most disappointing aspect of the defeat was we lost about eight wickets to seam bowlers."

"Having so many players ill during the match was not the ideal situation, but we could have fought better. I look forward to the next Test and hopefully we will have learnt our lessons."

The second and final Test will be played at the Sinhalese sports club in Colombo from Wednesday.

New Zealand will also play two Twenty20 internationals against Sri Lanka and a limited-overs tri-series with India as the third test.

SCOREBOARD

Final scoreboard on the fifth day of the first Test between Sri Lanka and New Zealand at the Galle International Stadium on Saturday:

SRI LANKA: First innings 452 (Samaraweera 159, M Jayawardene 114, Dilshan 92; Martin 4-77, Vettori 4-78)

NEW ZEALAND: First innings 299 (McIntosh 69; Muralidaran 4-73, Thushara

4-81)  
SRI LANKA: Second innings 259-4 declared (Dilshan 123 not out, Sangakkara 46)

NEW ZEALAND: Second innings (overnight 30-1)

Guptill b Thushara 18  
Flynn c M Jayawardene b Kulasekara 0

Taylor c P Jayawardene b M Jayawardene 16  
McIntosh c Samaraweera b Thushara 0

Oram lbw b Mendis 21  
Vettori c P Jayawardene b Mendis 67  
Ryder c P Jayawardene b Muralidaran 24

McCullum run out Patel st P Jayawardene b Muralidaran 22

O'Brien c Paranavithana b Muralidaran 5  
Martin not out 0  
Extras: (b-4, lb-1, nb-3) 8

Total: (All out in 71.5 overs) 210  
Fall of wickets: 1-1, 2-37, 3-39, 4-45, 5-86, 6-134, 7-167, 8-204, 9-210

Bowler O M R W  
Kulasekara 8 2 20 1  
Thushara 14 3 37 2  
Mendis 18.5 4 50 2  
Muralidaran 27 4 88 3  
M Jayawardene 4 1 10 1

Result: Sri Lanka won by 202 runs.  
Man-of-the-match: Tillakaratne Dilshan.

Toss: New Zealand.  
Umpires: Daryl Harper and Nigel Llong.

Joshi probable Biyanibazar coach

SPORTS REPORTER

Jasimuddin Ahmed Joshi is tipped to become the coach of newcomers Biyanibazar Sporting Club of Sylhet in the upcoming season.

"They confirmed me verbally," said Joshi. "I will sit with the club president Monday and expect that the things will be finalised on the same day."

Joshi, the former winger of the national team who was renowned for his speed, coached Mohammedan in 2005 to help the popular Black and Whites finish second beyond champions Brothers Union in the Premier Division League. He was also the assistant coach of the Motijheel-based outfit for two years over 1997-98.

Biyanibazar, one of three newcomers in the 13-team Professional Football League, reportedly talked with former Bangladesh captain Jewel Rana, but later dropped the idea of getting him as the coach because of Jewel's high demand.

The Sylhet outfit are said to be forming a good side after confirming some players like goalkeeper Mohammad Ali, Biblob, Bappy, Rony, Ashrafur Kader, Rikto, Pappu, Faisal Mahmud, Monju and Soheli.

"I can't say anything at the moment about how far I can take them until I see the condition of the players' fitness. It is unfortunate that the clubs confirm players before confirming the coach. I hope that this culture will change in the future."

Football turns violent

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

A controversial ruling of goal by a referee in a football match in Manikganj resulted in violent clashes between the supporters of the two teams that left at least 60 injured, 10 of them seriously on Friday.

The match, final of a tournament organized by a local organization named Uday Sena, was played between Tepri Ekadash of Daulatpur, Manikganj and Gangbithali of Nagarpur, Tangail at the Taluknagar Degree College playground.

Daulatpur were leading the match 3-2 through to the dying moments of the match when Gangbithali scored a third goal that was ruled off for offside by the linesman. But the referee decided to overrule the linesman's decision which got the supporters of Daulatpur agitated. The agitation ultimately resulted in violent clashes between the supporters of the two teams.

The angry supporters vandalised college property during the clashes and also damaged the house of a Rahmat Ali, where some supporters had taken shelter. The clashes lasted for around two hours and left 60 injured. The injured were taken to the local health complex at Daulatpur and Nagarpur.

ROGERS CUP

Serena storms into semis

Tennis

AFP, Toronto

Second-seeded Serena Williams stormed into the semifinals of the two million-dollar WTA Rogers Cup Friday with a 6-3, 6-2 victory over Lucie Safarova.

Williams, the reigning Wimbledon, Australian Open and US Open champion, made short work of the Czech qualifier, needing just 57 minutes to advance without facing a break point.

Williams fired seven aces past Safarova as she booked a meeting with fourth-seeded Russian Elena Dementieva, the woman she beat in an epic three-set semifinal at Wimbledon this year.

Dementieva, the 2008 Olympic gold medalist, rallied to beat unseeded Aussie Samantha Stosur 6-7 (3/7), 6-1, 6-3.

"It was not easy to play," Dementieva said of the windy weather. "On this kind of day you're just trying to be very aggressive with your footwork, trying to get very close to the balls and to get good control on the racket head, and just go for the shots."

Dementieva, winner of two WTA titles this year, said she knew she would have her work cut out for her against Williams.

"It looks like she's in good shape,"

Dementieva said. "She has played very powerful in all her matches this week, so it's going to be a tough challenge."

Williams was looking forward to facing Dementieva again. Dementieva had won three of the pair's prior four meetings prior to their clash at Wimbledon.

"I think it'll be a great match," Williams said. "She is obviously a great player, and our last match was really insane. I love playing her."

Saturday's other semifinal pitted Russian Alisa Kleybanova against compatriot Maria Sharapova.

Unseeded Kleybanova outlasted fifth-seeded Jelena Jankovic 6-7 (6/8), 7-6 (9/7), 6-2 in a match lasting more than three hours.

"I feel pretty fresh right now," said Kleybanova, ranked 36th in the world. "I really hope that I'll be fresh (on Saturday) as I am now."

Jankovic, winner of the WTA event in Cincinnati on Sunday, admitted she was tired after thunderstorms delayed her Thursday night match against Kim Clijsters.

"I didn't have much time to recover, and obviously I was tired," she said. "My body wasn't as fresh as when I played in Cincinnati."

Sharapova, the former world number one who is still working her way back from a shoulder injury that sidelined her for 10 months, advanced with a 6-2, 7-6 (7/5) victory over 14th-seeded Pole Agnieszka Radwanska.

Scrap Champs

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bi-lateral series. He also said the 50- and 20-over World Cups should be played in the same cycle.

Hayden, a key member of the Chennai Super Kings franchise, said no international cricket should be played during the proposed two-month window of the IPL, which according to him had brought the game to a "tipping point". "The IPL has the ability to generate international fan bases in the same way as achieved by the English football's Premier League. I believe some IPL matches should go on the road each year and be played in other countries, to make it a global competition. The sooner the world of cricket embraces the IPL, the sooner everyone can find ways to benefit from its massive potential."

Hayden also lent his support to the concept of a Test Championship that the MCC's World Cricket Committee put forth last month. Hayden rejected the ICC's Future

Tours Programme and instead proposed a world series of the top eight teams on a rolling calendar with finals every two years. He said Zimbabwe and Bangladesh's dismal Test records disqualified them from the Test championship. Bangladesh's only two Test wins have come against a second-string West Indies side, missing senior players who were on strike. "When a team like Australia play a team like Bangladesh in a Test series, you've got problems. It can't be fun for the underdogs and it's no challenge for the favourites. Just as importantly, it's not a good spectacle."

Hayden said the core of the Test championship would be the iconic series -- the Ashes and India v Pakistan. "They should stay as five-match series. Aside from those ties, teams are pooled in two groups, with everyone playing each other and scoring points for wins, draws and series wins, and picking up bonus points for stand-out batting and bowling performances.

The leading two in each group would progress to semifinals and a final, the other would enter a rankings play-off system.

"This way, every game means something -- even the dead rubber at the end of a series between two lesser sides. Every Test fits into a bigger picture that adds up to a championship. It gives players something to aim for, fans a format they can follow, and commercial stakeholders with something that's compact and exciting. By changing Test cricket into something more relevant and therefore more marketable, additional revenue is generated. More revenue in the sport is good for everyone, including players and the ability of the game to develop."

Hayden was also in favour of playing matches indoor to avoid losing days to rain or poor pitches like in Antigua. He said it was important to have a fixed global calendar for cricket that fans could identify with.

Kenyan one-two in men's

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Kirui and Mutai both praised the course, which involved a looped course, but Kebede was not so keen.

"It was very difficult, there were lots of turns and early on I suffered from a stitch," the Ethiopian said.

"I came here hoping to win. But it was very warm with the race being run at midday. I've not really trained in this heat because it is the rainy season in my country."

In the absence of world record holder Haile Gebrselassie of Ethiopia, Kenya's Olympic champion Samuel Wanjiru, Morocco's two-time world champion Jaoud Gharib and Kenya's defending champion Luke Kibet, the race was wide open.

The field remained tight

until the 16km mark when Kebede attacked and strung out the pack. But he was soon reeled in.

By kilometre 27, a five-strong lead group had broken clear -- the Kenyan trio of Mutai, Kirui and Robert Cheruiyot, Ethiopian Deriba Merga and Rwandan Dieudonne Disi.

A wobbly Disi suddenly came to a halt, however, to take a breather. He managed to continue a short distance further before stopping altogether and being helped off the course.

Kebede and compatriot Deressa Chimsa kept up their chase on the breakaway quartet around the sun-baked course which included cobbled streets in and around the Brandenburg Gate.

After 1:35 of the race, four-time Boston Marathon winner Cheruiyot fell off the pace.

And by the 35th kilometre 10 minutes later Mutai and Kirui built up a decisive lead over Merga, who finished fourth at the Beijing Games but has this season won both the Boston and Houston marathons.

With 5km remaining Kirui edged away from Mutai and built up a lead of 100 metres.

"Always in a marathon, between 35-38km is the crucial stage," Kirui said.

The 24-year-old Mutai, who only has one previous marathon podium finish to his name -- when he won the Amsterdam Marathon in 2007, managed to finish the course despite being physically sick as he ran the final kilometre.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

34 Deuce  
1 Hydrox  
5 Bro's kin  
8 Hawaiian  
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14 Opening  
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17 Cross-  
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28 Dallas  
29 Devour  
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32 NASCAR

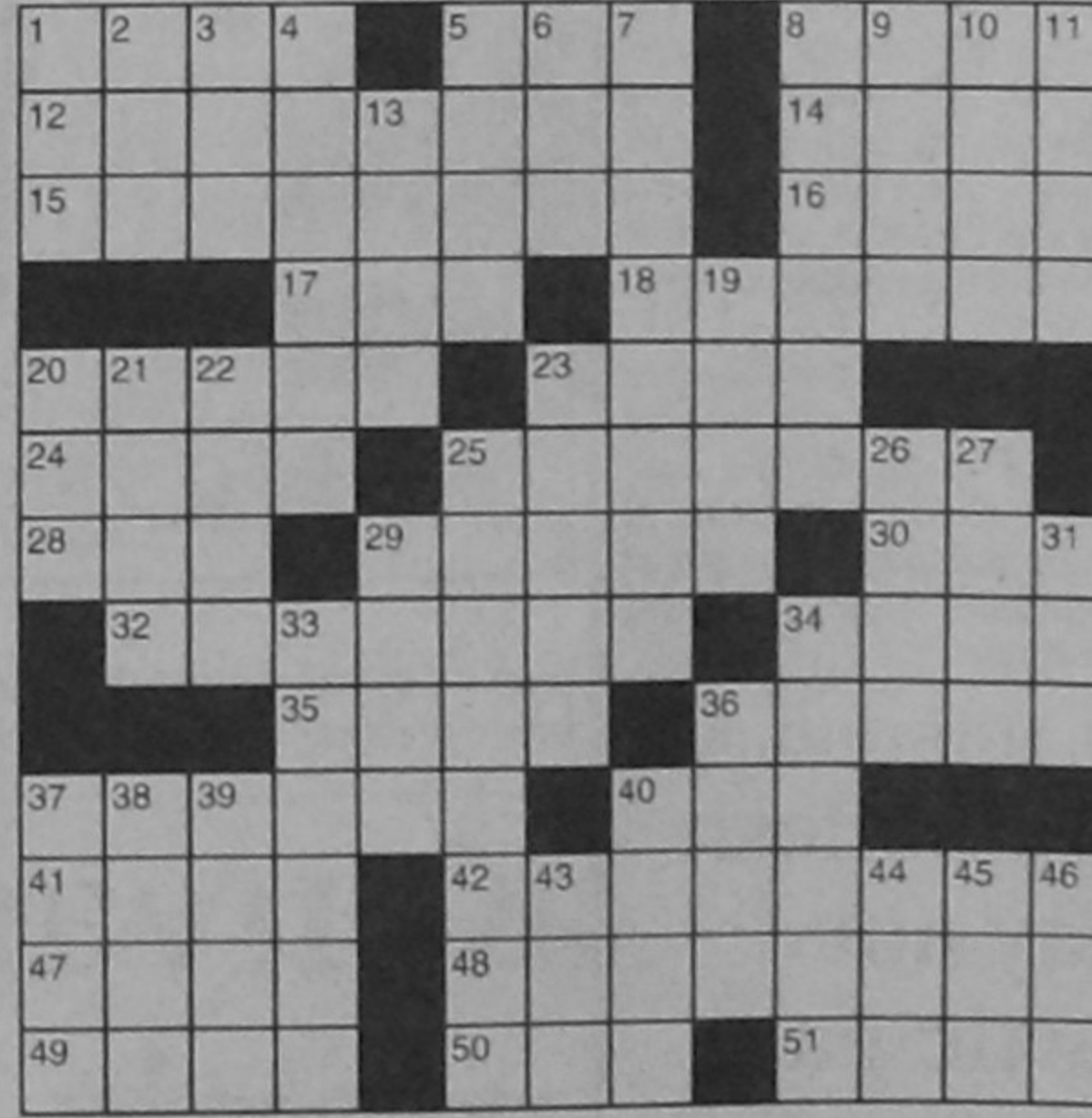
34 Deuce  
35 Chooses  
36 Song of  
37 Long-  
38 Long-  
40 Actress  
41 Cheer  
42 Voters in  
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48 Place  
49 "Cheers"  
50 "Mayday!"  
51 Sicilian  
52 Sicilian  
DOWN

1 Vacation-  
2 Regret  
3 Shade  
4 Pizza  
5 Mix  
6 Charged  
7 Acceler-  
8 Farm  
9 Parisian  
10 Loathe  
11 -friendly  
13 Break  
14 Suddenly  
19 Grate  
20 Derek  
21 Aladdin's  
22 Needle  
23 Cars  
25 Soldiers  
26 Gumbo  
27 Rind  
29 Catch  
31 Workout  
33 Wobble  
34 Infectious  
36 Treaty  
37 Colorless  
38 Top-  
39 Doves'  
40 Disarray  
43 Virgo  
44 Mel  
45 Director  
46 Hot tub

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CRYPTOQUIP

TGML BUJGL HFW IMRR LGC  
VWQIGMDC VQUIC FE ERFTCD.  
IMZOH, MZO CZJMJCBCZL  
QUZJD? IFWQL IFDLD.  
Saturday's Cryptoquip: PROPOSED SITCOM  
ABOUT FIBER-SPINNING METHODS THAT TV  
EXECUTIVES NIXED: "THE FLAX OF LIFE."  
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: H equals Y