



Sri Lanka's opening batsman Upul Tharanga (L) guided his side in a tricky 193-run chase with a gritty 70-run knock against New Zealand in the second ODI of the Micromax Cup tri-series at the Rangiri Dambulla International Stadium on Friday.

Tharanga sees off NZ

Cricket

CRICINFO

In a top-order studded with some of the finest batsmen of today, Upul Tharanga tends to get overlooked. Against New Zealand on Friday, however, he gave another demonstration of why he remains integral to Sri Lanka's World Cup plans.

His batting doesn't have either the flash of Tillakaratne Dilshan or the smooth adaptability of Kumar Sangakkara and Mahela Jayawardene, but his gutsy 70 on a challenging track was pivotal to the victory in the Micromax Cup tri-nation series.

It was a grab bag of an innings, which included inept wafts outside off, classy cover drives, his favourite cuts past point and an unintended tap to the off side as he was withdrawing his bat from a pull.

The initial period was particularly patchy, a mix of getting beaten by a big margin outside off and some sparkling boundaries.

Though 193 was a tiny target, batting under lights in Dambulla is never easy, as India had found out in the tournament's opening match.

"There was a bit of movement early on, there's not a lot of swing but a bit of uneven bounce, and a bit of seam movement," Sangakkara said.

New Zealand's hopes evaporated after

Tharanga's 84-run stand with Sangakkara, who after some starting trouble played some of the most eye-catching strokes of the match.

"I thought Upul batted really well. I was watching how Upul batted, and whenever he played a shot it was as if the wicket was absolutely flat, so I kept trying to watch him and see what he was doing and bat accordingly."

There were men on stilts twirling rings of fire, adding to the party mood, which wasn't dampened even by the fall of Sangakkara and Jayawardene.

Capitalising on a Styris drop at first slip, Tharanga scored his fourth half-century in seven innings, cleverly working the slower bowlers around to keep Sri Lanka on course for a bonus point.

With 60 runs needed off six overs for the extra point, Sri Lanka opted for the batting Powerplay.

Thilan Samaraweera showed off some innovative footwork, but Tharanga perished attempting a big hit.

Angelo Mathews followed for a golden duck, and there was a bit of drama towards the end as Sri Lanka promoted Nuwan Kulasekara and Rangana Herath ahead of Chamara Kapugedera in an attempt to quickly score the runs needed for the bonus.

Both didn't succeed, and it was a cool Samaraweera who led them to a three-wicket victory, a final margin which hides the one-sidedness of the contest.

Sangakkara said that it might have

been a better tactic to send in the bowlers ahead of Mathews, and was disappointed to have missed the icing to the victory.

"When you get an opportunity like this to get a bonus point, in Dambulla that might be a really important factor later on, unfortunately we weren't good enough to get the bonus point." He was happy though that the team had won chasing under lights in Dambulla.

"It's tough out there but it does our confidence a world of good." For that, he'll have to thank his opener.

Tharanga spent plenty of time yo-yoing in and out of the side after his debut in 2005, but displaced Sanath Jayasuriya from the opening slot after last year's Champions Trophy and has since kept out the 41-year-old, who still harbours ambitions of playing a sixth World Cup.

More performances like this, and Jayasuriya could well be confined to the television studios when the global tournament comes around next year.

SCORES IN BRIEF

New Zealand v Sri Lanka
New Zealand 192 all out in 48.1 overs (Watling 55, McCullum 36, Styris 24; Malinga 3-35, Mathews 3-36, Herath 2-35)

Sri Lanka 195 for 7 in 40.5 overs (Tharanga 70, Sangakkara 48, Samaraweera 36 n.o.; Mills 4-41, Styris 1-22)

Result: Sri Lanka won by 3 wickets
Man-of-the-match: Upul Tharanga

City's Spurs

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Yaya Toure and David Silva, who were adjusting to the pace of the English game.

It took 38 minutes for the visitors to muster their first shot, courtesy of midfielder Toure, but it was a deflected effort that Heurelho Gomes claimed comfortably.

Kolarov, after a difficult half against Lennon and picking up a knock, was taken off at the break and just after the restart City almost made Spurs pay for failing to get past Hart in the first half.

Midfielder Toure lofted the ball through for Shaun Wright-Phillips and the winger was through on goal, only for Assou-Ekotto to dash back and steal the ball off his toes.

Wright-Phillips failed to impose himself on the game, and was replaced by Adam Johnson, while Spurs took off their two strikers and brought on Robbie Keane and Roman Pavlyuchenko.

The substitutes were involved immediately, with Johnson setting up a chance for Carlos Tevez that was deflected just over before Pavlyuchenko twice tested Hart at the other end.

Super fast Gay

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in any conditions and I think I showed that tonight."

Heavy rain came down just before the meet began, leaving the track drenched and causing problems for the early competitors.

The other highlight on the night was Priscilla Lopes-Schliep producing the fastest time in the world this year to win the 100m hurdles.

The Canadian crossed in 12.52sec to finish well clear of a strong field for a meeting record.

Australia's Sally Pearson (12.61), who had been quickest out of the blocks, was second in 12.52 and Lolo Jones of the US was third in 12.66.

Allyson Felix of the US grabbed her fifth Diamond League victory of the season with a comfortable success in the 200m, clocking 22.37sec.

It was Felix's third 200m win -- the other two have come in the 400m -- and she has only lost once this year. Debbie Ferguson-McKenzie was second in 22.88 and Sherone Simpson ran 23.04 for third.

American Bershawn Jackson made sure he cannot be beaten in the Diamond Race in the 400m hurdles by winning a tight race in 48.12sec. Puerto Rico's Javier Culson was a narrow second in 48.17.

Bernard Lagat disappointed the home crowd by finishing clear of Britain's new double European champion Mo Farah in the 3000m.

Lगत, who was born in Kenya but races for the US, timed his finish to perfection in the home straight to clock 7:40.36.

Farah, a winner of the 5,000m and 10,000m in the European Championships in Barcelona, was second in 7:40.75.

Blanka Vlasic remained on course for an unbeaten run in the Diamond Race for the women's high jump by taking her sixth successive victory.

The Croatian leapt 2.01m to win by 10cm from Spain's Ruth Beitia.

"By the end I couldn't feel my legs it was so cold," said the slender Vlasic.

Kim, Maria

FROM PAGE 17
over 114th-ranked qualifier Akgul Amanmuradova of Uzbekistan that lasted just 56 minutes at the two million-dollar hardcourt event.

The 26-year-old Uzbek had ousted Serbian top seed Jelena Jankovic on Thursday.

Russian star Maria Sharapova eliminated France's Marion Bartoli 6-1, 6-4 to reach a Saturday semifinal against Russian teen Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova, who outlasted Belgium's Yanina Wickmayer 7-5, 3-6, 6-1.

It was the ninth match triumph in a row for the Russian, who is coming off a title at Istanbul and rallied after losing five of the first six games in the match for the triumph.

"I started off really well in the first set, got really tired after that and she came back and put up a great fight," Wickmayer said.

Sharapova has lost only one set this week. She surged ahead 5-0 with the aid of eight unforced errors from Bartoli and was never threatened.

Yousuf in the runs

AFP, London

Former Pakistan captain Mohammad Yousuf boosted his chances of a Test recall with an impressive unbeaten 40 on a rain-hit opening day of the two-day tour match at Worcestershire on Friday.

Only 28.1 overs were possible at New Road, during which the tourists finished on 112 for two with 35-year-old Yousuf hitting eight fours in 54 deliveries.

The appalling weather was irritating for the veteran batsman, who is aiming to make his Test comeback at The Oval next week after arriving only a day before Pakistan slipped to defeat in the second Test at Edgbaston.

Yasir Hameed was dismissed for 27 in his attempt to secure a Test place.

Hameed and Azhar Ali opened the innings and Ali received an early let-off when he was dropped in the gully by David Wheeldon off left-armers Jack Shantry while on 10.

Ali failed to make the most of his lucky escape and soon afterwards a throw by Alexei Kervezee led to him being run out for 19 after finding himself at the same end as Hameed, who was then joined by Umar Amin.

Hameed fell when he was snapped up by Vikram Solanki at first slip off Chris Russell.

Naved wants

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tour of Australia in 2009-10. He was banned for one year and slapped with a 2-million-rupee fine. All the punished players, except for Naved, have met the PCB again and had their bans revoked, and fines lifted or reduced. Shoaib Malik and Mohammad Yousuf, both of whom were banned, have since been recalled to the Pakistan side as well.

Navedul Hasan was recently permitted by the board to play county cricket. He has played nine Tests and 74 ODIs for Pakistan.

Onus on

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"We have to have a proper team management for the A team to run the show properly. Besides, we have to prepare a schedule for the A team so that they can tour in the off-seasons and get the opportunity to play in the domestic circuit," he added.

On the other hand, Gazi Ashraf Hossain was also promised to make a similar course of action to run the Academy.

Now everybody should wait to see whether their inclusion inject new blood to the activities of the two vital components.

Haider

FROM PAGE 17
under no threat of missing out if called.

Haider gained fair points for his technical skills behind the stumps and even if he failed to latch on to a couple of chances in the second innings, overall his keeping was more reassuring.

If Haider -- who participated in light training drills on Saturday -- is declared unfit then Kamran will return. For the moment Pakistan have their fingers crossed.

Roger, Rafael in semis

Tennis

AFP, Toronto

Roger Federer orchestrated a fightback from 2-5 down in the last set to rescue a 6-3, 5-7, 7-6 victory over nemesis Tomas Berdych for a place in Saturday ATP Toronto Masters semifinals.

The third-seeded Swiss had lost twice this season to Czech seventh seed Berdych, in Miami and in a Wimbledon quarterfinal barely six weeks ago.

Revenge was sweet, though, as Federer put a polite gloss on his victory after two hours and 40 minutes.

"It was a great match, but Tomas also played his role," Federer said.

Success in the struggle keeps Federer alive as he plays his first tournament since Wimbledon. He next faces Serbian world number two Novak Djokovic, who defeated French challenger Jeremy Chardy 6-2, 6-3.

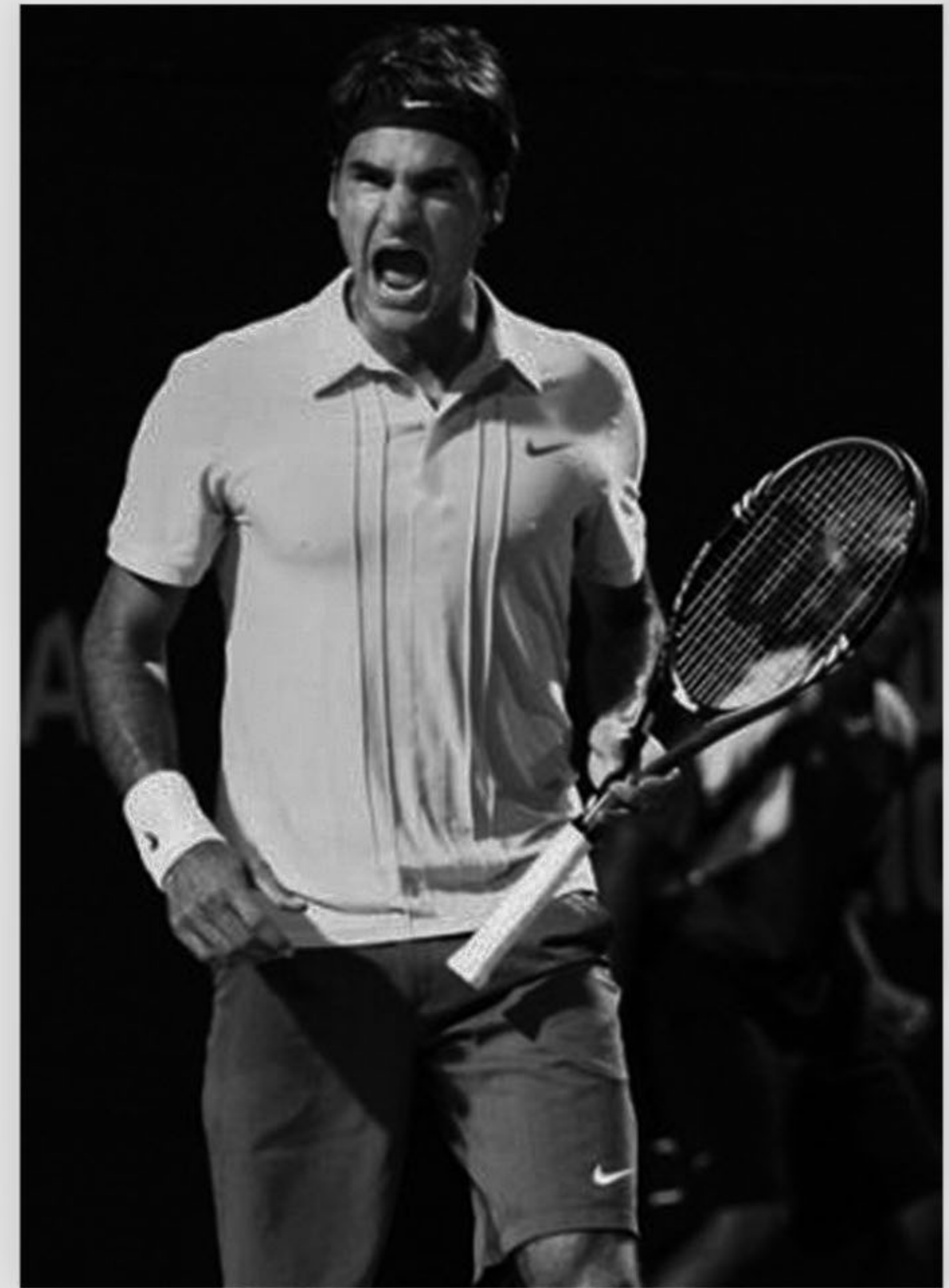
Djokovic's victory completed a matched set as the top four seeds in Canada reached the final four for the first time since 1987.

Berdych may have been feeling nerves as he failed to serve out while leading 5-3 in the final set. Instead Federer finally came good after four break points in the game, with his opponent sending a backhand into the net.

As it went to a tiebreak, Federer raced to 4-0, produced three mistakes in a row but recovered to set up a match point and advance as Berdych returned long.

"Serving it out is never easy, even for the top guys," said Federer, whose lone title this season came at the Australian Open. "He missed a couple of forehands and that made the difference."

"There was a lot of work on my side. This is the kind of close match I was losing early in the year. It was tough. I couldn't take a lot of confidence from that. You sometimes find yourself



Third seed Roger Federer of Switzerland reacts during the quarterfinal tie of the Rogers Cup against Tomas Berdych of the Czech Republic in Toronto on Friday.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS	43 Sinbad's bird	59 Neither masc. nor fem.	20 Hasten
1 Festive	45 "Nip/Tuck" actress		23 Regis and Kelly's network
5 Craze			
8 Caspian Sea feeder			
12 Pressing need?	47 No teetotalers, they	DOWN	19 Moo — gai pan
13 Screw up	51 Shaving cream additive	1 Cotton machines	24 Cattle call
14 Pleasant	52 Bribe of a sort	2 Met melody	25 Actress Mary, "America's Sweetheart"
15 Moniker	54 Singer Vikki	3 Sites	
17 Reverberate	55 Biblical verb suffix	4 Bracelet site	
18 Tar	56 Taj Mahal city	5 Scared	
19 Like 007's martinis	57 "Bye Bye Birdie" song	6 Branch	
21 Sprite		7 Frock	
22 Letter opener?		8 Dig up	
23 Pump up the volume		9 Human-drawn transport	
26 Drag behind		10 Liniment target	
28 Lucy's pal		11 Ponce de —	
31 Seethe		16 Longtime Steelers coach	
33 High-arc shot		58 Perched	
35 Aesopian also-ran			
36 Winter warmer			
38 La-la lead-in			
40 Bankroll			
41 Philo-sophy 101 subject			

Solution time: 21 mins.

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ADAR	JAB	ROLE
SOMEDAY	WIELD	
	GAG	SAC
BORON	RUT	OBI
APER	HISTORIC	
RANI	ASH	WEAK
BLOC	SKI	NOSY

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CRYPTOQUIP

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X B S F Y R W L A K W P F A B B M P U A W F .
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WHEN WEIGHTLIFTERS ARE ENGAGING IN LOTS OF RIBALD HUMOR, MIGHT YOU SAY THEY'RE BAWDY BUILDERS?
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: A equals T