



KIM CLIJSTERS

# Nothing personal



Serena Williams said revenge was with Kim Clijsters here Wednesday.

bludgeoned American 25th seed Meghann Shaughnessy 6-2, 6-2 to book her place in a keenlyanticipated last-four date with Belgian fourth seed Clijsters.

Anastasia Myskina 6-2, 6-4.

The Belgian was the last player to beat Williams in a tournament when she upset her at the seasonending WTA Tour championships in Los Angeles last November.

both sisters in 2002.

when pressed on Wednesday.

"She played really well," Williams

the past. You can feel free to look up

know, I don't know," she said.

her life, Williams too appears to be hitting her stride at the right time.

throughout the tournament," Williams said. "This day is the first day that I'm actually feeling like

games by a gear or two was a quality identified by Serena's beaten opponent Shaughnessy.

opportunity to break Williams, but did occasionally manage to sneak a point clear of her opponent on serve. On each occasion, Williams nvariably slammed the door.

Shaughnessy said. "All great players, when it's a break point or key point or important game or whatever, they always pick up the level."

edged she had been unprepared for the sheer power of Williams' game. "It was a little bit of a shock how

fast the ball was coming," she said "It was coming with a lot more power than anyone I played here so far.

# Fight fire with fire

## Australian 📝 Open

How to stop the biggest serve in women's tennis is the problem facing Justine Henin-Hardenne as she prepares to tackle Venus Williams for a place in the Australian Open final here Thursday.

Williams clocked one of the fastest serves ever recorded on Tuesday when she unleashed an extraordinary 201kp/h ace during her straight sets victory against Daniela Hantuchova.

Worryingly for fifth-seed Henin-Hardenne, Williams later said she had not been trying to hit so hard and that she now would attempt to break her world record of 205kp/h set in Zurich five years ago.

The fact that Williams seems to have rediscovered her biggest serving game just in time for the semis could spell bad news for Belgium's Henin-Hardenne, who has lost her last six meetings with

Though Henin-Hardenne has beaten her American opponent before that sole victory came in

that Williams detests.

On hard-courts or grass, Williams' powerful groundstrokes and thudding serves have been too

much for Henin-Hardenne to han-

Nevetheless, Henin-Hardenne is drawing encouragement from the fact that she has taken Williams to three sets in four of their seven

"I've always played well against Venus," said Henin-Hardenne, who has been beaten by Williams in their last two Grand Slam meetings, at Wimbledon in the 2001 final and the 2002 semi-finals.

"The last match was hard. In Wimbledon last year, it was 6-3, 6-2 because she plays unbelievably on

Williams leads 6-1

"But we've played a lot of tough matches together and I like playing her. I'm in the semis - I will have everything to win and nothing to

"She's confident. She's playing well and she's a great champion but I will go on to the court to win the

"I believe in my chances because I have been strong in this tournament," said Henin-Hardenne, who easily beat Virginia Ruano Pascual of Spain 6-2, 6-2 in the quarterfinals on Tuesday.

Though clearly still suffering from the after-effects of her marathon three-hour battle with Lindsay Davenport in the previous round, Henin-Hardenne soon found her

**HEAD-TO-HEAD** 

VENUS WILLIAMS (USA X2) VS JUSTINE HENIN-HARDENNE (BEL X5)

2002 Amelia Island (clay) Williams bt Henin-Hardenne 2-6, 7-5, 7-6 (7/5) (F)

2001 Berlin Open (clay) Henin-Hardenne bt Williams 6-1, 6-4 2001 Wimbledon (grass) Williams bt Henin-Hardenne 6-1, 3-6, 6-0 (F) 2001 New Haven (hard) Williams bt Henin-Hardenne 6-3, 5-7, 6-2 (QF)

2002 Gold Coast (hard) Williams bt Henin-Hardenne 7-5, 6-2 (F) 2002 Antwerp (carpet) Williams bt Henin-Hardenne 6-3, 5-7, 6-3 (F)

2002 Wimbledon (grass) Williams bt Henin-Hardenne 6-3, 6-2 (SF)

rhythm and outclassed the Spaniard

Whether Henin-Hardenne's rasping backhand, whiplash forehand and tireless retrieving will be enough to beat Williams - and her serve - remains to be seen.

Williams, ever the perfectionist, is still rankled by the solitary defeat she suffered to Henin-Hardenne at the German Open two years ago.

"I hated that one loss," Williams said after overwhelming Hantuchova 6-4, 6-3 in the

quarterfinals on Tuesday. "I always remember the losses more than the wins, so I guess I'll keep that in mind when I play the next one. I always remember the

scores, you know, the pain." Williams believes the secret to winning her first Grand Slam title since 2001 will be keeping her nerve at key moments.

"I think the players who are winning Grand Slams are the ones who play the points at the right time, who are the bravest, who aren't afraid to make a mistake," she said. "That's what I have to be."



not on her mind after setting up an Australian Open semifinal collision

Venus Williams in the same event. making her the only woman to beat

Williams said revenge would not be on her mind when she meets the in-form Belgian on Thursday. "Vengeance belongs to God," the 21-year-old said. "I'm just here to play

But there is little doubt defeat still bothers Williams, who refused to elaborate on reasons for the loss

"You know, I don't like to live in

While Clijsters is in the form of

"I feel much better than I have

**HEAD-TO-HEAD** 

SERENA WILLIAMS (USA X1) VS KIM CLIJSTERS (BEL X4) Williams leads 5-1 999 US Open (hard) Williams bt Clijsters 4-6, 6-2, 7-5

2000 Indian Wells (hard) Williams bt Clijsters 6-4, 6-4 2001 Indian Wells (hard) Williams bt Clijsters 4-6, 6-4, 6-2 (F) 2001 Ericsson Open (hard) Williams bt Clijsters 6-0, 6-2 2002 Princess Cup (hard) Williams bt Clijsters 2-6, 6-3, 6-3 (F) 2002 Tour Championships (carpet) Clijsters bt Williams 7-5, 6-3 (F)

the last transcripts and see why I lost that match," she told a ques-Williams then could not hide her

irritation when asked about comments by Clijsters that the gap between the Williams sisters and the rest of the field was closing.

"Sure the gap is closing, yeah. Quite frankly, I'm tired of answering these questions. Every day the same question. 'What does it take to beat the Williams sisters?'. You

But Clijsters, the girlfriend of world number one Lleyton Hewitt and hugely popular in Melbourne, was quick to distance herself from the burden of being labelled the

"I have a different feeling about that," Clijsters said. "There's a lot of tough girls out there at the moment. "I still think Serena and Venus

are the toughest girls to play. "Whenever you get into big tournaments and big matches they can play even better than what they have been in that same tournament.

"So you know I think that's what makes them really champions, because they play even better when they have to," said Clijsters, who hinted she plans to try and fight fire with fire against Serena.

"When you play Venus or Serena you'll always have to hit a bit harder and place it a little bit better," she The Williams' ability to raise their

The 23-year-old never had an

"That's why she is where she is,"

Shaughnessy also acknowl-





# Warne quits ODIs after WC

25.71. Best **Bowling:** 8-71. 2,238 runs at 16.82. Highest score: 99. One-day international debut: v

New Zealand, Wellington, 1992-93. 288 wickets (sixth on all-time list), average 25.79. Best bowling 5-33. 1,016 runs at 13.19. Born in the outer Melbourne suburb of Ferntree Gully and grew

Kilda, where he played under 19 and reserves games.

fast-tracked into Test cricket at age Test history with 491 wickets, the

second-highest in the sport's history. One of five players named as Wisden's cricketers of the century.

high score of 99 made against New Zealand in November 2001.

Married with three children and nicknamed "Hollywood" because of his dyed blond hair.

Made his Test debut v India in Sydney, January 1992, when he took 1-150 followed by 0-78 in his second Test. Was dropped from the side but reclaimed his place and has been a permanent part of the Australian Test team ever since except for one occasion when he was dropped after coming back from shoulder surgery.

Has almost single-handedly revitalised the art of leg spin, tormenting batsmen the world over with his clever variations.

Bowled Mike Gatting with his first ball in Ashes cricket in 1993 with "Ball of the Century". More than a quarter of his wickets have been Englishmen.

Had career-threatening shoulder operation in 1998. Similar surgery is often carried out on javelin throwers. Also has had finger surgery. Relaunched his career at 1999

World Cup with 20 wickets and won man-of-the-match award in both semi-final against South Africa and inal against Pakistan.

Involved in two major controversies when claimed he was offered a bribe by Salim Malik to throw a Test match in Pakistan 1994. Later admitted receiving money from a bookmaker in Sri Lanka but said it was a gift, not a bribe. Fined and reprimanded by the Australian Cricket Board over the incident.

Shed 14 kilograms in 2002 as part of a fitness regime and celebrated by taking 6-161 off 70 overs in the second innings of Australia's four-wicket win over South Africa in Cape Town in March 2002. Launched his own wine collec-

tion in October 2002.

Injured his shoulder playing in a one-day match against England in Melbourne on December 15 and was out of the Australia side for a month, missing the last two Tests of the Ashes series which Australia

AFP. New Delhi

Wednesday ordered the government not to release foreign exchange to sponsors if India is banned from taking part in next month's cricket World Cup, reports

cricket great Kapil Dev and five

will allow India's leading players to take part in the World Cup despite changing the terms of their con-The Board of Control for Cricket

in India (BCCI) is expected to announce later on Wednesday whether it will agree to the compromise proposed by the ICC.

### Aus win

FROM PAGE 13

around in that competition and it's really going to be similar to the last World Cup -- who peaks at the right times and who wins the important games.

"There will be crunch games. The Australia-South Africa game in 1999 was one ... and there will be some more in this tournament.

and I think that's the most important thing in one-day cricket."

Australia's walking wounded of the past month -- Shane Warne (dislocated shoulder), Glenn McGrath (back and side strains) and Jason Gillespie (elbow ligament problems) -- are expected to be fully fit for the World Cup.

## **TEAMS**

AUSTRALIA (from): Ricky Ponting, Adam Gilchrist, Michael Bevan, Andrew Bichel, Matthew Hayden, Brad Hogg, Brett Lee, Darren Lehmann, Jimmy Maher, Damien Martyn, Andrew Symonds, Shane

ENGLAND (from): Nasser Hussain (captain), Nick Knight, Marcus Trescothick, Ronnie Irani, Owais Shah, Ian Blackwell, Alec Stewart Andy Caddick, Jimmy Anderson Steve Harmison, Paul Collingwood, Matthew Hoggard, Michael

The Delhi High Court on Wednesday address the court of Malbandian looked a time.

AFP, Melbourne

Rainer Schuettler's routine five week off-season preparation paid big dividends on Wednesday when he overpowered Argentine 10th seed David Nalbandian to reach his first Grand Slam tennis semi-final at the Australian Open.

The German 31st seed swarmed

over last year's Wimbledon finalist

fitness and groundstrokes to pull off a merited 6-3, 5-7, 6-1, 6-0 win in 2hr Schuettler's reward was his first Grand Slam semifinal on Friday against either Moroccan 18th seed

Wednesday. "Of course. I'm surprised, but I have so far played a pretty good tournament and I deserve to be in

ninth seed Andy Roddick. El

Avnaoui and Roddick play later

Schuettler's five weeks slaving away under a Taekwondo fitness coach had him in superb physical condition when he arrived in

Madras and semi-finals in Sydney

Nalbandian looked a tired and and lost his last five service games beaten man as 26-vear-old Schuettler roared through the final set without losing a game in 32 minutes.

"I played pretty good in the third set and in the fourth it was mentally tough for him because I got the early break," said Schuettler.

Schuettler, inspired as a nineyear-old by the Wimbledon exploits of German tennis great Boris Becker, has steadily worked his way through the rankings from 111 at the end of 1998 to 33 last year and is rated second in Germany behind

"I start preparing for the new season at the end of November, so I like to have five weeks every year to work really hard with a fitness coach," he said.

"Over the last two years I've been doing something a little different with a Taekwondo teacher, so I practice a lot and that's why I'm always fit at the beginning of the

tent on the bigger points than lethargic Nalbandian, who was suffering the lingering effects of his five-set fight with Roger Federer in the previous round.

Schuettler was far more consis-

Nalbandian levelled at a set-all,

before embarking on his unbeaten but he was swamped by the eager German in the third and fourth sets

> Schuettler is the fifth German man to reach the semi-finals at the Australian Open in the post-1969 Open era.

The others were Karl Meiler (1973), Boris Becker (1991 and 1996), Michael Stich (1993) and Haas (1999 and 2002).

Schuettler will be aided in his coming semi-final by the comparative short time he has been on court.

He has reserves of unspent energy having been on court for just seven hours 53 minutes to reach the last four, but he received a third round walkover when Marat Safin

withdrew with a wrist injury. It was dismal ending for what had been a promising 10 days for

Nalbandian, who made the tennis world sit up when he made last year's Wimbledon final against Australian world number one Lleyton Hewitt, said the Federer win had taken its toll.

"I was a little tired from the match

didn't really play well there."

the other day," he said. "I was trying to take my chances at the beginning of the third set, but I



### Rainer Schuettler of Germany celebrates his victory over Argentine David Nalbandian.

World number one Williams

Clijsters, who has been in scintillating form this year and is unbeaten in tournament play since last October, advanced to the semis after swatting aside Russia's

Cliisters also claimed the scalp of

India players'

ing the dispute, could be used. Meanwhile Sri Lanka's players have yet to sign their World Cup ving a row with thei board about how big a share of the country's tournament proceeds they should receive.

The source said this issue would also be discussed during Friday's conference call meeting. Also on the agenda are

Zimbabwe and Kenya's safety and

security as World Cup sub-host venues Speed was due to arrive in Harare on Wednesday to examine conditions in famine ravaged Zimbabwe and he will report back to

the board. However, it may decide to defer a decision on the host status of Zimbabwe and Kenya, inspected last week by an ICC team, until after

## That 30's show

FROM PAGE 13

lenge to become only the fourth man to win four Australian titles by making a bet with his wife and 22 singles Grand Slam champion Steffi Graf to partner her in the mixed doubles at the French Open in June, if he wins the final here.

Agassi is looking at his eighth

Grand Slam title and extended his

unconquered run at the Australian

Open to 19 matches after withdrawing on the opening morning of last year's tournament with a wrist injury. His last defeat in Melbourne came in the fourth round of the 1999 Open to fellow American Vince

Spadea in four sets.

fitness coming into the new season and takes great satisfaction in winning the physical and mental battles against his years younger "I want to make someone work

Agassi prides himself on his

my opponent play something special to beat me," Agassi said. "Tennis is a very physical sport. This one particular tournament is more difficult physically to play because of the conditions and also the court

hard for every point. I want to make

"You dig into the court. It's not easy to move, you stick, it's more sort of trauma on your muscles when you change directions.

"So there is an opportunity for one to get tired out there, but somebody getting tired against me is really only a function of me working hard myself.

"And you hope that they're working harder than you.

up dreaming of a career as an Australian Rules footballer for St

As a schoolboy cricketer. Warne had concentrated on his batting but his big, strong hands and ability to impart enormous spin on leg-break deliveries with tremendous accuracy led to him being

The most successful spinner in

Final check on

**Zimbabwe** ICC Cricket World Cup
SOUTH AFRICA 2003

AFP, London Security details in Zimbabwe for next month's cricket World Cup will be examined by ICC officials who are travelling to the southern African country on Wednesday, the sport's

world governing body announced.

Zimbabwe is due to host six out

of the 54 World Cup matches for the February 9 to March 23 tournament, mainly hosted by South Africa but with two games in Kenya, but food riots in capital Harare and Bulawayo have raised safety concerns. ICC chief executive Malcolm Speed and the chief executive of the

ICC World Cup organizing commit-

tee Ali Bacher travel to Zimbabwe

on Wednesday to have a look at the

final security arrangements.

The Zimbabwe Cricket Union has drawn up a report on security, having earlier been given a blueprint for what was needed by security specialists at the ICC, the South African police, and other specialists

contracted for the event.

Speed said in an ICC statement issued on Tuesday: "The safety and security of the players and officials in Zimbabwe is clearly an issue for some countries and this meeting is an important opportunity for the ICC to see first hand how the security arrangements for this event are

"The visit of the Security Delegation in November 2002 highlighted the importance of this plan being fully implemented and I want to ensure that the ICC is fully aware of and briefed on the steps that are being taken to protect players and officials ' The England and Wales Cricket

Board (ECB) have come under strong pressure from the British Government to pull out of their match against Zimbabwe in Harare on February 13 although ministers have stressed that the final decision is one for the cricket authorities Elsewhere, the Australian and New Zealand governments have

also expressed their concerns

although both now appear resigned

to their teams playing in Zimbabwe.

### RU cricket

**OUR CORRESPONDENT** 

Management moved into the final with a six-run victory over Finance and Banking in the inter-department cricket tournament of the Rajshahi University stadium yesterday. Wining the toss, Management

batted first and collected 155 for five Rajib scored highest 53 runs and Ranto 25. Masud Rana and Alam claimed two wickets each for 28 and

32 runs respectively.

managed 149 runs for seven wick-Raju scored 51. Babu, Raju, and Joney claimed 2 wickets each

Ali nat'l junior

In reply. Finance and Banking

The second semifinal will be held

IM Reefat Bin Sattar IM Reefat Bin Sattar 1993 GM Ziaur Rahman 1994 Adnan Faisal 1996 IM Abdullah Al Rakib Dewan Shahidul Amin, 1997 IM Abdullah Al Rakib 1998 1999 IM Enamul Hossain 2000 IM Enamul Hossain 2001 Mehdi Hasan Parag

Mehdi Hasan Parag

Mohammad Ali

## Delhi HC gets into action

The court, ruling on a public

interest litigation filed by former

others, said the tournament sponsors should also be restrained from telecasting advertisements on Indian channels The order is, however, unlikely to be enforced amid reports that the International Cricket Council (ICC)

### and Pakistan definitely "There's a lot of talent flying

"At the last World Cup, the Aussies were playing poorly to start with, but they got a bit of a roll going,

# Rainer the richer

with his superior court coverage, 18min on Rod Laver Arena. Younes El Aynaoui or American

the semi-final." Schuettler said.

Australia early in the new year. He reached the quarterfinals in