

Hewitt pulls through

Tennis

AFP, London

World number one Lleyton Hewitt had to dig deep to keep alive his dream of winning a record fourth consecutive title here at Queen's Club Wednesday...

Hewitt looked out of sorts throughout long periods of the match and he mightily relieved to take his place in the third round after his 7-6, 3-6, 7-6 win.

"I knew it was going to be a tough match when I first heard the draw, and I am happy not to have lost," said Wimbledon champion Hewitt.

"He gave me a real run for my money and he looked like he already played a game on grass the way he was moving around the court.

"I thought he played really well and would have chewed up a hell of a lot of good players."

The first set was a real struggle and although the Australian survived to win the tie-break, it was no surprise to see the Sluiter take the second 6-3 in just 31 minutes.

Sluiter beat Hewitt in Stockholm last year, and after reaching the semi-final here in 2002, where he lost to Tim Henman, the Dutchman was clearly confident of causing a major upset.

The third set proved equally nervy, with both men feeling the pressure. Hewitt was first to find the breakthrough but serving for the match, he made a rash of unforced errors as Sluiter broke back for 5-5.

Both players had chances to win the set outright, but neither had the courage to make the most of their opportunities and a tie-break was needed to settle the match.

An unforced error from Sluiter on the first point gave Hewitt the break and he quickly established a 6-0 lead. Sluiter did fight back but he was unable to recover sufficiently and lost 7-3.

Briton Greg Rusedski made short work of Moroccan Hicham Arazi, coasting to a 6-4, 6-4 win in little over an hour to set up a mouthwatering third-round tie with American Andy Roddick.

Rusedski broke in the opening game and looked assured as he closed out the set, although he afterwards insisted he had not been

at his best.

The second set continued much in the same vein and after making the decisive break at 2-2, Rusedski went on to win comfortably, firing down 15 aces.

After a first-ever win on the ATP on Tuesday, 19-year-old Briton Alex Bogdanovic blew a golden opportunity to progress to the third round, wasting six match-points against Frenchman Anthony Dupuis.

Bogdanovic won the first set 6-3 but struggled in the second and

ironically, it was a missed smash by Bogdanovic which eventually handed his opponent the win after more than two and a half hours.

Frenchman Cyril Saulnier saw off big Max Mirnyi of Belarus 7-6 (7/2), 6-4 to set up a match with home favourite Tim Henman in the next round.

Eleventh seed Taylor Dent won an all-American affair beating compatriot Cecil Mamiit 6-4, 6-4 to set up a third-round tie with Dutchman Sjeng Schalken who



PHOTO: AFP

Lleyton Hewitt in action against Belgian Dick Norman at the Stella Artois Championship in London yesterday.

eventually lost out on a tie-breaker. The match swung both ways in the deciding set but it looked to be all over for Dupuis at 5-6, 0-40.

However, the young Briton's nerve failed him and three match-points were saved, forcing yet another tie-break.

Both men had chances to win it, Dupuis missing a routine overhead which would have sealed it, but,

received a bye after the withdrawal through injury of Todd Martin.

Number ten seed Jan-Michael Gambill also exited the tournament, losing in straight sets to Australian Todd Reid while former Wimbledon champion Richard Krajicek, of the Netherlands, booked his place in the third round with a three-set win over Czech player Jan Vacek, winning 7-5, 2-6, 6-3.

Behave yourself

Tennis

AFP, Birmingham

Russian teenager Maria Sharapova, who is already being hailed as the new Anna Kournikova, found herself at the centre of controversy here on Wednesday when she was warned to silence her on-court screams.

The 16-year-old defeated fifth seed Nathalie Dechy 6-3, 6-2 in the second round of the 170,000-dollar WTA event but her French opponent complained to the umpire over the Russian's habit of screaming every time she hit a shot.

"There is a rule. You are not supposed to scream like that," Dechy said.

Tour supervisor Donna Kelso told the BBC: "I asked Miss Sharapova if she could be a little bit quieter, without wanting to disrupt her game.

"There was no difference to the level of her play but there was a little less noise."

However Sharapova said the grunting and groaning were part of her natural game.

"Dechy told the umpire I was grunting and she didn't like it. It's a natural instinct - I've been doing it all my life."



MARIA SHARAPOVA

Wenger, Houllier OBE recipients

Football

BBC ONLINE, London

Liverpool manager Gerard Houllier and Arsenal boss Arsene Wenger have been awarded honorary OBEs.

The two Frenchmen were honoured in recognition of their outstanding contribution to British football.

Wenger has won two 'Doubles' - in 1998 and 2002 - in his time at Highbury, as well as a third FA Cup victory last season.

Houllier, meanwhile, led

became manager of Arsenal in 1996.

Wenger added: "The working environment at Arsenal is fantastic and from the first day I came to the club, everyone has been fully supportive and given me a huge amount of encouragement.

"I'm looking forward to receiving the award in July and also to achieving more great things with Arsenal Football Club."

Houllier said: "To be given such an award is a great, great honour and to be recognised in this way at the same time as my good friend Arsene Wenger makes it even more special.

"I am very proud to be consid-

School chess

SPORTS REPORTER

The Standard Chartered Bank School Chess Tournament will start at the NSC chess room on July 2.

It will be open to all school students and no entry fee is required.

Interested students have been asked to enroll before June 26 at the Bangladesh Chess Federation office.

Shaun

FROM PAGE 13

again. He is a match-winner, and I believe he has a lot left in his armoury."

Despite the difference of opinion between Pollock and Graeme Smith, the new captain who reportedly criticised Klusener's attitude in a breakfast interview, Pollock was keen to offer his support to Smith as well.

"Graeme's got to try and do things his own way," said Pollock adding, "particularly at the start of his captaincy, so he needs plenty of room. But I will offer help where it's needed."

Meanwhile, Boeta Dippenaar has been drafted into South Africa's one-day squad as a replacement for the injured batsman Neil McKenzie.

McKenzie, who damaged a disc in his lower back during South Africa's victory over Bangladesh last month, has been ruled out of the NatWest Series, but still hopes to recover in time for the first Test at Edgbaston on July 24.

"Boeta was the logical choice, he has been in the mix for a number of years and has performed well," said Omar Henry, South Africa's chairman of selectors. "This is another opportunity for him to nail down a place in the one-day team."

History

FROM PAGE 13

playing hours.

The three group winners and the best runners-up from England's 18 first-class counties will go forward to a finals day at Trent Bridge, Nottingham on July 19.

Twenty20 is due to run, initially, for at least three years and replaces the Benson and Hedges Cup which ended last season ahead of a British Government ban on tobacco companies sponsoring sporting events.

Some solace

FROM PAGE 13

trying to repeat the shot to leave his team struggling at 54-2.

Samuels and Ramnaresh Sarwan steadied the innings with a 45-run stand for the fourth wicket before off-spinner Muttiah Muralitharan struck to give a scare to the West Indies.

Muralitharan had Sarwan (25) caught by Sanath Jayasuriya to reduce the hosts to 126-4.

Samuels then made sure of his team's victory with a couple of big shots at the right time, punishing leg-spinner Chandana for two sixes in an over.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of the third and final one-day international between the West Indies and Sri Lanka on Wednesday:

SRI LANKA

Table with 2 columns: Player, Runs. Includes Jayasuriya run out 8, Kaluwitharana c Lara b Collymore 14, Atapattu c Hurley b Taylor 25, Sangakkara c Lara b Hurley 11, Chandana lbw b Taylor 33, Jayawardene b Collymore 51, Dilshan c and b Samuels 0, D'sena c Samuels b Collymore 21, Vaas run out 6, Muralitharan b Gayle 4, Gamage not out 2, Extras: (lb-4, nb-1, w-11) 16, Total: (All out in 50 overs) 191, Fall of wickets: 1-10, 2-28, 3-55,

4-63, 5-130, 6-134, 7-176, 8-184, 9-185

Table with 5 columns: Bowler, O, M, R, W. Includes Powell 9 0 37 0, Collymore 10 0 28 3, Hurley 10 1 25 1, Taylor 10 0 39 2, Gayle 6 0 29 1, Samuels 5 0 29 1

WEST INDIES

Table with 5 columns: Bowler, O, M, R, W. Includes Gayle b Chandana 21, Hinds c Dilshan b Vaas 19, Lara c Gamage b Dharmasena 14, Sarwan c Jayasuriya b M'tharan 25, Samuels not out 45, Powell not out 16, Extras: (lb-4, nb-6, w-10) 20, Total: (For 4 wks in 36.5 overs) 160, Fall of wickets: 1-36, 2-54, 3-81, 4-126

Result: West Indies win by six wickets (D/L method) and Sri Lanka win series 2-1.

Man-of-the-match: Marlon Samuels.

Man-of-the-series: Marlon Samuels.

Navratilova to play singles

BBC ONLINE, London

Nine-time Wimbledon champion Martina Navratilova will play singles at the Hastings Direct International in Eastbourne next week.

The 46-year-old has requested a singles wild card in order to gain extra practice on grass ahead of playing doubles at Wimbledon.

Navratilova made a singles comeback at the same event last year, eight years after retiring following defeat to Conchita Martinez in the Wimbledon final.

Schuetzler sinks

REUTERS, Halle

Rainer Schuetzler's hopes of a first title on home soil ended on Wednesday when he lost to Czech Radek Stepanek in the Halle Open second round.

The second-seeded German saved two match points to force the match into a deciding set, but Stepanek recovered to clinch a 6-4, 6-7, 6-3 victory.

"My best shot is my return and I didn't return well enough today," Schuetzler said. "He (Stepanek) has a good serve and it's tough to win on grass if you're not returning well."

Stepanek, who came into the event with a career-high ranking of 40, plays another home favourite, Nicolas Pietrangeli, in the quarterfinals.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down. Includes clues like '1 Height of fashion', '4 Centers up the check', '11 Mayberry fellow', etc.

Cryptoquip puzzle grid with letters and numbers. Includes clues like '1 "It went down the wrong way"', '2 Old French coin', etc.

CRYPTOQUIP GXYR P QNUR UT QYULPTC PEEPBZH N HWLLUHY URY BUWQC BPQQ EXPE P GNQCBPE HETNZY. Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WHEN SIGN MAKERS CALL A STRIKE, DO THEY WALK AROUND CARRYING EMPTY PICKET SIGNS? Today's Cryptoquip Clue: E equals T

A roof over Wimbledon?

Tennis

REUTERS, Halle

Day one at Wimbledon and a huge crowd gathers at the world's most famous tennis tournament. It rains. All day. Everyone goes home.

The unpredictable British weather is the bane of players and spectators alike during Wimbledon fortnight but if the organisers were to follow the example of a small grasscourt tournament in Germany, their problems could be solved.

The Halle Open, which began in 1993, is held in the same week as the Stella Artois Championships at London's Queen's Club. It attracted Pete Sampras in 2002 while Andre Agassi, Roger Federer and Yevgeny Kafelnikov have also played there.

Why? Because of its retractable roof.

The roof at Halle was built in 1994 and it allows play to continue almost immediately when the rain comes down.

Frank Hofen, the Halle Open media director, said the tournament's reputation is largely based on its roof.

"It was necessary for the success because you can guarantee matches for the television scheduler."

"Players know there will be matches played, despite the weather. You can't guarantee good weather in this region."

The show court at the Australian Open in Melbourne has a roof and Cardiff's Millennium Stadium, venue for soccer and rugby matches, has one too. The FA Cup final, the peak of the English soccer season, was played under it in May.

Agassi's ambition

Tennis

AFP, London

Andre Agassi has vowed to go all out to win a second Wimbledon crown 11 years after he claimed the first of the eight Grand Slam titles he has clocked up during a 17-year career.

"I am really looking forward to it. That's why I am here, and I am hoping to get better every day," said the American at the 860,000-dollar Queen's Club ATP event in West London.

"When you play on grass it does take some time to feel comfortable and I am not quite there yet," Agassi added, with a trip to Wimbledon less than two weeks away.

"But to be back out there on the Sunday and to win would be the best one for me ever."

After initial reluctance to even enter the tournament, Agassi admits he soon realised the significance of playing at the All England club.

"After my first time here I swore I'd never be back, but growing up gave me more awareness of the place Wimbledon has in the great sport of tennis and to miss out on it was my loss," he said, reflecting on a decision to miss four out of six Wimbledon before his 1992 win.

"To start with I didn't have any desire to be on grass. I didn't think it was real tennis and I was convinced it was a surface I couldn't do well on," he added.

"But as you get older you begin to realise what it means to the sport and from the first day I came to the club, everyone has been fully supportive and given me a huge amount of encouragement."

"I'm looking forward to receiving the award in July and also to achieving more great things with Arsenal Football Club."

Houllier said: "To be given such an award is a great, great honour and to be recognised in this way at the same time as my good friend Arsene Wenger makes it even more special."

"I am very proud to be consid-

the fact that it is possible to win from the baseline," he said of the Swede who won five Wimbledon titles.

Having beaten Goran Ivanisevic in a gripping final, Agassi fell in love with the place, grass and all.

"Wimbledon has its own magic, its own place in tennis. Wimbledon makes the grass more than the grass makes Wimbledon," Agassi said, insisting the slower surface now favours the baseliners.

"Grass highlights the shot-making side of the game. I have always believed you can win on grass from the back of the court."

But even with the twilight of a stunning career drawing in, Agassi still believes he has the game to add more titles to his already-bulging trophy cabinet.

"I take a lot of pride from the fact that if I play my tennis on the day I can still win. As long as I can still do it, I have a responsibility to the game and to myself," he said.

"The desire is still there and although it is difficult sometimes, those are my challenges," he added.

As for retirement, Agassi insists he is concentrating only on the present.

"I would like it to unfold on its own, but taking a guess, I would say that one day I will just wake up and says 'that's it, I either can't or choose not to do this any more'. How it ends it less important than how it goes when I am doing it."

BKSP Green

FROM PAGE 13

In the day's other match, Barisal Division assured their place in the last four from Group A beating Sylhet Division by a solitary goal scored by Jewel.

Dhaka Division played out a one-all draw with BKSP Red team to stay in contention for a semifinal spot. Sentu put BKSP red side ahead while Zahid restored parity for Dhaka Division.