

Now comes Serena's 'lover'

AFP, London

An obsessed German fan who stalked US tennis star Serena Williams was fined by a British court Thursday after declaring his love for her and failing to stay away from the Wimbledon Championships.

Albrecht Stromeyer, 34, was arrested Wednesday as he rode his bicycle down the approach to Wimbledon's All England Club in southwest London.

The bearded student, who lives with his parents in Frankfurt, admitted breaching the peace when he appeared in court.

He first appeared at the German Open in Berlin, followed by the Italian Open in Rome last month where he was arrested.

He was again spotted at the French Open in Paris where Serena went on to win the title.

Lawyers for Stromeyer, who was fined 300 pounds (458 dollars, 468 euros), said he accepted his behavior had caused alarm and apprehension.

Magistrates also imposed a 13-month good behaviour order on him.

Outside the court, Wimbledon police chief Des Stout said they had warned Stromeyer before the incident to stay away from Williams.

Wimbledon champion Venus Williams, Serena's older sister, has already said that just before the tournament began a bogus drug tester, claiming to be from the United States Anti-Doping Agency (USADA), turned up on her doorstep trying to get in.

Serena, 20, the world number two behind Venus, 22, is accompanied everywhere by her mother Oracene and a security guard.

The sisters, who are seeded to meet in the final here, have been staying in their four-bedroom house which they are renting close to the grounds, and have hired a security specialist to stay with them.

Philippoussis pledges to return

AFP, London

Mark Philippoussis shrugged off his Wimbledon disappointment on Thursday and vowed to return to the All England Club to clinch the biggest prize in tennis.

After losing his marathon fourth round match against Dutchman Richard Krajicek on Wednesday, the 25-year-old Australian insisted that he still had the game and the time to eventually carve his name on the Wimbledon trophy.

"I am only 25. I want to come back stronger and I am going to become a better tennis player," said Philippoussis after going down 6-7, 7-6, 6-7, 7-6, 6-4 to the 1996 champion in an epic four hour six minute battle spread over two days.

"When I go home I will train hard and get ready for the rest of the summer. I have plenty of years ahead of me."

Saqain, Razzaq

FROM PAGE 13 Council (ICC) last month approved Tangiers for limited-overs cricket, making it the first cricket venue in North Africa.

"Pakistani hopefuls will assemble in Lahore for a training camp from July 12.

PROBABLES

Saeed Anwar, Imran Nazir, Younis Khan, Inzamamul Haq, Yousuf Youhana, Rashid Latif, Wasim Akram, Waqar Younis, Azhar Mahmood, Saqain Mushtaq, Shoaib Akhtar, Shoaib Malik, Mohammad Sami, Misbahul Haq, Danish Kaneria, Shahid Afridi, Faisal Iqbal, Abdul Razzaq and Taufiq Umar.



New Zealand cricketer Chris Harris holds his daughter Sophie during the presentation ceremony of the second Test against West Indies at Grenada on July 2. Sophie is playing with Craig McMillan.

Eng leave out Hoggard



INTERNET, London

England have dropped under-performing seam bowler Matthew Hoggard as Ashley Giles returns for the NatWest series match against India on Thursday.

Wicketkeeper Alec Stewart won his 150th one-day cap, while Michael Vaughan comes in as Graham Thorpe is rested.

Hoggard was hoping that captain Nasser Hussain's vote of confidence would be enough to see him retain his place.

Hussain sprang to Hoggard's defence after a poor display in Tuesday's match against Sri Lanka.

But Hoggard only made the side at Headingley because the England team decided conditions mitigated against the spin of Ashley Giles.

And his four overs cost a staggering 53 runs.

It will be a big occasion for all-rounder Paul Collingwood, the only

Durham player in the team.

"It is a massive day, and I will have plenty of family and friends here," he said.

India's captain Sourav Ganguly has picked out Marcus Trescothick and Andrew Flintoff as the two biggest threats to his side's hopes of a third successive win in the competition.

"Andrew Flintoff, is turning out to be a good cricketer - something I am happy to see, having played for the same county (Lancashire) as him," Ganguly commented on Wednesday.

"Marcus Trescothick is also a great find for England," he added.

However, Ganguly is also aware of the current excellent form of his own charges.

The batting has proved immense so far in the two matches played, with India chasing successfully twice, something they have struggled with in recent times.

The trio of young bowlers, Ajit Agarkar, Zaheer Khan and Ashish Nehra have also held together the Indian attack, all of which has been

very pleasing for Ganguly.

"I was not surprised to see the way we played," Ganguly said.

"But this is an early part of the tour; it is just the beginning, and there is a lot of cricket to be played," he cautioned.

Either side can take a big step towards the final at Lord's with victory on Thursday putting a twelve point gap between themselves and Sri Lanka.

The weather forecast is indifferent and there could once again be a big advantage for which ever team wins the toss.

India are likely to be unchanged from their side at the Oval with a full bill health reported for their squad but Ganguly knows that his occasionally brittle side must keep up the pressure.

"It is most important we keep up our standards. The way the tournament is going we have a good chance of reaching (the final at) Lord's, and if we do I hope we are in the right shape to do well."

WIMBLEDON GOSSIPS

AFP, London

Richard Krajicek insists there is more to his game than just a big serve. He lost the battle of aces (24-27) with Mark Philippoussis in his marathon fourth round encounter but won the war when he beat his Aussie opponent to reach the quarterfinals at Wimbledon.

"I beat Yevgeny Kafelnikov 49 aces to 10 once and lost the match. Aces don't mean a thing, it depends when you hit them," said the Dutchman.

"Against Mark, I hit them at the big moments."

NOT HIM, HIS DAD

Ecuador's Nicolas Lapentti is used to seeing his name in the newspapers at home although the subject is usually his father, who shares the same name as his tennis playing son. That's because Lapentti senior is running to be prime minister in the South American country. But his son will be hoping to force his way into the nation's consciousness by reaching the semifinals of Wimbledon by beating Argentina's David Nalbandian in his quarterfinal on Thursday.

NAVRATILOVA, NOT NOW

Martina Navratilova, whose latest attempt to win a Wimbledon title came to an end when she and Todd Woodbridge were knocked out of the mixed doubles, says she will be back again at the All England Club in 2003 in one capacity or another.

"I know I'll be back. Hopefully I'll be back to do TV. As far as playing is concerned, physically I feel better than I did two years ago, even better than I did about 12 years ago. I feel like I could keep going like this for a long while but I need to see some results pretty soon."

Extra alert for July the 4th

REUTERS, London

Wimbledon officials have ordered extra security measures ahead of the United States' Independence Day, the All England Club said on Wednesday.

State and law enforcement agencies in the US have been put on increased alert by the FBI amid public anxieties over terror attacks on July 4.

Staff at the championships in southwest London have been given extra guidance on security measures to be implemented on Thursday.

"There is heightened awareness of security surrounding July 4," a spokesman for the Club said. "Stewards have taken an extra course today (Wednesday) to help them keep on top of every issue ahead of Thursday."

"Scotland Yard are in constant touch with the Metropolitan police and they pass any necessary information on to us."

"The main message is one of increased vigilance."

Approximately 30,000 spectators are expected to attend day 10 of the championships on Thursday.

Although no American players are left in the men's singles, two of the four semi-finalists in the women's singles, traditionally scheduled for Thursday, are American.

World number one Venus Williams will meet Belgian Justine Henin, with Serena Williams facing Frenchwoman Amelie Mauresmo in the other.

"We cannot give details of the security arrangements for players," the spokesman added.

On Tuesday, top seed Venus Williams revealed someone had tried to gain access to her house before Wimbledon began claiming to be a drug-testing official.

Felix decides to retire

AFP, Los Angeles

Less than a year ago, Felix Trinidad was one of the best pound-for-pound fighters in the world, now, apparently, he is leaving the ring.

Trinidad's lawyer, Nicolas Medina, said in a statement on Tuesday that the former welterweight and middleweight champion was retiring, frustrated by his inability to a rematch with either Bernard Hopkins - who beat him - or Oscar de la Hoya - a potential big payday bout over an already vanquished opponent.

"After carefully evaluating all present factors and listening to the recommendation of his father, manager and trainer, he has decided to retire definitively as a professional boxer," Medina said in a statement issued in San Juan on Tuesday. "The only fights remaining would not add anything to his career, but would cause great risk to his health."

The web site secondsout.com said Trinidad's promoter, Don King, had scheduled a teleconference on Wednesday to confirm the announcement.

Trinidad captured his first title in June 1993, when he knocked out Maurice Blocker for the International Boxing Federation welterweight crown.

Krajicek grounds Scud



AFP, London

Dutchman Richard Krajicek continued his magical run at Wimbledon on Wednesday when he beat Australia's Mark Philippoussis 7-6, 6-7, 7-6, 6-7, 6-4 to reach his third career quarterfinal here.

When play had been suspended

March 2001 to repair the damaged tendons and needed the luxury of having a protected ranking to get into the main draw here as his world ranking had slumped to 1093.

But he defied the odds against Philippoussis, who has undergone three knee operations, to move into the last eight where he will now face Belgium's Xavier Malisse.

There had only been two breaks of serve in the match on Tuesday, both coming in the second set so it was a surprise when the 30-year-old Krajicek immediately broke Philippoussis in the opening game of the fifth set and then held to lead 2-0.

The 25-year-old Australian was 40-30 ahead when the rain returned and, after just nine minutes, they were back in the locker room.

Incredibly, and despite play being suspended on all other courts, the two men were ordered back out at 2045 local time in an effort to get their match completed.

The rest of the 34-minute set went with serve with Philippoussis desperately trying to claw back the break.

But Krajicek held firm to extend his lead to 5-3 before the Australian served a love-game to go 4-5 down. The Dutch giant went to 40-0 as he served for the match, hit a double fault but wrapped up the match when Philippoussis hit a return long.

"It was really tough especially in the last rain break because I had a break and I knew that if I served well I could win."

"The first game was always going to be key," added the Dutchman who admitted that he had surprised even himself to get so far in the tournament.

"I thought that I would have done well to have reached the third round. I knew I could beat Franco Squillari in the first round and that if I played really well I could get past James Blake."

"But then I thought I would play Andre Agassi, but he lost and that was good for me."

"However, I have been pretty lucky. I was two sets to one down and 5-5 in the fourth set, 15-40 against Mark on Tuesday."

"It's all unbelievable. I even booked my holiday from today because I didn't expect to get so far."

The statistics show that there was nothing to choose between the two - Krajicek hit 24 aces to the Australian's 27, 10 double faults to 12, 17 unforced errors to 20 and 57 winners to 55.

But he converted two of his nine break points while Philippoussis took advantage of just one from a possible eight - it was that close.

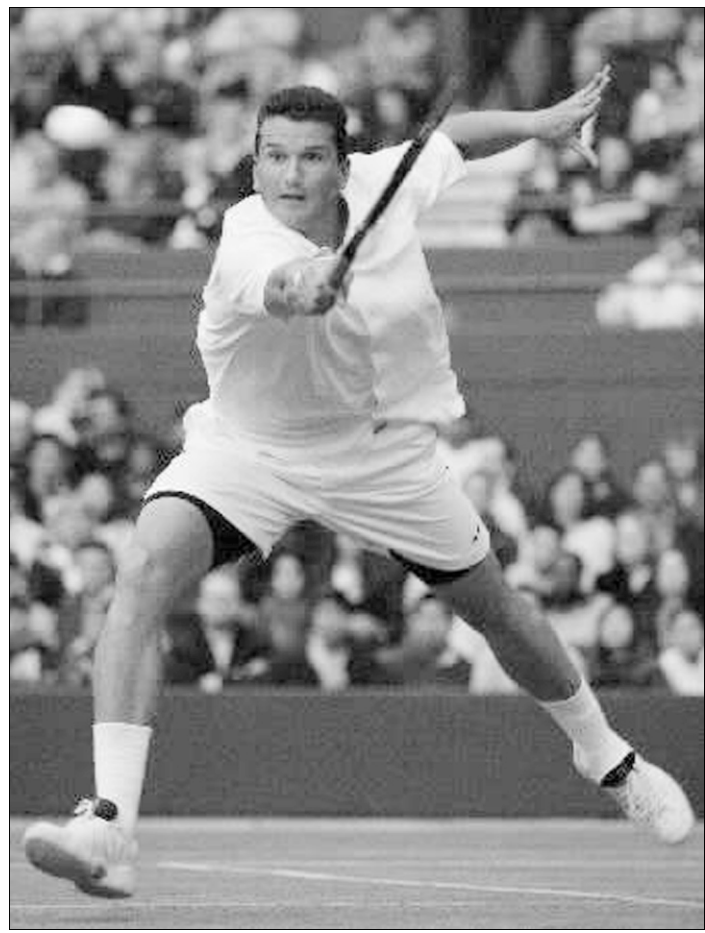


PHOTO: INTERNET

Dutch star Richard Krajicek in action against Mark Philippoussis of Australia at the Wimbledon on July 3.

In a match held over from Tuesday, the 1996 champion wrapped up victory after a four-hour and six-minute fourth round encounter of brutal tennis.

It is an astonishing achievement. A career-threatening right elbow injury meant that he didn't play on the tour from November 2000 until last month when he returned to action in Hertogenbosch where he lost in the first round.

He also underwent surgery in

on Tuesday night, the two men had spent three hours and 33 minutes on court trying to finish a match that had originally been scheduled to begin on Monday.

On Wednesday, when the start of play had been delayed by four hours, the two then had to wait until Serena Williams had disposed of Daniela Hantuchova in her women's quarterfinal before they could return to a gloomy Court One at 1930 local time.



PHOTO: AFP

Fans of British hope Tim Henman react after he spilled a chance against Brazilian Andre Sa during their Wimbledon quarterfinal on July 4.

On collision course



REUTERS, London

Second seed Serena Williams maintained her side of the sisters pact by joining Venus in the Wimbledon semifinals on Wednesday as the women's draw anticipated its first all-siblings final for 118 years.

Serena was supreme in disarming the potent threat of crowd favourite and 11th seeded Slovakian Daniela Hantuchova 6-3, 6-2 in their rain-affected quarterfinal.

While top seed Venus is aiming to overcome Belgian Justine Henin in the last four, younger sister Serena must beat Frenchwoman Amelie Mauresmo to produce the first Wimbledon final between sisters since Maud Watson beat Lilian in 1884.

The Williams clan is more likely to be concerned with the effects of their rise and rise on the modern game.

The off-stated ambition of father and coach, Richard, has been to see his daughters dominating the circuit.

As they tease each other at the prospect of another bout of sibling rivalry, there can be little doubt that the pair bestride the women's game.

A meeting at Wimbledon would be their second match-up in a Grand Slam final in quick succession, following Serena's victory over Venus at Roland Garros last month.

dampen the whispering campaign of cynics who suggest Richard Williams dictates which sister meets with triumph or disaster at any given time.

Yet it is a fascinating era and, on Wednesday's evidence, few would bet against Serena drawing to within one title of four-time Grand Slam winner Venus.

She showered her brilliance over court one whenever the rain clouds were chased away.

After being interrupted by rain in their first warm-up, Williams and Hantuchova returned to play five points before persistent drizzle frustrated them once again.

Unbelievably, they were forced off again as they warmed up for a second time, before the wet weather relented significantly.

With it went 19-year-old Hantuchova's chances of improving on her best ever Grand Slam showing.

There is beauty in her elegant technique, but she was not alone in succumbing to the beastly power of Williams.

Twice she had break point at 3-3 in the first set, and then two more break-back points came her way at 3-5 - but on each occasion Williams pummeled her way out of trouble.

"Her serve was so good today," said Hantuchova, who saw 10 aces from Williams fly past her. "What was supposed to do?"

After Williams had wrapped up the first set in 36 minutes, rain again forced them back to the locker room with Hantuchova 3-1 down in the second.

A 56-minute delay was not enough to dilute Williams' intensity, as she returned to break once more before serving out the victory on her second match point.

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IAAF Grand Prix Sizzling Devers, Jones



AFP, Lausanne

Legendary American female athletes Gail Devers and Marion Jones won their respective events in style here at the IAAF Grand Prix on Tuesday.

The 35-year-old Devers, twice crowned 100m Olympic champion, sauntered home in the world's best time this season of 12.40sec in the 100m hurdles while Jones romped away in the 100m recording a time of 11.04sec, though her task was made easier by the absence of reigning world 100m champion Zhanna Pintusevich-Block.

The ageless Devers and the powerful Jones will hopefully have provided enough inspiration for men's 100m Olympic champion and world recordholder Maurice Greene, who was watching from the stands after he decided to sit the meet out following two successive defeats and complaints that he was tired.

Jones said she hoped her time would improve by the time the second of the seven Golden League events comes around in Paris on

Friday. "I brushed the hand of my neighbour (compatriot Chryste Gaines) which had an effect on my start," the 26-year-old said.

"I found it still a bit cold for my liking and hopefully Paris will be a lot warmer," she added.

While Greene sat it out Portugal's Nigerian-born Francis Obikwelu took full advantage by winning the 100m and the 200m leaving the Kansas Comet's main rival Tim Montgomery trailing in his wake over the shorter distance.

Aside from Devers' there were seven other world best performances on the evening but the most impressive showing was that of 30-year-old Briton Chris Rawlinson in the 400m hurdles.

Rawlinson made light of his draw in lane seven to come home in 48.22sec ahead of France's 1997 world champion Stephane Diagana with the 1999 world titleholder Italian Fabrizio Mori in third.

The Olympic champion Angelo Taylor failed to show all trail in seventh while Rawlinson will have been encouraged two of his main rivals for the Commonwealth title later this month in Manchester, South African duo Llewellyn Herbert

and Alwyn Myburgh were well down the field.

"It was probably a field fit for an Olympic final and I took them apart," Rawlinson said.

Cuba had two of the world's best performers at the meet thanks to womens' world javelin champion Osleidys Menendez as the 22-year-old threw 67.40m and Olympic 110m hurdles titleholder Anier Garcia, who ran in a time of 13.03sec.

Mani talks

FROM PAGE 13 ago, which guaranteed an income of 550 million dollars for international cricket, over a period up to and including the 2007 World Cup.

Mani will be the second Asian to head cricket's governing body following Jagmohan Dalmiya of India, whose three-year term ended in 2001.

When asked what his major ambition for the ICC would be, Mani replied: "I would dearly love the United States to play in the World Cup in 2007."

"If we can bring the standard up to those levels in that country it would be a great achievement."

Mani is keen to promote the further advancement of cricket around the world.

"You can't truly have an international game based on 10 teams, you have to be expansionist and open up new markets," he said.

KZ Islam now

FROM PAGE 13 Islam takes heart from the success of Thailand, players of which have the same physical structure.

"Look at them. They have lifted their standard quite admirably in a short span of time. This could only happen because of their proper planning and implementation. I want to follow in their way and lift our world ranking much higher from 152."

When asked whether he has cut off his long-time relationship with cricket, Islam said, "I have had enough of cricket. I held the highest post in cricket in Bangladesh once. Now I want to do something for football. I don't think we deserve the 152nd rankings with a population of more than 120 millions."

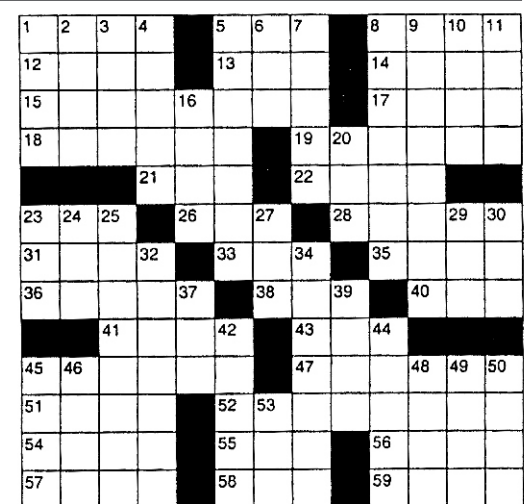
"Basically, I'm a sports organiser. I had been the president of Dhaka League football champions EPIDC Club for a long time. I have been the chairman of the Badda Jagarani Sangsad's governing body for last ten years. So, I was always with football also."

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
 1 Freeway access
 5 Stocky steed
 8 On 41 years
 12 Marty Feldman role
 13 Actress McClanahan
 14 Porridge preparer?
 15 Pet
 17 Eager, plus
 18 Shows off one's muscles
 19 Barber-shop supply
 21 Kennel cry
 22 Skewer
 23 Patrol
 26 Band-leader
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 31 "Holy mackerel!"
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 35 Actor Richard

DOWN
 20 Primate
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