



ANNA KOURNIKOVA

Anna again ambushed

Tennis

AFP, London

Russian beauty Anna Kournikova's bid to salvage a disappointing showing at the All England Club was scuppered Saturday when she crashed out of Wimbledon twice in the space of just over an hour.

The 21-year-old Muscovite went out in both the doubles and mixed doubles events to bring to an end a controversial two weeks at Wimbledon.

Kournikova, who lost in the first round of singles, and American partner Chanda Rubin threw away a one-set advantage in their doubles semi-final tie to super sisters Venus and Serena Williams.

The Williams sisters, the third seeds, came back out on Centre Court after Serena defeated Venus 7-6, 6-3 in the singles final to win her first Wimbledon title.

A lapse in concentration by the Russian early in the second set allowed the Americans back into the match and they won through 6-7, 6-0, 6-3 and will take on Spaniard Virginia Ruano Pascual and Argentina's Paola Suarez, the second seeds, in Sunday's final.

Vaughan spins

FROM PAGE 13 Sangakkara in place of Romesh Kaluwitharana.

Nuwan Zoysa and Silva were also called up by the former world champions, who have lost all four of their clashes so far leaving England to contest next Saturday's final at Lord's with India.

England also made changes. Tudor came in for James Kirley, who broke his hand in the nets Saturday and Snape taking over from left-arm spinner Ashley Giles.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of the Sri Lanka innings in their triangular series one-day international against England here at Old Trafford on Sunday:

SRI LANKA	
Atapattu run out	34
Jayasuriya c Hussain b Tudor	23
Sangakkara lbw b Vaughan	70
Jayawardene run out	42
Arnold c and b Snape	6
C Silva c Collingwood b Vaughan	9
Samaraweera st Stewart b Vaughan	3
Chandana c sub b Flintoff	15

Vaas b Vaughan	0
Zoysa c Knight b Gough	9
Wickramasinghe not out	3
Extras: (lb-9, w-5, nb-1)	15
Total: (10 wks, 49.4 overs)	229
Fall of wickets: 1-59, 2-73, 3-162, 4-185, 5-191, 6-200, 7-205, 8-205, 9-224, 10-229	

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Gough	10	0	51	1
Tudor	8	1	44	1
Flintoff	5.4	0	29	1
Irani	10	0	40	0
Snape	10	2	34	1
Vaughan	6	1	22	4

England: Marcus Trescothick, Nick Knight, Nasser Hussain (capt), Michael Vaughan, Ronnie Irani, Paul Collingwood, Alec Stewart (wkt), Andrew Flintoff, Jeremy Snape, Alex Tudor, Darren Gough

Umpires: David Orchard (Rsa), Peter Willey (Eng)

Third umpire: Jeremy Lloyds (Eng)

Match referee: Mike Procter (Rsa)

WIMBLEDON GOSSIPS

AFP, London

Long-suffering British tennis fans will at least get the chance to see one of their own in action in the men's singles final on Sunday. As Lleyton Hewitt and David Nalbandian slugged it out, the action was being overseen by umpire Mike Morrissey. The Surrey-educated 33-year-old was officiating his fourth men's final following similar duties in 1994, 1998 and 2000. Morrissey first officiated at Wimbledon in 1987 when he was just 17.

SISTERS STAND AT EASE

Worrying news for the legion of hapless women trying to find a dent in the armour of the Williams sisters. Serena and Venus, who were playing in the women's doubles final

on Sunday, admitted they don't take their partnership particularly seriously, but they still win.

"We have a lot of fun out there," said new singles champion and world number one Serena.

"We just laugh and giggle. As Venus said the other day, on her resume she puts 'singles player, not doubles player.'"

PAPER CHASE TO THE TITLE

During the changeovers in the women's singles final, Serena Williams was seen to delve into her bag and take out a sheet of paper which she read attentively. Great words of philosophy? Lyrics from a favourite song, perhaps? No, just timely reminders to 'keep low' and 'hit the ball down the middle.'

ARGENTINA CALLING

David Nalbandian was hoping to deliver a victory against Lleyton Hewitt to try and cheer up a country still despondent over both its economic crisis and the early departure from the World Cup by its much-vaunted football team.

"I hope the people watch me on the television. I think it's important because they are not having a very good time at the moment. If I win, hopefully that can make a difference," said the 20-year-old.

However, if he does pull off a shock win, he was hoping that not too many people would call up to offer the congratulations.

"After I beat Xavier Malisse in the semi-final, many, many people telephoned to offer their best wishes, but after a while I stopped answering the phone because I couldn't get to sleep."

India book Lord's berth

Cricket

AFP, Birmingham

Rahul Dravid's 64 guided India to a four-wicket triangular series victory over Sri Lanka here at Edgbaston on Saturday.

The result sent India, yet to lose a series match, into next Saturday's tournament final at Lord's.

And Sri Lanka's fourth straight defeat guaranteed England's place there as well.

An Upul Chandana wide, off the first ball of the penultimate over, saw India win with both Mohammad Kaif and Ajit Agarkar seven not out.

India bowled out Sri Lanka for just 187 after winning the toss.

They then suffered a collapse of their own as they slumped to 59 for four on a pitch assisting seam movement.

But Dravid, caught off a Dilhara Fernando no-ball on nine, and Yuvraj Singh (37) steadied the ship in a stand of 91.

It looked as if both men would see India home before Yuvraj was undone by a slow full toss from fast bowler Fernando that he steered to Chandana at backward point.

Yuvraj faced 68 balls including one six and four fours in his latest impressive innings this series.

And Dravid's 95-ball stay, including one six and five fours, ended when he was run out by Fernando with India nine runs short.

"I thought we played pretty well," said India captain Sourav Ganguly as he savoured victory.

"It was not an easy wicket to bat on and anything over 220 would have been difficult.

"It did quite a lot on the pitch, it was not coming out the bat and was difficult to play shots. Rahul played a fantastic innings."

Ganguly also paid tribute to the support his side received from a sell-out crowd mainly made up of

India fans.

"It is amazing to see so many people turn out. With so much noise it is like Eden Gardens."

Fernando's figures of two for 22 were impressive but it would have taken something truly extraordinary for the bowlers to defend such a low score - a point Sri Lanka captain Sanath Jayasuriya readily conceded.

"Today we needed more runs but we have not batted well throughout the series."

"We have been bowling well in patches but not consistently. I think we need to look into that for future games."

Chaminda Vaas did give Sri Lanka hope when, with the first ball of the innings, the left-arm quick bowled Virender Sehwag off an inside edge.

In the same over he also had a huge appeal for caught behind against Ganguly turned down by experienced West Indian official Steve Bucknor.

The left-hander's luck held when, in the next over, he was dropped by Chandana at backward point off Fernando.

But it turned when Ganguly fell for 24, a cut off Pramodya Wickramasinghe rebounding from Mahela Jayawardene at first slip to wicket-keeper Romesh Kaluwitharana. That left India wobbling at 33 for three.

It seemed as if Sri Lanka had missed a major opportunity when Sachin Tendulkar (18) was dropped by Fernando at short third man off leg-spinner Chandana.

But Fernando redeemed himself three balls later.

Tendulkar had added just one to his total when he spooned Fernando to Marvan Atapattu at short extra-cover.

India then almost declined to 75 for five when Dravid was 'caught' off a Fernando no-ball.

Dravid won the man-of-the-match award but it was India's

bowlers who laid the foundations for victory.

Left-arm paceman Ashish Nehra put the block on from the start, his first seven overs yielding just 10 runs. Nehra finished with two for 28.

But it was leg-spinner Anil Kumble (two for 36) who dismissed top scorers Jayawardene (36) and Atapattu (50) in quick succession after the pair had put on 84 in 19 overs.

From there on the rest of the batsmen, excepting Vaas' 20-ball 26, failed to make much impression, Sri Lanka losing their last eight wickets for 62 runs in 18 overs.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of the India innings during their triangular series one-day international match against Sri Lanka at Edgbaston on Saturday:

INDIA	
Sehwag b Vaas	0
Ganguly c Kaluwitharana b Wickramasinghe	24
Mongia c Jayasuriya b Vaas	5
Tendulkar c Atapattu b Fernando	19
Dravid run out	64
Yuvraj Singh c Chandana b Fernando	37
Kaif not out	7
Agarkar not out	7
Extras: (lb-3, w-17, nb-5)	25
Total (6 wks, 48.1 overs)	188
Fall of wickets: 1-0, 2-30, 3-33, 4-59, 5-150, 6-179	

Did not bat: Z. Khan, A. Kumble, A. Nehra

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Vaas	10	1	26	2
Fernando	10	0	22	2
Wickramasinghe	9	0	47	1
Chandana	6.1	0	32	0
Samaraweera	10	1	35	0
Jayasuriya	3	0	23	0

Result: India won by 4 wks

Man-of-the-match: Rahul Dravid
Umpires: Steve Bucknor (WI), Neil Mallender (Eng); Third umpire: Peter Willey (Eng); Match referee: Mike Procter (Rsa)

All-weather Wimbledon

Tennis

AFP, London

Wimbledon tennis bosses have pledged to solve the dilemma of building a retracting roof over Centre Court after rain delays once again hampered play at this year's grass court tournament.

The first week of the Championships was played under sunny skies but then the rain arrived causing scheduling headaches with many high-profile matches disrupted.

All England Club officials said that they were ready to put a cover over the Centre Court once problems with condensation and ventilation have been solved.

Costly experiments have been underway in the USA to assess the effect a roof would have on grass.

Wimbledon chairman Tim Phillips is expected to further discuss the possibility of renovation at the tennis complex in Sunday's committee meeting.

"In the last decade, we've built a new Number One Court, a new media centre and created the hill with the big screen," he told the BBC Radio Five Live's SportsWeek show.

"So if it was straightforward to build a roof, we'd already have done it."

"But there are problems with a roof. It doesn't matter to rugby or football matches if they get condensation or sweating - but it matters a lot on a grass tennis court."

"We've done expensive tests in the States, feeding in British summer forecast information. They work out whether condensation would occur - and it would on a considerable number of occasions."

"So what ventilation system would we need in an 80-year-old building? And how would it affect the flight of the ball?"

"We are actively trying to overcome serious obstacles. Until we get a really good solution, we're not going to do it."

Phillips also emphasised the need to strike a happy balance between the wishes of fans who queue for hours to gain access to the All England Club and the players who entertain them.

"We'd need to get planning approval and create a tennis court which provides top-quality play," he said.

"We have an obligation to fans and TV audiences in 170 different countries. But we also have an obligation to plays in terms of safety on court."

"We'll do it if we can solve these problems - which we haven't managed to yet."

Prophecy fulfilled

REUTERS, London

"Welcome to the Williams show" Richard Williams's proclaimed on a courtside banner when his daughters Venus and Serena battled it out in the Wimbledon semifinals two years ago.

On that occasion, the phenomenal sisters had only won one Grand Slam title between them - younger sister Serena had captured the family's first major at the 1999 U.S. Open - and were nowhere near dominating the women's tour.

Just 24 months later, the Williams travelling show took centre-stage on women's finals day and although Richard was absent from the latest battle between the siblings, Wimbledon champion Serena felt his presence from the moment she stepped on court for her historic showdown with Venus. "When I first walked out there, I was just thinking I wanted to win but I was also thinking that my dad always said that one day we'd be playing in the finals of Wimbledon, in the finals of the U.S. Open, just the big ones," said Serena, who stopped her sister from completing a hat trick of All England crowns by winning the absorbing clash 7-6-6-3.

"And here we were 10, 15 years later."

"It's really amazing if you think about it because it's hard to get one champion but my dad and mom now have two."

"And this is unbelievable really." The sisters have not only won three of the last four grand slams - Venus triumphed in Flushing Meadows in 2001 while Serena avenged that defeat at Roland Garros last month - they have also both attained the world number one status in a space of five months this year.

Perera given

FROM PAGE 13

Kaluperuma.

The three-man panel met the BCCSL's director of cricket operations Bandula Warnapura on Friday to submit their report. After the meeting one of the panellists said: "When we studied the footage, which the ICC had given us, there was an obvious problem and we rectified that with Ruchira."

The panel stressed that Perera's suspicious action had developed just prior to or during Sri Lanka's tour of England. According to coach Dav Whatmore, the problem arose when Perera modified his wrist action, possibly during an A tour to Namibia in March. Although ICC regulations allow a bowler to continue playing during the first stage, Perera played no further part in the Test series. However, he was very close to playing the final Test after injuries to Nuwan Zoysa and Charitha Buddhika.

Perera, one of Sri Lanka's brightest fastest bowling prospects despite the controversy, is now expected to play a warm-up game against Bangladesh so that the BCCSL can obtain fresh video clippings for their final report.

Perera is the fourth Sri Lankan bowler to have his action questioned by the ICC in recent years, following Muttiah Muralitharan, Kumar Dharmasena and Suresh Perera.

Dravid looks

FROM PAGE 13

a crucial role. The wicket seemed a bit all day and it was probably a 220 wicket but the bowlers on both sides did quite well."

His captain Saurav Ganguly is also convinced that playing Dravid as a wicketkeeper-batsman has given his side an ideal balance for one-day internationals.

Dravid has played in 173 limited-overs matches for his country but his place was in danger before he switched to keeping wicket on the recent tour of the West Indies and current triangular series in England.

"I'm not surprised by the way he's batted and he's keeping very well," Ganguly said. "Playing him as a wicketkeeper has allowed us to pick an extra batsman and that's given the team a good balance."



SERENA WILLIAMS

Keeping her appointment

Tennis

INTERNET, London

The younger Williams sister began the 2002 season with only one Grand Slam title under her belt.

But she followed up her French Open triumph in April by winning the Wimbledon trophy without dropping a set.

"At the beginning of the year, I told myself I don't care what else happens this year, I want to win Wimbledon," she said.

"I really wanted to win the French but that was an extra bonus. I just wanted to win Wimbledon."

"I wanted to become a member of so much prestige. I wanted to be a past of history."

The 20-year-old admitted that her quarter-final loss at last year's Wimbledon to Jennifer Capriati had spurred her on to a level of consistency which has also seen her claim the world number one spot from her sister.

"Times were low a year ago but it's high-tide now," she said.

"It's all changed mentally - I'm stronger and I have a little more experience under my belt. And I wanted to win so bad."

But Serena looked to have handed her sister an opportunity to get back into the match when she was broken leading 4-2 in the second set.

"When I was able to win the first set, I got a little too satisfied and I hit a couple of ridiculous shots," she explained.

"At the time, I thought some day you're going to be telling your grandchildren about how you blew it."

And the new champion paid tribute to her father who predicted that his young daughters would one day contest the Wimbledon final as the world's best players.

Your say: Can anyone stop the Williams sisters? "My dad always said we'd be here and here we were," she said.

"It's amazing when you think about it - it's hard enough to get one champion, now he has two."

"But I did a lot of work to get here and I don't regret any of it."

The defeated finalist admitted that her sister had out-performed her on the day as the 21-year-old was denied a hat-trick of Wimbledon titles.

"She was tremendous today," she said.

"There wasn't a lot between us but on some points, she was playing shots I just couldn't get."

"I kept my balls deep and on the line and she did the same - what can you do?"

But the older sibling said she was pleased that Serena was finally fulfilling her early promise.

"I think it's great to see Serena doing well because for a while she wasn't doing the best that she can do," she said.

"I would have liked to have won today but once again it just wasn't to be."

"When I was able to win the first set, I got a little too satisfied and I hit a couple of ridiculous shots," she explained.

"Times were low a year ago but it's high-tide now," she said.

"It's all changed mentally - I'm stronger and I have a little more experience under my belt. And I wanted to win so bad."

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CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS	36 Merriment	2 Have —	21 AP rival
1 Daytona entry	37 Illustrations	23 Cupid's yokemate	(flip)
6 Import duty	38 "Science Guy" Bill	4 Rival of All and Dash	23 Wanted poster
12 Half a weight-loss ad	40 "Orinoco Flow" singer	5 Providing narration	abbr.
13 Through-fare	42 Stir-fry need	6 Farewell	24 Vacationing
14 "20 Questions" category	44 Additional ennu	7 Dodge	25 Wade opponent
15 Silver service, maybe	46 Induce ennu	8 Actor Stephen	26 Covers thickly
16 Take heed of	50 News time	9 Badge of office	28 Act opener
17 Admitting a draft	52 Speaker	10 It'll get you going	30 Blunder
19 Seine sight	54 Turn in	11 Big celebration	31 Superlative suffix
20 Nobel-winning bishop	55 Land	12 Forbid	33 Desiccate point
22 Play-ground game	56 Montaigne pieces	13 Things are up in the air with him	34 Attention getter
24 Scooper	57 Expel	14 Things are up in the air with him	39 Manicurist's abrasive
27 Fairy-tale trio		15 Things are up in the air with him	41 Lessen
29 Footballer's sore spot		16 Things are up in the air with him	42 "The Way We
32 Storable furniture		17 Things are up in the air with him	43 Flamenco cheers
35 Apprehension		18 Things are up in the air with him	44 Change for a live

Solution time: 27 mins.

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SIT	AMS	ION
DAY	BIGTOP	
CASAS	MIL	RTO
ALUM	DOE	CUSIS
RIAN	PLIP	SUBTLET
BIG	BEN	ETA
EGG	DEMEAN	
JAVIA	BIGAPPLE	