

'I'm not the new Hingis'



AFP, Paris

Justine Henin-Hardenne scotched all talk of her being the new Martina Hingis on Friday after reaching the last 16 at the French Open.

The slightly-built Belgian, with the whipped one-handed backhand, swapped Dally Randriantefy of Madagascar 6-1, 6-1 to book a date with Swiss 19th seed Patty Schnyder - but said even if she is no Serena Williams in the power stakes she won't go the way of Hingis, forced to retire pre-

turely through injury and increasingly seen as too lightweight to compete in the brutal modern game.

"I haven't heard that," said the Belgian blonde when asked if she was the new Hingis, who won five Grand Slams before retiring last year after ankle ligament trouble.

"I've a long way to go before I can be compared with her. We have a very different game. We have many points in common but a very different game.

"Anyway, Hingis has things behind her. I have many ahead of me!"

The determined stare betrayed a young woman with an unshakable focus on her game.

So much so that even when she turns 21 on Sunday, Henin-Hardenne is not going to spend much time blowing out the candles on her cake.

The present she wants is one from herself - in the shape of the one Grand Slam crown Hingis failed ever to secure.

"I'm not thinking about my birthday - I'm thinking about my next match. It's a day like any day.

"Maybe on Sunday we can celebrate both!"

With Schnyder having been a quarter-finalist here in 1998, and having made the last 16 a year ago, Henin-Hardenne says she can afford to underestimate nobody.

"You can always lose matches - you have to be focused. Sometimes you play against someone who is playing unbelievably as they have nothing to lose. You have to be prepared for it.

"Now I'm in the fourth round I'll just try to be ready for Sunday. Now I have my chance to go to the quarters," said Henin-Hardenne, who beat Schnyder on the way to retaining her German Open crown.

In April she beat world number one Serena Williams to take the Charleston title.

"Patti is a dangerous player - I've always had difficult matches against her aside from the last one in Berlin. I know she can hamper the game of many players on the circuit.

"Today I was much better than in the last round. I am more relaxed. I was happy to win quickly as it was quite hot out there. I need to increase my level still further but this match was better than against (second round Croatian opponent Jelena) Kostanic.

Henin-Hardenne says she's no lightweight even if Serena has the extra bulk.

"I've increased my muscle mass but not increased my weight dramatically. I am more powerful and I have more stamina on court. I know if I want to play long rallies against the top players I need that muscle. Now the results are coming."



JUSTINE HENIN-HARDENNE

Future is Gasquet



AFP, Paris

French tennis fans are in a fizz over Richard Gasquet, the teenager they hope can reach the top of the tennis tree one day.

The 16-year-old already seems to be succumbing to the burden of intense expectation and his entourage are keen for him to take a step back out of the limelight to reassess his game.

Gasquet, who was hailed as a future Grand Slam star when he made the front cover of a tennis magazine aged just eight, stood two sets and 0-3 down against Nicolas Lapentti of Ecuador when he withdrew from his first-round encounter, saying he felt exhausted.

Having already pulled out on half a dozen previous occasions in tournaments at junior, challenger and senior level, Gasquet's latest failure to last the distance is causing concern that he may be trying too much too soon.

All the attention was on the teen who caused a sensation last year at the Monte Carlo Masters when he became the youngest player to win a main draw match at the event, ousting Argentine Franco Squillari in the opening round before falling to Russian giant Marat Safin.

This year things have not been quite so rosy for the star in the making from Beziers in the rugby-playing deep south.

The focus on Gasquet has been all the greater with Spanish 16-year-old Rafael Nadal pulling out of

the event injured having likewise had a wildcard.

Gasquet's agent Patrick Proisy says clearly there needs to be a change in strategy - but he thinks the problem is more mental than physical.

"Richard has all the ingredients you need to succeed. But the puzzle hasn't quite come together as yet. Cramping and repeatedly pulling out are signs that the mental approach has to be modified," Proisy told L'Equipe sports daily.

French national team technical director Jean-Claude Massias, who said Gasquet had no reason to be ashamed about his defeat, told the paper on Friday after talking to the player's father Francis that the problems were largely understandable given the intense interest in such a young player.

"There's no problem with Richard but he has yet to reach maturity. He has been squarely in the media eye and it's difficult to deal with what he has on his plate right now."

The player himself was sanguine - and didn't spare himself some tough criticisms.

"I was afraid of playing badly and that ate away at my energy levels. I played a great second set (which he lost on a tiebreak) and then suddenly I just ran into a brick wall. I was physically finished. I was totally empty."

But he insisted he would bounce back.

"It's serious if you don't give everything you have - but I gave the maximum."

"I have to build up my morale on good old-fashioned physical hard

work."

His father, who also works with the French team's technical staff, is for his part unfruffled.

"My son is not ill. My only obsession is to ensure he is happy doing an activity that makes him happy. And he is happy."

Aus 193/6

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game series 4-1 after losing by 39 runs in Port-of-Spain last Sunday, made four changes.

Batsman Michael Bevan and paceman Glenn McGrath are both out with groin muscle injuries along with Ian Harvey and Michael Clarke, while Hayden, Lehmann, Jason Gillespie and Brad Hogg came into the side.

On the other hand, all-rounder Ryan Hurley was replaced by medium-pace Vasbert Drakes for the West Indies.

TEAMS

WEST INDIES: Chris Gayle, Wavell Hinds, Brian Lara (captain), Ramnaresh Sarwan, Marlon Samuels, Ricardo Powell, Ridley Jacobs, David Bernard, Vasbert Drakes, Mervyn Dillon, Corey Collymore, Devon Smith (12th man)

AUSTRALIA: Matthew Hayden, Adam Gilchrist, Ricky Ponting (captain), Darren Lehmann, Andrew Symonds, Jimmy Maher, Brad Hogg, Andy Bichel, Nathan Hauritz, Brett Lee, Jason Gillespie, Michael Clarke (12th man).

Umpires: Eddie Nicholls (WIS) Rudi Koertzen (RSA)

French fries



AFP, Paris

French hope Julien Varlet was just a point away from causing an upset in his second-round match against Finland's Jarkko Nieminen before losing out in five sets having won the first two 6-1, 6-1 and had a match point in the third.

Varlet, 25, ended up covered in clay as he leapt around the court - and even collided with the drinks machine as he chased down one return.

His style stems from his time as a would-be footballer.

"I used to be a goalkeeper," he smiled, when asked why throwing himself left and right came so naturally.

MORARIU RECALLS GULLIKSON

Corina Morariu, who lost out in singles and doubles on Thursday, paid tribute to the memory of Tim Gullikson, former coach of Pete Sampras who succumbed to brain cancer in 1996.

Morariu herself has only recently returned from a two-year battle against leukaemia and her father was Gullikson's personal neurologist.

Morariu, 25, said she had drawn inspiration from a man she said had been like a second father to

her. "I got a lot of strength from him. You'd talk to him on the phone and think he was as healthy as can be. Then you'd see him and see how sick he was."

NO DALLYING FOR DALLY

Dally Randriantefy is not one for dallying after reaching the third round of the women's singles.

The 26-year-old Madagascan was not expected to get past Belgian fourth seed Justine Henin-Hardenne in her next match but she is delighted just to be here after her former manager vanished - with a large portion of her earnings - seven years ago, which forced the world number 83 to quit the circuit.

"Like idiots we didn't sign a contract," she explained.

"Against Henin-Hardenne, who plays almost like a guy, Roland Garros may come to a full stop for me - but for now I'll savour every moment. I know all too well where I've had to come back from."

TRAVELLING LIGHT

Players are travelling light these days and it's all down to new technology.

In the days when Yannick Noah won France their last men's singles title at Roland Garros a racket weighed around 400 grammes. Today the average has dropped to around 315 making the weapon of a champion around 20 percent lighter.

20 probables

FROM PAGE 13
played 18 ODIs with the last being against Pakistan in June 2000.

After three seasons in the wilderness because of some indifferent form and personal problems, the 28-year-old attacking batsman makes a comeback after some impressive performances recently including a whirlwind hundred in the national championships yesterday.

The selectors dropped Mehrab Hossain who had opened against South Africa in the two-Test series last month without much success.

Wicketkeeper Khaled Mashud, who had led Bangladesh in the World Cup but was left out during the TVS Cup one-day series and the Test series against South Africa under mysterious circumstances, has been recalled along with the man who had taken his place, Mohammad Salim.

There are five pacers in Monjurul Islam, Tareq Aziz Khan, Anwar Hossain Munir, Tapas Baishya and Mashrafe-bin-

Mortuza. Whatmore said that the wickets in Australia would be fast and bouncy and his main focus would be on picking some quality quickmen.

A surprise omission from the list was all-rounder Mushfiqur Rahman who was a pivotal figure in Victoria Sporting Club's triumph in the Premier league.

"We are considering sending Mushfiq to Sri Lanka in June with the under-23 team. That's why he was not considered," said chief selector Aliul Islam.

Although there were strong indications that veteran campaigner Aminul Islam was in line for a call, Aliul said that his performance in domestic cricket let Aminul down.

"His showing in local cricket has not been encouraging," Aliul revealed.

The 20 players have been asked to report to BCB at 6:30 pm tomorrow. The team is scheduled to leave for the BKSP later in the day.

Hoggard to miss second Test

AFP, London

England pace bowler Matthew Hoggard was ruled out Friday of next week's second Test against Zimbabwe at Durham with a knee problem that threatens to sideline him for six weeks.

Hoggard, who played in England's innings and 92-run win during the first Test at Lord's last week, sustained the injury while playing for Yorkshire during Wednesday's Cheltenham and Gloucester Trophy match away to Worcestershire.

On Thursday he underwent a scan which showed a torn meniscal cartilage in his right knee.

England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) chief medical officer, Dr Peter Gregory said Friday: "Matthew will need to see a surgeon to find out if an operation is required. Our initial assessment is that he is likely to be out of cricket for approximately six weeks."

Meanwhile Yorkshire captain Anthony McGrath, who made his Test debut at Lord's, also underwent a scan Thursday on his injured side. That revealed no tear and his condition is improving. He will be re-assessed by the England medical team next week.

Hoggard is the second England quick to withdraw from what will be the first Test ever played at Durham's Riverside Ground.

On Thursday, Andrew Flintoff, also a hard-hitting batsman, confirmed he would not be available because the shoulder injury which forced him to miss the first Test was preventing him from bowling.

WHIZZ KID-193

correct answers

- Who clinched the Professor Abdur Razzak 29th National chess title?
Ans: Reefat
- Who became man-of-the-match in the Sharjah Cup final?
Ans: Taufiq
- Who will lead Sri Lanka's one-day side?
Ans: Atapattu
- Who won the man-of-the-series award in the TVS Cup triangular tournament?
Ans: Dawson
- How many Test tons has Brian Lara scored?
Ans: 20

Father figure suits him



AFP, London

Darren Gough hoped his recall to England's one-day squad on Thursday would lend experience to an otherwise fledgling party.

Yorkshire fast bowler Gough has missed most of England's international programme including the World Cup, apart from a handful of home one-dayers in 2002, during the past 18 months because of injuries.

At 32, he was the oldest man in a coltish-looking squad where only Ashley Giles has also passed thirty.

"I thought I had a chance but until you get the call you never know, although I knew my experience at some stage would come into it," Gough told Sky Sports ahead of the three-match one-day series against Pakistan and the triangular tournament with Zimbabwe and South Africa.

"At the back of your mind I will always be thinking 'if I do well I'll get my recall'," he added.

"When you are out of the game and need something special, well I still believe I can do that for England," insisted Gough.

"It's still a great challenge for me - but I just hope we don't have to do a sprint test to see who's the quickest."

"I think I've got three or four years left in me at this level. Hopefully I fan stay fit for a long

period of time and make up for lost time."

Gough's remarks came following comments earlier Thursday by chairman of selectors David Graveney that England's failure to take wickets between the 15th and 35th over of a one-day innings had been a major problem at the World Cup.

Gough has been sidelined recently by a hamstring injury but, in typically optimistic style, the paceman insisted he would be ready for the opening match

against Pakistan at Old Trafford on June 17.

"I've worked hard and been bowling for three months. I got a little hamstring strain but it was not serious - I was only out for three weeks and with the injuries I've had that is nothing.

"I think in one-day cricket you've got to have a bowler who can take wickets.

"Australia have Brett Lee who can do it and I consider myself still able to do it. Hopefully I'll be able to do it for England this summer."



DARREN GOUGH

Stuck in clay



AFP, Paris

Where have all the Americans gone? That was a question on many lips Friday as fans at the French Open scanned the men's singles draw.

For with only five days gone and 32 players still left in contention only evergreen Andre Agassi is left standing as a realistic US title hope.

The only other American left is Vince Spadea, who has exceeded all expectations by getting this far and is not expected to make it into the second week.

That's a world away from the 1990s when Agassi, Jim Courier and Michael Chang won at Roland Garros four times between 1989 and 1999.

And even if they were not winning, those three along with Pete Sampras, even though he never fully found his feet on clay, were considered title contenders.

This year the young American brigade was sent packing, their lack of clay-court preparation laid bare.

Andy Roddick, James Blake, Mardy Fish and Taylor Dent - none of them made it past the second

round and with the exception of Roddick who did play in the main build-up events, they only had themselves to blame.

"It's weird going from, you know, feeling like you're playing pretty well to not really knowing what you're doing," admitted Roddick after his loss to Armenia's Sargis Sargsian.

The problem of course lies mainly with the surface, Americans being brought up on hardcourts where big serves and explosive play is more effective.

Near-perfection on the red dust has instead been achieved by the Spanish and South American armada who have won seven out of the last 10 French Open titles.

On clay, especially when the weather is hot as it has been in Paris this week, patience is a prime virtue and the art of slipping and sliding in marathon five-setters has to be learned.

"When you grow up playing on clay you know the points are going to be long," said Argentina's Juan Ignacio Chela.

"You know you are going to have to fight for every ball, to scramble for every ball. To play well on clay you must be patient. Hitting winners is much harder than on grass courts or hard courts."

But hard though it may be for the young Americans, learning to love clay is possible. Just take Agassi, who has adapted his style to the surface over the course of 15 long and at times painful years.

The Las Vegas's first appearance at Roland Garros was in 1987 when he went out in the second round.

He did reach the semifinals the following year as an 18-year-old and was runner-up in 1990 and 1991, but it took him until 1999 to complete his turnaround from clay-court hater to aficionado.

His comeback from two sets down to win against Andrei Medvedev that year was the turning point of his career.

Reflecting on that triumph after his second round win here, Agassi said: "I'll never forget what that meant to me. This particular tournament is the one that has made my career so full."

And if Agassi also bites the dust early, then there are always the American women to fall back on.

The two Williams sisters, Lindsay Davenport and Jennifer Capriati are all still flying high and it would take a bold bet to wager against a Stars and Stripes Saturday on June 5.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS	DOWN	DOWN
1 Run in neutral	36 Guardian's charges	16 Legal document
5 Pile of chips	40 Actor Cariou	1 Wading bird
8 Uncertain	41 Trans-action	2 Body-shop concern
12 Thrash	43 Ill-lit	3 Chantilly, e.g.
13 Wish undone	45 Debonair	4 One of the Barry-mores
14 Writer in an Andersen tale	47 Soaps, e.g.	5 Make money
15 Wriggler in an Andersen tale	51 Racetrack marker	6 "American Cousin"
17 Yule refrain	54 Daughter	7 Office help
18 Handles the helm	55 Raw material	8 Viscera
19 Missouri feeder	57 Vortex	9 Vikings' activity
21 Pitcher in grade	58 "Waking Devine"	10 Worry
22 Belgrade resident	59 Joie de vivre	11 New Haven campus
23 Funny Leno	Solution time: 21 mins.	
26 Darjeeling, e.g.	T I D Y	S P A
28 Spud source	I D E A	P L A N
31 Mountain range of Kirghiz	F L A	H I T S
33 Capek play	B E L T S	S I B W A R D
35 Falling behind	A M M O	D O T
	R U N W A Y S	H Y E N A
	A L E	G A S
	D R A W I	A I R
	T O T A	S I D E W A Y S
	C L O Y	O D D
	E L M S	B L A Y
		W E I S T

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12				13			14			
15				16						
18						19	20			
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31			32		33		34		35	
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				41						
45	46			42		43		44		50
51						52	53			
54						55			56	
57						58			59	

CRYPTOQUIP

N Z L V Q Z L G D W W Q V P Q
M X Y D B M G ' U D W D D X M X D
K P T L D W V M E E Z X L Y D X Q D T .
B M G ' U D W D D X P N P K K ?
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: MY HUSBAND HAPPENS TO BE A CHRONIC LIAR. APPARENTLY HE SUFFERS FROM TRUTH DECAY.
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: K equals L

The Cryptoquip is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Full marks

FROM PAGE 13
say he's got what it takes but he's got a real chance.

"With Simon Jones in the background and Darren Gough maybe coming back, England have a bloody good squad of quicks.

"Stephen Harmison's got a little glitch in his action but is coming down from 6ft 9in which is not a bad advantage. Top batsmen always reckon it's not pace or swing that really worries them but bounce.

"I've not seen too much of Jones but he looked fantastic before his injury (ruptured knee ligaments during the first Ashes Test of the 2002-03 series at Brisbane).

"Ashley Giles (left-arm spinner) is handy as well so the bowling not too bad. In all the boxes the crosses are in the right places."