

Clijsters claims No.1

Tennis
AFP, Los Angeles

Belgian Kim Clijsters took over the world's No. 1 ranking for the first time in her career by winning the WTA Los Angeles tournament on Sunday. Clijsters defeated former world No. 1 Lindsay Davenport 6-1, 3-6, 6-1 to capture her 16th career crown and pocket 97,000 dollars in first place prize money. "I don't know how to feel, I am a bit confused," said Clijsters. "It is great having my first No. 1 ranking." Serving to close out the match in the third set, Clijsters jumped out to a 40-15 lead and then took the title when one of Davenport's shots sailed long. "It is a feeling I can't describe," said Clijsters. "On the court I had butterflies and goosebumps. This is incredible." Clijsters said she will cherish this moment for a long time. "It reflects on the great season I have had so far. I have been able to be No. 1 in doubles and singles now, and no one will ever take that away from me. This is something I will always have on my resume." The 20-year-old Clijsters, who has reached the semis or better in all 14 tournaments she has played, is having her best season of her career with six singles titles this year. She supplanted the injured Serena Williams atop the world rankings. Williams will be out of action until after the US Open recovering from knee surgery. Williams had spent 57 weeks as No. 1. But unlike the other 11 former number ones, Clijsters is the first woman to reach the top spot without have won a Grand Slam tournament. She made it to the semi-finals of the Australian Open and

Wimbledon this year. Clijsters also passed Belgian compatriot Justine Henin-Hardenne for most singles titles this year. Henin-Hardenne has five. Clijsters and Davenport were an equal 6-6 in career matches heading into Sunday's final but Clijsters has now won six of the last seven meetings. "I started off well and that motivated me to keep going," said Clijsters. "In second set she played really well. "Then in third set once I broke



WRITTEN IN FLOWERS: Belgian Kim Clijsters celebrates her new number one ranking after winning the JPMorgan Chase Open final on August 10.

her I felt good and I felt like I could move her around. When I saw she was limping I tried to be more aggressive." Clijsters, who also won two weeks ago in Stanford, California, boosted her record this year to 66-8. Davenport also knows how it feels to be No. 1. She first reached the position in October 1998 and held it for 37 weeks. "It is a huge accomplishment, and she earned it," said Davenport. "I am sure she wants to start winning slam titles." Clijsters said her boyfriend Lleyton Hewitt was monitoring the progress of her match from Cincinnati where he is getting ready to play in an ATP event. "He was on the golf course and writing (text) messages to my parents," she said. Her parents were watching the match on TV from their home in Belgium. The match was broadcast live to Belgium, where it caused a stir in her hometown of Bree. "Everyone in Belgium has been watching it. In my town there was a performance, and band or something was playing, and no one showed up," said Clijsters. Clijsters won the first set easily, breaking Davenport in the second and fourth games then holding serve in the next game to jump out to a 5-0 lead. Davenport rallied in the second set winning the crucial seventh game to break a 3-3 tie after Clijsters had battled back from a 3-0 deficit. After winning the marathon seventh game, Davenport broke Clijsters serve in the eighth game en route to a 6-3 win. Clijsters took command of the third set in much the same way she did in the first. She grabbed a 3-1 lead and never looked back. She had five aces and hit 33 winners while Davenport had just three aces, 27 winners and made 36 unforced errors.

Desailly Chelsea's until 2005

AFP, Paris

France captain Marcel Desailly announced on Monday that he was staying at Chelsea until 2005 and believes the cash-rich English Premiership side can become one of Europe's biggest clubs. "The season is starting in under a week and I am happy. Chelsea have offered me a year's contract extension and I have accepted, which means I will be at the Blues until 2005," the 34-year-old central defender said on his personal website. Reports at the end of last season suggested Desailly would be released by Chelsea, but the takeover of the club by Russian billionaire Roman Abramovich seems to have secured his future at Stamford Bridge.

Can you take

FROM PAGE 13 the relevant parties," the statement said. "This appears to be a blatant attempt by a person attempting to set up someone for personal gain whether that be monetary or notoriety and we will consult our legal people in this regard. "We feel to comment on the issue would only further assist her in gaining the result she is conspiring to create. "Therefore, Shane and anyone connected to him will not be making any further comments on this topic." The latest controversy in Warne's eventful career follows an admission in August 2000 that he made lewd telephone calls to a nurse while playing county cricket in England. He subsequently lost the Australian Test team vice-captaincy over the incident. Cohen Alon claims the phone messages continued long after she first met Warne in South Africa. "Every time he came to South Africa he would contact me. SMS's (text messages) had already been sent to my phone. I'm not going to go into that, but it was quite disgusting some of them," she told Channel Nine. Warne, through his management, said he was seeking legal advice over the accusations. Cricket Australia on Monday appeared to wipe their hands of the matter, saying it rested between the individuals involved. "Cricket Australia is aware that international cricketers attract more public and media scrutiny than private individuals," CEO James Sutherland said in a statement. "There are obligations and standards incumbent on players, but there is also a boundary between their public lives and their lives as private citizens," he said. Cohen Alon said Gavin Varejes, a Johannesburg associate of Warne's, allegedly offered her R200,000 (28,000 USD) to keep quiet after hearing she wanted to sell her story in February this year, when Australia was in South Africa for the World Cup. Cohen Alon claimed Varejes paid her only half the money. She said she had gone public with her story because of mystery phone calls she believed were linked to the failure of the alleged gag offer. Varejes has denied her allegations.

Impressed by Beckham

Football
AFP, Madrid

David Beckham may have yet to pull on the famous white shirt in a competitive match, but after four friendly on his new club's Asian tour he is already seen as a fixture in Real Madrid's star-studded side.

side, a Hong Kong XI, Japanese outfit FC Tokyo and a Chinese XI. "Beckham was the only 'fixture'." He was the only regular in the four games," said Marca sports daily. "David Beckham finished up the Asian tour as the player most used by (coach) Carlos Queiroz," said Marca, noting Beckham had played 301 minutes of a possible 360. "The Englishman appears to be the 'galactico' (superstar) who has

global presence, particularly given the adulation which surrounds his visits to Asia, scored his first goal in Real's colours in Tuesday's win over FC Tokyo. "Beckham's performances matched expectations," noted Marca, which believes the midfielder appears to have taken to his new environment like a duck to water. AS daily echoed that sentiment, noting that "Beckham shone in attacking play and helped out with defensive duties." For Marca, however, if Beckham is the icing on a very rich Madrid cake it sees Frenchman Zinedine Zidane as the primary influence over the side - save for the Tokyo match when he was rested. "Madrid won under the Frenchman's command," said Marca, which hailed what it dubbed "Zidane Team."



SOCCER STAR MEETS KUNG-FU STAR: Real Madrid superstar David Beckham (R) poses with martial-arts maestro filmstar Jackie Chan, who is also Hong Kong's tourism ambassador, during Real's recent trip to the former British colony.

"Real dance to Zidane's rhythm. As always, he has been majestic," the daily drooled. On the potential downside for Real is that they now have to reacclimatise to Europe with a fortnight to go before the start of the domestic season. Already the club have to deal with niggling injuries. Portuguese midfielder Luis Figo, who has switched to the left to incorporate Beckham, sustained a minor injury in the Hong Kong match, and Brazilian striker Ronaldo likewise missed the Thai encounter with a strained left leg muscle. But Queiroz, who like Beckham joined from United, insists the club will be raring to go once the whiff of competitive matches gets in their nostrils with a domestic title defence and a tenth European Cup the targets. "I don't think this tour will cost us. I think everything will be fine once we come to the end of the pre-season period," said Queiroz at the end of the club's 18-day, 28,500-kilometre marathon. On Beckham's status at the club he told reporters: "The squad have welcomed him with open arms." Three fringe players, including former England and Liverpool man Steve McManaman, are meanwhile set to look for pastures new after failing to feature in any of the tour action.

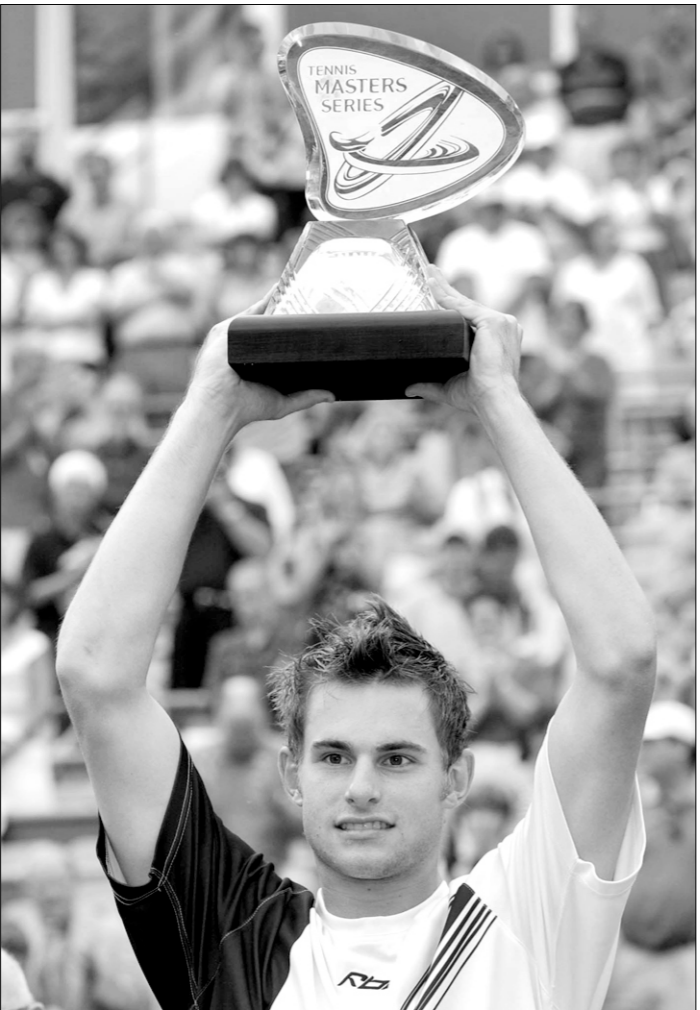
Fast & furious Roddick

Tennis
AFP, Montreal

Andy Roddick tips himself as a title contender at this month's US Open after defying a rain interruption on the way to a 6-1, 6-3 triumph over David Nalbandian in the final of the 2.45-million-dollar Masters Series Sunday. It took 56 minutes of work on court for the 20-year-old to lift his fourth title from seven tournaments. Roddick also moved up to second alongside Spain's French Open and Monte Carlo champion Juan Carlos Ferrero in match wins this season on 49. Wimbledon winner Roger Federer, who beat Roddick in the semifinals on grass, leads the table with 57 victories. "I'm a favorite," Roddick said of his hopes for Flushing Meadows, which begins in a fortnight. "Winning four out of seven titles was something I never thought I'd do. "To win two titles before the Open and have match point in the match you lost, I'm feeling pretty good about my game." But he warned: "On the day the Open starts, no other results matter." Roddick, the sixth seed, and Nalbandian, Argentina's 2002 Wimbledon finalist, had to wait for 90 minutes to get onto court after a morning of storms in Quebec. After the delayed start of play at Jarry Park, Roddick, got straight down to business, grabbing control of the first set and winning it On his second opportunity after double-faulting away the first. It took just 26 minutes. Roddick, who flew via private jet to Cincinnati for a reunion with his

Florida-based family prior to next week's Masters Series, had to endure another weather setback. That one lasted an hour and came as the American led a set and 4-2 with Nalbandian complaining of

slippery lines. That forced the contest off court for drying which took another hour.



Andy Roddick holds up the trophy after defeating David Nalbandian at the Montreal Masters on August 10.

The second match delay only postponed the inevitable as Roddick returned to repeat the victory he took over Nalbandian at the Canadian event last year in the quarterfinals. Roddick spent just a few more minutes in clinching the title, improving his Canadian match record to 14-2. The American struck six aces and broke Nalbandian five times. The Argentine produced 27 unforced errors. "I tried to keep going. I thought we needed to stop in the second set, it was getting too slippery," said the South American. "I didn't play my best tennis, I couldn't get my game going, it didn't work too well today." Roddick won 400,000 dollars and a skydiving bet with new coach Brad Gilbert, who now has to jump out of a plane. Roddick has done that four times -- Gilbert is afraid of heights. "Brad's scared to look off a second-floor balcony," said Roddick. "This should be fun -- he might mess his pants." Roddick's other titles in 2003 have come at St. Poelten, Austria, Queen's and Indianapolis. "I feel excited, this is my first Masters title," said the winner. "I played well this week -- it's pretty simple." Despite the one-way scoreline, Roddick added: "It never feels easy." Nalbandian, without a title this season, is the fourth consecutive unseeded player to reach a Canadian final after compatriot Guillermo Canas last year -- who beat Roddick for the title -- Romanian Andrei Pavel in 2001 and Israeli Harel Levy, a 2000 finalist against Marat Safin.

Boucher lauds

FROM PAGE 13 Boucher said: "On the last tour we went to Holland after winning at Lord's and we celebrated for a while. "The trip to Holland did get a bit out of hand and it had got out of hand the last two times we have been. "But we haven't gone this time and we are looking to stay focused. "If you have a team on the ropes, then you have got to leave them there otherwise you slip into bad habits. "We are playing well at the moment and if we can keep our standards high, and not lower them at all, then it will be great for us."

Naimur called

FROM PAGE 13 About Naimur's call-up, who last played international cricket against West Indies late last year before being dumped both as skipper and a player, a selector told The Daily Star Sport yesterday that Whatmore might consider him a better choice than Fahim Muntasir in Pakistan. The selector on condition of anonymity, said the newly-formed panel Would be meeting tomorrow to finalise the 14-member squad for the Pakistan tour. "We are thinking of selecting two separate teams for the three Tests and five one-day internationals against Pakistan but everything will be decided after the August 13 meeting," he said. The players have been asked to report to Whatmore today at 9am at the BCB's Stadium office. The selected players are: Javed Omar, Hannan Sarker, Shahriar Hossain, Habibul Bashar, Sanwar Hossain, Al-Shahriar, Rajin Saleh, Mohammad Ashraf, Alok Kapali, Khaled Mahmud, Khaled Mashud, Naimur Rahman, Tushar Imran, Mohammad Rafique, Manjurul Islam, Mashrafe-bin-Mortuza, Tapas Baishya, Hasibul Hossain, Tareq Aziz Khan, Mushfiqur Rahman, Anwar Hossain Munir and Alamgir Kabir.

Why them?

FROM PAGE 13 sible for selection didn't consider them good enough, why were they made to train under the Board's auspices? Whatmore had also gone on record as saying that the 21 cricketers who had been in the preliminary camp for the tour of Australia, would form the core from which teams will be picked for the next seven or eight months atleast, after the 15-man squad was announced in June. Has the popular coach had a sudden change of heart? Besides, what was the point in picking five new players when there was only a few days to make a judgement on them? Also, with the cricket season over, there was no guarantee regarding the required fitness level of a couple of players among the newcomers. It appears that that Whatmore's vibrant 'new Bangladesh' theme has hit its first controversy with the baffling selection of the preliminary squad, which many feel was not at all necessary with so little time for training as the Tigers leave for Pakistan on the evening of August 16.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS 38 Late 40 Word to the doctor? 5 Son of Noah 9 Aloof 12 Vagrant 13 Teeny amount 14 Personal question? 15 '50s Tony Martin hit 17 Football fill 18 Thick soup 19 Hearing, e.g. 21 Cobb of baseball 22 Hunt 24 'Charles in Charge' star 27 Blackguard 28 Glitch in print 31 Blond shade 32 Stocking stuffer 33 LummoX 34 Argument 35 Exit 37 1970 Newman/Woodward movie

Down 1 Porcelain flaw 2 Trade-mark art 3 Drive the getaway car 4 Vichyssoise ingredient 5 Faction 6 Weeding tool 7 Time-table abbr. 8 Billiards on in years 9 Uncle Sam's claim 10 Greek letters 11 Bygone days 12 Donald Fagen song 13 Acknowledge 14 Put one over on 15 On the rocks 16 Favorite 17 Voles 18 Indivisible

Football

AFP, Munich

Bayern Munich striker Giovane Elber is feeling the intense heat sweeping Germany worse than most with the arrival of Dutch front-man Roy Makaay and the purple patch of Peruvian marksman Claudio Pizarro putting the Brazilian under pressure at the Olympic Stadium. When Bayern signed Roy Makaay for a club record 18.75 million euros (21 million dollars) from Deportivo La Coruna the feeling was that Pizarro would make way so the top scorers last season in the German Bundesliga and Spanish Primera Liga could form a lethal partnership. However, Pizarro, 24, has been in scintillating form, netting in the opening two matches of the German season while Brazilian forward Elber, who bagged 21 goals last season, has yet to open his account for the 2003/04 campaign. Bayern coach Ottmar Hitzfeld has been singing the praises of former Werder Bremen forward Pizarro after he found the target in the 3-1 win over Eintracht Frankfurt and Saturday's 3-3 draw with

Hannover. "Pizarro is in great form," enthused Hitzfeld. "He was everywhere and has learned how to play his role.



He works the flanks and also defensively." Elber, 31, admits his fellow South American, who was voted man-of-the-match against Hannover by German magazine Kicker, is setting the standard but vowed to get back on the goal trail. "Of course Claudio has the edge at the moment but I am not writing off my chances," said Elber.

Media slams Shane

Cricket
REUTERS, Melbourne

Melbourne's The Age said in a front-page headline on Monday: "Warne hits back at woman's claims of raunchy phone messages." The newspaper added: "The allegations bear a striking resemblance to an incident in 2000, when Warne admitted he engaged in 'dirty talk' with a British nurse." Melbourne tabloid the Herald Sun ran a headline saying: "Shane slow to deny new sex claims". The paper said Warne had done some fine charity work this year since his suspension in February. But it added: "(Warne) hired a public relations firm to help rebuild his shattered public image. Now this. "If Warne is innocent, his public relations men could have done a better job for him yesterday by declaring his innocence in direct terms." The Australian newspaper ran a front-page headline saying: "Warne accused of 'text sex' harassment". The Australian Associated Press (AAP) called for the world's top-ranked team to sack Warne, saying: "Not only is Shane Warne a liability off the field, he is no longer a necessity on it." However, Warne's Victoria state coach David Hookes defended the 33-year-old who has taken 491 wickets in 107 tests and bowled Australia to victory in the 1999 World Cup final.

Sorry Jeffers

AFP, Cardiff

Arsenal striker Francis Jeffers apologised to Gunners' fans after being sent-off in his team's Community Shield defeat to Manchester United here on Sunday. Substitute Jeffers, who had only been on the pitch for 14 minutes after replacing Dennis Bergkamp, was red-carded after lashing out at United's Phil Neville in the 74th minute. "There was an initial foul by Phil Neville," said Jeffers. "I made a silly reaction in the heat of the moment. I have apologised to the boss and my teammates." Arsenal boss Arsene Wenger, whose side lost on a penalty shoot-out after the Millennium Stadium showpiece had ended 1-1 at the end of normal time, said the sending-off by referee Steve Bennett was justified. "Franny has apologised. He made a mistake, but he's an intelligent lad and he'll learn from that," said the Frenchman. "He was frustrated and he shouldn't have done it, but he's young and he'll learn. He wants to show when he comes on how good he is." "He missed a few early touches and got frustrated with his control of the ball. He feels under pressure to show how good he is."