

Roddick, Henin race

Australian Open

REUTERS, Melbourne

The Australian Open's top seeds led from the front on Monday, Andy Roddick and Justine Henin-Hardenne both posting impressive first-round victories at the season's first Grand Slam.

The world number ones faced very different challenges at a sunny Melbourne Park but the outcome was the same.

While Henin-Hardenne destroyed 15-year-old Australian wildcard Olivia Lukaszewicz 6-0, 6-0 at barely a canter, Roddick heaved aside burly Chilean Fernando Gonzalez 6-2, 7-5, 7-6.

The comprehensive manner of the American world number one's victory against a player regarded as one of the most dangerous non-seeds in the Open's 128-man draw

serves as notice that he is peaking at the right time.

A more powerful Henin-Hardenne did not face such stern opposition against her overawed opponent and barely put a foot wrong during the 46-minute match.

Sixth seed Rainer Schuettler, on the other hand, will have even less confidence after a disappointing loss to Sweden's Robin Soderling.

A surprise runner-up to Andre Agassi here last year, Schuettler let slip a two-set lead before exiting 4-6, 4-6, 7-5, 6-3, 6-4.

Another former finalist left the tournament on day one but Carlos Moya had not even had a chance to hit a ball.

The Spaniard, runner-up in 1997, pulled out of his first round match with James Blake with an ankle injury.

Schuettler and Moya were joined at the exit by Russian seeds

Elena Dementieva and Nadia Petrova, who were also both early casualties in Melbourne.

Seventh seed Dementieva slumped to Jelena Jankovic of Serbia and Montenegro 6-1, 6-4 while 10th seed Petrova lost to Hungarian Aniko Kapros 6-3, 6-3.

A dejected Dementieva, who also lost in the first round last year said: "Maybe I should not play because I never play well here.

Vera Zvonareva and Svetlana Kuznetsova fared better in a mixed start for the Russians.

Eleventh seed Zvonareva pounded Czech Zuzana Ondraszkova 6-3, 6-1 and 30th seed Kuznetsova breezed past American Shenay Perry 6-3, 6-3.

Fourth seed Amelie Mauresmo swept past Taiwanese Chuang Chia-jung for the loss of just one game and fifth seed Lindsay Davenport wiped Ruxandra Dragomir 6-2, 6-3.

Singer chess

SPORTS REPORTER

Four players jointly shared the lead with maximum 4 points each after the end of the 4th round games of the preliminary phase Singer 30th National Chess Championship at the NSC yesterday.

They are: Shawkat Hossain Pallab and FM Khandkar Aminul Islam, Abdul Maleq and Biswajit Mondal. Chanchal Kumar Gosh and Debaraj Chettarjee were in the second position with 3.5 points each.

In this round, Pallab beat Enayet, Amin beat Javed, Maleq beat Monir Khan, Biswajit beat Parag, Shakil beat Ity, Nasir beat Bisnu, Lavlu beat Amir, Emon beat Delwar, Arman beat Rashed, Reza beat Ali, Naser beat Farhad, Sohail beat Shameem, Shafiq beat Humayan, Arif beat Mithu, Anwar beat Rokon, Sawpan beat Janu, Taher beat Main and Uten beat Shajahan. Chanchal drew with Debaraj and Apel with Monir and Polish drew with Khorshed.

A team lose

FROM PAGE 13

they lost their last six wickets for 45 runs after Mazhar was dismissed with the score reading 158.

The home side was 11 for no loss at stumps.

Off-spinner Saeed Ajmal was the most successful KRL bowler with five wickets for 50 runs in 30 overs.

SCORES IN BRIEF

BANGLADESH A: First innings 198 all out in 84.3 overs (Rashedul Haq 19, Moniruzzaman 45, Nasiruddin 64 n.o., Tushar Imran 1, Halim Shah 0, Mazharul Haq 42, Anwar Hossain 3, Fahim Muntasir 0, Monjurul 0, Gazi Alamgir 1, Arafat 4-26, Faisal Afridi 1-47, Saeed Ajmal 5-50)

KRL: First innings 11 no loss in 3 overs (Saeed Anwar Jr 9 batting, Mohammed Ramzan 1 batting)

Kaba comforts

FROM PAGE 13

game was played in a foggy condition and was marked by physical displays. Referee Faizul Islam had to caution seven players including five Victoria booters to tackle the boiling atmosphere in the battle of two lightweights.

The defeat left Victoria glued to their previous collection of 10 points at the end of their first round campaign.

Yellow cards: Afzal, Polo, Sharif, Soum and Fakrul (Victoria), Oeinu and Kaba (Arambagh).

Sarwan, Gayle

FROM PAGE 13

Gayle not out 71
Gangab Ntini 0
Sarwan not out 79
Lara lbw b Nel 6
Chanderpaul c Gibbs b Kallis 27
Extras: (b-4, lb-4, nb-2, w-7) 17
Total: (For 3 wkts in 56 overs) 200
Fall of wickets: 1-18, 2-32, 3-99

Bowler O M R W
Pollock 14 7 25 0
Ntini 13 0 47 1
Nel 14 2 60 1
Kallis 12 3 44 1
Hall 0.2 0 4 0
Smith 1.4 0 8 0

McInnes questions

FROM PAGE 13

can beat anybody in the World Cup."

Bangladesh have been placed in a tough group that includes India and New Zealand.

He also defended the decision to change the captaincy.

"Ashiqur Rahman is a good leader and good thinker as well as a brilliant middle-order batsman that's why he has been named captain."

Ashiqur replaced Nafees Iqbal when the Board announced a 14-member squad on January 15.

SCORES IN BRIEF

BANGLADESH UNDER-19: 97 all out in 41.4 overs (Nayem 2, Aftab 28, Nazimuddin 0, Nadif 0, Ashiqur 4, Nadif 1, Abul Bashar 0, Riyad 3, Dhiman 23, Rubaiyet 6, Talha 12 n.o., Nazmul 0, Taposh 2-25, Mushfiqur 2-12, Tareq 2-17, Rafique 3-21)

BANGLADESH: 100 for 3 wkts in 29 overs (Hannan 11, Shahriar 5, Bashir 37 n.o., Rajin 14, Ashrafur 29 n.o., Rubaiyet 1-20, Nazmul 1-25)
Result: Bangladesh won by seven wickets.

Hookes' violent

FROM PAGE 13

Victoria police said on Monday that they had charged a 21-year-old man, Zdravco Micevic, with one count of assault. Local media reported that the man worked as a security guard at the hotel. Micevic made a brief appearance in the Melbourne Magistrates Court and was granted conditional bail. Police are now expected to consider further charges.

Hookes made a sparkling debut aged 21 in the Centenary Test in Melbourne in 1977, hitting England's Tony Greig for five consecutive boundaries as he reached his half-century.

The left-hander made 1,306 Test runs, including a top score of 143 not out, at an average of 34.36.

Hookes is also the fifth highest run-scorer in interstate cricket, hitting 9,364 runs for South Australia. He had a highest score of 306 not out. When he retired from first-class cricket in 1992 he was the highest run-scorer in Australian domestic cricket.

Primera Liga

Ronaldo saves Real

Football

AFP, Madrid

Brazilian superstar Ronaldo marked his 50th league match for Real Madrid with his 37th goal on Sunday but it wasn't enough to take his star-studded club top of the Spanish league following a disappointing 1-1 draw at Real Betis.

Even with England skipper David Beckham back in their ranks following an ankle injury Real did not live up to their 'galactic' status and a Joaquin volley on 34 minutes for Betis forced them to move up a gear to prevent a morale-sapping fourth league defeat of the season.

Valencia, held to a goalless draw by Valladolid on Saturday, continue to lead the way with 44 points from 20 games as the season enters its second half.

League's top goal better Ronaldo leveled brilliantly on the hour when he seized on a Zinedine Zidane pass, rounding goalkeeper Pedro Contreras before rolling the ball home from an extremely tight angle.

It was the phenomenal striker's 15th goal in the Primera Liga this season and 50th overall in the Real shirt since joining the Spanish giants in 2002 from Inter Milan.

Instead, it was the hosts who had the better chances as Beckham and company suggested they had not forgotten about a 4-1 beating at Sevilla on their last trip south.

Earlier, Deportivo La Coruna kept the heat on the leading pair with a 4-1 whipping of Real Zaragoza to cement their third place.

Diego Tristan hit a double for Deportivo and Juan Carlos Valeron scored twice - although his opening goal after just four minutes into his own net, under pressure from David Generelo.

Tristan fired the equaliser on 22 minutes and Valeron saved face by getting a second five minutes after the interval with a header.

Tristan headed the home side 3-

Premiership

Gunners go clear

Football

AFP, London

Arsenal jumped back to the top of the Premiership on Sunday but their beaten opponents Aston Villa claimed that neither of their goals were valid.

Thierry Henry scored twice in Arsenal's 2-0 win at Villa Park that saw Arsene Wenger's men take a two-point advantage over Manchester United, who crashed to the surprise defeat of the season at struggling Wolves on Saturday.

Both of Henry's goals angered Villa. His first, in the 29th minute, came after referee Mark Halsey allowed him to take a quick free-kick as the Villa defensive wall was still lining up.

And Villa were unhappy with the penalty Halsey awarded in the 53rd minute when Olof Mellberg halted Nigeria striker Nwankwo Kanu, in his last match before departing to the African Nations Cup, in the box.

Henry beat Villa's German



PHOTO: AFP

Ronaldo starts celebrating after equalising against Betis at the Ruiz de Lopera stadium in Sevilla on January 18.

1 up in the 76th minute and Sergio Gonzalez made it four with six minutes remaining after sprinting clear.

"Super Depor" now have 40 points from 20 games, just three behind Real.

Valencia saw their title challenge lose a little steam on Saturday in a goalless draw at Valladolid, where they have now not won for seven years.

As Real struggled to show their pedigree, city rivals Atletico

Madrid ensured their campaign for a Champions League slot stayed on the rails with a 2-1 home success over Seville which left them a point clear of Villarreal in fourth.

Fernando Torres swept in from close range to break the deadlock in the 43rd minute and Themistoklis Nikolaïdis rose to head in the clincher on 71 minutes before Jose Antonio Reyes, described as the future of the national Spanish side along with Torres, pulled one back with a late penalty.

"The crowd were fantastic and if we can replicate some of this form away we can really achieve something," said Atletico coach Gregorio Manzano.

Real Sociedad, conquerors last weekend of Real Madrid and climbing the table after an inauspicious first half of the season, moved clear of the danger zone with a 3-1 home success over Espanyol.

Russian international veteran Valery Karpin opened the scoring for Sociedad with a seventh-minute penalty.

Igor Gabillon and Turkey's Nihat Kahveci scored in the final six minutes to make the points safe, leaving former Manchester United man Jordi Cruyff to net a consolation in stoppage time for Espanyol, who remain in the relegation mire.

Fifth-placed Villarreal thanked second-half goals from Argentine defender Rudolfo Arribasbarrena and Brazilian veteran forward Sonny Anderson with his eighth of the season to see off Malaga 2-0.

Elsewhere, Australian striker John Aloisi rescued a point for Osasuna in a 1-1 home draw with Albacete which keeps alive the former Coventry forward's dreams of a tilt at a UEFA Cup spot next season with Osasuna in sixth place just ahead of Barcelona.

Barca have a huge fight on their hands to ensure a place in the Champions League next season after squandering two home points Saturday in a 1-1 draw with Athletic Bilbao.

TOP SIX

Spanish league table ahead after the weekend's matches (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, goals against, points):

Valencia	20	13	5	2	36	14	44
Real	20	13	4	3	38	20	43
Deportivo	20	12	4	4	36	16	40
Atletico	20	10	4	6	28	23	34
Villarreal	20	9	6	5	27	22	33
Osasuna	20	7	9	4	21	16	30

United get Saha

GUARDIAN, London

Louis Saha will become Manchester United's third signing since the transfer window opened when he travels to Old Trafford for a medical examination this week.

A 10-million pound deal was confirmed on Sunday night, although Saha, 25, was actually told last Tuesday and has been house-hunting since. On Sunday he described it as a "dream move".

Fulham reacted angrily last week when Saha announced the transfer had been all but completed before they could break the news themselves. However, the denials, accusations and half-truths finally made



LOUIS SAHA

way for a public admission from the club's owner Mohamed Al Fayed that the transfer had been agreed "in principle".

Saha still has to agree personal terms but that should not be a problem for a club of United's wealth and he will join his new team-mates for training when they return from a four-day break in Dubai on Thursday. The French forward is Cup-tied for Sunday's fourth-round tie at Northampton Town but should make his debut at home to Southampton the following Saturday.

Using their favoured agent Pini Zihavi and Saha's own Belgium-based representatives, United verbally agreed an offer with Fulham six days ago and have spent the past few days finalising the structure of the payments, the agents' share and possible top-up-fee.

Roger Milla's wife killed

AFP, Yaounde

Cameroon football legend Roger Milla's wife has died from injuries sustained in a traffic accident here last week, her family confirmed on Monday.

Marie Evelyn Milla, 39, was involved in a collision last Wednesday as she travelled with her husband to Mvomeka, 220Km south of here, for an audience with Cameroon President Paul Biya. Her husband was in a separate car.

She was treated in a local hospital and then transferred to a hospital in the French capital Paris, but never came out of a coma.

The couple, married in 1984, had two children - a 20-year-old son and a daughter aged 14.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Loulish sort
5 Set off the poly-graph
9 The girl
12 Wash
13 Instru-ment
14 Hem's partner
15 On the road
17 Feast-famine link
18 "When — 17, ..." —
19 Poe
21 Viewpoint
24 Rayburn or Rod-denberry
25 Remedy
26 Caljeot
30 Altar affir-mative
31 Satan's pur-chases
33 Fans, big-time
35 Festival pest

DOWN

1 Lunch counter order
3 Cupid's aka
4 Abuse verbally
5 Show-girl
6 Bellow
7 Inventor
8 Whitney
9 Whip
10 Arbor, MI
11 Actor
12 Lunch counter order
13 Kvetch
14 52 2003, e.g.
15 Cornfield
16 Ram's ma'am
17 Moreover
18 Actor
19 McGregor
20 Ram's ma'am
21 Moreover
22 Artist's model, maybe
23 Sub-servient, perhaps
24 Solidifies
26 Troubles
27 Colora-tion
28 Vivacity
29 Informa-tion
31 Visits
32 Tramar-car contents
33 Vampire repellent
37 West of
40 Boates' mail
41 At an end
42 Born
43 Cretan
44 Fresh
45 Filling-station supply

Solution time: 21 mins.

ALIAS DER SCAB
DORMOUSE HOWE
ZWIETRAK ALICE
WHALES KNOT
HESS KNOXAPS
OLIE FILLY OAF
PARABLES DULA
SEPTENTRION
LUAU ZUCCHINI
ARIA ESOTERIC
POLL BOW NAPE

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11

12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53

CRYPTOQUIP

HJ Q T Z L URLGYI VIHGL

HQ YH FHAM HA BOIZTAN,

NTR ZON BOFL O MILOV

GIM BTUH JOZHYN.

Yesterday's Cryptquip: THE SLICK ASTRONOMER, WHEN ASKED WHAT A PLANET WAS, REPLIED "NO COMET"

Today's Cryptquip Clue: B equals H

The Cryptquip 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.