

Early exit for Hingis

BBC ONLINE, undated

Justine Henin-Hardenne ensured Martina Hingis suffered a first-round exit at her latest comeback event, the Sydney International, on Monday.

French Open champion Henin-Hardenne beat the Swiss star 6-3 6-3 at the Australian Open warm-up competition.

Hingis lost her opening service game and struggled for pace as the Belgian attacked her slower second serves.

Henin-Hardenne is also on the comeback trail, having been out since October with a leg injury.

Five-time Grand Slam singles winner Hingis, who has been off the WTA Tour for three years, won three matches on the Gold Coast last week in her first full tournament back.

But in her first match against a top-10 player she struggled against her opponent's groundstrokes.

However, she was upbeat about her progress so far and how it sets her up for the Australian Open.

"I chose to come (to Sydney) to know where I'm at," said Hingis. "I know what I'm aiming for now."

"It's good to know how I played, how the match went - she was at a different level."

Ljubicic wins Chennai Open

BBC ONLINE, undated

Ivan Ljubicic carried his superb form of 2005 into the new year with victory over Carlos Moya at the Chennai Open.

The Croat won two titles last year and reached another six finals as he rose to number nine in the world rankings.

And Ljubicic claimed the fourth title of his career on Sunday with a 7-6 (8-6) 6-2 win over Moya in the final.

Damien Dragoys

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covered - and efficient, glossy fielding. What more could the home crowd want?

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of the Twenty20 cricket international between Australia and South Africa at the Gabba Monday:

AUSTRALIA

Hopes c Kallis b Pollock	17			
Martyn c Gibbs b Zondeki	96			
Ponting c Pollock b Botha	27			
Symonds not out	54			
Clarke not out	0			
Extras: (b-4, lb-3, w-8)	15			
Total: (For 3 wickets in 20 overs)	209			
Fall of wickets: 1-57, 2-104, 3-187				
<b>Bowler</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>W</b>
Pollock	4	0	34	1
Kruger	4	0	29	0
Zondeki	3	0	41	1
Hall	4	0	38	0
Botha	4	0	43	1
Kallis	1	0	17	0

SOUTH AFRICA

Smith b Hopes	22
Dippenaar c Haddin b Bracken	1
Gibbs c Clark b Bracken	0
Boucher c Haddin b Clark	29
Pollock c Lewis b Symonds	24
Kallis run out	15
Rudolph not out	6
Hall c Hussey b Hopes	11
Botha c Katich b Symonds	2
Kruger c Martyn b Lewis	3
Zondeki b Lewis	0
Extras: (w1)	1

Result: Australia won by 95 runs

Man-of-the-match: Damien Martyn (AUS)

PRIMERA LIGA

Stalemates give Barca more ground

Football

AFP, Undated

Real Madrid and Osasuna saw their hopes of catching Spanish league leaders Barcelona suffer a blow on Sunday when both had to make do with draws while Real also cursed a renewed injury for luckless Ronaldo as the Brazilian is set to miss the next three weeks due to a recurrence of calf injury.

Osasuna could only manage a 1-1 home draw with modest outfit Racing Santander to leave Barca four points clear of the chasing pack.

A further stalemate saw third-placed Valencia draw 0-0 at Atletico Madrid to leave the former six points adrift of Osasuna and ten of Barcelona.

Real, with 14 points to make up on the leaders at start of play, were cursing their poor luck following a goalless draw at high-riding Villarreal where Ronaldo limped off before halftime having just returned from an injury to his right leg.

Real's French midfield veteran Zinedine Zidane said there was little point in lamenting the growing gap with Barcelona.

"At this stage of the season there's still everything to play for. We mustn't think about Barcelona but about the team right above us," said the Frenchman.

That team is Villarreal, a point better off.

On the renewed injury for Ronaldo, Zidane said: "It's a bad one for us as we know Ronaldo will get goals. We'll have to see how long he will be out for."

Osasuna had won all their previous home league matches this season but Santander stopped them in their tracks and deserved a point.

Frenchman Ludovic Delporte swept home a fine freekick to put Osasuna ahead on 29 minutes but seconds before the break Perez Antonito levelled for Santander, taking advantage of confusion in the home defence to score off a pass by Mora and bag his fifth of the

season.

Second half pressure from Osasuna, who had won their previous home league encounters, failed to dislodge the visitors' stiff resistance.

Real, 30 points from their 18 outings, stand sixth after their draw at Villarreal which saw Woodgate swiftly into his stride, feeding Ronaldo in the fifth minute only for the striker to be hauled up for offside.

Zidane then slammed an effort just wide as Real set the early pace before Villarreal, inspired by Juan Riquelme, began to settle.

Real had to give a premature debut to new Brazilian defender Cicinho, just arrived on a five-year deal from Sao Paulo when Ronaldo

came off after just 33 minutes.

A switch of tactics saw young striker Roberto Soldado come on for Brazilian talent Robinho, freeing Zidane to move out to the left channel while Julio Baptista dropped deeper from his initial role as spearhead.

Elsewhere Sunday, Real Zaragoza gave their hopes of making a surge for a UEFA Cup slot a boost with a 2-0 win away to rock-bottom Alaves with Diego Milito and Ewerthon on target.

Cadiz moved out of the drop zone after a Nednad Miroslavjevic first-half penalty saw off midtable Getafe and a Fabian Canobbio effort helped Celta Vigo overcome Real Sociedad 1-0.



PHOTO: AP

Real Madrid's Ronaldo limps off the field as coach Juan Ramon Lopez Caro (R) gives instructions to his players during their Primera Liga match against Villarreal at the Madrigal on Sunday.

Vieri set for Monaco move

INTERNET, undated

AC Milan vice-president Adriano Galliani has revealed that the club has agreed a deal with Monaco for the transfer of Christian Vieri.

The striker only joined the Rossoneri in the summer but he has struggled to make an impact at the club and is down in the pecking order behind Andriy Shevchenko, Alberto Gilardino and Filippo Inzaghi.

Monaco have made a move for the former Inter hitman, with Italian coach Francesco Guidolin wanting to pair him up with Marco Di Vaio, and the French outfit would be able to give Vieri the first team football that he needs to get back into the Italy national squad for the World Cup.

Galliani said: "We have reached an agreement with Monaco. Now it is just up to the player to agree personal terms with the Monagasques."

"If Bobo leaves we will think about getting another striker. We will certainly not be doing a swap deal with Monaco. Javier Chevanton does not interest us and neither does Mirko Vucinic of Lecce."

Hooligans face WC crackdown

AFP, Berlin

Violent hooligans and fans who invade pitches at this summer's World Cup finals will face heavy fines as organisers attempt to ensure the June 9-July 9 tournament passes off peacefully.

According to an article in Monday's Focus magazine, the various German regional authorities are working to introduce a fast-track system to deal with offenders.

The measures include punishing transgressors without witness testimony while Dusseldorf prosecutor Klaus Bronny told the magazine that foreign fans could be hit with financial sanctions of between 150 and 1200 euros.

The prosecutor in Celle, Harald Range, in the north of the country demanded "immediate extradition" for instigators of "serious violence".

Authorities fear the fall-out of the Group A match in Hanover on June 20 between Costa Rica and Poland because of the traditional hostility between German and Polish fans.

As far as pitch invasions are concerned, the vice-president of the World Cup organising committee Wolfgang Niersbach, insisted that "only heavy fines can dissuade them".

Alonso wins it for punter

REUTERS, London

A Liverpool fan has won 25,000 pounds (43,880 dollars) after betting that midfielder Xabi Alonso would score from his own half this season, British media reported on Monday.

Alonso managed the feat from about 60 metres with Liverpool's fifth goal in a thrilling 5-3 FA Cup third round win at second division Luton Town on Saturday after the hosts' keeper had gone up for a stoppage-time corner. Fan Adrian Hayward, 42, had placed his 200 pound bet at 125-1 after noticing the Spaniard had tried several times last season to score from the Liverpool half.

"Since placing the bet, I've always had a vision in my mind that it would come when the opposing keeper came out for a corner in a cup game," Hayward was quoted as telling the Daily Mail.

"I couldn't believe it when Luton got a corner and the keeper started to run upfield....I thought I was going to pass out. When it went in, I went crazy."

I'm happy at Real: Carlos

INTERNET, undated

Roberto Carlos insists he has no desire to leave Real Madrid - for the time being at least.

The Brazilian full back has admitted in the past that he is considering a return to his homeland amid speculation that the 32-year-old has become increasingly unsettled in the Spanish capital.

However, for the next five months at least, Carlos is more concerned with helping to rectify Real's season of underachievement and the ultimate goal of adding more silverware to the trophy cabinet of the already decorated club.

"I'm not concerned about whether or not other clubs are making offers for me," said Carlos.

"I'm happy in Madrid and happy in Spain."

"If I get an offer to leave I will let people know but now isn't the right time as we have to work hard and keep battling away. I've got five months to help this club win something."

"I'm not leaving Real Madrid without winning another trophy."

Carlos, a fixture in the Real side for almost a decade, also admitted that he may be prepared to extend his stay beyond the end of the season.

"If I can I will stay on next season and continue trying to make history with Real Madrid," added Carlos.

A worrying

FROM PAGE 12

We have to release the Bangabandhu Stadium at one stage and if the Dhaka League is to be held here, the launch of the Pro-League will be delayed. We will sit with the clubs after the Eid," he said.

In reply to a question about national camp, Helal said that he was against long-term residential camps. "We could arrange the camp in Dhaka to cut the costs. Cruciani had suggested to take the team to Cox's Bazar for conditioning camp and we are considering the proposal," the BFF secretary added.

Mirpur Stadium

FROM PAGE 12

Bangladesh in February-March.

The Bangladesh Cricket Board is trying hard to prepare the stadium for the second Test in March. The first Test of the two-match series is expected to be held in Chittagong.

SERIE A

Milan win 7-goal thriller

Football

AFP, Rome

AC Milan emerged as the closest rivals to runaway Serie A leaders Juventus after edging Parma in a seven-goal thriller on Sunday.

Milan's unconvincing 4-3 victory saw them climb above city rivals Inter Milan into second place with 40 points, nine less than Juve who won 2-1 at Palermo on Saturday.

Inter, held to a goalless draw at Siena, drop to third on 39 points, followed by Fiorentina on 37.

Milan's Dutch midfielder Clarence Seedorf admitted his side need Juventus to suffer a slump if the title race is to remain open.

"We have to keep winning and make sure we're ready to exploit any mistake Juve might make," he said.

Parma took the lead at the San Siro when Nelson Dida fumbled a corner and Paolo Cannavaro, brother of Juve defender Fabio, stabbed home the loose ball from a yard out.

Milan responded with three goals in a blistering nine-minute spell before half time which crushed Parma's early swagger.

Giuseppe Cardone turned Kaka's cross into his own net to level the score, before Alberto Gilardino headed in Andriy Shevchenko's pinpoint cross.

Kaka appeared to have put Milan in control going into the break, his right-footed shot curling into the bottom corner after Shevchenko's drive had been blocked.

Parma gave themselves hope when Marco Marchionni burst through and beat Dida with a low shot in the 70th minute, but Shevchenko restored Milan's two-goal cushion by converting Andrea Pirlo's right-wing cross.

Marchionni doubled his goal haul with a superb solo effort to ensure a nervous finale for the home side, but Milan held on despite their defensive frailties.



PHOTO: REUTERS

Kaka celebrates with his AC Milan teammate Alberto Gilardino (top) after scoring against Parma during their Serie A match at the San Siro on Sunday.

Totti 'salutes' Cassano

Football

INTERNET, undated

Francesco Totti has said goodbye to Antonio Cassano with some barbed comments on their rivalry and how Roma have benefited from his departure.

"Seeing as Cassano left without saying goodbye to any of us, we will do it through the Press," sniped the Giallorossi captain. "Now the team is strong and united."

Cassano had been frozen out of the squad for the last six months after refusing to renew his contract and the saga was finally concluded this week with a 3.5 million-pound move to Real Madrid.

"The Spanish League will suit his style of football and I hope he can express all of his quality in La Liga," added Totti on a kind note.

The two men used to be firm friends when Cassano first arrived, as he had always said that Totti was his football hero.

However, their rapport deteriorated over the last year precipitated by Fabio

Capello's departure and it came to a head during Cassano's presentation Press Conference in Madrid.

When reminded that Zinedine Zidane had said Cassano was a better player than Totti, the 23-year-old agreed. "Zidane is a legend, so if he says something then we must believe him."

Totti hit back at this statement after Sunday's 1-0 win away to Treviso. "It is Zidane's opinion and should be respected, even if many people think

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

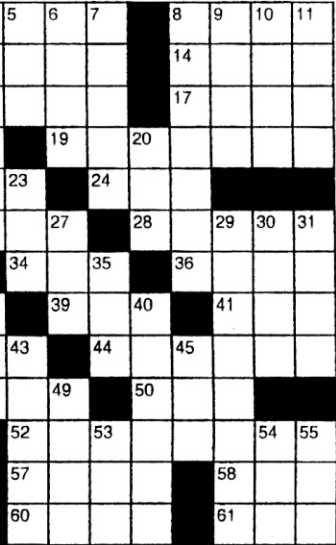
ACROSS

1 Fabric	39 Scull	61 Cut off	16 Shock's partner
border	41 Pinch	<b>DOWN</b>	20 Grimalkin
4 Large	42 Thanks-giving	1 Scenery	21 Wan
8 Lectern	43 veggie	2 "I" strain	22 Kim's ex
locale	44 Stations	3 Home	23 Seagoing
12 Some	46 Restau-rant critic,	of	jalopy
time back	perhaps	McGill	27 Cattle call?
13 Ethereal	50 Mongrel	4 Beauty shops	29 Disney-land
the foot?	51 Jason's	ship	transport
15 Nat "King"	52 Cash-related	5 XIII	30 Send forth
Cole hit	56 Farmer's home?	6 Gaelic	31 Agents, for short
17 Old	57 Pindaric creations	7 An Earp brother	33 Em-ployees' due
porficio	58 Debtor's letters	8 Vessel for washing	35 Disgust-ing
18 Afternoon	59 Earth	9 Opposi-tionist	38 Highland chapeau
hour	60 Makes	10 Pedestal like	40 Learners' break
19 Art made with lasers	Gregory Hines' specialty	11 Carpet style	43 Interoffice e-mails
21 Progeni-tor			45 Deposit
24 Gregory			46 Peregrinates
Hines' specialty			47 Hydrox rival
25 Pub request			48 Tangelo
26 Final answer?			49 Bustle
28 Circus employee			53 Just out
32 Bound			54 Kanga's kid
34 Go up and down			55 "Uh-huh"
36 Iditarod terminus			
37 Showy display			

DOWN

1 Scenery	2 "I" strain	3 Home	4 Beauty shops	5 XIII	6 Gaelic	7 An Earp brother	8 Vessel for washing	9 Opposi-tionist	10 Pedestal like	11 Carpet style
chewer	"I" strain	Home	Beauty shops	XIII	Gaelic	An Earp brother	Vessel for washing	Opposi-tionist	Pedestal like	Carpet style
McGill	University	of	shop	quadrupled	for short	Em-ployees' due	Disgust-ing	Highland chapeau	Learners' break	Interoffice e-mails
University	University	of	shop	quadrupled	for short	Em-ployees' due	Disgust-ing	Highland chapeau	Learners' break	Interoffice e-mails
University	University	of	shop	quadrupled	for short	Em-ployees' due	Disgust-ing	Highland chapeau	Learners' break	Interoffice e-mails
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University	University	of	shop	quadrupled	for short	Em-ployees' due	Disgust-ing	Highland chapeau	Learners' break	Interoffice e-mails
University	University	of	shop	quadrupled	for short	Em-ployees' due	Disgust-ing	Highland chapeau	Learners' break	Interoffice e-mails

Solution time: 25 mins.



CRYPTOQUIP

DW Q RQK OJIIILIX ZLQC

IBOLZEBRQK IVZLKNVE

XJ TJB IBOOJIL EL RDNEV

VZT IEJO CDWVDKN?

Yesterday's Cryptokuip: FILM CONCERNING A JAR OF GRAPE JUICE SPILLING ON SOMEONE'S SHIRT: "THE COLLAR PURPLE."

Today's Cryptokuip Clue: O equals P

The Cryptokuip 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.

Interim ZC

FROM PAGE 12

The players had walked out on Dec. 22 in protest at financial and transport issues and the continued presence in office of Zimbabwe Cricket chairman Peter Chingoka and managing director Ozias Bvute.

In a statement on Monday ICC president Ehsan Mani said the world governing body was seeking further details on the interim board.

"However, no one should regard the appointment of this committee as a solution to the issues facing Zimbabwe cricket and there remain a number of outstanding matters that must be urgently resolved in an open and transparent manner to support Zimbabwe's participation in international cricket," Mani said.

"These include addressing allegations of financial mismanagement, ensuring disputes between players and the board are effectively addressed and providing certainty for other ICC members that the strongest possible Zimbabwe cricket team will be able to fulfil future international commitments, especially the forthcoming tour of the West Indies due to commence in April."