

## Sampras back to tennis!

AFP, Newport Beach

A restless Pete Sampras will begin a low-level tennis comeback here Monday in World Team Tennis, but there are no plans for an ATP return or coaching by the 14-time Grand Slam champion.

Sampras makes his return when the Newport Beach Breakers host St. Louis and will play in six more matches for the Breakers over the following two weeks in the US circuit that features teams in singles, doubles and mixed sets.

"I want to do well and not embarrass myself. That's my main concern," Sampras said.

"I want to do well and win but it's not that cut-throat tennis that I used to be part of."

In ruling out ATP matches or coaching, Sampras also said he had no interest in the circuit of elder stars that includes former rival Jim Courier.

"I'm not quite ready for that sort of deal," Sampras said.

"Playing a few one-nighters here and there is a nice deal but not as cut-throat as Jim's deal. I don't know if I'll ever be ready to come back into that."

Sampras won his tournament farewell at the 2002 US Open and retired at the same event a year later. But lately, the American star that turns 35 next month has felt unsatisfied in retirement.

"In the last year, I was getting a little restless, a little bored finding out what was next for me. I opened myself to playing just to get some structure in my days. It gives me a little bit of what I used to have," Sampras said.

Sampras won 64 ATP singles crowns, including seven Wimbledon titles, five US Opens and two Australian Opens.

After such an epic career, taking up golf and enjoying time with his children did not provide what Sampras needed.

## Elizondo's final

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and fifth officials.

FIFA also announced that Japan's Toru Kamikawa will be the referee for Saturday's match for third place between Germany and Portugal in Stuttgart.

## FIFA revamps

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As hosts, Germany did not have to qualify for the World Cup.

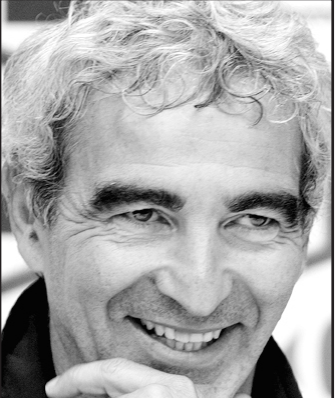
The United States crashed out in the first round and were highlighted as a particular disappointment by FIFA president Sepp Blatter, second ranked The Czech Republic also went in the first club and Mexico in the second round.

The next world rankings -- first created in 1993 -- will be published on July 12.



## Did U Know?

Gabriel Batistuta scored the fastest goal in the 1994 World Cup after just two minutes of Argentina's match against Greece. Batigol went on to score a hatrick in his side's 4-0 victory



### Raymond Domenech

(France football coach)  
"Zidane is a world champion, his photograph adorns a wall in Marseille, he's a true star, a true star in the sense that he brings something to this team and enables the French public to go on dreaming."



**STAR Sports**  
Wimbledon Championships  
Women's Singles/Men's Doubles Final  
Live at 6:30 pm



Frenchwoman Amelie Mauresmo is jubilant after winning a point against Russian superstar Maria Sharapova in the semifinals of the Wimbledon Tennis Championships in London on Thursday.

# A fighters' battle



AFP, London

Amelie Mauresmo and Justine Henin-Hardenne clash in Saturday's Wimbledon final with both determined to prove they are fighters not quitters.

World number one Mauresmo laid her Wimbledon demons to rest by beating Maria Sharapova in a thrilling semifinal on Thursday.

The Frenchwoman, who had lost at this stage three times before, made it to the final Saturday at the All England club with a dramatic 6-3, 3-6, 6-2 win over Sharapova to progress to a final clash with Justine Henin-Hardenne.

Mauresmo clinched her first Grand Slam title in January with victory at the Australian Open, but it was a tainted win in many eyes as Henin-Hardenne quit with stomach pains when she was trailing 6-1, 2-0.

Adding spice to the controversy was Mauresmo's admission that she was 'ready to die' on court that day in order to secure an elusive title.

The Frenchwoman had to

endure further doubts over her position as a Grand Slam winner after Michaela Krajicek retired with heat stress in their third round meeting and second-seeded Kim Clijsters retired with an ankle injury early in the third set of the semifinal.

"I think the final is going to be about tennis," said Mauresmo, keen to play down any lingering bitterness over the manner of her win in Melbourne and become the first French winner here since Suzanne Lenglen in 1925.

French Open winner Henin-Hardenne, who needs a Wimbledon title to complete a career Grand Slam, insists the controversy of her Melbourne performance is a thing of the past.

"It's far away for me now. I want to win another Grand Slam and win Wimbledon for the first time," said the Belgian third seed who has yet to drop a set at the All England Club this year on her way to a second final.

"I don't think about what happened because this is a new situation."

"I don't have anything to prove to anybody anymore. I have proved on the tennis court what a fighter I am, how much I can compete."

Henin-Hardenne is chasing her sixth career Grand Slam title and was the runner-up here in 2001, losing in three sets to Venus Williams.

Back then she was just 19, playing in her first career Grand Slam final and intimidated by just being on the same court as the imposing American.

She enjoys a 5-4 career edge over Mauresmo and will start Saturday's final as the slight favourite having easily overcome compa-

triot Clijsters in the semifinals.

Mauresmo also hopes she will inspire the French football team to victory against Italy in the World Cup final in Berlin on Sunday.

"I hope it's a French weekend," she said.

## WC travel woes eased

AFP, St. Kitts

Spectators visiting the Caribbean next year for the Cricket World Cup will be able to move between host islands without stopping for passport processing, officials said Thursday.

Caribbean Community (CARICOM) leaders meeting here agreed Thursday to the plan, which will help movement by more than 50,000 visitors expected to flock into the region next year for the global sport showcase.

All nine World Cup host nations and Dominica will be treated as a single entity from January 15 to May 15 of next year.

The deal is part of an unprecedented regional security plan incorporating the US advanced passenger information system.

Visitors will be pre-cleared and information will be shared among a pool of more than 400 police and military personnel.

"It is a framework that gives us comfort that we can therefore extend to all persons travelling in these 10 countries during this period of time... a level of freedom of movement that has not existed," Barbados deputy prime minister Mia Mottley said.

# Oz wins 'world cup of beer'

AFP, Sydney

The Soccerroos may have been eliminated from the World Cup by Italy but an Adelaide brewer says fans can console themselves with the fact that an Aussie ale has won a "beer world cup" held in Britain.

Coopers Brewery said it won a drink-off organised by British industry magazine Off Licence News involving, where possible, a representative beer from each of the 32 World Cup nations.

The beers were divided into eight groups of four, corresponding with the tournament's groupings, and judges awarded marks for taste,

appearance, balance and drinkability.

In the real World Cup, Italy knocked out Australia in the second round with a controversial stoppage-time penalty but the beer tournament saw a rematch between the two nations in the final.

Australia emerged the winner 4-3, with the judges stating "Not content with winning pretty much every other sporting event from tidlywinks to Test matches, an Australian -- and an ale of all things -- has only gone and lifted the prestigious beer World Cup."

## Berlin ready

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propaganda value of an Olympics. Hitler ordered the old venue to be demolished and commissioned a new design by Werner March.

Despite constant concerns that construction was behind schedule, the stadium and surrounding complex was ready in time for the opening ceremony on August 1, 1936.

Hitler ordered a halt to any anti-semitic attacks during the Games, so that they would appear to the outside world a celebration of peace.

Owens took gold in the 100 metres, 200m, long jump and 4x100m relay, and recalled in his autobiography that he had waved in greeting to Hitler, who he said returned the gesture.

During World War II, a bunker was prepared under the stadium to house the Nazis' radio network.

## Seamers bring Pakistan back

BBC ONLINE, undated

Pakistan's seamers made a good start to the second day of their Test warm-up game against England A at Canterbury.

Mohammad Sami, Umar Gul and Abdul Razzaq each picked up a wicket in the first hour of play.

England A skipper Rob Key was the third to go for 136 when his off stump was knocked out by all-rounder Razzaq.

But Chris Read (39) and Alex Loudon (29) stopped the rot with an unbroken partnership of 74 to see their side to 365-6 at lunch.

It was a timely effort by Read, who reminded the selectors that Geraint Jones is not the only wicketkeeper who can bat just two days before the squad for next week's first Test is announced.

Two of his five boundaries were hooked away in the middle of a spell of short-pitched bowling directed at him by Razzaq and he also used his feet to go down the pitch and loft spinner Danish Kaneria straight for six.

England A resumed on 268-3, but had added only 14 to the total when Key's overnight partner, Ravi Bopara, departed for 15.

He leg glanced and square cut Sami for two early boundaries but got carried away by his success and drove a catch to cover.

Jamie Dalrymple was one of England's few successes in the recent one-day series against Sri Lanka but he did not last long this time as Gul brought one back off the seam to have him lbw for one.

Key followed shortly after when Razzaq knocked out his off stump.

## Vaughan loss vital: Tait

AFP, Sydney

Australian bowler Shaun Tait on Friday predicted England would severely miss injured captain Michael Vaughan during the Ashes and suggested the skipper's role would burden his replacement Andrew Flintoff.

Vaughan was this week ruled out of the upcoming Ashes tour in Australia, where England will attempt to defend the trophy they won last September for the first time in 18 years.

"He's their leader, their frontman and someone with a knack of sticking it up the Aussies - if you look at his Test record against Australia it's quite outstanding," Tait told reporters.

"You never like to see someone go down with a career-threatening injury but him not being there has to be a positive for Australia, as is Simon Jones being injured," he added, referring to the England fast bowler.

Vaughan averages 42.94 in Test matches for England but this rises to 47.95 for matches against Australia.

Tait said handing the captaincy to Flintoff could be too much for a player already spearheading his team's efforts as an all-rounder, although he conceded Ricky Ponting's batting was unaffected by his duties as Australian skipper.

"Sometimes a bloke like Freddie (Flintoff) can be so involved, he's a slips fielder, a batsman and a bowler, probably their best bowler, if he's captain too it can probably affect his performance," Tait said.

Flintoff is expected to take over the captaincy if he returns from an ankle injury for England's second Test against Pakistan at Old Trafford this month.

Chairman of selectors David Graveney said this week that if available he would retain the role for the Ashes, which begin in November.

# The best soccer quotes



REUTERS, London

Bill Shankly felt soccer was more important than life and death, and fans around the world agreed with the former Liverpool manager on Friday.

Scotsman Shankly, who died of a heart attack in 1981, beat former Manchester United and France forward Eric Cantona in a poll organised by the Plain English Campaign to pick soccer's most memorable quote.

Shankly struck a chord when he said: "Some people believe football is a matter of life and death. I'm very disappointed with that attitude. I can assure you it is much, much more important than that."

Campaign spokesman Dave Smith told Reuters: "We surveyed

10,000 supporters in 80 countries. They really liked the power of the Shankly quote."

"Votes for him peaked after England went out to Portugal in the quarterfinals (of the World Cup). It described their passion for football. We got votes from all over, from Australia, America, all English-speaking countries."

Shankly's passionate commitment to the game gave him top spot above Cantona, who once bewildered fans by saying: "When the seagulls follow the trawler, it's because they think sardines will be thrown into the sea."

Third place went to former England midfielder Paul Gascoigne for saying: "I never predict anything and I never will."

BBC commentator John Motson took two of the top-10 spots.

"I think this could be our best victory over Germany since the

War" said Motson, who also once declared "the World Cup is a truly international event".

Former Manchester United great George Best, famous for his passion for the good life, was at number eight in the poll for saying: "I spent most of my money on birds, booze and fast cars. The rest I just squandered".

Smith said: "We have been conducting the poll throughout the World Cup and thought the final was the perfect time to publish it."

The Plain English Campaign is an independent group which urges clearer information in public documents.

Each year it takes great delight in naming and shaming bureaucrats, politicians and companies who mangle the language into incomprehensibility.

# Fairplay takes a dive



AFP, Berlin

"Football is a gentleman's game played by thugs while rugby is a thugs game played by gentlemen," - this World Cup has not quite proven that oft-cited maxim but at times it has come close.

The worst example was what has become known as the battle of Nuremberg, the second round match between the Netherlands and Portugal which yielded a finals record of 20 cards, 16 yellow and four red.

There was also the skirmish of Berlin when the Argentinians decided that having failed to beat Germany over 120 minutes and a penalty shootout they would kick them off the pitch instead.

Inquiries are ongoing but non-playing substitute Leandro Cufré managed the singular feat of emulating compatriot Claudio Caniggia in 2002 by being red carded without kicking a ball.

Needless to say FIFA president Sepp Blatter was less than pleased that his event should be tarnished by such a show.

"There was really no need," said the Swiss.

"After 120 minutes football is a drama and then you have to go to penalty kicks and then football becomes a tragedy, but one is the

winner and one is the loser.

"What I always said is in football you learn to win, but you also have to learn to lose."

Portugal may not have reached the final but they presently top the standings of the hall of shame for cards handed out - 21 of the yellow hue and two reds.

Africa have as yet failed to fulfil Pele's prediction they will win the World Cup - and that was meant to be in the 90's - but Ghana look set to finish second in the cards table with 18 yellow and one red.

Their talented striker Asamoah Gyan also looks like finishing top of the individual standings having accrued four yellow cards and one red in just four matches.

He would have been challenged by Croatia's Josip Simunic had English whistleblower Graham Poll had his way with the defender receiving three yellow cards and finally a red one in the group match with Australia.

While laughable it could have turned out to be extremely embarrassing for FIFA had Simunic scored and got the win that would have seen them progress and Australia lose out.

As it was it was embarrassing enough for Blatter as this was the first World Cup where the referee, his two linesmen and the fourth official were linked by microphone - none of the other three intervening to tell Poll about his error.

"An error of this kind should not happen when there are four people in the team," said a bemused

Blatter.

"What is incomprehensible is that no-one intervened. I cannot understand it, it is like a blackout."

Poll, a one-time candidate for the final like his compatriots in the England team destined for an early plane home, took his error with admirable frankness and retired as an international referee.

However while referees did get some things wrong, the players also were at times to blame, several of them play-acting to earn their side that extra edge.

Portugal's Cristiano Ronaldo comes top of that list and while there is no doubting his talent, his diving as he did in the French penalty area in the semi-final was blatant.

Not that the French were averse to acting, Thierry Henry's claim after the Champions League final that he would never cheat disappeared in one moment of the second round match against Spain as he fell to the ground clutching his face when not even touched by Carles Puyol.

From the resulting free-kick Patrick Vieira was on hand to make it 2-1 and change the course of the match and perhaps the tournament.

At least some influential people have noticed.

"Players are simulating and doing whatever they can to make it difficult for the referee," said Franz Beckenbauer.

"This is something we need to look at after the World Cup."

# France unleash the Scarface



AFP, Berlin

As France's golden generation prepares to head off into the sunset Franck Ribery's bright showing at the World Cup just weeks after earning his first cap suggest Les Bleus' future is in safe hands.

Eight years ago Ribery was a 15-year-old kid celebrating Zinedine Zidane and France's World Cup triumph over Brazil on the streets of his hometown of Boulogne-sur-Mer.

On Sunday the 23-year-old Marseille midfielder will step out with Zidane and company into Berlin's Olympic Stadium with a shot at the 2006 title.

Ribery's features are marked by a scar as long as the Seine running down the right side of his face, the legacy of a horrific childhood car accident, but he then underlined why he's left on the team that has stirred a nation and his teammates alike.

"Franck is someone who marks the team's spirit each time he plays, he'll become someone important to football," predicted Zidane.

Eric Abidal is another paid up member of the fast growing Ribery supporters' club.

"Each time he's played he's brought freshness, vivacity and technique to the team."

"He creates chances. I think it's great for the team, he pushes the side forward regardless of how many minutes he's on the pitch," the Lyon defender remarked.

His explosive speed has breathed fresh life into the France team, his darting runs and deft turns and assists adding a valuable extra dimension to the side.

Used as a kind of joker in France's three warm-up games he earned his first full cap in France's opener against Switzerland, putting in a far from error-free display.

But as France progressed Ribery grew in stature.

His clever pass set up Patrick Vieira to put France ahead against Togo, and he then underlined why they're calling him the new Zidane in

the last 16 clash against Spain.

Latching on to a through ball from Vieira the pocket dynamo side-stepped the onrushing Iker Casillas, beat off two Spanish defenders, and shot into an empty goal to put France back level in a game they went on to win 3-1.

Ribery celebrated his first goal for his country on his seventh appearance with a flying leap into the French bench.

Expelled from a training centre at Lille he had toiled away in France's amateur ranks for three seasons before getting his big break with first division Metz.

After only four games he was selected for France's Under-21 team and after six months at Metz he was snapped up by Turkish giants Galatasaray, returning after just half a year to join Marseille.

His stock has risen so high he's now being linked with five time champions Lyon.

Thierry Henry said after his Mexico debut: "He's a guy who has no fear, who provokes. Each time he gets the ball he wants to attack. For a defender it's a nightmare."



FRANCK RIBERY