

## Serb teenager dumps Nadal

AFP, Miami

Serbian teenager Novak Djokovic upset second-seeded Spaniard Rafael Nadal 6-3, 6-4 here Wednesday to reach the semifinals of the 6.9 million-dollar WTA and ATP Masters Series hardcourt tournament.

Djokovic, 19 and seeded 10th, avenged his loss to Nadal in the final of the Masters Series tournament in Indian Wells, California, two weeks ago. In the semifinals he'll face Scotland's Andy Murray, who advanced earlier Wednesday when American Andy Roddick retired injured.

Nadal, meanwhile, followed world number one and top seed Roger Federer of Switzerland out of the tournament.

## Akram over McGrath, says Lara

AFP, St John's

Glenn McGrath may be on the verge of breaking Wasim Akram's record for the most World Cup wickets but as far as West Indies captain Brian Lara is concerned the Pakistan great remains the best bowler he's faced in his career.

Australia quick McGrath took three for 31 in world champions Australia's 103-run victory against hosts the West Indies here Wednesday to move within one of Akram's World Cup career record of 55 wickets.

Should he draw level with the landmark on Saturday against Bangladesh, McGrath will have reached Akram's record in five fewer World Cup matches (33 compared to Akram's 38).

Lara, who made 77 against Australia, said McGrath had been helped by the fact he'd played in the last three World Cup finals -- the defeat to Sri Lanka in 1996 and the wins over Pakistan and India in 1999 and 2003 respectively.

"If you play a number of World Cup matches -- McGrath has been to the final in the last three World Cups, 1996, 1999 and 2003 -- that means he has played a lot of games.

"But it doesn't take away from the fact he is an outstanding fast bowler and he deserves to be up there with the very best."

However, Lara said Akram -- renowned for his ability to swing the ball both ways to devastating effect and arguably the greatest left-arm quick world cricket has known -- was in a class of his own four years ago.

## Video may

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Meanwhile Shields denied British press reports which had quoted him as saying that a second post mortem of Woolmer's was to be carried out in order to ward off speculation that the first examination had been mishandled.

"I can assure you there is no post mortem, there is no planned second post mortem," Shields said, reiterating his position that there was clear evidence Woolmer had been murdered.

## Kumara tells

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strange emptiness," Sangakkara wrote in his www.cricinfo.com column.

"India's unbelievable passion for the game always ensures an occasion whenever they take the field. One billion fans and a clutch of high-paying sponsors are naturally bitterly disappointed."

Sangakkara believes that the pressure on India contributed to the demise of Rahul Dravid's team who succumbed to a 69-run defeat to Sri Lanka in Trinidad which confirmed their early exit.

"There was no doubt in our minds that we would win the game. We were completely focused," said Sangakkara.

"The same cannot be said about India's players. I thought our body language told the story. We were up for it, positive and very upbeat. India's players looked under pressure and their body language betrayed their edginess."

## Happy with

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uniforms although West Indies official Steve Bucknor tied a sweater around his waist on the final day of the drawn first Test at Napier.

Sri Lanka coach Tom Moody said Malinga had given the team a different dimension.

"Up front, he has the ability to take wickets with the new ball. With the old ball, he is very good at executing it right up in the blockhole," said Moody.

Malinga was rated the fastest bowler at home when he made his one-day and Test debuts in 2004, but lacked consistency. He kept learning and improving with every match to eventually become a strike bowler.

He played a big role in his team's 5-0 one-day series victory in England, grabbing 13 wickets in five matches. He also impressed in the Champions Trophy in India in 2006 with his pace and control.

Malinga has so far captured 50 wickets in 32 one-dayers.



PHOTO: AFP

GET IT RIGHT, FREDDIE: England all-rounder Andrew Flintoff is all set to take a catch during a training session at Guyana national stadium in Georgetown on Thursday.

## KP being humble

AFP, Georgetown



Kevin Pietersen may be the world's top-ranked batsman but, by his own admission, he's not the best.

The South African-born England star displaced Australia's Michael Hussey this week as the top one-day batsman, but he insists there are better players out there.

"I know there are better players than me -- Ricky Ponting, Matthew Hayden, people like that are better than me," said Pietersen who is key to his side's hopes of winning the World Cup for the first time.

"There are a lot more important things than rankings like winning the World Cup and to be winning games with this team."

"Statistics mean a lot and it's great to be number one. But I am happy with the way I am playing and now I hope to win a few more matches with England and be in the final of the World Cup in Barbados on April 28."

Pietersen has hit two centuries already in the World Cup with a

60 in the Group C defeat against New Zealand and 56 in the win over Kenya. The only black mark on his World Cup record is a five against Canada.

Significantly for England, Pietersen is also showing little sign of the after-effects of the broken rib he suffered in the one-day series against Australia in the run-up to the World Cup.

"I started my international career really well on the tour of South Africa," said the 26-year-old batsman.

"After that it got complicated because opponents start to concentrate on your weaknesses. But I'm getting it right now. It was frustrating what happened in Australia because the wickets there are fantastic."

Pietersen has plenty of ambitions to fulfil with England and wants to convert great starts into big, memorable scores.

"I haven't scored enough 100s," he admitted.

"I have scored three international one-day centuries and they came in my first 10 matches.

"It's a mental thing for me. If I get to 70, I should be getting to 100."

## Pollock form

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Pakistan in South Africa's final international before the World Cup, the International Cricket Council announced that he had achieved the third-highest bowling points ranking of all time behind only past greats Joel Garner of the West Indies and New Zealand's Richard Hadlee.

Pollock is at his best when there is life and pace in the pitch, such as he finds in South Africa.

But on the slow, unhelpful pitches of the West Indies he has been vulnerable to attacks from the likes of Australia's Matthew Hayden and Sri Lanka's Sanath Jayasuriya.

Smith gave no hint of what looking at the Pollock situation might entail.

Pollock will have a chance to redeem himself in South Africa's next two matches against Ireland and Bangladesh, the weakest teams in the second round Super Eights.

But when it comes to the tougher cricket team, as saying that the bookie was seen at the World Cup in Jamaica with Dawood's brother Anees Ibrahim.

Jamaican officials, however, said they were not told by the Pakistani cricketers about any such row between the coach and the bookie.

The report, however, claimed that two Pakistani players, in their statement to police, did mention about the furious bust-up.

"Bob Woolmer said he had thrown a bookie out of his room. He didn't give a reason," an official said.

Deputy Commissioner of Jamaican Police Mark Shields said, "This issue has come up before but we have so far been unable to substantiate it."

"But we are prepared to consider it further now that we have names and more details. We will be investigating," Woolmer was found strangled in his 12th floor room of the Pegasus Hotel room on March 18, hours after Pakistan's shock World Cup defeat against minnows Ireland.

Former prison warden Langeveldt, 32, took two wickets in a first spell of two for 22 in six overs.

He came on at a crucial time, replacing opening bowler Shaun Pollock, who was hit for 32 in his first four overs.

Following the example of Australia, who appeared to target Pollock, Sri Lankan opening batsman Upul Tharanga and Sanath Jayasuriya went for their shots against the South African veteran, who holds a big lead at the top of the ICC one-day bowling rankings.

## Onus on Joyce

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Cup and look forward to playing against him."

### SQUADS

ENGLAND (from): Michael Vaughan (captain), James Anderson, Ian Bell, Ravi Bopara, Paul Collingwood, James Dalrymple, Andrew Flintoff, Ed Joyce, Jon Lewis, Sajid Mahmood, Paul Nixon, Monty Panesar, Kevin Pietersen, Liam Plunkett, Andrew Strauss

IRELAND (from): Trent Johnston (captain), Kyle McCallan, Andre Botha, Jeremy Bray, Kenneth Carroll, Peter Gillespie, Dave Langford-Smith, John Mooney, Paul Mooney, Eoin Morgan, Kevin O'Brien, Niall O'Brien, William Porterfield, Boyd Rankin, Andrew White

Umpires: Simon Taufel and Billy Doctrove.

## SA almost choke

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He ended a 95-run second wicket stand between Smith and Kallis when he had Smith stumped by Kumar Sangakkara for 59 in his second over.

Muralidaran struck twice off successive balls in the second over of a second spell, and his eighth of the innings, when he took a return catch from Herschelle Gibbs and trapped Mark Boucher leg before.

The whole of the Sri Lankan

team and many in a small crowd went up when the hattrick ball to Justin Kemp was caught by Russell Arnold at short leg.

But umpire Daryl Harper gave Kemp not out and replays showed the ball went off Kemp's pad.

Muralidaran took three for 38, while Malinga finished with four for 54.

Earlier Russell Arnold (50) and Tillakaratne Dilshan (58) were mainly responsible for Sri Lanka,

who won the toss, making a respectable total.

They put on 97 for the sixth wicket after their side slumped to 98 for five.

But after Dilshan was caught at third man off Makhaya Ntini, who took two for 26, Sri Lanka lost their last four wickets for one run, with Langeveldt taking three wickets in his final attempt at big hits.

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## Abahani

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just one point from a draw against Arambagh.

Mohammedan, meanwhile, face a tough task to recover in the table after two defeats in a row as they travel to Chittagong to meet their namesake from the port city at the MA Aziz Stadium in Chittagong also today. It will be Shafiqul Islam Manik's boys' first match outside the capital.

A spirited Chittagong Mohammedan, ably handled by coach Nazrul Islam Ledu, have not only proved a difficult side at home -- they beat giants Muktijoddha at their home ground -- but also looked good when they snatched a draw against Abahani in Dhaka.

Level on four points, the Chittagong outfit have an edge over their much illustrious Dhaka counterparts having played one match less.

Muktijoddha will look to retain their form when they host unfancied Chittagong Abahani on the back of a 4-1 win over Rahmatganj.

In-form Arambagh face giants Brothers Union, also on a recovery mission after a shock home defeat to Khulna Abahani, who will be resting this week. League leaders Sheikh Russell will go into action against Farashganj in the last match.

## SOUTH AFRICA V SRI LANKA SCOREBOARD

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Fall of wickets: 1-13, 2-45, 3-65, 4-90, 5-98, 6-195, 7-208, 8-208, 9-208, 10-209.

Bowler	O	M	R	W	Econ
Pollock	8	0	46	0	5.75
Ntini	8	0	26	2	3.25
Langeveldt	10	1	39	5	3.90
Hall	9.3	0	33	1	3.47
Kallis	6	0	24	0	4.00
Peterson	5	0	22	0	4.40
Smith	3	0	16	0	5.33
<b>SOUTH AFRICA</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>4s</b>	<b>6s</b>
Smith st Sangakkara b Muralidaran	59	79	65	7	1
De Villiers b Vaas	0	2	5	0	0
Kallis c Sangakkara b Malinga	86	187	110	4	0
Gibbs b Muralidaran	31	79	51	1	0
Boucher lbw b Muralidaran	0	2	1	0	0
Kemp st Sangakkara b Jayasuriya	5	23	16	0	0
Pollock b Malinga	13	23	24	1	0
Hall c Tharanga b Malinga	0	2	1	0	0
Peterson not out	4	18	8	1	0
Ntini b Malinga	0	2	1	0	0
Langeveld not out	1	8	9	0	0
Extras: (b-5, lb-4, w-3, nb-1)	13				
Total: (For 9 wickets in 48.2 overs)	212				
Fall of wickets: 1-1, 2-95, 3-160, 4-160, 5-182, 6-206, 7-206, 8-207, 9-20					