

## 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



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 half 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 games Smith and coach Mickey Arthur might have to consider giving the new ball to someone else, like swing bowler Charl Langeveldt, who came on as first change to replace Pollock Wednesday and took a career-best five for 39.

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

## 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
SOUTH AFRICA					
R	M	B	4s	6s	
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 c & 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
Langeveldt 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, 9-207.					
Bowler	O	M	R	W	Econ
Vaas	10	1	31	1	3.10
Malinga	9.2	0	54	4	5.78
Maharoof	7	0	41	0	5.85
Muralidaran	10	0	34	3	3.40
Jayasuriya	10	0	34	1	3.40
Dilshan	2	0	9	0	4.50

Result: South Africa won by one wicket.

Man-of-the-match: Charl Langeveldt (South Africa) and Lasith Malinga (Sri Lanka).

Toss: Sri Lanka

Umpires SA Bucknor and DJ Harper (Australia)

Match referee JJ Crowe (New Zealand)

## Phelps shatters yet another record

AFP, Melbourne

Michael Phelps shattered a third world record in winning the 200-metre individual medley for his fourth gold medal at the world championships on Thursday.

The American swimming marvel chopped 0.86seconds off his own mark to win the medley final in one minute 54.98 seconds to beat home American teammate Ryan Lochte (1:56.19).

Phelps is now halfway to his ambitious target of winning eight gold medals at the world titles in his buildup to an assault on Mark Spitz's record seven gold medals at next year's Beijing Olympics.

"I am just happy to swim fast again and have my training work," Phelps said.

"I went out there and went after it. That is what I have been doing for every race. Why stop something that works?"

It was 21-year-old Phelps' third consecutive win in the event at the worlds and his sixth world record in the medley he has made his own.

The Olympic champion is the only swimmer to win three back-to-back 200mmedley world titles.

He has now won gold in the 200m freestyle, 200m butterfly and 200m medley, all in world record time at the Melbourne world titles along with his role in America's winning 4x100m freestyle relay team on Sunday.

His new world record bettered his previous mark of 1:55.84 set at the Pan Pacific Games in Victoria, Canada, last August.

Lochte was just in front of Phelps on the third breaststroke leg but Phelps swept past him on the turn.

Hungary's European champion Laszlo Cseh set a European record in finishing third in 1:56.92.

"The bronze medal is reality right now. I didn't actually think what he was doing. I concentrated on my own race. Michael is just out of reach," Cseh said

## Gone are

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of Indian team, once described the rest of the team's dilemma whenever they attended a public function.

"What you do is to try and stay away from Sachin in public places. The crowd would come in droves and leave you gasping for breath. A quiet drink is never possible with him around." Every passing day only served to add to his aura. If Steve Waugh termed him second only to Bradman, the 'Don' himself likened him to his own image. Shane Warne talked of 'nightmare', Viv Richards about his fascination with the little genius. The monarchs of the game, including Brian Lara, took a bow to the Indian emperor.

## Murder linked

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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.

## 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 Shaiful 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 Muktiyoddha 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.

Muktiyoddha 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 Russel go into action against Farashganj in the last match.

## Ponting hits back

AFP, St John's



air unless they perform on the pitch.

Bidding for an unprecedented third World Cup title in a row, Australia began their second phase Super Eight campaign with a commanding 103-run win against hosts the West Indies here Wednesday, in a match spread over two days because of rain.

It was a far cry from the form that saw Australia lose five one-dayers in a row -- two at home to England in the CB series final and three on the trot to New Zealand in last month's Chappell-Hadlee campaign.

This latest success meant Australia, who won all their matches at the 2003 World Cup, had made it four wins out of four so far in this edition.

"You hear about other sides saying they don't fear us, don't fear anything we have to offer," Ponting told reporters at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium after a victory set up by Matthew Hayden's Australian World Cup record 158.

"It's all right saying that, but you have to go out there and play a certain brand of cricket to back that

up. So far they haven't done that."

Ponting, clearly amused by the way perceptions of Australia had altered in such a short space of time, added: "Two weeks ago everyone said we weren't frightening. All of a sudden now we are again -- it's a funny game.

"Our squad hasn't changed in that time.

"We have to keep stretching ourselves, and if we keep working hard I can't see any reason why we can't keep improving through this tournament.

"We've started pretty well -- and I think we've made a few statements along the way."

Australia have yet to be involved in a tight finish at this tournament having piled up more than 300 in each of their games with their narrowest margin of victory a still sizeable 83-run success against world number ones South Africa on Saturday.

But Ponting insisted Australia raised their game in a tough encounter.

"We've been able to beat teams pretty comfortably over the years, but one thing about us is that when the close games have come around that is when we've been at our absolute best.

"There are a lot of champion players in this side who are at their best when it gets tight.

"I'm very confident we have absolutely all bases covered in this

squad."

Australia since March last year have conceded the four highest totals by teams batting second in one-day internationals.

But Ponting said opponents risked putting themselves under immense pressure if they opted to field on winning the toss.

"It is Australia's favourite way of playing, to bat first. There are a lot of teams around the world who are favouring batting second, especially in day games.

"Generally in day games, the conditions stay pretty even -- the wicket doesn't deteriorate much -- and they feel if they can do some damage with the new ball that is their best chance of winning.

"But the flip side of that is if you go in and post a big total it is going to take some exceptionally good batting to chase down the score.

"Even if they get off to a good start if they lose one or two wickets it can change very quickly. That is the pressure they are putting themselves under by bowling first."

Australia's next match is on Saturday against Bangladesh, who caused one of the biggest upsets in cricket history by defeating Ponting's men two years ago in a one-day international in Cardiff.

## ICC happy

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"The use of this technology should ensure that our top umpires get even more decisions correct," said Richardson.

Television viewers or fans listening to radio can hear fine edges through the stump microphones, something umpires have not always had the benefit of in the past, he said.

"In many instances, if it is particularly windy or in noisy stadia, it can be extremely difficult to hear faint edges from 22 yards away. By linking to the stump microphones umpires now have that luxury and this should ensure even more correct decisions."

The World Cup has been controversy-free so far barring a few decisions that appeared to go against Ireland in their match against Pakistan. But Ireland still went on to cause an upset three-wicket win in that Group D first round match.

The win also ensured the debutants qualified for the Super Eight stages at the expense of the 1992 champions Pakistan.

The ICC hopes the new facility will add to an already-high correct decision percentage of around 94 per cent among its elite umpires. The ICC intends that the technology should be used in future bilateral series, where feasible.

It was used when India toured Pakistan in 2004.

AFP, St John's



batman wouldn't have it any other way.

The 35-year-old left-hander achieved the highest score by an Australian at the World Cup in making 158 against the West Indies as the reigning champions began the Super Eight stage of the tournament with a thumping 103-run win over the hosts in a match split over two days because of rain.

Early in his career, Hayden had to battle past the likes of Matthew Elliott and Michael Slater for a Test spot and, more recently, he was dropped from the one-day side for the best part of a year after the 2005 tour of England with Phil Jaques, Shane Watson and Simon Katich all given a run instead.

But he forced his way back in and last month scored an Australian one-day record 181 not out against New Zealand in Hamilton -- a match where his toe was broken by fast bowler Mark Gillespie.

"I've had a lot of commitment and passion, to get back into the one-day side," said Hayden, whose innings topped Queensland pal

Andrew Symonds's previous Australian tournament best of 143 not out against Pakistan in Johannesburg four years ago.

"In particular, to represent Australia at the World Cup is an enormous privilege and honour," Hayden, a World Cup winner in 2003, added.

"It's a special side to be a part of - and it's never meant to be an easy thing to play for Australia."

"There are guys who aren't here right now -- and one or two who are with us -- who deserve the right to be playing. That's the way the Australia cricket team keeps its edge and its intensity.

"I'm sure someone like Brad Hodge has a brilliant career ahead of him but he just can't get in right now.

"You have to be very determined to go out there and prove to the side and the people that you are good enough to play," said the hard-hitting Hayden, who in Australia's preceding 83-run win against South Africa also made a century.

"I said when I got dropped a couple of years back that I didn't feel I was ready to let the (one-day) game go -- that world-class players play both forms of the game. I'm just very happy that it's coming off right now."

### SCORES IN BRIEF

**BARISAL:** 216-8 in 50 overs (Rabbi 11, Shaheen 28, Rokibul 56, Iftekhar 10, Ariful 51, Arafat 49, extras 14, Shahjada 1-54, Shafaq 2-31, Mushfiq 2-37, Sajib 1-17, Nayeem 1-27).

**RAJSHAH:** 220-4 in 43.2 overs (Junaid 70, Rafiqul 24, Nayeem 52 n.o., Mushfiq 57 n.o., Monir 2-45, Rajan 1-34).

**Result:** Rajshahi win by six wickets. **DHAKA:** 269-9 in 50 overs (Uttam 67, Anwar 16, Al Shahrnar 13, Shamsur 19, Sharifullah 30, Sajjad 60, Nazmul 19, Mahbubul 14 n.o., extras 26, Hasibul 1-35, Maola 4-46, Sadiur 1-35, Kapali 1-34).

**SYLHET:** 273-5 in 44.5 overs (Rahman 17, Imtiaz 44, Kapali 114

n.o., Maola 20, Sadiur 35, Ezaz 23 n.o., extras 20, Azim 2-67, Mahbubul 1-82, Sharifullah 1-38, Rashedul 1-45).

**Result:** Sylhet win by five wickets **CHITTAGONG:** 344-8 in 50 overs (Nafis 16, Nadim 55, Mahbubul 78, Ehsanul 92 n.o., Dhiman 65, Rezaul 13, extras 26, Manjurul 1-55, Zia 1-48, Sadat 3-66).

**KHULNA:** 277 all out in 42.4 overs (Imrul 31, Nahidul 101, Monirul 22, Jamal 33, Asadullah 16, Salim 31 n.o., Zia 13, extras 11, Kamrul 4-43, Ehsanul 1-87, Sunny 1-57, Younus 2-44).

**Result:** Chittagong win by 67 runs.

## Sponsors pulling out?

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Cricket business insiders say that ESPN-Star would struggle to recover the investment if sponsors such as LG withdrew.

Sony Entertainment Television, which paid a reported 300 million dollars to beam the 2007 World Cup and other ICC tournaments to India over the past seven years, did not even bid for the new rights.