



Upcoming Russian starlet Anna Chakvetadze pumps her fist after winning a point in her fourth round match against Czech Lucie Safarova at the Roland Garros in Paris on Sunday.

PHOTO: AFP

NADAL TAMES HEWITT AGAIN Djokovic, Moya cruise along

AFP, Paris



Novak Djokovic, the youngest player left in the French Open, and veteran former champion Carlos Moya, the oldest man

standing, moved into the Roland Garros quarterfinals on Monday.

Sixth seeded Djokovic continued Serbia's French Open surge when he defeated unseeded Spaniard Fernando Verdasco 6-3, 6-3, 7-6 (7/1) to reach his second successive quarterfinal.

Thirty-year-old Moya, the 23rd seeded Spaniard and the winner here in 1998, set up a last eight clash with defending champion Rafael Nadal by defeating 35-year-old Jonas Bjorkman of Sweden 7-6 (7/3), 6-2, 6-4.

Nadal once again proved too good for Australia's Lleyton Hewitt as he completed a 6-3, 6-1, 7-6 win over the veteran in less than three hours.

In another match, unseeded Russian Igor Andreiev defeated Marcos Baghdatis of Cyprus 2-6, 6-1, 6-3, 6-4 to advance to the quarterfinals where he will meet Djokovic.

Djokovic will be the third Serb to feature in the last eight with compatriots Jelena Jankovic and Ana Ivanovic already in the quarterfinals of the women's singles.

After struggling to impress in his first matches, Djokovic, who needed over four hours to see off French wildcard Olivier Patience in the third round, clicked into top gear against Verdasco.

"I'm really happy with the way I played because I didn't play very well at all in the first three rounds," said Djokovic.

Verdasco battled gamely in the third set with Djokovic fending off break points in the fifth and seventh games and the Spaniard forced the tiebreak.

A lucky netcord gave the Serb a 4-1 lead in the breaker which became 5-1 with a brutal forehand drive.

A double fault handed Djokovic five match points and he wrapped up the 2hr 45min match when

Verdasco ballooned a forehand.

Moya, who played his first Roland Garros in 1996, could face close friend Nadal, nine years his junior, in the last eight.

Moya was put under pressure early on by the unseeded Bjorkman, who at 35 years old was the oldest player in the men's draw this year.

The Swede broke Moya's serve in the second game mixing his looping baseline shots with the occasional venture to the net and he got to 5-2.

The Spaniard though started to open up with his trademark big forehand and he won four games in a row with two breaks of serve to move 6-5 up.

Bjorkman forced the tie-break and was 5-3 up before Moya gathered his forces again winning four points in a row to take the set.

Two more breaks of serve in the sixth and eighth games gave Moya the second set comfortably and Bjorkman needed treatment for a shoulder injury at the next break.

Last year's Wimbledon semifinalist then forced Moya to save six break points in a marathon third game of the third set.

But then Bjorkman struggled on his own following serve allowing Moya to break for a 3-1 lead.

It looked like Moya was home and dry at that point but Bjorkman refused to capitulate and a break of serve in the next game allowed him to level at 3-3.

Games went with serve after that until the 12th game when Moya forced the pace on return of serve and Bjorkman cracked hitting a weak backhand into the net on match point.

Earlier on Sunday, Federer enjoyed a 7-6 (7/3), 6-4, 6-4 victory over Russia's Mikhail Youzhny to reach the quarterfinals where he takes on Spain's Tommy Robredo. In the battle of the Argentinians, Canas saw off Juan Monaco to reach his third Roland Garros quarterfinals to face Nikolay Davydenko.



Veteran Spaniard Carlos Moya hits a backhand return against Swedish Jonas Bjorkman of Sweden during their fourth round clash of the French Open at Roland Garros on Monday.

PHOTO: AFP

Barca reject Lampard

INTERNET, undated

Barcelona have denied that they will make an audacious transfer bid for Chelsea midfielder Frank Lampard.

The Liga champions have been linked with a move for the prolific England international, whose girlfriend Ellen Rives is Catalan.

However Txiki Beguiristain, Barca's sporting director, said a goalscoring midfielder was the last thing Frank Rijkaard's squad needed at the moment as they are amply stocked in that area.

"I think he is an extraordinary player characterised by his shots on goal and the number of goals he scores," he told Sky Sports News.

"But when you look at our squad we are currently really well catered

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Ranieri new Juve coach

AFP, Rome

Claudio Ranieri has been appointed as the new coach of Juventus, the newly-promoted Turin club confirmed on Monday.

The 55-year-old, who helped Parma retain their Serie A status this season and previously spent four years in England with Chelsea, replaces Didier Deschamps who quit on May 26 after guiding Juve back into Serie A.

Ranieri will begin his spell with the Italian giants on July 1 and his contract runs until June 30, 2010.

The Italian coach, who has also had spells with Valencia in Spain, had recently been linked to the manager's post at English Premiership side Manchester City.

Juventus are hoping Ranieri will help the club achieve their domestic and international objectives.

"For Juventus he was seen as the right choice to match the objectives and tradition of this club," the club said.

"He is a man of experience with a good knowledge of international football, capable of taking the club forward.

"With Claudio Ranieri we open a new season rich with ambition and new opportunities."

Ranieri has also coached in Serie A with Cagliari, Napoli and Fiorentina.

Known as 'The Tinkerman' in England for his squad rotation policy with Chelsea, Ranieri also coached in Spain, enjoying two spells with Valencia and a brief stay in charge of Atletico Madrid.

Sharapova grinds out another win

AFP, Paris



Maria Sharapova saved three match points in a battling performance on Sunday to defeat Switzerland's Patty Schnyder

3-6, 6-4, 9-7 and reach the last eight of the French Open.

It was a courageous effort from the 20-year-old Russian who is still feeling the effects of a shoulder injury that required a cortisone injection and left her on the sidelines for two months.

Three times the vastly experienced Schnyder, playing in her 44th Grand Slam tournament, served for the match and three times Sharapova went on the offensive to thwart her.

Finally she managed to hold her own serve and for the fourth time in

a row she captured Schnyder's service, leaping for joy when the Swiss hit wide on match point.

The fourth round tie had lasted two and a half hours.

"It was very exciting and even if I had lost the match I would have done an amazing job of fighting and getting myself back into the match," said Sharapova.

"I figured I wasn't going to beat her by being a claycourt player because I am just not a claycourt player so I just started coming in and going for my shots.

"I figured if I was going to lose this match I would lose it on my own terms."

The late evening match was marred by a series of incidents that resulted in Sharapova being roundly jeered by Schnyder's fans in the Suzanne Lenglen Court crowd, but the Russian said this had not bothered her.

Spectators turned on Sharapova at 7-7 in the final set, when she won a disputed point while serving at 30-love. Schnyder watched a serve land in, then complained she had held up a hand to call for time.

The chair umpire ruled the point would count, giving Sharapova her first ace of the tournament. Sharapova said later she didn't see Schnyder's hand until after hitting the ball -- and had no regrets about what happened.

"It's pretty hard being a tennis player and Mother Theresa at the same time and that's just the way it is," she commented.

Sharapova will play fellow Russian Anna Chakvetadze in the quarterfinals with a first ever semifinal appearance at Roland Garros her potential reward.

"I had a tough one against her in Australia and I have never played her on clay," she said.

Jose still after defender



Football

THE INDEPENDENT

Jose Mourinho, the Chelsea manager, said yesterday that he is still looking to sign a new defender and a midfielder this summer. Steve Sidwell and Claudio Pizarro have both recently moved to Stamford Bridge on free transfers, but Mourinho wants to bring in two or three more players.

The Brazil international Alex is expected to end his three-year loan at PSV Eindhoven to complete his move to Chelsea, and Mourinho has also been linked with a new offer for the Bolton defender Tal Ben Haim, who is a free agent.

Mourinho hoped to sign another midfielder alongside Sidwell, with John Obi Mikel and Michael Essien likely to be playing in the African Cup of Nations in January and February.

Asked how many newcomers might be joining Sidwell, Mourinho, in Africa on a charity mission with Chelsea, said: "I think three, and it is obvious a central defender because we have problems during

the season with injuries in defence. A central defender, a midfielder and a striker."

He also suggested that he wanted an improvement from some of the players who arrived last summer. "I expect more from [Michael] Ballack this season, and from [Andrej] Shevchenko, much more," he said.

Pizarro has already joined on a free transfer from Bayern Munich, and Mourinho is optimistic about the impact the Peru international can make in the Premiership. "He is a player with some qualities, we think he can be important for our group and important for the Premiership," Mourinho added.

"[Pizarro is] a player with experience of responsibilities because when you play with Bayern Munich in Germany it means you play for a top club."

Pizarro could prove invaluable if Didier Drogba is called upon by Ivory Coast for the African Cup of Nations, a competition that will lead to widespread disruption in the Premiership.

"I will try to keep them [the African players] until the last moment, just before the competi-

tion starts, but they have the Fifa rules on their side so if they want to go a couple of weeks before the competition starts just to train we have to let them come," he said.

"This is the kind of co-operation I hope we can have, and lose the players for three weeks and not five. Players should go straight to the game, not two weeks before. We have to try to reach an agreement with the nations so clubs don't suffer too much when players leave."

Fifa, the world governing body, has rules that state clubs must release players at least 14 days ahead of an international tournament.

"The players will only be training two weeks before the Nations Cup, while we will be playing crucial matches in Premiership at that time of the season," Mourinho said. "There is no need to fight the federations because they have the backing of Fifa. But if we cannot co-operate with the African federation over this problem I think I will not sign any more

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Milan hunting Henry

INTERNET, undated

Milan coach Carlo Ancelotti has revealed his side could compete with Barcelona for the signing of Arsenal striker Thierry Henry.

Barcelona are long-term admirers of Henry, and were thought to be the striker's inevitable destination should he choose to leave Arsenal, though Ancelotti has admitted his own admiration for the Frenchman.

"We want to sign a midfielder and a forward," Ancelotti told the Italian press.

"You know of the names that are being bandied about. There are lots of big-name strikers, but there is nothing concrete as these players

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Liverpool defend fans

AFP, London



Liverpool officials have hit back angrily at a new report from European football's governing body UEFA which slated the club's fans as being the worst behaved in Europe.

The UEFA report, which was carried out on commission by undercover police agents over a four-year period, will be presented to British sports minister Richard Caborn on Tuesday.

It paints a damning picture of the Liverpool fans' behaviour at last month's Champions League final in Athens, accusing them of stealing

tickets from their fellow supporters, charging the gates to get into the ground without tickets and causing trouble outside the stadium which ended with tear gas being used.

Liverpool chief executive Rick Parry, however, defended the fans saying that UEFA's failure to heed the club's warnings about potential security and ticketing problems were to blame.

He charged that UEFA were trying to pass the buck, having praised Liverpool fans before the final.

"The shortcomings in the management of the situation in Athens were apparent to anyone who was there," Parry told the club's official website www.liverpoolfc.tv.

"These latest comments from

UEFA should not deflect attention from that reality

"What is most surprising about the latest comments from (UEFA spokesman) Mr Gaillard is that on the eve of the final, he quite rightly commented that Liverpool supporters have a tradition of good behaviour."

"Let's not forget that these same supporters who Mr Gaillard is claiming are now the worst in Europe were praised by UEFA president Michel Platini after our semifinal victory against Chelsea only last month, commended for their behaviour in Istanbul in 2005 and actually honoured by UEFA at a gala dinner in Monte Carlo in 2001

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PHOTO: AFP

Chelsea manager Jose Mourinho (L) and London 2012 organising committee chief Sebastian Coe launch the brand for the 2012 Olympics and Para-olympics at the Roundhouse in London on Monday. Organisers hope the logo, designed to be instantly recognisable worldwide, will help boost its campaign to raise two billion pounds (three billion euros) to stage the Games. The budget for the 2012 Olympics has soared to 9.3 billion pounds (18.6 billion dollars, 13.7 billion euros), nearly four times more than the first projections of how much it would cost to stage the Games in London.