



PHOTO: AFP

American Andy Roddick is about to serve during his match against Czech Radek Stepanek during the Legg Mason Tennis Classic in Washington DC on Thursday.

## Roddick storms into qtrs

### Tennis

AFP, Washington

US top seed Andy Roddick fired 23 aces to outlast Czech Radek Stepanek 6-3, 1-6, 7-5 and reach the ATP Washington Classic quarter-finals Thursday along with fellow seeds Tommy Haas and Marat Safin.

Roddick lost the last five games of the second set, his serve broken twice, and struggled through the third, rescuing a break point in the fifth game and two in the ninth, the second when Stepanek sent a backhand wide.

"I just kind of hung around," Roddick said. "I decided to put the ball in the court and if he was going to be aggressive and get it, too good. I tried to draw back in the third set, make him create something."

Stepanek, who fired 20 aces, was two points from forcing a tiebreaker in the final game but sent a forehand long to hand Roddick a match point and netted a forehand to fall after one hour and 50 minutes.

"He served pretty well," Roddick said. "He got through his service

games without me getting to him. You just hang around long enough and something else might happen."

German second seed Haas continued his comeback, defeating American Michael Russell 6-3, 6-4. He withdrew from Wimbledon a month ago with a torn stomach muscle before a round of 16 match against Swiss world number one Roger Federer.

Next for Haas is 22-year-old US novice John Isner, who played only one ATP match before Monday. The tall Cinderella man fired 31 aces to defeat countryman Wayne Odesnik 6-7 (4/7), 7-6 (7/3), 7-6 (7/2).

Russian third seed Safin reached his fourth quarterfinal of the year, all on hardcourts, by ousting 104th-ranked Dutchman Robin Haase 7-5, 6-7 (2/7), 7-5 after two hours and 35 minutes in a match that ended 47 minutes after midnight.

Safin faces Frenchman Gael Monfils on Friday. Confident Monfils, ranked 54th, beat Germany's Michael Berrer 6-7 (5/7), 6-3, 6-3.

"Quarter-final for me is nothing. I expect to win this tournament," said

Monfils, whose only ATP title came on Sopot clay in 2005. "(Safin) is nothing. I played him last year in Cincinnati and I beat him. It's just a match."

World number five Roddick, who won here in 2001 and 2005, advanced to his 10th quarterfinal of the year. On Friday he faces South Korean fifth seed Lee, who rallied to eliminate France's Julien Benneteau 2-6, 6-2, 6-3.

"He times his winners," Roddick said of Lee. "You've got to try to make him uncomfortable, break his rhythm a little because he's a rhythm player."

Roddick, who lost an Indianapolis semi-final last week, seeks his second title of the year after winning at Queen's in June. He improved to 3-0 lifetime over Stepanek, who won his second ATP title two weeks ago in Los Angeles.

Haas, who only resumed full workouts Monday, was pleased with his progress.

"So far, so good," said Haas. "To reach quarter-finals is good, especially with the injury. I'm happy so far."

Isner, who in May led the University of Georgia to a US college

team title, ousted Britain's Tim Henman and German eighth seed Benjamin Becker in earlier third-set tiebreakers at the 600,000-dollar US Open tune up event.

"It's still a dream. To win three matches 7-6 in the third at a tournament like this is amazing," Isner said. "I know my serve can take me a long way. Hopefully it can carry me against Haas. He's a great player."

Ninth-ranked Haas, one victory shy of 400 in his ATP career, seeks his 12th title and second of 2007, having won February's Memphis final over Roddick. Isner, who is 6-foot-9, has yet to win a first set in four career ATP matches.

"I know he serves really big," Haas said of the newcomer. "I don't know the last time somebody won three in a row 7-6 in the third. It's tough to play those players. He uses his height as an advantage. You have to respect it."

Even Roddick respects it.

"You can't teach 6-foot-9," Roddick said. "He's playing on the house's money. If you have that kind of weapon you're going to win matches out here."

## 'Get the experts'

### Cricket

BBC ONLINE, undated

Ashley Giles is urging England to be bold when they name their final squad for the ICC World Twenty20 tournament.

The inaugural event takes place in South Africa in September and Giles says the selectors should pick county experts in their 15 on Monday.

The England spinner told BBC Sport: "We should think of players like Darren Maddy, Jeremy Snape, Mal Lode and Tim Ambrose."

"We play a lot of Twenty20 at county level and have specialists."

Batsmen Lode and Maddy along with spinner Snape are all in the provisional squad of 30 but Warwickshire wicket-keeper/batsman Ambrose is not, becoming the third highest run-scorer in the competition this season.

The 34-year-old Lode, who lines up for Lancashire in the finals of the domestic Twenty20 Cup on Saturday, played in the one-day series victory in Australia but was left out of the World Cup squad.

"You are talking about a World Cup. We've not been blessed with winning too many one-day trophies so we should go there looking to win."

"There's no point us going there not looking to win it."

England won their first Twenty20 international, against Australia, by 100 runs in 2005, but were defeated in their next four matches before scraping past West Indies at The Oval in June.

Giles, 34, played 62 one-day internationals for England but believes the 50-over-a-side format might be outdated.

He said: "You don't see many 50-over games that go to the death, and Twenty20 cricket can turn in an over."

"So actually you might learn more discipline from Twenty20 cricket, because every ball, every over you have to be totally focused otherwise you could lose the game."

And Giles said Adil Rashid, the 19-year-old Yorkshire leg-spinner who has made such a big impression with ball and bat, could be picked for Test tour of Sri Lanka -- where England may take two extra spinners along with Monty Panesar.

He also added that the tour at the end of the year was "maybe just a bit too early" for Rashid, a player he is "really impressed with".

"We have clauses in our central contracts clearly outlining the board decides where the players can play."

India's cricket authorities have also refused to endorse the league.

"The ICL is not recognised by the International Cricket Council or its member boards so there is no question of our players going to play there."

"Incidents of this kind do happen on ground sometimes and I'm not sure how much importance should be given to it. Personally, I think we should forget about all this," he said.

Murgatroyd, however, expressed surprise at Pawar's statement.

"There is no such thing. Match Referee (Ranjan Madugalle) had said after the second Test that he will talk to the two captains before the third Test gets underway. That is where it stands. That is the end of it," he said.

"I think it's a new experience for me and a great opportunity for me to go to Australia," Juninho said at a press conference at Sydney Football Stadium.

"As a World Cup winner, Juninho brings a wealth of experience at the highest possible level to Sydney FC," Culina said. "It's not often that you get to work with someone of his phenomenal footballing ability."

"I came because the club was interested in Juninho and that made

me make my head up to sign with them."

Sydney FC chief executive officer George Perry said that Juninho was the A-League's biggest ever signing.

"Juninho is a true superstar of the world game, a household name to football fans around the globe," Perry said in a statement. "We're thrilled to welcome him aboard."

Coach Branko Culina said it was a relief to have secured the 34-year-old ahead of the A-League season opener on August 24.

Juninho's signing came after former Liverpool ace Robbie Fowler rejected an offer from the club.

"I think it's a new experience for me and a great opportunity for me to go to Australia," Juninho said at a press conference at Sydney Football Stadium.

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"Not only is Juninho's signing great news for Sydney FC but also for Australian football in general. It demonstrates how the far the game has come in this country over the past few years," he added.

Under A-League rules, clubs can sign a marquee player whose wages are exempted from the team's salary cap as a means of raising the sport's profile in Australia.

Former Manchester United striker Dwight Yorke filled the role in 2006, helping Sydney FC to the inaugural A-League title before moving back to Britain with Sunderland.

Juninho, who made 50 appearances for Brazil between 1995 and 2003, has also played for Sao Paulo, Middlesbrough, Atletico Madrid, Vasco da Gama, Flamengo, Celtic and Palmeiras.

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## Hard men don't boast

### Cricket

SIMON BARNES

This week, I spoke to John Woodcock, Cricket Correspondent of this parish 1954-88, and received the first words of sense I have heard on the subject of jellybeans: "They should be forced to play their next game in short trousers." Absolutely. The whole business is childish beyond description. The taunting of an opponent by leaving sweets on the pitch is pathetic. It destroys a spectator's pleasure in the game. It certainly made me switch my allegiance to India. I thought England deserved what they got. And I don't think I was alone in that.

And yet the England cricket team defend such idiocy. More, they take pride in it. The whole business of taunting, putting off, insulting all the things that go under the name of sledging has become a battleground in which ugliness and inanity struggle for supremacy.

The stump microphone picked up a classic piece of sledging wit during that second Test between England and India. "I'm driving a Porsche Carrera; what's your car?" Thus the exquisite Wildean wit of the modern England cricketer is laid bare.

It is, of course, the sort of remark you would expect from a Porsche driver, a Porsche being the naughtiest car ever manufactured. But is it a suitable remark to make to a man from a Third World nation who is a guest in your country? The combination of vulgarity and inensitivity is mind-numbing.

But the thing that really gets to me is that England cricketers seriously believe that sledging makes them better players. They pink and preen because they say bad things to people when they cannot fight back. Hard men, eh?

"It comes with the territory," Matt

Prior, the England wicketkeeper, said. "It's international cricket, it's a hard game. We all want to win, we're all playing to win, so you're going to have banter." Prior is simply telling the world: "I'm well 'ard."

As a point of information, people who need to tell the world that they are 'well 'ard' are not, in fact, 'ard at all. They are just mouthy gits. Real hard man don't need to tell you."

The England cricket team are suffering from confusion. The players believe to a man that behaving like an arsehole makes you a better cricketer. The fact is that it doesn't. It only makes you an arsehole.

Peter Moores, the England head coach and team director, has talked up his belief that his team should be more aggressive. That is interpreted by all perhaps even intended by him as charter to drop all reasonable standards of behaviour, as if serious sport can only ever take place in an atmosphere of sledge and playground antipathy.

This is not only untrue, it is not what we spectators want. One of the many great things about the Ashes series of 2005 was the respect between the players. The ultimate image of the series was Andrew Flintoff's moment of commiseration with Brett Lee after England's narrow win at Edgbaston in the second Test. We liked that that's how we want cricket played.

So what is Moores' response to the present outbreak of nonsense? "There is an issue about whether the stump mike should be so loud." No there is not, there is an issue about whether the England players should make such prats of themselves.

It's not as if it did them any good. Zaheer Khan, the man insulted by means of jellybeans, responded by taking five second-innings wickets as England slithered to defeat, leaving Michael Vaughan, the home team's

captain, feebly trying to explain that, although Zaheer had played awfully well, it wasn't the jellybeans that had inspired him. Zaheer took the opposite view.

England didn't look well 'ard, they looked well pathetic. These people are supposed to be playing for England, they are supposed to be representing me.

How has it come about, then, this belief that bad manners and good cricket are inseparable? Australia, obviously. For years, England have believed that everything good in cricket is Australian and that the more Australian the England team can be, the more cricket matches they will win.

So England have copied the boasting and the taunting while failing to produce a Shane Warne or a Glenn McGrath. And it's contentious, I know, but I think Warne and McGrath did more to win cricket matches for Australia than any amount of mental disintegration inspired by Steve Waugh's sledging. England may lack the talent of Warne and McGrath, but they can certainly behave in an infantile and boorish fashion, and that's almost as good, not bad.

But these improvements are not dependent on throwing sweets at batsmen or boasting about what kind of penis substitute you happen to drive. All the cut of sledging does is spoil the game for the spectators, who want to see a good match contested in a forthright, full-on, flat-out, aggressive, honourable, decent, grown-up way. If we don't get that, perhaps we will start to look elsewhere for our sporting pleasures.

I shall leave the last word to King Lune of Archenland, from The Chronicles of Narnia. His impetuous son insults an enemy who is brought before the court in chains. "Shame, Corin. Never taunt a man, save when you please."

(Revered sports writer Simon Barnes wrote this article on the Times).

## Pity the poor opener

### Cricket

AAKASH CHOPRA

India must be pretty chuffed, having marked the 60th year of independence with a rare Test win in England.

A lot of credit must go to Wasim Jaffer and Dinesh Karthik for that stand of 147 -- it really set up the game. At the same time, as an opener myself, I felt for Alastair Cook and Andrew Strauss. This time around, they had the rough end of the deal.

"Even Matt Prior (England wicketkeeper) has been struggling. So we are not overly concerned about Dhoni's keeping," he added.

Brushing aside the criticism directed towards Dhoni, Robin said it would take time for the wicketkeeper to adapt to the tough English conditions.

"It takes time. I've been talking to Alec Stewart and others here. I even spoke to Andy Flower, who gave up the gloves in this sort of scenario," he said.

"In England the ball swings a lot and even their wicketkeeper was struggling a lot. Matt Prior has not had the best time," he added.

Giles, 34, played 62 one-day internationals for England but believes the 50-over-a-side format might be outdated.

He said: "You don't see many 50-over games that go to the death, and Twenty20 cricket can turn in an over."

"So actually you might learn more discipline from Twenty20 cricket, because every ball, every over you have to be totally focused otherwise you could lose the game."

And Giles said Adil Rashid, the 19-year-old Yorkshire leg-spinner who has made such a big impression with ball and bat, could be picked for Test tour of Sri Lanka -- where England may take two extra spinners along with Monty Panesar.

"It's not right to go through your usual ritual and then are asked to wait. You while away the time doing random things but with an eye on the proceedings: When is the next inspection? What are the chances of any play on the day? What's the weather forecast? You want to relax but you can't."

You do get half an hour after the toss to set yourself up, but taking guard on the damp Trent Bridge pitch wasn't just another day in office. It called for special skills and a particular mindset, and a bit of luck.

In back-to-back Tests, when you've scored runs in the previous game, like Strauss had, you are at greater risk of becoming a victim of your confidence. It's hard to be cautious when you have runs under your belt.

It's even tougher if you