



Russia's world number one Dinara Safina poses with the winner's trophy after beating compatriot Svetlana Kuznetsova in the WTA Rome International final on Saturday.

## Safina's sweet revenge

Tennis

AFP, Rome

World number one Dinara Safina defeated Russian compatriot Svetlana Kuznetsova 6-3, 6-2 on Saturday to claim the WTA Rome clay court international title here.

Safina never looked in trouble as she stormed to victory in an hour and a half as her seventh-seeded opponent paid for a string of unforced errors.

The top seed also gained revenge for her 6-4, 6-3 defeat to Kuznetsova in the final of last week's Stuttgart Open.

It was Safina's first title of the season in her fourth final having also been beaten in the Australian Open and Sydney finals.

Safina, 23, also won her first title as the world number one, a honour she only achieved on April 20.

But while she will be delighted with her victory, the truth was she was giving away more unforced errors to just 16 by Safina.

Having lost the first set in her previous three matches before digging deep to fight back, Safina admitted it was pleasing to have a less complicated match.

"Finally I won the first set," she sighed. "Today she was giving away more unforced errors than she usually does."

"I also played a little bit better. I was trying to get her off the baseline because she feels very confident there."

"But when she had some chances she was really missing - a lot. In some moments I had to say: 'thank you very much'."

The world number eight also took only two of 11 break point opportunities while Safina converted five of her nine chances.

Kuznetsova admitted she had brought the festive season forward during the final.

"Last week I was dictating the game, I was serving well and I was not doing that many unforced errors," she said.

"I was doing too much and sometimes not doing anything. So it was like a little bit like Christmas today. I was giving away too many presents."

"Especially given that it was a final, she would not give it to me. I had to fight my way through."

Kuznetsova's erratic play meant this result rarely looked in doubt despite a series of breaks in the opening set before Safina sealed it with a smash.

Safina had a match point on the Kuznetsova serve at 5-1 but the seventh seed showed good speed to reach a Safina drop shot and loop a backhand beyond her opponent to claim the point.

She held serve and then took a 40-15 lead on the Safina serve but the world number one saved the first break point with a blistering backhand winner and the second with a service winner.

A return error from Kuznetsova gave Safina a second match point which she wasted with a netted forehand at the end of a long rally.

However, two more return errors from Kuznetsova proved enough for Safina to lift this title for the first time.

She had reached the final in 2006, losing to Martina Hingis, while Kuznetsova was also runner-up here a year later when Jelena Jankovic won.

## IPL beyond \$2b barrier

KKR richest team

PTI, New Delhi

Shahrukh Khan's Kolkata Knight Riders may be struggling at the bottom in the second season of Indian Premier League (IPL), but in terms of brand value it is the richest team of the 20 Twenty cricket tournament, whose collective valuation has been now pegged at two billion dollars.

At the same time, Rajasthan Royals, partly owned by another Bollywood star Shilpa Shetty, has emerged as the best team in terms of return on investment, although it is ranked third in terms of brand value.

The valuation exercise of the entire IPL franchise, along with the individual teams, have been conducted by UK-based international brand valuation consultancy Brand Finance Plc.

"The entire enterprise is valued at 2.01 billion dollars," Brand Finance said, adding, its methodology took into account various revenue lines such as broadcasting, IPL sponsorship, team sponsorship, merchandising and gate receipts as well as the effect of performance, the catchment population of the city, the capacity of the stadium and the presence of iconic players.

Among the eight teams, KKR has been ranked as the most valued with a brand value of 42.1 million dollars, followed by Mumbai Indians (41.6 million), Rajasthan Royals (39.5 million), Chennai Super Kings (39.4 million), Delhi Daredevils (39.2 million), Royal Challengers Bangalore (37.4 million), Kings XI Punjab (36.3 million) and Hyderabad Deccan Chargers (34.8 million dollars).

## Delhi back

FROM PAGE 17  
Wridhiman Saha in his first over, before making Moises Henriques his third victim. Agarkar threw his bat around to take Kolkata into triple-digits, taking his chances with some uppish shots, to finish on a 29-ball 39.

BRIEF SCORES  
KOLKATA KNIGHT RIDERS: 123-8 in 20 overs (Ganguly 44, Yashpal 13, Agarkar 39; Nehra 2-29, Nannes 2-15, Sangwan 1-32, Mishra 3-14).

DELHI DAREDEVILS: 124-3 in 18 overs (Warner 36, de Villiers 40; Sharma 2-23). Result: Delhi won by seven wickets.

## Button in

FROM PAGE 20  
Felipe Massa.

Brazilian Massa, who led for a lap after the first pitstops, had to slow in the closing laps to save fuel with the team warning him that he risked not making it to the finish.

The three points were still the first of the season for last year's overall runner-up.

Germans Nick Heidfeld in a BMW-Sauber and Nico Rosberg for Williams were seventh and eighth respectively.

The Briton is now 14 points clear of his 36-year-old team mate, who had been tantalisingly close to his first win since he was Michael Schumacher's teammate at Ferrari in 2004.

Ferrari's 2007 champion Kimi Raikkonen, last year's winner in Barcelona, retired after less than a third of the race while McLaren's world champion Lewis Hamilton was ninth and lapped by his winning compatriot.

## Pakistan in last four

Hockey

AFP, Kuantan

Sohail Abbas found his scoring touch just in time to lead Pakistan into the Asia Cup semi-final field hockey with a 3-2 win over India in a Group B match in Malaysia Sunday.

The Pakistanis had five penalty corners but Sohail was on target with only one attempt and that turned out to be the winner.

Pakistan had earlier on Saturday drawn 1-1 with China and needed a win to book their semi-final place.

Pakistan coach Shahid Ali Khan said that the recall of the four players from Europe made the difference in the match.

"Sohail, Salman Akhtar, Waseem Ahmad and Rehan Butt gave us experience and were influential in the win. We needed the full points and credit to the players in achieving it," he said.

The match was an absorbing encounter with a lot of goal-scoring chances at both ends.

Pakistan took the initiative from the start. They had the ball in the back of the net in the fourth minute but Tariq Aziz's effort was ruled out by South African umpire Jon Wright.

Prabhjot Singh gave India the lead in the 16th minute after a botched penalty corner attempt.

The Pakistanis drew level in the 33rd minute when Sandeep Singh fumbled with his clearance and allowed the 20-year-old Haseem Khan to score.

In the second half Pakistan went on the offensive early and took the lead just one minute into the game. Haseem Khan was the scorer when he deflected a long ball into the D.

Rain started to fall in the 43rd minute and India managed to score their equaliser in the 46th minute through Rajpal Singh before play was stopped.

Play resumed after 45 minutes. Pakistan attacked and in the 54th minute won a penalty corner. Sohail finally got it correct with a low flick to put his team in the semis.

India coach Herender Singh was disappointed with the result but remained confident that his team will make the semi-finals.

"It was a good match and could have gone either way. Now we are under pressure and will have to get a win against China on Tuesday," he said.

"My players did well and I have no complaints about their performances," he added.

## Bell, Sidebottom back

Cricket

AFP, London

England added batsman Ian Bell and left-arm quick Ryan Sidebottom to their squad on Sunday as they named a 13-man party for the second Test against the West Indies at Chester-le-Street starting Thursday.

Bell and Sidebottom were the only additions to the team that thrashed the West Indies by 10 wickets at Lord's on Friday.

Monty Panesar, who was in the 12-man first Test squad before being left out on the morning of the match, was omitted from this latest squad after fellow spinner Graeme Swann produced a man-of-the-match display at Lord's.

Bell was dropped after England's Test defeat against the West Indies in Jamaica three months ago.

And he lost out on the No 3 position at Lord's to Ravi Bopara, who made a Test-best 143.

Bell though has been in fine early season form for Warwickshire and offers England an extra batting option ahead of the final match of a two-Test series.

Sidebottom, whose tour of the West Indies was cut short by an Achilles tendon injury, could, if selected, prove effective on a Riverside ground with a reputation for assisting seamers.

Meanwhile Miller was buoyed by the efforts of fast bowler Graham Onions, who now heads to his home ground having taken seven wickets on his debut at Lord's and Bopara, whose hundred was his second in just his fifth Test.

"Performances like Graham produced and that of Ravi augurs well for the future," Millersaid.

But with next week's match England's last Test before the Ashes, Miller insisted there was still a chance for the likes of Onions's fellow Durham quick Stephen Harmison to regain their place.

"He is capable of bowling at over 90 miles an hour and when he is bowling like that he is a problem for anyone in the world."

Victory at Lord's, with more than two days to spare, meant England -- beaten 1-0 in a five-match campaign in the Caribbean -- had won the first Test of a series for the first time in 15 attempts.

SQUAD  
Andrew Strauss (captain), Alastair Cook, Ravi Bopara, Kevin Pietersen, Paul Collingwood, Matt Prior, Stuart Broad, Tim Bresnan, Graeme Swann, James Anderson, Graham Onions, Ian Bell, Ryan Sidebottom.

Lanka decides on ICL rebels Thursday

CRICINFO, undated

The Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) will hold an important interim committee meeting on Thursday to decide on the future of ICL-contracted players, including former captain Marvan Atapattu.

Nishantha Ranatunga, the interim committee chairman, said that chairman DS de Silva was keen on lifting the ban and allowing past cricketers to be involved in the game, and it was likely that a positive decision would be reached.

With the BCCI allowing all its cricketers associated with ICL to return to official cricket if they cut all ties with the unofficial private league by the end of May, other boards are likely to follow on the same lines.

Brothers claim T20

FROM PAGE 17  
Man-of-the-series Nayeem hit five fours and a couple of huge sixes in his 34 off 18 balls while Hanif struck 56 from 48 balls. But the duo's departure left Dhaka Sports struggling and although they reached a competitive 146 for nine, it was not enough for a rampant Brothers Union.

Truly the MA Aziz Stadium came back to life after several years as the locals flocked in huge numbers to enjoy a thrilling encounter that lasted less than four hours. In fact, this was the first floodlit match in the business capital after more than five years.

BRIEF SCORES  
DHAKA SPORTS CLUB: 146 for 9 in 20 overs (Nayeem 34, Rashedur 1, Rajin 0, Anisur 7, Hanif 56, Ziaur 14, Wasel 6, Mashud 13, Taposh 1, Nahid 4 not out, Shahadat 1 not out; Razzak 2-32, Mubarak 2-28, Yunus 1-26, Shahjada 1-31, Dollar 2-28).

BROTHERS UNION: 148 for 4 in 18.1 overs (Mubarak 4, Nafees 53 not out, Tushar 6, Mehra 8, Kapugedara 61, Razzak 5 not out; Hanif 3-15). Result: Brothers Union won by six wickets.

Man-of-the-match: Chamara Kapugedara.

Man-of-the-series: Wasim Nayeem.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS  
1 Tackles weeds  
5 Miss Piggy's pronoun  
8 Rough journey  
12 Piedmont wine region  
13 Curved line  
14 Trumpet  
15 St. Patrick's Day emblem  
17 Dermatology subject  
18 McCain's running mate  
19 North-amer  
21 Settle down  
24 Kitten's call  
25 Judicial raiment  
28 Creme-filled cookie  
30 Shade source  
33 Actress Mendes  
34 Dress  
35 Meadow  
36 Quarter-back

37 Uplifting melody  
38 With "down," drop suddenly  
39 Mauna —  
41 Places  
43 Unexpected  
46 Bonfire residue  
50 Indigent  
51 Attention dance check  
54 Missile shelter  
55 Rage  
56 Other-wise  
57 Building extensions  
58 Kimono closer  
59 Cabbage salad

DOWN  
1 Padlocked fastener  
2 Job-safety org.  
3 And others (Lat.)  
4 "Hard as nails," for one  
5 Chinese chairman  
6 Killer whale  
7 Gross  
8 Scottish feudal lord  
9 "Saturday Evening Post" artist  
10 Sea eagle  
11 Last word of "Oh! Susanna"  
16 Genetic abbr.  
20 Wild and crazy  
22 Sushi wrapper  
23 Whimsically witty  
25 Roulette bet  
26 Eggs  
27 Wad  
29 Outside (Pref.)  
31 Writer  
32 Treasure seeker's aid  
34 Envelope feature  
38 Early March baby  
40 Marks' replacements  
42 Western st.  
43 Church area  
44 Seethe  
45 Small combo  
47 Corridor  
48 "Born Free" lioness  
49 Passel  
52 Scepter topper  
53 Main-lander's memento

Solution time: 21 mins.

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IMAM LOO RIDE  
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EROS WOBBLING  
AIM SHITAS ROE  
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RUTS CANES  
OLDAGE OUR  
OARS NIBBLING  
ZOOB ERE IDEA  
ESPY RAY COOP

## Easy wins for Biman, DU

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Biman and Dhaka University ran away with easy victories on the opening day of the Public Universities and Services Cricket tournament yesterday.

At the Jahangirnagar University ground, Biman banked on a century from ex-national opener Javed Omar, who made 104 in a total of 321-7 in 50 overs before the national airliner bowled out Islamic University of Kushtia for just 149 runs in 41.4 overs.

The right-hander struck thirteen boundaries in his 118-ball essay. Hasanuzzaman (75) and Elias Sunny (33) added the final touch to a big score before another former national cricketer Sanwar Hossain starred with the ball.

In nearby BKSP, Dhaka University (66-1) crushed Noakhali Science and Technology University (65) by nine wickets with Fahad picking up four wickets.

Earlier, BCB tournament committee chairman Gazi Ashraf Hossain Lipu inaugurated the competition at the Jahangirnagar University ground where all the players officials and guests observed a minute's silence in memory of Dr MA Wazed Miah, eminent nuclear scientist and husband of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina before the start of the match. The players of all four teams involved in the matches also wore black badges. Dr Wazed Miah passed away on Saturday.

## Mumbai march

FROM PAGE 17  
Mumbai's star bowler with two wickets for 15 runs in his four overs.

SCORES IN BRIEF  
MUMBAI INDIANS: 157-2 in 20 overs (Rahane 62 not out, Duminy 59 not out, Kumar 1-30, Van der Merwe 1-17).

BANGALORE ROYAL CHALLENGERS: 141-7 in 20 overs (Kohli 20, Boucher 48 not out, Harbhajan 2-15). Result: Mumbai Indians won by 16 runs.

Man-of-the-match: Jean-Paul Duminy.

## Guingamp

FROM PAGE 20  
white flag of the Breton region, Guingamp, 13th in Ligue 2, made an encouraging start, with Rennes goalkeeper Nicolas Douchez producing fine saves to deny Eduardo and Richard Soumah.

Rennes seemed cowed by their rivals' industry but shortly before half-time Jerome Leroy served a reminder of their threat when he cracked an exquisite half-volley against the crossbar from 30 yards.

The favourites were a team reinvigorated in the early stages of the second period and Moussa Sow should have put them ahead when he thumped a shot against the crossbar after Leroy's sumptuous flick had puthim clean through.

With just over 20 minutes remaining, Rennes won a free-kick wide on the right and Bruno Cheyrou's inswinging centre was headed home from close range by the unmarked Bocanegra.

The strike sparked jubilant scenes among the Guingamp fans, but even better was to come in the 83rd minute when Eduardo collected Lionel Mathis's pass before firing home an unerring strike off the base of the left-hand post.

## Suspended Pakistani players to meet Modi

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

Sohail Tanvir, the left-arm fast bowler, has said he and other Pakistan players will go to South Africa to discuss their Indian Premier League (IPL) suspension with tournament chairman and commissioner Lalit Modi.

The Pakistan Cricket Board had earlier banned its players from participating in the IPL after the country's relations with India deteriorated after the terror attacks in Mumbai in November. When the tournament was moved out of India -- over security reasons -- the Pakistan players were hopeful of returning but IPL officials said it wouldn't be possible as the squads had already been finalised earlier.

"A number of issues need to be discussed and we'll be accompanied by a representative of the company we've engaged to handle our case," Tanvir, the highest wicket-taker in the 2008 IPL season, told the Kolkata-based Telegraph. "I strongly feel the IPL should've reviewed our status, especially after our government issued the NOCs once the tournament moved out of India."

Six Pakistani players had their contracts terminated by their franchises before the IPL auction in February. But Tanvir and Kamran Akmal of the Rajasthan Royals, Umar Gul of the Kolkata Knight Riders and Misbahul Haq of the Bangalore Royal Challengers only had their contracts suspended, thereby leaving the door open for a potential return.

"I believe we should've been allowed to play once the IPL was shifted to South Africa," he said. "I'm confident I would've matched, if not bettered, last year's record [22 wickets in 11 games]."

The four suspended players had in February appealed to the President of Pakistan to compensate them for the loss in earnings brought about by the government's decision to not allow them to travel to India and take part. Asked whether compensation from the franchises would be high on their agenda, Tanvir said that would indeed be discussed in South Africa.

Tanvir was also concerned about the lack of quality competition ahead of next month's ICC World Twenty20 in England. "You can only gain by playing with and against the best in the world," he said. "However, our board has worked out a schedule, whereby we'll get to play some Twenty20 matches at home, before we leave for England."

FROM PAGE 20  
Dimitar Berbatov had been fouled, Ronaldo stepped up and smashed a free kick which, with the help of a deflection, dipped and beat Shay Given in the City goal.

City beat United home and away last season but the match was over just before half-time when Berbatov produced some superb skill to bring a long ball down and Tevez rifled in the second goal.

Martin Petrov forced a fine save from Edwin van der Sar late on, but United almost made it 3-0 when Tevez hit the post in the dying seconds.

Later on Sunday, Chelsea came to get to within three points of Liverpool in third if they win at Arsenal.

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## Tevez confirms

Derby glory

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## As close

FROM PAGE 20  
Schalke, this was a bad week for Wolfsburg who began the weekend three points clear but finished it level with Bayern.

"It was only after we conceded the second goal that we started to settle into the game," lamented Magath, whose side host Dortmund on Tuesday.

"Then we had a big chance to get the equaliser, but instead we conceded another goal. Stuttgart had a great game and deserved the win."

Hertha Berlin are just a point off the leaders after they beat strugglers Bochum with goals by forwards Marko Pantelic and Brazil's Rafael.

"Today we played against five defenders and four midfield, which made life very difficult for us," said Pantelic, whose side are at strugglers Cologne on Tuesday.

"But we played with a lot of energy and determination."

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