



Serbia's Ana Ivanovic plays a forehand against Italy's Sara Errani during the French Open first round match at Roland Garros in Paris yesterday.

Ivanovic battles thru'

Tennis

AFP, Paris

Defending champion Ana Ivanovic was made to sweat before reaching the French Open second round on Sunday with a gruelling 7-6 (7/3), 6-3 win over Italy's Sara Errani as Roland Garros temperatures hit a sweltering 30 degrees. Ivanovic, who skipped the Madrid Open because of a knee injury, had the problem area taped when she walked onto a sun-drenched Philippe Chatrier Court, but it didn't hinder her in the early exchanges as she edged to a 3-1 advantage.

beating the previous best of 51 set by Joachim Johansson at Wimbledon in 2005, a match the Swedish player also lost. Hewitt, now ranked 50 and who underwent hip surgery in August last year, will face Andrei Golubev of Kazakhstan for a place in the third round where four-time champion Rafael Nadal is a likely opponent. Safin, a semifinalist in 2002 and playing his 11th and last French Open before retiring, eased past French wildcard Alexandre Sidorenko 6-4, 6-4, 6-4. China's Li Na, the women's 25th seed, earlier had the honour of becoming the first player to reach the second round thanks to a 6-4, 6-2 win over Poland's Marta Domachowska. The 26-year-old Li now meets Switzerland's Timea Bacsinszky. Li was quickly joined in the next round by promising Russian 17-year-old Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova, the 27th seed, who eased past Romania's Ioana Raluca Olaru 6-3, 6-2. Eighteen-year-old Russian qualifier Vitalia Diatchenko, the world 151, reduced Mathilde Johansson, one of a record 19 Frenchwomen in the draw, to a tearful wreck after a three-hour 2-6, 6-2, 10-8 win. Johansson wasted eight match points, four of which were squandered on double faults. Diatchenko, making her Grand Slam debut, will face either world number one Dinara Safina or Britain's Anne Keothavong for a place in the third round. Later Sunday, men's third seed Andy Murray faces Argentina's Juan Ignacio Chela, a former quarter-finalist, while 2004 champion Gaston Gaudio takes on Czech 18th seed Radek Stepanek.

10-star Pabna Brothers

SPORTS REPORTER

Pabna Brothers Union racked up the biggest victory in the Basundhara Champions Club Cup football so far with a 10-0 demolition of Alor Dishari at the Rajshahi Stadium yesterday. The ten include a hat-trick scored by Ravi within 27 minutes in the second half, two goals from Abul and Riyad, and one each by Saikat, Sagar and Subrata. Across the country, Young Star (Moulavi Bazar), Young Tigers (Habiganj), Chittagong Mohammedan, Chaggra Sporting (Sherpur), Funtosh Sporting (Rangpur), BBS (Narail), Shariatpur Upazila, Bhai-Bhai Sporting (Chandpur), Biplob Sangha (Gazipur), Moral Sangha (Nilphamari) and Banga Moni (Chuadanga) won their respective matches while Jamalpur Mohammedan drew 2-2 with Ukilpara Sporting Club of Kishoreganj. The game between Kirtan Khola of Barisal and Jhalakathi's Titas Club did not end as the Jhalakathi side refused to play upon the referee's decision to award Kirtan Khola a penalty in the 14th minute. The referees waited for another 15 minutes and left the Barguna Stadium.

Expatriate booters for B. League

SPORTS REPORTER

British-Bangladeshi footballers are set to try out for next season's B. League teams, according to the founder chief executive of Britain-based London Tigers organisation. Mesba Ahmed, who is part of a British-Muslim delegation visiting the country, informed this at a discussion meeting with Abahani players and officials at their clubhouse yesterday. Mesba is accompanied by writer Rabina Khan, television personalities Konnie Huq and Tasnim Lucia Khan, Mohammad Bilal Abdullah and Abdul Quayam Khalique. He informed that the footballers will be sent ahead of the country's only professional competition. Mesba also informed that he is ready to help clubs in Bangladesh develop a youth programme. "The youth are not respected. It's important that they get to play matches. Just give them a ground and they'll develop themselves without even technical help," said Mesba, who developed the first Bangladesh-run semi-professional football club in West London. Tasnim, a BBC Three news presenter, pitched the idea of televising football talent hunts. "I worked with Aston Villa four years ago and they showed the trial on television. It's something like Pop Idol, it can be called Football Idol," she said. Abahani captain Arif Khan Joy, Biplob Bhattacharya and Shahajuddin Tipu were present among others.

School soccer from today

SPORTS REPORTER

The final round of the Citycell National School Football Championship will kick off today with two matches on the opening day at the Bangabandhu National Stadium. Narayanganj's Laxminarayan Cotton Mill School take on Netrakona's Dutta High School the first game at 4:00 pm while Nasirabad School face Gobindaganj High School at 6:00 pm in the inaugural day's matches. The preliminary round was held across the country in nine different zones from where a total of eighteen teams qualified to play the final round splitting into four groups. Abahani and Brothers Union grounds are the two venues for the tournament. The semifinals will take place on June 1 and the final is scheduled for June 3 at the Bangabandhu National Stadium. Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid will inaugurate the final round competition as a chief guest. Carlo keeps

FROM PAGE 20 "If I had to express myself in terms of a percentage, I'd say 100 percent I'll stay at Milan next season as well. "There has been a great feeling between myself and the team over the last eight years and here we're still talking, especially with the club. "If that wasn't the case, a coach wouldn't survive for so long in Italy." Ancelotti joined Milan as coach from Juventus in 2001 and has led them to two Champions League crowns and a Serie A title.

Openers worry Sachin

CRICINFO, undated

Sachin Tendulkar has stressed the need for adequate rest for Indian players ahead of the World Twenty20 in June, particularly so for the openers Virender Sehwag and Gautam Gambhir, who failed to fire in the IPL. Tendulkar was by and large satisfied with the way Indian players performed in the IPL but pointed out that Sehwag and Gambhir had not been consistent. The pair only managed two half-century partnerships in nine innings together, and struggled with their form. Both batsmen were among the top ten run-getters last season, but Gambhir finished with a disappointing average of 22 from 15 games this year, and Sehwag with 19.38 from 11. "I think individually the boys are doing well," Tendulkar said upon arrival in India. "Look at Rohit Sharma, Yuvraj Singh, Suresh Raina, MS (Dhoni)... In the bowling department, Zaheer was doing well before he got injured and RP Singh has come up in leaps and bounds. "Only our opening combination of Gautam Gambhir and Virender Sehwag hasn't fired,"

Tendulkar said. "I think the key would be how soon they can shed the fatigue factor. They have been playing back to back for a long time now and it would be difficult to keep up the tempo." The World Twenty20 is scheduled to begin on June 5 and India face Bangladesh in their first league game the next day. Asked if the IPL served as an ideal preparation for the tournament, Tendulkar said: "... It is. You are playing the same format and you are playing against the best bowlers and also not in home conditions. So, I think this is a good preparation except that the players should take adequate rest between the IPL and the ICC World Twenty20." Tendulkar was also sure he didn't intend to represent India in the Twenty20 format. "I never thought that I would play the ICC World Twenty20. MS Dhoni and his Twenty20 team have done wonderfully well and I just hope they continue to do so. I have no plans to play T20 for India," he said. Tendulkar led an unsuccessful campaign as captain of Mumbai Indians, losing eight out of 14 games, and failing to make it to the semifinals. "We blew hot and cold," he said about his team's performance. "There were times when we could have done better than we did. I think it is a batsman's format and in our case it was the batsmen who let us down."

England thrash WI Akhtar addicted to pain-killers?

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nipped back. He then had Denesh Ramdin lbw and, after Jerome Taylor was run out, bowled Kieron Pollard middle stump. Broad came back to end the innings by dismissing tailenders Suleiman Benn and Ravi Rampaul. The series concludes at Edgbaston on Tuesday. ENGLAND Strauss c Sammy b Taylor 4 Bopara lbw Bravo 43 Prior c Gayle b Sammy 11 Shah run out 38 Collingwood not out 47 Morgan not out 2 Extras: (lb-9, w-6, nb-1) 16 Total: (For 4 wickets in 36 overs) 161 Fall of wickets: 1-31, 2-61, 3-81, 4-157. Did not bat: Mascarenhas, Bresnan, Broad, Swann, Anderson. Bowler O M R W Taylor 7 2 29 1 Rampaul 6 0 23 0 Sammy 5 0 15 1 Bravo 6 0 30 1 Benn 9 0 38 0 Pollard 3 0 17 0 Result: England won by six wickets and lead three-match series 1-0. Man-of-the-match: Paul Collingwood. Toss: England. Umpires: Asoka de Silva (SRI) and Peter Hartley (ENG) TV umpire: Ian Gould (ENG) Match referee: Andy Pycroft (ZIM)

INTERNET, undated Controversial fast bowler Shoaib Akhtar's prolonged fitness problems may be primarily due to his addiction to strong pain-killers. According to the sources privy to the Pakistan cricket camp, Akhtar is so addicted to pain-killing injections that it seems he cannot live without it. "He (Akhtar) is addicted to strong pain-killers and it seems he can't live without them," The News quoted the source, as saying. He also revealed that Akhtar virtually begged for a particular pain killer during the recent one-day series against Australia in the UAE. "Akhtar was so desperate for a particular pain-killing injection during the tour of UAE that he almost begged a local doctor for it. The doctor, however, told him that he would risk being thrown out of UAE if he is administered that injection," he said. Akhtar looked out of sorts during the whole series and failed to bowl his quota of ten overs in any of the five games of the series. It may be noted that the PCB had initially selected Akhtar for the World Twenty20 championship, but later axed him from the 15-man squad after the pacer developed a 'mysterious' skin disease.

Tigers fly

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orderly," added Basel. "I remember that we were the first team to land in the West Indies for the 2007 World Cup and it is the same here. I like the look of the team. It is now the responsibility of the guys who had been in that World Cup to spread the vibe and revive the spirit that saw us beat India and South Africa. We have India here too and it would be so good to repeat the Trinidad performance," said Shakib. The team hotel, the Oxford Belfry is a Tudor style mansion set in the countryside of Oxfordshire and took about 45 minutes to reach from the airport. It is just beside the M40 motorway and is located far from the hustle and bustle of city life. The Tigers will play two practice games against New Zealand on May 26 and Scotland on May 29 at the Wormsley Cricket Ground. In-between, Bangladesh travel to neighboring Kent on May 28 for a match with the Netherlands. These three games are outside the official practice-match schedule for the tournament and have been mutually arranged by the Bangladesh Cricket Board and England Cricket Board.

Deccan charge

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back Vinay Kumar. A dot ball, and a wicket, and the batsmen crossed, which meant Uthappa would be away from the start. It was easy to not spare a thought for Anil Kumble, who spent most of the last over at the non-striker's end and saw his dream crash. Kumble celebrated like a teenager and bowled like the veteran champion he is, and kept Deccan down to a manageable target. He dismissed Gilchrist, then came back in the ninth to take Symonds. That wicket was crucial because he had been dropped on five by Dravid. Kumble again came on in the 17th over to break a dangerous 52-run partnership between Rohit Sharma and Gibbs. Playing a bizarre innings, Gibbs batted the whole 20 overs for 53, much like Sachin Tendulkar, in more trying conditions, had in the first

match of the tournament. Somehow they both ended up winning. It was a brilliant turnaround for Deccan after ending at the bottom of last year's IPL and the defeat would hurt Bangalore, but it's far better than their own performance in the first edition who finished just above Deccan. BRIEF SCORES DECCAN CHARGERS: 143-6 in 20 overs (Gibbs 53*, Symonds 33, Sharma 24; Kumble 4-16) ROYAL CHALLENGERS BANGALORE: 137-9 in 20 overs (Merwe 32, Taylor 27; Ojha 3-28, Symonds 2-18, Singh 2-23) Result: Deccan Chargers won by six runs. Man-of-the-final: Anil Kumble. Purple Cap: Rudra Pratap Singh. Orange Cap: Matthew Hayden.

Barca lift title

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At the other end of the table both Recreativo Huelva and Numancia have been relegated. Bottom side Recreativo's hopes of a miracle faded in a 1-0 defeat against Racing Santander, with Nicola Zigic scoring, while a Roberto Soldado strike for Getafe gave them a 1-0 win over Numancia. Sporting Gijon remain outside the relegation zone on goal difference after their 2-1 win over Valladolid. Diego Camacho and Mate Bilic scored the goals for Sporting with Jonathan Sesma finding the back of the net in between for the home side. Espanyol have completed a remarkable end to the season where little more than a month ago they appeared relegation certainties. Importantly the return of Ivan de la Pena has helped the team to produce a fine run which has led to their survival which came with 3-0 win thanks to a brace from Ivan Alonso and another from Ferran Corominas Real Betis go into their final match of the season looking nervously over their shoulders after their 1-1 draw with Malaga leaves them one point off the drop zone. A goal from Brazilian Edu appeared to be enough to give Betis the win before Albert Luque struck ten minutes from the end with a powerful

shot from outside the area. On Sunday, Real Madrid face Mallorca in their last home game of a season to forget with the dismissal of coach Bernd Schuster and also the resignation of president Ramon Calderon. They play a Mallorca side who thanks to a strong second half of the season already have their top-flight future assured. 'Flintoff's presence is vital' INTERNET, undated Former Australian batting great Mark Waugh has warned England that only Andrew Flintoff can prevent them from an embarrassing Ashes thumping. All-rounder Freddie was inspirational as Michael Vaughan's men won the old urn back in 2005. "England don't have a bad squad but they really need Flintoff firing if they are to have a winning chance against the Aussies. England has done well in their recent two Tests but I don't think the West Indies could beat a club side. Their batting and attitude were dreadful," the News of The World quoted Waugh, as saying.

BFF training

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act as a manager of the team from next month as Imtiaz Bresnan Jhonny requested to release himself from the post. The Igloo Summer Twenty20 Cricket Challenge will begin today at the Dhanmondi Club ground in the city. Eight teams including three clubs, four universities and an academy team will take part in the tournament. The opening ceremony will be held before the opening game today. Imran back FROM PAGE 17 clear if they have recovered from their ailments. Dollar Mahmud and Enamul Haque were also recalled. Not picking Imran for so long illustrates the mindset of different selection panels over the years, but the incumbent selectors' faith in the senior players of the cricketing circle is certainly a welcome move. The message is plain and simple: Performers are always in the reckoning.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down words.

Cryptoquip puzzle grid with letters and numbers.

CRYPTOQUIP VE TEW ZWSSEZX PAGP GHT ESAPAGKDEKENFZPZ SBXQXBBXVUBXGCGQZP MBXBGK DFNAP UX MEBHXG QKGCXZ? Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WHEN DADS FINANCE ALL OF THEIR DAUGHTERS' WEDDINGS, COULD YOU SAY THEY'RE FUNDING FATHERS? Today's Cryptoquip Clue: T equals Y