

It's Serena this time

AFP, London

Serena Williams clinched her third Wimbledon title and 11th Grand Slam crown with a 7-6 (7/3), 6-2 victory over sister Venus, the defending champion, here on Saturday.

The victory added to her 2002 and 2003 wins at the All England Club and shattered Venus's hopes of a hat-trick of titles and sixth overall which would have taken her level with Billie Jean King.

Saturday's final was the fourth all-Williams title match-up at Wimbledon and eighth in all Grand Slams with the win giving Serena the edge in head-to-head meetings at 11-10.

Of the eight major finals the sisters have faced each other in, Serena has won six.

"It feels so amazing. I'm so blessed. I feel like I shouldn't really be holding the trophy. Venus should be holding it, she always wins," said Serena who currently holds three of the four Grand Slam titles.

"I can't believe I have won 11 majors. It's a real honour."

Venus, 29, admitted Serena had been the better player of the two.

"She was just too good today. She had an answer for everything and played the best tennis," said Venus after a final fittingly staged on US Independence Day.

"I don't think the loss has set in yet, that's why I'm still smiling. But I have had some great times here and I'm looking forward to coming back next year."

Serve dominated the first set with 27-year-old Serena fighting off the only two break points in the eighth game and it was the younger of the two sisters who seized control of the tiebreak.

Serena went to three set points by forcing Venus to scramble from side to side before putting away a powerful crosscourt forehand.

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Did U Know?

The original Wembley Stadium took one year to build, and was completed on April 23, 1923, just three days before the first FA Cup Final at the ground.



Michael Vaughan

(Former England cricket captain)
"If a three-year-old is bowling me out, it's time to move over." Reading the retirement signals loud and clear when his son Archie knocked out his off stump in the garden.

What to WATCH

STAR Sports
Wimbledon Championship Men's Singles Final
Live from 7:30pm

TEN Sports
Sri Lanka v Pakistan First Test, Day 2
Live from 11:30am
West Indies v India 4th One-day International
Live from 8:30pm



PHOTO: AFP

American second seed Serena Williams celebrates a point against her sister Venus Williams during their Wimbledon women's singles final at the All England Club in London yesterday. Serena won her third Wimbledon title defeating Venus 7-6, 6-2.

Andy Roddick in history's way

AP, Wimbledon



Roger Federer will face a familiar foe in his chase for Grand Slam history: Andy Roddick - a player he has beaten in 18 of 20 matches stands in the way of a record 15th major title.

The milestones just keep coming for Federer, who has reached his seventh straight Wimbledon final and 20th in a major championship match overall.

A win over Roddick on Sunday would give him the biggest record of all, breaking the mark of 14 Grand Slams he shares with Pete Sampras. And Federer is one who appreciates tennis history more than most.

"I love playing against the younger generation, trying to beat those and then the next generation again and playing for the history books, but especially also playing for myself," Federer said after beating Tommy Haas 7-6 (3), 7-5, 6-3 in Friday's semifinals. "There's a big incentive. I really enjoy that part of the game right now."

A victory would also give Federer a sixth Wimbledon title and a return to the No. 1 ranking. "I'm very proud of all the records I've achieved because I never thought I would be that successful as a kid," Federer said. "I would have been happy winning a couple tournaments and maybe collecting Wimbledon. It's quite staggering now having reached ... my

sixth straight Grand Slam final. Having so many things going for me now again, opportunity again on Sunday, it's fantastic."

Federer said he would be happy if Sampras showed up for the occasion. Sampras has been at home in California looking after his two young sons. Whether or not he comes, Federer was full of praise for the man whose record he is on the verge of surpassing.

"I think his success here at Wimbledon, being able to win seven times, it's amazing," Federer said. "Winning it three times, coming back, winning it four times, going for five. It's quite something."

Breaking the record would bolster the argument that Federer is the greatest player in the history of the game.

"I like listening about it," he said. "It means I'm doing something right. But then again, let me finish my career, and then we'll see what happens at the end."

The women's final was set for Saturday, with five-time champion Venus Williams facing little sister and two-time winner Serena for the second year in a row and fourth time overall in the Wimbledon title match. Venus was going for her eighth Grand Slam championship, Serena her 11th.

Rafael Nadal, the man who beat Federer in last year's final, is absent this year due to knee problems. And Andy Murray, the player many people predicted - and all of Britain hoped - would

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India one step away

Win third ODI by six wickets



AFP, Gros Islet

India are now one step away from a rare one-day international series victory in the Caribbean.

They face West Indies in the fourth and final ODI on Sunday at the Beausejour Cricket Ground confident in the knowledge that they cannot lose the brief series.

The visitors won the rain-affected third ODI by six wickets on Friday at the same venue to take an unstopable 2-1 lead in the series.

India had won the high-scoring opening ODI by 20 runs last Friday at Sabina Park in Jamaica, and two days later, West Indies rebounded to secure an eight-wicket victory in a low-scoring second ODI at the same venue.

India captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni praised the overall effort in his side for prevailing in the match, despite having to battle the weather and the Duckworth-Lewis Method which calculates targets in weather-affected matches.

"It was getting tight, and from our experience in Twenty20 cricket, we never felt under any pressure, although we required 11 from the last six balls," said Dhoni.

Our final target (of 159 runs from 22 overs)

was always achievable, once we had two specialist batsmen at the crease, and others like Harbhajan Singh to come, but it was hard to cope with the pressure," he added.

India's top-order batting had misfired in the second ODI which led to their huge defeat, but they got a meaningful start on Friday from Dinesh Karthik and Gautam Gambhir which set things up for the final charge.

Karthik made 47 from 43 balls, and Gambhir collected 44 from 38 balls, as they shared 95 for the first wicket, and Dhoni felt this was crucial to India's victory, and hopes to see more of this on Sunday.

"We are a side which really relies on our opening batsman to give us the momentum," said Dhoni.

"Once we get a good start, we really have the firepower to capitalise on it, and get a big total on the board."

West Indies, on the other hand, have to finish the series with a win which would ensure the series ends in a tie.

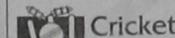
"We are very disappointed about the way we lost the third ODI," said West Indies captain Chris Gayle.

"At the same time, we have to pick ourselves up and get ourselves ready for the final game on Sunday. But we'll just have to take the positives that we can out of this game."

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Bangladesh fight back

Ashraful hits 50



AGENCIES, Barbados

Bangladesh staged a late fight back, after West Indies A fast bowler Kemar Roach and off-spinner Ryan Austin single-handedly bowled them out for 195 in the opening match of their Caribbean tour on Friday.

New Bangladesh captain Mashrafe Bin Mortaza removed opener Adrian Barath for four and senior West Indies batsman Lendl Simmons for seven, as the A team reached 82 for four at the close on the opening day of the three-day match at the Kensington Oval here.

Mortaza ended the day with two wickets for 14 runs from six overs, as the tourists put early pressure on the home team, whose captain Seynarine Chattergoon, a West Indies left-handed batsman, was holding things together for his side with 38 not out.

Roach captured five for 62 from 17 overs, and off-spinner Austin, his fellow Barbadian, supported with five for 71 off 22.5 overs, as the Bangladeshis were bowled out about 35 minutes after tea.

After choosing to bat, the visitors lost opener Tamim Iqbal in the 15th over with the score on 35, and wickets continued to fall regularly. All the top-order Bangladesh batsmen got starts, but none converted the 20s into

anything substantial. Ex-captain Mohammad Ashraful played a lone hand in an effort to construct a long innings, scoring the only fifty, off 82 balls, including two fours and two sixes in about an hour-and-a-half.

The visitors dipped to 99 for three, after they won the toss and chose to bat, and then the loose-limbed Austin inflicted further damage when he removed Rokibul Hasan for 26 and Shakib Al Hasan for a duck in successive overs, to leave Bangladesh 122 for five.

Once Ashraful was caught in the deep off Roach, Bangladesh lost their last three wickets for 10 runs in the space of 11 balls.

However, when the Bangladeshis took the field they found success immediately with young openers Kieran Powell and Barath both departing early.

SCORES IN BRIEF

BANGLADESH: First innings 195 all out in 63.5 overs (Ashraful 50, Zunaed 29, Rokibul 26, Tamim 23, Imrul 21, Shakib 0, Mushfiqur 3, Riyad 14, Mortaza 20, Shahadat 0, Rubel 0; Roach 5-62, Austin 5-71)

WEST INDIES A: First innings 82 for four in 24 overs (Powell 5, Barath 4, Chattergoon 38 not out, Simmons 7, Creary 17, Thomas 0 not out; Mortaza 2-14, Shahadat 1-29, Shakib 1-16)

National Chess

SPORTS REPORTER

GM Ziaur Rahman continued his winning spree as he won the sixth round board against Mahtabuddin Ahmed Robin to maintain their solo lead in the 35th Mercantile Bank National Chess Championship at the federation hall-room yesterday.

In the 6th round Zia played with black pieces to take Pirc Defense and continued to Classical system and won after 42 moves to secure a maximum six points.

GM Reefat Bin Sattar followed the leader as he improved his tally to five points after beating Golam Mostafa Bhuiyan.

Reefat played with black pieces in Capablanca system of Reti Opening and won after 44 moves.

In the other sixth round matches, GM Enamul Hossain drew with FM Taibur Rahman, Mohammad Javed beat Aminul Islam Polish and Mohammad Ali beat Debaraj Chatterjee.

Aamer impresses on debut



AFP, Galle

Teenage fast bowler Mohammad Aamer led Pakistan's spirited new-look attack to bowl out Sri Lanka for 292 on the opening day of the first cricket Test here on Saturday.

Pakistan were 15-2 in reply at stumps with skipper Younus Khan on seven and night-watchman Abdur Rauf yet to score after openers Salman Butt and Khuram Manzoor had fallen in the first four overs.

Butt was bowled by Nuwan Kulasekera off the second ball of the innings and Manzoor was trapped leg-before by Thilan Thushara to set up a thrilling contest ahead.

Aamer, a 17-year-old left-arm, grabbed three wickets

and fellow debutant Rauf picked up two after Younus sent Sri Lanka in to bat on a wicket freshened up by early morning rain.

Younis himself took 2-23 while wicketkeeper Kamran Akmal claimed four catches and a stumping as Sri Lanka slipped to 194-6 before the lower order fought back.

Left-handed opener Tharanga Paranavitana was Sri Lanka's saviour with 72, adding 75 for the third wicket with Mahela Jayawardene (30) and 43 for the fourth with Thilan Samaraweera (31).

Sri Lanka's lone debutant, Angelo Mathews, boosted the tail with a sparkling 42 off 57 balls during a 47-run stand for the seventh wicket with Kulasekera, who made 38.

The three-match series is the first between the two

nations since armed gunmen attacked the Sri Lankan team bus in the Pakistani city of Lahore on March 3 while the squad was en route to resume a Test match.

The attack injured seven Sri Lankan players and eight local security men were killed.

The match began less than a fortnight after Pakistan defeated Sri Lanka in the World Twenty20 final in England on June 21.

Aamer, one of Pakistan's heroes in the triumphant World Twenty20 campaign, justified his Test debut at the expense of seasoned all-rounder Abdul Razzaq.

The left-arm struck with the last ball of his first over in Test cricket when he bowled opener Malinda Warnapuru for two as the batsman was

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PHOTO: AFP

DELIGHTING DEBUT: Debutant Pakistan left-arm paceman Mohammad Aamer runs to celebrate after dismissing Sri Lankan batsman Tillakaratne Dilshan (unseen) on the opening day of the first Test at Galle yesterday. The 17-year-old took three wickets for 74 runs.

Asian Youth Games

SPORTS REPORTER

Swimmer Mahfizur Rahman was eliminated from the semifinal in the 50m free style event in the Inaugural Asian Youth Games in Singapore yesterday.

He finished last in the semifinal clocking 25.45 seconds after making the berth with 25.31 seconds in the heat at the Singapore Sports School pool on the same day.

BKSP's Mahfizur, who finished behind all swimmers in the 200m free style timing 2:3.65 minutes, will also take part in his last event of 100m free style today.

Mahfizur's teammate Anik Islam finished eighth in as many competitors in the 100m butterfly heat with a timing of 1:01.10 minutes. In the 50m butterfly, Anik took 27.32 seconds to finish fifth among eight swimmers.

On the same day, shooters Shovan Chowdhury and Mahmudul Islam were eliminated from the 10m Air Rifles qualifying round.

Meanwhile, the basketball team (three on three) suffered a 33-4 defeat against Palestine in the last game. They also lost to United Arab Emirates and Thailand before got a walkover against Malaysia.