

Clijsters' triumphant return

Tennis

AFP, Cincinnati

Former world number one Kim Clijsters made a triumphant return to tennis on Monday, defeating France's Marion Bartoli in straight sets in her first match in more than two years.

Clijsters, who retired in May of 2007 and gave birth to a daughter in February of 2008, defeated 12th-seeded Bartoli 6-4, 6-3.

"I'm really excited playing my first match," said Clijsters, 26, who received a wild card into the draw of the tournament which has been bumped up to WTA premier status.

"I've been training since the start of February, and I've always been focused on Cincinnati. Winning my first match feels good."

The ebullient Belgian advanced to a second-round clash against Switzerland's Patty Schnyder, a 6-4, 6-0 winner over Argentina's Gisela Dulko.

American Serena Williams, seeded second here behind world number one Dinara Safina, said she was impressed with Clijsters even before the Belgian hit a ball in anger.

"I look like I had a kid more than she does," Williams said in a meet the press session Monday. "She looks amazing."

Certainly Clijsters showed no sign of rust as she raced to a 4-0 lead, displaying a solid serve as well as the canny

ground game that was her trademark.

Clijsters, who held the world number one ranking for 19 weeks in 2003 and won the US Open in 2005, weathered the storm as Bartoli steadied to win four straight games, the Belgian putting away an opening set in which she notched 14 winners to Bartoli's two.

"I thought I started off

really well," Clijsters said. "Maybe I surprised myself a little bit with that start. I felt like my movement was good, but it could be better."

In the second set, Clijsters fended off a break point in the fifth game to hold for a 4-1 lead, and she fought back from 0-40 down to serve out the match.

Bartoli, who defeated Venus Williams to lift the title



PHOTO: AFP

Former world No. 1 Kim Clijsters of Belgium waves to the crowd after defeating Marion Bartoli of France on the first day of the Cincinnati Open in Ohio on Monday.

in Stanford on Sunday, admitted it was a tough first-round match-up.

"It was very difficult to expect anything," she said. "I haven't seen her in two years. That's the reason I didn't start well. I was trying to figure out what she was doing instead of playing my game."

"By the time I figured out her tactics, I was down 0-4. It's just a really bad draw, I guess."

The return of Clijsters, who owns 34 career singles titles, was the highlight of the opening day of the two million-dollar tournament. But she wasn't the only former world number one in action.

Serbia's Ana Ivanovic rallied after dropping the first set and shrugged off a rain delay of nearly two hours to beat American Melanie Oudin 2-6, 6-1, 6-1. Ninth-seeded Victoria Azarenka of Belarus beat Estonian Kaia Kanepi 6-3, 7-6 (7/2).

German Anna-Lena Groenefeld downed France's Virginie Razzano 6-3, 3-6, 6-4, while Canadian Aleksandra Wozniak beat Spain's Carla Suarez Navarro 6-0, 6-3.

Ukrainian Kateryna Bondarenko cruised past Slovakian Magdalena Rybarikova 6-2, 6-2 to set-up a second-round with Serena Williams.

The top eight seeds, including Safina, Serena and No. 3 Venus Williams and Olympic gold medalist Elena Dementieva all received first-round byes.

Zaheer against anti-doping policy

CRICINFO, undated

Zaheer Khan has said that Indian cricketers were not the only sportsmen to oppose the 'whereabouts' clause in the WADA code.

"I'm sure athletes all over the world have problems with the clause. It is high time someone took the initiative and we are happy that we did it," he said.

Zaheer said that drug testing would be good for the game. He also said that Indian cricketers were willing to undergo tests and had concerns only over the clause which required players to disclose their whereabouts three months in advance.

"We absolutely have no objection to be tested," he said. "We know it's important for the game that the players are tested, it's undoubtedly for the betterment of the game we play. It's only a particular clause that we don't agree to."

The fast bowler said that while the players had the support of the BCCI, they would adhere to the decision of the board.

Zaheer, who suffered a major shoulder injury last month and has been ruled out of the Champions Trophy, said he had taken it in his stride.

"We just can't wish away injuries. They are part and parcel of the sport, and one just has to be patient. As far as I am concerned, it's certainly not a setback for me; I am actually viewing it as an opportunity to come back stronger and fitter."

Hayden to join CA

CRICINFO, undated

Matthew Hayden is set to join the board of Cricket Australia, seven months after retiring from international cricket, according to a report in the Courier-Mail. Hayden, 37, is expected to replace Allan Border, who will end his eight-year term on the board.

The paper reported that Hayden and Bryan Phelan were the only nominations for Queensland's two positions on the Cricket Australia board, and it would become official at Queensland Cricket's annual general meeting on Tuesday.

The move could improve relations between Cricket Australia and the players due to Hayden's recent involvement in the game and his role as an executive member of the Australian Cricketers' Association.

Besides the retiring Border, Mark Taylor and Wally Edwards are the other two former Test cricketers who are now Cricket Australia directors.

Women's

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Delta Life Insurance, declared the meet open as the chief guest while deputy managing director Akram Hossain, Bangladesh Handball Federation vice president Principle Hamida Ali and general secretary Asaduzzaman Kohinoor were present among others.

Flintoff to play finale

Cricket

AFP, Leeds

England have been given a huge boost ahead of next week's Ashes decider with the announcement that key all-rounder Andrew Flintoff is set for a farewell to Test cricket at the Oval.

An England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) statement issued Monday said swelling on his right knee injury had "significantly eased".

Flintoff was ruled out of the fourth Test here at Headingley, where England were thrashed inside three days by an innings and 80 runs on Sunday, because of his longstanding knee injury.

England, with the series all square at 1-1, must win at the Oval — where the fifth Test starts on August 20 — to regain the Ashes, while Australia need only a draw to retain them.

But if their talismanic all-rounder is in the side, home fans will dream of a fairytale finale for both Flintoff and England.

An ECB statement said: "Andrew Flintoff's right knee injury was reviewed today (Monday) by his specialist in conjunction with the ECB and Lancashire CCC medical teams."

"The advice received was the swelling in his knee has significantly eased following the decision by the England management team to rest him from the last Test match and that, subject to further rest and intensive treatment, he will be available for selection for the fifth power Ashes Test at the Brit Oval."

England took the controversial decision to leave out the 31-year-old all-rounder, the bowling star of their 115-run second Test win at Lord's and top-scorer in the drawn third Test at Edgbaston, from their fourth Test side because of concerns his knee injury would prevent him seeing out the game.

In pace bowler and hard-hitting batsman Flintoff's absence, England were humiliated at Headingley. To make matters worse, fast bowler James Anderson sustained a hamstring injury.

But the ECB said Flintoff's Lancashire colleague was also set to be available at the Oval.

"James Anderson also underwent a scan on his hamstring, which was clear," their statement said.

"As there is no evidence of a significant tear, it is anticipated that he will also be available for selection for next week's final Test."

Flintoff, the star of England's 2005 Ashes series win, has had an injury-blighted career and he said before the match at Lord's that this would be his final Test series.

Andrew Chandler, Flintoff's agent, was adamant his client could have played at Headingley, telling Monday's edition of The Times: "He told them he was fit enough to get through... They didn't want him."

"What they didn't take into account during Thursday's practice was that there was no adrenaline. He was hurting at Lord's but the adrenaline got him through. It would have got him through this week as well."

There were only three days between the end of the Edgbaston Test and Friday's start at Headingley and England captain Andrew Strauss told reporters after stumps on Sunday: "Hopefully we're in a better situation to get a result earlier for the final Test." Flintoff's absence always causes a headache for England as they must then decide whether to play an extra bowler or an additional batsman.

At Headingley, they brought in another quick in Stephen Harmison only to be dismissed for 102 in their first innings on Friday after Strauss won the toss and elected to bat.

"When you haven't got an all-rounder in that number six or seven spot it is always a problem and one we are going to have to face up to because Flintoff is retiring from Test cricket," England coach Andy Flower, speaking after the end of the Headingley Test and before Monday's announcement, said.

"That is a problem because we seem to be either light on the batting side or the bowling side. "We will have to make a decision for the Oval — if he is not fit — where we put our strength."

Flintoff, despite missing out at Headingley, remains second in England's series batting averages, behind Strauss, with 171 runs from five innings in three matches at an average of 42.75 and a best, made at Edgbaston, of 74.

But he has taken just seven wickets in the series at an expensive average of nearly 49, with most of those coming in his match-winning burst at Lord's of five for 92.

Anderson is England's joint leading wicket-taker in the series, alongside Stuart Broad, with 12 wickets at 38.91 and a best of five for 80 at Edgbaston.

But, hampered by his injury, Anderson's 18 wicketless overs at Headingley cost 89 runs.

Australia quicks Ben Hilfenhaus (18), Peter Siddle (16) and Mitchell Johnson (16) have all taken more wickets in the series so far than Anderson and Broad.

BFF submits

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from the academy though the players will be attached to school outside the academy."

He also said that every year it would cost approximately Tk 4 crore to run the academy.

BFF president Kazi Salahuddin had earlier announced that a local reputed corporate house was ready to spend Tk 24 crore to run the football academy.

On August 2, the BFF high-ups met the sports minister to make the official proposal and the minister asked them to submit its full planning on the proposed academy.

Later, the sports minister told reporters that they would look into the legal aspect on whether there was any difficulty and then would consider the proposal.

More than

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"Klavan had an appendix operation in July, but can now play," Uiboleht noted.

The Brazil game is also a festival marking the 100th anniversary of competitive football in Estonia — two local clubs first played one another in June 1909.

Estonia's international presence in football dates back to 1921, after the country emerged from the embers of Tsarist Russia.

The country disappeared from the political and sporting map during World War II, when it was taken over by the Soviet Union, but returned to the fold in 1992 after the communist bloc had collapsed.

The match is also providing some light relief for fans struggling in the face of the deepening recession in this nation of 1.3 million.

Kevin's injury

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the lowest combined tally in Test history.

"I hate missing matches for England and especially during an Ashes summer but now that the decision has been made to undergo surgery I'm confident I can return to the England team injury-free following a course of rehabilitation," said Pietersen at the time of his injury.

No return

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Team boss Luca di Montezemolo said he was disappointed that Schumacher had been forced to pull out of the race in Valencia as he had already shown his enthusiasm and dedication to winning were intact.

"His return to racing would have been good for Formula One and I am sure we would have seen him fighting it out for the victory," he added.

Schumacher won five of his seven world titles with Ferrari and he had been working as a consultant with the Italian team this season.

Ponting due a break

Cricket

AFP, Sydney

Australia will give Test skipper Ricky Ponting a break after the crunch Ashes series with England as it experiments with its one-day and Twenty20 line-ups, selectors said Tuesday.

Ponting will miss both Australia's Twenty20 matches against England, a one-off one-dayer against Scotland and the beginning of the one-day series against England as he returns home for a rest.

Chairman of selectors Andrew Hilditch said the Australian captain was "having his workload managed" as the team's full schedule meant he would not get another break until next year.

"This gives Michael Clarke another opportunity to captain the Australian Twenty20 and ODI side," Hilditch said.

Batsman Mike Hussey was omitted from the Twenty20 side, along with bowlers Peter Siddle and Nathan Bracken.

Hilditch said selectors wanted to assess the talents of bowlers Dirk Nannes and Adan Voges in the ultra-short form of the game ahead of next year's ICC World Twenty20.

"We are keen to look at different players as

specialist Twenty20 players in these two matches," he said.

Wicketkeeper Tim Paine was called into the one-day squad, providing cover for Test glovesman Brad Haddin.

"Tim has been picked not only because he is an excellent wicketkeeper but because he has opened the batting in this form of the game with great success, which gives us good versatility if Brad Haddin misses any of the ODIs," Hilditch said.

Australia play Scotland on August 28 before two Twenty20 matches and a seven-match one-day series against England from September 4 to September 20.

Ponting will return at some point of the one-day series but the selectors did not say when.

ODIS SQUAD

Ricky Ponting (captain), Michael Clarke, Nathan Bracken, Callum Ferguson, Brad Haddin, Nathan Hauritz, Ben Hilfenhaus, James Hopes, Michael Hussey, Mitchell Johnson, Brett Lee, Tim Paine, Peter Siddle, Shane Watson, Cameron White

T20 SQUAD

Michael Clarke (captain), Brad Haddin, Callum Ferguson, Nathan Hauritz, Ben Hilfenhaus, David Hussey, Mitchell Johnson, Brett Lee, Dirk Nannes, Adam Voges, David Warner, Shane Watson, Cameron White

Shakib all the way

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boundary was hit in the air. It not only reflected the intent of the batsmen but also the disciplined lines and length of the new-ball bowlers Elton Chigumbura and Rainsford. If there was to be any criticism, it has to be said that they perhaps strayed to the middle and leg line a touch too often against Tamim, which shows up in his wagon wheel: Tamim picked 48 runs on the on side.

For their part, the batsmen were absolutely focused on playing themselves in before going for their shots. Things were looking good when Siddiqui was run out. He pushed Utseya, who brought himself on in the 11th over, to

the left of short midwicket, was caught in a yes-no situation with Tamim and couldn't get back to his crease in time. Tamim, himself, was run out soon in a comical fashion. He had missed to connect a leg-side delivery but was stranded in the middle due to a faulty call from Shakib and was easily run out by the keeper. However, it didn't prove to be a major set back as Shakib set the stadium ablaze with his power-hitting.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard in the second one-day international between Zimbabwe and Bangladesh at the Queen's Sports Club on Tuesday: BANGLADESH

SL eye T20 revenge

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order batsmen delivered.

"Our bowling always stepped up when we wanted it to," the Sri Lankan captain said. "We have just got to make sure our batting keeps up."

Sri Lanka called up in-form opening batsman Mahela Udawatte to replace Tillakaratne Dilshan, who is still recovering from finger and eye injuries sustained during the third Test last month.

Udawatte is expected to open the innings with swash-buckling veteran Sanath Jayasuriya.

Off-spinner Muttiah Muralidaran, the world's leading wicket-taker with 770 Test and 511 one-day wickets, will lead the bowling in the absence of experienced seamer Chaminda Vaas.

Vaas, who retired from Test cricket after the Pakistan

series, was ignored by the selectors despite saying he will play limited-overs cricket until the 2011 World Cup.

SQUADS

PAKISTAN (from): Shahid Afridi (capt), Imran Nazir, Nasir Jamshed, Mohammad Yousuf, Misbah-ul-Haq, Shoaib Malik, Kamran Akmal, Umar Gul, Saeed Ajmal, Mohammad Amir, Rana Naved-ul-Hasan, Abdul Razzaq, Umar Akmal, Fawad Alam, Rao Iftikhar.

SRI LANKA (from): Kumar Sangakkara (capt), Muttiah Muralitharan, Sanath Jayasuriya, Upu Tharanga, Mahela Udawatte, Mahela Jayawardene, Chamara Kapugedara, Thilina Kandamby, Angelo Matthews, Ajantha Mendis, Malinga Bandara, Nuwan Kulasekera, Lasith Malinga, Isuru Udana, Thilan Thushara.

Tamim run out	79
Zunaed run out	27
Ashraf ul lbw b Chibhabha	22
Shakib run out	104
Rokibul c Coventry b Chigumbura	35
Nayeem c Chibhabha b Chigumbura	0
Mushfiq run out	23
Mahmudullah run out	6
Enamul b Chigumbura	5
Nazmul run out	1
Extras: (b-5, lb-2, w-10, nb-1)	18
Total: (For 8 wks in 50 overs)	320
Did not bat: Rasel.	
Fall of wickets: 1-71, 2-110, 3-155, 4-251, 5-251, 6-293, 7-310, 8-319.	

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Rainsford	10	0	66	0
Chigumbura	10	0	59	3
Utseya	10	0	53	0
Chibhabha	5	0	51	1
Matsikenyeri	3	0	17	0
Price	9	1	38	0
Masakadza	2	0	14	0
Williams	1	0	15	0

ZIMBABWE	
Vermuelen lbw b Rasel	16
Masakadza b Rasel	13
Coventry c Nayeem b Mahmudullah	61
Chibhabha c Zunaed b Nazmul	8
Taylor c b Enamul	9
Williams c Mahmudullah b Enamul	75
Matsikenyeri c b Shakib	39
Utseya c Mushfiqur b Nazmul	4
Chigumbura run out	31
Price lbw b Shakib	5
Rainsford not out	0
Extras: (lb-6, w-4)	10
Total: (All out in 46.1 overs)	271
Fall of wickets: 1-28, 2-33, 3-62, 4-91, 5-137, 6-215, 7-223, 8-256, 9-270.	

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Rasel	9.1	0	53	2
Shakib	9	0	39	2
Nazmul	8	0	49	2
Enamul	10	0	56	2
Naem	4	0	27	0
Mahmudullah	6	0	41	1
Result: Bangladesh won by 49 runs.				
Man-of-the-match: Shakib Al Hasan				

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS	38	Manhattan	DOWN	24	A mere
1	Serve tea	Project	1	Tower	handful
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27	Solidify	composer	14	43 Leave	39 Speed-
28	Elevator	order	15	42 Wear	er's
31	Conceit	51 Perfor-	16	41 Elliptical	40 Oz VIP
32	Adapt-	mance	17	42 Wear	41 Elliptical
33	Astaire	system?	18	43 Leave	42 Wear
34	Make	boat	19	44 Old	43 Leave
36	Foolhardy	19 Harder to	20	45 Bit for 38-	44 Old
37	Peru's	find	21	46 Somme-	45 Bit for 38-
	capital	54 Muumu-	22	46 Somme-	46 Somme-
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		one's way		46 Somme-	46 Somme-
		36 Foolhardy		46 Somme-	46 Somme-
		goddess		46 Somme-	46 Somme-
		37 Peru's		46 Somme-	46 Somme-
		capital		46 Somme-	46 Somme-

MISC	LAM	APSE
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NAIL	LAP	
CODDLE	ATEASE	
OGRE	MIXED	DBAG
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LEGS	NOD	LESS

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