

Pakistan play Kiwis in UAE

AFP, Karachi

Pakistan will play four one-day internationals against New Zealand in Abu Dhabi and two Twenty20 matches in Dubai next month, an official said Monday.

"We have held successful discussions with the United Arab Emirates (UAE) officials and have planned four one-day matches in Abu Dhabi and two Twenty20 matches in Dubai," said Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chairman Ijaz Butt.

A final programme will be released after confirmation from New Zealand Cricket (NZC), he added.

New Zealand has refused to tour Pakistan following attacks on the Sri Lankan team's bus in the country's eastern city of Lahore last March.

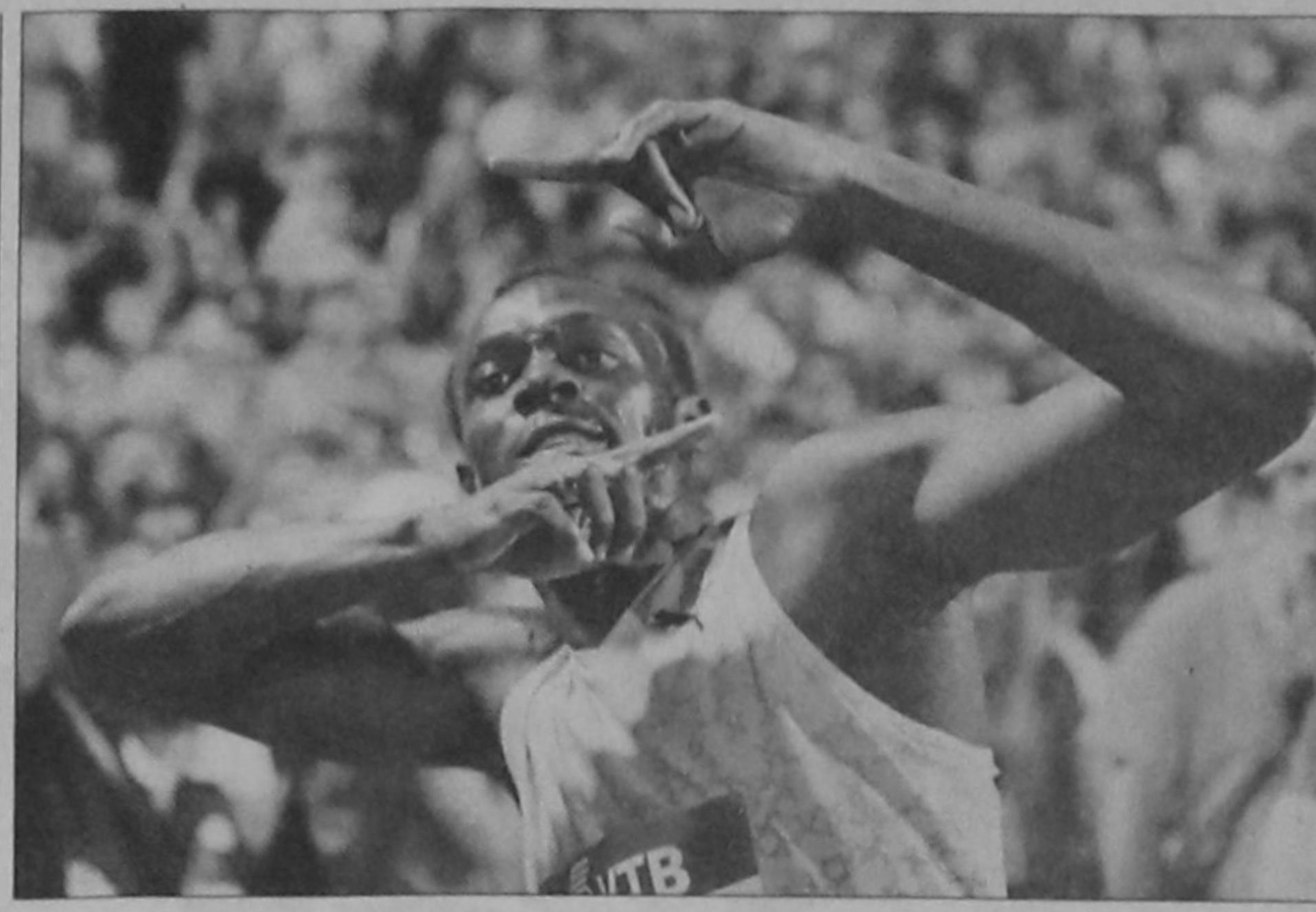


PHOTO: AFP
World's fastest man Usain Bolt of Jamaica celebrates in his trademark fashion after winning yet another title, the 200m gold this time at the World Athletics Final in Thessaloniki on Sunday.

A momentous victory

INTERNET, undated



Little Jada Clijsters Lynch reached out her index finger, gave her mother's US Open trophy a gentle tap, then toddled off down the service line of Arthur Ashe Stadium while jiggling her 18-month-old legs for the benefit of the photographers.

And suddenly, the acrimony, venom and ugliness that had stained the same arena 24 hours prior began to fade into the memory banks.

The purity and innocence of the love between mother and child, of seeing Kim Clijsters celebrate the unluckiest of triumphs with her infant daughter, was perhaps the only thing strong enough to cleanse the deep wounds Serena Williams inflicted upon the sport of tennis and the US Open on Saturday evening.

A day after Williams' outburst at a line judge and just hours after the American issued a statement that didn't once mention the word "sorry," Clijsters proved that nice gals don't always finish last and that champions don't always come with a jagged edge.

In this unforgiving city of bustle and attitude, Clijsters brought a softer side, with her extraordinary tale of returning better than ever after more than two years in self-imposed tennis exile.

This was no fluke result, no freak out-

come brought about by a bizarre confluence of circumstance. The Belgian stared down the best en route to the final and met every challenge.

Both Williams sisters came and went, Venus with some grace, Serena with that profane outburst, before the final obstacle of future star Caroline Wozniacki was met and conquered Sunday, 7-5, 6-3.

That Clijsters could return to the sport and in the space of a few months shed cobwebs from her game to this extent is astonishing. Some will assert that it typifies weakness in the women's game, but this is really about one woman's strength of conviction, talent and dedication.

Her play against Serena Williams was exemplary, against Wozniacki it was solid and calm and good enough to negate both her opponent's weapons and a swirling wind.

"What a fairy tale it is," said Clijsters' coach, Wim Fissette. "Having a baby, coming back, it really does seem like a fairy tale."

"But this is the goal we set for this. We didn't just want her to come back and be OK, our target was to win the US Open."

Clijsters' approach was unconventional. She did not practice on her rest days, preferring instead to spend time with her daughter and husband Brian Lynch.

As a result she looked fresh every time she took to the court. As each round came and went, the confidence grew, while family life provided a balance that pre-

vented too much dangerous introspection.

In an odd sense, Clijsters was a defending champion of sorts, having won her only previous Slam in her last appearance in New York in 2005. Injury ruled her out the following year, retirement kept her away thereafter.

"This has been so exciting for me," she said. "I just wanted to start three tournaments just to get back into the rhythm of playing tennis and get used to the surroundings."

"I don't have words for this. I am just glad I got to come back and defend my title from 2005. Winning the first one has helped me to keep my nerves at the end."

Wozniacki had led 4-2 in the first set before Clijsters dug deep, cutting out the clutter of unforced errors that plagued her early on and making the Danish teenager stretch further. Clijsters took the opener 7-5, and established an early advantage in the second that held throughout.

The final point saw Wozniacki desperately retrieve a ground stroke from the back of the court to send up a high, swirling lob. Clijsters didn't flinch, spiking away the decisive smash before crumpling to the ground in disbelief.

There followed a climb to the players' box, a long round of hugs, a gracious speech and that wonderful scene with her daughter.

It gave the women's event the final image it deserved.

India ride

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Yuvraj Singh not out 56
YPathan c Kapugedara b Thushara 0
Raina c Kulasekara b Thushara 8
Kohli not out 2
Extras: (b-1, nb-1, w-18) 20
Total: (For 5 wickets in 50 overs) 319
Did not bat: Harbhajan, I Sharma, Nehra, RP Singh.
Fall of wickets: 1-95, 2-205, 3-276, 4-277, 5-302.

Bowler O M R W
Kulasekara 8 0 38 0
Thushara 10 0 71 2
Malinga 10 0 81 1
Mendis 10 0 70 1
Jayasuriya 9 0 43 1
Mathews 3 0 15 0

MSC go goal

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The result was so embarrassing for the Gopibagh giants that manager Amer Khan and coach Wasim Iqbal both left the team at the end of the game without facing the press.

At Army Stadium, Feni Soccer Club went ahead with a fourth-minute strike from Anwar, who later found the back of the BKSP net in the 50th and 58th minute to complete a treble.

Monaeem Khan Raju, a winger of Dido's camp, also found the hattrick scoring in the 45th, 53rd and 70th minute. Ashraful Kader Manju struck the other to taste first win after losing to Mohammadan.

TEAMS
MOHAMMEDAN: MN Shakil, Wali Faisal, Nasiruddin, Ariful Islam, Enamul Haq Sharif (Alamgir Kabir Rana), Mofazzal Hossain, Saikat, Arman Aziz (Shakil Ahmed), Zahid Hasan Emily (Christian Emeka), Abdul Baten Komol and Alamu Bokola.

BROTHERS: Youssif Ali Khan, Riton Khan, Moniruzzaman Mamun, Masud Rana, Lutfur Rahaman Nayan (M. Adil), Muksudul Alam Bulbul (Tanmoy Hossain), Tahir Ahmed (Didarul Alam), Murad Hossain Milon, Sabuj Kumar, Jahangir Alam and Moussa Fontaine Camara.

Referee Abdul Hannan Miron
Yellow cards: Zahid Hossain (Mohammedan), Jahangir Alam (Brothers).

Mahmud asstt coach

FROM PAGE 17

staff's contracts in the team management except fielding c o a c h M o h a m m a d Salahuddin, as his contract will be reviewed after Zimbabwe's tour of Bangladesh in November this year.

"Question was raised about his [Salahuddin's] performance and that's why the cricket operations committee has suggested to assess his performance," said Yunus.

Bangladesh bowling coach Champaka Ramanayake has been reassigned with the national team until March 31, 2010 while national team's computer analyst Nasir Ahmed's contract has been extended up to June 30, 2010.

The contracts of age-group selectors Ehsanul Haque and Sajjad Ahmed were also extended till June 30, 2010.

The board has appointed Mahmudul Hasan as captain of the Bangladesh Under-19 team while Amit Majumder as his deputy for Zimbabwe and England's tours to Bangladesh this year.

The contract with national team sponsors Grameenphone will expire on October 31, but as the contract is expiring

now be assessed ahead of Today's day/nighter at Trent Bridge in Nottingham where England, already 4-0 down with three to play, will try to win their first match of this one-day international series.

Wright is not the only England player to have sustained a bizarre injury in recent weeks.

Joe Denly was ruled out of the start of the series after a football warm-up clash with fellow England batsman Owais Shah saw him injure his left knee.

English

FROM PAGE 17

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Federer v Del Potro

FROM PAGE 17

losing an ace to an incorrect overrule by umpire Norm Chryst.

Djokovic won a review challenge on the line call overrule but was given only a first serve not an ace even though lunging Federer appeared to have no hope at hitting it.

Federer won five of the last six points tie-breaker points to take the set, two on an errant Djokovic backhand and three on his own winners, the last on a drop volley.

In the second set, Djokovic won a review challenge to get credit for a forehand winner and held serve to 4-4.

Djokovic made five stabbing volley returns in a row during an amazing point in the 11th game, answering Federer with lunging forehands and backhand until just turning his back and bending over, unable to handle the frenzy of shots.

Federer won command by breaking Djokovic in the 12th game to win the set. Federer won the penultimate point off a net cord, Djokovic unable to backhand volley the ball over the net, and hit a forehand winner to take the set.

Earlier, Argentina's del Potro wrecked Rafael Nadal's title aspirations with a bludgeoning 6-2, 6-2, 6-2 victory in

the other semifinal. The giant sixth seed was simply too powerful for the Spanish third seed, who was powerless to match the big-hitting coming at him from the other side of the net as his bid to win the US Open for the first time bit the dust.

This is the best moment of my life," he said.

"I was so focussed every moment because Rafa is a great player and can run for five or six hours.

"I am not that strong, but I did my best and I am in the final."

Both players had early break chances in a tightly-contested start to a match delayed by 24 hours because of heavy rain on Friday and Saturday.

It was an outsider del Potro who struck first in the fourth game, unleashing a big forehand to get to break point and then forcing Nadal into hitting on a backhand volley at the net.

There were no early signs of discomfort from Nadal from the stomach muscle strain that hampered him in earlier rounds, but he was simply being outhit by the giant South American who held easily to a 4-1 lead.

Del Potro held serve to open the third set and he pounced again in the following game, blasting Nadal's serves back with ease to break for the fifth time in the match.

The Argentine eased to a 5-2 lead and then broke the Nadal serve to love to roar into the championship match.

Bolt eases to 200m victory

AFP, Saloni

World and Olympic champion Usain Bolt brought the curtain down on another record-breaking season here on Sunday when he cruised to victory in the 200m at the World Athletics final.

But the Jamaican found himself sharing top billing with America's Carmelita Jeter who ran the third fastest women's 100m of all time.

Bolt won the 200m in 19.68sec, outside the world record of 19.91sec he set at the World Championships in Berlin last month, but quick enough to see off America's Wallace Spearmon (20.21sec) and Antigua's Brendon Christian (20.65sec).

Bolt was to have completed his season by running in Shanghai, on September 20, and Daegu, in South Korea, five days later, but he has already pulled out of both meetings, citing fatigue.

"I am happy that the season is over, I didn't want to get injured. Now I want to go home and rest for six weeks," said Bolt.

Meanwhile, Jeter's winning time of 10.67sec was the third fastest women's 100m in history.

Only compatriots, the late Florence Griffith-Joyner, who set the world record of 10.49sec, and Marion Jones, with 10.65sec, have gone faster.

The 21-year-old Jeter's time nudged France's Christine Arron (10.73sec) from the previous third-best slot.

After that, he took two and a half months out,

Nadal bemoans injury

AFP, New York

Rafael Nadal admitted Sunday that poor scheduling after a knee injury may have set him on the road to his worst-ever defeat in a Grand Slam tournament.

The Spanish powerhouse was hammered 6-2, 6-2, 6-2 by Juan Martin del Potro of Argentina in a semifinal match, wrecking his bid to win in New York and become just the seventh man to lift all four Grand Slam titles.

Del Potro played "unbelievable" tennis and fully deserved his win, Nadal said admitting that he was way below his best and was not in prime physical condition.

"I came back perfect with the knees, but maybe, because I was few times outside of competition and I started back playing two Masters Series at the top level -- maybe was a little bit too much to come back," Nadal said.

"It's much better if you can start a little bit slowly with a little bit small tournaments, not with the Masters Series."

"But I don't have any option, because the calendar says that, and I did."

Nadal's injury problems this year started during the arduous claycourt season when he put excessive strain on his suspect knee tendons while winning tournaments in Monte Carlo, Barcelona and Rome.

He took that with him into the French Open only to lose for the first time at Roland Garros in a fourth-round shocker to Sweden's Robin Soderling.

After that, he took two and a half months out,

missing the defence of his Wimbledon crown and only returned to action at the Montreal Masters in early August.

But that was where he started to feel some pain in his stomach muscles, an injury that worsened in the Cincinnati Masters the following week.

Still, he said he never considered not playing the US Open.

"It was tough to play a few matches like this," Nadal said.

"But at the same time, it was important for me to play this tournament, try my best. It's one of the most important tournaments of the year, and I had to try, no?"

By he did, Nadal never looked like finding the answers he needed to counter the powerful hitting of the six-foot-six-inch (2.03m) Del Potro, who reached his first Grand Slam final to underline his growing status among the sports elite.

By the end, even his defensive play, the hallmark of his game, looked inadequate, with Del Potro yanking him at will left and right across the court.

Turning to the rest of the year, Nadal said he was hopeful he would be able to quickly get back to full fitness from what he called a "not very important injury."

"I have to see the doctor in Spain," he said.

"I have to do another test, because I didn't want to do a test during the tournament because anyway I'm going to play."

"So I don't know how is the injury right now, but I expect not a lot."

One consolation Nadal can take away from New York is that no matter what happens he is assured of regaining the world No.2 ranking he lost to Britain's Andy Murray last month.

Caroline makes her mark

AFP, New York

Caroline Wozniacki's first experience of a Grand Slam final ended in defeat at the US Open on Sunday, but the 19-year-old Dane has given notice that she belongs among the elite.

There was not much wrong, she felt, with her play in the tournament final, where she lost 7-5, 6-3 to Kim Clijsters, who also lost her first Grand Slam final when just 18-years-old at the French Open.

Asked if nerves had played any part in her defeat, Wozniacki was adamant.