

Henin's winning comeback

Nadal routs Lacko

AFP, Melbourne

A tenacious Justine Henin returned to big-time tennis with a bang Wednesday by downing fifth seed Elena Dementieva at the Australian Open, while Rafael Nadal kept his title defence on track.

Playing only her second tournament since making a comeback from an 18-month retirement, the seven-time Grand Slam champion showed she still has what it takes in a 7-5, 7-6 (8/6) epic that lasted almost three hours.

The Belgian, who won the Australian Open in 2004 and made this year's tournament as a wildcard, said she didn't think she would ever experience emotions like that again.

"It was a special night. That's why I came back on the tour, to live these kind of matches," a relieved Henin after making the third round.

"It was very emotional for me on the court at the end because there was so much intensity."

She next plays 27th seed Alisa Kleybanova with a potential quarterfinal looming against fellow Belgian Kim Clijsters, who was given a thorough examination by Thai veteran Tamarine Tanasugarn.

Clijsters, also on the comeback trail after a break to start a family, triumphed 6-3, 6-3, but it was harder than the score suggested for the 15th seed.

Her serve was broken in each set before she dug deep to win.

"Physically, I feel good," she said. "I feel like I'm good enough on the day to beat my opponents. It's not with my best tennis yet, but hopefully I can save that when it's really necessary."

Spanish second seed Nadal was in rip-roaring form as he smashed hapless Slovak Lukas Lacko 6-2, 6-2, 6-2 to stay on track for a potential last eight meeting with Andy Murray.

The Scotsman also looked ominous form with a flawless 6-1, 6-4, 6-3 mauling of Frenchman Marc Gicquel.

"Second round always is easier to play, you are more adapted to the conditions and everything, I think I improved a little bit," said Nadal, who relinquished his number one ranking to Roger Federer last year.

"My real goal right now is just try to be competitive in every tournament that I play, and feel when I go on court I can win against everybody."

Fourth seed Juan Martin del Potro of Argentina was given a huge scare by American James Blake.

The US Open champion battled for over four hours before winning a titanic five-setter to reach the third round 6-4, 6-7 (3/7), 5-7, 6-3, 10-8.

Other top names also showing their credentials included Dinara Safina, Andy Roddick and Svetlana Kuznetsova.

Safina, the second seed who was beaten in the final last year by Serena Williams,

posted a 6-3, 6-4 win over the Czech Republic's Barbora Zahlavova Strycova but struggled.

She made nine more unforced errors (40 to 31) than her 57th-ranked opponent and had problems with her serve, facing multiple break points each time.

"Overall there were too many unforced errors," she admitted.

Unlike the high-profile Clijsters and Henin, Russian third seed Kuznetsova is flying under the radar and looked impressive in her 6-2, 6-2 defeat of countrywoman Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova.

The French Open champion said she had prepared well in the off-season and was ready to make an impact.

"I think I've done a good pre-season, I've worked hard and I've enjoyed it," she said.

Danish fourth seed Caroline Wozniacki downed Canada's Aleksandra Wozniak 6-4, 6-2 while Belarusian seventh seed Victoria Azarenka blasted her way past France's Stephanie Cohen-Aloro 6-2, 6-0.

In the men's draw, Roddick ranted at the umpire after completing a straight sets win over Brazilian Thomaz Bellucci.

The American seventh seed had just served out a 6-3, 6-4, 6-4 victory when he continued to argue over a Hawk Eye video review decision which narrowly went against him on the first of his two match points.

He later apologised.



FAIRYTALE ALIVE: Former world number one Justine Henin of Belgium celebrates after beating Elena Dementieva of Russia in the second round of the Australian Open in Melbourne yesterday.

AUSSIE OPEN AT A GLANCE

AFP, Melbourne

A look at Wednesday's third day of the Australian Open tennis championships:

WEATHER: Sunny with a high of 83 degrees.

ATTENDANCE: Day: 46,542; Night: 19,612; Total: 66,154.

WINNERS: Men: No. 2 Rafael Nadal, No. 4 Juan Martin del Potro, No. 5 Andy Roddick, No. 7 Fernando Gonzalez, No. 11 Philipp Kohlschreiber, No. 33 John Isner.

Women: No. 2 Dinara Safina, No. 3 Svetlana Kuznetsova, No. 4 Caroline Wozniacki, No. 7 Victoria Azarenka, No. 9 Vera Zvonareva, No. 11 Marion Bartoli, No. 15 Kim Clijsters, No. 16 Li Na, No. 19 Nadia Petrova, No. 22 Daniela Hantuchova, No. 27 Alisa Kleybanova, No. 29 Shahar Peer.

LOSERS: Men: No. 21 Tomas Berdych, No. 29 Viktor Troicki.

Women: No. 5 Elena Dementieva, No. 12 Flavia Pennetta, No. 24 Maria Jose Martinez Sanchez, No. 26 Aravane Rezaï, No. 28 Elena Vesnina, No. 30 Kateryna Bondarenko.

STAT OF THE DAY: 39. The age of the oldest women's player at the tournament, Kimiko Date Krumm, who lost in the first round Wednesday.

QUOTE OF THE DAY: "Apologies for the language today folks hopefully most kids were asleep by the time I went off my bad" a conciliatory Andy Roddick tweets about admonishing the chair umpire over a line call.

On Court Thursday: No. 1 Roger Federer vs Victor Hanesku, No. 3 Novak Djokovic vs Marco Chiudinelli, No. 6 Nikolay Davydenko vs Ilya Marchenko, No. 9 Fernando Verdasco vs Ivan Sergeyev, No. 10 Jo-Wilfried Tsonga vs Taylor Dent; No. 1 Serena Williams vs Petra Kvitova; No. 4 Caroline Wozniacki vs Julia Goerges; No. 6 Venus Williams vs Sybille Bammer; No. 7 Victoria Azarenka vs Stefanie Voegelé; No. 10 Agnieszka Radwanska vs Alla Kudryavtseva.

Thursday's Forecast: Mostly sunny with a high of 82 degrees.

Mickey has mixed feelings on UDRS

Cricket

AFP, London

South Africa coach Mickey Arthur has weighed into the debate surrounding the Umpire Decision Review System (UDRS) by saying he views its use with "mixed feelings."

He has also questioned the accuracy of the predictive element of Hawkeye technology which has been used to assess leg before wicket decisions.

"I was always in favour of the UDRS but now that we have seen the system in operation for a decent period of time, I have mixed feelings," said Arthur, writing in the February edition of the Wisden Cricketer magazine.

The UDRS system was responsible for a sharp dip in last week's fourth and final Test between South Africa and England in Johannesburg.

Australian television umpire Daryl Harper failed to overturn a not out decision against South African captain Graeme Smith because he allegedly did not turn up the sound on an audio feed from the stump microphone.

Smith, who was on 15 at the time, went on to make a century and the Proteas won by an innings at the Wanderers to square the series at 1-1.

England were so infuriated they lodged an official complaint with the International Cricket Council (ICC), who have opened an ongoing investigation.

Arthur said technology did "more good than bad" but added he had "some misgivings",

particularly the way in which slightly different systems were in operation around the world.

"We have to standardise the use of the UDRS across the world by using all the tools available. If 'Hot Spot' and 'Snicko' are used in one series but not another then the system is half-baked."

Replay technology in other sports, such as the ball hitting the line in tennis or being grounded for a try in rugby union, is used to determine matters of fact.

But the final question any umpire must answer when ruling on an lbw decision -- would the ball have gone on to hit the stumps? -- is a matter of opinion.

And Arthur is not convinced Hawkeye's judgement should be substituted for that of an umpire.

"I'm not 100 percent convinced about the predictive element of Hawkeye and I don't think many players are either."

In order for UDRS to be activated, players must appeal against the on-field umpire's decision and there were times when both sides appeared to be stretching the rules in this regard to breaking point.

"The other issue that needs to be clarified is the amount of time taken to decide whether to call for a review," Arthur said.

"I think it's fair to say that both South Africa and England did take longer than we should have done at times."

But Arthur said that, for all the controversy, UDRS was succeeding in its core task of eliminating the rank bad, as opposed to arguable, decision from international cricket.

"If the UDRS can eliminate the absolute shocker, then it is doing its job," he said.

School cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

BKSP beat Khilgaon Govt. High School by a massive 266 runs in the quarterfinal of the Dhaka Metro region played at the Gulshan Youth Club Ground on Wednesday.

Batting first, BKSP put on 346 for six in their 50 over, thanks to half centuries from Sajid Akhter (77), Samiul Alam (53) and Salehin Rifat (51 not out).

In reply, Khilgaon Govt. High School were bowled out for 80 runs in 25.5 overs, courtesy of a five-wicket haul from Shah Afran Shakil.

In the other matches, Khulna Zilla High School defeated St. Joseph's High School, Khulna by 149 runs while Ali Nagar High School of Chapainawabgonj beat Nawabgonj High School by 7 wickets.

Parsvnath chess

SPORTS REPORTER

GM Ziaur Rahman maintained third position in the 8th Parsvnath International Open Chess tournament as he drew his ninth round match against Russian IM Tolstikh Nikolay in Delhi yesterday.

Zia earned seven points from nine matches. GM Niaz Morshed has five points from eight matches.

Up close

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Ireland during the World Cup qualifier, Matthaeus was downright to say that it was not fair play by the French captain.

Matthaeus's happiest moment in football came when he lifted the 1990 World Cup and his saddest moment came in the 1999 Champions League final when his team Bayern Munich lost to Manchester United conceding two late goals.

He left the stage as he arrived holding the World Cup, leaving a lasting impression among the journalists present.

Hockey happy

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medal, but our target is to play the final beating either India or Pakistan," said Rach adding that he had no idea about Sri Lanka except the footage he watched and he believed that the Lankans would not be a side to trouble Bangladesh on their home soil.

Moududur Rahman Shuvo, Hasan, Rimon Kumar and Krishna Kumar, who travelled to Europe, have been dropped from the final squad while veteran Ashiquzzaman, fit-again Zahidul Islam Rajon and new faces Irfan Haque and Moshir Rahman Firoz have been included in the 18-member squad.

About the final selection, Rach said he has chosen those players, who would suit his game plan and style of playing.

SQUAD

Mehrab Hossain Kiron (goal-keeper), Zahid Hossain (goal-keeper), Moshir Rahman Biplob (captain), Kamruzzaman Rana, Asaduzzaman Chandan, Ashiquzzaman, Mamunur Rahman Chayan, Irfan Haque, Rasel Mahmud Jimmy, Abdus Sajjad John, Sheik Mohammad Nannu, Zahidul Islam Rajon, Moshir Rahman Firoz, Golam Mostafa, Musharraf Hossain Kutu, Imran Hasan Pintu, Pushkor Khisa Mimou and Taposh Barman.

Shakib eyes the unlikely

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foundation on the fifth morning.

One might be scared with the way the Bangladesh batsmen batted in the latter part of the day after India declared their second innings on 413-8, especially the dismissal of Kayes and Nafees hardly reflected any application in their batting.

Left-handed opener Kayes pressed forward against a lovely delivery from Zaheer Khan, who had pitched it on a good length outside off, to offer a simple catch for wicketkeeper Dinesh Karthik while it was ugly to watch the way Nafees was struggling from the very beginning.

It is not easy for Nafees to get his feet back at the highest level after two years of isolation from the longer-version game. But the batsman can't be blamed for that rather it was the selectors who surprisingly failed to consider the fact that the batsman had only played T20 and 50-over matches during that period.

Nafees was dropped twice by VVS Laxman at slip and on both occasions the unlucky bowler was Zaheer Khan but the south-paw batsman failed to ride his luck as lanky Ishant Sharma got an edge to gully where stand-in skipper Virender Sehwag took a low catch.

The batsmen however can

take inspiration from the bowlers who bowled really well on a flat track to stop the India's run spree on the fourth day. Bangladesh skipper was pleased with their bowling efforts against a vaunted batting line-up.

"I'm really happy with our bowling performance especially the three pace bowlers were excellent. I must give them special thanks," he said.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at stumps on the fourth day of the first Test between India and Bangladesh at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in Chittagong on Wednesday:

INDIA: First innings 243 (Tendulkar 105 not out, Sehwag 52; Shahadat 5-71, Shakib 5-62)

BANGLADESH: First innings 242 (Mahmudullah 69; Zaheer 3-54, Mishra 3-66)

INDIA: Second innings (over-night 122-1)

Gambhir c Nafees b Shafiq 116

Sehwag c Rokibul b Shakib 45

Mishra c Tamim b Mahmudullah 50

David run out 24

Tendulkar lbw b Rubel 16

Laxman not out 69

Yuvraj c Ashraf b Shahadat 25

Karthik c Rubel b Mahmudullah 27

Zaheer b Shakib 20

Sharma not out 7

Extras: (b-1, lb-5, nb-5, w-3) 14

Total: (For 8 wks decl in 87 overs) 413

Did not bat: Sreesanth.

Fall of wickets: 1-90, 2-188, 3-

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Shafiq	15	0	87	1
Shahadat	16	1	53	1
Rubel	15	0	94	1
Shakib	27	2	112	2
Mahmudullah	13	0	52	2
Ashraf	1	0	9	0

BANGLADESH: Second innings

Iqbal not out 23

Kayes c Karthik b Zaheer 1

Nafees c Sehwag b Sharma 21

Ashraf not out 16

Extras: (b-4, lb-1, nb-1) 6

Total: (For two wks in 18 overs) 67

To bat: Shakib, Rokibul, Mahmudullah, Mushfiqur, Shahid, Shahadat, Rubel.

Fall of wickets: 1-8, 2-47.

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Zaheer	8	3	34	1
Sreesanth	5	0	11	0
Sharma	4	1	7	1
Mishra	1	0	10	0

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Pouch

4 Crooner

8 Cribbage score-keepers

12 "Berlin's 'What'll -?'"

13 Paper quantity

14 Bound

15 Trade

17 — mater

18 Central

19 Israeli parliament

21 Toxic hydro-carbon

24 Perched

25 Toss in

26 Uncle, south of the border

28 Sounds from grandfather?

32 Cry

34 Saloon

36 Scoop holder

37 Twangy

39 Beam of light

41 Culpa preceder

42 Clampted patriarch

44 Cyclist's protection

46 A, C or E

50 Mermaid's realm

51 Shared

52 Grad

56 Actress

57 Sorvino

57 Duet

58 Conk out

59 Nerd-pack contents

60 Stitched together

61 Mined-over matter

20 Chow down

21 Sunrise

22 Notion

23 Pinch

27 "— Town"

29 Shock trooper

30 Dandling site

31 Chair part

33 Night-wear

35 "Hum-bug!"

38 Moon's vehicle

40 Syco-phants

43 Chops into cubes

45 Romanian money

46 Temptress

47 Nastase of tennis

48 Swerhe

49 "Unh-unh"

53 Kitten's comment

54 Balloon fill

55 Novelist Harper

Solution time: 25 mins.

B	R	O	A	L	B	A	T	H
L	A	P	B	O	O	T	I	L
O	V	A	S	P	O	O	N	B
G	E	L	L	O	M	A	L	
		O	R	C	A	P	E	S
S	N	O	W	B	A	L	L	S
A	T	I	M	S	N	O	O	D
S	L	I	M	T	A	C	O	B
S	E	T	A	E	D	O	U	R
		L	E	A	G	A	V	E
P	A	P	A	L	B	U	L	L
O	P	E	D	I	K	E	A	
D	E	W	E	T	E	E	S	

CRYPTOQUIP

T N L CSOFNTAR BSZ'P JKKU

YGTKP BTPR RTA WXTPTWTAE,

ASEKSZK ARSGOF ELJK RTE

Y G T P R T A W L X U T Z C .

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: I BELIEVE THE OLD MATHEMATICIAN ONCE INFORMED US THAT HIS FAVORITE QUAFF IS SQUARE-ROOT BEER.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: T equals I

Gambhir stays modest

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think about it, you only put extra pressure on yourself rather than making it yours," said Gambhir.

"I think the most important thing is to give your team a good start, which is the top most priority. And once you are set as an opening batsman, you are bound to score runs. I always believe one thing when you open the batting, if you get set, you score as many runs as possible because you never know what's gonna happen in the next innings. So that's what I've always tried. That's what I'm gonna do in the next innings as well," he added when asked about his ninth Test hundred in 28 matches.

Gambhir also said that he never set any targets because it only puts extra burden on a player.

"I don't set any targets for myself. I don't believe in setting those targets."

Whenever I set targets for myself, I was not able to achieve those targets. It only puts more pressure on me. So I don't believe in setting a lot of targets. I just try to keep it pretty simple. Whenever I go to the field, I think it could be the last match I am playing for my country. And every innings that you play for your country is very special because there are not many people who can represent their country. Representing your country is the biggest honour," he observed.

"Representing the tri-color is the biggest motivation. If I don't get motivation, I am going to stop playing cricket. You represent 100 crore people. You play for them, they pray for you. In Australia, I was dropped several times. If you are dropped, you tend to analyze your game much better. I don't want to look behind. Yeah, it motivated me. I made a lot of runs in Ranji trophy. I thought if I can do well in Ranji trophy, I can do well in the international cricket," he continued.

He also informed that suggestions from dashing opener Virender Sehwag helped him to learn the craft of converting the fifty into a hundred.

"Viru (Virender Sehwag) once told me that if you really want to be successful in international cricket, you have to convert those fifties into hundreds. When I made my comeback in the Sri Lanka series, I had four fifties till that time and I did not get my second hundred in Mohali. So in that point of time I kept thinking that I don't know whether I would get my second Test hundred ever or not because I was only getting fifties and sixties.

So what Viru said was very right that if you want to be a successful player in international cricket, you need to make big scores. That's what I kept doing," he informed.

Gambhir however will love to come here again and again as he made his Test debut in the country as well as get his first hundred here.

"Bangladesh so far proved very lucky for me. I don't mind coming back to this country again and again. I love the wicket. Yeah, things are going my way here. I try to make it as much as possible," he said.

Barisk stilted

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in 63 overs against Sylhet. Opener Nazmus Sadat scored 37 and one-down batsman Mohammad Mithun scored 47 runs.

BRIEF SCORES

DHAKA v BARISAL

BARISAL: 89 all out in 32.1 overs (Arafat Salauddin 29, Ariful Haq 24; Mohammad Sharif 5-34, Talha Jubair 4-41)

DHAKA: 131 for four in 42 overs (Uttam Sarker 40, Marshal Ayub 46 not out)

CHITTAGONG v RAJSHAHI

CHITTAGONG: 128 for five in 36 overs (Gazi Salauddin 34, Aftab Ahmed 34 not out; Mohammad Shahjada 3-39)

KHULNA v SYLHET

KHULNA: 196 for three (Tushar Imran 50 not out, Habisul Bashar 38 not out; Nabil Samad 1-26)

Heartbreak for U-19s

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match. And now after a second straight defeat, they find themselves playing for the Plate Championship once again. Bangladesh will their Plate Championship quarterfinal against Hong Kong on the 24th.

In the other matches of the day, New Zealand outplayed Sri Lanka for a seven-wicket win at Christchurch while South Africa left it to the second-last ball of its clash with Australia to secure 2-wicket victory at Queenstown.