

# Sharapova restores order

AFP, Paris



Maria Sharapova helped restore order at the French Open on Saturday after Roland Garros had been shellshocked by the loss of its top two seeds before the fourth round stage, a 40-year low point for Paris.

The seventh seeded Russian, whose best performance here remains a 2007 semifinal place, comfortably reached the last 16 with a 6-2, 6-3 win over Taiwan qualifier Chan Yung-Jan.

Sharapova had to recover from a set and 1-4 down to defeat French 17-year-old, and world 188, Caroline Garcia in three sets to reach the last 32 on Thursday.

But there were no dramas on Saturday with the former world number one and triple Grand Slam title winner strolling to her third victory in three meetings with the 129-ranked Chan.

Sharapova will next face Agnieszka Radwanska, the 12th seed, for a place in the quarter-finals, boasting a 6-1 career record over the Pole.

Belarusian fourth seed Victoria Azarenka, a 2009 quarterfinalist, and China's Li Na, the sixth seed, also eased into the last 16.

Azarenka romped to a 6-3, 6-2 win over Italian 30th seed Roberta Vinci while Li, the first Chinese player to make a Grand Slam final at the Australian Open this year, enjoyed a comfortable 6-2, 6-2 win over Romania's Sorana Cirstea.

Saturday's results came a day after top seed Caroline Wozniacki was knocked out in the last 32 while second seeded Kim Clijsters exited the day before in the second round.

It was the first time since 1971 that the top two seeds had failed to get beyond the third round.

Li reached the fourth round for the second time by seeing off 21-year-old Cirstea, a 2009 quarterfinalist, and will next face dangerous Czech ninth seed Petra Kvitova who ended American interest with a 6-4, 6-2 win over Vania King.

Andrea Petkovic, the German 15th seed, also went into last 16 with a 6-2, 4-6, 6-3 win over Jarmila Gajdosova, the last Australian in the event.

Petkovic, who reached her first Grand Slam quarterfinal in Australia, will face Russian 25th seed Maria Kirilenko, who put out Clijsters' conqueror Aranxta Rus.

Meanwhile, Swiss veteran Patty Schnyder called time on a 17-year career which brought 11 titles, 59 Grand Slam appearances and a family split caused by a bizarre relationship with an orange juice-obsessed guru.

The 32-year-old made her majors bow at Roland Garros in 1996 and suitably chose her 16th successive French Open to announce her retirement.



PHOTO: AFP

China's Li Na celebrates after her win over Romania's Sorana Cirstea during their third round French Open match at the Roland Garros in Paris yesterday.

# Diego accuses Julio



Football

AFP, Buenos Aires

Argentine legend Diego Maradona on Friday repeated doping allegations against Argentine Football Federation president Julio Grondona, insisting the latter gave the green light for players to take a banned substance ahead of a 1994 World Cup playoff with Australia.

"Grondona told us a week beforehand we could take the substance we wanted as there was to be no anti-doping control," 1986 World Cup winner Maradona told Argentine radio station Metro.

Grondona said earlier this week that doping controls were deliberately overlooked so as to prevent Maradona, who served a 15-month suspension in 1991 for taking cocaine, fouling foul of a test.

Former Australian football officials have angrily denied being party to any deal to prevent drug testing before the play-off, which saw Argentina go through to the 1994 finals over two legs.

# Inter eye consolation



Football

AFP, Rome

The Italian Cup final between deposed champions Inter Milan and Palermo on Sunday could have been overshadowed by the Champions League trophy clash in London the day before, but two presidents are ensuring no one forgets about it.

Inter's Massimo Moratti and Palermo counterpart Maurizio Zamparini have brought a level of intensity to the build-up that has usually been lacking in this much-maligned competition.

The Italian Cup is slowly increasing in importance but was long regarded with almost disdain in the past.

Few teams ever put out their first choice line-ups but recently that has changed and

At the ensuing 1994 World Cup, he would additionally test positive for ephedrine.

Then Australian federation chief executive Ian Holmes insisted no deal to drop the controls was ever discussed with his side, telling the Sydney Morning Herald that "quite frankly, we would never have agreed to that kind of an arrangement."

Former Argentina defender Jorge Borelli and former midfielder Hugo Perez have denied Maradona's claim - but the latter accused them of only "playing Grondona's game."

Maradona said: "I don't know who took what. The only thing I know is that I went walking around the whole of Australia with (former wife) Claudia until eight o'clock in the morning and that various others couldn't get to sleep, I don't know why."

Maradona has several times hit out at Grondona, head of the Argentine federation since 1979, since the former was forced out as national coach following last summer's World Cup finals, dubbing him "old" and "corrupt".

# No stopping Novak

AP, Paris



Novak Djokovic extended his perfect start to the season at the French Open on Saturday, beating Juan Martin del Potro 6-3, 3-6, 6-3, 6-2 for his 40th straight victory this year.

Djokovic has not lost in 42 matches dating to last year's Davis Cup final. He and Del Potro returned to Court Suzanne Lenglen on Saturday after splitting the first two sets Friday before the match was suspended because of darkness.

The second-seeded Serb had no problems on Day 2 against Del Potro, the 2009 U.S. Open champion. He had 41 winners to Del Potro's 22 and had four of his five breaks in the final two sets.

Rafael Nadal also appeared to put his struggles behind him, advancing to the fourth round with a 6-1, 6-3, 6-0 win over Croatian qualifier Antonio Veic. Australian Open runners-up Andy Murray and Li Na also advanced, as did three-time Grand Slam champion Maria Sharapova.

Djokovic's 40-0 start to 2011 is the second-best opening streak in the Open era, which started in 1968. The two-time Grand Slam champion's overall winning streak of 42 trails only the record of 46 set by Guillermo Vilas in 1977.

Djokovic entered the French Open after beating Nadal in two clay-court finals, making him a contender for his first French Open title. The Serb will take over the No. 1 ranking if he makes the final.

In the next round, Djokovic will face

No. 13 Richard Gasquet of France, who advanced Friday with a 6-2, 6-3, 3-6, 6-3 victory over Thomaz Bellucci of Brazil.

Nadal, who needed five sets to win his opening match at Roland Garros, had only 18 unforced errors and managed to break his opponent nine times.

The five-time French Open champion has been dominant at Roland Garros since his debut in 2005, when he won the first of four straight titles. His only loss at the clay-court Grand Slam came in 2009, when he was defeated by Robin Soderling in the fourth round, giving him a 41-1 record at the tournament.

But Nadal started off slowly this year, needing five sets to beat John Isner. In the second round, Nadal also looked shaky in second round, Nadal also looked shaky in defeating Pablo Andujar 7-5, 6-3, 7-6 (4).

Murray moved into the next round despite twisting his right ankle in the second set against Michael Berrer. The fourth-seeded Brit called for a trainer and had his ankle taped before returning to the court. He broke his German opponent on the next point and went on to a 6-2, 6-3, 6-2 victory.

Murray would play Victor Troicki of Serbia, who beat No. 21 Alexandr Dolgoplov of Ukraine 6-4, 3-6, 6-3, 6-4.

Also, No. 18 Gilles Simon eliminated 10th-seeded Mardy Fish of the United States 6-3, 6-4, 6-2, Juan Ignacio Chela of Argentina defeated Lukas Rosol of the Czech Republic 6-2, 6-4, 3-6, 7-6 (5) and Alejandro Falla of Colombia beat Lukasz Kubot of Poland 6-7 (4), 6-4, 7-5, 6-4

## Chennai

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part of his innings, missed out on a well-deserved century when he offered a simple catch to captain Daniel Vettori off paceman Sreenath Aravind.

Aravind struck again off the very next ball to remove Dhoni, caught off a full toss by Virat Kohli after making 22 which included two sixes in one over by Gayle.

Gayle also picked up two wickets in two balls, sending back Albie Morkel and Suresh Raina in the 20th over with his wily off-breaks.

**SCORES IN BRIEF**  
**CHENNAI SUPER KINGS:** 205 for 5 in 20 overs (Vijay 95, Hussey 63, Dhoni 22; Gayle 2-34, Aravind 2-39)

**ROYAL CHALLENGERS BANGALORE:** 147 for 8 in 20 overs (Tiwarly 42 not out, Kohli 35, Zaheer 21, De Villiers 18; Ashwin 3-16, Jakati 2-21)

**Result:** Chennai won by 58 runs and lift the IPL 2011 trophy.

**Man-of-the-match:** Murali Vijay.

**Man-of-the-series:** Chris Gayle.

## Eng not

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Neither Anderson nor England had added to their score when he edged spinner

Ajantha Mendis to Mahela Jayawardene at slip.

That left England 47 for two, 353 runs adrift of a Sri Lanka total founded on a century from wicket-keeper Prasanna Jayawardene and several fifties.

England, whose attack had now been reduced to just three specialist bowlers.

## China sweep

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sports Ahad Ali Sarkar was also present on the occasion. Also present at the closing ceremony was president of Bangladesh Table Tennis Federation (BTTF) and principal secretary to the prime minister Abdul Karim, vice president of BTTF Jahangir Alam and BTTF's general secretary ATM Shamsul Alam.

The event got underway on May 24 with China, Malaysia, Thailand, India, Pakistan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Maldives, Bhutan and hosts Bangladesh taking part.

# Dad knows best

AFP, Paris



Caroline Wozniacki is hoping some fatherly advice can help her ditch her Grand Slam jinx. The 20-year-old Dane saw another chance of winning a major title vanish ingloriously when she lost 6-1, 6-3 to Slovak veteran Daniela Hantuchova in Friday's third round action at the French Open.

And once again the world number one's inability to turn it on when it matters most was put under intense scrutiny.

The first person she turned to as she slumped off court was father and coach Piotr, who played pro football in Poland before he moved the family to Denmark where Wozniacki was born.

"He just said, you know, 'Daniela played better than you today,'" Wozniacki replied to a question.

"It's a tough loss, and I know that it's not fun for you right now, but it's the sport and we know what we can do.

"I mean, the world still goes on and we still have the next tournament next week. There is nothing you can do about it now, so just don't beat yourself up too much."

To date Wozniacki has played in 17 Grand Slam events with her best showing a run into

the final at the US Open in 2009 when she lost to Kim Clijsters who was making her comeback from two years out of the game.

Still the wins keep coming in the regular WTA Tour events with another four this year at Dubai, Indian Wells, Charleston and Brussels and she has now held the world number one spot for all but one week since January.

Asked whether she was frustrated or mystified by all the talk about her failures to win a Grand Slam tournament, Wozniacki said that "everyone always has an opinion."

"It doesn't matter," she said.

"When I was younger, people told me, yeah, yeah, right, you'll never be a top player. You're from Denmark. We don't have the mentality. Blah, blah, blah.

"And, you know, it really doesn't matter. For me, I know what I'm capable of. I know I'm a great player. I'm doing well, and, you know, I had a loss today. That's what happens. I'll be back even better."

Wozniacki said she would take a few days off, possibly back home in Denmark, and then switch her focus fully on Wimbledon where she has reached the fourth round in the last two years.

"I definitely enjoy playing on grass. I think it's a great surface," she said.

# Pakistan go one-nil up

AFP, Belfast

Pakistan beat Ireland in the first of the two one-day internationals in Belfast on Saturday.

Pakistan played a clinical innings as they chased down a pitiful total of 96 set by Ireland in their allotted 36 overs.

The tourists play the second match on Monday.

Rain had delayed the start of the match in what is also Ireland's first game since the World Cup.

**SCORES IN BRIEF**

**IRELAND:** 96 all out in 20 overs (Stirling 39, K. O'Brien 15, Wilson 11; Junaid 4-12, Ajmal 3-7)

**PAKISTAN:** 97 for 3 in 27.3 overs (Hafeez 52, Taufeeq 23; Cusack 3-13)

**Result:** Pakistan won by seven wickets (D/L method)

**Man-of-the-match:** Junaid Khan.

## MSC

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the election will be June 24, exactly 90 days after the formation of the limited company.

Meanwhile, it was learnt that there was a compromise between two groups of candidates led by Mosaddek Ali and Lokman Hossain which resulted in no nomination papers being submitted.

## Nat'l Jr

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BKSP became champions in the meet with seven gold, six silver and two bronze medals to their credit.

Khulna District Sports Association finished second collecting six gold, three silver and two bronze medals while Pabna DSC came third with two gold, silver and bronze medals each.

A total of 284 athletes -- 191 boys and 93 girls -- competed in the two-day U-18 meet in a total of 19 events.

## Barca immortals land

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right before racing towards goal. Another one-two with Ryan Giggs, looking perilously close to off-side, and Rooney was in space.

The England international took his time and swept in a curling shot beyond Victor Valdes to round off a wonderful move.

The goal clearly rattled Barcelona, but the Catalans were soon threatening again. Messi went on a surging run and picked out Villa but then just failed to control his teammate's return pass and United breathed again.

United started the second half positively but again Barcelona were swiftly on top as the warning lights were flashing again.

A fine save from van der Sar denied Dani Alves after the Brazilian was played in by Andres Iniesta before Vidic headed away Messi's follow up shot.

But on 54 minutes Barcelona were back in front.

Messi gathered the ball 25 yards out, and with Patrice Evra standing off fatally, the Barca talisman buried a thunderous low shot beyond van der Sar.

With Barcelona firmly on top it was left to Villa to apply the coup de grace on 69 minutes.

Messi embarrassed Nani before racing down the right flank. When Nani then failed to clear again, Messi found Sergio Busquets who passed to Villa who curled into the top corner.

Solution time: 25 mins.

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CRYPTOQUIP

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**Yesterday's Cryptoquip:** IN WHAT FARM CART MIGHT REPORTER CHUNG STORE HER MANY FRAT PARTY OUTFITS? CONNIE'S TOGA WAGON. Today's Cryptoquip Clue: R equals A