

Confident Masters eye Roland Garros glory

Tennis

AFP, Madrid

Roger Federer and Serena Williams took home trophies on Sunday from the Madrid Masters...

With the French Open starting in a fortnight, both the Swiss, who put his best tennis on display to beat Tomas Berdych 3-6, 7-5, 7-5, and Williams, who crushed world number one Victoria Azarenka of Belarus 6-1, 6-3, are confident of their form.

"There are exciting times ahead for me," said Federer, who will fly to Italy on Monday but will decide only before his opening match on Wednesday whether his body feels fit enough to compete at the Rome Masters.

"I'm winning so many events and playing so well, I believe that I can win the slams. I know the difficulty of the French, the focus will be on Novak [Djokovic] who is going for four slams in a row and on Rafa [Nadal] because he's the defending champion.

"It's an exciting event and I'm playing well, let's see how it plays out." Williams, who won Roland Garros a decade ago, is also feeling good about her game and has a misconception to correct.

"I love the clay, I have won the French Open," said the 30-year-old.

"It's a myth about me not liking the clay -- I like it more than grass. Hopefully I can start doing better.

"Roland Garros conditions are much different from here. Conditions are different every week on clay. Definitely my goal is to do well in Paris."

Federer, with 16 Grand Slam titles, will now stand behind Djokovic on Monday on the ATP list after sending Nadal back to third on the rankings with his winning performance on the controversial blue clay laid down at the Caja Magica.

Playing in his first event after six weeks off, the Swiss star surprised even himself.

"It's surprising to come back and win a title right away," said Federer.

"I was worried about getting through the first round, I was very realistic coming in. I guess I forgot that I had such a great record [now three titles] in Madrid, I was able to draw from that.

"Confidence started coming back, it didn't take much for me this week. It's been a great scenario, coming off a break and winning."

The 30-year-old Federer went level with Nadal on 20 career titles at Masters 1000 level, with both men sharing the overall record.

Federer, playing in his 104th ATP final, won his 74th title and fourth of the season.

MI ride on Rayudu, Pollard

PTI, Bangalore

Mumbai Indians rode on Ambati Rayudu and Kieron Pollard's swashbuckling knocks and their unbroken 122-run sixth-wicket partnership to stage a dramatic fightback and beat Royal Challengers Bangalore by five wickets in their Indian Premier League match on Monday.

Rayudu smashed an unbeaten 81 off 54 balls while Pollard remained not out on 52 off 31 as Mumbai Indians chased down the target of 172 with two balls to spare after staring down the barrel at 51 for five in the ninth over.

Pollard smashed Gayle for a six and two fours to seal the match for Mumbai and keep their chances of qualifying for the playoffs alive.

Pollard and Rayudu hit nine runs in the penultimate over off Zaheer, leaving Mumbai to score 14 off the last over.

MI started poorly losing Sachin Tendulkar for a first-ball duck. Zaheer Khan, who seems to be peaking at the right time for RCB, had the batsman caught by Virat Kohli at short cover point.

The visitors then lost Herchelle Gibbs for two after KP Appanna fired in a superb throw at the bowler's end where Tiwary did the rest. MI were in trouble with

the scorecard reading seven for two at the end of the second over.

Pollard and Rayudu targeted left-arm spinner Appanna in the eleventh over by clobbering him for 19 runs.

Pollard thrashed Appanna for two consecutive sixes, taking Mumbai to 75 for five at the end of the over.

Earlier, a gritty knock by Tilakaratne Dilshan after early wickets and late charge by Mayank Agarwal powered Royal Challengers Bangalore

to a challenging 171/6.

Mayank Agarwal produced a blistering 30-ball 64 and smashed Munaf Patel for 24 runs in the innings' last over, which included two sixes and as many fours.

SCORES IN BRIEF ROYAL CHALLENGERS BANGALORE: 171 for 6 (Agarwal 64, Dilshan 47) MUMBAI INDIANS: 173 for 5 (Rayudu 81*, Pollard 52*) Result: Mumbai Indians won by 5 wickets. Man-of-the-match: Ambati Rayudu.



PHOTO: AFP

Mumbai Indians batsman Ambati Rayudu flays one away to the midwicket boundary during an unbeaten 81 in their IPL win over Royal Challengers Bangalore at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bangalore yesterday.

Phelps won't

FROM PAGE 16 great. It's an exciting time and this is going to be a fun summer.

"I've been able to get an excitement back in the water." Phelps says he doesn't worry that whatever he does in London will inevitably be compared to his spectacular Beijing performance.

"Going into this year I have goals that I want to accomplish," Phelps said. "I know it won't be eight medals again. If you want to compare me to that that's your decision, not mine. I'm going out there to try to accomplish the things that I have in my mind and in my heart."

"If I can do that and I can have fun then that's all that really matters to me."

Of course, winning is more fun than losing, something that came home to Phelps as he saw US teammate Ryan Lochte go from strength to strength last season, often at Phelps's expense.

"It wasn't fun," Phelps said. "Obviously I put myself in that spot, I put myself in the spot to not swim the times I want. He was just kind of rolling over me. It wasn't fun to be on that end. It was something that was very motivating for me."

Neymar guides Santos to title

Football

REUTERS, Rio de Janeiro

Brazil striker Neymar scored a brace of goals to steer Santos to a 4-2 win over Guarani as they clinched the Paulista championship title on Sunday.

The 20-year-old converted a penalty for Santos's second goal and sidefooted the third from the edge of the penalty area as South American champions Santos won the two-leg final 7-2 on aggregate.

Neymar, who finished with 20 goals in the competition, was also involved in the first and fourth goals scored by Alan Kardec as Pele's former club won the title for the third year running in a match marred by crowd violence.

Television pictures showed Guarani fans fighting with truncheon-wielding police on the terraces during the first half, although media reports said nobody was injured.

The Paulista, played in the state of Sao Paulo, is the most prestigious of the plethora of state championships which kick off the Brazilian season.

Critics say the tournaments, which pre-date the growth of air travel in Brazil, are now out-dated and clutter up the calendar.

The Brazilian championship, which features 20 teams playing each other twice, has to be squeezed into little more than six months to accommodate them.

Rio de Janeiro's Engenhao stadium was only around half full as Fluminense clinched the Carioca tournament with a 1-0 win over Botafogo, completing a 5-1 aggregate win.

Atletico Mineiro won the Minas Gerais state championship, beating America 3-0 to complete a 4-1 aggregate win. Guilherme broke the deadlock before Bernard scored either side of halftime for the Roosters.

Former South American champions Internacional came from behind to beat Caxias 2-1 and win the Gaucha championship final 3-2 on aggregate.

Pepsi's football remix festival

SPORTS REPORTER

Football lovers around the country can brace themselves for a mouth-watering opportunity to fly to Madrid and enjoy a DJ party in the Spanish capital by enrolling on the Pepsi Football Remix Festival.

The festival is an SMS based contest wherein three lucky winners will get a once in a lifetime opportunity to win a fully paid trip to Madrid.

Some of the world's biggest football stars like Lionel Messi, Frank Lampard, Didier Drogba, Fernando Torres and internationally renowned DJ Calvin Harris are part of the festival.

To participate in the contest, fans will need to register by sending the unique code via a SMS to 6969. The unique code will be available under the Pepsi PET bottles (Go pack/ 500 ML/1 litre and 2 litre). Once registered, fans will receive a question, which on answering will help them score a goal. 50 fans with maximum number of goals will get a chance to appear in a gala event scheduled in the end of June 2012. Three lucky winners will get the chance to win a trip to Spain where they get an opportunity to party with internally renowned DJ Calvin Harris. Along with Mega gifts, consumers will also get chance to win regular gifts such as Samsung Galaxy Tab, Samsung Corby phone, Pepsi branded Bag, Pepsi branded Football & Pepsi 3D sipper.

This contest is in line with the brand's recent communication focusing on football that revolved around the theme, Change the Game.

Dhaka Ekadash leave for Kolkata

SPORTS REPORTER

A 22-member Dhaka Ekadash RC leave here for India today to play an exhibition football match in Kolkata on Wednesday.

Dhaka Ekadash, comprising former national footballers like Kaiser Hamid, Elias Hossain, Nakib, Jewel Rana, Saiful Bari Titu, Zakir Hossain, Amer Khan, will play against Pailan XI, comprising former players of Indian Arrows, at the Pailan World School ground in Kolkata.

Farashganj

FROM PAGE 16 Muktiyoddha Sangsad in a trial. Sheikh Jamal coach Abu Yousuf blamed his boys for not showing their willingness to win the match.

"I don't want to blame any single player, rather we are not gelling as a team," said Yousuf adding that the foreign players have been struggling to cope with the weather.

CSK win last ball thriller

INTERNET, Kolkata

Chennai Super Kings won another last-ball thriller in the Indian Premier League beating Kolkata Knight Riders by five wickets here yesterday.

With Chennai needing five runs to win off the final delivery, Rajat Bhatia, who had bowled MS Dhoni and conceded only four from the previous five balls, bowled a full toss. Dwayne Bravo, who had missed a heave off the fifth ball, heaved again, and this time he hit the ball high into the night sky.

Kolkata Knight Riders' captain Gautam Gambhir, fielding in the circle, kept his eyes fixed on the ball as it began its descent, and grimaced as he watched it fall agonisingly out of reach of his fielder at long-on, and just over the boundary. The Super Kings were out of the dug out, craning their necks to see where the ball landed, and once they saw it was a match-winning six, there were several streaks of yellow speeding to embrace Bravo, who stood with arms aloft having kept his team alive in the IPL.

In pursuit of 159, Michael Hussey and M Vijay added 97 runs in 10.1 overs before Sunil Narine, who continued to confound batsmen with his variations during his spell of 4-

0-14-2, dismissed both of them in the space of three balls. Hussey had demonstrated impeccable timing on a pitch that demanded application, hitting four sixes in a half-century that threatened to make short work of the chase, before he top-edged a sweep. Vijay was bowled trying to cut.

When Knight Riders had been sent in after losing the toss, Gambhir and Brendon McCullum had set off at breakneck speed, adding 99 in 11.2 overs before they were dismissed in the space of five deliveries.

With the Knight Riders openers gone and two new batsmen at the crease, Super Kings began to drag the run-rate back, by striking regularly. The hosts slipped from 99 for 0 to 128 for 5. Jacques Kallis was unlucky to be given caught behind while sweeping, because the ball came off the arm, and Yusuf Pathan hit his customary solitary six before holing out to Bravo on the long-on boundary. Bravo caught Manoj Tiwary there soon after and Knight Riders were eventually kept to 158.

BRIEF SCORES KOLKATA KNIGHT RIDERS: 158 for 6 (Gambhir 62, McCullum 37; Jakati 2-26) CHENNAI SUPER KINGS: 160 for 5 (Hussey 56, Vijay 36, Dhoni 28; Narine 2-14, Bhatia 2-33) Result: Chennai win by 5 wickets.

Easy win for Green Valley

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

Green Valley Club registered their second win in the Colonel Malek Smriti Premier Cricket League with a thumping 175-run victory over Victoria Club at the Shahid Miraz Tapan Stadium in Manikganj yesterday.

Upon winning the toss, Green Valley batted first and made 279-7 in the 40 overs.

Rabbi top-scored with 73 runs from 58 balls and Emon made 59 runs from 54 balls. Shaiful picked up three wickets while Hira took two wickets.

In reply, Victoria Club were all out for 104 runs in only 29.5 overs. Tarek scored 31 runs while Rocky and Sajal picked up three wickets each.

Bolt to run in Zurich

AFP, Zurich

Double Olympic sprint champion Usain Bolt will race in the Zurich leg of the Diamond League on August 30, organisers announced on Monday.

Bolt, also the world record holder over the 100 and 200m, kicked off his season on home soil last week, winning the Jamaica International Invitational in a world-leading 9.82 seconds.

He is scheduled to run the 100m in Ostrava, Czech Republic, on May 25, and will also race the 100m at the Diamond League meetings in Rome on May 31 and Oslo on June 7.

His final race before the July 27-August 12 London Olympic Games will be over 200m at the Monaco Diamond League meeting on July 20.

WI suffer 10-wkt defeat

Cricket

AFP, London

England Lions crushed West Indies by 10 wickets on Sunday, dealing a further blow to the brittle confidence of the tourists ahead of the first Test which starts at Lord's on Thursday.

Joe Root (115 not out) and Michael Carberry (72 not out) led the Lions to victory in Northampton with a session to spare on the final day of the four-day game, finishing on 197-0 after the West Indies had been bowled out for 390 in their second innings.

As well as defeat, the West Indies also saw seam bowlers Kemar Roach and Ravi Rampaul suffer new injuries ahead of Thursday's first Test at Lord's.

The tourists' mid-match fightback --

with Kieran Powell (108) and Shivnarine Chanderpaul (77) -- came to nothing on the final day after they were dismissed after just 30 minutes in the morning session.

The Lions moved to 61 without loss at lunch while the West Indies -- without Roach, who took a blow on his right hand batting against Stuart Meaker -- also saw Rampaul leave the field after four overs with the new ball.

Darren Bravo was required to bowl only his second spell in first-class cricket and Root and Carberry were predictably untroubled.

The Lions' openers, who discovered that team-mate Jonny Bairstow will be the man to replace the injured Ravi Bopara in England's squad for Lord's, turned on the style as victory was wrapped up after lunch.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS 1 Sleeping 5 "Avatar" technology (Abbr.) 8 Reverb-ate 12 Georgia city 13 Young fellow 14 Thick chunk 15 Poetic foot 16 Work with 17 Remedy 18 Wood nymphs 20 Meager 22 Deterioration 23 Annoy 24 Harbor structure 27 "The Defiant Ones" duo 32 Web address 33 Prot. or Cath. 34 Genetic letters 35 Breach in a levee 38 "Hey, you!" 39 Have a bug 40 Way back when 42 "Lord Jim" author 45 Soft fabric 49 Neighborhood 50 Haven't paid yet 52 Early primary state 53 Dave of "Mad" magazine 54 Rowing need 55 Dance lesson 56 Not good, not bad 57 "—" 58 Dame Myra at the piano 21 Spy novel org. 24 French nobleman 25 Hockey great Bobby 26 Laundry mat alternative 28 French possessive 29 Butchers' tools 30 Type measures 31 Perched 36 Shrew 37 -- carte 38 Shine 41 "We Bring Good Things to Life" co. 42 Urban fleet 43 Sandwich cookie 44 Armageddon 46 November responsibility 47 Rams fans? 48 Spigots 51 Doves' aversion

Solution time: 25 mins. PART LAB MESA ASE EGO IVAN SANCTION LILIT SPOKE DANCES LACE GET ANTE ALOE IDO CUR KNEAD OUR ETA TITCH KNEE CRAW TUNE LATVIA BALSAL ARIA JUNCTION PEON ARE OMAN PLANT XIV NOPE

Crossword grid with numbers 1-58.

CRYPTOQUIP

OYR PFQ WTCYUC KHIC QU PFQB XCUD YLIHOC FR GJHOJ GHRC DF XQP? HD GFQTL XC KBYWCTP YWBCOHYDCL. Yesterday's Cryptoquip: LARGE-EARED CARTOON CHARACTER WHO WAS CONSTANTLY TALKING LOUDLY AND RUDELY: MICKEY MOUTH. Today's Cryptoquip Clue: P equals Y