Serena goes for broke off for Nadal

AFP, London



Serena Williams insists she has nothing to lose as the four-

time champion bids to secure her seventh appearance in the Wimbledon final with a victory over second seed Victoria Azarenka on Thursday.

Williams booked her place in the last four by ending Petra Kvitova's reign as champion with a 6-3, 7-5 victory on Tuesday, while Azarenka moved into her second successive Wimbledon semifinal by defeating unseeded Austrian Tamira Paszek 6-3, 7-6 (7/4).

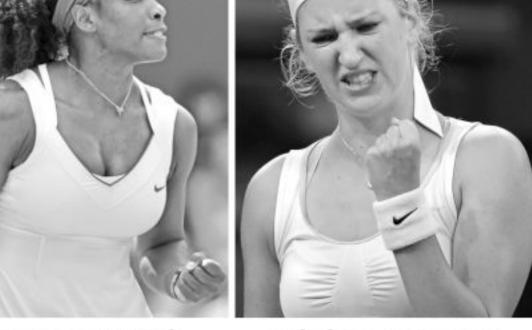
That sets the stage for a fascinating clash between one of Wimbledon's all-time greats and a talented contender in Azarenka who has already enjoyed the best year of her life after winning a series of titles including her first Grand Slam crown at the Australian Open.

Williams, who last won a Grand Slam at Wimbledon in 2010, has been impressed by Azarenka's rise over the last six months, but the American believes the lack of pressure she feels at the moment could be the decisive factor as it allows her to go for broke at crucial moments.

For Azarenka, the 22year-old's meeting with 13time Grand Slam champion Williams represents a chance to make amends for last year's Wimbledon semifinal defeat against Kvitova, and also a quarter-final loss to Williams in 2009.

The other semifinal between eighth seed Angelique Kerber and





SERENA WILLIAMS

VICTORIA AZARENKA



AGNIESZKA RADWANSKA

ANGELIQUE KERBER

SEMIFINAL-LINEUP

Angelique Kerber (GER x8) v Agnieszka Radwanska (POL x3) Serena Williams (USA x6) v Victoria Azarenka (BLR x2)

world number three Agnieszka Radwanska will produce a first-time Wimbledon finalist.

Kerber defeated fellow German Sabine Lisicki 6-3, 6-7 (7/9), 7-5 to reach her firstWimbledon semi-final.

Just 12 months ago, the 24-year-old left the All England Club ranked 100th after a first round exit that came during a miserable sequence of opening round defeats.

But a period of reflection after Wimbledon refocused Kerber's mind and she has surged up the rankings to

eighth place since a break through run to the US Open semi-finals last year.

It will also be a defining who ignored a series of rain delays to defeat 17th seed Maria Kirilenko 7-5, 4-6, 7-5 in a match that started on Court One at 2.20pm local time, but was eventually played to a conclusion under the Centre Court roof after 9.45pm.

The 23-year-old is the first Polish player to reach a Grand Slam semi-final in the Open era after finally win in the last eight of a major at

moment for Radwanska,

The abode of the corrupt

Cricket

AFP, Karachi

When Pakistan's leg-spinner Danish Kaneria was banned for life for fixing, many were baffled as to why Pakistanis were so talented at cricket yet so susceptible to the

lure of corruption. It was another jolt with the country still reeling from the devastating 2010 spot-fixing scandal at Lords, which ended in lengthy bans and jail terms for then Test captain Salman Butt, and pacemen Mohammad Asif and Mohammad Aamer.

Corruption is rife in Pakistan. Businessmen consider it a necessary evil and last month the prime minister lost his job after being convicted of contempt for refusing to reopen corruption cases against President

Asif Ali Zardari. In a country with an ineffective government, disastrous power cuts, Taliban violence, Al-Qaeda strongholds and an economy at risk of defaulting, cricket is the most

popular if not the only form of entertainment. "Corruption cases against our politicians are common, but the corruption of 19-yearold Aamer was hard to swallow," said Tauseef Khan, head of mass communication at the

Federal Urdu University in Karachi.

"It reflects the lack of role models and unabated corruption in our society."

For those talented enough, cricket offers an escape from the hardship of low-income and poverty-stricken homes such as those where Aamer grew up just outside the capital

Islamabad. The commercialisation of the game in the late 1970s enabled cricketers to earn tens of thousands of dollars a year, but also gave rise

Oscar makes

year-old because of a con-

genital condition that meant

he was born without lower

Having failed to qualify

for the 400m at the 2008

Beijing Olympics he went on

to compete at the 2011 world

championships in South

Korea, where he made the

400m semi-final and won a

However, his omission

from the relay team for the

final left him venting his anger

Pistorius, a three-event

defending champion, will

Paralympic Games in

London in the 100m, 200m,

400m and 4x100m relay.

at South African officials.

silver in the 4x400m relay.

FROM PAGE 16

leg bones.

"The majority of cricketers in Pakistan come from poor families and when they see so much money floating around, sadly temptation gets the better of them," said former captain Mushtaq Mohammad.

Many also blame the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) for being unable to stop the rot after life bans on Salim Malik and Ata-ur Rehman, and fines for Wasim Akram, Waqar Younis, Inzamam-ul Haq, Saeed Anwar and | beating BAF Base Mushtaq Ahmed in 2000.

Commentator and former captain Ramiz Raja, who played with all these stars, blamed the lack of structure.

"I don't think the system moulds players into an ambassadorial role for the game, Raja told AFP.

"It's a mix of so many factors: lack of education which could help to weigh good and bad options, social breakdown as we increasingly see villains ruling the roost, lack of sound upbringing and lack of role models, especially in cricket."

Cricketers are lionised to such an extent that fans refuse to believe their idols are even capable of crime and corruption, further

emboldening offenders. So there was little surprise when Butt was warmly welcomed home last month -- in contrast to the apathy felt over former prime minister Yousuf Raza Gilani's conviction for contempt last April.

"The power of denial is a safety rope that breaks a fall. There have been examples in which cricket crime has gone unpunished because of such an approach," said Raja.

"Hard core evidence is difficult to get and the crooked know how to drown out the sane voices by playing on the emotions of the nation's simplicity and giving it a conspiracy

spin," he added.

Ramprakash tells knee before turning one-

fixtures, was dropped by Surrey for the first time earlier this season as he struggled for runs.

Ramprakash, as was the case with his some-time England team-mate Graeme Hick, endured a frustrating international career, averaging a modest 27.32 in Tests -- barely half his county return.

He managed just two Test hundreds, with a best of 154

against the West Indies in Bridgetown in 1998 and 133 against Australia at The Oval in 2001. Ramprakash also played in 18 one-day internationals.

At county level, he topped 1,000 runs in 20 separate seasons and three times made more than 2,000 -- in 1995, 2006 and 2007.

His highest-first class score is an unbeaten 301, for Surrey against Northamptonshire, at The Oval in 2006.

Ramprakash became known beyond cricket circles after winning BBC television's 'Strictly Come Dancing' celebrity dance competition in 2006.

A Surrey statement issued Wednesday said: "Surrey also compete at the County Cricket Club will be hosting a press conference with Mark Ramprakash on Thursday 5th July at the Kia Oval, where Mark would like to make a statement about his future."

AFP, Paris

Rafael Nadal, knocked out of Wimbledon in the second round last week, is to take two weeks off because of tendinitis in his knee.

The Spaniard will miss a charity match against world number one Novak Djokovic in Madrid's Bernabeu stadium on July 14 but hopes, however, to have fully recovered in time for the July 27-August 12 Olympics in London.

"I want to apologise to all, in particular to the fans that had already purchased a ticket to such a good cause, but unfortunately we won't be able to play for the moment that match in Madrid," he said.

"The doctors have been checking my knee and I suffer a tendinitis which will have me away from any practice or matches for 15 days, which makes it impossible to play with Novak Djokovic as we'd expected and announced.

"I was with my doctors on Monday and started already my treatment with the goal to be ready for the London Olympic Games and represent Spain once again."

Nadal, the world number two, added: "I will now work on my rehab as well as taking some short holidays to resume my practice in 15 days."

BAF Inter-base swimming competition

SPORTS REPORTER

BAF Base Birshreshtha Motiur Rahman emerged champions in the Inter-Base Swimming Competition of Bangladesh Air Force which concluded at the Navy Swimming Coplex in Banani yesterday.

Base Birshreshtha Motiur Rahman grabbed nine gold, six silver and two bronze medals followed by BAF-Base Bashar which won six gold, eight silver and one bronze medals.

LSC Sazal of Base Bashar was adjudged best swimmer in the competition.

BAF-Base Jahirul Haque lifted the title of water-polo Birshreshtha Motiur Rahman 10-2 in the final.

Air Vice Marshal Abu Esrar distributed prizes among the winners.

William, Kate light up royal box

AFP, London

Prince William and his wife Catherine took their places in the Royal Box on Wimbledon Centre Court on Wednesday to watch six-time champion Roger Federer play in his quarter-final against Mikhail

Youzhny. The royal couple received a rapturous welcome from the crowd as they arrived in the front row of the box, having already proved a hit

around the All England Club. "My life is complete!," tweeted German women's player Anna-Lena

Groenefeld. "I don't care that we won the Mixed! Prince William said hi to me! I was so excited I won my service game!????"

Also in the Royal Box were Australian legend Rod Laver, 50 years after he completed the Grand Slam, as well as golden couple Andre Agassi and wife Steffi Graf, both former Wimbledon champions.

Final before

FROM PAGE 16 Tsonga against Germany's Philipp Kohlschreiber.

Tsonga, who beat Federer at this stage last year, is aiming for his second Wimbledon semifinal, while 27th seed Kohlschreiber will be playing in the last eight of a Grand Slam for the first time.

Sangakkara stranded in drawn Test

Cricket

AFP, Colombo

Kumar Sangakkara missed a double-century for the second successive match as the rain-hit second Test between Pakistan and Sri Lanka ended in a dreary draw in Colombo onWednesday.

Sangakkara, who was stranded on an unbeaten 199 in the first Test at Galle, was dismissed for 192 after helping Sri Lanka avoid the embarrassment of a followon on the fifth and final day.

The hosts, who began the day needing 74 more runs to make Pakistan bat again, were all out for 391 in the post-lunch session in reply to Pakistan's 551-6 declared. Pakistan, leading by 160

runs on the first innings made 100-2 in their second knock when skipper Misbahul Haq close the innings soon after tea to attempt an unlikely win.

Sri Lanka appeared disinterested in chasing the tough victory target of 261 in 37 overs and were 86-2 in 22 overs when the match was called off at the Sinhalese Sports Club. Sri Lanka will head for the

third and final Test in

Pallekele from Sunday with a Pakistan, having surpassed 1-0 lead, having won the opening encounter in Galle by 209 runs.

The home side, who began the day at 278-5, were steered out of trouble by a 89-run stand for the sixth wicket between Sangakkara and Angelo Mathews (47). But Mathews' dismissal

soon after lunch triggered a middle-order collapse in which Sri Lanka lost their last fivewickets for 21 runs. Young left-arm seamer

Junaid Khan finished with his second five-wicket haul in Tests and spinner Abdur Rehman claimed four as the Pakistanis extracted more from the slow pitch than their Sri Lankan counterparts. Sangakkara looked set for

his ninth double-century when he fell against the run of play after defying Pakistan's attack for almost nine hours. The left-hander stepped

out to loft Rehman and only managed a thick edge to Taufeeq Umar at square-leg. Sangakkara, who hit 15 fours and a six in his 30th Test

century, raised a cry of anguish before walking off to warm applause from less than 500 spectators at the ground. Sangakkara is already the

highest run-getter against

Indian great Sunil Gavaskar's tally of 2,089 runs when he reached 60 on Tuesday.

He has nine three-figure knocks against Pakistan with a top score of 230 in Lahore in March, 2002.

bowled Nuwan Kulasekara, while Rehman dismissed Prasanna Jayawardene and terminate the innings.

Pakistan and Tharanga Paranavitana made 32 for Sri Lanka.

bad weather, which allowed just 71 of the stipulated 180 overs to be bowled on the second and third days.

not out;Herath 3-164) SRI LANKA: First innings (overnight 278-5) Paranavitana c A zhar b Junaid Dilshan Ibw b Junaid Sangakkara c Taufeeg b Rehman Jayawardene Ibw b Junaid Samaraweera lbw b Ajmal Randiv Ibw b Rehman MathewscAkmalbJunaid Jayawardene c Akmal b Rehman Kulasekara b Junaid Herath not out

Pradeep c Ajmal b Rehman Extras: (b-4,1b-5) Total: (All out in 124.4 overs) Fall of wickets: 1-11, 2-236, 3-250, 4-259, 5-278, 6-370, 7-378, 8-379, 9-385.

Cheema

Junaid had Mathews caught behind and then

last man Nuwan Pradeep to In the brief second innings for both teams, Taufeeq Umar scored an unbeaten 42 for

The Test was marred by

SCOREBOARD

PAKISTAN: First innings 551-6 declared (Hafeez 196, Umar 65, Azhar 157, Misbah 66

PAKISTAN: Second innings Hafeez cDilshan b Randiv Umarnot out Rehman b Randiv Akmal not out Extras: (nb-1) Total: (Fortwowkts declin 18 overs) 100 Did not bat: Azhar, Younis, Misbah, Shafiq, Ajmal, Cheema, Junaid. Fall of wickets: 1-51, 2-99.

SRI LANKA: Second innings Paranavitana Ibwb Ajmal Dilshan Ibw b Rehman 28 Sangakkaranotout M Jayawardene not out Extras: (lb-1) Total: (Fortwowkts in 22 overs) Did not bat: Samaraweera, Mathews, P Jayawardene, Kulasekara, Randiy, Herath, Pradeep. Fall of wickets: 1-48, 2-78. R Bowler 21 0

Tendulkar opts out of ODIs



AFP, New Delhi

Indian batting superstar Sachin Tendulkar will skip the upcoming series of limited-overs matches in Sri Lanka, the national selectors announced on Wednesday.

India will play five one-day internationals, starting in Hambantota on July 21, plus a oneoffTwenty20 match on August 7. The 39-year-old Tendulkar, who completed an unprecedented century of centuries during

the Asia Cup in Dhaka in March, is the world's leading run-getter in both Test (15,470) and one-day (18,426) cricket. Tendulkar, who does not play in interna-

tional Twenty20 games, has dismissed talk of retirement but has chosen to play in only some of India's ODIs in recent years. "Sachin is not available (for selection). He

must be aiming for the England and Australia series later this season," chief selector Krishnamachari Srikkanth said.

"We have selected the best possible side and hope this season starts with a bang." Hard-hitting opener Virender Sehwag and

key paceman Zaheer Khan both return to bolster the side after missing the Asia Cup due to injuries. Sehwag last year became only the second batsman after Tendulkar to hammer a dou-

ble-century in one-day internationals. He has far scored 8,090 runs in 245 one-dayers with 15 hundreds.

Zaheer, who played his last one-dayer in February, has bagged 278 wickets in

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195 matches.

Left-arm spinner Pragyan Ojha has replaced all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja, who was part of the Indian squad in the Asia Cup. Ojha played his last one-day international in Sri Lanka in August 2010.

Mahendra Singh Dhoni will lead the 15man squad, with batsman Virat Kohli as his deputy.

ODI&T20SQUAD

Mahendra Singh Dhoni, Virat Kohli, Gautam Gambhir, Suresh Raina, Virender Sehwag, Rohit Sharma, Ravichandran Ashwin, Pragyan Ojha, Zaheer Khan, Umesh Yadav, Ashok Dinda, Vinay Kumar, Ajinkya Rahane, Manoj Tiwary, Rahul Sharma.

Dhaka Bank's

FROM PAGE 16

stage of discussion.

said BFF vice president Badal Roy, who has been appointed co-ordinator of the exhibition match.

Dhaka Bank handed over a cheque of Tk

25 lakh at the ceremony and Roy said all the money would be spent for the development programme of BFF. BFF president Kazi Salahuddin said that the exhibition match would be a test case for them,

even though the Dhaka Bank chairman Reshadur Rahman ensured that they would not go away after the July 7 exhibition match. It has been learnt that the bank would provide full funds to hold the district football league and age-level football tournaments in

all 64 districts and both parties are in the final

FROM PAGE 16 After retirement, Koran spent

Elegant Koran

19 1

Cheema

Rehman

Former national cricketer Raquibul Hassan, who played against Koran in the Dhaka league back in the day, spoke about a cricketer who was not only a stylish batsman but a man who couldn't have an enemy due

"I am so shocked at his demise," said Raquibul. "He was a stylish player who was friendly with everyone. He used to have a good time

"I have played against him when I was appearing for Azad Boys and he was playing for Mohammedan Sporting Club. I was a schoolboy and I noticed that he always rolled up his shirt sleeves like the West Indian great Rohan Kanhai used to," he said.

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB), Bangladesh Sports Journalists Association (BSJA), Bangladesh Sports Press Association (BSPA) and Cricketers' Welfare Association of Bangladesh (CWAB) expressed deep heartfelt sympathies to the family of the deceased.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

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his time by coaching cricket and being an organiser.

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while playing."

Several years later, in 2008, Koran received the National Award for his contribution to the game in the country.

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