



ROGER FEDERER



ANDY MURRAY

Written-off v underdog

Federer-Murray men's singles final today

AFP, London



Andy Murray admits only his perfect game will be good enough to defeat six-time champion Roger Federer in Sunday's Wimbledon final and become Britain's first men's champion in 76 years.

The 25-year-old Scot, the first Briton in the final since Bunny Austin in 1938, is desperate to be the home country's first champion since Fred Perry in 1936.

But standing in his way is 30-year-old Federer, the 16-time Grand Slam title winner written off as a spent-force by many in the sport, but who can equal Pete Sampras's record of seven Wimbledon triumphs on Sunday.

Victory would also put Federer, who knocked out defending champion Novak Djokovic in the semifinals, back on top of the world rankings after a two-year absence.

Murray leads Federer 8-7 in career meetings, but the great Swiss has won their only meetings in Grand Slam finals -- the 2008 US Open and 2010 Australian Open.

"I just need to try and make sure I play a perfect match on Sunday," said Murray, who reached the final with a four-set win over Jo-Wilfried Tsonga.

"It obviously would be very nice [to beat Federer], but I can't allow myself to think that far ahead. I'll just focus on getting the tactics right.

"There's obviously going to be nerves and pressure, but I need to try and stay focused."

Murray has been desperately close to the final in the last three years, but came up short in the semifinals, losing to Andy Roddick in 2009 and then suffering back-to-back losses to Rafael Nadal, a shock second round casualty this year.

Murray believes he can thrive on being the underdog against Federer who will be playing in a record eighth Wimbledon final.

"He's one of the greatest ever players. He's been doing it consistently over a number of years. The matches he has lost the last couple of years were five sets against Tsonga [2011], five sets against Berdych [2010], five sets against Rafa. He's very, very tough to beat here," he added.

"It's a great challenge, one where I'm probably not expected to win, but one that, if I play well, I'm capable of winning. The pressure that I would be feeling if it was against somebody else I guess it would be different.

"But there will be less on me on Sunday because of who he is."

Murray also took the opportunity to decry those critics who wrote off Federer, condemned as a relic in the new golden age of Djokovic and Nadal.

"If you look at the way he played, you can't say he's passed it or because he's 30 he's playing worse tennis. I just think the players around have gotten better."

The last man to win a Grand Slam title over the age of 30 was Andre Agassi who was pushing 33 when he captured the Australian Open in 2003.

Just two men over 30 have won Wimbledon -- Rod Laver, who was

almost 31 when he won in 1969 and Arthur Ashe who was just five days short of his 32nd birthday when he was champion in 1975.

Federer has had some almighty struggles at Wimbledon in recent years as well as this campaign.

After winning his sixth title in an epic final in 2009 over Roddick, he fell to quarterfinal defeats to Tomas Berdych in 2010 and Jo-Wilfried Tsonga, from two sets to love up, in 2011.

This year, he came back from two sets to love behind to beat French journeyman Julien Benneteau and needed treatment on a back injury during his fourth round win over Xavier Malisse.

Despite the last of Federer's 16 Grand Slam titles having come over two years ago at the 2010 Australian Open, he believes he won't feel a sense of desperation on Sunday.

"I'm in a good place mentally and you have got to be that for the finals," he said.

"There's a lot on the line for me. I'm not denying that. I have a lot of pressure, as well. I'm looking forward to that. That's what I work hard for.

"I've worked extremely hard since I lost that match point against Novak last year at the US Open [Federer lost a five-set thriller to the Serb]. My run has been extremely good. Now I have a chance at world No. 1, at the title again all at once.

"So it's a big match for me and I hope I can keep my nerves. I'm sure I can."

Tykes borrow Harmison

AFP, Chester-le-Street

Former England fast bowler Stephen Harmison has joined Yorkshire on a month-long loan, his parent county announced on Saturday.

The 33-year-old has spent much of this season in Durham's 2nd XI while Yorkshire are short of seamers with former England left-armers Ryan Sidebottom injured and Mitchell Starc due to join Australia A for their tour of England later this month.

Yorkshire have also lost Ajmal Shahzad, on loan to arch-rivals Lancashire after falling out with his native county.

Harmison, a veteran of 63 Tests and 58 one-day internationals, said: "It's been a frustrating first half of the season and I don't want to be playing second team cricket."

5-Wimbledon

FROM PAGE 16
When she bagged another break with a delicate drop-shot, Serena celebrated as though the title was hers.

Moments later it was and she was soon clambering into the players' box to celebrate with Venus and the rest of her family.

Abahani, Usha

FROM PAGE 16
hattrick as they took a 3-1 lead into the breather. Shabbir scored two in the first half while he added two more after the break. Shabbir's compatriot Kasim Ali scored one while Zahidul Islam Rajon and Prosenjit added the others for the men in yellow. Shoyeb Ali and Raju Ahmed reduced the margin for Azad.

The second match was a much more one-sided affair than the first as Usha's Pakistani recruit Shabbaz Ali slammed five goals including a hattrick while Moinul Islam Koushik slammed a late hattrick. Sarwar Hossain, Mohammad Atique and Mohammad Imran chipped in with two goals each while Shahidullah Titu, Khorsheedur Rahman and Aktar Ali netted one goal apiece to complete the rout.

Can Andy be a Bunny?

AFP, London



When Bunny Austin, the last British man to reach the Wimbledon final in 1938, finished runner-up his prize was a 10-pound gift voucher from a London jeweller.

Seventy-four years on, Andy Murray has ended Britain's long wait for a British finalist and is already guaranteed 575,000 pounds for getting to Sunday's title match where he will face Roger Federer.

Victory will double the size of the cheque and transform the Scot into a national hero, but it's doubtful whether his life will be as colourful or controversial as Austin, who was born Henry Wilfred Austin on August 26, 1906.

Known affectionately as Bunny after a comic strip Pip, Squeak and Wilfred, Austin was a contemporary of Fred Perry, the last British man to win Wimbledon in 1936, and together they won four Davis Cups in the 1930s.

He also pioneered the wearing of shorts by tennis players instead of heavy, white flannel trousers.

"Fred Perry and I were playing doubles at Longwood [in Maryland], and it was terribly hot," Austin told The Boston Globe newspaper in 1997.

"I came off the court in those sweat-soaked trousers feeling I was carrying an awfully lot of unnecessary weight below my knees. I'd been a football player in school and of course we wore shorts.

"Best thing for running. Why not for tennis? We went to New York for the singles at Forest Hills, and I bought a pair and wore them. I got a lot of kidding, but the wisdom of it was apparent.

"The next year, I introduced them at

Wimbledon. I expected a fuss there, but there was none. Slowly, others followed. I don't know why we put up with long flannel trousers for so long."

Sadly for Austin, Wimbledon club officials did make a fuss over another matter which left him blackballed from the All England Club for 40 years.

In the 1930s, Austin had joined the Oxford Group, later known as Moral Re-Armament and toured the United States lecturing on Christianity and pacifism.

During the war, he was denounced as a draft-dodger although the truth was he was twice judged unfit for military service on medical grounds.

Despite that setback, he still served as a private in the United States Army Air Force from 1943 until 1945.

But his Wimbledon membership had been revoked and his attempts to regain entry were blocked by just one man on the All England Club committee, who it later emerged had carried a grudge against Austin for dropping him from the Cambridge University tennis team.

It was not until 1984 that he was allowed back into the club.

During his pomp, Austin shone on the court and off it.

He and his wife, the film star Phyllis Konstam, were regulars on the social circuit.

Austin even played tennis with Charlie Chaplin and met President Franklin Roosevelt.

He made an emotional return to Wimbledon in 2000 when he was brought onto Centre Court in a wheelchair for the parade of champions.

Austin died later that year on the day he celebrated his 94th birthday.

Final Test from today



AFP, Pallekele

Pakistan and Sri Lanka begin the third and final Test in Pallekele on Sunday seeking an exciting finale on what appears to be a result-oriented wicket.

Both sides were relieved that the greenish pitch looked different from the lifeless track prepared for the rain-hit second Test at the Sinhalese Sports Club in Colombo, which ended in a tame draw.

"That was a boring Test -- flat wicket and lots of rain -- but this one will be different," Sri Lanka's vice-captain Angelo Mathews told reporters at the Pallekele International Stadium on Saturday.

Sri Lanka, who won the first Test in Galle, are hoping to record their first series win in three years since defeating New Zealand 2-0 at home in 2009.

Skipper Mahela Jayawardene insisted the hosts will go all out to win the final Test even though a draw would be enough to seal the series.

Light rain has been forecast for next week, but the groundstaff were confident the weather would not interfere with the cricket.

The Pallekele Stadium, built in 2009 on the outskirts of the hill town of Kandy, has hosted two drawn Tests so far, both of which were interrupted by bad weather.

Pakistan vice-captain Mohammad Hafeez, who scored 196 in the second Test, hoped dry weather would enable the tourists to seek a series-levelling win.

Two golfers in Junior Open C'chip

SPORTS REPORTER

Two Bangladeshi young and upcoming golfers will participate in the British Junior Open Championship 2012 slated for July 16-18 at the Fairhaven Golf Club in Lancashire, England. Royal & Ancient (R&A), UK has invited one under-16 male and female golfer from Bangladesh to participate in the 2012 Junior Open Championship. Tasvir Hasan Majumdar and Liza Akhtar have been the two chosen junior golfers to participate in the event in which golfers from 79 other counties will be participating in. The tournament takes place from the 16th to the 18th of July. Senior vice president of Bangladesh Golf Federation Major General M Motiur Rahman disclosed this at a press conference yesterday.

Scottish flag at Downing Street!

AFP, London

Andy Murray's Wimbledon semifinal victory was on Friday hailed as "great news" by British Prime Minister David Cameron as Downing Street pledged to fly the Scottish flag to mark Sunday's final.

Murray became the first British man in 74 years to reach the Wimbledon final when he beat French fifth seed Jo-Wilfried Tsonga 6-3, 6-4, 3-6, 7-5.

Minutes later, Cameron's 10 Downing Street office issued a statement saying it would fly the Scottish flag alongside the Union flag on Sunday "in support of Andy Murray in the final".

Cameron himself said: "It is great news that we have our first home-grown men's finalist at Wimbledon for over 70 years, especially in this exciting Olympics year when the eyes of the world are on the UK.

"I'll be watching the final on Sunday and like the rest of the country, will be getting right behind Andy Murray -- I wish him the best of luck."

Mushfiqur

FROM PAGE 16
happy to see five Bangladesh players selected for the Sri Lanka Premier League (SLPL).

"It is simply a reflection of our good performance," said a confident Mushfiqur, who along with Shakib, Tamim Iqbal, Nasir Hossain and Elias Sunny were picked by the seven franchises via a draft system for the inaugural SLPL which will be held in Colombo and Pallekele over August 10-31.

Hussey lifts Australia



AFP, Chester-le-Street

David Hussey's 70 guided Australia to 200 for nine in the fourth one-day international against England here on Saturday.

Australia were in dire straits at 96 for five when Hussey took guard but his 73-ball innings, featuring nine fours, kept the tourists in the match.

Together with Brett Lee, he put on 70 for the seventh wicket.

England, 2-0 up in this five-match series, would have been in an even stronger position had they not dropped four catches, with Hussey reprieved on 15 and 29.

Fast bowler Steven Finn, twice on a hattrick, took four for 37 -- just shy of his career-best four for 34 which he achieved twice against Pakistan in the United Arab Emirates earlier this year.

England, after winning the toss in over-cast conditions, saw Finn claim two wickets in successive balls as Australia slumped to six for two in the sixth over.

First a full and straight delivery rapped David Warner on the pads, with the normally dynamic left-hander having taken 19 balls for two runs.

English umpire Nigel Llong initially ruled not out, but England requested a review which showed the ball had pitched in line.

Next ball Peter Forrest was plumb lbw for a golden duck after being struck flush on the back pad.

Australia captain Michael Clarke survived the hattrick after missing an excellent Finn delivery that cut back sharply between bat and pad.

Clarke should have been out for eight but Eoin Morgan at backward point dropped a simple chance off Tim Bresnan.

Opener Shane Watson struck Stuart Broad for four and later in the same over, after Broad had bowled a no-ball, pulled the ensuing free-hit for six.

But a stand worth 51 in 80 balls ended when Watson, trying to run the ball down to third man, played on to Bresnan for 28.

Clarke, also dropped on 28, found runs hard to and was out for 43 off 85 balls when clean bowled by Finn.

Next ball Finn had Matthew Wade brilliantly caught off the inside edge by opposing wicket-keeper Craig Kieswetter, who dived to his right and grabbed the one-handed chance at the second attempt.

Once again Finn was on a hat-trick but Lee watched the next ball pass wide of his stumps.

Hussey, who survived an lbw shout from Ravi Bopara, was dropped off a low caught and bowled chance by the medium-pacer.

He was given another 'life' when Ian Bell, running in from the cover boundary, grassed a low chance off all-rounder Bopara.

Lee, a ball after lofting James Anderson for six, holed out for 27 before Hussey, in the last over, was caught in the deep by Anderson off Bresnan.

SCORES IN BRIEF
AUSTRALIA: 200 for 9 in 50 overs (Hussey 70, Clarke 43, Watson 28, Lee 27; Finn 4-37, Anderson 2-34, Bresnan 2-46)
ENGLAND: Cook, Bell, Trott, Bopara, Morgan, Kieswetter, Patel, Bresnan, Broad, Finn, Anderson
Toss: England.
Umpires: Marais Erasmus and Nigel Llong.

Fixers let off the hook?

FROM PAGE 16

Brothers have allegedly given away three points to Rahmatganj MFS losing 0-4 just before the BFF polls in April to lure the Rahmatganj voters. While the first allegation against Brothers is yet to be proved, the Gopibagh-based outfit allegedly played another fixed-match at the fag end of the league, this time against Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club to avoid relegation. However, the BFF has taken the second allegation into consideration, but is yet to launch any investigation

into that match.

With Rahmatganj MFS (nine points) and Farashganj SC (18 points) already relegated from the professional league finishing in eleventh and tenth positions respectively, Brothers, who finished seventh with 24 points, might still go down if they are proved to have played fixed matches against Rashmatganj as they will lose six points from their secured points. That scenario will call for a play-off between Brothers and Farashganj to decide the second club for relegation, as per bylaws.

But then if the second allegation against Brothers is found out to be true, then they will surely be relegated as they would lose nine points while Farashganj will survive the drop.

If the allegations of Brothers's playing fixed matches with Sheikh Jamal and Rahmatganj are indeed proved, it will be a warning for the country's football, as it will show that a third team has now joined the proven duo of the sinners from last year.



PHOTO: STAR

Bangladesh women cricket team's Indian coach Mamatha Maben (L) shakes hands with her charges before the practice session at the BCB National Cricket Academy ground in Mirpur. Mamatha joined the camp yesterday to prepare the team for next month's tour of Ireland where they will play a triangular series also involving Pakistan.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

- ACROSS**
- 1 Space
 - 4 Angels' illuminants
 - 9 Total
 - 12 Past
 - 13 Vote into office
 - 14 Gorilla
 - 15 Moon, for instance
 - 17 Youngster
 - 18 CDs' fore-runners
 - 19 Winter weasel
 - 21 Easter egg
 - 24 Golf props
 - 25 "The — Daba Honey-moon"
 - 26 Water barrier
 - 28 Vaults
 - 31 On pension (Abbr.)
 - 33 In medias —
 - 35 Tragic
 - 36 Speaks unclearly
 - 38 Guy's counter-part
- DOWN**
- 1 Petrol (in jail)
 - 2 Khan victim
 - 3 Cauldron
 - 4 Lent a hand
 - 5 Outstanding athlete
 - 6 Islander's neckwear
 - 7 Group of eight
 - 8 Cord-wood measures
 - 9 Content
 - 10 "Once — a time, ..."
 - 11 Apportion (out)
 - 16 Wapiti
 - 18 Regretted
 - 19 Maestro, e.g.
 - 20 Anthropologist Margaret
 - 21 Behind —
 - 22 First victim
 - 23 Halves of week-ends
 - 27 "Little Women" woman
 - 29 Sea eagle
 - 30 Prognosticator
 - 32 Pharmaceutical
 - 34 Cracker type
 - 37 Teeter-totter
 - 39 Tilted
 - 42 Pulitzer Prize category
 - 44 Find
 - 45 "Dracula" author
 - 46 Actress Paquin
 - 50 Can material
 - 51 Have bills
 - 52 Depressed
 - 53 Shelter

Solution time: 24 mins.

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

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
12			13						14		
15		16							17		
		18				19		20			
21	22	23				24					
25			26		27		28		29	30	
31		32		33		34		35			
36			37		38		39		40		
		41			42		43		44		
45	46						47				
48			49		50				51	52	53
54			55						56		
57			58						59		

CRYPTOQUIP

P A V F N M A B I U M M X J M H Q X I
U J A Z A E ' X I V Q O G O M H B X M Q
B H N N G E Y G E X A F H O G E Y Y A A :
X H Q - P Q A I M Z N A O M Q I .

Saturday's Cryptoquip: I TWISTED TOGETHER SOME SPAGHETTI PIECES SO WELL, THEY ACTUALLY GAVE ME A STRANDING OVATION.
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: A equals O