

## Armstrong confesses to doping

AFP, Austin

Shamed cyclist Lance Armstrong has admitted that he used performance-enhancing drugs, US media reported on Tuesday, as the sport braced for revelations in his first interview since being banned for life for doping.

Armstrong, who has consistently denied drug-taking, on Monday recorded a two-and-a-half hour interview with chat show host Oprah Winfrey at his home in Austin, Texas, where a media scrum gathered hoping for a glimpse of the fallen icon.

His representatives refused to reveal what was discussed but the New York Times and USA Today newspapers both cited sources with knowledge of the taping that the seven-time Tour de France winner would admit using banned substances in his career.

The Times added that he would also testify against high-ranking cycling officials who knew he was doping and may have helped him do it.

Armstrong, the most high-profile cyclist of recent years, was stripped of his career wins and banned for life last year after the US Anti-Doping Agency (USADA) said he was at the centre of the biggest doping programme ever seen in sport.

## Songster with a racket

SPORTS REPORTER

Sania Sultana Liza, winner of the musical talent hunt programme 2008 Close-up 1, was the centre of attention on the opening day of Qubee 32nd National Badminton Championships as the singer from Mymensingh to compete the badminton championship for the first time.

Like her vocal talent, Liza shone with the racket as well and impressed the small crowd at the Shaheed Tajuddin Ahmed Indoor Stadium, winning her his first round match against Bristi of Naogaon by 21-4, 21-5 points.

However, playing badminton at the highest level is nothing new for the songster as she finished runner-up in a national competition of U-12 level in 2003. She had also been champion in intra-school badminton competitions from six to ten and emerged champion twice at college-level competitions, informed the singer.

"I have taken this decision suddenly even though I have been playing badminton from my childhood. I am really enjoying the environment here as many of the participants and spectators recognise me and are inspiring to continue to play badminton," Liza told reporters after the opening ceremony.

"I want to represent Bangladesh in any way possible, be it sports or music," said a smiling Liza.

## 8 Bangladeshis

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A total of 259 players from 13 countries including 13 GMs, 4 WGMs and 20 IMs are taking part in the event, said a Bangladesh Chess Federation Press Release yesterday.



Serena Williams (C) of the US nurses her bandaged left ankle during the break of her first round Australian Open match against Romania's Edina Gallovits-Hall in Melbourne yesterday. She however put behind the pain barrier to win the match 6-0, 6-0.

# Serena in injury scare

## Andy, Roger record easy wins

AFP, Melbourne



Serena Williams' bid for a historic Grand Slam hit an injury hurdle at the Australian Open Tuesday, as Roger Federer and Andy Murray coasted and a landmark for Chinese tennis proved short-lived.

Federer and Murray opened their accounts with superlative wins on a sun-drenched Rod Laver Arena, as they joined Novak Djokovic in the second round and stayed on course to meet in the semifinals.

As the tennis world reeled from news that ATP chief Brad Drewett was stepping down after being diagnosed with motor neurone disease, Wu Di became the first Chinese man to play a Grand Slam match, losing in foursets.

And there was drama when Williams, gunning for the first sweep of all four major titles in the same year since 1988, was on court for only 19 minutes against Edina Gallovits-Hall before going over heavily on her right ankle.

However, after medical treatment and despite hobbling around the court, the 15-time Grand Slam-winner astonishingly won 6-0, 6-0 in just 54 minutes as she belted every winner in sight to keep her running to a minimum.

The 31-year-old said she felt pain and swelling and may need an X-ray, but pledged to soldier on in her quest for a sixth title at the year's first

Grand Slam.

"Oh, I'll be out there. I mean, unless something fatal happens to me, there's no way I'm not going to be competing," she said. "I'm alive. My heart's beating. I'll be fine."

Any lasting injury to the hot favourite could throw the women's draw wide open and may benefit defending champion Victoria Azarenka, who is scheduled to meet Williams in the semifinals.

The world number one from Belarus beat Romania's Monica Niculescu, but had to come from 3-0 down in the second set before winning 6-1, 6-4.

Caroline Wozniacki, last year's top seed and now ranked at 10, also had to dig deep before reeling off six third-set games in a row to beat Germany's Sabine Lisicki.

Former Wimbledon champion Petra Kvitova also won but Italy's seventh seed Sara Errani became the biggest casualty so far.

Elsewhere, Japanese number one Kimiko Date-Krumm, aged 42, became the oldest female to win a main draw match at the Australian Open, upsetting 12th seed Nadia Petrova 6-2, 6-0.

In the men's draw, Murray, in his first Grand Slam match since becoming a major-winner, showed his class in a 6-3, 6-1, 6-3 dismantling of Dutchman Robin Haase.

The Scot said he hoped the experience of September's US Open win would help him later in the tourna-

ment.

"I think when I would see the benefits of that is if I get myself deep into a Slam this year and you're playing against the top players. That's when I think you'll draw on that experience and use it in the right way," he said.

Federer, who is drawn to face Murray in the semi-finals, also showed little mercy in his 6-2, 6-4, 6-1 win over Frenchman Benoit Paire and next faces Russian Nikolay Davydenko.

It was a typically sumptuous performance from the popular Swiss, who is bidding to become the first man since Roy Emerson in the 1960s to win five Australian Open titles.

Federer paid tribute to Australia's Drewett, a former player who took over as ATP chief last year, as the sudden revelation of his serious illness prompted a wave of sympathy.

"It's a very sad situation for all of us. I saw him yesterday and he told me the news. Obviously very emotional," Federer said.

"He was so influential."

Out on Court 8, China's Wu made history just by turning up, but despite fighting back from a set down the world number 186 could not stave off defeat to Croatia's Ivan Dodig, who won 7-5, 4-6, 6-3, 6-3.

"I'm really happy, but I lost," smiled Wu, when asked if he was pleased with how he played.

# Heat not worrying Fed

REUTERS, Melbourne



Searing heat forecast to hit Melbourne Park's second round matches on Thursday holds no fear for Roger Federer, who welcomed the chance to test his 31-year-old body in extreme conditions.

The Swiss maestro played his opening match of the Australian Open in far gentler weather on Tuesday at Rod Laver Arena.

Former players and pundits have cast doubts on Federer's ability to handle a marathon in draining heat at Melbourne Park, particularly against the likes of the ultra-fit Novak Djokovic and his fellow 25-year-old Andy

Murray.

Federer, who plays Russian former world number three Nikolay Davydenko on Thursday when 39 degrees Celsius heat is forecast, said he was not concerned about the weather.

"Obviously [it] has a big effect, but I'm not worried about the heat in any way," he told reporters.

"I have practised and played so many matches over the years in a lot of heat. I almost favour myself over my opponent in the heat."

"Obviously when you get the hot match, you try not to stay out there for too long. But then again, if you have to, that's what it is. That's part of the game."

John McEnroe ques-

tioned second seed Federer's ability to overcome champion Djokovic and twice finalist Murray in a long match in the heat this week.

Swede Mats Wilander, thrice an Australian Open champion, agreed with the American great's assessment.

"I don't think that he can match them [in the heat], but I think he is the master at dealing with the unexpected," seven-times Grand Slam champion Wilander told this news agency at Melbourne Park on Tuesday.

Federer also shrugged off doubts about a lack of competition in his preparations for the year's first Grand Slam, needing only 83 minutes to despatch 46th-ranked Benoit Paire from France, the Swiss's first official match since playing the ATP Tour Finals in November.

## India back

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for the third one-dayer to be played on January 19.

### SCOREBOARD

<b>INDIA</b>				
Rahane b Finn	4			
Gambhir b Dernbach	8			
Kohli c Bell b Woakes	37			
Yuvraj lbw b Tredwell	32			
Raina b Finn	55			
Dhoni c Root b Dernbach	72			
Jadeja not out	61			
Ashwin not out	1			
Extras: (lb-5, w-10)	15			
Total: (For 6 wkts in 50 overs)	285			
Did not bat: Kumar, Ishant, Shami				
Fall of wickets: 1-18, 2-18, 3-71, 4-119, 5-174, 6-270				

<b>Bowler</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>W</b>
Finn	10	1	51	2
Dernbach	9	0	73	2
Woakes	9	0	60	1
Patel	10	0	43	0
Tredwell	10	0	48	1
Root	2	0	5	0

<b>ENGLAND</b>				
Cook lbw b Kumar	17			
Bell c Dhoni b Shami	1			
Pietersen b Kumar	42			
Root b Jadeja	36			
Morgan c Dhoni b Kumar	0			
Kieswetter c Raina b Ashwin	18			
Patel not out	30			
Woakes lbw b Jadeja	0			
Tredwell lbw b Ashwin	1			
Finn c Dhoni b Ashwin	0			
Dernbach run out	2			
Extras: (b-4, lb-3, w-4)	11			
Total: (All out in 36 overs)	158			
Fall of wickets: 1-4, 2-58, 3-73, 4-73, 5-110, 6-132, 7-132, 8-135, 9-135				

<b>Bowler</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>W</b>
Kumar	10	2	29	3
Shami	4	1	24	1
Ishant	4	0	28	0
Jadeja	7	1	12	2
Yuvraj	4	0	19	0
Ashwin	7	0	39	3

**Result:** India won by 127 runs and level

## Rory loses sleep for Caroline

REUTERS, Melbourne

Rory McIlroy won't be losing any sleep about his financial future after signing a multi-million dollar deal with Nike, but the Northern Irishman is having to sacrifice some shuteye to watch girlfriend Caroline Wozniacki at the Australian Open.

McIlroy confirmed he had signed a sponsorship agreement, worth a reported 250 million dollars, with the sportswear giants in Abu Dhabi on Monday, just hours before Wozniacki battled to a 2-6, 6-3, 6-3 first round win over Germany's Sabine Lisicki.

"Great comeback by @CaroWozniacki! Off and running at the Australian Open... Now I can get a few more hours sleep!" the 23-year-old wrote on his Twitter account.

Former women's world number one Wozniacki looked in trouble early against the risk-taking Lisicki before she rallied to seal a second-round clash with Croatia's Donna Vekic.

# Miller fears for Broad



Cricket

AGENCIES, London

National selector Geoff Miller accepts that there may come a time when Stuart Broad is asked to give up one form of cricket to extend his England career.

Broad has experienced a variety of injury problems in the last two years, from minor niggles to more serious setbacks and has been forced to sit out a number of high-profile matches and events.

"Anybody with an injury is a concern to us and we've got to manage workloads as best as we can, that's why we're continually looking at other players," he said, when asked about Broad's fitness record.

"We will look at it and make sure he's used in the best possible way for English cricket. He knows that."

A torn stomach muscle saw Broad miss three Tests of the 2010-11 Ashes win Down Under, a side strain then forced him to fly home early from the World Cup and he has been absent from England duty since with shoulder and calf problems.

He is currently recovering from a heel injury but is due to link up with the rest of the one-day squad for the fourth and fifth ODIs in India this month.

Miller insists Broad is still viewed by the selectors as an important player in all three formats but does not rule out a review of that position if problems persist.

The 26-year-old is currently the side's Twenty20 captain, perhaps muddying the

waters a little, but Miller is not afraid to contemplate action, should it be necessary.

He said: "At this moment of time we're not thinking about taking him out of a format because he's got that sort of quality but if we reached the stage where his body wasn't responding to all kinds of cricket then we're open to that."

## BPL sans Pak

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players, though ready to come to Bangladesh, hadn't received their no-objection certificates (NOCs)," said Jalal Yunus, chairman of the BCB media committee.

Members of the governing council further stated that the BPL would go as per the schedule even if the Pakistani players don't participate. "There were a number of unsold players during the auctions and we are also trying to contact players from other countries. We have informed the franchises. Hopefully there will be some good news on Wednesday," said Dr IH Mallick, member-secretary of the governing council.

The latest developments with regard to the Pakistani players can prove to be costly for a number of franchises. Seven out of the nine foreign players for the Khulna Royal Bengals, for instance, are from Pakistan. Rangpur Riders, who have a total of 15 players as of now, have four Pakistani players.

## CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

<b>ACROSS</b>	<b>39</b> Mouth part	<b>DOWN</b>	<b>19</b> Bohemian
<b>1</b> Listen to	<b>41</b> Droplet of	<b>1</b> 50 percent	<b>22</b> Dangle a carrot
<b>5</b> Aries symbol	<b>8</b> Clenched hand	<b>2</b> Great Lake	<b>24</b> Away from NNE
<b>12</b> Part of the foot	<b>42</b> Sun-dried brick structures	<b>3</b> Computer brand	<b>25</b> On the — vive
<b>13</b> Clean air org.	<b>45</b> Beast	<b>4</b> Ballroom dance (Var.)	<b>26</b> Removes the cover
<b>14</b> Division word	<b>49</b> Furry Pacific denizen	<b>5</b> Para-phrases	<b>27</b> Brushes up on
<b>15</b> Stead	<b>51</b> Corpse	<b>6</b> Suitable	<b>29</b> Gorilla
<b>16</b> One walking proudly	<b>52</b> Sorts	<b>7</b> Filly's mom	<b>30</b> Standard
<b>18</b> Mathe-ician famed for his "last theorem"	<b>53</b> Nightfall, in verse	<b>8</b> Irregular	<b>33</b> Indian flat
<b>20</b> Lacking vigor	<b>54</b> Lotion additive	<b>9</b> Account extra	<b>36</b> Put the — on (stop)
<b>21</b> Pesky kid	<b>55</b> Carp or cod	<b>10</b> Don't dele	<b>38</b> Cian-related
<b>23</b> "— Town"	<b>56</b> "— Doubtfire"	<b>11</b> Ripped	<b>40</b> House-hold pooch, e.g.
<b>24</b> Criminal in tent?	<b>57</b> Not as much	<b>17</b> Venusian vessel?	<b>42</b> "Yeah, right!"

Solution time: 24 mins.

BASIC	SETTLE
MENTOR	AWOKE
INTONE	REMOVE
DEER	SWAN
MESA	SPA
OWE	REST
PETER	TNEG
STEM	SILLO
DOT	DOT
RUT	NEON
SON	HOGG
CAITMAN	RAPPER
ATTUNE	ACETIC
RHYMES	MESON

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12				13			14			
15				16			17			
18				19			20			
			21			22				
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		

### CRYPTOQUIP

L D P J M E R D B S E U Q E H M J S -  
S D L J X Z J H H J S U H J M E S W P J  
S G E S W U R H E P J : " S G J  
H I X R E X F J H D Z Q D B H E F J . "

**Saturday's Cryptoquip:** ONCE A YEAR, WHEN I'M FEELING PARTICULARLY GLEEFUL, MY GOOD FRIENDS WISH ME A HAPPY MIRTH-DAY.  
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: S equals T