

# SPORT

GULF NEWS  
FRIDAY,  
FEBRUARY 27, 2009

**NO MORE BLUES FOR CHELSEA**  
SOCCER P.47



**POLLOCK IN AWE OF SEHWAG**  
CRICKET P.44

**DALLAGLIO IN A NEW ROLE**  
RUGBY P.44



## INSIDE

### GOLF

#### WOODS COMES OUT WITH FLYING COLOURS

**Tucson** Tiger Woods's hard work rehabilitating his left knee paid off on Wednesday as he passed his first post-surgery public test with flying colours. Woods defeated Brendan Jones 3 and 2 in the first round of the WGC Accenture Match Play Championship — the American's first competitive outing since surgery to repair the anterior cruciate ligament in his knee last June. The US superstar, whose projected return this season had the golf world on tenterhooks, said he expected to have some soreness after the round, but was pleased with the way things have worked out.

Page 48

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# French flavour lingers

SIMON, GASQUET AND FERRER MARCH INTO BARCLAYS DUBAI OPEN SEMIFINALS



By ALARIC GOMES  
Senior Reporter

**Dubai** Two of the four semifinalists at the Barclays Dubai Tennis Championships will be Frenchmen following the withdrawal of Great Britain's Andy Murray yesterday due to a viral infection.

Third seed Gilles Simon won an engrossing 7-6 (3), 6-1 battle against Fabrice Santoro in an all-French quarterfinal on an unusually warm afternoon, while fourth seed David Ferrer of Spain made his way to the last four from the lower half of the draw with a 7-5, 6-1 result against sixth seed Russian Igor Andreev.

#### Odd man out

Ferrer will take on the odd man out, unseeded Frenchman Richard Gasquet, while Simon will await the winner of the last quarterfinal between top seed Novak Djokovic and fifth seed Marin Cilic that was to be held later last night.

In the first quarterfinals, Simon got off to a slow start, holding three game points to hold serve 1-0. Santoro made a break in the third and then held for 3-1. But Si-



ANDREW CABALLERO-REYNOLDS/Gulf News

#### Studying all options

David Ferrer of Spain is a picture of concentration as he returns the ball to Philipp Kohlschreiber of Germany during a match at the Barclays Dubai Tennis Championships yesterday.

mon broke back twice (2-3 and 3-4) only to see Santoro break back in the tenth game for 5-5 and send the set into a tie-breaker which the younger Frenchman went

on to win 7-3.

"It's never easy to play against Fabrice because he's got such a different game," Simon admitted. "I think I just tried my

best and went for all his shots," he added.

In the second set, Simon broke the veteran in the third and fifth games for a 5-1 lead.

In the second quarterfinals, Ferrer saw off an early challenge from Russian Igor Andreev to ensure a semifinal against Frenchman Richard Gasquet.

**RESULTS: Singles quarterfinals**  
Gilles Simon bt Fabrice Santoro 7-6 (3), 6-1; David Ferrer bt Igor Andreev 7-5, 6-1; Richard Gasquet bt Andy Murray (Walkover).

Refer page 42

## SHOCK Murray withdraws from Dubai tournament

By ALARIC GOMES  
Senior Reporter

**Dubai** Great Britain's Andy Murray, odds-on favourite to take the title this year, has withdrawn from the Barclays Dubai Tennis Championships due to a virus he contracted during the Australian Open last month.

"I got it [the virus] down in Australia and I felt I haven't been the same really since. I woke up in the middle of the night sweating. I got some anti-virals from the doctor yesterday even after the match, so it didn't help so much," Murray told media before his scheduled quarterfinal match against Frenchman Richard Gasquet.

"I had some breakfast and then slept again for three hours and the guys woke me up. [I'm] just not feeling good," Murray said.

The Scot said he had felt the virus coming on during Wednesday's night match against Arnaud Clement.

"In between the sets I felt really weak and so tired. I felt very cold and sort of shivery. So I need to take some time off," he added.

Seeded number two, Murray was expected to meet top seeded Serbian Novak Djokovic in tomorrow evening's final.

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