



ON SUNDAY

July 2, 2005

# VENUS JUMPS FOR JOY

Picture: ANJA WIEDINGHAUS



Williams battles back to grab the title from her fellow American in the longest Wimbledon women's final ever

HAPPY DAYS: Venus Williams celebrates after winning a marathon three set final

VENUS WILLIAMS completed the most remarkable of comebacks when she won her third Wimbledon title last night in the gathering gloom of Centre Court — beating fellow American Lindsay Davenport 4-6, 7-6, 9-7 after two hours 45 minutes, the longest women's final in history.

Both women were in tears at the end, Williams with sheer joy after being virtually written off at the start of the tournament and Davenport for coming so close to adding to her 1999 Wimbledon title. An injury in her lower back midway through the final set proved to be her undoing.

At that stage, the match was evenly poised after Davenport had won a tight first set and then lost a match point in the second before Williams prevailed in the resulting tiebreak.

## LADIES' FINAL

V WILLIAMS (US) bt L DAVENPORT (US)

4-6, 7-6, 9-7

By Ian Stafford



Davenport, the world No 1, led 4-2 in the third but then called for a trainer and a medical time-out in the dressing-room after Williams broke back.

She was clearly in pain when she returned but hung on against an increasingly deter-

mined Williams, who had beaten Davenport in three previous meetings at the All England Club, including the 2000 final.

Davenport held another match point in the 10th game of the final set but Williams would not be denied. Seeded at a lowly 14th for Wimbledon and down to 16th in the world rankings, few could have foreseen Venus even making it this far. A loser in the second round last year, she was thought to be in long-term decline. Supposedly losing her appetite and without fitness, form or focus, her last Grand Slam success came at the US Open in 2001 — some three years and nine months ago.

Even her father, Richard, claimed last week that she and younger sister Serena had discovered there is more to life than tennis. Venus yesterday proved everyone wrong to

pick up the aptly named Venus Rosewater Dish and a winner's cheque for £600,000.

Davenport, too, was close to a remarkable recovery. Twelve months ago she announced that she would not be returning to Wimbledon, so disillusioned was she after losing to eventual winner Maria Sharapova in the semi-final.

Retirement appeared to be on the cards, but a successful second half of 2004 persuaded the three-time Grand Slam winner to continue. She overcame Kim Clijsters in three sets in the last 16 here and Amelie Mauresmo, also in three, in a semi-final concluded on Friday due to rain. The final proved a match too far. She came into the tournament carrying a thigh injury and departed last night in considerable

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BUT THE NEW BORG IS WAITING Pages 6-7



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## THE OPEN DRAW

PLUS PAT RAFTER EXCLUSIVE



Weekend

## SECRETS BEHIND THE SONGS



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# HERO COP

## Girls come out to play

THEY'RE winners on and off the tennis court. Sister act Serena and Venus Williams took advantage of Melbourne's burst of summer to tone up at Brighton beach before the Australian Open starts on Monday.

While the Williams sisters cooled their heels, Aussie top gun Lleyton Hewitt was hot to trot after the Australian Open draw. Hewitt was placed on the opposite side of the draw to world No. 1 Roger Federer.

A Hewitt-Federer final would be a dream result for organisers — and Pat Rafter says it's on the cards.

Rafter says Federer has forced Hewitt to a new level.

"Federer has given Lleyton a new lease on life. I think there were times when Hewitt had become bored, he was not getting challenged," Rafter said.

The draw was less kind to Aussie star Alicia Molik, who faces a fourth-rounder against Venus Williams with top seed Lindsay Davenport waiting for her in the quarters.

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Just smashing: Serena and Venus Williams look stunning on Brighton beach.

Picture: RON C. ANGLE

## Shots in hijack struggle

A YOUNG policeman who leapt into a hijacked taxi moments before it flipped and landed on its roof has been hailed a hero.

City shoppers scattered in terror: the constable jumped into the base of the cab and put a headlock on fugitive, who had stolen a police gun and fired in an earlier showdown.

The gunman let off another shot during the struggle, with a witness describing how the bullet whizzed towards Collins Place.

As they wrestled, the taxi shuddered forward, hit a tram safety zone and catapulted through the air.

Superintendent Mick Williams praised the young officer as "absolutely courageous".

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Crunch: the hijacked taxi.

## Blue evicted over house

CARLTON footballer Karl Norms has been accused of trashing a home refusing to pay rent and leaving it lashed with a \$699 clean-up bill full of putrid rubbish and smashed windows.

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