

Williams and Blake win for United States

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

PERTH, Australia — Top-ranked Serena Williams and teammate James Blake overcame jittery starts in singles before combining Monday to give the United States a 3-0 win over Uzbekistan in its opening Hopman Cup match.

Williams, making her debut in the international mixed teams competition, lost her opening service game before overpowering Iroda Tulyaganova 6-3, 6-2 to give the United States a 1-0 buffer.

Blake dropped the first set before he rallied to beat Oleg Ogorodov 2-6, 7-5, 6-1 to



Clijsters

Williams saved three break points in the final game before completing the sweep with a strong backhand volley on her first match point.

Earlier, Kim Clijsters steered Belgium to a 2-1 win over defending champion Spain, showing glimpses of the form that took her to an upset win over Williams at the WTA Championship final in Los Angeles last month.

Williams, who won majors at Wimbledon and the French and U.S. Opens this year, was held to 3-3 in the first set of her singles match here until she reeled off seven of the next eight games.



James Blake

Tulyaganova twice needed treatment for an injured shoulder before Williams clinched the result in 56 minutes, beginning her quest for a maiden Australian Open crown in emphatic style.

"I am all rejuvenated and all refreshed, and I have had a long break," she said. "My main dream now is the Australian Open. I have never been able to win (a title) here, and I would like to try and let's see what happens."

The Australian Open starts Jan. 13 in Melbourne, where Williams will be bidding to win a fourth consecutive Grand Slam title.

Clijsters needed only 43 minutes to establish a 1-0 lead

over defending champion Spain, but the rest of the matches en route to Belgium's 2-1 victory were not as easy.

The 19-year-old Clijsters beat Virginia Ruano Pascual 6-1, 6-0 but Clijsters' teammate and world No. 25 Xavier Malisse lost to Tommy Robredo 7-6 (1), 3-6, 6-3 to level the best-of-three match going into the deciding mixed doubles.

Clijsters and Malisse lost the first set before rebounding for a 2-6, 7-5, 10-7 win, needing a super tiebreak to decide the Group A match. The Belgians were a set and 4-2 down before coming back to beat the defending champions.

Hill

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of which to be proud. I also looked at my situation kind of like a teacher might look at his or her job. Sure, it's good to work for a huge school, with record-setting enrollment, but it's more rewarding to teach at a school that's small enough to give the teacher a chance to build relationships with his or her students. I hope to build a good relationship with the readers of The Chronicle.

I have a few ideas floating around in my head about what will be covered in The Chronicle each week. The sports

section will have more junior varsity and peewee sports coverage, along with standings. I would also like to add a column that's dedicated to introducing players, coaches and other sports personalities of Winston-Salem to the community, along with professional and collegiate athletes.

We will also try to get more varsity and college sports stories in the newspaper. The Chronicle always tries to inform the community of news and activities that may occur in the area. Our sports section will continue that sentiment. We will do our best to inform readers of the history of the day — which is

Clijsters will play Williams on Friday when the United States and Belgium meet in the final round-robin match of the tournament.

Clijsters, ranked No. 4, has been in Australia since the beginning of December with world No. 1 Lleyton Hewitt, her boyfriend. She said the extra time here could be a big boost to her Australian Open chances.

"I think I have a bit more of an advantage because I've been in Australia already for a month almost," she said.

"I think that's definitely good and I'm feeling very fit at the moment. After winning L.A. this year I really wanted to work hard again to get fitter and to get stronger."

Clijsters said she believed she could beat the Williams sisters regularly.

"It is just a matter of being a little bit more consistent than I was at the beginning of the year," she said. "If I keep my consistency up I believe I am capable of doing it."

Winners

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Loser

• Nebraska — Had first non-winning conference record since 1968. Lost six regular-season games, most since 1961 team went 3-6-1. Road record against ranked teams under coach Frank Solich fell to 1-7.

PRO FOOTBALL

Winner

• Tom Brady — Went from backup quarterback to Super Bowl MVP with the New England Patriots. Play forced trade of longtime No. 1 quarterback Drew Bledsoe to Buffalo. In first full season as starter, led NFL in TD passes through 14 weeks.

Loser

• Kurt Warner — Two-time St. Louis Rams MVP lost Super Bowl, then went 0-4 before breaking finger. Lost two more games on return and broke hand again, ending season.

BASKETBALL

Winner

• Los Angeles Lakers — Captured third straight NBA championship, sweeping New Jersey. Completed NBA three-peat without coach Pat Riley, who coined the term when the team won two straight titles in 1986-87.

Loser

• New York Knicks — Missed playoffs for first time in 15 years. Latrell Sprewell broke hand before training camp, and was suspended and fined nearly a half-million dollars. Lost Antonio McDyess for the season with a broken kneecap in a preseason game.

BASEBALL

Winners

• Anaheim Angels — Reached World Series for first time in 42-year history. Won championship, rallying from a 5-0 seventh-inning deficit while facing elimination in Game 6, then took Game 7.

• Barry Bonds — Unanimous winner of record fifth MVP award. Pushed past 600 career home runs, fourth on all-time list. At 38, became oldest first-time batting champion in history with .370 average, record 198 walks and record .582 on-base percentage.

• Randy Johnson — Unanimous choice for fourth straight Cy Young Award, fifth overall. Won pitching triple crown, leading NL with 24-5 record, 2.32 ERA and 334 strikeouts.

Loser



Slugger Barry Bonds at the 2002 World Series.

File Photo

• Livan Hernandez — Considered unbeatable in October with a 6-0 record in previous postseason action, lost both World Series starts for San Francisco, never making it past the fourth inning and finishing with an ERA of 14.29.

TENNIS

Winners

• Serena Williams — Won

French Open, Wimbledon and U.S. Open, three-quarters of a Grand Slam. Finished year ranked No. 1 after 18-match winning streak ended in WTA championships.

• Lleyton Hewitt — Won season-ending Masters Cup to finish No. 1 for second straight year, first player since Pete Sampras in 1997 to successfully defend the top ranking.

Loser

• Anna Kournikova — Tennis heartthrob stretched her winless streak through 25 more events. Now winless in 122 career tournaments.

AUTO RACING

Winners

• Michael Schumacher — Five-time Formula One champion won a record 11 races as Ferrari won 15 of 17 events. Finished in the top three of every Grand Prix event with most points in a season (144), largest winning points margin (67) and most career wins (64).

• Tony Stewart — Won first Winston Cup championship. Blew engine and finished last in season-opener at Daytona, becoming first NASCAR driver to go from bottom to top in same season.

Loser

• CART driver Paul Tracy lost Indianapolis 500 to Helio Castroneves in disputed finish. Appealed outcome and was turned down by final arbiter Tony George, president of rival Indy Racing League.

CYCLING

Winners

• Lance Armstrong — Won fourth straight Tour de France, six years after battling testicular cancer, which spread to lungs and brain.

• Mario Cipollini — Ended short retirement to win world championship road title. Finished 159 miles in 5 hours, 30 minutes, 3 seconds. Announced retirement in July after not being invited to the Tour de France, but later said he would continue to compete.

Loser

• Stefano Garzelli — Banned

two years for doping after appeal was rejected. Tested positive for a banned diuretic after second stage of Giro d'Italia. Won Giro in 2000 and was race leader when he was banned.

HOCKEY

Winners

• Canada — Scored an Olympic gold medal sweep, defeating USA for championship in both men's and women's competition. Men's gold was first for country since 1952. Women reversed gold medal loss to United States at Nagano in 1998.

• Scotty Bowman — Won Stanley Cup for ninth time, coaching Detroit to championship, third in six years for Red Wings. Also coached five Cup champions in Montreal and one in Pittsburgh.

Loser

• Theo Fleury — Ended troubled three years with New York Rangers, which included treatment for substance abuse. Signed free agent contract with Chicago Blackhawks but was suspended by NHL 25 games for violating terms of substance abuse aftercare program.

TRACK AND FIELD

Winners

• Tim Montgomery and Marion Jones — Both ranked No. 1 at 100 meters. Live and train together and have each other's names tattooed on their arms. Shared Jesse Owens Award as top track and field athletes of the year. Montgomery clocked world's fastest 100 at 9.78 seconds. Jones is aiming for Florence Griffith-Joyner's record of 10.49.

Loser

• Maurice Greene — Called "Slo-Mo" by British news media after a disappointing season was capped by losing his 100 record to Montgomery. Beaten badly in most meets, troubled by family problems.

HORSE RACING

Winner

• Azeri — Wire-to-wire winner of Breeders' Cup Distaff, her seventh straight victory and 10th in 11 career starts. Strong Horse of the Year candidate.

Loser

• War Emblem — Won Kentucky Derby and Preakness but Triple Crown bid ended badly with stumble at start of Belmont. Beaten by long-shot Volponi in Breeders' Cup Classic, and lost three of last four races of career.

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