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METROSPORT Thursday, September 2, 2010

TENNIS US OPEN

Murray's too hot to handle

By Greg Hobbs

Scot defies conditions to make fine New York start

BRITAIN'S Andy Murray defied 'brutal conditions' to cruise into the second round of the US Open at Flushing Meadows. Murray had to wait until the third day to play his first-round match against Slovakia's Lukas Lacko but needed just one hour and 51 minutes to complete a 6-3, 6-2, 6-2 victory on Arthur Ashe Stadium.

With the temperature in New York approaching 100 degrees Fahrenheit, Murray was delighted to deal with the world No.7 so quickly.

'I managed to get through in straight sets so I'm pleased, but it was a lot tougher than the score suggests,' he said. 'Everyone in my box always

tells me it's a lot tougher watching in the heat than playing but I'm not so sure. It was brutal conditions.'

Murray, the fourth seed, broke

3

Grand Slam matches won by Lacko in his career to date

Lacko in the fourth game on his way to taking the opening set 6-3.

Although he was broken himself in the next set, three further breaks of his opponent saw Murray take the second comfortably 6-2. Lacko had

reached the second round at the Australian Open, French Open and Wimbledon this year.

But he was not about to complete the set at Flushing Meadows as he lost a further two service games in the third set to give Murray the chance to serve out and complete a routine victory.

And there was more good news for Murray as Wimbledon finalist Tomas Berdych, the seventh seed and a potentially tough quarter-final opponent, was beaten in straight sets by France's Michael Llodra.



Eyes on the prize: Murray on his way to victory in New York last night

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ODDBALLS Edited by: Marc Dodd and Danny Griffiths

Azarenka in collapse scare

VICTORIA AZARENKA collapsed on court during her second-round match against Gisela Dulko at the US Open yesterday. As temperatures hit 100 degrees Fahrenheit, the Belarusian tenth seed slumped to the ground while 5-1 down and was taken off in a wheelchair. It later emerged her illness was not primarily heat related.

The rally wild show

BEING the only female driver in the British Rally Championship Challenge, Louise Cook is used to beating the odds. But the Maidstone racer, pictured left, will really be up against it on Sunday when she takes on nature's finest. The 23-year-old, currently placed sixth out of 27 in the championship, will race against a cheetah, eagle and peregrine falcon at the Eagle Heights Wildlife Park in Eynsford in the Celebration of Speed. All the animals will race against the stopwatch as will the rally car. 'I've always loved animals,' said Louise but she added: 'I hope it's only my dust they are biting on the day!'

Edgar's move? Just the ticket

EDGAR DAVIDS is in for a culture shock after joining Championship club Crystal Palace. The former Juventus, Inter Milan, Barcelona and Ajax midfielder made his league debut for the Eagles against Scunthorpe at Gianford Park. But a bigger jolt to the system came when he had to fork out loose change for his ticket as George Burley's team travelled by train. Presumably it wasn't first class.

Kendall suffers an ear-bashing

NFL star Kendall Langford received a frosty look from Miami Dolphins coach Tony Sparano after losing an earring worth £32,000. The jewellery went missing during a practice session and team-mates got down on their hands and knees in a failed bid to find it. 'I'd never lose an earring - I can't afford them,' Sparano groaned.

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