



THE 2008 WPBA US OPEN 9 BALL CHAMPIONSHIPS



SEMIFINALS #2

JEANETTE LEE VS. KELLY FISHER

By Anne Craig - WPBA



August 3, 2008: Riverwind Casino, Norman Oklahoma.

Kelly Fisher, needing only to win one more match to overtake the #1 ranking for 2008, faced off against Jeanette Lee, making her first TV Semifinal appearance in 2008.

Jeanette won the lag, pocketing a ball on the break, but was forced to play a safety. She did leave Kelly a view to the 1 and Kelly executed a beautiful safety, forcing Jeanette to kick 3 rails. While she struck the 1 ball, she left Kelly an open shot and with her usual quickness, made short order of the first rack to take the first game of the match. Kelly also had the next break, but failed to pocket a ball (almost scratching!). The cue ball and 1 ball were very close together but Jeanette played a good safety. Kelly kicked one rail and almost made the ball, but ended up leaving an open shot for Jeanette. The 2 ball was tied up and Jeanette executed a perfect safety, snookering the cue ball up onto the 3 and Kelly had to play a 2 rail kick shot which she successfully struck. Jeanette did have an open shot and she began to run the rack, finishing off the 9 ball in short order to level the match 1 all.

Jeanette broke, and nearly made the 9 in the side. With her and the crowd yelling for the 9 to drop, it stopped just millimeter's short, hanging there taunting her. Meanwhile, the 1 ball was sitting in front of the 6, making for a tough combination into the corner which she missed. Kelly made the 1, but had no shot on the 3 and played a great safety, leaving the cue and the 3 rail to rail. Jeanette was hooked with no way to get to the 3 and instead chose to shoot the 9 in, forcing Kelly to run out the rack. With ball in hand, Kelly began the task but in trying to break the 6 away from the 8, she missed the 5, leaving a shot into the side for Jeanette. After sinking the 5, Jeanette continued on with the remaining 4 balls to take the first lead of the match, 2-1. Giving a rebel yell, Jeanette pumped her fists and the crowd jumped to their feet in approval.

Kelly's break advantage and she was disappointed when not one ball dropped. Jeanette came to the table with no open pocket for the 1, opting for a short rail bank. She made the 1 ball but scratched all the way down in the corner pocket and Kelly gained ball in hand. The rack layout wasn't pretty as the 4/8 were tied up and after sinking the 3, Kelly shook her head at the dilemma. She gently struck the 4/8 sending the cue ball to lay on the end rail and the 4 up table.

Jeanette calmly made the rail shot and another 5 balls ahead of her to win game 4. As she got down to shoot the 8, she stood up and pleaded with Tournament Director Steve Tipton to clean something off of the cue ball exclaiming "I know it's probably because I'm nervous but could you please clean this off its driving me crazy!" After Steve complied, Jeanette ran the last two balls to take a 3-1 lead.

Jeanette broke but didn't make a ball and forced Kelly to attempt a safety, leaving instead a long 1 ball shot for Jeanette which she missed but left Kelly a long 2 rail kick on the 1. Kelly not only hit the ball, but snookered Jeanette behind the 7 ball, almost locking it up and the 1 ball came to rest enticingly in front of the 9 for a future 1/9 combo. Jeanette massed the ball and hit the 1, leaving Kelly a long straight in shot. With a lot of green to work with, Kelly missed the ball but didn't leave an open pocket. Jeanette took her extension for the game pondering what to do with the awkward lie. She tried a very, very thin back cut but scratched and failed to pocket the 1. Kelly took ball in hand, steadying her nerves and began to run out the rack in her usual Kwikfire style and got back to within one game, 3-2.

Kelly came to the table with the break advantage, and struck the rack hard, making 1 ball. With precision, Kelly navigated her way around the layout, running to the 8 ball and incredibly, missing a fairly easy cut shot down the rail, leaving the 8 ball sitting in the corner pocket. Jeanette jumped up and immediately sank the 2 balls to retake a 2 game advantage 4-2.

Jeanette broke but made no ball, and Kelly wanted badly to run out but blew shape onto the 2 ball and was forced to play a safety. Jeanette kicked at the 2 two rails, hit it, leaving an awkward lie. Kelly responded by playing another safety. Jeanette made a beautiful 3 rail kick shot, striking the ball and re-hooked Kelly! Kelly hit the 2 ball but left the cue about 3 inches away from the 2 and Jeanette missed a delicate cut shot. Kelly subsequently missed the 2 and the safety battle raged on. Finally, Kelly had an open shot and made the 2, 3 and gained great position to the 4 ball. The position play to the 5 was tougher but she sent the cue ball down table successfully and continued with the run out. She kept her cool and made the 9 to get back within one game and had the break advantage going into game 8. She failed to pocket a ball and Jeanette stepped up to begin her run.

To her chagrin, Jeanette was so focused on shape from the 1 to the 2 ball she missed the 1, leaving it hanging in the corner pocket. Kelly leapt back up out of her chair and made the one but played a safety on the two, hooking Jeanette up table. Jeanette missed the 2 ball (2 rail kick) and Kelly took ball in hand, looking to hook Jeanette again. Kelly locked the cue ball right up behind the 4 ball and sent the 2 up table. Jeanette was looking at a very tough 3 rail kick shot and missed, although it was a great effort. Kelly was looking for a way to foul Jeanette out of this game and once again locked the cue ball up right on the 6 ball! Jeanette failed to hit the ball and fouled out losing the game and Kelly tied the match up 4 all.

Jeanette broke but failed to make a ball and Kelly proceeded to run out and make a 6/9 combination to take her first lead of the match, 5-4. Kelly even had the break advantage but didn't make a ball and Jeanette began running out the tough layout. She made a beautiful shot on the 3 but came back to rest her cue ball straight on the 4 ball which was resting just off the rail. She confidently pocketed the ball and let the cue ball float up for a long shot on the 6. The 6 rattled briefly but fell in as Jeanette got back in line for the 7, 8 & 9 balls and with a double fist pump, once again tied up the match at 5 all.

Jeanette pocketed a ball on her break, and after a great position shot off the 1 to the 2 ball, got to the 3 ball and missed the shot in trying to force position play to the 4. Kelly took advantage of the critical error, and despite squirrely position on the 7, ran out to reach the hill. To add insult to injury, Kelly enjoyed the break advantage going into game 12 and struck the rack well, making 2 balls but to her dismay, the 6 ball came to a stop in front of the 1.

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Kelly stood up mid-stroke to rethink her shot and took her extension for the game. She attempted a 1 rail kick safe which was partially successful as Jeanette hit the 1 ball using a slight masse. Kelly's only available shot was a short rail bank on the 1 which she missed, but fortunately for her, the 1 ball came to rest next to the 6 and the cue ball landed on the opposing rail. Jeanette made a nice touch safety, forcing Kelly to kick one rail. The result was a fairly difficult leave, causing Jeanette to simply comment "Yuck!" The cue ball was up table at the center diamond while the 1 ball was parallel to it down table. Jeanette was forced to use her game extension, and fired at the 1 bank shot and failed leaving Kelly an easy open shot. The layout of the table was ready for Kelly to run out to take the match and not only continue on into the finals, but to take over the #1 ranking for the year. Kelly made the 7, the 8 and the 9 and is now the #1 ranked player and moves on into the finals.