



THE 2009 WPBA TOUR CHAMPIONSHIPS

DAY THREE

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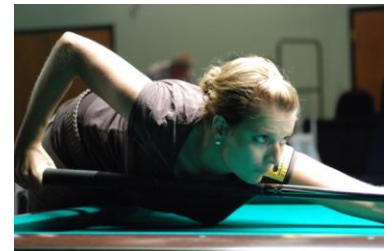
As the dust settled from Friday's battles in the arena here at the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino, 24 players were left standing to face Saturday's match ups. The day began with the first four matches starting at Noon, with the web match featuring Jeanette Lee and My-Hanh Lac. The other three matches saw Melissa Little battle it out with Gerda Hofstatter; Liz Ford matched up against the #1 ranked player Ga Young Kim and the defending Champion, Monica Webb



faced off against Florida player Michell Monk (pictured left) who has earned an exemption with her solid play this season including reaching the top 24 at this event.

Early on, all four matches stayed close showcasing the fact that the overall level of competitiveness on the WPBA has increased several notches. Ga Young felt the pressure from Liz Ford as she matched her game for game through the first 10; Ga Young turned on the afterburners though and took command, defeating Liz 9-6. My-Hanh took an early 3-1 lead over Jeanette but Jeanette fought back and ultimately won 9-5. Melissa Little got out of the gate strong against Gerda and before you could say break and run, Melissa reached the hill against Gerda, up 8-4 and finished the match at 9-4. The big story came with Michell Monk who took an early lead over Monica, playing focused to reach the hill, up 8-6. She ran to an awkward 8 ball, made the shot but the 9 in the side was tricky and she missed. The crowd gasped as Monica also missed, hanging the 9 in the corner pocket and Michell stepped up to sink the ball and knock the defending Champion out of the event and advances into the final 16.

The 2:00pm round featured many of the newer generation of players and a few veterans, too. The web match up for the round was between Norway's Line Kjorsvik and WPBA Board Secretary Melissa Herndon, who often steps up to the mic to offer commentary on other matches. Line played very well and Melissa appeared to have some issues with her eye (something scratching her cornea). The combination of the two allowed Line to advance into the final 16 by the score of 9-4. Meanwhile, Billiard Education Foundation Executive Chairperson Laura Smith has had a great season and this tournament added to it. She faced off against the always tough Kim Shaw, winning 9-7 in a hard fought match. Holland's Tamara Rademakers (pictured right), who has earned her exemption for 2010, played Southern California's Melissa Morris, whose father is Ned Morris of Morris Custom Cues. Melissa has also earned her exemption for next year, but ran out of steam in her match and Tamara won 9-4. Finally, New Yorker Jennifer Barretta who has played well this season after taking a year off to raise her son, Max, matched up against Angel Paglia, also returning to the tour. Angel had defeated Helena Thornfeldt earlier in the tournament and gave Allison Fisher a run for her money in the 3rd round winner's bracket match. She continued that strong play against Jennifer and won 9-6.



The redraw resulted in some interesting match ups – Jeanette Lee vs. Kyoko Sone; Jasmin Ouschan vs. Line Kjorsvik; Allison Fisher vs. Michell Monk (also the web match up); Karen Corr vs. Ga Young Kim; Vivian Villarreal vs. Melissa Little; Xiaoting Pan vs. Laura Smith; Tamara Rademakers vs. Kelly Fisher and Tracie Hines vs. Angel Paglia.

Jasmin has been so intensely focused that most of her matches have been won by larger margins including 9-0 and 9-1 wins. Her match against Line was no exception as she jumped out to a 7-2 lead.

Karen was quietly making her way through the tournament as she usually does, and she took a 6-3 lead over Ga Young Kim. Ga Young fought back, and the two ground their way to a hill-hill score, but Karen gained the advantage and won the match 9-8. Laura Smith showed no nerves as she gained a 3-1 advantage over Xiaoting Pan but Xiaoting came back to take a 5-4 lead. From there it was all Xiaoting and she advances after defeating Laura 9-4. Kelly Fisher made quick work versus Tamara Rademakers and was the first to finish the final 16 round, beating Tamara 9-3. Jeanette Lee jumped to a 6-3 lead versus Kyoko Sone, who had defeated Ga Young Kim earlier in the tournament. Kyoko couldn't seem to get anything going and soon Jeanette closed out the match to advance, winning 9-3. Vivian Villarreal and Melissa Little's match was a hotly contested from the start as they each took several leads for 14 games. Vivian stepped up her game and won 9-7. Michell Monk took a 3-1 lead over Allison but just as she got a rhythm going in their match, a spectator took a photo that flashed right in her eyes and from that point, Michell just couldn't refocus, as Allison took full advantage and closed out their match, 9-4. Tracie Hines started off her match well against Angel Paglia although it was close early on. Tracie pulled away, commenting a little later that "I'm playing the best I've ever played" and won 9-5.

The Final 8

We were down to the final 8 by 8:00pm on Saturday. Karen Corr faced off against Kelly Fisher on the web streaming table; Vivian Villarreal and Jeanette Lee, who always seem to play each other in the later rounds of tournaments but who are crowd favorites; Jasmin Ouschan collided with Allison Fisher and finally, Tracie Hines matched up against Xiaoting Pan.



Vivian won the first two games in her match versus Jeanette. They played safety on the 3 ball until Vivian scratched off a kick shot and after Jeanette played a 3/9 combo, she faced only a 1 game deficit. Vivian needed the calamine lotion as she scratched after making the 1 ball, leaving Jeanette ball in hand. She ran to the 7 ball and missed in the corner pocket, allowing Vivian to run out and go up 3-1. Vivian maintained a 2 game lead, going up 4-2. Vivian would have extended her lead to 5-2 but missed the 7 ball; she was still up a game, 4-3 after Jeanette sank the 9. Vivian gave Jeanette

another opportunity in game 8 after playing a poor safety and Jeanette ran out to tie the match at 4 all. After trading the next two games, Jeanette ran out in game 11 to take her first lead of the match, 6-5. She extended that lead to 7-5 with the break going into game 13. After some tricky position play Jeanette reached the hill although Vivian did have the break in game 14. Jeanette shut the door on Vivian's bid for the Semi's as Vivian finished tied for 5th place, the final score was 9-5, Jeanette. Jeanette will face Jasmin in Semi-Final #1 at 1:00pm on Sunday.



Jasmin and Allison traded the first two games, tied 1 all. After a safety battle in game 3, Jasmin made a 2/9 combination to take a 1 game lead, up 2-1. Jasmin played safe in game 3, earning ball in hand to run out and go up 3-1. She extended that lead to 5-1 as nothing seemed to go right for Allison until she was finally able to post another game, down 2-5. Allison closed the gap further after making a 2/9 combination, now down, 3-5. Each competitor posted a game and Jasmin maintained a 6-4 lead with the break going into game 10 and wowed the crowd by snapping in the 9 ball! Allison couldn't

catch a break at all as she was unable to earn any momentum and Jasmin reached the hill, up 8-4. She wouldn't give up

that easily though and with ball in hand in game 13, played a great safety locking the cue ball up on the 6 and sending the 1 ball up-table. Jasmin couldn't hit the 1 and Allison capitalized by winning the game, down 8-5. Jasmin broke and ran the next game and moved into the Semi Finals of this event, leaving Allison to finish tied for 5th.



Tracie Hines found herself down 2-0 in her match up against Xiaoting and after missing the 8 ball, thought she'd be down 3 but Xiaoting scratched off the 8 ball and the score was 2-1. Tracie's jump shot on the 6 ball in game 4 was unsuccessful and Xiaoting extended her lead 3-1 but Tracie fought back and tied the match at 3 all. Tracie is a tenacious player and after taking advantage of opportunities, took her first lead of the match, 5-4. With her confidence growing, she extended her lead, up 6-4 after Xiaoting's error on the 6 ball although Xiaoting would go into game 11 with the break. She ran out to the 7 ball and missed it, leaving an open shot for Tracie but the crowd gasped as she missed the 9 ball. That was a huge two game swing and instead of it being 7-4, it was now 6-5. Xiaoting attempted a touchy safety on the 5 ball in game 12 and scratched, allowing Tracie to earn back that missed 9 ball to regain a 2 game lead, up 7-5. The two players fought on as Tracie reached the hill first as Xiaoting climbed her way to within one game, down 7-8. The two became embroiled in a safety battle but Tracie blinked first as she scratched off of the 4 ball. With ball in hand, Xiaoting ran out to the 7; after making the ball, she brought her cue ball down to the opposite end of the table but overshot her shape to the 8 leaving an awkwardly thin cut shot. Instead of the cut she chose an extremely difficult cross-bank that missed the mark by a wide margin. Tracie missed the resulting leave and Xiaoting ran out – we were now hill-hill. Xiaoting had the break going into this final game and after pocketing the one ball, was left with a long tough cut on the 2. She couldn't decide what to do and got up several times to survey the shot. She made the cut beautifully with position on the four to continue through the rack. With deliberate care, Xiaoting pocketed each ball gaining perfect position each time and ran out to reach the Semi Final #2 versus Kelly Fisher. Tracie finishes tied for 5th place.



Kelly Fisher took a quick 2-0 lead over Karen. Kelly just wouldn't give Karen any open shots to work with and earned ball in hand after a great safety in game 3 on the 5 ball. Kelly kept rolling and before you could say 9 ball, she had a 6-0 lead. Anytime Karen came to the table she seemed to face a shot that forced her to play a safe or she faced a kick shot. Karen had an opportunity in the 7th game with ball in hand on the 2 ball and ran out to finally post a game on the board. She took another game off of Kelly as the crowd encouraged Karen to stay in the match. It wasn't enough to keep Kelly from posting two more games to reach the hill, 8-2 and the break in game 11. She failed to pocket a ball and Karen knew she needed to make this rack count or she'd be out of the event. She ran out and was still hanging on for dear life, down 8-3. Karen posted yet another game and kept the fight going as she ran out in game 13 and reached her 5th game of the match. It proved not to be enough as Kelly finished off the match 9-5 and advances into Semi Final #2.

Action Sunday starts at 1:00pm. Who will be crowned the 2009 WPBA Tour Champion? Stay tuned!