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WPBA CAROLINA CLASSIC

HOSPITALITY IN THE SOUTH AS THE TOP PROFESSIONALS HIT THEIR MID-SEASON STRIDE

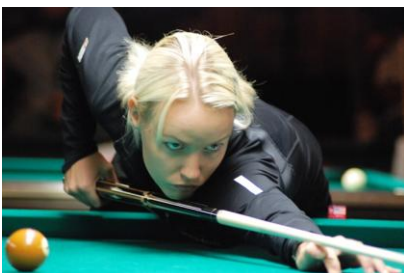
September 13, 2008 – Durham, North Carolina – Photos and story by Anne Craig



Its day three at the WPBA's Carolina Classic and the second day saw several upsets: Line Kjorsvik, coming back after a 2 year hiatus but has been tearing up the qualifier circuit, soundly defeated Xiaoting Pan in their 3rd round winners' bracket match. Xiaoting is currently playing veteran Belinda Calhoun. Top 40 Exempt player Sarah Rousey has had a quiet season, but played well versus young phenom Jasmin Ouschan (fresh from her 3rd place finish at this year's 14:1 World Championships) and defeated Jasmin 9-7. Jasmin missed a straight in 9 ball in game 14 that would have tied the match and never recovered, losing 9-7. Jasmin moves into the 1 loss side.

Gerda Hofstatter started off shaky in her 3rd round match against Tiffany Nelson, but down 3-1 put together a string of 6 unanswered games to take the match 9-3. Jeanette Lee proved ready to continue her great finish at the US Open by defeating Anna Kostanian with authority, 9-1. Ga Young Kim, Allison Fisher, Kelly Fisher and Karen Corr also had solid wins and the 8 finalists on the winners' side were set.

Outstanding performances for yesterday include Japan's Kyoko Sone. After defeating top 40 Exempt Player Val Finnie 9-7, she went on today to win versus former Jr. Champion, Michelle Rakin and is currently playing Tiffany Nelson. Canada's Brittany Bryant is having an excellent tournament. After nearly defeating Allison Fisher in the first round (Brittany ended up losing hill-hill), she's gone on to defeat Top 40 players Melissa Morris, Caroline Pao and Laura Smith and now plays Anna Kostanian. Maureen Seto, longtime veteran player and Canadian Champion in her own right, had a stellar tournament, finishing tied for 17th after losing to Vivian Villarreal in the round before the final 16. Monica Webb, the US's highest ranked player lost to Japan's Miyuki Sakai who has been absent for several tournaments this year. Monica finishes tied for 17th along with veteran Belinda Calhoun. Miyuki is showing she's still got her game, winning by a 9-4 margin.



Jasmin Ouschan appears to have recovered from her loss to Sarah Rousey last night and took a 7-0 lead over Melissa Little. Although Melissa eventually got on the board with 2 games, Jasmin finished out the match to reach the final 16, winning 9-2.



Dawn Hopkins had taken a 7-2 lead over Jennifer Chen, but Jennifer's never to be counted out and before long, the match tightened to within one, 7-6. Dawn took advantage of Jennifer's error in game 14 and reached the hill first. Jennifer fired back and the crowd was encouraging as the match reached hill-hill. Dawn had the break advantage and pocketed 2 balls with a long but open shot on the 2. Shape on the 3 was difficult and Dawn began a safety battle on the squirrely object ball. Jennifer blinked first and Dawn calmly ran out to reach the final 16. Jennifer finishes tied for 17th.

Melissa Herndon fell to Helena Thornfeldt, 9-2, finishing tied for 17th, while Tiffany Nelson and Kyoko Sone battled it out, trading games the entire match. Both played well and neither would give quarter. From 1-1, 2-2, 4-4 and so on it went. Tiffany missed the 5 ball in game 14 that would have put her on the hill and Kyoko took advantage to tie up the match once again 7-7. She continued to take advantage of mistakes and reached the hill first. Game 16 saw Tiffany getting the opportunity to run out after a safety battle on the 1. Unfortunately for Tiffany, she scratched off of the 7 to the 8 ball and Kyoko easily ran out the last two balls to reach the final 16.



The Draw:

7:00pm Matches:

Kelly Fisher vs. Jasmin Ouschan
Gerda Hofstatter vs. Xiaoting Pan
Sarah Rousey vs. Vivian Villarreal
Ga Young Kim vs. Helena Thornfeldt

8:45pm Matches:

Line Kjorsvik vs. Anna Kostanian
Allison Fisher vs. Kyoko Sone
Jeanette Lee vs. Dawn Hopkins
Karen Corr vs. Miyuki Sakai

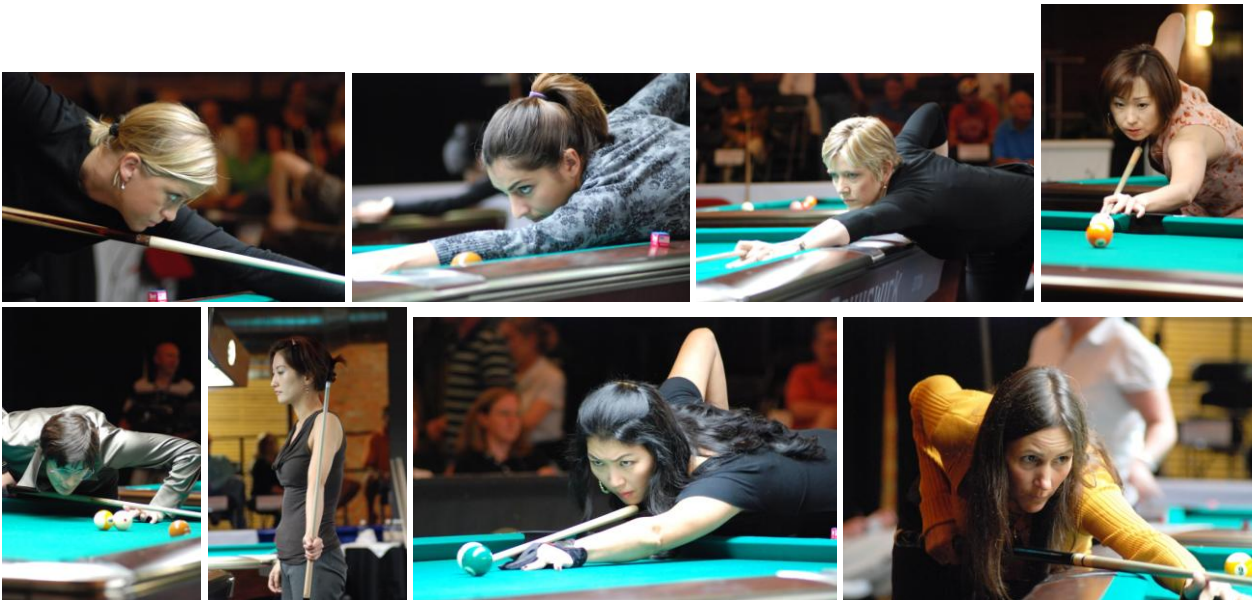


The surprise so far is Helena Thornfeldts' dominance in her match with Ga Young Kim: taking an immediate 4-0 lead over the WPBA's #4 ranked competitor after Ga Young missed the 9 in game 4. Ga Young finally got on the board in game 5 but still seemed out of sorts. Finally she began collecting her focus, and started making a run to catch up. Helena put a stop to that though and extended her lead to 4 in no time. Helena continued to play strong, going up 6 games to reach the hill, 8-3. Helena never looked stronger and defeated Ga Young Kim, 9-3.

Kelly Fisher and Jasmin Ouschan are well matched, but Kelly's bringing a lot of confidence to the table as the new #1 ranked player in the world, but the early part of the match was close, with Kelly having a one game advantage 3-2. But Jasmin wouldn't let Kelly walk away with the match, going stride for stride and taking the lead in game 7 with the break advantage in game 8. Jasmin left Kelly a tough cut on the which she rattled, and Jasmin found herself ahead 2 games, up 5-3. Soon the lead grew, and Kelly, looking a bit stunned, was down 3-7! Kelly wasn't about to give up though, and stayed determined each time she came to the table, but Jasmin wasn't giving her any open shots to work with, instead being forced to play safeties, but finally put another game on the board but still down 4-7 and Jasmin had the break advantage. Jasmin continued to play lights out and ran out in the last game to defeat the #1 ranked player and knock her out of the tournament!

Gerda Hofstatter, having made her way through the winner's bracket, is finding rough going versus Xiaoting Pan and faced an early deficit 1-5. Xiaoting played focused and calm, making no mistakes along the way and soon found herself up 8-1. Gerda just wasn't getting many good opportunities to shoot. Finally she found a way to put another game on the board and try to get back into the match but it was not to be, and Gerda finished tied for 9th, while Xiaoting went on to the quarterfinals!

Meanwhile, Sarah Rousey seems to have lost all momentum and before she knew it, was down 1-4 versus Vivian Villarreal. Vivian, meanwhile, seems comfortable and wasn't her usual animated self, instead choosing to stay focused and calm. That calmness seemed to benefit her game and soon took a quick 7-1 lead over Sarah. Sarah didn't want to leave the party just yet though and struggled to earn another game, still down a seemingly insurmountable 2-7. Vivian reached the hill first and to add insult to injury, snapped the 9 in on the last game to win 9-2 and was the first to reach the Quarterfinals.



Dawn Hopkins found herself down 8-1 fairly quickly against a very determined Jeanette Lee, who wants another taste of the TV rounds after her great finish at the US Open. Dawn wasn't given many opportunities, allowing Jeanette to take full advantage and eventually win 9-1 to move on into the Quarters. Dawn finishes tied for 9th.

Karen Corr and Miyuki Sakai found themselves knotted up at 3 apiece in a safety battle ridden match. Miyuki, a top 40 Exempt player, has been absent for most of the year and returns to the WPBA arena fired up. Karen kept up the pressure though and took the lead 5-3. Miyuki remained unperturbed and fought back to within one game, down 6-5. Karen wasn't about to be intimidated and extended her lead back to 3 to reach the hill, 8-5. Karen finished off the match and moves on into the Quarters, Miyuki Sakai finishes tied for 9th.

Line Kjorsvik started her match playing very well and kept the lead through 5 games, 3-2. Anna came ready to play and didn't let Line get too far ahead of her, though, and kept within one game for the early going in their match, eventually tying things up at 4 all. They continued to trade games, neither one willing to give up. With the score 7-6 in Anna's favor, both players found themselves in a safety battle over the two ball in game 14. Line came out ahead in that game and the match was once again tied up, 7 all. The match came to a head when the score reached hill-hill! Game 17 saw Anna with the break, sinking the 1 ball. Unfortunately, Anna wasn't left with an open shot on the 2 and chose a 1 rail kick safe attempt which was unsuccessful. Line came to the table with an open layout ready to run out. Methodically she picked off each object ball, from the 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and the 9 to make it into the Quarters. Anna finishes tied for 9th.

Allison Fisher found herself down a game early on in the match to Japan's Kyoko Sone, 3-2, but slowly fought her way to take the lead at 4-3. Kyoko's attempt to stay with Allison proved unsuccessful and she found herself slipping further back, soon down 7-3. The end was inevitable as Allison closed out the match, 9-5. Congratulations to Kyoko for a great 9th place finish.

QUARTERFINALS ACTION

Xiaoting Pan vs. Jasmin Ouschan

Jasmin Ouschan came into this match ready to rumble and proved it by taking an early 4-1 lead over Xiaoting Pan. Xiaoting answered back by winning the next two games and getting back to within one. She then tied up the match and went into game 9 with the break advantage. After a safety battle, Jasmin came out ahead and retook the lead, 5-4, which turned into 6-5. Xiaoting was like a dog with a bone and tied the match up at 6 all. She then took the lead 7-6 after a great runout in game 14. Jasmin shook it off and put together a nice runout herself to tie the match back up again. Xiaoting hooked herself on the 3 ball in game 15 and her short jump shot fouled, allowing Jasmin ball in hand and the runout to reach the hill first. Jasmin then finished off the match by breaking and running out to reach her 2nd TV round Semi's this year. Xiaoting finishes tied for 5th.

Helena Thornfeldt vs. Vivian Villarreal

In this hotly contested match, Helena started off by taking a 2-1 lead but Vivian stepped up and wrested the lead from her, 5-3. Both players were visibly nervous and cautious, especially Vivian who played more than her fair share of safeties. It manifested itself with Helena getting back to within one game: down 5-4 Helena came into game 10 with the break advantage but failed to pocket a ball. The competitors went back and forth on the 2 ball until Helena was finally left with an open shot to run out and tie the match up. In game 11, Vivian ran out to the 9 but overshot shape, leaving herself with a thin cut into the corner, which she rattled to lose the game and get behind 5-6. Vivian shook off the miss and ran out the next game to tie things up at 6 all. Vivian then ran out to take the lead once again 7-6 but Helena answered back to tie it up yet again, 7 apiece, then took the lead back in game 15 to reach the hill first. Helena made a critical error in the next game, attempting to hook Vivian on the 3 but she made the 3 and hooked herself on the 4: her kick shot missed and Vivian gained ball in hand and quickly ran out to go hill-hill. Vivian had the break advantage and although pocketed 3 balls on the break, was hooked behind the 3 shooting at the 2 ball. Vivian pushed out and each player played safe back and forth. Vivian agonized over letting it ride, as the 2 was near the 9. She was unsuccessful and left Helena with an open table run out. Slowly but surely she pocketed each ball, until to the shock of the crowd, she missed an easy 9 ball into the corner pocket, losing her chance to make it into the TV rounds for the first time this year. Helena finishes tied for 5th.

Allison Fisher vs. Line Kjorsvik

Line continued to play solid pool, coming into this match warmed up and in stroke. Allison was also raring to go, but couldn't get into stroke and found herself down 1-4. As hard as Allison tried, she couldn't shake off the blues and Line kept her off balance, extending her lead to 5-1. Allison took a break to try to hit the reset button which seemed to help a bit as she came back from it to win game 7. Game 8 saw Allison running out to get back within one game. Before Line knew what hit her, the match was tied up at 5 all and Line knew she had to bear down and regain her composure and focus. She did so, putting together 2 great consecutive runs to go up 7-5. Line reached the hill first, but lost game 14 and in the subsequent game, was forced to play a tough safety on the 2 ball. She did so beautifully, and gained ball in hand after Allison's failed 2 rail kick attempt. She pocketed the 2 ball, but left herself a thin cut on the 3 which rattled in the pocket and Allison quickly jumped up to begin running out the rack. She was doing fine until she overshot shape on the 8 ball, leaving herself a back-cut into the corner pocket while trying to figure out how to get back into position on the 9. She surveyed her options, got down on the shot but stood back up, unsure of her choice. Taking several moments, she once again lined up the cut, got down on the shot and stood up yet again! Finally, she committed to her stance, made the 8, and the cue ball went into the 9 ball sending it up-table to rest for a rail cut. She rattled the 9 ball in the pocket, and conceded the match to Line. Allison finishes tied for 5th place.

Karen Corr vs. Jeanette Lee

Jeanette and Karen's match proved another grinder, as all the remaining competitors knew the importance of winning each of their matches. For Jeanette, having another chance to make it into the TV rounds (potentially for the 2nd time this year) motivated her to be less flamboyant and extremely focused and she took a quick 3-1 lead over Karen. Jeanette kept a two game advantage into game 7, but Karen fought back to within one, 4-3. After a great shot on the 2 ball in game 8, Karen missed the 3 ball and Jeanette quickly strode back to the table to run out and regain a 2 game lead, 5-3. She maintained that 2 game lead by Karen's misfortune of missing a 7 ball in game 12 and Jeanette was up 7-5. Jeanette whiffed the cue ball past the 2 ball in a failed safety attempt and Karen gained ball in hand to run out. Jeanette maintained her cool and put together a tough runout in game 14 to reach the hill, 8-6. Jeanette finished Karen off to advance into the Semi's and Karen to finish a disappointing 5th place. If Karen had won this event she would have overtaken the #1 ranking, but Kelly will retain her top spot since no one else can earn enough to overtake her.

Stay tuned for more updates and don't forget to check out the [tournament bracket!](#)