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## WPBA SAN DIEGO CLASSIC THE BEST IN THE WEST

### THE FINALS



**Monica Webb**

vs.



**Ga Young Kim**

**April 5th, 2009 – Alpine, CA at the Viejas Casino – by Anne Craig**

It was Ga Young Kim and Monica Webb matching up in the finals of the first event of 2009 for the WPBA – the San Diego Classic at the beautiful Viejas Casino in Alpine, CA. Monica was coming off of her high from the 2008 Tour Championships and this was Ga Young's first finals since the 2008 BCA Generationpool.com 9 Ball Championships in Las Vegas, NV. Both wanted to be the first winner of the 2009 season.

Ga Young won the lag but scratched on the break and Monica came to the table ready to rock. There was no hesitation in her stroke as she began running out the table but a huge mental error right at the beginning caused her to come up short on the 8 ball, hooking herself behind the 9. With a regretful smile, she eyed a kick shot short rail (2 rails) that just missed, giving Ga Young back the ball in hand she'd given to Monica and took the first game of the match.

Monica had the break in game two but came up dry but left nothing for Ga Young to look at except a safety. She thinned the 1, went 4 rails with the cue ball and stuck it snug behind the 6 while the crowd whistled in amazement. Monica missed the 3 rail kick and Ga Young received ball in hand. Working her way around the layout, she navigated a few touchy position shots with aplomb, running out to take a quick 2-0 lead.

Ga Young pocketed a ball on her break, and it seemed all the remaining balls paired up two by two around the table. Ga Young attempted a tough 2/9 combination, leaving the 9 hanging in the pocket giving Monica a chance at the table. The layout was tough so when she got to the 3 ball, she played a nice safety forcing Ga Young to jump the cue ball over the 6. Calling for her extension after Steve called "10 [seconds], Steve informed her she'd taken it so she had to rush jump, she struck the 3 but did leave Monica a shot. Monica ran out to post her first game of the match, down 1-2.

Monica broke but failed to pocket a ball and Ga Young stepped up, quickly taking control of the rack. Surprisingly, she played lazy position from the 5 to the 6, which caused her to go further out of line for the 7 which was sitting near the side rail. Leaving herself a tough, thin cut, she nailed the shot with position on the 8 and got herself out of trouble to take a 2 game lead, 3-1.

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Ga Young broke, pocketed a ball and appeared to be on her way to a break and run but made bad position on the 3 ball. She played a beautiful safety, snookering Monica behind the 9 near the bottom corner pocket and sending the 3 ball to the opposite side rail. Monica was forced to use a lot of left-hand English, kicking one long rail and although she hit the ball, the crowd groaned as the cue ball slid off the 3 and scratched into the corner. With ball in hand, Ga Young finished the rack off to take a 4-1 lead.

Monica broke and pocketed a ball but was forced to jump to make the 2 ball. She made the ball but left herself another jump and the crowd was on its feet as she made that one too! The position she was left with forced her to make a tough 3/8 combination and the crowd roared again as she made both balls and got position for the 6. Calming herself, she made the remaining 3 balls to get back within 2, still down 2-4.

Ga Young made 2 balls on the break, leaving herself a wide open table. It was tricky to get from the 1 to the 2 as she was straight in having to force position and she left herself a long shot on the 2. She forced that into the corner, regaining position to the 3. Perhaps it was a momentary lack of focus but she overcut the 3 slightly, leaving it hanging in the pocket and Monica jumped up quickly to take advantage of the situation, running out to get within one game, 3-4.

Monica broke, pocketing a ball, and took a lap around the table to map out her run out. Slowly she sank each ball and showed she wasn't going to get discouraged so easily. As the audience applauded, she ran the rack and tied the match up 4 all.

Going into game 9, Ga Young knew she needed to be persistent and pocketed a ball on her break, the layout wasn't easy as she had to carefully navigate short shape from the 2 to the 3, but she had no problem with it. The only question was, would she hold her focus through the entire rack or would she once again make an unforced error. The answer came quickly enough, with a break and run to take the lead 5-4.

Monica broke and broke hard, causing the 3 ball to leap off the table before sinking into the corner pocket. Her safety attempt on the 2 ball fell short, leaving Ga Young an open shot. While she made the ball, she came up very short on her position for the 3 ball and played a safety, leaving Monica with the cue ball on the end rail and a long straight in shot. She hit it perfectly, but missed the 5 and got a bit of a roll when the cue ball ended up about 3 inches in front of the 7 ball forcing Ga Young to jack up to strike the 5 ball up table. As is the case with many jacked-up cue ball hits, the cue ball struck the 5 far from where she was aiming it and it came around for an open shot for Monica to hit. Monica had to decide if she wanted to shoot at the corner pocket long ways, or into the side, sending the cue ball up table and back down. She opted for the side pocket shot, executing it perfectly for position on the 6. The 7 was near the bottom rail, the 8 just under the side pocket and the 9 at the opposite short rail. She made it appear easy and ran out to tie the match up again, 5 all.

Ga Young had the break going into game 11 but nothing fell for the Little Devil Girl. Monica played a pretty carom off the 1 into the 4 that was sitting in the corner pocket but since she hit the 1 thin, it came off the bottom rail harder than she'd hoped and she had to bank the 1 into the side. Making it look routine, she did just that and continued around the layout. One by one, each ball dropped and before you could say "out", she had reached the hill, up 6-5 and her first lead of the match.

Monica enjoyed the break advantage and pocketed two balls but faced a bit of a dilemma on the 1, the 7 ball was right there with it so gaining position up table for the 2 could have been tricky, but she cut the 1 into the corner and slid the cue ball not only off the 7 but off the 8 that was there too. The next shot saw her gently strike the 2 to the 3 on the bottom rail with the 9 close by, once she pocketed the 3, the 5, 7, 8 & 9 were the only object balls standing between her and her 2<sup>nd</sup> WPBA Title in a row.

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The WPBA wants to thank The Viejas Casino for hosting for the 13<sup>th</sup> year in a row! We look forward to next season. Many thanks to the fans, the players, the shot-clock volunteers from the American Poolplayers Association local League and its' operators, Brian & Jill Frankland. Many thanks to our sponsors for 2009, The American Poolplayers Association, Aramith, Brunswick Billiards, Cuetec Cues, Mueller Recreational, Simonis Cloth, and to our Presenting Sponsor for the 2009 Web Streaming, Pooldawg.com. Many thanks to the crew and staff at TSI Events. We'll see you at the Blue Chip Casino in Michigan City, Indiana, June 17<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup>, 2009.