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Rampre overpowers Fleishman

After easy first set, top-seeded player stops comeback bid

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By JOHN PACKETT
TIMES-DISPATCH STAFF WRITER

STRAIGHT-SETS FINAL: Top-seeded Petra Rampre defeated No. 2 Nataly Fleishman of Norfolk 6-0, 6-4 in an hour and a half at Salisbury Country Club. The first set lasted only 30 minutes, and Rampre yielded just 12 points. Fleishman, who won the tournament in 2005, made the native of Slovenia work harder in the second set.

WHY SHE WON: Rampre, 27, who plays on the women's pro circuit and has been ranked as high as 162nd in the world, overpowered Fleishman with deep ground strokes and was steadier than the former Old Dominion University standout. When Fleishman tried to come in, Rampre usually zinged a passing shot down the line.

MAKING IT INTERESTING: Just when it appeared Rampre was going to roll through the second set after breaking Fleishman for a 2-1 lead, the native of Israel got a service break of her own to tie it. Fleishman, 28, held her serve to take a 3-2 lead and broke Rampre again for 4-all. That was it for the comeback attempt, however, as Rampre broke for 5-4 and served it out.

WHAT'S IT WORTH: Rampre collected a check for \$2,500; Fleishman took home \$1,000. Rampre picked up an extra \$2,000 for sharing the women's and mixed doubles titles, giving her a week's paycheck of \$4,500.

QUOTING: "It took me a while to get into it," said Fleishman, coming back after having a daughter nine months ago. "I just had to start hitting the ball more, hitting the ball better. I played much better [in the second set] and had a lot of opportunities that could have put me in maybe a different position. She plays [on the tour], so I knew it was going to be a tough match coming into it. She's in shape, and she plays all the time. After the long points, I was huffing and puffing. It was very hot."

"I travel about 35 weeks a year, playing prize-money tournaments, and I also do meditation," said Rampre, who is ranked No. 757 on the tour. "I really feel [meditation] has been helping me emotionally. It's a very positive thing. I don't have a sponsor, and it's really tough on the pro circuit if you don't win. So I want to play in these tournaments to make some money if I can. I play my first tournament in the U.S. [at Brandermill Country Club] here 10 years ago, and I get to know a family who lives only 20 minutes from here."

MIXED DOUBLES FINAL: The second-seeded team of Rampre and Oren Motevassel beat the No. 1 duo of Alison Ojeda and David McNamara 6-3, 7-6 (7-4). Rampre and Motevassel split the top prize of \$2,000.

Contact John Packett at (804) 649-6313 or jpacket@timesdispatch.com.

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