

SEREDNI MOVES TO SEMIFINALS

SHE OUSTS DEFENDING CHAMPION TO SET UP MATCH WITH FLEISHMAN

[City Edition]

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In their first three meetings on the court, Chrissie Seredni was unable to handle the blistering ground strokes of Lindsey Wyeth.

So, Chrissie, how much motivation did you have going into the women's semifinals of the SunTrust State Tennis Championships?

"A lot," said the No. 2 seed with a smile after she had dismissed the No. 3 seed and defending champion 6-1, 6-2 yesterday at Raintree Swim and Racquet Club.

"I've beaten her in practice but never in a tournament where it counted. I felt like I should have won [the previous matches], but I didn't," said Seredni, 16, bidding to become the youngest champion since Jessica Steck won the title at 15 in 1993.

This time, there was very little doubt about the outcome from the beginning. Pounding her ground strokes into the corners with authority and unleashing some big first serves, the Richmonder claimed the first five games and never looked back.

"I came into the match thinking I had lost to her last time [State Clay Courts a year ago] because I got a little tight. I played up and down the whole match. This time, I felt like I played even the whole time. I wanted to keep hitting the ball [hard] and not ease up.

"When I got short balls, I tried to come to the net as much as I could. I actually came in more than I usually do, and that made a difference."

Seredni gets another chance for revenge in today's 4:30 p.m. final when she meets top-seeded Nataly Cahana Fleishman of Norfolk.

Fleishman, who defeated Seredni in the final of the Central Virginia Invitational in Lynchburg in June, will be gunning for her second state title (2002) after disposing of fourth-seeded Julie Kaczmarek 6-3, 6-0 in the other semifinal.

Because of rain, the matches were moved inside at Raintree, where the slick surface is considerably faster than the outdoor hard courts.

"That makes a huge, huge difference," Seredni said of the quickness of the court. "I know she doesn't like indoor hard courts, so that helped me some and hurt her. I got a little lucky there. It would have definitely been a closer match if we had played outside. Could have gone either way."

Fleishman, who played No. 1 singles at Old Dominion for the past four years, was never in trouble against Kaczmarek in the cat-and-mouse game. Each tried to move the other around, until an opportunity arose to put away a winner.

A native of Israel, Fleishman produced most of the winners, especially in the second set.

"The thing with her, and we've played before, is she can't really hurt me," said Fleishman, who was married in June. "It all depends on what I do. She is hitting soft, so I know whatever she has I have also. I can put the ball in the court against her."

Kaczmarek saved three set points at 5-1 in the first set and pulled to 5-3 before Fleishman captured the last seven games.

Men's singles play resumes today at 4:30, when top-seeded Daniel Casquero meets No. 4 David Emery of Fairfax and second-seeded Sears Driscoll faces Jose Bernard of Manassas in the semifinals. The final is at 11 a.m. tomorrow.

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS

Women's singles - Semifinals: Nataly Cahana Fleishman d. Julie Kaczmarek 6-3, 6-0; Chrissie Seredni d. Lindsey Wyeth 6-1, 6-2.

Men's doubles - Semifinals: Sean and Scott Steinour d. Sears Driscoll-Garrett Horsley 6-4, 7-6 (9-7); Tom Cain-Carl Clark d. Daniel Casquero-Darryl Wilburn 6-4, 7-6 (7-2). Final at 1 p.m. tomorrow.

Mixed doubles - Semifinals: Margie Walsh-Sean Steinour d. Kaczmarek-Jon Ramthun 6-1, 6-3; Fleishman-Scott Steinour d. Rachel Gale-Joe Cappellino 7-5, 7-5. Final at 7:30 p.m. today.

TODAY'S SCHEDULE

Women's singles - Final: Nataly Cahana Fleishman vs. Chrissie Seredni, 4:30 p.m.

Men's singles - Semifinals: Daniel Casquero vs. David Emery, Jose Bernard vs. Sears Driscoll, 4:30 p.m.

[Illustration]

PHOTO

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Abstract (Document Summary)

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Women's singles - Semifinals: Nataly Cahana Fleishman d. Julie Kaczmarek 6-3, 6-0; Chrissie Seredni d. [Lindsey Wyeth] 6-1, 6-2.

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