

FLEISHMAN COLLECTS ANOTHER CROWN

[City Edition]

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TENNIS STATE INDOOR

If she keeps this up, top-seeded Nataly Fleishman is not going to be welcome at tournaments in the Richmond area.

For the third time this year and the sixth time in the past three years, the head pro at Norfolk Yacht and Country Club came to town and left with the top prize in women's singles. The native of Israel is just too good for the rest of the field.

"They can't stop me [from playing]," said a smiling Fleishman, after disposing of No. 2 seed Bridget Merrick of Arlington 6-3, 6-1 in the final of the SMARTBOX State Indoor Tennis Championships last night at the Country Club of Virginia.

"They can give me the money and I won't come. No, I'll come if they'll let me back in."

Fleishman, 27, gave herself a late birthday present and early Hanukkah gift of \$1,000, then added \$500 more to her check by teaming with Rachel Gale to beat Amy Mitchell and Margie Walsh of Richmond 6-2, 6-1 in the doubles final.

The former Old Dominion University star actually lost a few more games than she did this summer when she captured the state clay and hardcourt titles. But her consistency from the backcourt always seems to prevail on the crucial points.

"I was a little bit rusty because I haven't been able to practice much because of the weather," Fleishman said. "We don't have indoor courts at my club.

"But I have to say that [Merrick] played great and so did Rachel [in the semifinals on Monday]. They give me a good fight. My concentration in the second set [last night] was better, and I played better. If I can pick up myself and not do many mistakes, I always feel like I can win."

Said Merrick, "I thought I played better [than a year ago], but she still has a little bit of an edge over me. She's a little bit faster, and she gets to more balls. I couldn't run down a lot of her balls. Next time I play her, I'm going to train more and do some speed work.

"My timing was on and my shots were there; I think it was my court movement that held me back."

The men's singles final tonight at 5:30 will feature top-seeded Trevor Spracklin of Reston against former Virginia Commonwealth standout and No. 2 Marton Ott. Spracklin topped No. 3 Sean Steinour 6-2, 3-6, 6-1, and Ott edged former VCU teammate, fourth-seeded Francesc Lleal 7-5, 6-4.

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS

Women's singles final: Nataly Fleishman d. Bridget Merrick 6-3, 6-1.

Women's doubles final: Fleishman-Rachel Gale d. Amy Mitchell- Margie Walsh 6-2, 6-1.

Men's singles semifinals: Trevor Spracklin d. Sean Steinour 6-2, 3-6, 6-1; Marton Ott d. Francesc Lleal 7-5, 6-4.

Men's doubles quarterfinals: Clark-Spracklin d. Bostic-Makepeace 6-0, 6-4; Einwick-Oakes d. Hopke-Morgan 7-6, 6-7, 6-3; Greene-Ott d. Chase-Rizza 6-2, 2-6, 6-3; Steinour-Steinour d. Beale-Blair 6-3, 6-4. Semifinals: Clark-Spracklin d. Einwick-Oakes 6-2, 6-2; Greene- Ott d. Steinour-Steinour 3-6, 6-3, 6-3.

[Illustration]

Photo

Credit: Times-Dispatch Staff Writer

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