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HONG KONG SQUASH OPEN 2007

二〇〇七國泰航空香港壁球公開賽

Quarter-Finals:

Top men through to the Plaza as Vicky rocks Rachael ...

In yesterday's quarter-finals at the Hong Kong Squash Centre the top four men's seeds all earned their places in today's semi-finals.

Number one seed and defending champion Amr Shabana came from a game down to beat fellow-Egyptian Wael El Hindi, and he will meet the reigning world champion David Palmer, after the Australian continued his fine run of form, beating another Egyptian, Karim Darwish, in straight games.

The other semi-final will be an all-French affair. Thierry Lincou, the fourth seed, replayed his 2004 world open final with England's Lee Beachill, and this time came out the winner in three games.

Gregory Gaultier came through a thriller against another Englishman, Nick Matthew, squeezing home in a deciding fifth game which perfectly fitted the "nothing in it" cliché.



The French pair recently contested the prestigious British Open final which Gaultier won, but only one of them can make the final here ...

In the women's event too the defending champion and top seed is through to the semis. Malaysian marvel Nicol David has looked in fine form since the loss of her world title last month in Madrid, and England's Jenny Duncalf couldn't match her in the quarters.

Vicky Botwright provided the only English success yesterday, with a stunning win over new world champion Rachael Grinham. Vicky was in top form and Rachael had no answer as Vicky reached the semi-finals for the second consecutive year.



Natalie Grinham, the triple commonwealth games gold medallist, today. Natalie made quick work of her young Egyptian opponent Omneya Abdel Kawy in the quarters.

Second seed Natalie will face Natalie Grainger, the American who beat her in last week's Qatar Classic, and who brushed aside Englishwoman Alison Waters to reach the semis.

Men's Quarter-Finals

- [1] Amr Shabana (Egy) bt [8] Wael El Hindi (Egy) 7/11, 11/7, 11/8, 11/7 (50m)
- [3] David Palmer (Aus) bt [5] Karim Darwish (Egy) 11/4, 11/7, 11/6 (38m)
- [4] Thierry Lincou (Fra) bt [7] Lee Beachill (Eng) 11/8, 11/9, 11/4 (42m)
- [2] Gregory Gaultier (Fra) bt [6] Nick Matthew (Eng) 8/11, 11/4, 8/11, 11/2, 12/10 (80m)

Women's Quarter-Finals:

- [1] Nicol David (Mas) bt [11] Jenny Duncalf (Eng) 9/3, 9/2, 9/2 (24m)
- [6] Vicky Botwright (Eng) bt [3] Rachael Grinham (Aus) 5/9, 9/6, 10/9, 9/4 (58m)
- [5] Natalie Grainger (Usa) bt [13] Alison Waters (Eng) 9/5, 9/6, 9/5 (32m)
- [2] Natalie Grinham (Aus) bt [7] Omneya Abdel Kawy (Egy) 9/0, 9/3, 9/2 (26m)

SEMI-FINALS:

- 15.50 Amr Shabana v David Palmer
- 16.45 Nicol David v Vicky Botwright
- 17.30 Natalie Grinham v Natalie Grainger
- 18.15 Gregory Gaultier v Thierry Lincou



"I actually enjoy playing Rachael, even when I lose to her, so I go on and usually end up playing well.

"I managed to stick to my gameplan today, unlike last week in Qatar. All her drops were going in that time but they were a bit looser today and I made sure I was moving in to pick them up. I was lobbing a lot in Qatar too, but it was just working better today, and I was able to pick off anything loose."

Vicky Botwright

"It's 3/2 every time with Nick, and that's three times in a row I've won a really close fifth game. The fifth was an epic, every rally was hard and it went point for point. He had match ball this time, but I was lucky he opened up the court and gave me the opportunity to get back, but there was no difference there, no difference at all ..."



Gregory Gaultier