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二〇〇七國泰航空香港壁球公開賽



Top seeds to contest finals as Shabana & David go for hat-tricks

In yesterday's semi-finals at the Hollywood Plaza in Diamond Hill it was the top seeds in both men's and women's events who won through to today's finals.



World number one Nicol David recovered from a game down to end the giant-killing run of Vicky Botwright, who simple ran out of steam towards the end of their match.



The defending champion will face world number two Natalie Grinham, who turned in a sparkling performance against Natalie Grainger, reversing last week's result in Qatar.

Nicol and Natalie have contested the bulk of the major finals over the last year or so, with some memorable matches between the pair, so today's crowd is in for a treat ...

The men's final will also see the world number one and defending champion in the final. Amr Shabana looked to be cruising to victory against David Palmer, but the reigning world champion made a real fight of it from the middle of the third game before finally succumbing to the in-form Egyptian.



Standing in the way of Shabana's bid for three Hong Kong titles in a row will be Gregory Gaultier, who yesterday repeated his British Open final victor over fellow-Frenchman Thierry Lincou. Gaultier holds a winning record over Shabana, but when they met in last week's Qatar Classic final it was the Egyptian who triumphed.

SEMI-FINALS:

- [1] Nicol David (Mas) bt [6] Vicky Botwright (Eng)
3/9, 9/3, 9/5, 9/0 (53m)
- [2] Natalie Grinham (Aus) bt [5] Natalie Grainger (Usa)
9/5, 9/3, 9/0 (27m)
- [1] Amr Shabana (Egy) bt [3] David Palmer (Aus)
11/5, 11/5, 10/12, 13/11 (67m)
- [2] Gregory Gaultier (Fra) bt [4] Thierry Lincou (Fra)
9/11, 11/7, 13/11, 11/9 (70m)

THE FINALS:

- 15.50 [1] Nicol David (Mas) v [2] Natalie Grinham (Aus)
- 16.45 [1] Amr Shabana (Egy) v [2] Gregory Gaultier (Fra)



"I'm just thrilled to be back on the glass court, and all the hype of being in the Plaza again. It's so nice to play in Hong Kong, it has that nice Asian feeling, almost like playing at home in Malaysia."

Nicol David

"Tomorrow I'm just going to go out there and do my best. I love being on the glass court, we're all used to them, but the crowds and atmosphere her is really fantastic ..."



Natalie Grinham



"I've been coming to Hong Kong since I was 15 or 16, I never miss the tournament, I love it here. This is an amazing venue too, all tournaments should be in the public view like this, it's really good to have so many people watching and getting involved."

Amr Shabana



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