

Schremmer, Filler to square off in Amateur finals; defending champion Haywood, Connelly to vie for Senior Title

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By Gary Curreri

While the weather conditions may have changed every day, one thing has remained consistent in the 91st annual Ione D. Jones/Doherty Women's Amateur Championship at the Coral Ridge Country Club in Fort Lauderdale.

The top two seeds, medalist Scarlett Schremmer (Birmingham, Alabama) and second-seeded Maisie Filler (Palm Beach Gardens) will tangle for the Amateur championship on Friday at 8:30 a.m.

In the 38th annual Ione D. Jones/Doherty Senior Women's Amateur division, defending champion Shelly Haywood (Laguna Woods, California) will try and stave off the challenge of Tara Connelly (Marion, MA) when they tee off at 8:15 a.m.

Schremmer is hoping to go wire to wire in the event after taking down Boca Raton's Kayla Bryant, 16, a sophomore at FAU High in Boca Raton, 2&1 in her semifinal match.

"It was a hard-fought match," Schremmer, who takes online classes with Laurel Springs. "We were just going back and forth all day. It was honestly extremely exhausting with the weather today."

Schremmer captured the seventh (birdie) and ninth holes (par) to go 2-up. Bryant won 12 and 14 with pars to square the match before Schremmer won 15 and 16 to close out the match.

"I didn't exactly have my 'A' game, but neither did Kayla," Schremmer said. "I would make a putt and she would make it right on top of me. We both had a lot of 12 to 15-foot putts to win holes. I'm proud of myself, I never got down all day. I haven't been down in a match all week. At the end of the day, I am playing good golf."

Bryant said she missed a few opportunities today.

"Overall, I played pretty well," said Bryant, who was coming off a win at the Junior Orange Bowl International golf tournament a week ago. "Scarlett played

well. We were pretty much following each other around the course. She made some great birdies towards the end. She earned it.”

Filler, 22, a senior at the University of Florida, edged Anna Ritter (New Albany, OH) in the other semifinal. This will be the first meeting with Schremmer.

“It was a good match, we went all the way to 17,” Filler said. “She made some good par putts to keep herself going.”

Filler said she has had to adjust to the different weather conditions each day. The first day was a little breezy; Tuesday there were wind gusts of up to 40-miles-per hour; Wednesday was picture perfect and Thursday was rainy.

“You definitely have to be adaptable,” she said. “I am used to that. You can’t control it. You have to ignore it.”

“I just have to play well tomorrow, that’s what it comes down to,” Filler said of what it would take to win. “That’s what it comes down to. I have been pretty consistent this week. I’m excited. I like competition and I love to win.”

The senior women had to play two matches on Thursday to try and advance to the championships. Haywood had arrived at the course and was warming up until she learned her opponent Jayne Pardus (Mount Pleasant, SC) withdrew with the flu.

Haywood then defeated Terrill Samuel (Boynton Beach) in their semifinal, 3&2. Samuel defeated 2022 Doherty Senior Champion Kim Keyer-Scott (Estero) in her quarterfinal, 6&4.

“I won the first two holes and then just really didn’t look back,” Haywood said. “I hit it great. I mean my ball striking was fantastic. I made one bad swing on 15 and then hit a shot to within three feet on 16 and she gave me the hole. I hit every green except for 15. I played really well.”

She said her putting has improved every day this week and added her ball striking has been there all week.

“I don’t think not playing the quarterfinal match neither helped, not hurt,” Haywood said. “I didn’t get a chance to see all the hole locations, so I walked the 18 and made notes because they weren’t changing the hole locations. I feel that preparation helped me a lot. I didn’t miss a fairway and I missed one green. Terrill is an amazing player and a great competitor. She was just a joy to play with.”

Connelly, who turns 51 next week, will be playing in her first final at the Doherty after topping Mary Jane Hiestand (Naples) in the quarterfinals, 6&5 and then Kimbra Benson (Pinehurst, NC) 6&4 in the semifinals.

Connelly is a two-time USGA Mid-Am semifinalist, a Florida Stroke play and Florida Mid-Am champion. She's also in the Massachusetts Golf Hall of Fame.

"The first match was good," Connelly of her win over Hiestand. "I rolled my putter much better today. That helped and that took a lot of pressure of the ball striking today."

In her semifinal match, she chipped in from 18-feet away to win 6&4.

"That was nice," she said. "It is what you dream about. It would be great to win this at the end of my 50th year. I had a pretty decent year after being out all of 2022 with rotator cuff surgery."

Weidig wins Amateur First Flight

Scarlet Weidig (Bozeman, MT) rolled to a 6&4 win over Coral Springs' Sophia Quinones in the Amateur First Flight on Thursday afternoon. It was her second time playing in the tournament.

"I really enjoyed it last year, so I knew I wanted to come back again," Weidig said. "It's a very nice event to start off the spring season. My first round wasn't quite as I wanted it to be, but that's golf. Sometimes things that you never thought would happen and that's it. I was lucky enough to still be able to keep playing."

"The course was in great shape, the greens were fast and that's my favorite way to play," she continued. "I made a lot of up and downs and long putts for birdie that allowed me to get the win. I want to thank everyone that helped in the event and the course staff that has the course in such amazing conditions."

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