

## **Defending amateur champion Miller ousted, Haywood rolls on**

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By Gary Curreri

For the second consecutive day, an upset prevailed and sent the defending amateur champion home.

Palm Beach Gardens' Maisie Filler stunned defending champion Morgan Miller (Cedar Park, Texas) 4&3 in the quarterfinals of the 91<sup>st</sup> annual Ione D. Jones/Doherty Women's Amateur Championship on Wednesday morning at the Coral Ridge Country Club.

"It was a good match. I played steady the whole day," Filler said. "I played it one at a time and based my strategy off what she did. I just have to go out there and beat that person on each hole and not worry about who she is. Everyone is good here.

"My putting has been pretty good. It's been really steady," said Filler, a sophomore at the University of Florida. Filler won the fourth hole and then rolled through 7, 8, and 9 to open up a 4-up lead at the turn. "At that point, it was just about keeping the pressure on and making her have to make birdies."

The last time Filler played in the Doherty; she reached the quarterfinals in 2018 before bowing out to eventual champion Alexa Pano.

"I struggled today," said Miller, a University of Colorado sophomore. "I didn't hit many greens today and when I did, it wasn't even close. I was making pars and bogies all day. I only had one birdie all day and that isn't helpful in match play."

Miller made the turn five down and tried to settle herself down.

"I told myself it is match play and anything can happen," Miller said. "I just needed to stick it close and make a putt, but my putts weren't dropping at all. She made clutch putts on 10, 11, and 12 to really keep it going.

"There were chances I could have gotten today, but she played really well," Miller added. "I'm disappointed. I didn't play well, and she did. The

chipping and tee game were great. I wish I had putted better, and I also lacked in iron play.”

Top-seed and amateur medalist Scarlett Schremmer (Birmingham, Alabama) made quick work of Delray Beach’s Gabriel Albert in their quarterfinal match, 6&5.

Schremmer said the victory was bittersweet since she and Albert are good friends.

“It stinks to beat someone you are friends with,” Schremmer said. “It’s hard because she is someone you like so much, but I am very competitive and have a competitive spirit.

“I just try and keep my routines and processes,” she continued, “I was very hot on the front nine and made like five or six birdies. On 10, I made one silly mistake and that cost me the hole. I was 6-up at that point and it was important for me to keep doing my thing and try and hit good shots.”

Albert, a junior at St. Andrew’s School in Boca Raton, said she was pleased overall with her performance during the week. Albert lost the first three holes and was down four shots at the turn.

“I have never played against her in match play,” Albert said. “We have played together in stroke play. It was fun and exciting to play against a friend and it was also a little bit difficult because I have never played against someone that I am good friends with.”

“She made a 30-footer on the first hole and there wasn’t much I could do,” Albert said. “She played great, and I didn’t play so well.”

With the victory Schremmer, 17, advances to Thursday’s semifinal against Boca Raton’s Kayla Bryant, also 17.

Bryant, a sophomore at FAU High, also won in decisive fashion, winning 7&5 over Julia Zigrossi (Spencerport, NY). She is coming off an impressive win in the Junior Orange Bowl International golf tournament.

“I felt I played very solid,” Bryant said. “I was hitting a lot of greens and hitting it closer to the hole. A few more putts were dropping, so that was good.

"I made a couple of mistakes on the first two holes, but after that, I was pretty much in cruise control," said Bryant, who was 3-up at the turn. "I am trying to stay calm in all situations, good or bad. It would mean a lot to win this."

Anna Ritter (New Albany, Ohio) earned the fourth spot in the Amateur semifinals with a 1-up (19th hole win) over Sydney Grimes (Miami). Ritter is a sophomore at the University of Illinois and has surpassed her previous best in last year's tournament,

"Today's match was back and forth all day," said Ritter, who rallied from one shot down after the first nine holes and then forced a playoff. "On the back nine, I got it to three up and gave a few shots back towards the end. We wound up going to a playoff hole and I finished out strong."

On the 19<sup>th</sup> hole, Ritter, and Grimes each hit good drives. She hit a 6-iron towards the back of the green and then lagged a putt to within 5 feet and made the putt for par. Grimes' second shot was a wood that flew the green, and her chip landed 15 feet away and she missed the tying putt."

"It would be really cool to win this," Ritter said. "This tournament is amazing, that's why I came back. I really like the course and the staff is great."

Mary Jane Hiestand (Naples) needed an extra playoff hole for the second time in two days to advance in the Ione D. Jones/Doherty Senior Women's Amateur division. Hiestand, the 2011 Senior Doherty champion, topped Suzi Spotleson (Canton, Ohio) 1-up (19 holes). This time she battled back from being 3-down early in the match. She downed last year's Doherty senior runner-up Judith Kyrinis (Thornhill, Canada) yesterday.

"I putted poorly today and actually got away with a match that I deserved to lose," Hiestand said. "I three putted 18 to go to the 19th and then we both made a mess of the 19th but my mess (double bogey) was better than hers (triple).

"I was three down early and came back to tie the match through 8 then gave away 9 to go one down," she continued. "I tied 10 with a three-putt, so I was one down through 10, won 11 then three putted 12 back to one down. Then she hit it in the water on 15 and I won 17 with a par to go one up into 18>"

Meanwhile, defending senior champion Shelly Haywood made easy work of Sarah LeBrun Ingram (Nashville, Tenn.), 7&5. LeBrun Ingram was the USGA Amateur Championship runner-up in 1993 and went on to capture the USGA Mid-Am championships in 1991, 1993, and 1994.

Haywood opened up by winning the first hole and said she didn't make a bad swing until the seventh hole. She was 3-up at that point and lost the hole. She then proceeded to win four of the next five holes to blow the match open.

"Sarah is a great player with a great pedigree, and I just knew if I played my game and hit greens and didn't short-side myself, I would be okay," Haywood said. "If you short side yourself in these bunkers it is almost an automatic bogey."

"I just tried to hit every green today and I only missed three greens and I got it up and down two of three times today," she continued. "Today with the day being more favorable conditions, I just had to hit good golf shots, especially against Sarah because I know she is a great putter and has a great short game."

Kim Keyer-Scott (Estero), the 2022 Doherty Senior Champion, topped Wendi Christiansen (Coral Springs), 3&1 to move into her semifinal. She will face Terrill Samuel (Boynton Beach) who downed Nancy Beck (Dallas, TX), 6&5. Samuel finished runner-up three times (2017, 2018, 2019) in the Doherty.

In another division, Scarlett Weidig (Bozeman, MT) will face Sophia Quinones (Coral Springs) for the Amateur First Flight title on Thursday at 9:28 a.m. Weidig represented Costa Rica in the 2023 World Amateur Team Championships in France.

"The club is excited and proud to continue its rich tradition in hosting for the last 68 years," said Coral Ridge Director of Golf Scott Fox. "The course is in great condition and the players have been in for a real treat."

"These Championships draw some of the most talented female golfers around the world," Fox added. "Our field this week, many have storied golf careers and resumes...their accomplishments are many and quite impressive."

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