

JONES/DOHERTY WOMEN'S AMATEUR CHAMPIONSHIP



COURTESY

Defending Doherty Women's Amateur division champion Alexa Pano, 13, of Lake Worth, makes a short birdie on the seventh hole in her match against Courtney McKim.

Amateur, Senior defending champs both advance

By Staff and event reports

The defending Amateur and Senior division champions each went the distance in Wednesday's quarterfinal matches at the 86th Ione D. Jones/Doherty Women's Amateur Championship at Coral Ridge Country Club.

Playing her first competitive round of this tournament, Alexa Pano sank a 4-foot par putt to halve the 18th hole and defeat Courtney McKim 1 up. An hour later, reigning senior champ Lisa Schlesinger, who never led until the 17th hole, halved the 18th for a 1 up victory over Susan West.

"It was a really tough match," said Pano, 13, of Lake Worth, who was exempt from Monday's qualifying round and had a bye for Tuesday's opening round of match play Fort Lauderdale. "It was really back and forth."

McKim, 27, of Raleigh, N.C., took a 1-up lead when she got up and down for par on the first hole and Pano three-putted from 40 feet. Pano squared the match on the next hole when she got up and down from a green-side bunker, and McKim bogeyed.

The match remained all square until Pano sank a 5-foot putt for birdie on the par-5 seventh. McKim evened the match when she got up and down after missing the par-3 eighth green to the right and Pano, whose tee shot rolled off the back of the green, missed her par putt.

Pano birdied the par-5 ninth to regain the lead.

Pano went 2 up on McKim when she birdied the par-3 12th from five feet.

She held that lead until the par-3 16th. Both players hit their tee shots in bunkers, but McKim, whose ball was buried, blasted to a foot from the pin to win the hole with a par. After McKim got up and down to halve the 17th, Pano two-putted from 35 feet to halve the 18th and win the match.

The other top seeds in the Amateur division did not fare as well as Pano. Second seed Haeley Wotnosky of Wake Forest, N.C., lost 1 up to Noelle Maertz of Clark, N.J. Third-seeded Georgia Oboh of Riviera Beach lost 3 and 2 to Meghan Stasi of Oakland Park. And fourth-seeded Marie Arnoux of Miami lost 4 and 2 to Lexi Harkins of Crystal Lake, Ill. Harkins plays Pano in the semifinals starting at 8:48 a.m. Thursday, followed by Maertz and Stasi at 8:56.

Stasi, 39, the 2012 Doherty champ and a four-time U.S. Women's Mid-Amateur champion, was two down after three holes to the 17-year-old Oboh, but won the next four holes with pars and then won the ninth to go 3 up at the turn.

Schlesinger plays Therese Quinn of Jacksonville, a 5-and-4 winner over Marilyn Hardy of Magnolia, Texas, at 8:32. Senior medalist Sylvie Van Molle of France defeated Beatriz de Arenas of Guatemala 4 and 2. She plays 2017 finalist Terrill Samuel of Toronto, who beat Diane Lang of Weston, 5 and 4, at 8:40.