



THE 2015 UNITED STATES COURT TENNIS OPEN CHAMPIONSHIPS

TOURNAMENT UPDATE – THE FIRST ROUND, FEB. 19, 2015



From the looks of the schedule, US Open observers expected a lighter match day. The players would have none of that. Not one match was a straight three-setter.

First up were Leon Smart and Jeremy Wintersteen vs. Ryan Carey and Jeff Horine. Leon found himself outnumbered by the three other, amateur players. Smart and Wintersteen stormed through the first set 6-1 and did nearly the same in the second set, winning it 6-3. Carey and Horine stemmed the tide in the third, taking it 4-6. Smart

and Wintersteen got back on track however and closed it out at 6-1. It was a fun match to watch on the streaming video during lunch break.

The next match evened up the pro vs. amateur balance. Tuxedo's Josh Dodgson and New York's Barney Tanfield took on a perennial amateur T&R team: Alex Spence and Garrett Gates. The T&R boys took no prisoners in the first set, winning it 6-5. In the second set, the pros loosened up but also increased the pressure on the less seasoned amateurs, taking it 6-3. Spence and

Gates redoubled their efforts in the third set. Their efforts got them to 5-5 in the third, up 40-15. The pros defended the two set points to tie it up and tidily took the next two points as well to end the set. The amateurs got a bit tired and hit some loose shots in the fourth set; Tanfield and Dodgson took advantage and the set 6-1. The T&R boy should be proud of themselves.

The third match of the day was an all pro affair. Newport's Rich Smith and Josh Bainton, the sixth seeds, played the unseeded team of Matt Ronaldson

and Claire Fahey. I don't think anyone expected a five-setter out of this match up, but that's what they got. Fahey and Ronaldson took the first set 6-3. The Newporters righted the ship by bageling their opponents in the second set. They kept the ship sailing, taking the third set as well: 6-3. Claire and Matty started playing a bit more aggressively, with Matty hitting a few more straight forces and Claire defending her own share of forces. At this point, the crowd went to refresh their drinks and get some more sustenance, as it was already 8 o'clock. The fifth set was more of the same competitive tennis, but Claire and Matty hit a few less errors and took it 6-4 and thus the match.

The final match went off about two hours late, after the previous barn burner. T&R's Tony Hollins and his young partner, Neil Mackenzie has perhaps warmed up a bit too early, as they lost their first set 6-3 to the fifth seeded pair of veteran Mike Gooding and relative newcomer Darren Long. In the second set, Tony and Neil began to sync up a bit better and took it 6-4. They remained steady and took the third set, as well, same score. Tony and Neil must have

sensed the moment, which had grown quite late. There were drunken revelers in the dedans cheering our Tony on. The hometown boy and his new partner put the pedal down, didn't look back, and took the last set 6-3, upsetting the fifth seeds. This intense match was a great way to end the day.

A special thanks goes to the Tennis & Racquet Club's Board of Governors, who sponsored an excellent opening cocktail party. The dedans and galleries and the Hamlen Room must have seen nearly a hundred people come through and watch some of the night's tennis. These social events are crucial to exposing more people to the game. Happily, the T&R membership is not known for skipping any parties.