

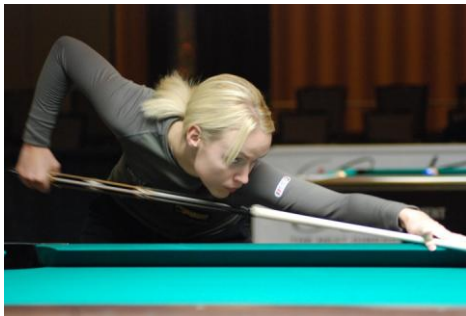


WPBA Great Lakes Classic

The Finals

June 21, 2009 – Michigan City, Indiana

Photos and story by Anne Craig – WPBA



Jasmin Ouschan

vs.



Kelly Fisher

As several of the WPBA Sponsors looked on with the capacity crowd at the Blue Chip Casino, Kelly Fisher and Jasmin Ouschan stepped up for the lag in the finals of the 2009 WPBA Great Lakes Classic. Both had won events last year, and were looking to win their first title of the new season. If Kelly won this event, she would vault back into the #1 position by herself. If she came in second, she would be tied for 1st place with Ga Young Kim. If Jasmin were to win, she'd tie for 2nd along with Xiaoting Pan and Monica Webb.

Jasmin won the lag and broke, but found herself embroiled in a safety battle with Kelly Fisher on several of the balls in the rack including the 7. Kelly stuck Jasmin directly behind the 9 but Jasmin was able to kick one side rail, leaving the 7 ball at the foot of the table and the cue ball near the 1st spot by the corner pocket. She attempted to cut the ball, missed but got lucky and left Jasmin hooked, the 7 ball having come to rest behind the 9. Jasmin kicked from the back rail, and the two kept going back and forth until finally Jasmin gained the upper hand and finished out the rack to win the first game of the match.

Kelly broke in game 2 but failed to pocket a ball. Jasmin had a touchy thin cut on the one and the crowd applauded as she made it with positing for the 2/9 combination. Just like that, she earned her 2nd game in just minutes of play to go up 2-0 and into game 3 with the break advantage. She pocketed the 3 ball, but the one proved unmake-able and she chose to play a great safety, striking the cue ball behind the 7 forcing Kelly to kick. She missed entirely giving Jasmin ball in hand, but Jasmin failed to take advantage of the opportunity and missed the 6 ball. As luck would have it, she didn't leave Kelly an open shot so Kelly sent the 6 ball to the side rail behind the 7. Jasmin could see enough of the ball to play a great cross bank to the side pocket and left herself straight in on the 7. She drew back the cue ball for the 8, giving herself an out and taking a 3-0 lead.

Kelly broke but failed to pocket a ball and Jasmin made a pretty shot on the 1 with position for the 2. She wasn't so perfect from the 3 to the four, though and was forced to play a safe. Her attempt failed and Kelly had an open shot to run out and post her first game of this final match, down 1-3.

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Jasmin looked to fare better in game 5 as she had the break, but nothing fell for her. Luckily for her, several of the balls clustered around each other, preventing an easy run-out. Kelly made a beautiful cut shot on the one ball and tapped the 2 ball into a makeable position on the table. The crowd gasped as she undercut the 2, leaving Jasmin a wide open shot. The three barely cleared the 5 ball while the 4 was wide open in the side. Jasmin successfully navigated through all of these issues until she found herself straight in on the 6. Without missing a beat she force followed the cue ball (cheating the very tight pockets) down-table for great position on the 7, to the 8 and finally the 9 to retake a 3 game lead, 4-1.

Kelly broke and made a ball but her safety attempt came up short. Jasmin made a thin cut on the one, sending her cue ball up-table and snookering herself behind the 9 for the 2 ball. She jumped, struck the 2 and left Kelly with a side pocket cut shot. Kelly quickly came to the table and made short work of the rack, now facing a 2 game deficit instead of 3, down 2-4. Jasmin stepped up to break in game 7, and after pocketing a ball on the break, had a monster cluster to contend with as the 2, 6, 7 and 9 ball were all tied up on the side rail by the corner pocket. It was ugly! However, Jasmin calmly played the 2/7 carom, breaking the 2 away from the 6 and 9, giving herself the opportunity to run out and retake the 3 game lead. Kelly looked on without any expression as Jasmin ran out, up 5-2.

Much to Kelly's chagrin, she scratched on the break. Jasmin played a great position shot from the 1 to the 2 ball to get in line and run out another rack. As Kelly crossed her arms in obvious frustration, Jasmin came around from the 2 to the 3, and from the 3 to the 5 squeezing between the 7/8 balls. Steve called out "10" and Jasmin took her extension on the 6 ball as she carefully thought out how she'd get position to the 7. Pocketing the 6 in the side and coming off the side rail, she was perfect on the 7, the 8 and the 9 to reach the hill, 6-2. It appeared as though Jasmin was putting on a clinic for all to see, including Kelly Fisher.

Jasmin continued on in game 9 with the break and pocketed 2 balls but found herself without a pocket for the one ball. She played safety and Kelly fired back with one of her own, starting a safety exchange. Jasmin slow rolled the cue ball, barely kissing the one, then onto the rail as Kelly came back to the table smiling at the great shot. The two competitors continued on with the safety battle of wits, which ended when Jasmin went for a bank shot into the side pocket. She barely missed, leaving Kelly a very thin cut into the corner pocket. She came up short and Jasmin had an open shot to the one ball. However, she still would face the 3 and 4 ball tied up near the side rail. Eyeing the shot, she played a beautiful throw/combination, pocketing the four and leaving perfect shape back on the 3 ball. With only four balls left on the table between her and victory, Jasmin strode 'round the "Zanzibar" table with confidence, and thus she won her first event of 2009! Congratulations to both competitors for a fantastic event.

Thanks to the Blue Chip Casino for their wonderful hospitality. Many thanks to all our APA Shot Clock volunteers for their dedication and staying so late every night! As always, many thanks to our sponsor's, Aramith Balls, The American Poolplayers Association, Brunswick, Cuetec Cues, Mueller Recreational and Poldawg.com. We'll see you in Norman, Oklahoma at the Riverwind Casino for the 2009 WPBA US Open 9 Ball Championship's.