

# Mraz gives notice that her time is near

By DAVID WINER  
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Mississauga's Monica Mraz served notice on Friday that her future within the ranks of the upper echelon of women's tennis in Canada is near.

The 20-year-old southpaw out of Duke University gave defending SunLife Nationals champion and No. 2 seed Rene Simpson Alter all she could handle in a one-hour, forty minute match before bowing

out 6-4, 6-4 in one of two ladies semi-finals at Mississauga's Ontario Racquet Club.

As was expected, Simpson will now face No. 1 seed Patricia Hy today (Saturday) in a rematch of last year's final. Hy downed No. 3 seed Maureen Drake 6-0, 6-4.

After playing Simpson even throughout the first set except for being broken on her first serve, Mraz continued to turn the screws on Simpson in the second set taking

a commanding 3-0 lead. But instead of the score demoralizing Simpson, it had an opposite affect as Mraz' accurate shots down the line and her first services deserted her.

"It was a four game spurt — it wasn't anything major," said Mraz, who's best previous finish was 1990 when she reached the quarter-finals. "At 4-3 I started to play good tennis, but I let up at 3-0. I eased up a bit and I wasn't getting any good first services."

While Mraz suggested she wasn't exhausted from the 45 degree on court temperature, she did admit "my muscles may have gotten tired."

But Mraz had no excuses.

"I never gave up, she's just a bet-

ter player.

"It's the best I've ever done," added Mraz, who defeated No. 4 seed Caroline Delisle 6-4, 6-3 Thursday. "I think I played well in the tournament and I have no regrets. I have to go for those (winning) shots more, otherwise I can't win. It's the next level I have to take it to."

And according to Mraz the third year Economics Major is well on her way to another plateau.

"I'm hitting volleys I wouldn't have two years ago."

Mraz expects her improved play

to continue and perhaps lead to a final berth next year.

"If not, than the year after."

On the men's side, Chris Pridham survived a two-hour, fifty-five minute marathon downing No. 7 seed Brian Gyetko 6-4, 5-7, 7-6 (9-7). The No. 1 seed will play Sebastien Lareau or Daniel Nestor in one semi-final while No. 5 seed Martin Laurendeau will meet No. 2 seed Andrew Sznajder in the other. Sznajder beat Martin Wostenholme 6-3, 7-6 (7-5) and Laurendeau bested Albert Chang 7-5, 3-6, 7-5.

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