

FAWITT Knockout Round - Update 10 - Inside FAWITT

"What's going on with FAWITT?" asked one curious young fan, who subscribes to the FAWITT updates. "As far as I know, it's still going strong," his mother said to him. "Have you been looking on the website – FAWITT.com for updates? I hear all the updates are now posted there as well!"

This conversation has echoed through thousands of households over the last week and a half as FAWITT fans worldwide continue to wonder, "What's the latest with FAWITT? Why have there been no updates? Why hasn't anyone been playing?"

In Tier 1, FAWITT players have been hurting. The grind of Group Play coupled with the intensity of the first round matchups left many players feeling the pain. Let's bring in FAWITT injury correspondent, Stephania Bell, who has updates on a number of these injuries.

Stephania:

"We'll start in the top left of the bracket, where Rackman seems to be doing as well as he can at this time of the season, but Shoshan is really feeling the wear and tear on his body. When I spoke to him earlier today, he told me he was still recovering from the grueling match with Burger but should be ready to go next week. The bottom left may as well double as an infirmary, with Rafa's shoulder hurting and his doctors recommending surgery. He will do his best to gut out his match next week as well, but it's hard to win without a serve. Unless, that is, your opponent is Howie Hershkovich who may not be able to run because of his ailing knee. That match is, quite literally, going to be a war of attrition. In the top right, Fruchter is dealing with a severe wrist situation he sustained over the weekend putting in some extra time for his match against Markfeld. It remains to be seen what kind of shape he will be in, and how he will be able to sustain the long rallies he is accustomed to without a strong right wrist. He will be meeting with his team and a wrist specialist this afternoon. Markfeld should be good to go. Finally, in the bottom right, Schulman's back has been acting up again. He saw his doctor who gave him another cortisone, and he claims he's feeling better. Barring any unforeseen setbacks, he should be ready to continue his title defense next week against a relatively healthy Mishkoff."

Thanks Stephania.

There were a few matches over the last 11 days or so that are worth reporting on. The first was one of two final first round Tier 3 matches; this one between Yossi Reich and Dovi Singer. In a rematch of last year's Knockout round won by Reich in two hotly contested sets, Reich went up 5-3 in the first set but could not close it out. Singer clawed his way back, forcing a first set tie breaker. Singer would take the early lead in the tiebreak, only to let that lead slip away. The First Reich set victory was sealed with a 7-3 score. "I thought I'd have the momentum after coming back," said Singer. Despite his length and 7 foot 6 wingspan, Singer could not seem to

topple the mighty Reich regime in the second set either. Singer did go up 3-1 to start the second set, but the Second Reich set victory would be solidified shortly later by a score of 6-4. "That's a long drive back to Vacation Village," said Reich. "Easier to do it when you've just won." Reich will take on Tzvi Plawes of the Plawes 5, in the next round.



Reich and Singer Post match (Photo Credit: Yossi Reich)

Moving to Tier 4, where Adam Okun took on a very challenging opponent in Melich Ershowsky in the Quarterfinals. Ershowsky's ground strokes were solid early on, forcing Okun into very difficult shots, as he jumped out to an early lead. But Okun is a former Tier 2 Finalist, and there is no quit in him. Attacking the net with zeal and zane, Okun would cause Ershowsky to begin to unravel. Okun took the first set 6-4. "I was lucky to get that first set," said Okun. "Really set me up for the next one." In the next set, Okun was able to do more of the same, once again claiming a 6-4 victory en route to a showdown with Yehuda Williams in the next round. Ershowsky was very complimentary after the match. "He played well. I could have done more. But he played well." Okun was just focused on himself. "I'm like a freight train out there. You better get out of my way or I'm gonna run you over. Next stop: Yehuda "Serena" Williams." Let the bulletin board material begin.

Finally, prognosticators had the Feit/Fried matchup as one of the premier matchups in the Tier 2 Quarterfinals. But the first round upset of Feit by Yosef Siegel spoiled that dream matchup and pitted the former Tier 3 champion against another former Tier 2 champion in Yitzi Fried. Fried jumped out to the lead early 2-0 before Siegel was able to even it at 3-3. Fried once again took a 2 game advantage with his aggressive net play, but Siegel closed the gap to 5-4. "He absolutely does not give up," said Fried. "He is a real fighter." Fried took the next game and the first set 6-4. The second set saw more of the same. Fried went up early only to see Siegel fight his way back to 4-3 Fried. "He absolutely does not give up, "said Fried. "He is a real fighter." Siegel's cinderella run, however, would end here as he dropped the next two games and the set 6-3. "I left it all out there. I am proud of my accomplishments in this year's Tournament. This is something for me to build on next year. "He absolutely does not give up, "said Fried. "He is a real fighter." Fried will take on the winner of Ian Glastein and Eric Pollak in the Tier 2 Semi Finals.