

## Mary's Redemption

What a difference a day makes! Mary's first opponent Julia on Sunday was about 4'6". I looked at her and then Mary towering over her at 5'3", lanky frame and said to myself. "Wow, these girls are really short!" I remember when Elizabeth was playing in the 12s age division, her opponents were much taller, much bigger than the crop of upcoming junior tennis players. Given the size of two of Mary's opponents and a host of other participants, it was definitely confirmed in my mind these girls are incredibly tiny. This will definitely be a shorter generation of junior tennis players. What stood out in my mind is the fact that their parents aren't very short, actually on the above average size in height! Julia was a little spunky son-of-a-gun! She had fight and determination. I liked that about her; she showed no intimidation on the court. In frustration, Julia said several times, "Oh my God!" totally unbelieving of the results. Unfortunately she had to retire because she injured her groin area from a fall. The final score was Mary 6-2, 2-1. Mary second match was Ena a very worthy adversary. The tennis match was worth taping. Ena and Mary looked like professional tennis players! They were going for broke, hitting with pace on every shot. Mary was hitting forehand winners, Ena reciprocated with forehand winners with a wicked angle. You could not help but applaud the awesome shots made by both warriors. I knew Ena and I told her mother to the agreement of everyone enjoying this match, "Now this is what I call tennis!" It was so exciting the referee stayed during the entire match! Actually, we were hoping he would leave so we could maneuver for a better position to see the match. However, he stayed glued and focused and honored his call of duty totally enthralled in these two opponents earnest attempt to prevail. Ena won the first set, 6-4. However, Mary was not unnerved by her loss. She maintained her focus and never doubted that she would prevail in the second set, which she did with a score of 2-6. Mary ran down everything with her size 11-1/2 men shoes. You didn't even hear the flapping of her feet. She was as graceful as a ballerina, but had the feet of Bigfoot! Wow, can't wait until she finish growing, she's going to be a force to be reckoned with for sure! Ena was

shorter, more compact, like a pitbull very quick on the court. Mary is dangly like a ragdoll with muscles like the mythical character John Henry. It was a joy to watch them fight it out, neither opponent willing to submit to defeat. The deciding tiebreaker was next, and this match definitely could have gone either way. You could see Mary's confidence was building, and Ena was focus but obviously upset that her loss in the second set was so lopsided. The referee told Mary she could only make one toss on her serve. She practiced her serve and we decided she needed to toss at least twice on the serve, don't rush it, take a deep breath, then hit the ball. The ref was wrong. I wondered why she stopped tossing the ball on her serve at least twice. Mary loss the tiebreak in a score of 5-10. As I suspected on my inquiry to Mary, "What was the major contributor to your defeat?" She responded in a melancholy voice, "My serve." Of course she was upset. I on the other hand was proud of her tremendous effort. Everyone applauded both of these champions after closure of the match. Yes, Ena won and I gladly congratulated her on a great match and effort, and she literally grinned ear to ear and said, "Thank you." However, Mary won too. This was the redemption of Mary Profit, fighting it out, not giving up, not allowing anger to cloud her thinking, running down every ball, hitting unbelievable passing shots, hitting right and left forehands. She performed like a champion with heart. It was a job well done. Ah, how easy it is to be a gracious winner, however, extremely difficult to be a gracious loser. Mary was both gracious and totally unbelievable in her effort. Yes, a little fear is a magnificent thing! It vehemently demonstrated that Mary has what it takes. Ena told her she is a very good player. Mary is like a fine wine; as the wine ages, the taste becomes better. Once she reaches her full height, and potential I will be able to shout, "How sweet it is! How sweet it is!"

Written by: Yvonne Profit