

US Ladies Court Tennis Open 2017 **Held November 10th – 12th at Tuxedo, USA.**

A new name is on the Honours Board of Ladies Tennis after the US Ladies Open in Tuxedo. After a good run in the World Championships, Saskia Bollermann fulfilled her potential by taking the US Open Singles and Doubles titles.

She commented: "I was not self confident at all. I did hope it, but did not want to expect because you never know what will happen, but I am very happy to win my first Open title, especially as I'm the first Dutch person to do that!"

Claire Fahey and Sarah Vigrass did not play in this tournament, so Saskia was top seed, but she still faced potentially doughty opposition from the other three seeds: Tara Lumley (2), Australian Xanthe Ranger (3), and Izzy Candy (4). Fifteen players competed in the Singles; seven pairs in the Doubles.

After just one previous match at the quarter-final stage, Saskia says she felt nervous facing Izzy in the semi-final: "I knew Izzy had been playing great tennis and she is definitely improving fast". She describes the first set as "very close" but she steadied up to take a very entertaining match, 6/3 6/1. "Even though I went on to lose the first set, it was tight, and the best and most enjoyable match I have played", said Izzy.

In the Final against Tara, (who in the semis had come through comfortably against Xanthe 6/0 6/1), Saskia also felt nervous at facing such a difficult opponent. And indeed, the first set was extremely tight, ending with Saskia just hanging on to take it 6/5. The second set was still gamely fought by Tara, but Saskia by then had settled into her strokes, sealing an excellent match 6/5 6/1.

Saskia and Tara paired up in the Doubles, as number 1 seeds, playing Xanthe and Izzy in the final. The number 2 seeds were completely outplayed in the first set, but the second set was very close. Shot of the match was a fantastic dive by Izzy to save match point, where she ended up flat on the floor but managed to hit a winner in the process. Saskia and Tara won 6/0 6/3.

Tara was elated to win her second Open Doubles title, partnering Saskia, and promises: "This is hopefully the first of many to come!" She also commented on the hospitality of Tuxedo: "Second to none", with particular praise for the online streaming of play by Ryan. She wished to thank everyone who made the players feel so welcome; "It's what keeps us coming back time and time again."

Also of note was a pair of youngsters coming through: particularly outstanding was 14 year old Nieve Monderer who reached the Plate final. Tara commented: "Such potential in their ability and great demeanour on court – it was a pleasure to see them play. I'm sure they'll be the ones to watch in the future." Another good performance was on show from Sophie Danreuther, who came through from the very first round to eventually be beaten by Tara in the quarter- finals.

Report by Linda Fairbrother, with the help of Saskia, Tara, and Izzy