

What to look for in Today's Matches



5:00: [3] Nouran Gohar (Egypt, age 22, rank 3) vs. [5] Camille Serme (France, age 30, rank 5)

Serme pulled off the biggest result of the tournament so far on Tuesday with a five-game masterclass against world No. 1 Raneem El Welily. Serme now faces her fourth Egyptian of the tournament in Gohar, the 2019 British Open and U.S. Open champion who is eager to add the ToC to her growing list of accolades. The powerful Egyptian is the only woman left in the tournament who has yet to drop a game, and the Cairo native will look to continue that against Serme. In the U.S. Open semis and British Open final, Gohar defeated Serme in three games and twenty-nine and thirty minutes, respectively. Serme hasn't won a Platinum title since the 2017 ToC and on Tuesday displayed not only her hunger for another title in Grand Central, but also the dynamic squash she is capable of at her best. Serme will need to continue that momentum into this match to reach her second ToC final.

Follow: [2] Nour El Sherbini (Egypt, age 24, rank 2) vs. [6] Joelle King (New Zealand, age 31, rank 6)

After El Sherbini and King extended to four games in the third round, both players refined their approach Wednesday night with decisive three-game victories to set up this semifinal. The reigning world champion enters the match as the heavy favorite having lost against the Kiwi only once on the PSA World Tour—at the 2012 U.S. Open. They have faced each other twice in New York City, but in Brooklyn rather than Grand Central during two Carol Weymuller finals—both won by El Sherbini. In the past five years, they have played six times in which El Sherbini never conceded a game. A win for El Sherbini would earn an opportunity to become just the second four-time ToC champion following Jonathan Power's footsteps. King's power and accuracy were in fine form Wednesday and the veteran will need to be firing on all cylinders to have a chance at reaching just her third career Platinum final.

8:00: [1] Ali Farag (Egypt, age 27, rank 1) vs. [4] Tarek Momen (Egypt, age 31, rank 3)

This semifinal has the caliber of a world championship final with the world No. 1-ranked player pitted against the reigning world champion, and is a rematch of the 2018-2019 world championship final in Chicago, which Farag won. November's 2019-2020 world championship in Qatar was a milestone for Momen nearly fifteen years into his professional squash career, marking both his first world title and his first PSA Platinum title. There was a void in the Qatar world championship draw, however, due to Farag withdrawing from the tournament the week before due to a family emergency. These two have met in the semifinals or finals of a PSA event eight times since 2018 with Momen claiming three of four in 2018, and Farag winning all four in 2019. Momen has looked determined so far this week, completely deflating Mostafa Asal's mercurial run in three games on Tuesday and a gritty top-ten win over Marwan ElShorbagy to open up his ToC campaign. Farag legs have worked a bit harder with two five-gamers so far and fifty more minutes spent on court thus far, although both players did enjoy a rest day on Wednesday.

Follow: [2] Mohamed ElShorbagy (Egypt, age 29, rank 2) vs. [3] Karim Abdel Gawad (Egypt, age 28, rank 4)

Separated by one year in age and one spot in the tournament seeding, these two past ToC and world champions are no strangers to each other. They have clashed fifteen times on the PSA World Tour since 2012, and six times in 2019 alone—five of which were in the semifinal stages. ElShorbagy leads the head-to-head 11-5, but Gawad won both of their most recent encounters at the World Tour Finals in June and Channel VAS final in November, which was a ninety-minute five-game affair. They met in Grand Central in the semifinals last year, ElShorbagy then seeded one and Gawad eight, which ElShorbagy won in four games after an hour. A major factor in this match could be that ElShorbagy was able to get off court forty minutes faster than Gawad was able to last night in the quarterfinals. If Gawad's legs are still feeling the effects of his ninety minutes against Rösner, that could cause him to be more aggressive with his shot selection, which—if he finds his targets as has he has before—could be a spectacle.



Thursday
January 16, 2020



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This blockbuster J.P. Morgan Tournament of Champions semifinal lineup features a world No. 1 against a world champion in Farag and Momen, a past champion guaranteed to reach the men's final in Gawad (r) or ElShorbagy, two players aiming for their first ToC final in King and Gohar, a player hungry for her first major title since the 2017 ToC title in Serme, and a chance to continue what could become the most successful ToC legacy of all time in three-time champion El Sherbini (l).

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Today's Matches
Presented by



Semifinals

5:00 PM SESSION

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[6] Joelle King (NZL) vs. [2] Nour El Sherbini (EGY)

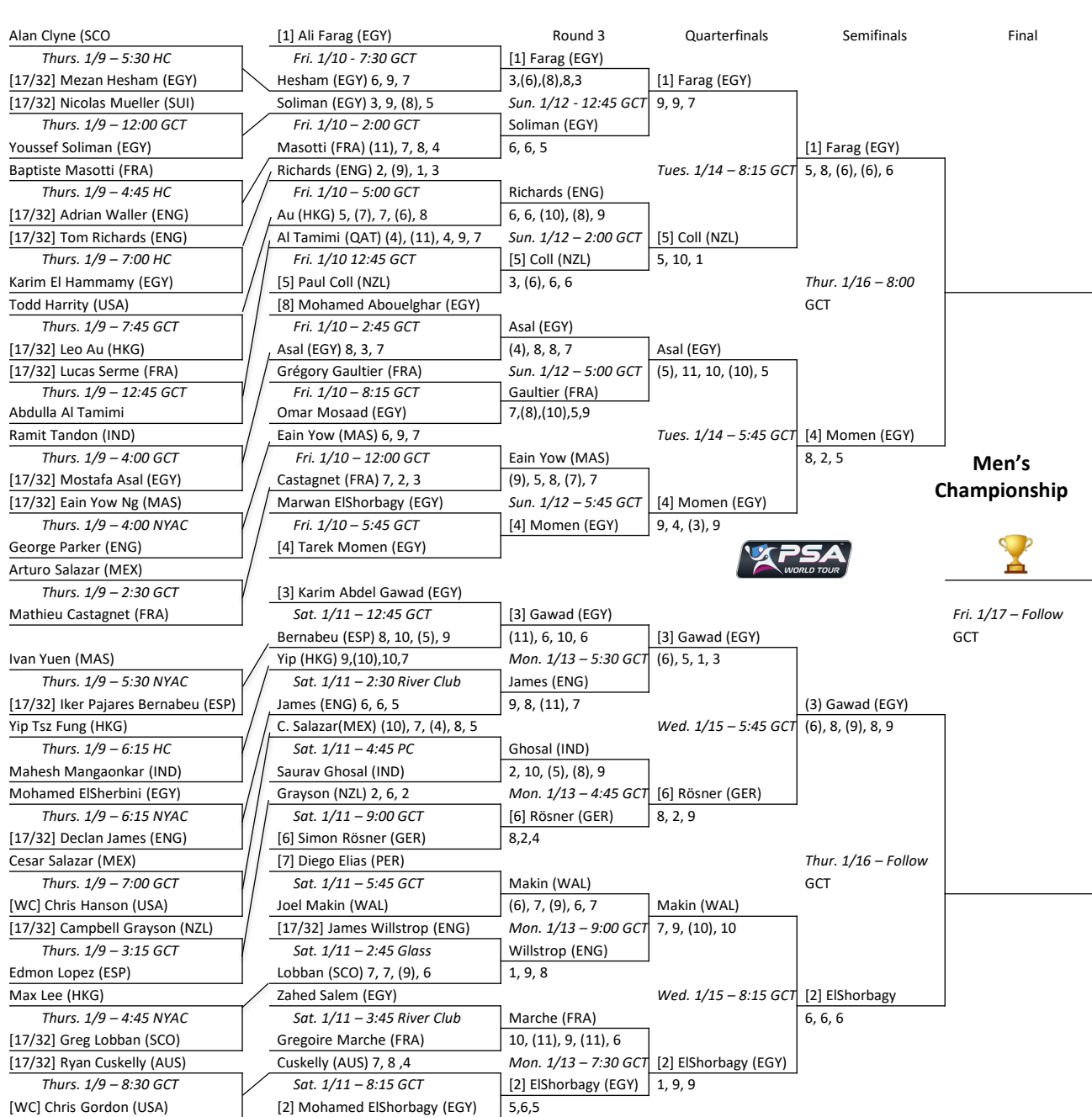
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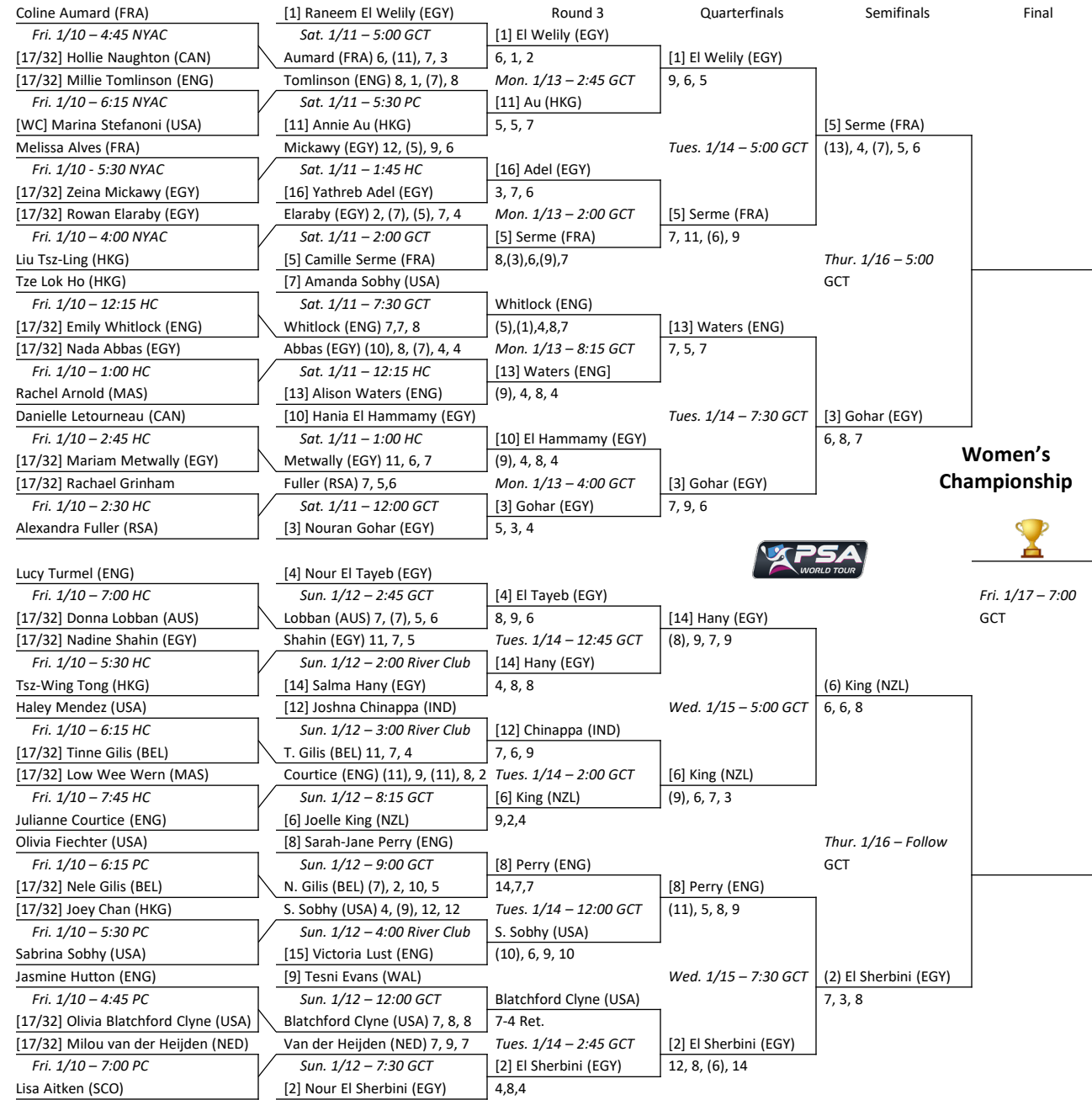
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Men's Championship



Women's Championship

