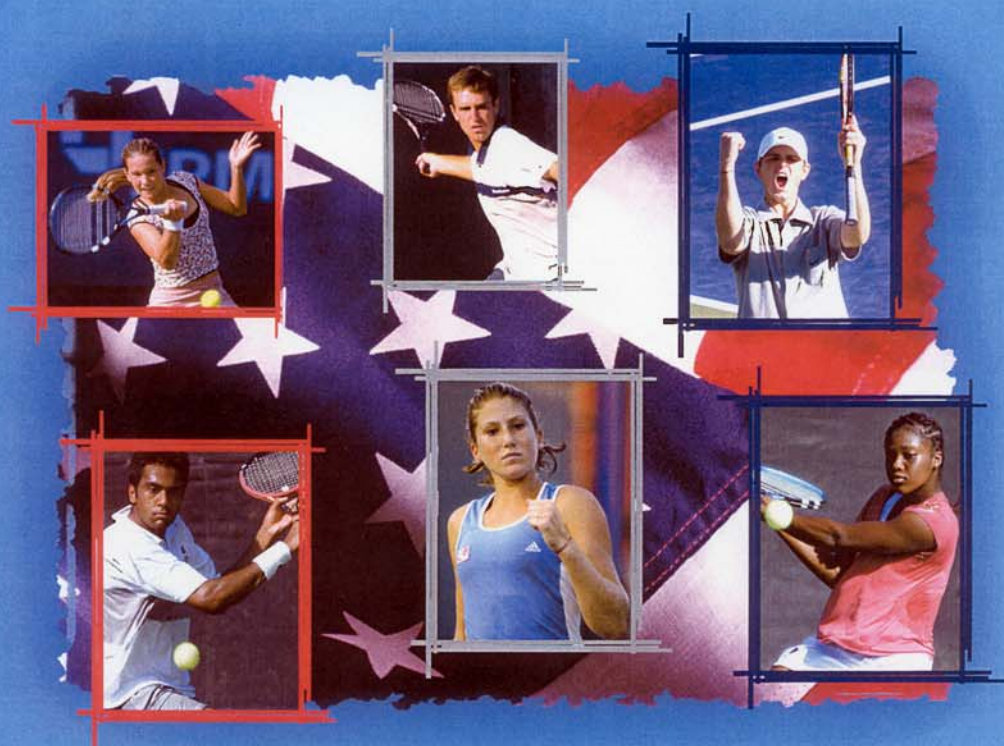


CORTEC \$50,000 USTA WOMEN'S TOURNAMENT

Presented by USTA/Northern Section

FORT SNELLING TENNIS & LEARNING CENTER
100 FEDERAL DRIVE
MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA



FEBRUARY 23 - MARCH 2, 2003



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Florida teen wins Cortec tournament

By David La Vaque

Special to the Star Tribune

TENNIS

Shenay Perry won the singles tennis championship at the Cortec \$50,000 Women's USTA tournament on Sunday, making her \$7,700 richer and making event officials look like geniuses.

Perry, 18, was the only wild card chosen for the field, and she was the first wild card in the three-year history of the Cortec to play in the final. She beat veteran Maria Vento-Kabchi 6-2, 6-4 at the Fort Snelling Tennis and Learning Center.

Perry overcame a 2-0 hole in the first set, then weathered a tight second set for her first professional singles championship.

The victory enabled Perry to jump at least 40 spots in the rankings, and it gave her an automatic berth in the main draw of the WTA's Sarasota (Fla.) Clay Court Classic beginning March 31.

"I told myself this was going to be a good year," Perry said. "I'm just surprised to have this kind of performance so early on."

The Coral Springs, Fla., native drove with her father to Columbus, Ohio, for the World Tennis Cup on Feb. 17 before coming to Minneapolis. A tough three-set loss to Teryn Ashley in the semifinals provided Perry with ample motivation for a solid showing at the Cortec.

Discouraged by her inability to finish opponents, Perry rebounded in the Cortec — winning the first set in all five of her matches while allowing only one match to exceed two sets. She beat the No. 7 and No. 8 seeds en route to the championship.

"You've got to expect your opponent to come back tougher if you win the first set," Perry said. "After the way I lost in Ohio I vowed not to let that happen here."

In the doubles final, China's Ting Li and Tian Tian Sun beat top-seeded Americans Teryn Ashley and Abigail Spears 6-3, 6-1.