



☐☐☐ **Simona Halep joined Petra Kvitova in the quarterfinals of the \$500,000 Shenzhen Open on Wednesday, taking just 61 minutes to breeze past a very green opponent. [Simona Halep](#) was in fine form at the [Shenzhen Open](#) on Wednesday, taking just 61 minutes to breeze past a very green opponent and into the quarters at the International event.**

The woman across the net was Natalia Vikhlyantseva, a 17-year-old Russian playing her first WTA event as a wildcard. Vikhlyantseva, ranked No.584, had beaten World No.93 [Anna-Lena Friedsam](#) in the first round, but to go from that to playing the World No.3 was a mighty steep learning curve.

And Halep was in no mood for a long match, dispatching the young Vikhlyantseva, 6-2, 6-2.

"It wasn't very easy because she's a really good player and played really well. She served very well," Halep said afterwards. "But I'm happy that I played better than I did in the first round. I feel like my form is getting better and better day by day - I really want to do better match by match here.

"I want to see how far I can go because I like this tournament. I'm really enjoying it."

Awaiting the No.1-seeded Halep in the quarterfinals is Serbian qualifier [Aleksandra Krunic](#) , who pulled off a Houdini-like escape against [Anna Schmiedlova](#) , rallying from 6-3, 5-2 down - and ending up fighting off six match points in total - to complete an unlikely 3-6, 7-6(1), 6-1 comeback victory.

Schmiedlova's first three match points came when she served for the match at 5-4, and her other three match points came when she served for it again at 6-5 - that was actually 40-0, triple match point.

[Halep beat Krunic in their only previous meeting](#) , on Halep's home turf in Bucharest last summer.

Another quarterfinal match-up that was set on Wednesday was No.8 seed [Timea Bacsinszky](#) against [Vera Zvonareva](#) . Bacsinszky outdid [Karin Knapp](#) , 7-5, 6-2, while Zvonareva did her own Houdini act to close out [Cagla Buyukakcay](#) , rallying from 5-2 down in the second set to edge the Turk, 6-3, 7-6(5).

[Zvonareva beat Bacsinszky in the pair's only previous meeting](#) , at Indian Wells back in 2011.

This is Zvonareva's first WTA quarterfinal since Charleston in April 2012, and if she manages to get past Bacsinszky, she will be in her first WTA semifinal since the WTA Finals in Istanbul in 2011.

The last match of the day saw [Tereza Smitkova](#) beat [Katerina Siniakova](#) , 6-3, 2-6, 6-1.

[Petra Kvitova](#) , the No.2 seed this week, booked her spot in the quarterfinals on Tuesday, as did a pair of WTA Rising Stars, namely No.4 seed [Zarina Diyas](#) of Kazakhstan and [Saisai Zheng](#) of China.

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