



# Live on Riverbender.com: Sandgren-Mena meet in finals at 10 a.m. today of LCCC/USTA Futures

by Brent Feeney, Sports Writer  
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**GODFREY** – And now, there's just two left.

Those two are **Tennys Sandgren** of Gallatin, Tenn., and **Faundo Mena** of Buenos Aires, Argentina.

They'll meet at 10 a.m. Sunday at Lewis and Clark Community College's Simpson Tennis Center to decide the championship of the 19<sup>th</sup> USTA LCCC Men's Futures tennis tournament on Court 2. **Riverbender.com will televise the final match live.**

Sandgren won his way to the final with a 6-2, 7-5 win over American Rhyne Williams, while Mena defeated Briton Luke Bambridge 6-2, 2-6, 7-6 (7-1) to reach the final in the tournament's semifinal matches Saturday morning.

“He (Williams) is one of my best friends,” Sandgren said, “so it's always tough to play someone you know really well; he knows what I'm going to do and I know what he's going to do, so it's who can stay mentally fresher and execute better.

“The second set got real tight there; I gagged a little bit after a few match points there at 5-3 and he picked up his level. If he takes that second set, who knows in the third set? I was definitely getting real frustrated about not having closed it out, but happy I finished it in two sets.”

Sandgren is happy to have reached the final. “Anytime you can reach the finals of one of these 25s (the \$25,000 purse), it's definitely an accomplishment; I would love to take it one more step tomorrow.”

“It's very tough to play my best buddy,” Williams said. “He is my best friend, I would say; we've been playing each other since we were 9 years old, and I can tell you honestly, it's not fun to play your best buddy out here, especially in a semifinal. I feel like both of us had a chance to win this tournament – I feel he probably will tomorrow; I wish him all the best.

“He played a great match; I did all that I could.”

Mena has already been in a title match this week; he and Venezuelan Jesus Bandres dropped a two-set decision in Friday's doubles final, but managed to survive a very difficult match to reach Sunday's final. “It was a tough match,” Mena said. “I was losing 5-2 (in the deciding set) and I came back. I think it was when the (officials made a decision) was on the line on a break point in the first set (was where the match turned in his view).

“I felt a little bit upset and started to play better.”

“I started well, executing my game plan and being aggressive,” Bambridge said. “I got a lucky break at 5-4 (in the first set) and then I had a game point in the first game of the second (set) and he broke it, then it just got away from me in the second set.

“I served really well in the third (set), got my mojo back and won a few tough games, had a couple of chances on his serve and then got a break to go 4-2 (in the deciding set), held to go 5-2, had a match point at 5-2 on his serve and then served for the match and lost my serve, then had another match point at 5-4; it came and went. When those things come and go, you try to battle it, you try to battle it with your energy; it's really tiring, especially here in the heat and humidity.

“I feel gutted, but it's been a decent week. I can move on from this and learn from it.”

A ceremony will be held prior to Sunday's final honoring the late Andy Simpson, who did much for tennis along with her husband Bud and son Robert in the Alton-Godfrey area. Admission is free to Sunday's final; live scoring and updates will also be available at [www.lc.edu/usta](http://www.lc.edu/usta).

