

# **Sandgren dominates Mena in LCCC /USTA Tourney singles title match**

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**GODFREY – Tennys Sandgren** was on top of his game Sunday morning.

Sandgren won the first seven games of the match and went on to defeat **Facundo Mena** 6-0, 6-4 to claim his second USTA Lewis and Clark Community College Men's Futures Tournament at the Simpson Tennis Center. Sandgren, from Gallatin, Tenn., had won the

championship previously in 2011 as an amateur while playing for the University of Tennessee.

Sandgren bounced back from an 0-30 deficit in the day's opening game with two straight service aces (he had six on the day) and went through five deuces before finally winning his first of seven straight games from the start of the match.



“I played the first set very well,” Sandgren said. “He (Mena) started a bit slow there; I played kind of aggressive there really early and had him off-guard there a bit, so he really wasn't sure how he should play and then he started tempering his game and hitting the ball heavier.

“He was pushing me back and was really effective with the drop shot. He definitely got his way back in the match and he had some looks there; he had a (service) break point there to go up 4-3, I think, in the second (set) and I was able to save it.”

“I couldn't play my best tennis,” Mena, who hails from Buenos Aries, Argentina, said. “I was a little tired (Mena had won a three-set match over Luke Bambridge of Great Britain the day before); I didn't move my legs.

“He was able to play more relaxed (getting out to the 6-0 win the first set and winning the first game of the second set). I would have liked to have won the tournament.”

Both players had many good things to say about how the tournament was conducted and the experience of the week. “It was amazing,” Mena said. “It's a beautiful tournament and the atmosphere was pretty good. I hope I can come back and play here next year.”

“It was a great feeling winning here again, knowing it's one of the hotter events that we play (the weather was hot and humid again Sunday morning, much like the weather was throughout the week),” Sandgren said. “To know I'm able to stay fit physically and stay strong mentally is definitely encouraging.”

Sandgren had six aces for the match and six double faults, with a first-serve percentage of 52.4 percent; he went a perfect 8-0 in his service games won and won four of eight break points; Mena did not have an ace and had four double faults on the day, with a first-serve percentage of 45.5 percent. He was 4-8 in service games won and did not win a break point in eight attempts.

Prior to the start of the final, the late Andy Simpson was honored in a ceremony for her and her family's contributions to area tennis; Nancy Simpson spoke in the ceremony before conducting the coin flip to determine first service. The coin, specially made for the occasion, had a picture of Andy on one side and the tournament's logo on the reverse side. Payday candy bars, baclava and bananas – items Simpson often brought to the courts for players – were available for fans attending the event. A vase honoring her contributions to the game was presented to Nancy Simpson following the match.

The Illinois Swing portion of the USTA Futures tour continues this week with the Edwardsville Futures tournament at Edwardsville High School's tennis complex; the swing moves to Decatur beginning Aug. 1 and to Champaign Aug. 8.

