

Hansson runs past Ram-Harel to win Edwardsville Futures championship

by Brent Feeney, Sports Writer
August 14 2017 10:03 AM





EDWARDSVILLE – It's safe to say that Gustav Hansson had quit



e the weekend in Edwardsville.

Hansson, of Karlskrona, Sweden, began the weekend by teaming up with Hunter Callahan to win the doubles championship of the \$25,000 USTA Pro Circuit Edwardsville Futures tennis tournament presented by the EGHM Foundation Friday evening.

Saturday afternoon, Hansson defeated Argentina's Genaro Alberto Olivieri in the singles semifinals to advance to the final, losing only two games in the process.

Hansson, who is about to begin his senior year at the University of Mississippi, climaxed his weekend in Edwardsville with a 6-1, 6-2 win over Or Ram-Harel of Israel, who played at the University of Tulsa, to claim the singles championship of the tournament.

And he won the tournament in front of his coach at Ole Miss, Toby Hansson, who drove up early Sunday morning all the way from Oxford, Miss., to see Gustav Hansson win the crown.

“It feels fantastic,” Hansson said following the win. “I feel overwhelmed – I feel happy.”

Hansson lost just five games the final two days of the tournament to win it all. “It's been a lot” of tennis Hansson played to get to the final – including winning three matches just to get into the main draw through the qualifying process before winning five matches to win the tournament - “but I've just been playing better and better for every match, and today – I know Ram, and he's a fighter, it was going to be a long rally today; I just hung in today and fought my way through.”



Hansson decided to use his forehand strokes aggressively to keep Ram-Harel off-balance. “I just tried to play aggressive with my forehand; it's been working all week,” Hansson said.

That his coach with the Rebels, Toby Hansson, drove all the way from Oxford to see the match meant something to Gustav Hansson. “That was great,” Gustave Hansson said. “He didn't tell me about it, so I only saw him this morning and surprised me; it felt really nice. It's always nice to have him on my side.”

Ram-Harel felt reaching the final capped off a successful week for him. “It was a successful week,” Ram-Harel said. “I think I came a little bit short because I came straight from the quarterfinals last week (in Decatur) and I had to play three rounds of qualifying; it showed up today, but it still was a great tournament.”

Ram-Harel thought Hansson's aggressiveness proved to be the difference in the match. “He played a bit more offensive,” Ram-Harel said, “I was a bit defensive today; I'll learn from that and the next tournament, I will be better.”

Reaching the final will be a confidence-booster for Ram-Harel. “I'm very happy; it gave me a lot of confidence,” Ram-Harel said. “I wasn't practicing as much before I came here because I was in summer school (at Tulsa), but even with the performance to get to the final, I showed whenever I can play even better tennis in practice, I just have to show it a tournament; I believe I can accomplish even bigger things.”

Hansson got out to a 2-1 lead in the opening set and then showed his aggressiveness en route to winning the final four games of the set, then bouncing back from 2-1 down in the second set to win the final five games of the match, giving him the two titles on the weekend. “It's very big,” Hansson said of winning both championships on the weekend. “I'm serving much better,” Hansson said when asked if any parts of his game have improved.

Both players had many good things to say about the experience in Edwardsville. “This is the best Futures I've seen,” Hansson said, “especially in terms of organization, the tournament director (Dave Lipe) doing a fantastic job and the crowd coming out – it's awesome.”

“I enjoyed every moment and every point,” Ram-Harel said. “The people and everybody were very nice.”



[Dan Brannan also contributed to this story.](#)