



L&C's USTA Tournament Named Best in St. Louis Metro Area

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GODFREY – Tennis tournaments are in the business of recognizing the best players, but it's rare when a tournament itself earns "best of" honors.

Lewis and Clark Community College's United States Tennis Association (USTA) Men's Futures Pro Circuit 2012 tournament recently received that honor when it was named the 2012 Best Adult Tournament by the USTA's St. Louis District.

“It’s nice to be recognized by the St. Louis District for all the hard work that makes this such a successful event,” said Jim Hunstein, USTA Coordinator for Lewis and Clark, who is in his first year working with the tournament.

Lewis and Clark’s tournament was chosen based on USTA criteria including tournament organization, staffing, quality facilities and amenities for players, volunteers and spectators.

“I’m in the enviable position of being able to accept the award on behalf of so many folks who work so hard. It’s truly a team effort and we couldn’t do it without the wonderful support of everyone involved especially our volunteers and support from our community.”

Held annually at college’s Andy Simpson Tennis Complex in Godfrey, the Lewis and Clark Pro Tennis Classic marked the 15th year the school has hosted the USTA event and the first time it has garnered such honors.

The tournament drew players from more than 50 countries across six continents for two weeks of competitive professional tennis. Five different countries were represented in the singles and doubles finals alone.

In the 2012 singles final, Jason Jung, of California, earned the championship title when he defeated Cesar Ramirez, of Mexico, 2-6, 7-5, 6-2. The doubles final went to Ryan Rowe, a University of Illinois alumnus from Moline, and his partner Marcelo Arevalo, of El Salvador, who defeated Luca Margaroli, of Switzerland, and Sebastian Boltz, of France, 6-4, 6-4.

In addition to international players, many locals also participate each year. The winners of the 2012 Bud Simpson Tennis Tournament, Fares Gosea (singles), and Steve Moehn and Dave Fuhrig (doubles), earned wild cards into the 32-player main draw. Gosea played at the University of Illinois. Moehn, 40, of St. Louis, is a native of Alton who played tennis for Marquette Catholic High School.

Also among the 128 players in the qualifying rounds were L&C Trailblazer incoming freshman tennis players Cameron Randall, of Edwardsville, and Patrick Logan, of Godfrey, as well as local player Joseph VanMeter.

“Most of these guys are in their late teens or early twenties and they live this nomadic lifestyle going from tournament to tournament all summer, chasing the dream of playing pro tennis,” Hunstein said. “I don’t know too many people that age, or any age, with dreams that big. That’s why it’s so much fun to watch them play.”

The Lewis and Clark Pro Tennis Classic is part of the USTA's Pro Circuit, the largest developmental pro circuit in the world. Now in its 34th year, the Pro Circuit offers more than 90 men's and women's events and awards nearly \$30 million in prize money. The Lewis and Clark event offers a total purse of \$10,000 and is the eleventh oldest men's Pro Circuit tournament.