

# **Hulme Comes In Second In Boys 18-And-Under Singles, Koons Wins Girls 18-And-Under Singles, Local Players Perform Well In Tiger Tennis Classic**

by Colin Feeney, Contributing Sports Writer  
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EDWARDSVILLE - Edwardsville players Colton Hulme finished second in the boys 18-and-under singles, while Chloe Koons took the girls 18-and-under singles title and other Edwardsville-area players did well in the Tiger Tennis Classic this weekend at the Edwardsville Tennis Center.

Play moved along very well despite the threat of rain during the late afternoon and early evening, and everything went along smoothly, with many of the championships being decided on Saturday.

"It's been a great tournament from start to finish," said assistant director Kirk Schlueter, "two great days of tennis, featuring some of the best players in St. Louis, and we've also had some players travel from Carbondale, Ill., from Robinson, Ill. So really getting a broad view of the whole tennis scene, which is great. We've had great competition, great support from parents, great support from our sponsors as well. Obviously, this is the first year of our partnership with the Whirlwind Johnson Foundation, so glad and proud to have them represented on our camps with everything they stand for. So just been a great tournament overall, and every level has been great. It's been nice to see some Metro-East kids have some success as well."

The Whirlwind Johnson Foundation was named for the late Dr. Robert W. "Whirlwind" Johnson, who was a longtime coach and mentor to African-American tennis players, helping to integrate the sport while helping to establish the American Tennis Association's Junior Development program. He coached all-time greats Althea Gibson and Arthur Ashe, the first two African-American players to win the singles titles at Wimbledon, and also coached SIU-Edwardsville great Juan Farrow, and was inducted into the International Tennis Hall of Fame in 2009.

"Dr. Robert "Whirlwind" Johnson is considered the grandfather of black tennis in America," Schlueter said. "He was the greatest trainer and organizer of black junior American players, so singlehandedly desegregated most of American junior tennis, was the coach of Althea Gibson, Arthur Ashe and Juan Farrow, who played at SiUE. so three great tennis players. And we've been fortunate enough to partner with his foundation, run by his grandchildren, that are going to be a big part of our Diversity Day at the Futures this year, and that also were a sponsor of this junior tennis tournament, kind of keeping Dr. Johnson's legacy alive, which is really fantastic."

And the day being the first Federal Juneteenth holiday made it the more special.

"Yeah, it's true," Schlueter said. "Having Juneteenth, I think, one of the great holidays, I'm so glad it's a Federal holiday, one of the great days in American history. I'm so

excited that it's part of Edwardsville tennis and the Futures. We get to partner with such an outstanding organization like the Whirlwind Johnson Foundation. Dr. Johnson is a hero of American tennis, and being affiliated with him in any way is such a great honor for us."

In the boys 12-and-under singles, John Mathes of St. Louis won the round-robin event with a 4-0 record, defeating Yihan Zhong of St. Louis in his final match 6-2, 6-4. Amey Parwal of St. Charles, Mo. was second with a mark of 2-1, Zhong was third at 2-2, Kayden Xue of St. Louis was fourth at 1-2 with one match remaining and Marshall Harris of Fairview Heights was fifth at 0-4.

In the boys 14-and-under singles, Schaefer Bates of Edwardsville was the winner of the round-robin event, winning over Joseph Cass of St. Jacob 7-5, 7-5 and Russell McElveen of Carbondale 6-4, 6-3. Cass was 1-1 to finish second and McElveen came in third at 0-2.

Cameron Woll of O'Fallon won the boys 16-and-under singles round robin, going 3-0, with his final match being a walkover win over Rowan Brunner of Belleville. Richard Elias of St. Louis was second at 2-1, Cass came in third at 1-2 and Brunner was 0-3 to finish fourth.

In the boys 18-and-under singles, in the first round, Hulme received a bye into the quarterfinals, while Jace Ackerman of Edwardsville defeated Jacob West of St. Louis in a walkover, Michael Karibian of Glen Carbon won over Alton's Luke Boyd 6-0, 6-0, Jade Dynamic of Edwardsville defeated Parker Mayhew of Alton 6-3, 6-2 and Ben Harris of Fairview Heights won over Edwardsville's Harrison Feco 6-0, 6-0. In the quarterfinals, Hulme defeated Kabeer Ahuja of Carbondale 6-2, 6-1, Karibian defeated Ackerman 7-6, 6-0, Dynamic advanced when Jonah Blanquart of Millstadt retired after losing the first set 6-0 and R.J. Miksell of Fairview Heights defeated Harris 6-1, 6-2. Hulme won his semifinal over Karibian 7-5, 6-3 while Miksell defeated Dynamic 6-4, 3-6, 10-3, and Miksell won the title by defeating Hulme 6-3, 6-4.

In the girls 14-and-under singles, the quarterfinals saw Edwardsville's Katie Woods win over Jenna Song of St. Louis 6-0, 6-3, Kara Moore of Carbondale winning over Kennedy Taylor of Edwardsville 6-2, 2-6, 10-4, Keeley O'Meara of St. Louis won over Sophie Byron of Edwardsville 6-1, 6-3 and Dia Kannan of Edwardsville won in a walkover against Annabelle Elias of St. Louis. Woods won her semifinal match over Moore 6-0, 6-3 and Kannan won over O'Meara 6-1, 6-0. In the final, it was Woods winning over Kannan 6-3, 6-2.

In the quarterfinals of the girls 16-and-under division, Zoe Byron of Edwardsville lost to Greta Larson of Chesterfield, Mo. 6-4, 7-6 and Alyssa Wise of Glen Carbon fell to

Simrit Mander of Springfield 6-1, 6-2. Mireya David of Lake St. Louis, Mo. won over Mander in the final 6-2, 6-1.



Koons won the 18-and-under singles in a round-robin, winning over Mia McIssac of Fairview Heights 6-0, 6-1 and Lucy List of Robinson 6-2, 6-2. List was second at 1-1, while McIssac was third at 0-2.

In the boys 18-and-under doubles, Dynamic and Karibian received a bye into the semifinals, while Adrian Norcio of Edwardsville and C. Martin of Belleville defeated Mayhew and Boyd 6-1, 6-0 and Hulme and Ackerman won over Woll and Brunner 6-0, 6-0. The semifinals and finals will be played Sunday morning, starting at 8:30 a.m, along with the girls 14-and-under and 18-and-under doubles.

Overall, it has been a very successful tournament, getting the summer tennis season off on the right foot.

"It's great," Schlueter said. "We got a little bit of a late start to our camps this year because of boys state being pushed back because of COVID. So great to have the tournament, great to see so many kids out here from all over the area playing."

And hopefully, the start of a great summer season ahead after being sidelined because of the COVID-19 pandemic that played havoc with many sports last year.

"Yeah, I hope so," Schlueter said. "I think we've got this, we've got the Edwardsville Open next weekend, then we've got the wild card for the Futures July 15, and the Futures itself. So it'll be a really great summer for Edwardsville tennis."



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