

King, Thompson move to singles finals on Saturday, doubles finalists also determined

by Brent Feeney, Sports Writer
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EDWARDSVILLE – One match went the distance, the other ended in straight sets.

And in the end, the finalists for the singles championship in the **2015 USTA Edwardsville Futures** tennis tournament, hosted by the EGHM Foundation, were determined Saturday morning at the Edwardsville High School tennis complex.



Sunday's final, featured a pair of Americans – one of whom finished second in the inaugural tournament in 2011 – as eighth-seeded Evan King of Chicago will meet unseeded Clay Thompson of Venice Beach, Calif., for the crown. It will be preceded by the doubles final that featured the team of Scott Clayton and Richard Gabb, both of Great Britain, against Alan Kohen of Buenos Aires, Argentina, and John Lamble of Saratoga, Calif. A scheduled exhibition by players 10-and-under will take place in between the title tilts.

King dispatched fifth-seeded Harry Bouchier of Hobart, Tasmania, Australia, 6-4, 6-4, while Thompson eliminated Croatian Ante Pavic, the tournament's seventh seed, 7-6 (7-5), 6-7 (4-7), 6-3, in Saturday's play.

“I played pretty well today,” King, who is a University of Michigan graduate, said. “I was serving well, receiving well and my ground strokes were working pretty good. Overall, it was a good performance and I'm pleased with how things went today.”

“I played OK,” Bouchier said. “I didn't serve as well as I would have liked when I needed to, and I didn't return as well as I would have liked, but overall, I thought it was a good week here. I'm happy with how things went.”



King didn't allow Bouchier to gain much momentum, taking control early and keeping Bouchier at bay most of the day. Afterward, King was excited about reaching the final. "I'm excited about getting here," King said. "Now it's just a matter of being prepared and going out there and playing as well as I can."

In the other semifinal, which took place at the same time as the King-Bouchier match, Pavic and Thompson were evenly matched and neither could get much of an advantage over the other. The first two sets went to tiebreakers (first to seven points while winning by at least two points) and Pavic and Thompson split the sets. In the deciding set, Thompson seemed to wear down Pavic and took control on his way to the win.

"It was a lot of fun out there today," Thompson said. "Ante was ranked 120th in the world at one point last year and it was good to get out there and see how I could perform against a seasoned player like him. I saw it as a test of myself."

Both King and Thompson have known each other for quite some time, but to Thompson's knowledge, this will be the first time the two have played each other in a match. "I've known Evan since we were 12," Thompson, a UCLA graduate, said. "I'm really looking forward to it and giving the fans a good match."

King himself has become a fan favorite at the tournament thanks to his 2011 runner-up finish and his play at the tournament. “There's a lot of good support for the tournament,” King said. “The fans here are really good and the group running the tournament are great. I feel very comfortable here and I'm looking forward to tomorrow.”

“I'm really enjoying it here,” Thompson, who is making his first stop in Edwardsville, said. “It's a beautiful area here and I'm really enjoying it. There's a lot of support for the tournament here and it's been a fun two weeks (also referring to the qualifying and wild-card tournaments held prior to the Futures tournament).”

More information on the tournament can be found at www.edwardsvillefutures.com

