

Edwardsville Futures Is Back: Professional Tennis Event Celebrates 10th Anniversary

by Chris Rhodes, Reporter
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EDWARDSVILLE - A press event at the Holiday Inn Express on Tuesday showcased information about the upcoming Edwardsville Futures Tournament presented by the EGHM Foundation events.

The series of events that lead up to the Futures start with the Edwardsville Open June 25-28. The open event features men's and women's open and 4.0 draws in singles and doubles. The men's open champion receives a main draw wild card to the Futures Tournament. The doubles winners also receive a draw to the event.

The Pro Wildcard Challenge is July 15-16 at the EHS Tennis Center. The one-day Doubles Shootout is July 17. Other key dates are Diversity Day at Futures on Wednesday, July 21, Mitch 'n' Friends from 6:30-7:30 p.m. on Thursday, July 22, an adaptive clinic for people with any type of special need. Family Day at the Futures is from 9 a.m. to noon Saturday, July 24.

The Edwardsville Futures joined the Pro Circuit in 2011 and this year will be recognized for that 10th-anniversary mark. All matches are played on the Edwardsville High School tennis courts, the only high school to host a Pro Circuit Tournament.

Dave Lipe, the EHS tennis coach and one of the coordinators of the Futures event, said there is considerable excitement to see the return of the Futures after not being able to have it last year.

“This is year No. 10 so to make it a decade hosting a professional tennis tournament is a big achievement,” he said. “We are proud we have made it 10 years and it is because of a lot of hard work by people associated with it.”

Lipe said there are many special partnerships with the event, starting with the EGHM Foundation and a great working relationship with the USTA. Local hotels, restaurants, and many other businesses also provide significant support, he said. All the local hotels are partners with the Futures event.

Lipe said the Futures and Wildcard events have thousands of dollars of impact on the region.

Cory Jobe, of the Great Rivers and Routes Association, said sports tourism is one of his group's big avenues to draw from and the Futures tournament brings in a lot of new eyes and ears to the area.

“We are happy to support the event and it is one of the many avenues of sports tourism we work on,” he said.

This year's event will have \$15,000 in prizes and Lipe said he believes after an absence with COVID players are hungry to play and he expects a very high talent level of players.

Lipe said the Futures organizers will work with the East St. Louis Community Tennis Pro Darian Banks of East St. Louis Community Tennis for the Diversity Day. He said he and the other Future organizers are extremely excited to have the Diversity Day and the educational opportunities it will offer. Once again, the powerful Mitch 'n Friends Night and Family Day will be huge attractions.

Lipe mentioned that one of the Edwardsville Futures finalists Sebastian Korda is on the cover of Tennis Magazine and over the years, many have participated in the Edwardsville Futures and then moved on to very successful professional tennis careers.

“It was monumental to have Sebastian Korda on the cover of Tennis Magazine,” he said.

“We want people to come out and enjoy the tennis star of tomorrow at the Futures.”



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