
October 6, 2017

\$100,000 Stockton Men's Challenger, A USTA Pro Circuit Tour Event

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THIRD SEED MICHAEL MMOH RALLIES BACK TO BEAT FELLOW AMERICAN MCDONALD IN MAIN DRAW

Stockton, Calif. – There were no free lunches as three of Thursday's four scheduled singles main draw matches at the second \$100,000 Stockton Men's Challenger were extended to three sets.

Third-seeded Michael Mmoh had a tough one to start off the morning, losing the first set, but coming back in dramatic fashion to beat three-time UCLA All-American Mackenzie McDonald of Piedmont, 1-6, 6-2, 7-6 (4) in a matchup of up-and-coming U.S. players at the Eve Zimmerman Tennis Center on the Pacific campus.

McDonald was ahead in the third set 4-3 but Mmoh tied at 4-4 after holding at 40-30. McDonald then took a 5-4 lead when he hit a forehand behind Mmoh on ad-in. Both players were on serve the next two games, forcing the tiebreaker.

Just before the tiebreaker, Mmoh was down 5-6 and had served at deuce but his first serve accidentally hit a ballperson, who went down on the ground for a few minutes but left under his own power. Mmoh faced two match points at ad-out, but both times McDonald hit two errant forehand returns.

"Honestly I couldn't tell you, I was just in the moment," Mmoh said. "The first match point I got a little lucky. (McDonald) went for a second-serve return and the way he returns he usually makes that. And he hit it a little long, so I was fortunate. The second match point I hit a pretty good serve to his body, and even him he usually makes those so I think he got a little tight on those points so I took advantage and I got a good start to the tiebreaker."

Mmoh had a good start in the tiebreaker, including winning a 50-ball rally that put him up 2-0. He eventually led 4-1, but double faulted on the next point to make it 4-2. A service point and a McDonald forehand error made it 6-2, then McDonald closed the gap to 6-4 on a forehand winner and a forehand error by Mmoh. But Mmoh clinched the match on an overhead winner.

"That was a big time momentum swing," Mmoh said of the long rally. "Whoever won that point was going to win the match. Especially against playing a guy like that who plays aggressively, loves to take cuts. But I played great defense and made it tough on him."

Mmoh, ranked 142nd on the ATP will next face former world top 20 player Dmitry Tursunov, a 7-6 (2), 6-3 winner over Australia's John-Patrick Smith, in today's quarterfinals.

"I think there were a lot of games won off my serve, and it could have gone a different way a few times, and it's never good to lose the first set on a tiebreaker," Tursunov said. "(Smith) is a player that give you a little pressure here and there, and you don't know what to expect."



Tim Smyczek, another former Top 100 player, fell behind to fellow American Christian Harrison early on, but came alive in time to triumph 2-6, 6-3, 6-4.

"I made an adjustment, and I was getting impatient in the first set, so I took a deep breath and took note of what was going on, so I think I played much better in the second and third sets," Smyczek said. "You see it all the time where guys beat themselves, but I was able to come back from it this time."

Smyczek was the top seed in Stockton last year, but he says the 32-player field is tough, seeded or not.

"If you're not seeded, you have to play a seed the first couple rounds," he said. "It's never easy because I've had a rough year (on the USTA Pro Circuit), but I'm looking to make a big push the next five or six tournaments left this season."

Smyczek, who at one point was 68th on the ATP World Tour, will play up-and-coming Elias Ymer of Sweden, who also weathered a slow start to defeat Canada's Frank Dancevic, another ATP World Tour veteran, 3-6, 7-6 (8), 6-4.

Ymer fought off five match points in the second set-- two when he was down 5-6, and three in the tiebreaker, where he came back from 6-4 in Dancevic's favor. The duo traded the next four points until Ymer hit a return that Dancevic shanked into the net, then clinched the match on a service point.

"I was fighting for everything that I could," Ymer said. "I had very tough losses this year, so I'm very happy with this win, but I was very lucky to save five match points. I was also returning very well. ... It's very difficult to play (Dancevic) because he has a special game. You have to stay close to him. Today I was lucky and it could have gone either way."

Second-seeded American Tennis Sandgren, the 96th-ranked player in the world, faces eighth-seeded Cameron Norrie of Great Britain in another quarterfinal match today. Norrie ranked 136th, defeated Sandgren in the title match at the Tiburon Challenger. In addition, fourth-seeded American Stefan Kozlov plays No. 6 Darian King of Barbados.

The top-seeded doubles team of Neal Skupski of Great Britain and Smith were challenged but held on to defeat Kozlov and Frederik Nielsen of Denmark 6-4, 6-7 (3), 10-5. Skupski and Smith next play No. 4 seeds Brydan Klein of Great Britain and countryman Joe Salisbury, who beat Nikola Milojevic of Serbia and Jan Satral of the Czech Republic, 6-3, 6-4.

Qualifiers Denis Kudla of the United States and Mikelis Libietis of Latvia triumphed over Hans Hach Verdugo of Mexico and India's Ramkumar Ramanathan 7-6 (5), 6-4,

In the final doubles match of the day, McDonald and Mitchell Krueger came back to defeat wild cards Deiton Baughman and Alexios Halebian 5-7, 6-2, 13-11.

The main draw continues at 10 a.m. today at the Eve Zimmerman Tennis Center. Tickets are available at the door or at evezimmermantenniscenter.com.

For more information on the tournament, visit evezimmermantenniscenter.com, ustaproircuit.com and





atpworldtour.com.

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\$100,000 Stockton Men's Challenger

A USTA Pro Circuit Event

Thursday, October 5, 2017

Eve Zimmerman Tennis Center

Stockton, Calif.

Purse: \$100,000

Surface: Hard-Outdoor

Singles -- Main draw

(3) Michael Mmoh, United States, d. Mackenzie McDonald, United States, 1-6, 6-2, 7-6 (4)

Q-Dmitry Tursunov, Russia, d. John-Patrick Smith, Australia, 7-6 (2), 6-3

Elias Ymer, Sweden, d. PR-Frank Dancevic, Canada, 3-6, 7-6 (8), 6-4

Tim Smyczek, United States, d. Christian Harrison, United States, 2-6, 6-3, 6-4

Doubles-Main draw

(1) Neal Skupski, Great Britain/John-Patrick Smith, Australia, d. Stefan Kozlov, United States-Frederik Nielsen, Denmark 6-4, 6-7 (3), 10-5

(4) Brydan Klein, Great Britain-Joe Salisbury, Great Britain, d. Nikola Milojevic, Serbia-Jan Satral, Czech Republic, 6-3, 6-4

Q-Denis Kudla, United States-Mikelis Libietis, Latvia, d. Hans Hach Verdugo, Mexico-Ramkumar Ramanathan, India, 7-6 (5), 6-4

Mitchell Krueger, United States-Mackenzie McDonald d. WC-Deiton Baughman, United States-Alexios Halebian, United States, 5-7, 6-2, 13-11

Friday, October 6 - SCHEDULE

Stadium Court - starting at 10 a.m.

(8) Cameron Norrie, Great Britain, vs. Tennys Sandgren, United States

Not before 11 a.m.

Q-Dmitry Tursunov, Russia, vs. (3) Michael Mmoh

Not before 12:30 p.m.

Mitchell Krueger-Mackenzie McDonald vs. Q-Denis Kudla-Mikelis Libietis

Court 2 - starting at 10 a.m.

4 (Alt)-Stefan Kozlov vs. (6) Darian King, Barbados

Not before 11 a.m.

Elias Ymer vs. Tim Smyczek



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Not before 12:30 p.m.

Neal Skupski/John-Patrick Smith vs. (4) Brydan Klein-Joe Salisbury



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