

# Thomas Enqvist wins Brodies Champions of Tennis Trophy



Swedish star Thomas Enqvist fought back from a set down to win the inaugural Brodies Champions of Tennis trophy at the home of Edinburgh Accies in Stockbridge.

Following four days of top class entertainment, the final was won on a tie break after Enqvist and opponent Mark Philippoussis had each won a set apiece.

The trophy is a sterling silver pierced knop bowl standing 18cm in height and with a diameter of 19cm which sits on a hand-turned oak mahogany plinth and the Swede's name will be the first to be engraved on it.

The event was part of the ATP Champions Tour which brings together many of the greatest tennis players in history. To be eligible to compete on the Tour, players must have been either a World No. 1 during their competitive playing careers, a Grand Slam singles finalist, or a singles player in a victorious Davis Cup team; and they should have retired from the ATP circuit.

Play began on Thursday at 2pm in perfect conditions, when Australian Mark Philippoussis beat Greg Rusedski, then Wayne Ferreira beat Mikael Pernfors.

The evening session saw a repeat of the 2001 Wimbledon semi-final, and looked as though it would have the same result when Goran Ivanisevic went one set up against Tim Henman, thanks to some powerful serving, but the former UK number one fought back to take the game into a ten point tie break, which he won.

The day ended with a doubles match between Rusedski and Carlos Moya against Pernfors and Thomas Enqvist. With the score tied at 7-7, a tie break decided the fixture, and it was Pernfors and Enqvist who took the honours 7-2.

The sunny conditions continued on Friday when Tim Henman came back from a set down to Thomas Enqvist to draw level; however the Swede took the game on the tie break. Goran Ivanisevic and Mikael Pernfors then beat Wayne Ferreira and Mark Philippoussis in the doubles.

The evening session saw Carlos Moya beat his doubles partner Greg Rusedski 6-3, 7-5, before the man that everyone had come to see, John McEnroe made an appearance alongside Tim Henman in the doubles where they disposed of Philippoussis and Ferreira 8-5.



Unfortunately, the weather delayed the start of day three, and a superb effort from the volunteers made the court playable by 2.30; however McEnroe and Pernfors were unable to complete their first game when the rain returned and play was suspended.

The game eventually resumed around 6pm, and it was decided that it should be decided in one set, with the winner being first to reach eight. After a hard fought contest, McEnroe won 8-4.

Philippoussis then went one set up against Moya after a tie break, before the end of the day.

The match was due to re-start at 9am on Sunday, but once again the rain delayed play, and the set was eventually started just after 11am. Philippoussis continued where he left off and took the second set to win the match.



Enqvist then beat Ivanisevic by two sets to love after the big Croat suffered an injury although he played on with some discomfort.

John McEnroe and Wayne Ferreira then took to the court, but lasted only three games before the rain returned, and many thought that would be the end of the tennis for the day, but thankfully they were able to resume around 3.30pm. The former Wimbledon champion took just over 20 minutes to win the one-set match 6-3, and he accepted the Legends Trophy from Bill Drummond, managing partner of Brodies, receiving a standing ovation from the Edinburgh fans.

Just after 4pm, Mark Philippoussis and Thomas Enqvist arrived on court to contest the final, and after a ten minute warm up, the match began.

Philippoussis took the first set 6-4, playing some top class tennis, but Enqvist fought back strongly, winning the second set 7-5, then took the title on a tie break.

When asked about his plans, the champion told the Edinburgh Reporter: "I've never been to Scotland before so I'm looking forward to some sight-seeing now. My wife and son have travelled with me and he is very excited about seeing the castle. We have a few days before heading to Wimbledon for the second week."

Enqvist is a former Australian Open finalist who reached a career high ranking of number four in the world. For nearly a decade he was one of the most consistent players on the ATP Tour, finishing in the world's top ten on four occasions. He won 19 ATP Tour titles and helped the Swedish team to reach the final of the Davis Cup in 1996 and 1997.

Despite the Edinburgh weather, some fantastic tennis was witnessed and every player was a credit to their profession, chatting to the fans, signing autographs and posing for photographs.

Whilst there were plenty of laughs along the way as the players interacted with the crowd, the competitive spirit that carried them through their careers was still evident, and as Mikael Pernfors told the Edinburgh Reporter; "None of us have come to Edinburgh to lose."



Special mention also must go to the many volunteers who did such good work drying the court in difficult circumstances and generally helping fans, and also to the ball boys and girls, supplied by Tennis Scotland, who did a fine job.

Afterwards organisers issued the following statement: "We apologise to all ticket-buyers who have faced long periods of frustration whilst waiting for play to resume. We share their disappointment.

"We were assured that the roof, which was designed specifically for this event, would allow play to continue in wet conditions. However, the canopy has proven to be inadequate in the very wet and blustery weather and we are hugely disappointed in its performance.

"We will be looking into the reasons for this in consultation with our contractors and we will be seeking solutions for the 2014 event.

"Every effort has been made by tournament organisers to ensure play can be resumed as quickly as possible during dry periods. We were pleased that John McEnroe and the rest of the players were able to put on a show during the two hour window of fair weather we had yesterday.

"We are grateful to all the fans who have supported the event despite the adversity we have faced and for their patience during periods of frustration. We will be carrying out a full debrief at the conclusion of the tournament and will be communicating directly with ticket holders for yesterday's

play.”

Photographs by John Preece

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