Lake pulls off another sweep at Keowee Key tourney

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SALEM — He knows it's getting to that point where it probably won't last much longer, but Keowee Key tennis pro Andy Lake proved on Saturday afternoon he can still claim bragging rights over his nephew Bobby Lake.

With Bobby ahead 3-1 in the finals of the Keowee Key Pro Tennis Invitational singles tournament against his uncle, Andy stormed back to take a 5-4 advantage, before the match went into a seven-point tiebreaker after the score was brought back to 5-5.

From there though, Andy never trailed, as Bobby double-faulted on his final serve to give his uncle the 7-3 edge in the tiebreaker, and a 6-5 victory in the match.

It marked the second straight year Andy swept titles in both singles and doubles play in the tournament, as he teamed with Trent Constance, a teammate of Bobby at Appalachian State, on Friday for the doubles crown.

And by claiming the championship against his nephew in a highly contested finals match, it made for a particularly sweet victory for Andy.

"I figured he's at that point now where I'm probably not going to beat him too many more times, and maybe I was hoping he'd get a little tight and give me a chance to get back in there," Andy said. "He played pretty strong except for that double fault at the end."

Despite jumping out to a 1-0 lead in the finals, things certainly looked tough for Andy early in the sweltering heat, as he quickly fell behind with Bobby running up the lead to 3-1.

But despite the heat, Andy said fatigue didn't play a part in the finals, as it just took a few opportunities to help him come from behind.

"He should have won that game when I was serving at 3-1," Andy said. "But then I hit a forehand to break him and I kind of got rolling a little bit again, but he played well."

Andy did say fatigue played a factor early in the day, particularly during his opening-round victory over Seth Rose, which came by a score of 6-3.

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And after cooling down, Andy ran away with a 6-0 decision over Arthur Novoseletsky, which featured the native of Russia ripping off his shirt partly due to frustration, and partly to get some laughs from the gallery.

The path to the title round was similar for Bobby in the heat, as he advanced out of the first round with a lengthy tiebreaker win over Gerrit Disbergen before taking down Constance with relative ease by a score of 6-2.

"He had a tough match and he was dying up (on the upper court)," Andy said. "But the second round helped him playing against Trent, so he had a little confidence."

All told, Andy's earnings from the weekend came to $1,150, as he continued the tradition of the Keowee Key tennis pro winning the singles titles since the tournament's inception four years ago.

"I'm really not sure what to do now," Andy said. "I think people probably think it's fixed now, but yesterday I got lucky and today I was down. Even last year I was kind of in the same boat, so one of these days I guess it's going to end at some point."

His bragging rights against Bobby, at least in the short term, could also end quickly, as they'll square off next Sunday at the Yonahlossee Resort in North Carolina.

Bobby's father Bob, also the head tennis coach at Appalachian State, runs the tennis program at the resort, which will host the Independence Day Round Robin exhibition match next weekend.

"I'm sure he'll have a week off to kind of absorb everything and come after me again," Andy said.

No matter what the result there, Andy will still hold bragging rights over Bobby in Keowee Key for at least one more year.