

Sunrise, Sept 13 (AP) - Dudi Sela's four-set win over Carlos Berlocq on Friday lifted Israel into a 1-1 tie with Argentina in their Davis Cup World Group playoff.

Leonardo Mayer defeated Bar Botzer 6-4, 3-6, 6-2, 6-1 in the first match of the day, but Sela responded with a 6-3, 6-7 (5-7), 6-2, 6-2 victory against Berlocq at the Sunrise Tennis Center. The event was originally a home match for Israel in Tel Aviv. But the International Tennis Federation moved it to Florida because of safety concerns.

Scoring updates on the loudspeaker were given in Hebrew and English. The cheering sections were split evenly, with both groups wearing the blue and white of their nation's flags.

The best-of-five competition resumes with a doubles match on Saturday and then reverse singles on Sunday. The winning country becomes one of 16 teams that will compete to win the 2015 Davis Cup. The loser will play next year in World Group II.

It was Sela's second win over Berlocq in the past couple of weeks. Sela, ranked 84th in the world, beat No. 67 Berlocq in four sets in the first round of the U.S. Open on Aug. 25.

Argentina, which has finished second in the Davis Cup four times, is 2-0 all-time against Israel. But Sela's victory was the first time Israel had won a Davis Cup match against Argentina.

The 25th-ranked Mayer broke Botzer's serve to start the match. In the second set, Botzer trailed 3-2 when he broke Mayer's serve. Mayer double-faulted in the game's decisive point.

Mayer, 27, took 5-0 leads in the third and fourth sets against the 20-year-old Botzer, who is ranked No. 776 and was making his Davis Cup debut.

"It was not easy playing against an opponent with such a low ranking - the ball never seemed to come over the net cleanly," Mayer said. "I had never heard of him, but he played well. He played better than his ranking."

Despite the loss, Botzer was upbeat. He said he even enjoyed when the Argentina fans started singing.

"I had the time of my life," he said. "I wasn't afraid. I wasn't nervous except maybe the first game. It was my first time playing someone in the top 200, (let alone) top 30. I think I played a pretty decent match."