USTA TO ELEVATE SUPPORT OF COLLEGE TENNIS

USTA Player Development to Offer New, Guaranteed Pro Wild Cards for American Collegians

‘College MatchDay’ Series to Anchor Collegiate Event Slate Coming to USTA National Campus, the new Home of American Tennis, in Orlando

FLUSHING, N.Y., September 2, 2016 – The USTA today announced that it will increase its support of college tennis as an aspirational destination for juniors, a pathway toward the professional game and as a spectator sport through a variety of initiatives, including utilizing the USTA National Campus in Orlando, Fla., as a showcase for the collegiate game.

The USTA has consolidated and strengthened its Collegiate Tennis division, which will be headquartered at the USTA National Campus, the new Home of American Tennis. USTA Collegiate National Coach Stephen Amritraj, who spearheaded the 10-plus tournament USTA Pro Circuit Collegiate Series initiative, will take over as Director, Collegiate Tennis – a hybrid role that will lead a team, including former IMG Academy college placement director Scott Treibly, focusing on several elements aimed at growing college tennis as a whole.

Additionally, USTA Player Development will increase its funding and support to American collegians in the 2016-17 season, in part by offering guaranteed wild cards into USTA Pro Circuit events for any American men’s and women’s winners of the ITA All-American Championships, USTA/ITA National Indoor Intercollegiate Championships and Oracle/ITA Masters.

"We’re incredibly excited about a united USTA Collegiate group to continue promoting and growing the collegiate game," Amritraj said. “College tennis programs, collectively, are investing 350 million dollars per year in our sport, which is a tremendous level of commitment that we’re eager to support, especially considering that the top two American men on tour right now each played four years in college.”

“What we’re seeing now with John Isner and Steve Johnson proves how viable college tennis is as a development pathway toward a professional career,” said USTA Player Development General Manager Martin Blackman. “By offering top American college players more opportunities for professional match experience, we hope to facilitate their transition to the pro game and support their progression into the Top 100 and beyond.”

“Continuing to invest human and financial resources into college tennis is important for both the health of the collegiate game and the vitality of American tennis as a whole,” said Virgil Christian, Senior Director, Collegiate Tennis, USTA. “We’ve seen the volume of college tennis matches on TV and digital networks increase significantly over the past several years, and we hope to be able to utilize the new USTA National Campus as a large-scale platform to continue showcasing the college game.”

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The USTA is the national governing body for the sport of tennis in the U.S. and the leader in promoting and developing the growth of tennis at every level -- from local communities to the highest level of the professional game. A not-for-profit organization with more than 715,000 members, it invests 100% of its proceeds in growing the game. It owns and operates the US Open, the highest-attended annual sporting event in the world, and launched the Emirates Airline US Open Series, linking seven summer WTA and ATP World Tour tournaments to the US Open. In addition, it owns approximately 90 Pro Circuit events throughout the U.S. and selects the teams for the Davis Cup, Fed Cup, Olympic and Paralympic Games. The USTA’s philanthropic entity, the USTA Foundation, provides grants and scholarships and helps under-resourced youth and individuals with disabilities, and supports wounded, ill and injured service members, veterans and their families. For more information on the USTA, log on to usta.com, “like” the official Facebook page, facebook.com/usta, or follow @usta on Twitter.