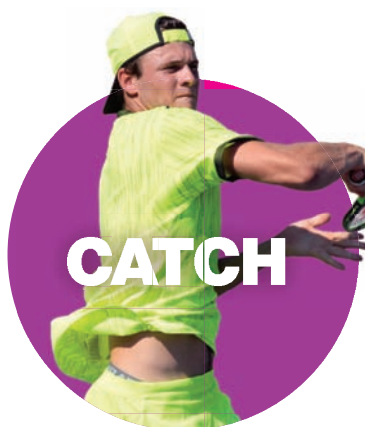




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Since Nordic Naturals founding, right here in Aptos in 1995, we have been involved in many events and causes. All are worthwhile, but none quite compares with the Challenger, a personal favorite thanks to my own love of tennis, and because it showcases the spirit of Nordic Naturals—our commitment to help people of every age live life to its fullest.

For over two decades Nordic Naturals has created premium essential nutrient products that optimize human health, and this includes support for top physical and mental performance. This is why the Challenger is so important to us. Previous Grand Slam finalist and 2014 champion Marcos Baghdatis, as well as the Santa Cruz Warriors, are athletes who benefit from Nordic Naturals. We're inspired by their successes as we work each day to create innovative products for athletes—professional and amateur—and for all those driven to succeed at the biggest game of all—life!

We're honored to have you join us at the Seascope Sports Club for this spectacular sporting event.

In health,

Joar Opheim  
Nordic Naturals CEO & Founder



Fellow Tennis Fans,

We welcome you to the historic 30<sup>th</sup> annual \$100,000 ATP Challenger in beautiful Aptos, California. Once again, Santa Cruz County Bank is delighted to partner with Seascope Sports Club and Nordic Naturals to present this year's 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Challenger tournament. It is an honor to be involved in supporting this tournament that brings professional tennis to our community while supporting local non-profit organizations.

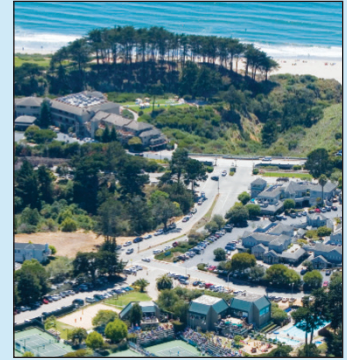
As a community bank founded by local business professionals for the Santa Cruz community, we take great pride in serving the banking needs of local residents and businesses. Our entire staff is actively engaged in our community, serving as volunteers on a year-round basis on nonprofit boards, and participating as fundraisers for charitable events.

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We look forward to meeting fellow tennis fans and participants throughout the week, while enjoying the talents of the top tennis players in the world. Congratulations and good luck to all the athletes competing in the 2017 Challenger.

David V. Heald  
President & CEO, Santa Cruz County Bank

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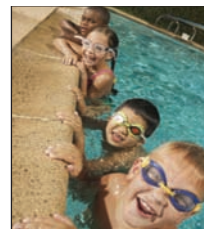
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## Seascape Challenger Celebrates 30-Year Anniversary

By: Brooke Cohan

Aptos is known as a quaint seaside town with an idyllic setting, but for tennis fans it is known as the place to be if you want to witness outstanding professional tennis in an up-close and personal environment. The ATP/USTA Challenger, held at the Seascape Sports Club for the past 30 summers, has been a playground for tennis greats such as Andy Murray, Patrick Rafter, Michael Chang, James Blake, Marcos Baghdatis, Mardy Fish, John Isner, Milos Raonic, Sam Querrey, Steve Johnson, Tommy Haas, Radek Stepanek, Jack Sock and the Bryan brothers. For these, and many other players, the tournament has also been a stepping-stone to greater success on the ATP World Tour.

It all started when Paul Kepler, the current owner of Seascape Sports Club, and the Kepler family teamed up with Judy

Welsh and teaching professional Mark Elliott to purchase the Aptos-based sports club in 1986. Little did they know they would soon play an important role in shaping men's professional tennis for the next 30 years. In fact, today the Seascape Challenger is the longest running Men's Challenger in the U.S. and the second longest in the world.

Challenger tournaments are part of the USTA Pro Circuit and provide players with an opportunity to gain the professional ranking points they need to compete on the major pro tours. The Seascape owners were first approached in 1987, shortly after taking over the Club, and asked by the USTA if they were interested in hosting the Cal Open, a \$50,000 women's development tournament seeking a new location. Although Aptos was a small town compared to many tournament



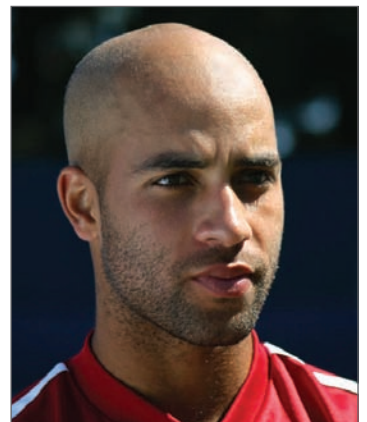
Andy Murray



Michael Chang



Pat Rafter



James Blake



Marcos Baghdatis



John Isner



Milos Raonic



Tommy Haas

spots, the appeal of Seascape was partially due to its unique center court venue that seats 1,200 spectators and had a history of hosting big name charitable tournaments such as the Merv Griffin Circuit, which included players such as Bjorn Borg, Jimmy Connors and Arthur Ashe.

“We knew this was an opportunity too good to pass up and thought securing a major tournament like this would be good for the Club and for the community,” explained Kepler. “At the time we weren’t sure exactly how it would work out, but we jumped at the chance and it ended up being a great decision.”

The Cal Open officially moved to Seascape in 1987 and over the next two years included top women’s players such as Rosie Casals, Kathy Jordan and Melissa Gurney. The Club also decided to add a small men’s tournament (non-sanctioned) as an extra component to the Cal Open that



Paul Kepler



Judy Welsh

first year. The response was so strong from players that the next year the USTA added an officially sanctioned \$25,000 Men’s Challenger, along with the Cal Open, and the total prize money for the combined tournaments grew to \$75,000.

In 1989, the WTA stopped supplying the \$50,000 in prize money for the women’s tournament, while the USTA agreed to provide the Club with a portion of the prize money for the men’s tournament. Over the next several years the Men’s Challenger continued to grow in popularity and became the primary event. According to Judy Welsh, an original co-owner and tournament director for the past 30 years, the men’s event was a natural fit for Seascape and was easier to manage financially.

“Sponsorships are key for hosting a tournament of this size and caliber,” said Welsh. “We were fortunate early on, with the help of Club member Bob Fennell, to

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line up Safeway and Seven-Up as primary sponsors. That helped us kick off the early years of the Men's Challenger and become an established tournament."

After the Safeway/Seven-up sponsorship concluded, Comerica Bank stepped in as the title sponsor for the next eleven years. For the past two years Nordic Naturals has been the title sponsor and Santa Cruz County Bank has been the presenting sponsor.

Rick Kepler, Paul's son and head teaching professional at the Club for many years, was actively involved in the tournament from being the player representative to overseeing the tournament desk, housing, ball kids, and often acting as co-director. In the early years Rick frequently played in the tournament as well.



Rick Kepler

"As a former player, I had a lot of empathy for the players and wanted to make sure we did everything possible to make the tournament enjoyable and easy for them," said Kepler. "We worked very hard to get great accommodations for them—often housing their families and in a few cases even their dog. Being away from home, if they needed anything, we did our best to help them out."

"The members have really embraced housing the players, as well as officials, over the years," said Welsh. "Many families would host the same people for years at a time and become lifelong friends. It has been a special way our tournament really created personal bonds between the players, officials and the members."

Welsh recalled one favorite memory about Patrick Rafter and his host family. The members hosting both worked full time and had not expected Patrick and his brother to arrive for a few days. The Rafter duo ended up in town several days early and the hosts had not had time to clean the house, but they agreed to let them in early with their apologies. When they arrived home that evening, the house had been vacuumed, dishes washed, and beds made. Patrick and his

*Continued on page 10*

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# Nordic Naturals Challenger

presented by  **SANTA CRUZ COUNTY BANK**



## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

August 4 – 13, 2017



<b>First Friday</b> Nordic Naturals Wildcard Championship "Shootout"	<b>Friday</b> 4:00 pm
<b>Opening Day of Qualifying</b> Qualifying Matches	<b>Saturday</b> 9:00 am
<b>Pro Am Day</b> Qualifying Matches Pro-Am Tennis Tournament Qualifying Matches Pro-Am Dinner: <i>Seascope Foods*</i>	<b>Sunday</b> 10:00 am 2:45 pm 4:30 pm 5:00 pm
<b>USTA Kids Day &amp; USTA League Day</b> <b>Hosted by Martinelli's and Granite</b> 1st Round Matches <i>Invitation Only Party at Seascope Beach Resort</i>	<b>Monday</b> 11:00 am 5:30 pm
<b>First Round Matches Completed</b> 1st Round Matches Special Sponsor Clinic Hospitality: <i>TBD*</i>	<b>Tuesday</b> 11:00 am 4:00 pm 5:30 pm
<b>Second Round Matches Begin</b> 2nd Round Matches Hospitality: <i>Sanderlings*</i>	<b>Wednesday</b> 11:00 am 5:30 pm
<b>Santa Cruz County Bank Day</b> 2nd Round Matches Hospitality: <i>Seascope Foods*</i>	<b>Thursday</b> 11:00 am 5:30 pm
<b>Granite Construction Day</b> Quarter Final Matches Hospitality: <i>Seascope Foods*</i>	<b>Friday</b> 11:00 am 5:30 pm
<b>Pink Day</b> Semi-Final Matches Hospitality: <i>Sid's Smokehouse*</i> <i>Pink Day Matches Begin at 9am</i>	<b>Saturday</b> 11:00 am 1:30 pm
<b>Finals Day</b> Pink Day Finals Wheelchair Tennis Clinic Challenger Finals Hospitality: <i>Sid's Smokehouse*</i>	<b>Sunday</b> 11:00 am 11:00 am 1:00 pm 1:30 pm
<b>Monday through Friday "Feature Match"</b>	<b>6:00 pm</b>

\*Wine provided by **Bargetto's**, **Hunter Hill Vineyards**, **Pelican Ranch Winery**, **Stockwell Cellars**, and **Margins Wine**



# USTA "Kids Day"

Thanks to all the ATP Pros; Seascope Sports Club Tennis Director; Mike Schiro, Outreach Chair; the United States Tennis Association, USTA NorCal, Martinelli's Gold Medal and Granite Construction Company for their continued support for Kid's Day.

Hundreds of young children from YMCA groups and local schools have received free tennis lessons over the many years. We look forward to more children enjoying the tennis in 2017! 🍏



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brother said they came from a big family of eleven and were used to helping out around the house.

Rafter went on to win the Challenger that year, 1993, and followed it up by beating highly ranked Pete Sampras in Indianapolis six weeks later. Local fans were very proud in 1997 and 1998 when Rafter won the U.S. Open and went on to be ranked No. 1 in the world in 1999.

It takes some 200 volunteers to put on the Challenger each year. Seascope members, and others from the local community, have stepped up to serve in many capacities and make the event possible. “We couldn’t do it without our great volunteers,” said Kepler. “Not only helping with the housing, but they work with us to handle ticket sales, the tournament desk, parking, ball kids and hospitality.”



The vineyard, sustainably farmed by Bret and Carol Sisney, is located in Santa Lucia Highlands, a premier region known for quality Pinot Noir and Chardonnay.

*Chardonnay* Aromas of apple, melon, and citrus balance well with a satisfying butterscotch and vanilla finish.

*Pinot Noir* Barreled in select French oak, the wine is deeply colored, offering concentrated layers of cherry, currant, and spice with a hint of caramel.

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# Winnie Kepler

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Winnie Johnsen, a longtime Club member, has been involved with the tournament as a volunteer and spectator since the very beginning. “Early on I was Judy’s assistant ‘gofer’. It is great to see how much the tournament has grown and how much the Club members have helped out by volunteering their time,” she said.

USTA officials also enjoy the Seascape tournament and many of them have been working it for years. Brian Earley, currently the Head Referee for the U.S. Open, was one of the early USTA Supervisors at the Seascape Challenger for nine years starting in 1990. For seven of those years he was in charge of all USTA supervisors and liked Aptos so much he assigned himself to work at Seascape.

“It is such a great place for a tournament with the stadium and the people watching from the balconies,” Earley said. “It’s a small venue, but it really feels like a big match and then, of course, you can look right out and see the ocean.”

Earley explained that running a Challenger event takes a huge commitment from the hosting organization, because it is not always a money maker. “Seascape made it work and the commitment was from the heart. I think they realize the

Challenger is good for the Club and allows them to offer their members a chance to see the highest level of professional tennis in their own backyard.”

Gabe Pace, currently the Chief Umpire and a Club member, got his first start as a linesman for the Challenger in 1987 and has worked every year since then. “Aptos is such a beautiful location and the cooler weather is a nice change,” said Pace. “We attract officials from all over the country and even a few international ones. Many of them have a regular rotation moving on from Aptos to an ATP Master’s level tournament in Cincinnati, and then on to the U.S. Open.”

Along with the great tennis, the Seascape Challenger offers up some fun and socializing for the players, officials and fans. According to Kepler, the vibe at the Challenger has changed a bit since the early days when the players would often party late into the night. The present day players have gotten much more serious and currently focus more on fitness, sleep and nutrition.

“I remember how big the parties used to be here. In 2000, the Bryan brothers had a band and were playing at the Player’s Party in the clubhouse until late in the evening. Bob was on

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Bryan Brothers, Doubles Champions, 1998 & 2000;  
with Rick, Jordan, Haley and Devan Kepler



Easter Seals, Alzheimer's and now, in its second year, Pink Day, supporting local cancer charities. Kepler estimates the Challenger has raised over \$1 million for these worthy organizations.



the guitar and Mike was playing drums. The next day Mike had a sore wrist from so much drumming, but luckily had a late match so he could rest it.” Mike went on to win his next two matches, Bob prevailed as the singles champion, and the brothers won the doubles title as well.

Seascape is proud to have supported many philanthropic fundraisers and activities as part of the tournament including

Kepler sees a long and bright future for the Challenger. His goal is to increase the prize money to attract even more top players. “If we can keep our current sponsors happy, and continue to add new sponsors every year, we will do this forever. It’s so much fun and the adrenaline rush is addictive. For those of us who play tennis—and even for those who don’t—we cannot wait until the next Challenger comes to town—our town—Aptos, California.”

## NORDIC NATURALS CHALLENGER PRESENTED BY SANTA CRUZ COUNTY BANK APTOS, CA • AUGUST 5-13



### TOURNAMENT INFO

**Site:** Seascope Sports Club – Aptos, Calif.

**Websites:** [www.seascopesportsclub.com/challenger](http://www.seascopesportsclub.com/challenger)  
[www.procircuit.usta.com](http://www.procircuit.usta.com)

**Facebook:** Seascope Sports Club

**Twitter:** @SSCTournaments

**Qualifying Draw Begins:** Saturday, Aug. 5

**Main Draw Begins:** Monday, Aug. 7

**Main Draw:** 32 Singles / 16 Doubles

**Surface:** Hard / Outdoor

**Prize Money:** \$100,000

**Tournament Director:**

Judy Welsh, (831) 251-0004, [sscjudyw@gmail.com](mailto:sscjudyw@gmail.com)

**Tournament Press Contact:**

Haley Kepler (831) 334-0221, [haleykepler4@gmail.com](mailto:haleykepler4@gmail.com)

**USTA Communications Contact:**

Amanda Korba, (914) 697-2219, [korba@usta.com](mailto:korba@usta.com)

### PRIZE MONEY / POINTS

SINGLES:	Prize Money	Ranking Points
Winner	\$14,400	100
Runner-up	\$8,480	60
Semifinalist	\$5,020	35
Quarterfinalist	\$2,920	18
Round of 16	\$1,720	8
Round of 32	\$1,040	0

**DOUBLES:** Prize Money (per team)

Winner	\$6,200
Runner-up	\$3,600
Semifinalist	\$2,160
Quarterfinalist	\$1,280
Round of 16	\$720

### COMMUNITY EVENTS

**Sunday, Aug. 6** – Pro-Am, 2:45 p.m.

**Monday, Aug. 7** – USTA Kids' Day and USTA League Day

**Saturday, Aug. 12** – Pink Day Matches, 9 a.m.

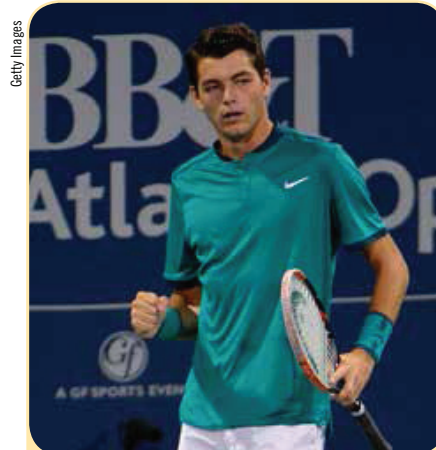
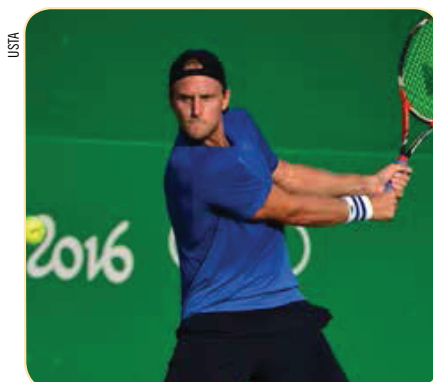
**Sunday, Aug. 13** – Pink Day Finals, 11 a.m.;  
Wheelchair Tennis Clinic, 11 a.m.

## USTA PRO CIRCUIT MEN'S TENNIS RETURNS TO APTOS FOR 30TH YEAR, CONCLUDES US OPEN WILD CARD CHALLENGE

The **Nordic Naturals Challenger** presented by **Santa Cruz County Bank** returns to Aptos for the 30th consecutive year. It is the second-longest running men's event on the USTA Pro Circuit, trailing only Little Rock, Ark., which has been taking place for 36 years. The tournament increased its prize money from \$75,000 to \$100,000 in 2012 and is one of five \$100,000 Challengers on the USTA Pro Circuit calendar this year.

Aptos concludes the **US Open Wild Card Challenge**, which will award a men's and women's wild card into the 2017 US Open by utilizing hard-court pro tournaments this summer. The men's challenge began the week of July 10. In the men's wild card challenge, USTA Player Development considers all American results worldwide. Therefore, both USTA Pro Circuit tournaments (including Aptos) and international ATP World Tour events on any professional outdoor hard-court surface over the five weeks will be included.

The American man and American woman who earn the most ATP World Tour and WTA ranking points from their best results will earn main-draw wild cards into the US Open. The men's challenge will include the best three results during the five-week time period. Only Americans who did not otherwise earn direct entry into the US Open are eligible. In the event of a tie, the player with the best ATP (on Aug. 14) or best WTA (on Aug. 7) singles ranking will be awarded the wild card.



*Taylor Fritz, 19, qualified for Wimbledon this summer, losing to fellow American John Isner in the first round. Last year, he reached a career-high No. 53 and became youngest American to reach ATP final since 1989.*

This tournament will be streamed live on [www.procircuit.usta.com](http://www.procircuit.usta.com).

Notable players competing in Aptos include:

**Taylor Fritz, 19, Rancho Santa Fe, Calif.**

- Took time off following the ATP Masters Series event in Indian Wells, Calif., to complete eight weeks of training ahead of the grass season.
- Qualified for Wimbledon this year, losing to fellow American John Isner in the first round. Also reached the quarterfinals of the ATP grass-court Challenger in Ilkley, Great Britain, in June.
- Advanced to the third round of Indian Wells in March and reached the final of the \$125,000 USTA Pro Circuit Challenger in Dallas in February.
- Last year, reached a career-high ranking of No. 53 and became the youngest

*Denis Kudla competed in the 2016 Olympics in Rio and reached the fourth round of Wimbledon in 2015.*

\*Player field subject to change

American to reach an ATP final (Memphis) since Michael Chang in 1989.

- Also in 2016, competed in all four Grand Slam events and reached the quarterfinals of the ATP tournament in Acapulco.
- Son, Jordan Taylor, was born in January, with wife Racquel.

**Denis Kudla, 24, Arlington, Va./Tampa, Fla.**

- In 2017, has reached the quarterfinals or better at four USTA Pro Circuit and ITF Pro Circuit Challengers. Also reached the final round of qualifying at Wimbledon this year and won his first-round match at the ATP grass-court event in Newport, R.I., this July.
- Made his Olympic debut in Rio in 2016.
- Also in 2016, won his first-round match at the Australian Open, competed in the US Open and won matches at the ATP events in Indian Wells, Miami, Houston and Madrid.
- Reached the semifinals of the US Open Series event in Atlanta in 2015 for his best ATP result.
- Earned a wild card into Wimbledon in 2015 and reached the fourth round for his career-best Grand Slam singles result.
- Holds seven USTA Pro Circuit and ITF Pro Circuit singles titles, as well as six doubles titles.
- Was ranked as high as No. 3 in the world junior rankings and reached the 2010 US Open boys' singles final.
- Born in Kiev, Ukraine.

**Bjorn Fratangelo, 24, Pittsburgh, Pa.**

- In 2017, qualified for the Australian Open and French Open and reached first ATP semifinal this July at the grass-court event in Newport, R.I., falling to John Isner. Also won matches at the ATP events in Indian Wells, Budapest, and Estoril.
- Made French Open main-draw debut in 2016 after earning a wild card by winning the USTA Pro Circuit Roland Garros Wild Card Challenge and won first-round match over Sam Querrey for his first career Grand Slam win.
- Also in 2016, qualified for the Australian Open – his first appearance in a Grand Slam main draw outside of the US Open – as well as Wimbledon. Also reached the third round of the US Open Series event in Winston-Salem, N.C., and qualified for the ATP events in Indian Wells, where he pushed world No. 1 Novak Djokovic to three sets in the second round, and Miami.
- Made Grand Slam main-draw debut at the 2015 US Open after winning the USTA Pro Circuit US Open Wild Card Challenge.
- Holds 10 USTA Pro Circuit and ITF Pro Circuit singles titles.
- Won the French Open boys' singles title in 2011, becoming the first American to win the Roland Garros boys' title since John McEnroe in 1977.
- Named after 11-time Grand Slam champion Bjorn Borg.
- Currently trains at the USTA National Campus at Lake Nona in Orlando, Fla.

**Mitchell Krueger, 23, Boca Raton, Fla.**

- Peaked at a career-high No. 169 in May after reaching the singles semifinals at the \$75,000 USTA Pro Circuit Challenger in Tallahassee. Also this year, reached a Challenger final in Australia.
- Won his first USTA Pro Circuit event in 2015 at the \$15,000 Futures in Los Angeles. Also holds ITF Pro Circuit titles in the Netherlands (2013) and China (2016).
- In 2014, won the doubles title at an ITF Pro Circuit event in

Australia and reached the singles quarterfinals or better at six events around the world.

- Was the top-ranked American junior boy in 2012, peaking at No. 5 in the world junior rankings.
- Advanced to the boys' singles semifinals at the French Open and Wimbledon in 2012 and turned pro that July.
- His father played college tennis at Texas A&M; mother is a tennis coach and played at Louisiana Tech.
- Currently trains at the USTA National Campus at Lake Nona in Orlando, Fla.

**Noah Rubin, 21, Long Island, N.Y.**

- Qualified for the 2017 Australian Open and won his first-round match; faced Roger Federer in the second round. Also qualified for the ATP clay-court event in Houston this April.
- Earned a spot in the main draw of the 2016 Australian Open for the first time after clinching the USTA Pro Circuit Australian Open Wild Card Challenge; advanced to the second round in Melbourne with a first-round upset of No. 17 Benoit Paire. His only other Grand Slam main-draw appearance to date came in 2014, when he earned a wild card into the US Open as the USTA Boys' 18s Nationals singles champion.
- Completed a standout freshman campaign at Wake Forest in May 2015, advancing to the NCAA singles final; became the first player in ACC men's tennis history to earn ACC Player of the Year and Freshman of the Year honors in one season, as well as the first ACC men's tennis Player of the Year in Wake Forest men's tennis history; was also named the ITA Rookie of the Year and earned All-America honors.
- In 2016, advanced to the quarterfinals or better at four USTA Pro Circuit Challengers, while also qualifying for the main draw at the ATP event in Indian Wells.
- Holds one USTA Pro Circuit singles title (\$50,000 Charlottesville, Va., in 2015) and one ITF Pro Circuit singles title (\$75,000 Launceston, Australia, in 2017).
- As a junior, won the 2014 Wimbledon junior title.
- Protégé of John McEnroe's at his Randall's Island, N.Y., academy.

**Tennys Sandgren, 25, Gallatin, Tenn.**

- Made his Grand Slam main-draw debut at the 2017 French Open after winning the Roland Garros Wild Card Challenge. Earned the wild card by winning the \$75,000 USTA Pro Circuit Challenger in Savannah, Ga., and by reaching the final of the \$100,000 Challenger in Sarasota, Fla. Had attempted to qualify for a Grand Slam main draw 12 times.
- Peaked at No. 100 in the world this June following the French Open after being ranked outside the Top 300 as recently as last year.
- Is on the comeback trail after having hip surgery in 2014, which sidelined him from February until after that year's US Open.
- Was a former University of Tennessee standout; reached the semifinals of the 2011 NCAA Championships.
- Holds 14 singles and 16 doubles titles on the USTA Pro Circuit and ITF Pro Circuit.
- In 2013, served as a Davis Cup practice partner for the U.S. team as it prepared to face Serbia in Boise, Idaho.

**Michael Mmoh, 19, Bradenton, Fla.**

- Currently ranked a career-high No. 172 in the world.
- Competed in the 2017 Australian Open main draw as a wild

*\*Player field subject to change*

card after winning the USTA Pro Circuit Australian Open Wild Card Challenge. Also qualified for the ATP event in Auckland, New Zealand, in 2017 and competed in the ATP Masters Series event in Miami and the ATP grass-court event in Newport, R.I., both as a wild card.

- Also advanced to the final of the \$25,000 USTA Pro Circuit Futures event in Wichita, Kan., this July.
- In 2016, made his Grand Slam main-draw debut at the US Open as a wild card as the USTA Boys' 18s national champion. Also qualified for the ATP's Memphis Open and competed in the main draw of the Masters 1000 event in Miami.
- Won his first USTA Pro Circuit Challenger title in fall 2016 at the \$50,000 event in Knoxville, Tenn. Holds four additional Futures titles.
- Reached the quarterfinals or better at four USTA Pro Circuit Challengers following the 2016 US Open.
- Peaked at No. 2 in the world junior rankings in 2015 after reaching the singles semifinals at the junior French Open and the quarterfinals at the junior US Open. Also competed in the junior Australian Open and Wimbledon that year, reaching the doubles semifinals at both tournaments.
- In 2014, went 5-0 in singles to help lead the U.S. to the Junior Davis Cup title.
- Was born in Saudi Arabia and is the son of former ATP professional and Nigerian Olympian Tony Mmoh.

Notable players competing in qualifying include:

#### **Tommy Paul, 20, Boca Raton, Fla.**

- Currently the men's leader of the US Open Wild Card Challenge after qualifying for and reaching the quarterfinals in Atlanta—his first ATP quarterfinal—and advancing to the semifinals of the \$75,000 USTA Pro Circuit Challenger in Winnetka, Ill.,
- Won the 2015 French Open junior singles title, becoming the sixth American ever to win the boys' championship in Paris; defeated fellow American Taylor Fritz in the first-ever all-U.S. boys' singles final at Roland Garros, dating back to 1947.
- Reached the final of the junior US Open in 2015, losing to Fritz, and the quarterfinals of junior Wimbledon.
- Peaked at a career-high No. 3 in the ITF World Junior Rankings in fall 2015.
- As a pro, won the \$15,000 Futures in Palm Coast, Fla., in February and the USTA Pro Circuit Collegiate Series event in Winston-Salem, N.C., this June. Holds six USTA Pro Circuit and ITF Circuit singles titles overall.
- This year, reached finals at the \$15,000 Futures in Orlando, Fla., and the \$25,000 Futures in Tulsa, Okla., and the semifinals of the \$75,000 Challenger in Savannah, Ga.
- In 2016, upset No. 8 seed and world No. 53 Paolo Lorenzi to advance to the second round of the ATP's U.S. Clay Court Championship in Houston.
- Served as a practice partner for the U.S. Davis Cup team in the quarterfinal tie against Croatia in Portland, Ore., in July 2016.

#### **Marcos Giron, 24, Thousand Oaks, Calif.**

- Won the 2014 NCAA singles title as a junior at UCLA, becoming the 11th Bruin to win the NCAA men's singles crown and the first to do so in eight years.

- Finished the 2013-14 season as the No. 1 college tennis player.
- On the strength of his NCAA title, received a wild card into the 2014 US Open, where he lost to fellow American John Isner in the first round.
- Claimed the men's title at the inaugural US Open American Collegiate Invitational, a tournament held at the US Open for U.S. college players, in 2014.
- Turned pro in 2014.
- Holds five USTA Pro Circuit singles titles, including the \$25,000 Futures in Long Beach, Calif., in 2017, and one ITF Pro Circuit singles title in China this year. Has also won three doubles titles.
- Had hip surgery in December 2015 and returned to competition in September 2016, reaching the quarterfinals or better at four events and winning one USTA Pro Circuit title. While recovering from surgery, he served as UCLA's men's tennis volunteer assistant coach.
- Served as a Davis Cup practice partner for the team's World Group Playoff in Chicago in 2014.

#### **Ray Sarmiento, 25, Rancho Cucamonga, Calif.**

- Graduated from USC in 2014, where he was a part of three NCAA Championship winning teams at USC.
- Earned five All-America honors throughout his collegiate career (four singles, one doubles). Also named the 2014 NCAA Tournament Player of the Year.
- Closed USC career with a 125-41 overall singles record and a 95-29 mark in doubles play.
- Also honored with the 2014 ITA/Arthur Ashe Jr. Southwest Region Sportsmanship and Leadership Award.
- Since playing on the pro tour, holds one ITF Pro Circuit singles title, won in France in 2016. Also holds three USTA Pro Circuit and ITF Pro Circuit doubles titles.

#### **Dennis Novikov, 23, San Jose, Calif.**

- In 2017, advanced to his first ATP quarterfinal at the grass-court event in Newport, R.I. Also reached the quarterfinals or better at three USTA Pro Circuit and ITF Pro Circuit Challengers.
- Qualified for and advanced to the second round of Wimbledon in 2016. Also advanced to the mixed doubles quarterfinals at the 2016 US Open.
- In 2016, won three \$50,000 USTA Pro Circuit Challenger doubles titles, while also qualifying for the ATP events in Miami and Delray Beach in singles.
- Holds eight singles and 10 doubles titles on the USTA Pro Circuit and ITF Pro Circuit.
- Represented the U.S. at the 2015 Pan American Games in Toronto, where he won the bronze medal in men's singles. Also in 2015, won Challenger singles titles in Cary, N.C., and Columbus, Ohio.
- Was the 2012 USTA Boys' 18s national champion in singles and doubles, which earned him wild-card entries into each main draw at the 2012 US Open. Became just the second USTA Boys' 18s champ in 15 years (the other being Jack Sock) to advance to the second round in singles at the Open; defeated 2013 Wimbledon semifinalist Jerzy Janowicz in the first round.
- Completed his sophomore year at UCLA in 2013 and turned pro that summer.
- Was born in Moscow and moved with his family to the U.S. as a 1-year-old.

\*Player field subject to change

**Mackenzie McDonald, 22, Los Angeles**

- Three-time singles All-American who turned pro in 2016 after his junior year at UCLA.
- Made college tennis history by sweeping both the 2016 NCAA singles and doubles titles, the first men's player in 15 years to do so. Also finished his final season ranked No. 1 in singles and doubles in the ITA collegiate rankings.
- In 2016, made his debut at the US Open as a wild card. Also last year, won the first USTA Pro Circuit singles title of his career at the \$10,000 Futures in Irvine, Calif.
- Won his second career USTA Pro Circuit singles title in 2017 at the \$25,000 Futures in Los Angeles.
- Holds six USTA Pro Circuit doubles titles.
- In 2015, won the American Collegiate Invitational, a tournament held at the US Open for college players.

**Bradley Klahn, 26, Poway, Calif.**

- Won the doubles title in early 2017 at the \$25,000 USTA Pro Circuit Futures in Calabasas, Calif., his first pro title since 2014. Also won a doubles title at an ITF Pro Circuit Challenger in Canada this summer.
- Spent 21 months away from tennis after undergoing back surgery to repair a herniated disk in early 2015, during which he contemplated retirement. In his first event back at the \$50,000 USTA Pro Circuit Challenger in Champaign, Ill., in November 2016, qualified and advanced to the quarterfinals.
- Won the 2010 NCAA men's singles title for Stanford and was a collegiate All-American in 2010, 2011 and 2012.
- Following his pro debut in 2012, received a wild card into qualifying at the 2012 US Open and subsequently won three matches to advance to the main draw, where he upset Top 50 player Jurgen Melzer in the first round. In doing so, became the first men's qualifying wild card to win a round at the US Open.
- Earned a main-draw wild card into the 2013 US Open by winning the USTA Pro Circuit US Open Wild Card Challenge. Also competed in the US Open main draw in 2014.
- In 2013, led the USTA Pro Circuit in prize money after reaching five singles finals and winning two singles titles.

**Christian Harrison, 23, Bradenton, Fla.**

- Did not compete from July 2013 to August 2015 after suffering a series of injuries.

- Is on the comeback trail after qualifying for the 2016 US Open—his first-ever Grand Slam main draw.
- Has won two USTA Pro Circuit singles titles in 2017 (\$25,000 events in Tulsa, Okla., and Wichita, Kan.). Won his first USTA Pro Circuit singles title in summer 2016 at the \$25,000 Futures in Champaign, Ill. Also holds one ITF-level singles title, won in Great Britain in 2013.
- Advanced to the doubles quarterfinals at the 2012 US Open with older brother and Top 50 player Ryan Harrison.

**Daniel Nguyen, 26, Oxnard, Calif.**

- Was a former standout college player at USC, clinching the 2009-10 and 2010-11 NCAA Team Championships for USC.
- Competed in qualifying at all four Grand Slam events in 2016. Competed in the main draw of the men's doubles event at the 2009 US Open, where he reached the second round.
- Holds 11 USTA Pro Circuit and ITF Pro Circuit singles titles, including three titles this year in Korea and Chinese Taipei.
- In doubles, has won seven USTA Pro Circuit and ITF Pro Circuit titles.
- Competing in second USTA Pro Circuit event since January after playing overseas in Asia and Australia this year.

**Jared Hiltzik, 23, Wilmette, Ill./Tampa, Fla.**

- Graduated in 2016 from the University of Illinois, where he earned three All-America honors, making him one of three Illini players ever to do so.
- Finished his collegiate career as the eighth-winningest singles player in program history, with 115 victories.
- Reached the quarterfinals of the NCAA tournament as a junior in 2015.
- Won his first career pro singles title at the \$25,000 USTA Pro Circuit Futures in Memphis, Tenn., this year; reached the semifinals at the \$25,000 Futures in Little Rock, Ark., the following week.
- Won his first USTA Pro Circuit doubles title in early 2016 at the USTA Pro Circuit Collegiate Series event in Winston-Salem, N.C., and then captured back-to-back doubles titles in Illinois in summer 2016. Also won a doubles title at an ITF Pro Circuit event in Israel this year.
- In July 2016, served as a practice partner with the U.S. Davis Cup team for its quarterfinal against Croatia in Portland, Ore.

\*Player field subject to change

## APTOS PAST WINNERS

Singles			Doubles	
Year	Winner	Runner-Up	Year	Winner
2016	Daniel Evans (GBR)	Cameron Norrie (GBR)	2016	Nicolaas Scholtz (RSA) – Tucker Vorster (RSA)
2015	John Millman (AUS)	Austin Krajicek (USA)	2015	Chris Guccione (AUS) – Artem Sitak (NZL)
2014	Marcos Baghdatis (CYP)	Mikhail Kukushkin (KAZ)	2014	Ruben Bemelmans (BEL) – Laurynas Grigelis (LTU)
2013	Bradley Klahn (USA)	Daniel Evans (GBR)	2013	Jonathan Erlich (ISR) – Andy Ram (ISR)
2012	Steve Johnson (USA)	Robert Farah (COL)	2012	Rik de Voest (RSA) – John Peers (AUS)
2011	Laurynas Grigelis (LTU)	Ilija Bozoljac (SRB)	2011	Carsten Ball (AUS) – Chris Guccione (AUS)
2010	Marinko Matosevic (AUS)	Donald Young (USA)	2010	Carsten Ball (AUS) – Chris Guccione (AUS)
2009	Chris Guccione (AUS)	Nick Lindahl (AUS)	2009	Carsten Ball (AUS) – Chris Guccione (AUS)
2008	Kevin Kim (USA)	Andrea Stoppini (ITA)	2008	Noam Okun (ISR) – Amir Weintraub (ISR)
2007	Donald Young (USA)	Bobby Reynolds (USA)	2007	Rajeev Ram (USA) – Bobby Reynolds (USA)
2006	Alex Kuznetsov (USA)	Go Soeda (JPN)	2006	Prakash Amritraj (IND) – Rohan Bopanna (IND)
2005	Andy Murray (GBR)	Rajeev Ram (USA)	2005	Nathan Healey (AUS) – Eric Taino (PHI)
2004	Kevin Kim (USA)	Frank Dancevic (CAN)	2004	Huntley Montgomery (USA) – Tripp Phillips (USA)
2003	Jeff Salzenstein (USA)	Dmitry Tursunov (RUS)	2003	Jan Hernych (CZE) – Uros Vico (ITA)
2002	Brian Vahaly (USA)	Noam Behr (ISR)	2002	Amir Hadad (ISR) – Martin Vassallo (ARG)
2001	Jeff Salzenstein (USA)	Jeff Morrison (USA)	2001	Brandon Hawk (USA) – Robert Kendrick (USA)
2000	Bob Bryan (USA)	Kevin Kim (USA)	2000	Bob Bryan (USA) – Mike Bryan (USA)
1999	Michael Hill (AUS)	Harel Levy (ISR)	1999	Michael Hill (AUS) – Scott Humphries (USA)
1998	Cecil Mamiit (PHI)	Takao Suzuki (JPN)	1998	Bob Bryan (USA) – Mike Bryan (USA)
1997	Jan-Michael Gambill (USA)	Wade McGuire (USA)	1997	Sebastien LeBlanc (CAN) – Jocelyn Robichaud (CAN)
1996	Albert Chang (CAN)	Brian MacPhie (USA)	1996	Sebastien LeBlanc (CAN) – Jocelyn Robichaud (CAN)
1995	Daniel Nestor (CAN)	Chris Woodruff (USA)	1995	Sebastien LeBlanc (CAN) – Brian MacPhie (USA)
1994	Shuzo Matsuoka (JPN)	Gianluca Pozzi (ITA)	1994	Brian MacPhie (USA) – Alex O'Brien (USA)
1993	Patrick Rafter (AUS)	Cristiano Caratti (ITA)	1993	Gilad Bloom (ISR) – Christian Saceanu (GER)
1992	Alex O'Brien (USA)	Byron Black (ZIM)	1992	Paul Annacone (USA) – Alex O'Brien (USA)
1991	Chuck Adams (USA)	Bryan Shelton (USA)	1991	Nduka Odizor (NGR) – Bryan Shelton (USA)
1990	Henrik Holm (SWE)	Brian Garrow (USA)	1990	Jeff Brown (USA) – Scott Melville (USA)
1989	Mark Kaplan (RSA)	Robbie Weiss (USA)	1989	Steve DeVries (USA) – Ted Scherman (USA)
1988	Brad Pearce (USA)	Tim Pawsat (USA)	1988	Jeff Klaparda (USA) – Peter Palandjian (USA)

# *Pink Day* At The **CHALLENGER** *Let's Smash Cancer!*

“We need to see every sunset.” That was April 2016, on a girl’s tennis trip to Maui. Lori Fischer, our sunset girl, had bravely survived three bouts of cancer and inspired us all. Amidst the beauty of Maui, we started talking about holding a tennis tournament to raise funds to fight cancer, which had impacted Lori and so many other friends and family members and Pink Day at the Challenger was born.

On our return home, a small group started meeting to see if we could pull it off as part of the Nordic Naturals 100K Challenger, held at Seascape in early August. What began as an idea for a fundraiser and silent auction, quickly expanded to a women’s tournament where everyone wore pink and could win prize money for playing tennis. According to one of our organizers, Winnie Kepler: “We thought, what more could a woman ask for, dress me up and pay me?”

That was the easy part, now how could we do it? We needed everything you could think of: donations, volunteers, supplies (lots of supplies) and a “how to”



book (which we didn’t have). But we did have passion and drive—and some food and drinks. We divided into idea groups and jumped right in. Lori agreed to be the chairperson and helped us focus our efforts on two organizations close to her heart—WomenCare and Jacob’s Heart. Sam and Tammi Brown, designed and ran the tennis tournament. Lori, Ann Wasserman and Adriane Naess worked hard securing donations, Maggie Driscoll (bless her big heart) designed our beautiful logo, set up our first website, did our banner, and helped with flyers. Winnie Kepler took on ticket sales, accounting, ordering supplies, and much more. We were fortunate that Ann managed the silent auction and Brooke Cohan handled the lunch catering and food set up. Jeanne Wilson and Lori organized and ran the raffle and everyone pitched in with everything else.

Somehow we pulled it all together and we are proud to say we netted over \$10,500, which was donated to Jacob’s Heart and WomenCare.

We are now on track for our Second Annual Pink Day Event, but without our dear friend and chairperson Lori Fischer, who lost her fight late last year. Tammi Brown, Adriane Naess, Ann Wasserman, Jeanne Wilson, Brooke Cohan, Winnie Kepler, Jody Muller, and Amy Harrington wish to thank everyone who attended last year’s event and hope you will join the fun and support the worthy cause this year. Even if you don’t play tennis, you can enjoy as a spectator, wear your pink, buy raffle tickets, check out the silent auction and be part of a memorable day to help smash cancer.

Lori this year is for you.

# Wheelchair Clinic & Exhibition 2017

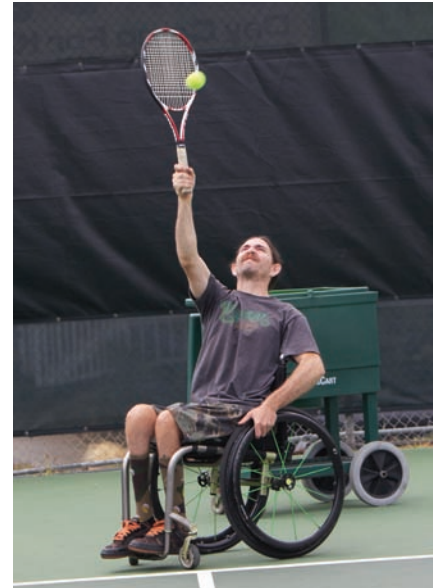
## Free Wheelchair Tennis Clinic!

Learn the techniques of this exciting Paralympic sport at a beautiful sport club in Aptos! Any age and skill levels invited to attend. Tennis chair available to try out. Food & drink will be available for purchase.

**Sunday, August 13th**  
**11:00am – 12:00pm**

**Seascape Sports Club**  
**1505 Seascape Blvd. — Aptos, CA 95003**

*For information, or to register for the event, contact  
Mike Schiro: (831) 840-9179, mschiro@hotmail.com*



Photos by Joyce Rideout



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# Thank You! Thank You! Thank You!

## Tournament Staff

Director:	Paul Kepler	Doctor:	Barbara MacFarlane
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Chief Umpire:	Gabe Pace	Sponsors:	Judy Welsh
USTA Supervisor:	Keith Crossland	NorCal TSR:	India Hoffman
Trainer:	Zsolt Hajdu	Stringer:	Star Stringing

## Volunteer Committee Chairpersons

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Outreach:	Mike Schiro	Announcers:	Chris Caputo Martin Sweet
Pro-Am:	Rick Kepler		
Hospitality:	Josie Cowden		
Tickets:	Ed Perez Jennifer Perez Anita Ridpath		



Dawn Juliano updated the New Scoreboard everyday for the Tournament. It might be the neatest Scoreboard ever!

Jordan Kepler offered his time doing special photography and shared his "DWIGHT R." tennis statue with the Challenger.

## Each Year Over 250 Volunteers Help in the Nordic Naturals Challenger presented by Santa Cruz County Bank



Ballkids love to be part of the Finals Presentation. They work all week to practice for this moment.



Leon Chaikin celebrates his Volunteer of the Year Award with friends and family.



Norbert Benecke accepts Leon's Award with a surprise "Song" since Leon could not make the Final's Presentation.



Tournament Ticket Sales & Tournament Desk require 50 volunteers daily.



Wheelchair Tennis Clinic and Exhibition



Linda Hitchcock did an incredible job organizing the ballperson's training.



Volunteers make new friends



Josie Cowden, Hospitality Chairperson, has some fun with Sponsor, Jill Andrews and Party Coordinator, Anna Lutz.



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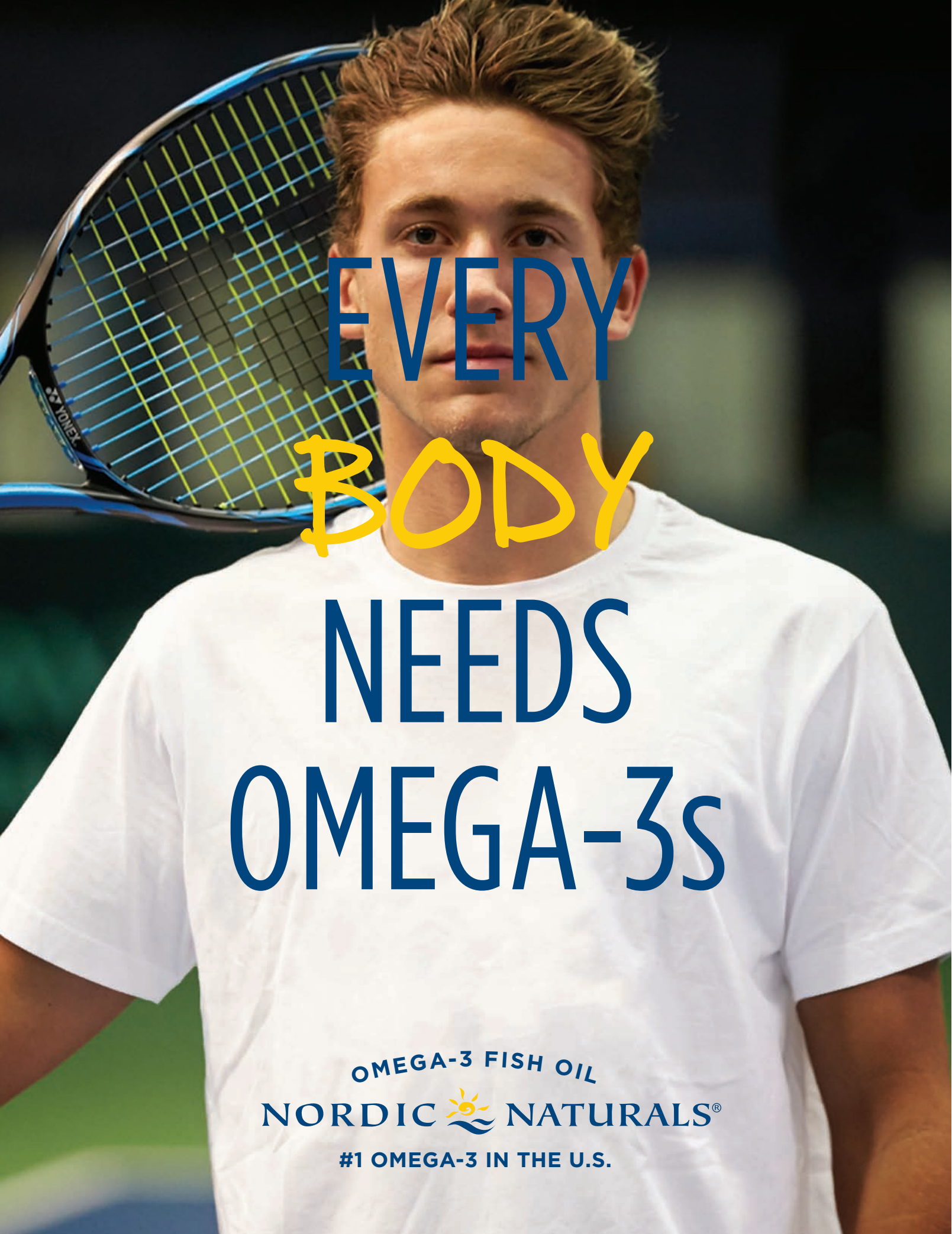
Photo: 2016 Finals Check Presentation Ceremony

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