

KNOXVILLE 2016 CHALLENGER

KNOXVILLE, TN • NOVEMBER 6-13



TOURNAMENT INFO

Site: Goodfriend Indoor Tennis Center at the University of Tennessee – Knoxville, Tenn.

Websites: www.knoxchallenger.com
www.proccircuit.usta.com

Facebook: The Knoxville Challenger

Twitter: @KnoxChallenger

Qualifying Draw Begins: Sunday, Nov. 6

Main Draw Begins: Tuesday, Nov. 8

Main Draw: 32 Singles / 16 Doubles

Surface: Hard / Indoor

Prize Money: \$50,000

Tournament Director:

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PRIZE MONEY / POINTS

SINGLES:	Prize Money	Ranking Points
Winner	\$7,200	80
Runner-up	\$4,240	48
Semifinalist	\$2,510	29
Quarterfinalist	\$1,460	15
Round of 16	\$860	7
Round of 32	\$520	0

DOUBLES:	Prize Money (per team)
Winner	\$3,100
Runner-up	\$1,800
Semifinalist	\$1,080
Quarterfinalist	\$640
Round of 16	\$360

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Daily Tennis Club Days

Thursday, Nov. 10 – Junior Night Out

USTA PRO CIRCUIT RETURNS TO KNOXVILLE, CONTINUES MEN'S AUSTRALIAN OPEN WILD CARD CHALLENGE

The **Knoxville 2016 Challenger** is taking place in Knoxville for the 10th consecutive year and the 13th year overall. (The tournament was not held from 2003 through 2006.) It is the only USTA Pro Circuit event held in the state of Tennessee.

Knoxville is the second of three consecutive men's hard-court tournaments that make up the **USTA Pro Circuit Australian Open Wild Card Challenge**, which will award a men's and women's wild card into the 2017 Australian Open. The USTA and Tennis Australia have a reciprocal agreement in which wild cards into the 2016 US Open and 2017 Australian Open are exchanged. The other tournaments in the men's portion of the wild card challenge are \$50,000 Challengers in Charlottesville, Va., held the week of Oct. 31, and Champaign, Ill., held the week of Nov. 14.

The three men's tournaments join three women's tournaments—the W.L. Amos Sr. Tennis Classic in Macon, Ga., held the week of Oct. 24; the Copperwynd Pro Women's Challenge, held the week of Oct. 31 in Scottsdale, Ariz.; and the Bush's \$50,000 Waco Showdown, held in Waco, Texas, the week of Nov. 7.

The American man who earns the most ATP ranking points at two of the three USTA Pro Circuit hard-court events will receive a wild card to compete in the main draw of the 2017 Australian Open, which will be held Monday, Jan. 16, through Sunday, Jan. 29. Only players who did not receive direct entry



Jacob Stuckey

2015 singles finalist Frances Tiafoe earned a wild card into the 2016 US Open and pushed John Isner to five sets in the first round.

into the Australian Open are eligible for the wild cards.

This tournament will be streamed live on www.proccircuit.usta.com. To follow the action, download the USTA Pro Circuit's phone app for smartphones and tablets by searching "proccircuit" in the Apple and Google Play stores.

Notable players competing in Knoxville include:

2015 Knoxville singles finalist **Frances Tiafoe**, who earned a wild card into the 2016 US Open and pushed John Isner to five sets in the first round. Tiafoe won the 2015 Har-Tru USTA Pro Circuit Wild Card Challenge to earn a spot in the French Open, which marked his Grand Slam debut. He also competed as a wild card at the 2015 US Open by winning the USTA Boys' 18s National Championships in Kalamazoo, Mich. Also last year, Tiafoe won his first USTA Pro Circuit singles title, at the \$15,000 Futures in Bakersfield, Calif. Tiafoe, who turned pro in early 2015, also reached three



Pete Staples/USTA

Denis Kudla made his Olympic debut in Rio earlier this year.

additional USTA Pro Circuit singles finals last year and served as a practice partner for the U.S. Davis Cup team against Great Britain in Scotland in March 2015. This year, he reached the quarterfinals or better at eight USTA Pro Circuit Challengers and played in the ATP events in Memphis, Houston and Indian Wells, where he won his first-round match over fellow rising young American Taylor Fritz. Tiafoe is now ranked a career-high No. 117 in the world. As a junior, Tiafoe peaked at No. 2 in the ITF World Junior Rankings in 2014 and reached the boys' singles semifinals at the 2014 US Open. He also won the prestigious Orange Bowl International Tennis Championships in December 2013 in Plantation, Fla., becoming the youngest boys' champion in the 67-year history of the event. Tiafoe is a product of the Junior Tennis Champions Center in College Park, Md., a USTA Certified Regional Training Center, where his father, an immigrant from Sierra Leone, worked as a custodian. He now trains with the USTA.

Denis Kudla, who made his Olympic debut in Rio this year. Kudla earned a wild card into Wimbledon in 2015 and reached the fourth round for his career-best Grand Slam singles result. In summer 2015, he reached the semifinals of the Emirates Airline US Open Series event in Atlanta (his best ATP result) and qualified for both Cincinnati and Montreal. This year, Kudla 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. Kudla holds seven USTA Pro Circuit and ITF Circuit singles titles, as well as five doubles titles. He was ranked as high as No. 3 in the world junior rankings and reached the boys' singles final at the 2010 US Open.

Tim Smyczek, who peaked at No. 68 in the world in April 2015 after qualifying for the main draw of the Australian Open and winning his first-round match. In the second round, he became a top storyline after facing Rafael Nadal and almost pulling off an upset, falling to the Spaniard in a five-set thriller, 6-2, 3-6, 6-7 (2), 6-3, 7-5. During the match, Smyczek was heralded for his sportsmanship after giving Nadal a first serve when a fan yelled out during Nadal's service toss in the final game of the fifth set. Following the 2015 Australian Open, Smyczek won the \$100,000 USTA Pro Circuit Challenger in Dallas for his fifth USTA Pro Circuit singles title, and that October, he won his sixth title here in Tiburon. This year, he reached the semifinals of the USTA Pro Circuit Challengers in Dallas and Tiburon, Calif., and advanced to the quarterfinals of the ATP event in Delray Beach, Fla., as well as qualified and upset John Isner en route to the third round in Miami. Smyczek has played in all four Grand Slam tournaments during his career, advancing to the second round or better at the US Open each year from 2012 to 2014, highlighted by a third-round showing in 2013. He also won his first-round match at this year's Australian Open. Smyczek regularly trains at Saddlebrook Resort in Tampa, Fla., and once lived with fellow American Mardy Fish for a year while training there.

Stefan Kozlov, 18, who won the first two USTA Pro Circuit singles titles of his career this year at the \$25,000 Futures events in Los Angeles in January and Little Rock, Ark., in April; he also won his first-round match at the ATP grass-court event in Newport, R.I., this summer, won an ITF Circuit event in Canada in March and captured the doubles title at the \$50,000 Challenger in Winnetka, Ill., in June. He also spent this fall competing overseas in China and Vietnam, where he reached one singles final and one doubles final. A junior standout, Kozlov peaked at No. 2 in the world junior rankings in 2014, when he reached the junior boys' finals at both Wimbledon and the Australian Open, as well as the quarterfinals of the junior US Open and French Open. At the All England Club, he fell to 2014 USTA Boys' 18s national champion Noah Rubin in the first all-

American Wimbledon boys' final since 1977. Also in 2014, Kozlov won the prestigious Orange Bowl singles and doubles titles, and in the pro ranks, he reached the final of the \$100,000 USTA Pro Circuit Challenger in Sacramento, Calif., losing to former Top 20 player Sam Querrey. In advancing to the Sacramento final at age 16, Kozlov became the youngest American to reach a Challenger final since Andre Agassi in 1986. Kozlov transitioned to primarily pro events in 2015, competing in the main draw of the ATP's Memphis Open and winning his first USTA Pro Circuit Challenger doubles title in Maui, Hawaii. He also won his first ITF singles title in Belarus and served as a practice partner for the U.S. Davis Cup team in Glasgow, Scotland.

Noah Rubin, who earned a spot in the main draw of the 2016 Australian Open for the first time after clinching last year's USTA Pro Circuit Australian Open Wild Card Challenge; he advanced to the second round in Melbourne with a first-round upset of No. 17 Benoit Paire. Rubin's 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. Rubin completed a standout freshman campaign at Wake Forest in May 2015, advancing to the NCAA singles final. He 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. He was also the ITA Rookie of the Year and earned All-America honors. He subsequently turned pro and won his first USTA Pro Circuit singles title at the \$50,000 Challenger in Charlottesville, Va., and competed in qualifying for the 2015 US Open. This year, he advanced to quarterfinals or better at four USTA Pro Circuit Challengers, while also qualifying for the main draw at the ATP event in Indian Wells. Rubin was a standout junior player, winning the 2014 Wimbledon junior title to go with his Boys' 18s National Championships crown. He is a protégé of John McEnroe's at his eponymous Randall's Island, N.Y., academy.

Tommy Paul, who won the 2015 French Open junior singles title, becoming the sixth American ever to win the boys' championship in Paris. Paul defeated fellow American Taylor Fritz in the first-ever all-U.S. boys' singles final at Roland Garros, dating back to 1947. Paul, who peaked at a career-high No. 3 in the ITF World Junior Rankings in fall 2015, also reached the final of the junior US Open in 2015 and the quarterfinals of junior Wimbledon. As a pro, he captured the first USTA Pro Circuit singles titles of his career this year at the \$10,000 Futures events in Plantation, Fla., and Sunrise, Fla. Most recently, he upset No. 8 seed and world No. 53 Paolo Lorenzi to advance to the second round of the U.S. Clay Court Championship in Houston. In 2015, he also won ITF Circuit singles titles in Spain and Italy. Paul served as a practice partner for the U.S. Davis Cup team in the quarterfinal tie against Croatia in Portland, Ore., this July.

Jared Donaldson, who broke into the Top 100 in September after qualifying and reaching the third round of the US Open—his career-best result. He also won matches at four Emirates Airline US Open Series events this year, including a run to the third round in Toronto. Donaldson made his Grand Slam tournament debut as a wild card at the 2014 US Open, where he faced eventual quarterfinalist Gael Monfils in the first round. He also competed as a wild card at the 2015 US Open. Last year, he won his first USTA Pro Circuit Challenger title in Maui, Hawaii, where he also captured the doubles title with Stefan Kozlov. In addition, Donaldson won matches at three ATP events during summer 2015 (Newport, Cincinnati and Atlanta). In 2014, he won back-to-back USTA Pro Circuit singles titles at \$15,000 Futures events in Tulsa, Okla., and Oklahoma

City for the first USTA Pro Circuit singles titles of his career. As a junior player, he competed in the US Open Junior Championships and represented the U.S. in Junior Davis Cup (16 and under). He is coached by former Top 30 player Taylor Dent and has spent time in Dubai training with Roger Federer.

Bjorn Fratangelo, who made his French Open main-draw debut this year after earning a main-draw wild card by winning the 2016 USTA Pro Circuit Roland Garros Wild Card Challenge. At the French Open, he won his first-round match over Sam Querrey in Paris for his first career Grand Slam win. Fratangelo finished this year's Roland Garros Wild Card Challenge with a title at the \$50,000 Challenger in Savannah, Ga., and a semifinal appearance at the \$100,000 Challenger in Sarasota, Fla. Fratangelo 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. This year, he qualified for the 2016 Australian Open – his first appearance in a Grand Slam main draw outside of the US Open – as well as Wimbledon. He also reached the third round of the Emirates Airline US Open Series event in Winston-Salem, N.C., this summer 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. Fratangelo made his Grand Slam main-draw debut at the 2015 US Open after winning the USTA Pro Circuit's US Open Wild Card Challenge last summer. He has won 10 USTA Pro Circuit and ITF Circuit singles titles over the last three years and broke into the Top 100 this June. Fratangelo is named after 11-time Grand Slam champion Bjorn Borg.

Austin Krajicek, who enjoyed a breakout 2015, cracking the Top 100 for the first time on the strength of reaching the singles quarterfinals of the ATP event in Memphis—his first ATP quarterfinal—and winning his first-ever Grand Slam match, at the US Open as a wild card. He also reached four USTA Pro Circuit/ITF-level Challenger quarterfinals in fall 2015. Krajicek also won his first-round match at the 2016 Australian Open. Overall, he holds eight USTA Pro Circuit and ITF-level singles titles and more than 20 doubles titles, peaking at No. 61 in the world in doubles in April 2015. He was a five-time All-American at Texas A&M and won the 2011 NCAA men's doubles championship with Jeff Dadamo. A standout junior player, Krajicek won the 2008 USTA Boys' 18s National Championships, earning a wild card into the 2008 US Open men's singles main draw. Krajicek is a distant relative of former Wimbledon champion Richard Krajicek.

Michael Mmoh, who reached his first USTA Pro Circuit Challenger final at the \$100,000 Challenger in Tiburon, Calif., this fall. Mmoh is regarded as one of the brightest young American prospects, drawing comparisons to Gael Monfils for his athleticism and power. Mmoh peaked at No. 2 in the junior rankings in 2015 after reaching the singles semifinals at the junior French Open and the quarterfinals at the junior US Open; he also competed in the junior Australian Open and Wimbledon in 2015, reaching the doubles semifinals at both tournaments. In 2014, Mmoh went 5-0 in singles to help lead the U.S. to the Junior Davis Cup title, and he won his first career USTA Pro Circuit singles title at the \$15,000 Futures in Brownsville, Texas. He added two additional USTA Pro Circuit titles in 2015. This year, Mmoh made his Grand Slam main-draw debut at the US Open as a wild card as the USTA Boys' 18s National Champion, qualified for the ATP's Memphis Open, and competed in the main draw of the ATP event in Miami, while also winning the \$25,000 USTA Pro Circuit Futures in Bakersfield, Calif. Mmoh trains with coach Glenn Weiner in Nick Bollettieri's program at the IMG Academy in Bradenton, Fla. He is the son of former ATP professional and Nigerian Olympian Tony Mmoh.

Dennis Novikov, who qualified for and advanced to the second round of Wimbledon this year and advanced to the mixed doubles quarterfinals at this year's US Open. Novikov 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, Novikov won singles titles in Cary and Columbus, Ohio (these were not USTA Pro Circuit events), to peak at No. 133 in the world. Novikov was the 2012 USTA Boys' 18s national champion in singles and doubles. Those victories earned him wild-card entries into each main draw at the 2012 US Open, where he became just the second USTA Boys' 18s champ in 15 years (the other being Jack Sock) to advance to the second round in singles; he defeated 2013 Wimbledon semifinalist Jerzy Janowicz in the first round. Novikov completed his sophomore year at UCLA in 2013 and turned pro that summer. He won his first career USTA Pro Circuit title soon afterward, at the \$10,000 Futures in Amelia Island, Fla., and had a strong 2014, winning three USTA Pro Circuit doubles titles and claiming four ITF Circuit singles titles. This year, he won three \$50,000 USTA Pro Circuit Challenger doubles titles, while also qualifying for the ATP events in Miami and Delray Beach. Born in Moscow, Novikov moved with his family to the U.S. as a 1-year-old and chose tennis over hockey, swimming and gymnastics.

Mitchell Krueger, a former junior standout who won his first USTA Pro Circuit event in 2015 at the \$15,000 Futures in Los Angeles. In 2014, he won the doubles title at an ITF Circuit event in Australia and reached the singles quarterfinals or better at six events around the world. Krueger was the top-ranked American junior boy in 2012, peaking at No. 5 in the world junior rankings. He advanced to the boys' singles semifinals at the French Open and Wimbledon in 2012 and turned pro that July. He captured his first pro singles title in 2013 while competing overseas at a clay-court ITF Circuit event in the Netherlands. Krueger comes from a tennis-playing family; his father played college tennis at Texas A&M, and his mother is a tennis coach and played at Louisiana Tech. He is coached by USTA National Coach Stanford Boster.

Alex Sarkissian, who finished runner-up at the 2014 NCAA singles championships as a redshirt sophomore at Pepperdine. In doing so, he became only the third player in school history to reach the NCAA singles final; he also advanced to the NCAA doubles quarterfinals. With his success, Sarkissian received All-America honors in both singles and doubles. In 2015, Sarkissian won two singles titles playing overseas in ITF Circuit events and also advanced to two additional singles finals. Also last year, he won his first USTA Pro Circuit singles title at the \$15,000 Futures in Harlingen, Texas. This year, Sarkissian qualified for the ATP event in Indian Wells and competed in Wimbledon and US Open qualifying, while also playing abroad in Australia, Korea, China and Mexico.

Players competing in qualifying include:

Former University of Tennessee standout **Tennys Sandgren**, a former Top 200 player and a 2011 NCAA semifinalist who has captured three USTA Pro Circuit singles titles this year. He peaked at No. 183 in the world in 2013, when he won the USTA Pro Circuit season-ending Challenger in Champaign, Ill. Also in 2013, Sandgren served as a Davis Cup practice partner for the U.S. team as it prepared to face Serbia in Boise, Idaho, and he nearly qualified for the main draw at the 2014 Australian Open, falling to former NCAA champion and Top 30 player Steve Johnson in five sets in the final of the USTA Australian Open Wild Card Playoffs. Sandgren's rise was disrupted by injury, however, in 2014, when hip surgery sidelined him from February until after that year's US Open. In 2015, he played on the

USTA Pro Circuit and in ITF Circuit events in China, Australia and Canada, winning two singles titles. Sandgren, whose first name is pronounced like the sport, turned pro following his sophomore season at the University of Tennessee. He has won 12 career USTA Pro Circuit/ITF Circuit singles titles and 15 doubles titles. His brother, Davey, was a two-time All-American for Tennessee, lettering from 2007-10.

Brian Baker, who used a protected ranking to compete in all four Grand Slam events this year and the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio. At the 2013 Australian Open, Baker retired in his second-round match against Sam Querrey with a knee injury and played in just three more tournaments that year (the last being the US Open) before having surgery due to a cartilage defect in 2014. In 2012, Baker completed a fairytale comeback from a series of career-threatening injuries by reaching his first-ever ATP final, in Nice, France, advancing to the fourth round of Wimbledon and the second round of the French Open and the US Open. He also won three singles titles on the USTA Pro Circuit in 2012, including the \$50,000 Challenger in Savannah, Ga., to climb nearly 400 spots in the ATP rankings and into the Top 60. Baker returned to pro tennis in 2011 after undergoing five surgeries for a series of ailments from 2005 to 2008, including Tommy John elbow ligament replacement surgery in February 2008. This year, Baker has won four USTA Pro Circuit Challenger doubles titles—his first titles since 2012. Baker was a standout junior, peaking at No. 2 in the ITF World Junior Rankings in 2003 after reaching the boys' singles final at the French Open and winning the 2002 Orange Bowl. While he was away from the game, he served as an assistant coach at Belmont University in Nashville, Tenn., where he was also enrolled as a student.

Reilly Opelka, who is best known for his height at 6-foot-11, which ties him with Ivo Karlovic as the tallest player in the world. Opelka dealt with many injuries over the years because of his rapid growth, but had his best summer as a pro in 2016, reaching the semifinals of the BB&T Atlanta Open and the second round of the ATP Masters 1000 Western & Southern Open in Cincinnati, both Emirates Airline US Open Series events. He broke into the Top 300 of the pro rankings this summer after beginning 2016 ranked No. 981. As a junior, Opelka won the Wimbledon boys' singles title in 2015 and was ranked as high as No. 4 in the world. Opelka has trained at the USTA Training Center – Headquarters since he was 12 years old, and now works with USTA National Coach Diego Moyano, who also coaches Tommy Paul. Opelka was introduced to tennis by USTA National Coach and former U.S. Davis Cup Captain Tom Gullikson after Gully met Opelka's father while playing golf near Palm Coast.

Sekou Bangoura, who won the second USTA Pro Circuit singles title of his career in January 2014 at the \$10,000 Futures in Plantation, Fla. He also won an ITF Circuit event in the Dominican Republic in 2015 and captured the USTA Pro Circuit Collegiate Series event in Winston-Salem, N.C., this summer. Bangoura holds 14 USTA Pro Circuit and ITF Circuit doubles titles, including the \$25,000 Futures in Wichita, Kan., this year. Bangoura was named a doubles All-American during his sophomore year at the University of Florida after reaching the doubles semifinals at the 2011 NCAA tournament. He turned pro shortly thereafter.

Mackenzie McDonald, a three-time singles All-American who recently turned pro after his junior year at UCLA and who 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. McDonald also finished this season ranked No. 1 in singles and doubles in the ITA collegiate

rankings. This year, he made his debut at the US Open as a wild card, and in 2015, he won the American Collegiate Invitational, a tournament held at the US Open for college players. Also this year, McDonald won the first USTA Pro Circuit singles title of his career at the \$10,000 Futures in Irvine, Calif., while also winning the fifth doubles title of his career at the \$100,000 Challenger in Fairfield, Calif. He also reached the singles semifinals at the \$100,000 Challengers in Tiburon, Calif., and Stockton, Calif., this fall.

Nicolas Meister, who has captured six USTA Pro Circuit doubles titles this year, giving him 16 USTA Pro Circuit/ITF Circuit doubles titles for his career. This summer, Meister won the US Open National Playoffs Men's Doubles Championship with Eric Quigley to earn a wild card into the US Open men's doubles draw. Meister cracked the Top 200 in the doubles rankings in June. In addition to his doubles success, Meister holds four ITF singles titles, winning two in Israel this spring and two in Mexico in 2013. Meister graduated from UCLA in 2012 with All-America honors in singles that year. He also earned All-America doubles honors during the 2009-10 season.

Eric Quigley, who was the 2012 NCAA singles runner-up for the University of Kentucky. Quigley is one of the most decorated tennis players in Wildcats history, earning five All-America honors between singles and doubles. In 2008, he became the first player from the state of Kentucky in 34 years to win four consecutive high school state singles titles. In 2015, Quigley qualified for the ATP event in Delray Beach, Fla., and won three USTA Pro Circuit doubles titles, as well as one doubles title in Nigeria. He holds one USTA Pro Circuit singles title, which he won in 2013 at the \$15,000 Futures in Decatur, Ill. This year, Quigley won the US Open National Playoffs Men's Doubles Championship with Nicolas Meister to earn a wild card into the US Open men's doubles draw. Quigley also captured doubles titles at the \$100,000 Challenger in Dallas and the \$25,000 Futures in Calabasas, Calif., both with Meister.

Great Britain's **Marcus Willis**, who was a top storyline at Wimbledon after reaching the main draw through a pre-qualifying tournament and then advancing through Wimbledon qualifying, which totaled six match victories to reach in the main draw. Willis won his first-round match over Ricardas Berankis, who was ranked more than 700 spots above him, and faced Roger Federer on Centre Court in the second round.

Many Top 10 players have found success in Knoxville.

2000 singles runner-up **Andy Roddick** finished the 2003 season ranked No. 1 in the world after winning the US Open that year. Roddick retired following the 2012 US Open and, in his career, won 32 singles titles, finished in the Top 10 nine consecutive years and advanced to five Grand Slam tournament finals. He was a longtime member of the U.S. Davis Cup team, leading the United States to the championship in 2007.

2001 singles champion **James Blake** peaked at No. 4 in the world in 2006 after reaching the final of the Tennis Masters Cup, the season-ending championships of the ATP World Tour. He won 10 singles titles and seven doubles titles during his 14-year career and also was a longtime member of the U.S. Davis Cup team, helping lead the United States to the Davis Cup title in 2007. Blake announced his retirement at the 2013 US Open.

2002 singles runner-up and 2001 doubles champion **Mardy Fish** peaked at No. 7 in the world in August 2011 after one of

the strongest seasons of his career, which included reaching the quarterfinals of Wimbledon and the round of 16 at the US Open. He also won the 2011 Emirates Airline US Open Series event in Atlanta en route to winning his first overall Series crown. Fish retired at the 2015 US Open and won six ATP World Tour singles titles, along with eight doubles titles, in his career. He also held an 11-8 overall record in Davis Cup.

2010 singles champion **Kei Nishikori** of Japan is currently ranked a career-high No. 4 in the world. Nishikori made history as the first Asian man to reach a Grand Slam tournament singles final when he advanced to the final of the 2014 US Open, before losing to Marin Cilic. Nishikori has won 11 ATP World Tour singles titles, including one title this year and four additional finals, and won the bronze medal at the Rio Olympics.

**Player field subject to change*

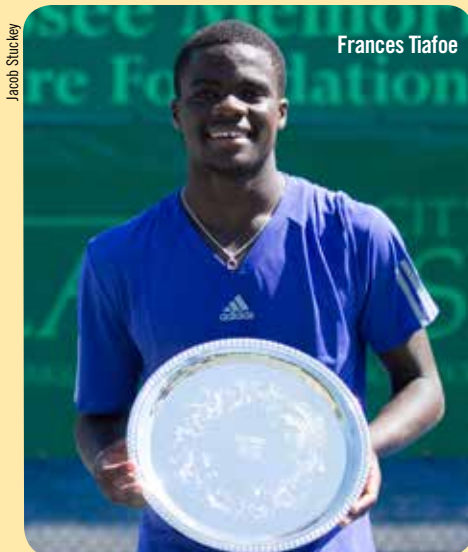
KNOXVILLE PAST WINNERS

Singles			Doubles	
Year	Winner	Runner-Up	Year	Winner
2015	Daniel Evans (GBR)	Frances Tiafoe (USA)	2015	Johan Brunstrom (SWE) – Frederik Nielsen (DEN)
2014	Adrian Mannarino (FRA)	Sam Groth (AUS)	2014	Mikelis Libietis (LAT) – Hunter Reese (USA)
2013	Tim Smyczek (USA)	Peter Polansky (CAN)	2013	Sam Groth (AUS) – John-Patrick Smith (AUS)
2012	Michael Russell (USA)	Bobby Reynolds (USA)	2012	Alex Kuznetsov (USA) – Mischa Zverev (GER)
2011	Jesse Levine (USA)	Brian Baker (USA)	2011	Steve Johnson (USA) – Austin Krajicek (USA)
2010	Kei Nishikori (JPN)	Robert Kendrick (USA)	2010	Rik De Voest (RSA) – Izak van der Merwe (RSA)
2009	Taylor Dent (USA)	Ilija Bozoljac (SRB)	2009	Martin Emmrich (GER) – Andreas Siljeström (SWE)
2008	Bobby Reynolds (USA)	Luka Gergorc (SLO)	2008	Kevin Anderson (RSA) – G.D. Jones (NZL)
2007	Robert Kendrick (USA)	Kevin Kim (USA)	2007	Harel Levy (ISR) – Sam Warburg (USA)
2003-06	Tournament not held	Tournament not held	2003-06	Tournament not held
2002	Martin Verkerk (NED)	Mardy Fish (USA)	2002	Dmitry Tursunov (RUS) – Martin Verkerk (NED)
2001	James Blake (USA)	Gabriel Trifu (ROU)	2001	Mardy Fish (USA) – Jeff Morrison (USA)
2000	Cristiano Caratti (ITA)	Andy Roddick (USA)	2000	Karsten Braasch (GER) – Michael Kohlmann (GER)

USTA PRO CIRCUIT

With approximately 90 tournaments hosted annually throughout the country and prize money ranging from \$10,000 to \$100,000, the USTA Pro Circuit is the pathway to the US Open and tour-level competition for aspiring tennis players and a frequent battleground for established professionals. The USTA launched its Pro Circuit in 1979 to provide players with the opportunity to gain professional ranking points, and it has since grown to become the largest developmental tennis circuit in the world, offering nearly \$3 million in prize money. Last year, more than 1,000 men and women from more than 70 countries competed in cities nationwide. **John Isner, Maria Sharapova, Andy Murray, Caroline Woznaicki, Kei Nishikori, Victoria Azarenka** and **Sam Querrey** are among today's top stars who began their careers on the USTA Pro Circuit.

More recently, the USTA Pro Circuit was a pathway to success for two young Americans in 2015—**Frances Tiafoe** and **Samantha Crawford**. Tiafoe, a former world No. 2 junior who turned pro early in 2015, started last season ranked No. 1,143. His successes on the USTA Pro Circuit not only allowed Tiafoe to finish the year ranked No. 176, but also gave him experience on the Grand Slam stage. Tiafoe won the Har-Tru USTA Pro Circuit Wild Card Challenge (based on results in three USTA Pro Circuit Challengers) to earn a spot in the 2015 French Open, which marked his Grand Slam debut. He also won his first USTA Pro Circuit singles title in 2015 at the \$15,000 Futures in Bakersfield, Calif., and reached three additional finals. Tiafoe also competed in the 2015 US Open as a wild card and continues to climb in the rankings. Crawford, the 2012 US Open girls' singles champion, started the 2015 season ranked No. 293 and competed in 23 USTA Pro Circuit events throughout the year. She went on to win the first USTA Pro Circuit singles title of her career at the \$50,000 event in Scottsdale, Ariz., and also won two of the USTA Pro Circuit's wild card challenges to earn wild cards into the 2015 US Open and 2016 Australian Open. Crawford's hard work paid off, and in January 2016, she rose to No. 107 in the world after a strong start to the year in Australia, where she reached her first WTA semifinal in Brisbane as a qualifier.



Jacob Stuckey

Frances Tiafoe

USTA PLAYER DEVELOPMENT

The USTA Player Development program, working with the American Tennis Family of players, coaches and families, helps to identify and develop the next generation of American champions by surrounding top junior players and young pros with the resources, facilities and coaching they need to reach their maximum potential. The Player Development program is based at the USTA Training Center Headquarters in Boca Raton, Fla., and utilizes National Training Centers in Carson, Calif., and Flushing, N.Y., as well as a network of Certified Regional Training Centers located throughout the United States.

YOUTH TENNIS

The USTA is making it easier and more fun for kids to get into the game—and stay in the game. Kids are learning to play faster than ever before through the USTA's youth initiative, which is geared toward getting more kids to participate in tennis using modified equipment and courts tailored to a child's size. For more information, visit YouthTennis.com.

USTA FOUNDATION

USTA Foundation, the national charitable organization of the USTA, helps serve up dreams for under-resourced youth; individuals with disabilities; and wounded, ill and injured service members, veterans and their families. The foundation supports programs nationwide that leverage tennis and education to help those in need, primarily through the National Junior Tennis & Learning (NJTL) network, and other efforts to assist military personnel, veterans and individuals with disabilities. To date, it has awarded more than \$19 million in grants and scholarships to hundreds of programs, benefitting thousands of children and adults through a tennis, education and health curricula. For more information, visit the website www.ustafoundation.com.

US OPEN NATIONAL PLAYOFFS

The USTA launched the US Open National Playoffs in 2010, making the US Open "open" to anyone age 14+ and of all skill levels. This year, more than 1,500 players competed in 15 Sectional Qualifying Tournaments nationwide for a 2016 US Open Qualifying Tournament wild card. Men's doubles, women's doubles and mixed doubles events offered winning teams US Open main draw doubles wild cards. For 2016, Jose Statham and Sophie Chang earned the men's singles and women's singles wild cards, respectively. The doubles wild card winners were Jacqueline Cako and Danielle Lao (women's), Nicolas Meister and Eric Quigley (men's) and Emina Bektas and Evan King (mixed). For more information, visit www.usopen.org/NationalPlayoffs.

