



**WORLD-CLASS PROFESSIONAL TENNIS RETURNS TO THE PALMETTO TENNIS CENTER IN SUMTER
USTA Pro Circuit \$10,000 Women's Tournament begins May 17**

SUMTER, May 13, 2014 – The United States Tennis Association announced that the award-winning Palmetto Tennis Center in Sumter, SC will host the seventh-annual USTA Women's \$10,000 Palmetto Pro Open, May 20-26. The tournament, a USTA Pro Circuit event, is one of only two professional tournaments in the Palmetto State and attracts many future stars of the tennis world!

The field for the Palmetto Pro Open will feature 32 singles players and 16 doubles teams. Players ranked in as high as No. 300 in the world typically compete in the \$10,000 events. The qualifying tournament, which begins on Saturday, May 17, will fill out the Main Draw singles bracket.

The Pro Circuit is the start for many future stars' careers. In the first Palmetto Pro Open in 2008, Sloane Stephens made it to her first professional semi-final. Less than six years later, she was a semi-finalist at the Australian Open – a Grand Slam Event. Eugenie Bouchard also played in the PPO in 2008 and made the semifinals of the 2013 Australian Open.

This year's edition features two-time doubles champion Alexandra Mueller returning to not only defend her doubles crown last year, but to advance past the quarterfinals in the Singles Draw and two-time Singles Draw runner-up Brooke Austin – a top recruit that has committed to the University of Florida. Also playing in the qualifying draw are University of South Carolina commits Hadley Berg and Megen Cochran.

Admission is free to spectators.

ABOUT THE USTA PRO CIRCUIT:

With approximately 90 tournaments hosted annually throughout the country and prize money ranging from \$10,000 to \$1,000,000, 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 34 years ago 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. **Mardy Fish, Maria Sharapova, John Isner, Caroline Wozniacki, Sam Querrey, Li Na and Andy Murray** are among today's top stars who began their careers on the USTA Pro Circuit.

For more information, contact:

Patrick Enzor, Tournament Press Aide

Office: (803)774-1662; Cell: (803)795-2393

Email: penzor@sumter-sc.com