

March 2008

News

Billie Jean King to attend 2008 USTA National Campus Championship

Tennis legend will present the Championship awards

The USTA Tennis On Campus program and NIRSA are pleased to announce that Billie Jean King, legendary tennis champion and advocate for social change and equality, will attend the [2008 USTA National Campus Championship](#) in Cary, North Carolina, April 17-19. King will be a special guest on Friday and Saturday's play and will be on-court to present the Championship awards for this NIRSA National Campus Championship Series event.

The 2008 USTA National Campus Championship is the culmination of the USTA Tennis On Campus Season. As part of the Tennis On Campus Season, all 17 USTA Sections hold Championships, with the winner of each receiving an automatic bid to the 2008 USTA National Campus Championship. The USTA Tennis On Campus program features co-ed teams participating in intramural and sport club play using the World TeamTennis format on campuses nationwide. This year, 64 co-ed teams from throughout the nation will compete for the 9th annual National Campus Championship. Over 450 colleges and 25,000 student athletes currently participate in the program.



Billie Jean King

Throughout her long and illustrious tennis career, King won 39 Grand Slam singles, doubles, and mixed doubles tennis titles, including 20 titles at Wimbledon. She is also the only woman to have won US singles titles on four surfaces (grass, clay, carpet, and hard court). She was one of nine players who broke away from the tennis establishment and accepted \$1 contracts to play women's tennis professionally. This led to the formation of the Virginia Slims Tour and the Women's Tennis Association. Perhaps the single match that she is most remembered for, however, was against Bobby Riggs in 1973. Termed the "Battle of the Sexes," King empowered women, educated men, and left a lasting effect on society and the women's movement when she defeated Riggs 6-4,

6-3, 6-3. In the same year, she lobbied for and obtained equal prize money for men and women at the US Open.

Off of the court, King has had an even more profound impact. She founded the Women's Tennis Association (1973), the Women's Sports Foundation (1974), and Women's Sports Magazine (1974). She also co-founded World TeamTennis (1974), a groundbreaking co-ed professional tennis league, and founded the World TeamTennis Recreational League. The World TeamTennis format (one set of men's and women's singles and doubles and one set mixed doubles) is used by the USTA National Campus Championship.

Other honors she has received include: named one of the "100 Most Important Americans of the 20th Century" by Life Magazine (1990); ranked No. 5 on Sports Illustrated's "Top 40 Athletes" list for significantly altering or elevating sports in the last four decades (1994); one of six inaugural inductees into the Court of Fame at the USTA National Tennis Center (2003), honored for her contributions to tennis, sports, and society both on and off of the court during the 2006 US Open where the USTA dedicated and renamed the National Tennis Center, home of the US Open, to the USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center; honored by the Sports Museum of America and the Women's Sports Foundation when they announced that the Billie Jean King International Women's Sports Center, the nation's first permanent, comprehensive museum collection dedicated to women's sports, will be housed at the Sports Museum of America when it opens in New York City in 2008; and being honored by several leading GLBT organizations, including the Human Rights Campaign, GLAAD, Lambda Legal Foundation, and the San Francisco GLBT Historical Society. King continues to be involved with the USTA and is currently the Chair of the Tennis in the Parks Committee, is a leader in the fight for equality and recognition in the GLBT community, and currently serves on the boards of the Women's Sports Foundation and the Elton John AIDS Foundation. She has also recently launched an environmental initiative called GreenSlam, which is a challenge to the sports industry to become proactive about being green.

The USTA National Campus Championship is administered in partnership by the United States Tennis Association (USTA), NIRSA, World TeamTennis (WTT), and Intercollegiate Tennis Association (ITA). This partnership has not only resulted in record participation at this championship, but in a growing interest and participation in club and intramural tennis on college campuses throughout the country. Many of the 64 participating programs were established in the last nine years and represent well over 4,000 additional players at their respective campuses.

The inaugural USTA National Campus Championship was held in 2000 and featured a total of 10 teams. Participation records have been set at each of the eight ensuing championships. Past championships have been held in Austin, Texas; Daytona Beach, Florida; San Diego, California; and Cary, North Carolina.