

NWU ready to host international tennis events

During the upcoming weeks, the North-West University (NWU) will be hosting some of the rising stars of international tennis on its Potchefstroom Campus. First up will be the Ilana Kloss International – week one (Women's \$25 000 ITF World Tour event) and the North-West University Open (men's \$25 000 ITF World Tour event), followed by the Ilana Kloss International – week two (Women's \$25 000 ITF World Tour event) and the Potchefstroom Open (an ATP Challenger 50 event).

The Ilana Kloss International – week one and the North-West University Open will be held from 2 to 8 March, followed by the ATP Challenger 50 and week two of the Ilana Kloss International – which will run from 9 to 15 March.

The NWU, which has completed the first phase of a significant multimillion-rand investment in its tennis facilities, is gearing up for a bumper two weeks of international tennis tournaments.

Sheldon Rostron, manager of sport at the Potchefstroom Campus, remarked that it remains a privilege to join hands with Tennis South Africa in hosting these prestigious events. "We are grateful for the partnership and the opportunity to build and develop tennis across South Africa and the African continent, and we pride ourselves in the facilities that we have established." The university is looking forward to hosting many more events like this and to assisting South Africa in developing and attracting young talent and future stars to the NWU, as well as to providing a unique space for high performance in tennis.

Various individuals at the university, including Prof Daryl Balia, Deputy Vice-chancellor: IT and Potchefstroom Campus Operations, have assisted in making this a reality and in constantly building on the vision and dreams of many youngsters in South Africa. Ms Helene Botha (NWU Tennis Manager), Mr Riaan Venter (RVTA Tennis Academy) and many others have contributed to the success of this facility and the upcoming events.

The events will feature a mix of international and home-grown tennis players such as South Africa's top female player, Chanel Simmonds, British world no. 213 Samantha Sharon, German-Jamaican star, Dustin Brown, men's world no. 227 Alexandre Muller, Evgeny Karlovskiy of Russia, and Serbian player Pedja Krstin.

The ITF World Tennis Tour events serve as the entry level for professional tennis and lies between the ITF Junior World Tennis Tour and the elite levels of women's and men's professional tennis. Meanwhile, Challenger events are the second highest level of international men's ATP tennis tournaments, after the ATP Tour (250, 500 and Masters events). The last ATP Challenger to take place in South Africa was hosted in Soweto in 2013.

Each tournament will include singles and doubles draws for men and women. The tournaments have attracted players from over 25 nations, including France, Great Britain, Italy, Serbia, Germany, Spain, Australia, the Netherlands, India, Argentina and more.