

MEDIA RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

GREATER VICTORIA TO HOST MAJOR TENNIS EVENT

VICTORIA, BC – Over the first two weekends in May, Greater Victoria will host a major tennis spectacle, one that promises to draw players of all levels and ages from across the Pacific Northwest.

On May 7-8 and May 14-15, the 2005 Victoria Open Tennis Tournament & Festival will feature hundreds of competitive matches at nine venues across Greater Victoria, while prominent guest speakers will deliver professional level player clinics and fitness seminars to local and visiting tennis enthusiasts.

The tournament is hosting events for players of all levels, ranging from first time novices to seasoned competitors seeking tournament prize money. It will also serve as a National Qualifier for top ranked juniors, while additional events are scheduled for child players, seniors and wheelchair athletes.

A Tennis Festival, held in tandem with the tournament, will be geared to tournament competitors, their families, friends and other tennis enthusiasts. It will feature prominent guest speakers, player clinics, fun activities and opportunities to see the latest tennis products and services.

"The Victoria Open promises to be the biggest tennis event to take place in Victoria for several years," says Ludo Bertsch, co-director for the tournament and festival. "This is an exciting opportunity for players of all levels to experience the atmosphere of a major tennis tournament, as well as learn from some of the biggest names in tennis with our festival speakers."

Scheduled speakers include Ken DeHart, a top level U.S. tennis coach, and Carl Petersen, a physiotherapist and fitness trainer who works with professional players on the WTA and ITF tour. The tournament's head referee will be Dave Ouellet, the only BC tennis official with the prestigious ITF White Badge for Chair Umpire.

Ryan Clark, executive director of Tennis BC, is enthusiastic in his support for the Victoria Open. "Events such as this are great community builders as they bring together all ages, pre-teen to 65 years and over. The Victoria Open can soon become what the Rogers Open @ Stanley Park tournament is to the Vancouver area."

Tentative indoor venues for the tournament include Oak Bay, Cedar Hill, and Panorama recreation centers, while outdoor sites include Henderson, Lambrick, Carnarvon, Panorama, Glen Meadows, and Langford. Henderson is the main venue and will host final matches.

Interested players of all ages and levels can register for the 2005 Victoria Open by picking up a registration form at recreation centers across Greater Victoria, or by visiting the tournament website www.victoriaopen.ca. Registration closes on May 2nd for Junior events and April 25th for all other events.

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