



HOW TO GET STARTED ON THE WOMEN'S PRO CIRCUIT

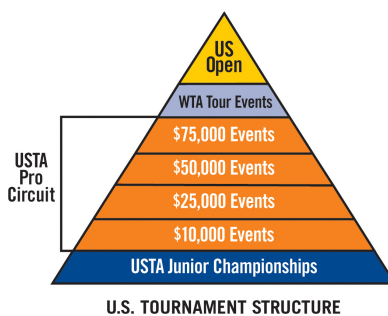
Welcome to the USTA Pro Women's Circuit! There is no better place to test your skill or to determine whether or not you have what it takes to become a professional tennis player. The USTA Pro Circuit is governed by the International Tennis Federation (ITF) Rules and Regulations and is part of the larger worldwide International Pro Circuit.

All players must reach their 14th birthday by the start of the Main Draw of a Pro Circuit Event in order to be eligible to participate. Players ages 14 – 18 are subject to 'The Age Eligibility Rule ("AER") which is applicable to competition in Professional Tennis Tournaments worldwide, including all WTA Tour Tournaments and ITF Women's Circuit events that receive ranking points. Competition in a Professional Tennis Tournament is defined as participation in the singles and /or doubles Main Draw or singles and/or doubles Qualifying Draw of a WTA Tour Tournament or ITF Women's Circuit event. Each Tournament in which a player earns ranking points (singles and/or doubles) counts towards a player's allotment of Tournaments under the AER. Participation in the draws of the ITF Women's Circuit events in which a player does not earn ranking points does not constitute competition in a Professional Tennis Tournament under the AER. For more details regarding the AER please visit the Sony WTA Tour website at <http://www.sonyericssonwtatour.com>

The Pro Circuit is the place to obtain coveted Sony Ericsson WTA Ranking points, a worldwide ranking system that measures a player's performance in tournament play and record against other players. The ranking system is a 52-week, cumulative system. Results used to determine a player's ranking are tournaments in which a player earns the highest Ranking Points during a 52-week period.

In addition to earning ranking points players are eligible to win prize money. Players who must retain Amateur status in order to maintain NCAA eligibility are offered the opportunity to declare Amateur or Professional status at each event played. The Pro Circuit Tournament Supervisor staff will provide the necessary documents to ensure Amateur status is in keeping with NCAA guidelines. **Acceptance into all circuit events is based strictly on ranking. The system of merit is as follows:**

1. WTA Ranking
2. Top 500 National Rank
3. No Rank



\$10,000 Circuit Events

\$10,000 prize money events are entry level tournaments for Junior or collegiate players who have yet to earn a SONY Ericsson WTA Ranking as well as those players as well as for players trying to improve their skills and techniques. Junior players and college players who want to increase their level of competition and earn a worldwide ranking are good candidates for this level. These events can be played individually or in sequence, however a minimum of three tournaments must be played per calendar year and the second round of main draw reached in order to earn enough SONY ERICSSON WTA Points that are then converted to a WTA Ranking. These events are limited to a 32 Main draw and a 64 or 128 qualifying draw. Player skill level may range from 300 WTA Ranking to no ranking. Junior National, or Division I players will find it easier to gain acceptance into \$10,000 events due to the larger qualifying draw.

\$25,000 Circuit Events

The \$25,000 prize money level offers increased competition and an opportunity to receive increased ranking points. This level is for the player that has had some success at the \$10,000 level having gained or improved a ranking. If you have successfully earned enough SONY ERICSSON WTA ranking points to gain direct acceptance into the main draw or first half of the qualifying draw of a \$10,000 event, now is the time to consider moving to the next level. The draw size for a \$25,000 event is a 32 Main Draw and a 32 or 64 Qualifying draw.

\$50,000/\$75,000/\$100,000 Circuit Events

These events are not for the faint hearted. Here you will encounter some of the fiercest competition on the Pro Circuit. These players often play in WTA Events, and Grand Slams, you will find rankings ranging from 50 – 400 WTA Rank in the Main Draw. The draw size is limited to 22-24 direct acceptances into Main Draw and 26 direct acceptances into Qualifying.

The **USTA** is the organizing body of all Pro Circuit events in the United States. Each tournament is staffed by USTA Referee/Supervisor who is ITF Certified and also assigns a Primary Healthcare Provider for the treatment of players. Each local event is operated by a local Tournament Organizer and is responsible for player amenities and all tournament activities.

Tournament Fact Sheets

Fact sheets are posted on the USTA website approximately one month prior to the start of each event. Go to www.procircuit.usta.com; or www.itftennis.com

*Once you have decided to enter Pro Circuit events **PLEASE** pay close attention to the rules and deadlines of entering and withdrawing to avoid incurring fines and penalties.*

Welcome to the world of Professional Tennis, we wish you great success!

IMPORTANT ENTRY DETAILS

ENTRY DEADLINE

Each tournament Entry deadline is Thursday, eighteen (18) days prior to start of the each event. **LATE ENTRIES ARE NOT ACCEPTED!**

WITHDRAWAL DEADLINES

Main/Qualifying Draw: Tuesday, Thirteen (13) days before the start of the event.

Players are permitted two (2) withdrawals per year which shall not count as late withdrawal offences, provided the player:

- a) Withdraws prior to the qualifying sign-in deadline;*
- b) Submits to the ITF, to be received no later than the last day of the tournament, an official ITF Medical Certification Form, which must be written in English, French or Spanish and completed by a medically qualified physician, indicating the nature of the injury or illness and verifying that the player is unable to play in the specific tournament(s) from which she was forced to withdraw.*

If the injury or illness has occurred during the tournament, the ITF Medical Certification Form must be completed, as above, but the medical withdrawal is not counted towards a player's permitted number of medical excuses.

FREEZE DEADLINE

After 14.00 hours (2:00 PM Greenwich Mean Time), on Thursday prior to the start of the Tournament Week, players still on an Alternates list will no longer move into Qualifying but will remain on the Alternates List. Players remaining on the Alternate list who do not withdraw **WILL NOT** be fined. Players remaining on an Alternate list who want to play must personally sign-in with the **USTA Supervisor** and will be accepted into the draw as space is available according to the **System of Merit**. On site alternates who did not enter the tournament will be accepted into the draw as space is available according to the **System of Merit**.

ONE TOURNAMENT PER WEEK

Players **MAY NOT** remain on more than **one ITF Women's Circuit** Main Draw **or** Qualifying List for any Tournament Week after the appropriate withdrawal deadline. Players who do not withdraw and remain on more than one **ITF** Main Draw or Qualifying list will be removed from all but one list.

Once a player enters and is accepted into the main draw of singles or doubles, signs in or enters the Qualifying competition of an ITF or WTA event, she is committed to that Tournament for the week, unless she applies for and receives authorization from the ITF.

SIGN-IN

Qualifiers of \$10,000/\$25,000 **Pro Circuit Events must sign-in personally on-site with the USTA Supervisor** and pay a \$40 entry fee **3:00 - 6:00 PM** on **Saturday** the day before qualifying begins. **No one may sign-in for you and there is no telephone sign-in.** The **USTA Supervisor** may only accept a telephone sign-in from the Referee of an event in which a player is still participating.

Players accepted into the Qualifying of a \$50,000/\$75,000/\$100,000 event may sign-in with the **USTA Supervisor** by phone if the player is en route to the site or by the Referee of an event in which a player is participating. **There is no sign-in for Main Draw players of ITF Circuit Events. Main Draw Doubles** only entries fees are \$20.00 Qualifying Doubles only entry fees are \$15.00. Sign-in is by **12 Noon** the day **before** Main Draw begins. Telephone sign-in will be accepted. One player may sign-in for the team. **DO NOT LEAVE MESSAGES WITH CLUB PERSONNEL.**

Players are required to be on-site and ready to play when the match preceding theirs commences. Matches are scheduled on a "Followed By" basis. Only first matches of the day will be announced for a specific time.

RESIDENT & NON-RESIDENT PLAYERS

Resident aliens must present a green card. Taxes for non-resident aliens will be withheld as follows:

- *10% for Canadian residents and 30% for all other countries.*

IPIN

In order to play in a USTA Pro Circuit tournament, you MUST have an IPIN.

Log onto www.itftennis.com/ipin to register for your IPIN today!

ENTRY AUTHORITY

The ITF is the entry authority for all men's & women's Pro Circuit tournaments including tournaments in Europe and the USA.

WHAT DOES IPIN STAND FOR?

International **P**layer **I**dentification **N**umber (**IPIN**)

HOW DO I GET AN IPIN?

Log onto www.itftennis.com/ipin Once you have obtained your IPIN, log back onto www.itftennis.com/ipin, to register for the Online Entry Service.

Online Entry Service Fee: \$45 annual fee

All players entering ITF Women's Circuit Tournaments agree, as a condition of their entry, to register for annual IPIN Membership and pay the appropriate fee. Failure by a player to register for IPIN Membership will result in rejection of that player's entry.