



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **“NIGHT OF LEGENDS” TO HONOR BILLIE JEAN KING AS THE USTA NATIONAL TENNIS CENTER IS RENAMED IN HER HONOR ON OPENING NIGHT**

**Jimmy Connors, Chris Evert, John McEnroe, and Venus Williams, Pay Tribute to the  
Tennis Legend and Trailblazer in a Special On-Court Ceremony  
to be Broadcast Live on USA Network**

**Host Mary Carillo will be Joined by New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg**

**Special Musical Performance by Diana Ross to Cap Memorable Evening**

**FLUSHING, N.Y., August 22, 2006** – The USTA announced that a special Opening Night ceremony -- featuring the historic renaming of the USTA National Tennis Center in honor of Billie Jean King -- will include top legends of sport and entertainment. The official renaming and dedication will be part of a special on-court ceremony on Monday, August 28, Opening Night of the 2006 US Open. The ceremony will be broadcast live on USA Network.

Four tennis greats - - **Jimmy Connors, John McEnroe, Venus Williams, and Chris Evert** - - will pay tribute to the tennis legend and trailblazer whose pioneering efforts helped change the sport of tennis and launch the drive for gender equality in sports and in society. CBS commentator **Mary Carillo** will host the special ceremony and she will be joined by New York City **Mayor Michael Bloomberg**, who will welcome all attendees to New York and to the world’s highest attended annual sporting event.

The night will be capped by a performance by the legendary pop diva **Diana Ross**. Ross is expected to perform one of her classic hits as a tribute to Billie Jean King and then a stirring rendition of “God Bless America” as the fifth anniversary of September 11<sup>th</sup> approaches. Ross will be backed by members of the Frank Sinatra School of the Arts Concert Choir. The public school, located in Queens, was founded by long-time tennis fan Tony Bennett in honor of his mentor.

“This special ceremony -- legends paying tribute to a legend -- has all the makings of a marquee New York night,” said Arlen Kantarian, Chief Executive, Pro Tennis, USTA. “We will celebrate the legacy of an American hero with greats from tennis and entertainment in a fitting and memorable tribute.”

The 2006 US Open will be held Monday, August 28 through Sunday, September 10. Gates open at 6:00 p.m., and fans are encouraged to take public transportation to the USTA National Tennis Center (IRT 7 train from Manhattan; Long Island Railroad from Long Island and Penn Station).

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The USTA is the national governing body for the sport of tennis in the U.S. and the leader in promoting and developing the growth of tennis at every level -- from local communities to the highest level of the professional game. It owns and operates the US Open, the largest annually attended sporting event in the world, and launched the US Open Series linking 10 summer tournaments to the US Open. In addition, it owns the 94 Pro Circuit events throughout the U.S., and selects the teams for the Davis Cup, Fed Cup, Olympic and Paralympic Games. A not-for-profit organization with 690,000 members, it invests 100% of its proceeds in growing the game. For more information, log on to [usta.com](http://usta.com).

**For more information, contact:**

Chris Widmaier, Senior Director, Public Relations, USTA  
(914) 696-7284; [Widmaier@usta.com](mailto:Widmaier@usta.com)