International tennis hits the Red Centre

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The action will be hot on court when international tennis players hit the Red Centre for the Alice Springs Tennis International this weekend.

Then tournament is part of the 2014 Australian Pro Tour, which is the highest profile tennis event in Australia outside of the Australian Open and Australian Open service events.

“The Alice Springs Tennis International is a proven stepping stone to a Grand Slam,” said Minister for Sport, Recreation and Racing Matt Conlan.

“Eight players who have played in the tournament in the last two years have gone on to play Grand Slam tournaments in 2014.

“Hosting this tournament in Alice Springs is part of the Country Liberal Government’s commitment to bringing top class sporting events to the Centre, and following on from NRL’s Parramatta Eels and AFL’s Melbourne Demons matches this year, helps set our reputation as a great sporting destination.

“The tournament brings opportunities for the local community, including an Indigenous Sports Camp at Yirara College, involving boys and girls between 10 and 16 years old from the MacDonnell and Central Desert shires.

“Top tennis coach Ian Goolagong, the brother of champion Indigenous tennis player Evonne Goolagong Cawley a talented former international tennis player himself, will help facilitate the camp.

“There will be an Alice Springs Officiating Course held during the tournament, which will help develop local tennis officials and enable them to have the chance to apply for selection as a linesperson at the Australian Open next year.”

The top ranked player in the tournament is American Jamere Jenkins, who is ranked 278th in the world. Other top ranking players participating include the UK’s Brydan Klein (ranked 300th) and Japan’s Takuto Niki (ranked 344th). The highest ranking Australian player is Sydney’s Dane Propoggia (ranked 376th). Another Aussie player to watch will be Victorian 17 year old, Omar Jasika, who won the US Open Junior Singles Championship last month.
Top Alice Springs players who will take on the international stars include Nick Whtye, Ethan Scobie and Luke Horsfall, plus strong local juniors Jake Woods and Jingjo Brown (juniors).

The NT Government provides $50,000 to Tennis Australia to enable Alice Springs to host the Australian Pro Tour men’s event. Entry to the matches, which will be held at Tennis Alice Springs in Traeger Avenue from Saturday, is free.

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