

# Grand Slam Champions and Global Icons Support the Future of Pro Tennis and Youth Leaders at the Rancho Santa Fe Open

*ICL Academy Student Iva Jovic Wins Biggest Career Title For Rancho Santa Fe Open Crown*

RANCHO SANTA FE, CA, UNITED STATES, October 8, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [The Rancho Santa Fe \(RSF\) Open](#), in partnership with [The ICL Foundation](#) and [ICL Academy](#), welcomed tennis legends and champions to celebrate and support the next generation of professional athletes. Grand Slam winners Michael Chang, Monica Seles, Kim Clijsters, and Rod Laver showed their support by either attending in person or sending special video messages, encouraging the world's top newly turned professional female tennis players.

The RSF Open, supported by The ICL Foundation and ICL Academy, is not only a platform for emerging talents but also promotes health, wellness, and mental resilience for young professionals.

ICL Academy is proud to highlight two standout student athletes: Iva Jovic, a rising junior who made waves by winning a round at the US Open main draw after securing the Billie Jean King



RSF Open Winner Iva Jovic, an ICL Academy Student (photo credit John Coccozza)



RSF Open Winner and ICL Academy Student Iva Jovic with The ICL Foundation Founder Kirk Spahn (photo credit John Coccozza)

National Championship title earlier this year; and senior Akasha Urhobo.

"Iva Jovic simply knows how to win – especially when she's playing in San Diego," states the official RSF Open press release. "For the third time this year, the 16-year-old Jovic from Torrance won a significant title just down south via the 405/5 Interstate from where she grew up on Sunday capturing the ITF World Tour W75 Rancho Santa Fe Open."

This is Jovic's first W75 title, running her USTA Pro Circuit winning streak to 10 matches. "San Diego has been good to me this year," said Jovic, after she beat her LA County South Bay neighbor and friend Ena Shibahara, 6-3, 6-3, to win the biggest title of her career at the Rancho Santa Fe Tennis Club. "I guess it's the homecourt advantage." Jovic is now up to 217 in the WTA live rankings.



ICL Academy student Akasha Urhobo with The ICL Foundation founder Kirk Spahn at the RSF Open

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*Stacy Pennington, RSF Open Assistant Tournament Director*

Though she lost in the second round of the RSF Open, Akasha Urhobo, a 17-year-old senior from Ft. Lauderdale, FL, is making significant strides up the professional rankings. She also attends ICL Academy.

The RSF Open has quickly become a beacon for nurturing tennis excellence, fostering leadership, and preparing young players for the global stage.

“This year the RSF Open is proud to partner with The ICL Foundation and ICL Academy to emphasize the complete athlete. We are committed to the importance of education, community, and health and wellness,” says RSF Open Assistant Tournament Director Stacy Pennington. “More

than a tennis tournament, the RSF Open is a celebration of community and the extraordinary stories and experiences of the players.

“This level of tournament is often a portal into the next level of competition,” continues Pennington. “Hosted at the Rancho Santa Fe Tennis Club, our members are directly involved in supporting the players. Over the past few years, it’s become increasingly apparent how much the

details matter – fitness, nutrition, wellness, sleep, support, education, morale, logistics, environment, and balance. Rather than just hosting a tournament, we are excited to partner with The ICL Foundation and ICL Academy to raise awareness about their impressive role in the development of the next generation of champions.”

"Partnering with the RSF Open allows us to create unparalleled pathways for student-athletes to succeed, not only in their sport but also in their education. At ICL Academy, we believe in preparing our students for success in all aspects of life, and this collaboration highlights our dedication to supporting the next generation of champions," says Dayton Hansen, ICL Academy Chief Operating Officer.

"Tournaments like the RSF Open align with the mission and values of the ICL Foundation and Academy in an effort to 'Build Champions for Life.' This is a true pathway to the highest levels of professional tennis and they promote health and wellness and serve as an inspiration to the local community. San Diego has produced numerous world champions including US Open finalist Taylor Fritz, grand slam champions like Michael Chang and legendary pros like Coco Vandeweghe and Amber Lu."

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