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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Tracy Austin Named Tournament Honoree At Storied Ojai Tennis Tournament**

***Tickets Now On Sale for Special "Evening With Tracy Austin" Fundraising Event  
Honoring Tennis Hall of Famer and Former Ojai Champion Set For April 27***

OJAI, Calif. (Feb. 12, 2018) – International Tennis Hall of Famer Tracy Austin has been named the Tournament Honoree for the 118<sup>th</sup> Ojai Tennis Tournament and will be celebrated at a special fundraiser during the event, which runs from April 25-29 headquartered in downtown Ojai's venerable Libbey Park.

"An Evening With Tracy Austin" will take place Friday, April 27 at the Topa Mountain Winery. The event is a fundraiser for the Ojai Valley Tennis Club and funds raised will be used to expand and support youth tennis programs and tournaments in Ojai, as well as enhance Libbey Park and local school tennis facilities and support funding for The Ojai Tennis Tournament.

Longtime Ojai resident and renowned actor Malcom McDowell will take part in the evening's event, as will longtime local tennis teaching pro and promoter Wayne Bryan, father of the all-time winningest doubles team Mike and Bob Bryan. The Diane Miller Band will also perform. The cost of the fundraiser is \$150. For more information and to purchase tickets online, go to: [www.ojaitourney.org](http://www.ojaitourney.org) or click [HERE](#).

"The 118th edition of The Ojai Tennis Tournament is going to be our best tournament yet," said Carolyn Burke, first-year Ojai Valley Tennis Club President. "We are so excited to welcome Tracy Austin back to The Ojai as our tournament honoree and special guest at our annual fundraising event on April 27 at the Topa Mountain Winery. Our community was tested by the Thomas Fire, but we are resilient and strong! We are happy to be working together to create a memorable tournament that we know both players and fans will enjoy!"

The Rolling Hills resident Austin first burst onto the tennis scene winning The Ojai in 1977 (women's open) and 1978 (Girls' 16s), just one year before becoming the youngest player to win the US Open at the age of 16. The former world No. 1 beat Martina Navratilova in the semifinals and Chris Evert in the final at that 1979 US Open, and was later named that year's Associated Press Female Athlete of the Year.

Austin went on to win 30 singles titles and five doubles titles during her amazing career. Austin holds the distinction as being the youngest player to be inducted into the International Hall of

Fame in 1992. She can be seen at tennis' top events and has been the face of the U.S. Open for more than 20 years for USA Network and Tennis Channel.

In recent years, Ojai Tournament honorees have included former Grand Slam champion Rod Laver, former world No. 1, Wimbledon champion and USC All-American Stan Smith, and legendary former Stanford coach Dick Gould.

Austin recently announced through a video message that The Ojai would for the first time offer equal prize money in the Men's and Women's Open divisions. Local benefactor Mike Taggart has increased his donation for the equal prize money, which this year will total \$30,200. Each of tennis' Grand Slam events offer equal prize money, including the BNP Paribas Open which takes place each March in Indian Wells, Calif.

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**About The Ojai**

The Ojai Valley Tennis Club, Inc., is a non-profit organization that was established in 1895 by William Thacher. In 1896, the Ojai Valley Tennis Club initiated its first valley-wide tournament consisting of a single elimination mixed doubles event and The Ojai was born. Today the Ojai Valley Tennis Club is still running The Ojai but has broadened its mission to promoting interest in physical fitness and tennis, and providing recreational facilities for young people throughout the area.