



DOUG PINKERTON

COCO 2023 to serve up 'elevated' experience Pages 18-19



PAGES 12-17 Fan Guide 2023: Match times to fun times



PAGES 20-21 Players with a local connection



PAGES 24-25

Local businesses prepare to serve up Southern charm

PAGE 22 Meet the players

PAGE 26 Tennis Trivia

PAGES 28-29 Out-of-town visitors

FAN GUIDE: BE IN THE KNOW AT THE CHARLESTON OPEN

ZACH GIROUX

zach@thedanielislandnews.com

Curious what's in the mix for this year's Credit One Charleston Open? Look no further than this ultimate fan guide to help you navigate all the excitement to and from the tennis stadium.

DAYTIME FESTIVITIES

FAMILY WEEKEND

SAT, APRIL 1 – SUN, APRIL 2 9AM - 5PM

Bring the whole crew out for two fun-filled days during qualifying rounds! The weekend will offer a variety of family friendly activities on behalf of MUSC Health, including bouncy houses, fair hair, balloon art, face painting, games and live music. Admission is free for kids 16 and under, and adults are only \$10.

THE DRAW

SAT, APRIL 1

Be the first to know the match ups of the Credit One Charleston Open! The Draw will be conducted at the Match Point Bar & Grill. Players will be in attendance, so be sure to stop by, say hello and snag a photo!

FAN ZONE

SAT, APRIL 1 – SUN, APRIL 9 ALL DAY

Adults and kids are welcome to try their hand and see if they have what it takes to play like the pros at the Fan Zone presented by the USTA. Challenge your friends or family at the Speed of Serve Challenge; Be the Ball virtual tennis court maze; Multi Ball, Tennis Simulator; Ball Kid Challenge and the Knock 'Em Down Challenge.

LIVE MUSIC

SAT, APRIL 1 – SUN, APRIL 9 ALL DAY

Enjoy acoustic performances from local artists throughout the day at Charleston's Living Room. Lineup: creditonecharlestonopen.com/music-schedule/.



PROVIDED

Match Point Bar & Grill offers food, setting, and entertainment.

ART

SAT, APRIL – SUN, APRIL 9 11AM – 4PM

Attention art lovers, stop by the deck and check out artist Ted Dimond's signature paintings.

AUTOGRAPH SESSIONS

SAT, APRIL 1 – SUN, APRIL 9 ALL DAY

Meet some of your favorite players for a

picture and autograph!

TENNIS CLINICS

SAT, APRIL 1 – SUN, APRIL 9 9AM - 4PM

Come out for free clinics with world-class instructors from LTP Tennis, in partnership with Short Court Sports. All ages and skill levels are welcome.

PICKLEBALL CLINICS
MON. APRIL 3 - WED. APRIL 5

9AM – 4 PM

Enjoy pickleball lessons, the latest exhibits and daily exhibits.

NIGHTTME ACTIVITIES

LIVE MUSIC

MON, APRIL 3 – SUN, APRIL 9 DAILY

Relax with daily drink specials and live acoustic music from local acts at the Match Point Bar & Grill's Feature Stage. Lineup: creditonecharlestonopen.com/match-point-bar-and-grill/

HAPPY HOUR

MON, APRIL 3 - FRI, APRIL 7 5-6 PM

Join 2014 Charleston Open champion Andrea Petkovic for daily happy hour talk shows, presented by Racquet Magazine, with top tennis talent, coaches and more at the Match Point Bar & Grill.

See FAN GUIDE on PAGE 13

SouthState Your Trusted Mortgage Partner

Specializing in Purchase, Refinance, Lot Loans & Construction Loans



Kevin Brookes

SVP, Mortgage Loan Officer
NMLS# 204134
899 Island Park Drive, Suite 101
Daniel Island, SC 29492
Mobile 843.324.0279
Kevin.Brookes@SouthStateBank.com

Apply Online at
SouthStateBank.com/KevinBrookes

All loans are subject to credit approval and program guidelines. Equal Housing Lender. NMLS# 403455. Member FDIC.





PLAY BREAKDOWN

DAY MATCHES

SAT. APRIL 1

QUALIFYING ROUND

Gates open: 9 a.m. Play begins: 10 a.m.

SUN. APRIL 2

QUALIFYING ROUND

Gates open: 9 a.m. Play begins: 10 a.m.

MON. APRIL 3

1ST ROUND

Gates open: 9 a.m. Play begins: 10 a.m.

TUES, APRIL 4

1ST/2ND ROUND

Gates open: 10 a.m. Play begins: 11 a.m.

WED. APRIL 5

2ND/3RD ROUND

Gates open: 10 a.m. Play begins: 11 a.m.

THURS. APRIL 6

3RD ROUND

Gates open: 10 a.m. Play begins: 11 a.m.

FRI. APRIL 7

QUARTERFINALS

Gates open: 10 a.m. Play begins: 11 a.m.

SAT. APRIL 8

SEMIFINALS

Gates open: 10 a.m. Play begins: 11 a.m.

SUN, APRIL 9

FINALS*

Gates open: 10 a.m. Play begins: 11 a.m.

NIGHT MATCHES

MON, APRIL 3

1ST ROUND

Gates open: 5 p.m. Play begins: 7 p.m.

TUES. APRIL 4

1ST/2ND ROUND

Gates open: 5 p.m. Play begins: 7 p.m.



PROVIDED

Catch tennis action at Credit One Stadium April 1-9.

WED. APRIL 5

2ND/3RD ROUND

Gates open: 5 p.m. Play begins: 7 p.m.

THURS, APRIL 6

3RD ROUND

Gates open: 5 p.m. Play begins: 7 p.m.

FRI. APRIL 7

QUARTERFINALS

Gates open: 5 p.m. Play begins: 7 p.m.

*NOTE: Doubles Final begins at 11 a.m. followed by Singles Final. All match times are subject to change.

EATS AND DRINKS

MATCH POINT BAR & GRILL

The Match Point Bar & Grill features a full-service bar with local craft beer. spirits and Kim Crawford wines. Snack on local favorites from Swig & Swine BBQ. Enjoy a Clay Court Cooler while listening to live music and catching up with past champions. Be sure to stop by for happy hour from 4 p.m.-6 p.m. for \$2 off select beverages.

CHARLESTON COLLECTIVE

Offering Verde's Fresh Salads; Lowcountry Oysters; Orlando's Brick Oven Pizza; Beech Acai, Poke Bowls & Smoothies.

CLUB COURT CAFÉ & COCKTAILS

Located by the Althea Gibson Court, enjoy coffee by La Colombe as well as light bites and a full service bar!

CHARLESTON'S LIVING ROOM

Full-service cocktail bar featuring Chandon. Build your own charcuterie board featuring Forx Farms Cheese!



PROVIDED

Club Court Cafe & Cocktails is one of many food options on site.

FIRST SERVE PLAZA

Make this your first stop when you arrive at the Credit One Charleston Open. First Serve plaza features topshelf bloody marys, mimosas, and La Colombe coffee.

FOOD TRUCK VILLAGE

Featuring Local Charleston favorites. the food truck village will be home to Motley Chew Burgers, Mr. Poppers, Bangin' Vegan Eats, Ben & Jerry's, Life Raft Treats & Lowcountry Lemonade.

See FAN GUIDE on PAGE 14

pringtime...RE-LOCATE TIME!



BERESFORD CREEK STREET

Clarice Cawood, Realtor 865.776.2252

claricecawood.com





clarice.cawood@carolinaone.com



RULES AND REGULATIONS

FOOD & BEVERAGES

With the exception of one unopened bottle of water per person, no food or beverage will be admitted into the event.

NO SMOKING POLICY

Smoking, including e-cigarettes, is not permitted anywhere on the tournament grounds.

MATCH SCHEDULE

Please keep in mind that match times are subject to change due to weather, television coverage or other delays. Check credi tonecharlestonopen.com or the app for updates.

CAMERAS

No flash photography is allowed. Cameras are prohibited for any purpose other than using photographs for personal and private domestic use. Such photographs cannot be exploited or displayed in any manner or in any medium whatsoever without the express written consent of the WTA.

LOST & FOUND

Lost and Found is located at Guest Services, which is near the front steps of the stadium. The Credit One Charleston Open, its owner and the owner's affiliates, agents and employees are not responsible for lost or stolen articles.

TICKET POLICIES

Be prepared to present your digital ticket to our usher staff. Patrons wanting to leave and re-enter the tournament grounds will need to obtain a hand stamp or have your ticket exit scanned. No ticket or credential holder may continually collect, disseminate, transmit, publish or release from the grounds of the tournament any match scores or related statistical data during match play (from the commencement of

a match through its conclusion for any commercial, betting or gambling purposes).

REFUNDS/EXCHANGES

There are no refunds or exchanges. All sales are final

RAIN POLICY

The following policy applies to individual session tickets purchased directly (and not via ticket auction, exchange, resale, or other secondary ticket outlet) through Ticketmaster, creditonecharlestonopen. com or in person at Guest Services located at the main entrance. Note that this policy does not apply to weeklong subscription, or any tickets issued on a Complimentary or Trade basis. If a session is canceled and no matches are completed, tournament management will make every effort to reasonably accommodate the individual session ticket holder on a subsequent session, if held. The Credit One Charleston Open cannot guarantee ticket availability, exchange of equal value or

SMALL CLUTCH BAG APPROXIMATELY THE SIZE OF A HAND WITH OR WITHOUT A HANDLE OR STRAP NO LARGER THAN 4.5" X 6.5"

comparable seat location. There will be no refunds or credits. If one match is completed on Stadium Court, a session is considered complete, and no exchanges or refunds will be made. In addition, patrons are advised that the Credit One Charleston Open schedule of play is subject to change for all sessions. Tickets are not eligible for refund or exchange due to one or more changes in the schedule of play. Please note: Information on scheduling changes can be obtained cepted at the tournament and bag by visiting our website's homepage.

ADA ACCESSIBLE SEATING

ADA seating areas require an ADA seat ticket, which can be purchased from Ticketmaster.com or by calling 843-856-7900. Handicap parking is available. Present your state-issued license plate or hangtag to parking attendants and they will direct you.

CLEAR BAG POLICY (See graphic)

Be aware of what items are acdimensions.

See FAN GUIDE on PAGE 17







TAKE A STEP TOWARD THOUGHTFUL LIVING.



We're creating a community where all trails lead to discovery. Point Hope is a place rooted in nature where residents live, learn and play at the heart of all the City of Charleston offers. Conservation-minded planning celebrates the stunning Lowcountry natural environment and homes, schools, shopping and recreation here are thoughtful additions to the land. Join us to discover your next step.

VISIT OUR COMMUNITY SPECIALISTS AT THE HUB OR MEET US ONLINE.

Current home offerings from David Weekley Homes, Pulte Homes and Toll Brothers starting from the \$500s.

1049 Point Hope Parkway | Charleston, SC 29492 | 843.580.8080 | pointhopecharleston.com







EASTER

Surrise

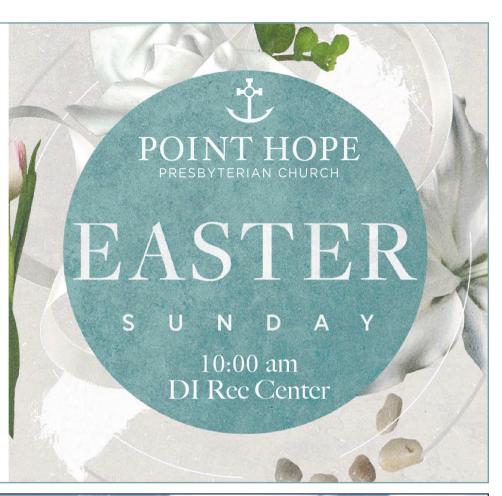
COME CELEBRATE WITH US

6:30 am at Waterfront Park









SPECIAL

\$30

BASIC WASH

SPECIAL

15% OFF

CERAMIC WINDOW TINT INSTALLATION CHECK OUT OUR NEW LARGER LOCATION!

LOCATION!

CAR AUDIO, RADIO & SECURITY

OF THE PROPERTY OF THE

Cars 843.com | 2466 Clements Ferry Road | 843.225.9996

PARKING AND TRANSPORTATION

DAY PARKING

Blackbaud – Spectator Lot A – NO PASS OR COST, 65 Fairchild St Benefitfocus – Spectator Lot B – NO PASS OR COST, 100 Benefitfo-

cus way.

NIGHT PARKING

Benefitfocus – Spectator Lot B – NO PASS OR COST, 100 Benefitfocus way.

SHUTTLES

Shuttles will run on a continuous loop beginning 1 hour prior to the gate open time and ending one hour after the conclusion of the final match for the day/evening. Buses will stop at each spectator lot on the way back from the stadium.

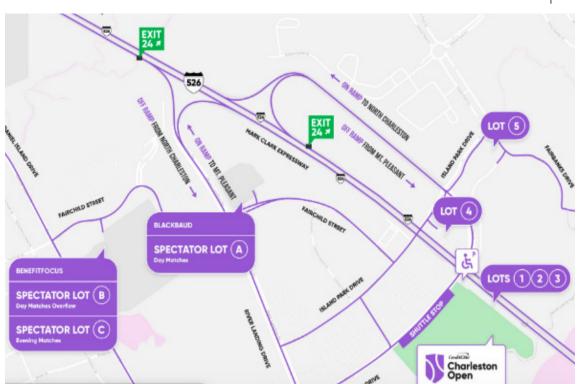
Visit the tournament schedule for gate times.

DANIEL ISLAND FERRY

If you are traveling to the tournament from downtown, catch the Daniel Island Ferry and enjoy a scenic waterway ride to the event. Ferries will loop from downtown Charleston to Daniel Island for tennis-goers to catch day or night matches at the stadium. Schedule and rates: diferry.com/ferry-tickets/.

ALL PARKING PASSES

All physical parking passes will have a specified lot number 1-5. Once on Daniel Island, follow the posted signage to get to the appropriate lot.



STAY PLUGGED IN

While on site, keep up with the happenings on other courts and around the grounds by following 0 Credit One Charleston Open on social media. Snap a selfie and share what you're experiencing at the tournament! /CREDITONECHARLESTONOPEN @CREDI-

TONECHARLESTONOPEN @CHARLESTONOPEN

Use the app to explore the stadium's site map, where you'll find locations for cocktails, merchandise and more. The app also includes access to your digital tickets. In-seat food and beverage ordering is available through the app exclusively for premium level ticket holders. The app will be available for download on April 1.

For more information, visit creditonecharlestonopen.com.



SETTING THE STAGE

COCO 2023 to serve up 'elevated' experience

ELIZABETH BUSH

news@thedanielislandnews.com

year ago, as the world's top women tennis players and thousands of loyal fans prepared to step into a new stadium experience at the Credit One Charleston Open (COCO) on Daniel Island, there was a bit of a scramble going on behind the scenes.

The brand new, modernized and revamped facility had been completed just weeks before. As opening day loomed, several items remained on the "to do" list, including unloading and installing a fleet of new stadium seats that were waiting on a cargo ship in Charleston harbor.

Fast forward to 2023 – a new year marked with plenty of renewed excitement and energy, minus the last minute frenzy.

"We feel like we have a home now," said Eleanor Adams, COCO's tournament manager. "And that we've had a year now to really get to know the stadium and to work out the kinks and to be able to really move things easily. It's been a gift!"

"We're definitely in a place where we always like to be – ready a week before the tournament starts, so we can kind of finish



ALL PHOTOS BY ELIZABETH BUSH

A view of center court and the four-story, 75,000-square-foot "Stage House" inside the Credit One Stadium.

things off, and we just didn't have that opportunity last year," added Bob Moran, tournament director and president of Charleston Tennis LLC. "It was kind of touch and go. So this year, we're in a really good place."

And if ticket sales are any indication, Moran is absolutely right. So far, they are pacing ahead

of 2022's totals and are expecting some 90,000 attendees throughout the week. All ticket packages have sold out, as well as both "Doubles, Bubbles and Bites" events.

The largest women'sonly tennis tournament in North America, the COCO officially kicks off Saturday, April 1, during the event's

"Family Weekend" and concludes on Sunday, April 9. And the 2023 player field is already generating lots of buzz, noted Moran. Charleston's roster features five of the world's top 10 players, including World No. 2 Aryna Sabalenka, World No. 3 Jessica Pegula, World No. 5 Ons Jabeur, World No. 8 Daria Kasatkina and World No. 9 and 2022 Charleston champion Belinda Bencic. Last week, 2020 Australian Open champion Sophia Kenin was given a wildcard entry into the tournament, joining fellow grand slam champs Sabalenka, Victoria Azarenka, Sloane Stephens and Jelena Ostapenko in the field.

"We've always had a strong player field," said Moran. "But this is by far the deepest field we've had...We have 42 of the top 73 players here, so every one of our players is ranked in the top 73 in the world. So day one, matches are going to be intense!"

But the tournament has more good news to celebrate. For the first time in COCO's 50-year history,

in December 2022 the event was named the WTA 500 Tournament of the Year. The fact that the selection was voted on by the players made it all the more meaningful for Moran and Adams.

"I've always felt like we were one of the best tournaments," said Moran. "And now the facilities match what we've always done. It's something we always strive for and it was really nice to see that happen in year one (of the new stadium's opening)!"

"I think the players were astounded with our new facility," added Adams. "It was so thoughtfully done with the players in mind, and right off the bat they saw it and they were excited and appreciated it...It's an outstanding facility that you just don't see on the tour very often."

And as they have continually strived to do in the past, taking care of the players and making them feel

at home takes center stage.

"What's amazing to me is that every other sport, they go home after," said Moran. "Be it the PGA or the NBA, they're done and they go home. But these young women don't go home, they go on to the next place...That's why it's such a challenge for us. They're on the road for eight to nine weeks when they get here, so that's why we pay a little more attention to the creature comforts and the things that we can do...to make sure they're taken care of."

ELEVATING THE EXPERIENCE

Creating an experience that is second to none for both players and fans remains priority one in 2023.

"I think it's about elevating the experience all the way around," added Moran. "And that comes from ownership. They challenge us every year to make sure we're doing the best we can...and to look for those new opportunities."

Thanks to what Moran calls some good "sponsorship wins" this year, fans will get to partake in a number of "partner activation" activities - such as the Volvo Mobile Studio, where they can design a new Volvo; the Motorola Razr Experience, where fans can charge their phones and play a game of ping-pong; and the upgraded "Pro Vision "test your serve speed" station. There will also be a new "Pose with Pros" photo selfie booth, where patrons can pose with a digital image of their favorite players.

"It's so cool!" noted Adams.

"And it will be the first time (it's offered) at any tournament!"

Other enhanced fan experiences include a brand new permanent

See STAGE on PAGE 19

Credit One Charleston Open 2023 generating lots of buzz

From **STAGE** on **PAGE 18**

deck "under the oaks" in the middle of the facility's grounds for listening to music or enjoying a bite to eat. There will also be more live music in more places, and new opportunities for fans to keep track of tournament action.

"It will be a lot easier for the patrons to come in and see where the players are practicing," noted Adams. "That will be updated live through our practice courts scheduling, so they will know who's on what court, so that if they have a favorite or someone they're interested in getting to know a little better and watching them practice, they'll be able to go and see that immediately."

"We (also) have invested a ton more in video production," added Moran. "Especially at night...it comes to life."

PLAYER HAPPENINGS

When they're not battling it out on the courts, players will once again have a chance to take part in some tournament favorites that are returning after being suspended for several years due to COVID. The popular "Player Party" is back in 2023 and will be held at the Riviera Theatre in downtown Charleston. The event, which will feature an illusionist and "candy bar," offers a time for players to dress up and show "their true personalities," said Adams.

The "Tennis in the City" event will also return this year. COCO players will partner with tennis players from the College of Charleston in offering a tennis clinic for local youth.

In addition, supporting charities will be an important part of tournament activities both on and off the courts. A fundraiser planned for earthquake relief in Turkey will net \$100

every time a player hits an ace.

"It will be exciting!" said Adams. "I think when word gets out and the girls hit an ace it will mean a lot more."

Ukraine's Elina Svitolina, a former top 10 player, is returning to the WTA Tour, after having her first child last fall, to host COCO's "Tennis Plays for Peace" Pro-Am benefitting Ukraine.

"She is coming from Ukraine, her family is still there and have been greatly affected by everything," said Adams.
"She also runs a tennis academy (there)...she's trying to keep the children involved in something that can get their minds

off of what they're going through."

Players will also take part in a virtual bingo game with patients at MUSC's Shawn Jenkins Children's Hospital. And the USA's Madison Keys, currently seeded at No. 9 in the COCO player field, will visit North Charleston, where her charity "Kindness Wins" helped fund the resurfacing of some local tennis courts.

All in all, tournament organizers are promising another win-win experience for every-

one involved in this year's event, which will showcase a singles draw of 56 players, a qualifying draw of 32 players, and a doubles draw of 16 players.

"Our attendees are in for a great nine days of tennis in April," added Moran. "Where the best in women's tennis will be in competition at the Credit One Stadium."

For all the latest COCO news, information on where to park, and a complete schedule of events, visit creditonecharlestonopen.com/.



Heads up! Workers string lights over a new permanent outdoor deck created adjacent to the Credit One Charleston Open stadium.



Bob Johnston of Johnston Signs installs one of many new seating directional signs in the stadium.

a Charleston doubles quarterfinalist in 2022 and competed in the main singles draw. That's par for the course for

Pegula, the only player on the WTA Tour who is ranked in the top 10 in both singles

The top-ranked American player was impressed with the \$50 million renovation the Credit One

Stadium received in time for last year's event, which is the largest women's only tournament in

"It's amazing," Pegula said in an interview with The Post and Courier last spring. "It looks so good. I'm so happy that they were able to accomplish it in time, and I think all of the players

really appreciate it. The facilities are great, and it's beautiful. And we always love this tournament ... It just makes it all that much better com-

Pegula had a season of success in 2022. She reached three Grand Slam singles quarterfinals in Melbourne, Paris and New York, while reaching the doubles final on the red clay of Roland-

She also made the finals in Madrid, the semifinals in Miami, Toronto and San Diego and the quarterfinals in Cincinnati last year. She qualified for the season-ending WTA Finals in both singles

Pegula, who is 15-5 this year with just over \$1.6 million in prize money, was scheduled to

Magda Linette in a Miami Open quarterfinal on Monday. After that, it's time for her return to

Pegula comes from a family that has strong ties to professional sports teams. Her father,

Terrence, got his start in the gas and oil industry while her mother, Kim, is a business owner.

The couple owns the Buffalo Bills of the NFL, while Mr. Pegula owns the Buffalo Sabres, an entry in the NHL.

NTA tent is pros Pegula-Rogers, Navarro trace success to local continue con

ZACH GIROUX

zach@thedanielislandnews.com

Emma Navarro wasn't born and raised on Daniel Island, but it didn't take long for her to call Charleston home. Her connections are planted firmly in the foundation of the Credit One Stadium.

The 21-year-old Navarra is the daughter of Ben and Kelly Navarro. The couple helped fund the \$50 million renovation of the Credit One Charleston Open last year.

Navarro grew up in New York, but spent a majority of her formative years traveling the country playing tennis. One of those stops was Daniel Island.

Navarro's first memory of playing on Daniel Island was in a 12-and-under tournament. She won a third set tiebreaker under the lights on Althea Gibson court.

In high school at Ashley Hall, Navarro was ranked the No. 1 tennis recruit in the nation. In 2018, she won the 18 singles and doubles titles at the USTA National Clay Court Championships. The following year, she finished the special. I'm super grateful to come from a season ranked the No. 3 junior player in the world.

Navarro played collegiate tennis at the University of Virginia, winning the NCAA Singles Championship as a freshman in 2021. In 2022, she was the first player in program history to earn ACC Player of the Year honors. Her All-American collegiate singles' career record was 51-3.

Navarro turned pro last year, making her debut at the LTP 100K ITF Women's Pro Circuit in Mount Pleasant. Navarro is no stranger to playing under the bright lights,

she made her Women's Tennis Association debut as a wild card at the Volvo Car Open when she was just 17. Since then, she's played on some of the world's biggest stages including wild card invites at Indian Wells and the U.S.

As for the Charleston Open, Navarro admitted she loves playing on the green

clay. It's what she grew up on and it's the surface she feels most comfortable

"I think the biggest thing that works in my advantage at this tournament is having the hometown support," Navarro added. "I feel very honored to be able to play for this city and having the support of the Charleston tennis fans is something city that values tennis so highly."

Currently ranked World No. 122, Navarro looks to crack into the top-100 soon. She's also knocking on the door of winning 100 matches on tour, which may be eclipsed while she's home.

> PETER FINGER PHOTOGRAPHY **Emma Navarro**

ZACH GIROUX

zach@thedanielislandnews.com

Island. She's since made a much larger imprint throughout the women's tennis

to grow up in."

Rogers credits the coaches and players that molded her as a player and a person from a young age. From clinics to private academies and all the grueling sprints on the lawns around the island, Rogers hasn't forgotten where she

hard work we put in," Rogers said. "A lot of happy memories and really good moments from Daniel

Rogers credits all of her success and good fortune on her roots. She remembers when Daniel Island was primarily forest and dirt roads. She even recalls when the row of palm trees were planted at the entrance and exit to the island. They've since

young spectator eating frozen treats and chasing after autographs to signing her name for adoring young fans.

"I really take it seriously when kids come up to me or I feel like I'm in that same position where I can inspire someone else," Rogers said.

"It is definitely a blessing that I'm able to

been able to make it a reality. So trying to bottle that perspective and pull it out on the hard days is

Rogers' most precious milestones came when she first broke into the world top-100, then the top-50 and has ascended as high as World No. 30.

Her most impressive victories to date have recently occurred against tennis great Serena Williams at the 2020 Top Seed Open; a win against World No. 12 Petra Kvitova to reach the quarterfinals of the 2020 U.S. Open and a third-round win against former World No. 1 Ash Barty in the 2021 U.S. Open. Not to mention her nearly 300 career match wins and more than \$5 million in prize money earned so far.

This year is no different, although the Credit One Charleston Open's look has drastically changed after a \$50 million stadium facelift last

She still has the same loyal supporters in her corner that give her a home court advantage and an edge over the competition.

"I always know that win, lose, draw, injury or whatever, my friends and family are there to support me and love me," Rogers added.

Maybe enough for Rogers to claim her maiden WTA singles title in the town she still calls home.

PHILIP M. BOWMAN sports@thedanielislandnews.com

Much has changed in Jessica Pegula's life since she first arrived in Charleston almost a decade ago to refine her tennis game.

Pegula was unknown at the time, a player who offered potential and promise, as she practiced on ing back." the hardcourts and clay courts of the Lowcountry while living in Mount Pleasant.

Today, she's one of the superstars of the WTA circuit with a world ranking of No. 3 in singles and No. 5 in doubles.

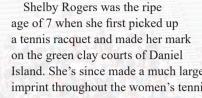
She has two singles titles to her credit in her career, including Guadalajara in 2022 and Washington, D.C., in 2019. She's appeared in four other finals.

But the 29-year-old native of Buffalo hasn't forgotten about her ties to the Lowcountry tennis

"Charleston is like a second home to me, and I can't wait to be back in April to play the Credit One Charleston Open again," Pegula said when it was announced she would be in the 2023 field.

"I am really proud of the tennis that I'm playing right now, and it would be amazing to win a title in a city that holds such a special place in

Pegula will make her fifth appearance at the Credit One Charleston Open, which commences on April 1 and concludes April 9.



"Without Charleston I wouldn't have a career," said Rogers, currently No. 42 in the WTA's rankings. "It's just a really great tennis community... A really awesome environment

came from.

"There's lots of good and tough memories of the

grown to new heights and so has she. Now 30, Roger's status has elevated from a

Over the years, Rogers has watched a lifelong dream blossom into a budding reality. She year. doesn't take a moment for granted. She still stops to smell the flowers and admire the journey that has transcended her to the game's biggest stage.

do this for a living," Rogers noted. "When you have those canceled flights or difficult days, it's important to remember how far I've come and that it was always a dream of mine and I've



Fans can expect intense matches

Five top-10 players lead strong field of competitors

First Seed: Aryna Sabalenka -World No. 2

Twenty-four year old Aryna Sabalenka is off to a terrific start for the 2023 season, building on a strong finish to the 2022 season where she defeated World No. 1 Iga Swiatek at the year-end WTA Finals before losing the title to Caroline Garcia.

She won two straight titles to start the 2023 season (bringing her singles title count to 17), the Adelaide International 1 and an exciting three-set come from behind win to capture her first Grand Slam win at the Australian Open.

She reached the quarterfinals in Dubai and made it to the finals at Indian Wells before dropping a three set match to Elena Rybakina. Currently playing in the Miami Open, Sabalenka opened the tournament with a straight-set win over Shelby Rogers, cruised through the early rounds, and is set to play a quarterfinal match on Wednesday. The Belarusian is challenging Swiatek for the World No. 1 ranking, who currently has a large lead - but her strong season coupled with a Swiatek injury keeps her atop the WTA Finals Leaderboard.

SUZANNE DETAR

sdetar@thedanielislandnews.com

With 42 of the top 73 players in the world playing at this year's Credit One Charleston Open, fans can expect some intense matches.

The field is headlined by 2023 Australian Open champion Aryna Sabalenka, three-time 2022 Grand Slam quarterfinalist and top-ranked American Jessica Pegula, two-time 2022 Grand Slam finalist Ons Jabeur, 2022 Roland-Garros semifinalist Daria Kasatkina and Olympic champion Belinda Bencic.

Second Seed: Jessica Pegula - World No. 3

American Jessica Pegula, who trained on Daniel Island in the mid-2010s, is playing some of the best tennis of her career. Playing professionally since 2009, she finished the 2022 season with a career high World No. 3 rank.

In 2022 she won her second WTA title and was one of only seven players to win 40 or more matches last year.

Pegula opened this year by reaching the quarterfinals in the Australian Open, battling to the finals in Qatar and the semifinals in Dubai. She returned to the U.S. to reach the quarterfinals at Indian Wells and is into the quarterfinals at the Miami Open.

Rounding out the Field

Bencic and Kasatkina join fellow Charleston champions Veronika Kudermetova (2021), Madison Keys (2019), and Sloane Stephens (2016) in looking for a repeat victory on Daniel Island. Charleston natives Shelby Rogers and Emma Navarro will also compete, vying for their first WTA title on home soil.

Other top players include World No. 14 Victoria Azarenka and World No. 18 Ekaterina Alexandrova, There are 13 American competitors: Pegula, Keys, Stephens, Rogers, Navarro, Danielle Collins, Amanda Anisimova, Bernarda Pera, Lauren Davis, Alycia Parks, Claire Liu, Alison Riske-Amritraj and Caty McNally.

Third Seed: Ons Jabeur - World No. 4

Tunisian Ons Jabeur reached a World No. 2 ranking in 2022, the highest ever for an African or Arab tennis player. The 28-year-old finished the 2022 season with a win-loss record of 47-17, capturing the Berlin and Madrid titles and reaching the Wimbledon, U.S. Open, Charleston and Rome finals. She also had six quarterfinals berths and qualified for the WTA Finals for the first time.

The 2023 Charleston Open will be Jabeur's fifth time competing in the field, where she holds a 10-4 win-loss record. In addition to reaching the tournament's finals in 2022, she was a semifinalist in 2021.

Jabeur is off to a slow start in 2023. She was physically hampered at the Australian Open and subsequently announced that she was undergoing minor knee surgery. After missing the entire Middle East tournaments, she returned to Indian Wells where she was knocked out early. She suffered a similar fate in Miami, losing her opening match to a qualifier in straight sets. She called for medical attention twice in the second set.

Fourth Seed: Daria Kasatkina: World No. 8

Daria Kasatkina is a past champion in Charleston, winning her first-ever professional title here in 2017. World No. 8 is her highest ranking, which she first achieved in October, 2022.

> Kasatkina made it to the finals to start the 2023 season at the Adelaide International 2 but lost in the first round of the Australian Open. She made it to the quarterfinals in Abu Dhabi, the round of 16 in Oatar, and lost her first match

in Dubai. The Russian

continues to struggle, getting knocked out at Indian Wells in the round of 32 and losing her opening match at Miami.

Fifth Seed: Belinda Bencic - World No. 9

Defending COCO champion Belinda Bencic, the "Swiss powerhouse," will defend her Charleston title. Last year, she defeated Jabeur in three sets in the final.

An Olympic Gold medalist, Bencic owns 7 WTA singles' titles.

Bencic came out strong in 2023, earning titles at the Adelaide International 2 and Abu Dhabi. She played well at the Australian open, losing in the round of 16 to eventual champion Sabalenka.

Since beginning play in the U.S., Bencic has struggled. She had early exits at Indian Wells and at Miami.



"I'd spent over a year and half looking for that perfect recreational tract of land within an hour drive from home. My efforts were largely a waste of my time. Despite my extensive online searches, I struggled to identify appropriate properties. When I found something I liked, it was already sold or under contract. I lacked the resources to identify leads or new listings. Then, I met Douglas Cutting at Blue Wing Properties, and everything changed.

Douglas instantly understood what I wanted in my ideal tract. He worked diligently to screen and present tracts of land in quality locations. He was intimately familiar with each of the properties we toured, having always presented me with clear and accurate information on each property prior to the visit. Before, during and after each tour, he walked me through the pros and cons of each property with his expert guidance weighed against my interests and needs. I was amazed at the extensive array of contacts and relationships he had established within remote areas: even allowing me to preview properties that had yet to be listed.

After months of research and patience, Douglas introduced me to a tract offering income potential, exceptional hunting opportunity for whitetail deer and turkey, as well as water features offering immediate waterfowl hunting. And in keeping with his advice, I'm now enjoying a beautiful, historic piece of land."

- Happy local client

EXPLORE. DISCOVER. ESCAPE.



Brokers of unique getaway properties

Contact DI resident **Douglas Cutting**



843.534.3911 dcutting2@gmail.com BlueWingProperties.com

Local businesses serve up Southern charm during Charleston Open

MARIE ROCHA-TYGH

marie@thedanielislandnews.com

This weekend crowds of tennis fans will arrive on Daniel Island for the 2023 Credit One Charleston Open. Many local businesses are ready to roll out their own special brand of Southern hospitality.

TRANSPORTATION

Daniel Island Ferry will once again ferry people daily from downtown to the DI waterfront. Owner Colby Hollifield says the COCO provides a unique opportu-



MARIE ROCHA-TYGH

Owner Colby Hollifield says an expanded ferry schedule will provide hassle-free rides during the tournament.

nity to expand their schedule.

"Tennis fans staying downtown love the hassle-free ride directly to the tournament and DI residents can enjoy a weekday experience downtown. Having evening service every day of the week opens up a lot of options for Daniel Islanders to enjoy dinner downtown without getting stuck in rush hour traffic. Getting around on the ferry is a bonus for visitors and residents alike."

Ben Tonon, owner of the **Daniel Island Shuttle**, expects to be very busy shuttling people around the area. It's a good idea to text or email Tonon for a lift. "Out of towners coming to Daniel Island

with the 'I'll just get an Uber' mindset are in for a rude awakening. Just ask the islanders! Thousands of fans leaving at the same time overload the system with demand creating price surges and wait time increases," he said.

His advice to local tournament goers is simple. "If you live on the island, consider yourself lucky. Walk, bike, or golf cart to the stadium. Save money, save a tree, and save yourself from having to comment on the neighborhood forum about the traffic."

SERVICE

Liem Dang, the new owner of Nails So Dep Daniel Island, is excited for his first experience with the tennis tournament. Dang says he has nine well-trained nail artists waiting to serve tournament attendees at his salon located right across from the stadium. "We are next to the stadium and are very convenient for tired feet. Stop in for a Green Tea Jelly Foot soak and back massage while browsing the internet with our 5 Gig WIFI."

Lori Nadelstumph of **Paisley Daniel Island** has a variety of stylish spring styles in inventory, including outfits that are a perfect match for tennis fans. Nadelstumph is also stocking a large variety of clear purses, bags, and backpacks to meet the needs of tournament goers. "The Stylish Clear Bag is perfect for events requiring see-through bags for entering policy."

Jacqueline Dinsmore, a Daniel Island resident and realtor at Carolina One's Daniel Island office, says the appeal of the tournament and other concerts at the Credit One Stadium can be a big draw for out of town visitors. "Tennis tournament week is not only fun but an outstanding time for potential buyers to visit and see all that this fabulous island town has to offer. There is nothing like taking



PROVIDED

The staff from Beech will be on hand to serve up healthy delicious dishes.

a client to an event at the Stadium in a golf cart after a bite to eat or drink down at the waterfront as well."

FOOD

Allie Clay, co-owner of Mpishi, said the restaurant will be open during their normal business hours, but anticipates they will be busy and suggests planning ahead. "Locals might want to make reservations, we're on Resy.com, to ensure they can get in. We've also been asked to do a couple of VIP private dinners for players and coaches over at the stadium, which should be really fun!"

LIDI also expects to get busy during the tournament. The

See HOSPITALITY on PAGE 25



MARIE ROCHA-TYGH

Paisley is stocking a large variety of clear purses, bags, and backpacks for a no-hassle stadium visit.

Island businesses prepare for the tourney

From HOSPITALITY on PAGE 24



LIDI bartender Quentin Scrivens will be shaking up cocktails for thirsty tennis fans and restaurant regulars.

Italian eatery is offering up their regular menu along with happy hour drink specials and bar bites. Reservations are available at the bar as well. Early birds can grab a saved seat and sip specialty libations shaken up by LIDI bartenders.

Attendees who bring their appetites will be treated to classic concession creations. A tasty variety of food will be available on site at the stadium, including delectable dishes from two Daniel Island favorites, Orlando's Brick Oven Pizza and Beech.

Orlando's will serve their classic cheese, pepperoni, and specialty pizzas. Whether

you're eating in the stadium or taking a break at their Seven Farms location, regulars can expect the great taste they've come to know and love thanks in part to the new facilities at the renovated stadium. "In the new kitchen they put in a pizza oven just for us. It has our own area where we can do all our prep, even make our boxes, so everything is status quo," John Geng, co-owner of Orlando's, said.

Beech will again be on hand at the stadium serving up healthy poke and acai bowls. Keegan Bird, Beech Restaurants CEO, said

it's great to be a part of the event not only because of the exposure, but it gives staff members the opportunity to get out of the shop and interact. General

Manager Juan Pineda is grateful to be part of the event for a second time. "Last year, we had a blast walking the grounds and admiring the architecture. This year we are pumped with excitement! We hope to leave a lasting impression on the beautiful people of Daniel Island and those who will be stopping by to witness one of the year's most excit-



ORTHOPAEDICS & PAIN MANAGEMENT



Lowcountry Orthopaedics & Sports Medicine specializes in orthopedic surgery and pain management. Our experienced physicians treat sports injuries, the hip & knee, spine, hand, and foot & ankle.





















CREDIT ONE CHARLESTON OPEN

Play Tennis Trivia Presented by Atlantic Properties

Enter to win 2 General Admission Tickets to the Finals

ennis Trivia returns for the 2023 Credit One Charleston Open! Enter this week's Tennis Trivia Presented by Atlantic Properties for your chance to win two General Admission tickets to the Credit One Charleston Open finals on April 9. Below are the questions. To be eligible to win, you must enter online by Sunday, April 2, at 5 p.m. at bit.ly/COCOTrivial 2023. You will also have a chance to play

1. Which three players committed to play in this years' tournament are from the Lowcountry or trained on **Daniel Island?**

and win final tickets next week.

- a. Emma Navarro, Shelby Rogers, Bethanie Mattek-Sands
- b. Shelby Rogers, Jessica Pegula, Emma Navarro
- c. Madison Keys, Sloane Stephens, Shelby Rogers

d. Shelby Rogers, Sloane Stephens, Emma Navarro

2. Counting this year, how many years has the Credit One Charleston Open (previously played under different sponsor names) been played?

- b. 51
- c. 26
- d. 2

3. Who was the original named sponsor of what is now the Credit **One Charleston Open?**

- a. Virginia Slims
- b. Revlon
- c. Family Circle Magazine
- d. Volvo Cars

4. Who won last year's tournament?

- a. Billie Jean King
- b. Ons Jabeur
- c. Belinda Bencic

d. Madison Keys

5. What kind of surface is the court in Credit One Stadium?

- a. Red Clay
- b. Green Clay
- c. Grass
- d. Hardcourt

6. Who is the top-seeded player in this year's tournament?

- a. Aryna Sabalenka
- b. Jessica Pegula
- c. Iga Swiatek
- d. Serena Williams

7. What Ukranian player, formerly ranked World No. 3, was granted a Wild Card to this year's tournament?

- a. Maria Sharapova
- b. Anhelina Kalinina
- c. Sofia Kenin
- d. Elina Svitolina

8. What word is used to describe a player's score after a game goes to deuce and she will win the game if she wins the following point?

- a. Deuce
- b. Advantage
- c. Ace
- d. Love

9. What former Australian Open champion was awarded a Wild Card to this year's tournament?

- a. Venus Williams
- b. Samantha Stosur
- c. Sofia Kenin
- d. Sloane Stephens

10. What does "love" mean in ten-

- a. When referencing the score, love is the equivalent of zero.
- b. The opposite of John McEnroe's feeling for line judges.
- c. The score is tied.
- d. The player serves a double fault.



Owner & Broker-In-Charge



Realtor & Broker's Assistant

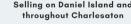


ASHLEY SEVERANCE #1 DI Agent in 2020, 2021 & 2022 Sales Volume Concierge Buying & Selling with a Professional Support Team

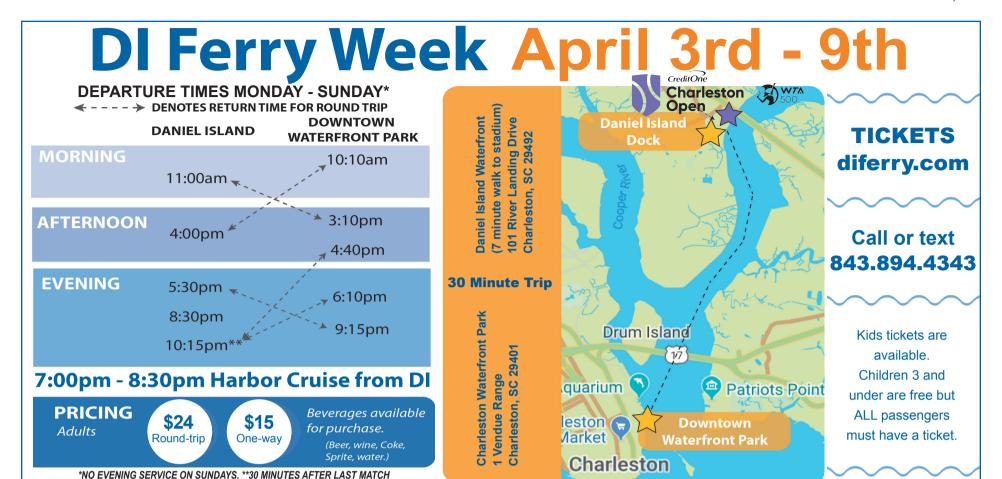
Marketing Manager











4% TOTAL REAL ESTATE COMMISSION

FULL SERVICE - MLS LISTING WITH COMPLETE INTERNET MARKETING

FULL SERVICE MLS LISTING INCLUDES

Full Internet Marketing Package
Virtual Tour
Automatic Buyer's Feedback

SPECIAL BUYER'S PROGRAM INCLUDES

20% REBATE of my earned commission to my Buyer Client



Harbourtowne has been in business since 1978

Fudgy Brabham has been the owner since 1997

FUDGY BRABHAM

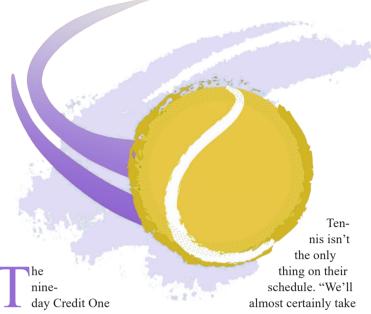
30-Year Realtor | Owner/Broker-in-Charge 843.568.1241

Go to the website for full details: hbrtwn.com/fudgy

Out-of-town fans come for the tennis, stay for the charm

MARIE ROCHA-TYGH

marie@thedanielislandnews.com



Charleston Open will bring more than 90,000 tennis fans to Daniel Island. Many of the attendees have been here before and are returning to see some of the best women's tennis in the world. And, they get to enjoy the charm and hospitality offered by the island.

Patrick Clark and Candy Barr came out last year to visit with friends and enjoy their first Charleston Open. "We haven't attended any others, so I have nothing to compare it to other than the tournaments that I watch on TV. The appeal of the tournament in Charleston is that it's an opportunity to visit with friends and watch some entertaining tennis."

the ferry into Charleston and have a nice meal at a great restaurant. Other than that, we'll be visiting friends and probably take a few hikes around the island."

The couple agrees Daniel Island is a great place to hold a tennis tournament. "The facilities are first class and the right size. I don't think you could find a bad seat in that stadium. The close proximity to Charleston is great. Charleston has a lot of excellent restaurants and places to sit down and enjoy a nice cocktail," Patrick said.

The couple was eager to come back and experience the excite-

ALL PHOTOS PROVIDED

ment of seeing the event live. "You hear the sounds, feel the environment the competitors feel, and live the emotion of the crowd as it reacts to a winning shot, or a disappointing setback. It's like comparing a Broadway show to a motion picture. The connection with the performers is not there. Same goes for tennis," he said.

Todd Veland and his wife Deborah Lee will be bringing their daughters, Rylee and Sophie, back to Charleston for a fourth time. The family will visit parents and spend time with Veland's sister. Veland says the vibe at the event makes the tournament special.

"It's joyful, more laid back than other tournaments. A friendlier atmosphere, not as formal. You can tell the players enjoy themselves. The organizers and sponsors really do a great job of making the event for all types — families, partiers, tennis enthusiasts, novices, etc. Everyone feels welcome, the overall climate and culture is felt by all who attend."

pandemic shut down the city.

Daniel Island resident Sherri Ginger is overjoyed to finally have the couple visit and check out the tournament. It also gives her a chance to show off the beautiful island she calls home.

"I'm ecstatic we'll be attending



Tricia Vogel, far left, loves coming to Charleston to watch the tournament and visit family.

Shelly and John Kacergis are thrilled to be attending their first Charleston tennis tournament. Plans to attend the event back in 2020 were scrapped when the

the Thursday daytime sessions together and they get to stay in my guest room! I'm so looking forbest women players in the game. "Over the last 10 years we've seen some of these ladies at the Australian Open, French Open, Wimbledon, U.S. Open, Italian Open and Cincinnati. Because of COVID, however, we have never seen a majority of these women in person," John said.

Tricia Vogel's first trip to the Charleston tournament was back in 2005 with her young family when it was the Family Circle Cup. She visits her family, who all live in the Charleston area, annually at tournament time.

The couple is excited to experience the tournament and watch the

Shelly said.

ward to giving them the golf cart

tour of our amazing island, shops,

The Atlanta couple have been

to tournaments from Paris to

Wimbledon, but the Charleston

tournament has always been on

their tennis bucket list. "Going

to the major tournaments — we

have also been to the U.S. Open

and the Italian Open in Rome

— is exciting but they are very

crowded and take place in large

cities. I am looking forward to a

more manageable size where we

can get closer to the action and a

more relaxed surrounding area,"

parks and restaurants."

Shelly and John Kacergis, pictured in Paris, have attended tournaments around the world.

Vogel is a huge tennis fan. She's been to the tournaments in

See FANS on PAGE 29

Tennis fans from near and far flock to Daniel Island

From FANS on PAGE 28

Washington, D.C., once to Indian Wells and once to the U.S. Open. But she says nothing compares to the charm of Daniel Island and the surrounding area.

"I get to see family, great weather, walk on Sullivan's Island, have lunch at Poe's, sweet tea at McAllister's, and lots of walking and biking along the trails. The beauty of the moss hanging from the trees first thing in the morning down at Rivers Landing. No wonder my family loves it," Vogel exclaimed.

As a young girl living in the South, Kat Frost always hoped to see the WTA tournament in person. "I knew about this tournament back when it was tobacco sponsored and known as the Virginia Slims Circuit. With all the proprietary originals like Chrissy, Billie Jean, and Martina, I wanted to go."

Last year Frost, now living in Southern California, got her wish after friends moved to Daniel Island. She was thrilled, finally getting to experience the

WTA tournament in person.

"It's such an exclusive women's event. An amazing stadium and the tennis players are so available" Last year she ran into several fan favorites including the 2023 Australian Open champion and the number two world ranked women's player. "Heck, Aryna Sabalenka even said 'hi' to me last vear mid-week. She is a doll," Frost exclaimed.

"It was super fun seeing the ultimate champion Belinda Bencic winning a grinder, three-setter versus a hard hitting lefty player in round one! Her win over Ons Jabeur in the final was truly

spectacular – although I had to watch it televised as my inaugural Charleston Open visit concluded with a wondrous women's weekend."

Frost was so impressed by the tourney and Daniel Island she's coming back for a second year in a row. "I know y'all never tire of hearing how charming Charleston is, but Daniel Island really exudes charm. What a well-planned top notch world class event."



Above: Todd Veland and his two daughters strike a pose at a previous WTA event. Center circle: Kat Frost wanted to come to the Charleston event since she was a young girl.





DANIEL ISLAND 2023 SWIM TEAM

2022 IMPORTANT SWIM TEAM DATES

APRIL 4: Returning swimmer and sibling registration begins

APRIL 11: New swimmer registration begins

APRIL 18 — 19: New swimmer evaluation at Pierce pool

APRIL 22: Kick off breakfast

MAY 2: Practices begin! (ages 7 and up)

MAY 15: Practices for 5 and 6 year olds begin

MAY 24: Team dinner and time trials

JUNE 1: Morning practices begin

JUNE 26: 6 and under Mega Meet

JULY 7-9: City Meet

CCAA meets to be announced soon

2023 SPONSORS

PREMIUM SPONSOR

aniel Island News

PLATINUM SPONSOR



GOLD SPONSORS







BRONZE SPONSORS









The Perfect Retirement













Assisted Living • Memory Care • Skilled Nursing • Rehab

580 Robert Daniel Drive • Charleston, SC 29492 (843) 402-8693 • Well-More.com