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## BRAUNSCHWEIG, MONS & SZCZECIN SCOOP 2016 AWARDS FOR ATP CHALLENGER TOUR TOURNAMENTS OF THE YEAR

LONDON – The ATP has announced the 2016 ATP Challenger Tournaments of the Year, with three long-standing events voted by players as their most favoured ATP Challenger Tour events: the Sparkassen OPEN (Braunschweig, Germany), the Ethias Trophy (Mons, Belgium) and the Pekao Szczecin Open (Poland). Braunschweig and Mons were also 2015 winners in the inaugural year that players began voting for the awards.

The ATP Challenger Tournament of the Year awards recognise the leading standards set across the 166 Challenger tournaments in 42 countries in 2016.

ATP Challenger Tour Committee Co-Chairs, Alison Lee, ATP International Executive Vice President and Ross Hutchins, Chief Player Officer, said, “These Challengers in Braunschweig, Mons and Szczecin are all proud events which excel in providing the very best services for players and fans. The players appreciate the extra care the tournaments provide them and the fans obviously enjoy themselves with almost 70,000 spectators attending these three tournaments in total.”

The Sparkassen OPEN in Braunschweig has received many accolades in its 23-year history. Tournament Director Volker Jaecke said, “It’s unbelievable and we say a very special thanks to the ATP and all players, who have voted for our ATP Challenger Sparkassen OPEN in Braunschweig again. It is such an honour for the whole team to receive the Challenger of the Year Award. After winning the award the last two years, we have been even more motivated to organise a great tournament for players, spectators, sponsors and partners. This year, we are very proud to have many ATP Challenger promoters in Braunschweig at the first global ATP Challenger Workshop and we are happy to show them our great event.”

Tournament Promoter of the Sparkassen Open, and CEO of Brunswiek Marketing, Harald Tenzer said, “It is important to mention that this tournament could not exist without all the sponsors and partners who support us each year. We are looking forward to another year of successful cooperation and organization with the ATP, especially with the new prize money level of \$150,000 +H. We are hoping to be an important event for the ATP’s Next Generation.”

In 2017, all three Challenger winners have increased to the new top level of prize money on the Challenger circuit, €127,000 (US\$150,000) plus hotel accommodation for players.

The Ethias Trophy in Mons, staged since 2005, is also a local crowd favourite. Former player and Tournament Director Dominique Monami said, “We are delighted to have won this prize for the third time. For the last 12 years, we have been helping talented young Belgians break into a difficult environment and offered tens of thousands of visitors a unique experience. Sport has been at the heart of our business model and this prize recognises our visitors and our team. We hope that it will help us safeguard the long-term future of the tournament.”

The Chairman of Pekao Szczecin Open, Krzysztof Bobala said, “I am very pleased that the Pekao Szczecin Open was appreciated and earned this prestigious award. In September, we will be celebrating the 25th anniversary and are proud that we will open a new chapter of our history by being honoured with

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this award. Our special thanks go to our sponsors and our event organizing team – without them our tournament wouldn't be the same. With their support, we try every year to raise the bar and be one of the best tournaments in the world. The huge success of last year's edition, which was highlighted by an attendance record of more than 25,000 people in the stands, gave us a lot of joy and satisfaction and showed that we are going in the right direction. On behalf of the entire crew at Pekao Szczecin Open, we promise we will do our best to constantly develop our tournament and for years to write a beautiful story not only of Szczecin but the entire Polish tennis family. The best is yet to come.”

The ATP Challenger Tour is a launching pad for up-and-coming players to as they look to make strides up the Emirates ATP Rankings, and onto the ATP World Tour. Challenger tournaments provide ATP players with important playing opportunities throughout the season, as well as providing local tennis fans the opportunity to see world-class tennis and future stars of the game.

In 2016, the ATP Challenger Tour comprised 166 events in 42 countries, offering a total of US\$10.2 million prize money. More than 750,000 spectators attended these tournaments worldwide. ATP Challenger Tour matches are streamed live on [www.atpworldtour.com/en/atp-challenger-tour](http://www.atpworldtour.com/en/atp-challenger-tour).

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**About the ATP**

The ATP is the governing body of the men's professional tennis circuits - the ATP World Tour, the ATP Challenger Tour and the ATP Champions Tour. With 64 tournaments in 31 countries, the ATP World Tour showcases the finest male athletes competing in the world's most exciting venues. From Australia to Europe and the Americas to Asia, the stars of the 2017 ATP World Tour will battle for prestigious titles and Emirates ATP Rankings points at ATP World Tour Masters 1000, 500 and 250 events, as well as Grand Slams (non ATP events). At the end of the season only the world's top 8 qualified singles players and doubles teams will qualify to compete for the last title of the season at the ATP Finals. Held at The O2 in London, the event will officially crown the 2017 ATP World Tour No. 1 presented by Emirates. For more information, please visit [www.ATPWorldTour.com](http://www.ATPWorldTour.com).

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