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NISHIKORI LAUNCHES ATP WORLD TOUR'S ASIAN SWING

HONG KONG – Japan's Kei Nishikori, fresh off his historic run to the US Open final and a return to the Top 10 of the Emirates ATP Rankings, helped launch the ATP World Tour's three-week Asian swing on Friday in Hong Kong.

This year marks the first time that China will host events across all three ATP World Tour tournament categories (250, 500, Masters 1000). The Asian swing gets underway next Monday with the inaugural Shenzhen Open and the Malaysian Open in Kuala Lumpur. It continues with a pair of 500 events, the China Open in Beijing and Rakuten Japan Open Tennis Championships in Tokyo, before culminating with the Shanghai Rolex Masters.

Nishikori began his PR day with breakfast TV studio visits with CNN and Bloomberg, and then boarded a traditional junk boat for a trip across Hong Kong's iconic harbour. Following a dim sum lunch with several local and international media and a press conference attended by 30 of the region's media, he headed to the LRC Tennis Club to have a hit with Hong Kong's top juniors. In the evening, Nishikori was the guest of honour at an ATP cocktail party at the exclusive Upper House hotel.

"It was great fun to spend a day in Hong Kong doing media interviews, kids clinic and sponsor reception. It's a huge personal goal of mine to continue to grow tennis in Asia. Now I look forward to returning to the tour in Kuala Lumpur, Tokyo and Shanghai," said Nishikori.

Nishikori will compete in Kuala Lumpur, Tokyo and Shanghai, as the Emirates ATP Race to London intensifies over the next three weeks. Five singles berths remain up for grabs, with just 11 tournaments remaining during the regular season. The Japanese star is attempting to become the first player from Asia to qualify for the Barclays ATP World Tour Finals singles field. He is currently sixth in the Emirates ATP Race to London.

The 24 year old has already achieved a number of milestones this season, becoming the first Japanese player to break into the Top 10 of the Emirates ATP Rankings, as well as becoming the first Asian player to contest an ATP World Tour Masters 1000 (Mutua Madrid Open) and Grand Slam final (US Open).

"Kei has had very little downtime since New York and made a huge effort to come to Hong Kong today to help promote the ATP World Tour tournaments in Asia," said Alison Lee, ATP Executive Vice President, International Group. "He is a superstar who is gracious and inspiring to millions of people in this region."

Nishikori is one of an all-time high 18 Asian players, including seven from Japan, currently in the Top 200 of the Emirates ATP Rankings. There were 12 Asian players in the year-end Top 200 in 2013, compared to five in 2003.

Tennis in the region has come a long way since 2009, when the ATP World Tour's three-week Asian swing was first introduced with the inaugural Masters 1000 tournament in Shanghai. It has significantly grown its attendance and broadcast figures, and now provides more than \$9 million in prize money, equivalent to 10% of the ATP prize money pool.



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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 61 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 2014 ATP World Tour 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, based on their performance throughout the year, will qualify to compete for the last title of the season at the Barclays ATP World Tour Finals. Held at The O2 in London, the event will officially crown the 2014 ATP World Tour No.1 presented by Emirates. For more information, please visit www.ATPWorldTour.com.



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