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## **Storied Ojai Tennis Tournament Cancelled Because Of COVID-19 Virus Pandemic**

*Started in 1896, One Of Nation's Oldest Tournaments Scheduled For  
April 22-26 Is Called Off By Tournament Organizers Because Of  
Potential Spread Of Coronavirus*

OJAI, Calif. (March 16, 2020) – In light of the ongoing developments surrounding the spread of COVID-19 (coronavirus), the 2020 Ojai Tennis Tournament set for April 22-26 has been cancelled.

In a vote by Ojai Valley Tennis Club board members on Sunday night, it was determined the 120<sup>th</sup> edition of the tournament would not take place next month, and comes on the heels of the Pac-12 Conference's decision last week to cancel all spring sport championships. The Ojai serves as the men's and women's dual-match Pac-12 Championships, as well as other collegiate events, the California Community College Athletic Association State Championships, Boys' CIF-Southern Section divisions, men's and women's open prize money events and junior divisions.

Ojai Valley Tennis Club President, Carolyn Burke, and Ojai Tennis Tournament Executive Director, Katrina Rice Schmidt, released a joint statement on the tournament's cancellation:

"We deeply regret that we must cancel The Ojai Tennis Tournament," the statement read. "This decision was made in the best interest of the health of the players, spectators, volunteers, and the residents of Ojai. We are deeply disappointed to have to cancel our tournament, but feel that the well-being of everyone involved is most important at this time. We wish you all well and look forward to bringing you The Ojai in 2021."

The tournament, headquartered in downtown Ojai and played at venerable Libbey Park and throughout West Ventura County, started in 1896, and has been played every year except for five years; once for the infectious hoof and mouth disease (1924) and four years during World War II (1943-46).

Each year, 27 different divisions are contested at The Ojai with more than 1,250 players. Free freshly squeezed orange juice is served in Libbey Park, as well as tea poured from silver urns under the classic tea tent and served by just some of the tournament's 600 volunteers.

Last Friday the United States Tennis Association, the governing body of tennis in the U.S., announced it was canceling all events through April 20.

For more news surrounding The Ojai, like on Facebook at:

[www.facebook.com/TheOjaiTennisTournament](http://www.facebook.com/TheOjaiTennisTournament);

Follow on Twitter: [Twitter.com/TheOjai](https://twitter.com/TheOjai);

And on Instagram: @OjaiTennis.

**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.