

W-S Open talent announced

CHRONICLE STAFF REPORT

James Blake and Gael Monfils will be among this year's Winston-Salem Open at Wake Forest University players.

The tournament, now in its third year, will be played from Aug. 18-24 at the Wake Forest Tennis Complex adjacent to BB&T Field.

Blake played the previous two W-S Opens. He is a local favorite, having played for the United States in Davis Cup ties at Joel Coliseum against India in 2001, Spain in 2007 and France in 2008. The 33-year-old, currently ranked No. 85, has 10 ATP World Tour singles titles, including five in 2006, when he reached a career-best No. 4 in the world. He teamed with Jack Sock to win the doubles crown at Delray Beach earlier this year.



Monfils

Monfils is currently ranked No. 60 but has been as high as No. 7. The 26-year-old Frenchman is widely considered to be one of the most entertaining players on the ATP World Tour. He has been hit with injuries in each of the last two years and was recently forced to miss Wimbledon, but he upset Tomas Berdych and reached the third round at Roland Garros in May. Monfils will be making his Winston-Salem Open debut. He requested a wild card last year but was forced to withdraw at the final minute as he continued to rehab from a knee injury.

"It's wonderful for Gael Monfils to commit to our tournament this early. He committed because he has talked to other players who competed in Winston-Salem during the past two years and shared that this is a great place to prepare for the US Open," said Tournament Director Bill Oakes.

Tommy Robredo, Tommy Haas, Sam Querrey and Greensboro native John Isner, the two-time W-S Open defending champion, will also be among this year's players. As of last week, 39 of the 48 slots in the main draw have been filled, with the remainder of the entrants to come from wild cards and qualifying play.

"Other than the U.S. Open and the top-tier ATP Masters tournaments, the Winston-Salem Open offers greater playing field depth than probably any other men's professional tournament in America this year. Nine of the players who will compete in the Winston-Salem Open have been ranked in the top 10 during their careers," said Oakes. "The players' attraction to Winston-Salem is due in large part to the incredible hospitality, fan support and volunteers that we offer."



File Photo

Fan favorite James Blake is returning to the Winston-Salem Open.

In other tournament news, the Winston-Salem Open will hold tryouts for ball persons July 19 from 4-6 p.m. and July 20 from 10 a.m.-noon. at the Wake Forest University Indoor Tennis Center, 100 West 32nd St. (adjacent to BB&T Field).

Candidates for ball persons must know how to keep score of tennis games, be able to move quickly, be willing to endure lengthy tennis matches in the sun and work well with others on a team. Ball persons must be 13 years old by Aug. 17 (proof of age required) in order to qualify. Applicants are asked to wear appropriate athletic clothes to the tryouts and cannot wear shoes with black soles. Ball persons serve as volunteers, and there is no fee to apply.

For tickets or more information about the 2013 Winston-Salem Open, go to winstonsalemopen.com.

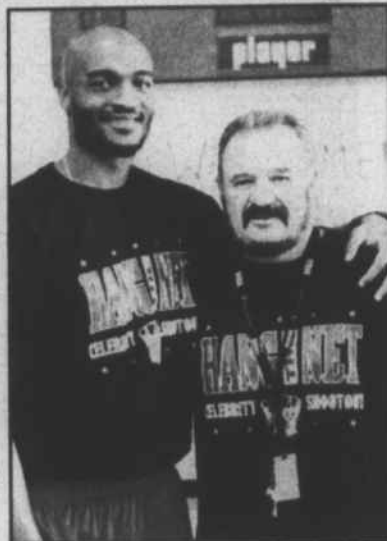
Fun slate of talent at annual b-ball showcase

CHRONICLE STAFF REPORT

Hanes Hosiery Community Center will hold its 23rd Annual Hang the Net Celebrity Shootout and Slam Dunk Contest on Thursday, July 25 at 2 p.m. The Center is located at 501 Reynolds Blvd.

Since Art Blevins, the director of Hanes Hosiery, created the event, it has become a favorite attraction for both fans, area celebrities and nationally-known basketball stars.

Scheduled to appear this year are Cameron Kent from WXII, Danny Harden from Fox 8, Sam Davis of Triad Sports Newspaper, Carolina Panthers Super Fan Greg "Catman" Good, Mount Tabor Football Coach Laymarr Marshall, Atkins Basketball Coach Louis "Dr. Art Blevins (left) with Reyshawn Chocolate" Terry.



Submitted Photo

Lowery, former Wake Forest University star Willie "Super Sub" Griffin, former Winston-Salem State University Star Brandon Hobbs, former Yale Star Mike Grace, former North Carolina Central star Albert "T-ball" Connor, former Belmont Abby College Star Jon Adams, Howard Coston, former Harlem Globetrotter Rob Little, NBA Star Josh Howard, Steve Nivenes of the Josh Howard Foundation, Coach Kenneth Bates and former High Point College Star Brian Leak.

At the event, Blevins will honor former University of North Carolina basketball star Reyshawn Terry, Mount Tabor Coach Andy Muse, Winston Salem Prep Coach Andre Gould and sports journalist and anchor Dave Goren with Living Legend awards.

This event is free and is open to the public.

Cook

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only be derived from science fiction. Canvases of every size line her hallway, showcasing works in various stages of completion.

"I'm usually doing at least five paintings at once," she related. "... It's very therapeutic."

Cook is currently working on conceptualizing a series that draws parallels between global events and Biblical prophecies. The mother of two estimates that she has more than 100 paintings in her collection.

"They are my babies, but I've sold a few," she said. "You gotta let your children grow up and move on sometime."

Cook says she has loved art since she was a girl, but was discouraged from pursuing it as a hobby or a career. It wasn't until she discovered PBS' instructional show "The Joy of Painting" featuring Bob Ross in 1988 that Cook was inspired to revisit her childhood passion.

"I got to the place where I started recording it because it was so soothing, and there was something in my head that said, 'You can do that,'" she related. "It was very healing because it was something that I never got to bring to fruition as a child."

As a member of the Associated Artists of Winston-Salem, Inc., Cook's work has been on display in businesses all across town. Several of her pieces are currently on view at Buena Vista Eye. Next month, a group of her paintings will be on display at a local doctor's office. Though she was reluctant to share her work at first, Cook says the interaction with her viewers and fans has become one of the most important aspects of her journey as an artist.

"I like to let people make their own assumptions and interpretations (about my work)," she said. "It's a great way to create dialogue."

Cook's work has piqued the interest of Lee Mecum, an artists' representative and owner of Art Pear Gallery on Coliseum Drive.

"I thought her work was interesting," commented the city native. "I really liked that every piece of art she showed me had a story."



Photo by Layla Garmy

The artist holds one of her pieces, "No Woman Not Cry," a commentary on the social ills America faces.



Mecum

Mecum, who has worked in the art world for more than a decade, said Cook's unique voice sets her apart as an artist.

"One of the things I really like about Cloves is her sincerity," she remarked. "She wants to make a statement with her art, and she wants to help people. She's a very nurturing person - I liked that about her immediately."

For Cook, painting is a source of peace and contentment. Through her work, she's grappled with unemployment, single motherhood, cultural identity and a host of other challenges she's faced along the way.

"I started painting as a form of therapy," she said. "... It's given me an outlet for all of the anxieties of life."

With the help of the master's in licensed professional counseling that Cook obtained from Grand Canyon University last spring, she hopes to share the healing power of art with a broader audience as an art therapist. She is also working on an e-book featuring a sampling of her works, the stories behind them and the lessons she has learned from the experiences.

Like the artist, Mecum says Cook's work is resplendent with facets and layers.

"She's really got a story to tell... Her paintings appear to be very simple, but when you look closely at them, they have a very deep meaning, and I like that," Mecum said. "There's more than meets the eye."

For more information about Cook or her paintings, email paintress43@hotmail.com with "Paintings" in the subject line. For more information about Art Pear Gallery, visit <http://artpeargallery.com>.

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