



## PALERMO PROVIDING PATH TO WTA TOUR RETURN, BUT IT WON'T MAKE A PROFIT

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The WTA Tour is scheduled to resume in Palermo on August 3, following a five-month break, with the tournament looking to lead professional tennis back.

"I honestly feel the responsibility to show the world that you can play tennis, but using all kinds of precautions," [the tournament director, Oliviero Palma, told Reuters](#).

The tournament will follow WTA coronavirus protocols and would require players have "tests before they come, as they arrive and every four days." It will have some fans allowed—350 in the stands, down from the usual 1,000 seats.

The \$250,000 International event is reducing prize money by \$27,500, but does not expect to make a profit under these conditions. Still, the small clay-court tournament has an unusually strong field, led by No. 2 [Simona Halep](#) and No. 14 [Johanna Konta](#).

"The draw is insane, almost like a Premier," said Palma, contrasting it alongside the next level of WTA events.

The tournament will be followed by another clay-court event, in Prague, before switching to hard courts. The tour will then return to Europe for a September clay-court swing that will conclude with Roland Garros.

"I think our first three events—Palermo, Prague and Lexington—will certainly create that pathway for us," WTA CEO Steve Simon told Reuters in another interview.

But Simon noted that changes in government restrictions or other difficulties could still affect events.

"Obviously, if we don't think the balance is right or we think the conditions have changed and it's not safe, we don't like what's happening due to the challenges we have, we will not hesitate to shut down," he said.