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2026 Ningbo Open Kicks Off Bringing World-Class Tennis to Ningbo

The opening ceremony of the 2026 Ningbo Open was held at the Center Court of the Ningbo (Yinzhou) Tennis Center on the evening of October 19, marking the official launch of the week-long tournament. Witnessed by thousands of spectators, the stadium's retractable roof slowly opened, creating a spectacular moment for the occasion. A highlight of the evening was the presentation of the WTA 500 Progress Award of the Year, recognizing the tournament's progress and development.

The ceremony began with a light show in the evening, followed by "Yin Feng Song Yun", a dance performance inspired by China's Song Dynasty heritage. Blending traditional Chinese culture with the energy of modern tennis, the performance highlighted the city's cultural identity and sporting spirit. Top players Elena Rybakina and Jelena Ostapenko also attended the ceremony and later interacted with spectators by hitting balls with fans.

Bai Xilin, Secretary of the Party Committee and Director of the Tennis Administrative Center of the General Administration of Sport of China, congratulated the tournament on its opening. He praised Ningbo as an open and dynamic city, noting the tournament's rapid development from its early stages to a major international event in just three years. He also highlighted its role in raising Ningbo's international profile, saying that the tournament had helped introduce Ningbo to the world and bring the world closer to the city.



A highlight of the evening was the presentation of the WTA 500



Progress Award of the Year, recognizing the tournament's progress and development. WTA supervisor Kerrilyn Cramer presented the trophy to the tournament. Since being upgraded to WTA 500 status in 2024, the tournament has continued to improve its facilities and player services, further strengthening its position on the international tennis calendar.

The ceremony concluded with officials and guests jointly activating the launch device amid a countdown from the audience, officially opening the 2026 Ningbo Open. Rybakina and Ostapenko then joined spectators for an on-court tennis interaction, bringing the atmosphere to a lively close.

Except for the event competition, the Ningbo Open has also brought a wider range of sporting and lifestyle experiences to the city. Running alongside the tournament, the "OPEN ENJOY Sports and Lifestyle Week" has transformed the area around the Ningbo (Yinzhou) Tennis Center into a lively hub for sports, entertainment and leisure.

Beyond the court, the tournament also offered players an opportunity to experience Ningbo's cultural heritage. Before the competition began, Elena Rybakina visited Yuebo Academy by the Dongqian Lake, where she tried her hand at painting a



traditional Chinese oil-paper umbrella. Surrounded by the lake and rolling hills, the experience offered a glimpse of Ningbo's traditional craftsmanship and scenic beauty, showing another side of the city beyond the tennis court.

Visitors can try their hand at pickleball challenges, experience simulated F1 racing and explore interactive activities such as cyber tennis, while a nearby lifestyle market brings together sports brands, food outlets and specialty coffee shops. By combining professional competition with accessible activities and leisure experiences, the event invites spectators to do more than watch the matches, offering them new ways to engage

with sport and experience Ningbo's urban lifestyle.

The main competition began on October 19 and will run through October 25, when the singles and doubles champions will be crowned. Players from more than 20 countries and regions are competing at the Ningbo (Yinzhou) Tennis Center, adding to a week of high-level international tennis in the city.

Competition has been heating up at the 2026 Ningbo Open. In the women's singles second round on October 21, Marie Bouzkova defeated Anastasia Zakharova 7-5, 6-2 to become the first player to reach the quarterfinals. In women's doubles, Spain's Cristina Bucsa and the United States' Nicole Melichar-Martinez defeated Italy's Sara Errani and Jasmine Paolini 7-5, 6-3 to advance to the second round. Bucsa and Melichar-Martinez later progressed to the doubles semifinals after Leylah Fernandez and Marta Kostyuk withdrew from their quarterfinal match due to injury.

As the competition progresses, the tournament will enter its decisive stages in the coming days, with four quarterfinal matches scheduled for Friday, October 23, followed by two semifinals on Saturday, October 24. The finals will take place on Sunday, October 25, when the singles and doubles champions will be crowned. With the titles within reach, the coming days promise more exciting tennis at the Ningbo (Yinzhou) Tennis Center.



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