

# HIGHEST-PAID FEMALE ATHLETES 2024: COCO, CAITLIN AND KORDA SOAR



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The world's 15 top-earning athletes will make an estimated \$221 million. Eleven athletes made at least \$10 million, including Coco Gauff, Caitlin Clark, Nelly Korda and Simone Biles.

Interest in women's sports has exploded recently with record TV ratings, attendance, revenue, sponsorships and franchise valuations across multiple sports

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properties. For the athletes, the money is starting to flow as well.

The world's 15 highest-paid female athletes will earn an estimated \$221 million in 2024, up 27% versus last year. Eleven athletes made at least \$10 million, compared with six in 2023.

**Tennis**(<https://www.sportico.com/t/tennis/>)

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star

**Coco** (<https://www.sportico.com/t/coco-gauff/>)

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ranks No. 1 for the second straight year with \$30.4 million from

**prize** (<https://www.sportico.com/t/prize-money/>)

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and endorsements. She is just the third woman in sports to earn more than \$30 million in a given year, after Naomi Osaka and Serena Williams.

Overall, athletes from five different sports made the cut, led by tennis with nine entries. Golf had three players in the top 15, while skiing (Eileen Gu), basketball (

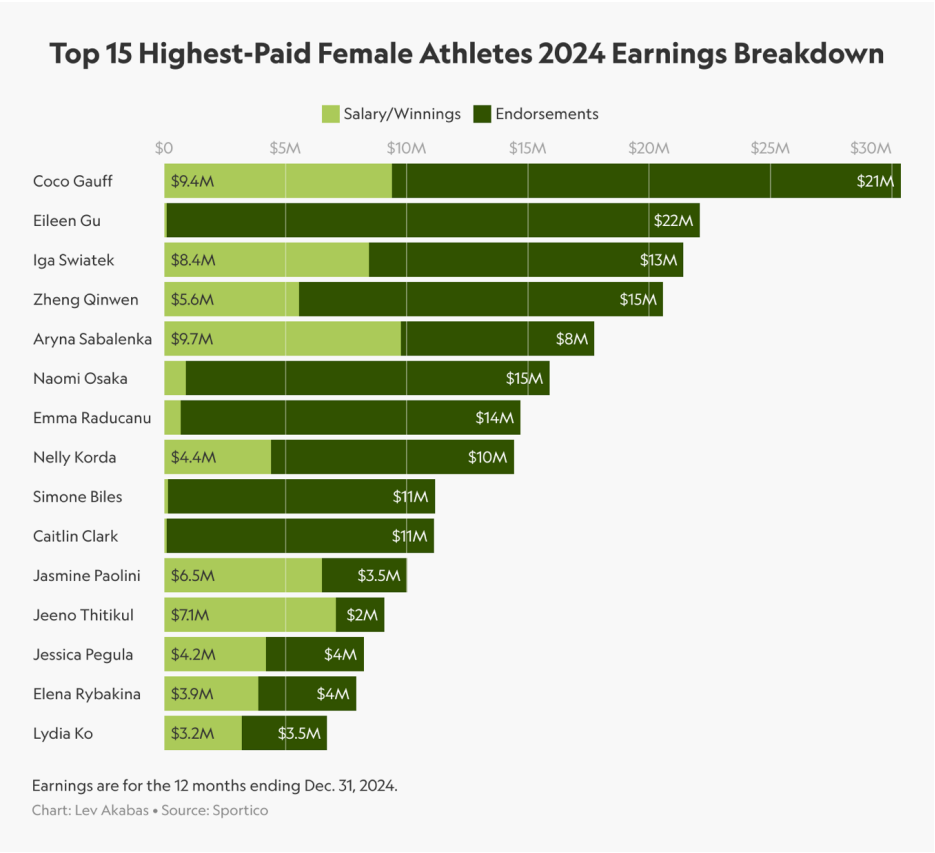
**Caitlin** (<https://www.sportico.com/t/caitlin-clark/>)

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) and gymnastics (

**Simone** (<https://www.sportico.com/t/simone->

) each had one athlete represented.

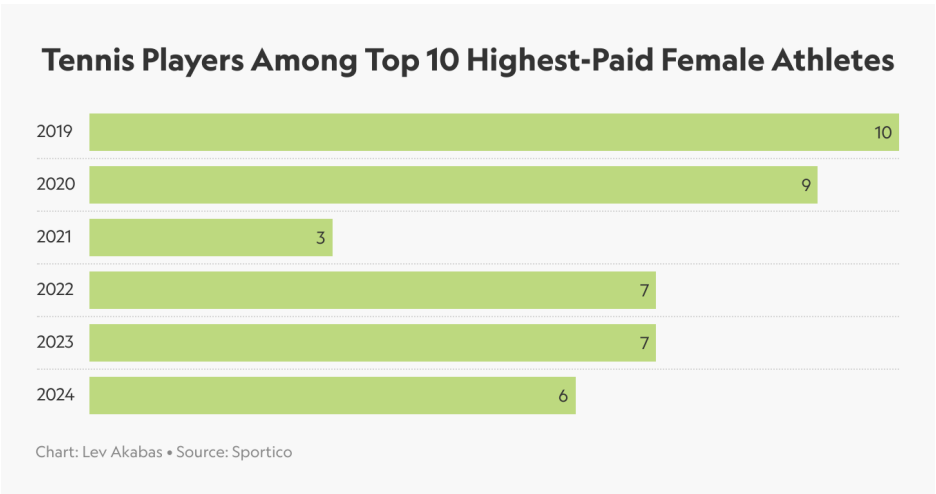


Clark (\$11.1 million) makes her list debut after a record-breaking college career that included more than a dozen NIL deals at Iowa. Several of those brands, including Nike, Gatorade, State Farm and Panini, have continued their relationship with Clark as a pro where she was the No. 1 overall pick by the Indiana Fever.

Nike is Clark’s most valuable endorsement deal. In April, the Swoosh signed the future WNBA Rookie of the Year to an eight-year agreement worth more than \$3 million a year on average. Other brand partners include Wilson, Hy Vee, Xfinity, Gainbridge and Lilly.

Gauff had a disappointing performance at the Grand Slams this year, with her best showing semifinal appearances at the Australian Open and French Open —she did win the doubles title at the French. The 20-year-old did win three titles in 2024, including the richest tournament in the sport. Gauff defeated Zheng Qinwen 3-6, 6-4, 7-6 in the WTA Finals in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, and earned \$4.805 million for the title. It was the biggest payout ever for a women’s tennis event.

Gauff earned \$9.4 million in prize money but took in more than twice as much off the court. She added two new deals to her deep endorsement portfolio, signing a multiyear pact with L’Oreal to pitch its natural hair care brand Carol’s Daughter and adding juice brand Naked, where she was named CSO—chief smoothie officer. The Naked deal includes an equity position.



Coco is on top, but her reign will be challenged by

breakout tennis star Zheng, who made an estimated \$20.6 million, including \$15 million off the court. She won a pair of WTA events and reached the finals in three others, including the Australian Open, but her big breakthrough was in Paris at the Olympics. She became the first Asian tennis player, male or female, to win an Olympic gold in singles, triggering major bonuses from sponsors and new deals that will significantly boost her off-court earnings in 2025. She has a dozen endorsement partners led by Nike.

The endorsement landscape in China is a gold mine for breakthrough athletes and is partially responsible for the sponsor windfalls for Emma Raducanu and Eileen Gu, who both have Chinese ancestry. Zheng is just the second Chinese tennis player to crack the top 10 after Li Na. Li's endorsement earnings approached \$20 million a year after she won the French Open (2011) and Wimbledon (2014). Like Li, Zheng is represented by IMG, which has deep connections in China from its past work there.

Another athlete shooting up the charts is Nelly Korda (\$10.4 million). The world's No. 1 golfer reeled off a record-tying five straight wins early in the year and seven titles overall in 16 events. She was the first American with seven wins in a season since Beth Daniel in 1990. The win streak and appearances at the Met Gala and *Sports Illustrated* swimsuit issue made

Korda a crossover star in 2024. Her stellar play also boosted her bank account from sponsor bonuses. Partners include Nike, T-Mobile, TaylorMade, Goldman Sachs, Delta Airlines, Cisco, Grant Thornton, Whoop, US LBM and LivPur. In July, travel brand Tumi signed Korda as a brand ambassador.

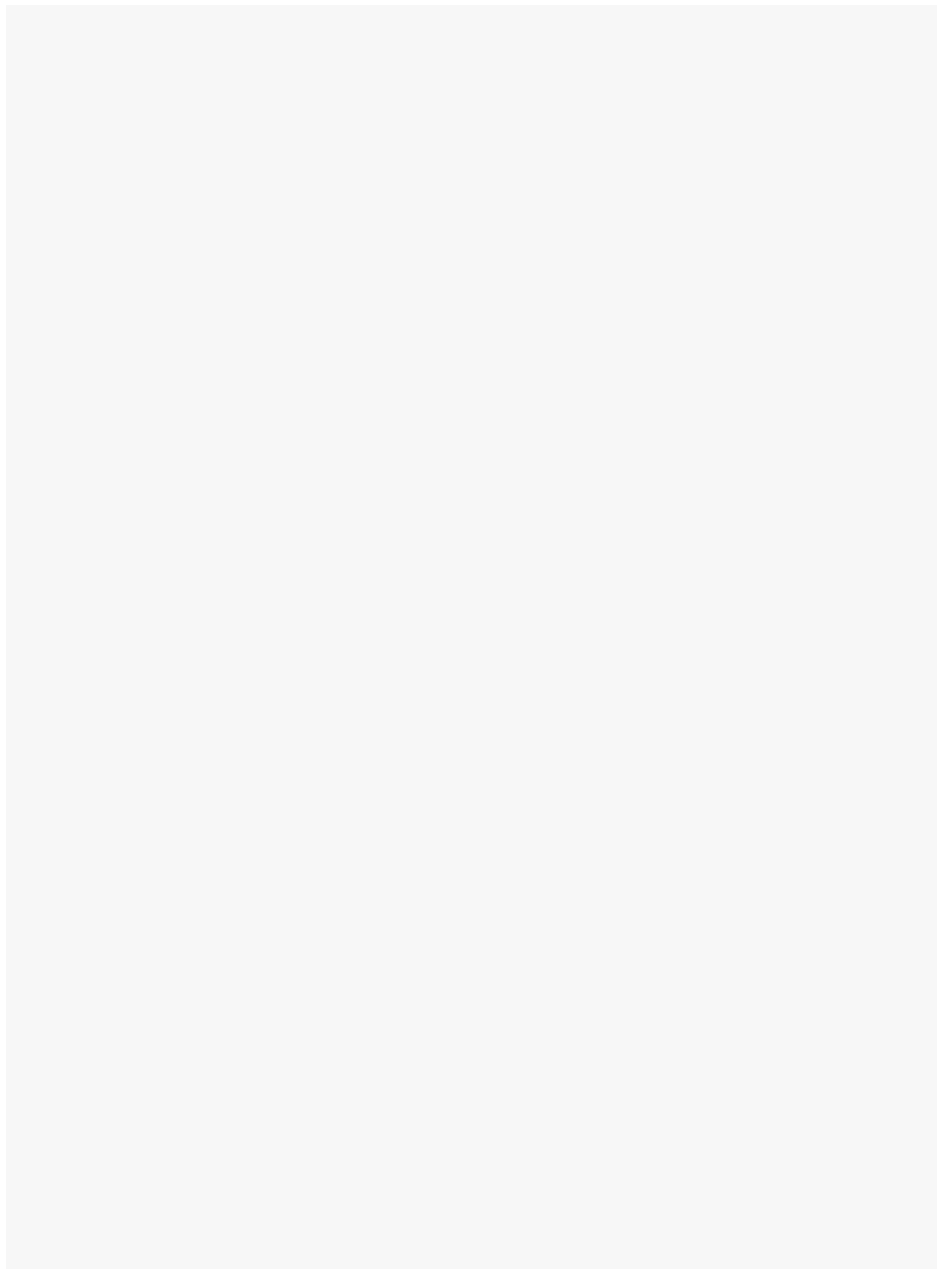
Zheng and Korda are part of a group that skews young and makes bank. Overall, the top 15 earners are 25 years old on average, and 30-year-old Jessica Pegula is the only one older than 28. Compare that to the 100 highest-paid men last year, which had a cutoff of \$32.5 million. The average age was 31 and 10 athletes older than 38 cracked the top 100.

Several other athletes made more than \$6 million, by *Sportico's* count, but fell just outside the top 15, including Czech tennis player Barbora Krejčíková, soccer star Alex Morgan and WNBA All-Star Sabrina Ionescu.

The earnings include prize money, salaries and bonuses during 2024 for active athletes, including Olympic medal payouts and prize money from the Billie Jean King Cup. Venus Williams is not technically retired but the 44-year-old played just two matches early in the year and has largely hung up her racket. The seven-time Grand Slam champion was not

considered for the list but would have made the cut based on her hefty corporate speaking income.

The endorsement earnings estimates were compiled through conversations with those familiar with marketing agreements and also include royalties, memorabilia, appearance fees, media and businesses tied to their celebrity. The figures are all before taxes and any agent fees.



### **1. Coco Gauff: \$30.4 million**

**Prize money: \$9.4 million | Endorsements: \$21 million | Age: 20**

Gauff first signed with New Balance when she was 14 years old. In 2022, the Boston-based brand redid her contract and made it one of the richest in the women's game with an extension that runs for more than five years. This summer, New Balance launched her second signature shoe. Her other partners are UPS, Head, Barilla, Baker Tilly, Bose, Rolex, L'Oréal and Naked.

### **2. Eileen Gu: \$22.1 million**

**Prize money: \$62,000 | Endorsements: \$22 million | Age: 21**

In 2019, the American-born Gu started competing for China, where her mother was born. She partnered with more than 20 brands leading up to the 2022 Olympics in Beijing and appeared on the covers of the Chinese editions of *InStyle*, *Marie Claire* and *Vogue*—the IMG Model client just appeared on the cover of *Hong Kong Vogue* for a third time. Gu remains a marketing force between Olympic cycles with a global sponsorship with Porsche her latest major pact.

### **3. Iga Świątek: \$21.4 million**

**Prize money: \$8.4 million | Endorsements: \$13 million | Age: 23**



The Polish-born Swiatek finished second in the year-end WTA rankings after two straight seasons on top. She captured her third straight French Open and fourth overall. Swiss-brand On signed Świątek last year to help launch its tennis apparel. In November, the International Tennis Integrity Agency suspended Świątek for one month for testing positive for the banned substance trimetazidine. She forfeited \$158,944 in prize money from the Cincinnati Open, the first tournament she played after the failed test.

#### **4. Zheng Qinwen: \$20.6 million**

**Prize money: \$5.6 million | Endorsements: \$15 million | Age: 22**

Zheng was named 2022 WTA Newcomer of the Year, won her first event in 2023 and this year made her first Grand Slam final in Australia. The world's fifth-ranked player now has a deep endorsement roster that includes Nike, Lancome, Gatorade, Wilson, McDonald's, Rolex, Alipay, Tencent and more. In November, she cashed her biggest on-court check with a runner-up finish to Gauff at the WTA Finals worth \$2.3 million.

#### **5. Aryna Sabalenka: \$17.7 million**

**Prize money: \$9.7 million | Endorsements: \$8**

## **million | Age: 26**

Sabalenka became the 16th different woman to finish as the year-end No. 1 in the WTA Tour rankings. It capped a dominant year where she won a pair of Grand Slam titles, the Australian Open and U.S. Open. The wins and ranking triggered lucrative bonuses from her biggest sponsor, Nike. Her other sponsors are Wilson, Whoop, Maestro Dobel Tequila and Oakberry USA. Sabalenka's career prize money of \$30.1 million ranks 10th all time.

## **6. Naomi Osaka: \$15.9 million**

**Prize money: \$870,000 | Endorsements: \$15 million**

**| Age: 27**

Osaka was back on the court in 2024 after she took a year off from tennis with the birth of her daughter Shai. Her brand partners still include Nike, Louis Vuitton, TAG Heuer, Panasonic, Beats, Crate & Barrel, Hyperice, Morinaga and Bobbie baby formula. This year, she joined Zico Coconut Water as an investor and brand ambassador.

## **7. Emma Raducanu: \$14.7 million**

**Prize money: \$671,000 | Endorsements: \$14 million**

**| Age: 22**

Raducanu returned to the WTA Tour this year after injuries sidelined her for the final eight months of

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2023. She has been unable to duplicate anything close to her breakthrough 2021 U.S. Open win, with only one trip past the second round in a Slam since then. Her Nike earnings have been dented with her fall in the rankings, but she maintains a deep roster of sponsors that continue to use the dual U.K.-Canada citizen who also speaks fluent Mandarin. Multiyear partners secured after her Open win included HSBC, Tiffany, British Airways, Dior, Vodafone, Porsche and Evian.

## **8. Nelly Korda: \$14.4 million**

**Prize money: \$4.4 million | Endorsements: \$10 million | Age: 26**

In early 2023, T-Mobile signed Korda to an endorsement deal. The wireless brand featured Korda in an iPhone ad that blanketed the airwaves in June as she was in the midst of her five-tournament win streak. “We felt we had our ‘Caitlin Clark’ of golf already, so we jumped on the opportunity to feature Nelly and reinforce our commitment to drive equity in sports,” said a T-Mobile spokesperson.

## **9. Simone Biles: \$11.1 million**

**Prize money: \$135,000 | Endorsements: \$11 million | Age: 27**

The most decorated gymnast in history racked up four more Olympic medals, including three golds in Paris. Sponsors flock to Biles, whose 2024 endorsement roster included Athleta, Eli Lilly, GK Elite, K18, MasterClass, Nulo, Powerade, Spieth America and Visa. Biles' earnings also got a boost from the four-part Netflix documentary *Simone Biles Rising*, corporate speaking engagements and as headliner of the Gold Over America Tour.

#### **10. Caitlin Clark: \$11.1 million**

**Salary/bonus: \$100,000 | Endorsements: \$11 million | Age: 22**

Clark earned a base salary of \$76,535 during her rookie year with the Indiana Fever. The WNBA's salary structure also includes performance bonus payments that ultimately boosted her basketball

**on-court**[\(https://www.sportico.com/personalities/athletes/2024/caitlin-earningsclark-wnba-salary-pay-endorsement-earnings-1234819038/\)](https://www.sportico.com/personalities/athletes/2024/caitlin-earningsclark-wnba-salary-pay-endorsement-earnings-1234819038/)

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to roughly \$100,000. The biggest bonus was \$10,300 for her selection as All-WNBA first team. She was the first rookie since Candace Parker in 2008 to be selected.

#### **11. Jasmine Paolini: \$10 million**

**Prize money: \$6.5 million | Endorsements: \$3.5**

## **million | Age: 28**

It was a breakout year for Paolini, who had never made it past the second round of a Grand Slam in her first 12 years as a pro but made the finals of the French Open and Wimbledon in 2024. She also came through for her country with a doubles gold medal at the Paris Olympics and a title for Italy in the Billie Jean King Cup, formerly the Federation Cup, where Paolini and her four teammates split \$2.5 million in prize money. The Slam finals and year-end No. 4 ranking unlocked sponsor bonuses.

## **12. Jeeno Thitikul: \$9.1 million**

**Prize money: \$7.1 million | Endorsements: \$2 million**

**| Age: 21**

Thitikul pocketed a pair of huge paydays last month worth \$5 million. She clinched a \$1 million bonus through the Aon Risk Reward Challenge, a competition based on how players score on a designated hole each week. The same week, she won the year-end

**CME Group**     **(<https://www.sportico.com/leagues/golf/2024/jeeno-thitikul-largest-prize-ever-1234817169/>)**

**Tour**                     **Championship**

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that paid \$4 million in prize money, the biggest prize money in women's golf history. The Thai golfer had \$3.7 million in winnings before this year.

## **13. Jessica Pegula: \$8.2 million**

13. Jessica Pegula: \$4.2 million

**Prize money: \$4.2 million | Endorsements: \$4 million | Age: 30**

After six straight losses, Pegula made it past the quarterfinals of a Grand Slam for the first time at the 2024 U.S. Open. She reached the final before losing to Sabalenka but earned a

**career-high [\(https://www.sportico.com/leagues/tennis/2024/jessica-pegula-us-open-run-sabalenka-wins-1234796445/\)](https://www.sportico.com/leagues/tennis/2024/jessica-pegula-us-open-run-sabalenka-wins-1234796445/) payday**

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of \$1.8 million as runner-up. Adidas is her primary endorsement deal, and she also represents Yonex and Ready Nutrition. She is also the founder of skin care line Ready 24.

**14. Elena Rybakina: \$7.9 million**

**Prize money: \$3.9 million | Endorsements: \$4 million | Age: 25**

The 2022 Wimbledon champion won three events in 2024—Brisbane, Abu Dhabi and Stuttgart—and made the finals at Miami and Doha. The Kazakhstani tennis star struggled with illnesses and injuries in the second half of the year but still qualified for the year-end WTA Finals. She switched from Adidas to Yonex as her clothing sponsor in 2023—she also uses a Yonex racket. Red Bull and Bank RBK are among her other partners

## 15. Lydia Ko: \$6.7 million

**Prize money: \$3.2 million | Endorsements: \$3.5 million | Age: 27**

It was a bounce-back year for Ko, who won her first event at 15 and was No. 1 in the world at 17. She won four times, including a major (AIG Women's Open) and Olympic gold medal—she also has a silver and bronze, making her the only golfer with all three medals at three different Olympics. The medal qualified her for the LPGA Hall of Fame, and she was the second-youngest to qualify after Karrie Webb. Ko's \$20.1 million career prize money ranks fourth all-time and is just \$2.4 million shy of leader Annika Sorenstam.



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