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Sony Ericsson WTA Tour Wraps Landmark Multi-Million Dollar "Superhero" Marketing Campaign Creative Shoot In The Eternal City

Over 30 stars of women's tennis get on location in Rome to take part in unprecedented creative push promoting players

ST. PETERSBURG, Florida - 'Game set and match' became 'roll, camera, action!' over last weekend in Rome as the Sony Ericsson WTA Tour ignited production on the most dynamic and ambitious marketing drive in the Tour's 35-year history.

A comprehensive film and photographic crew moved swiftly around the Italian capital during the week of the Internazionali BNL D'Italia tournament shooting at six different locations, involving over 30 Sony Ericsson WTA Tour players launching the creative thrust of a campaign that pitches the Tour's players as modern-day superheroes.

The campaign is designed to promote the Tour's current and next generation stars, in their yearlong race to the season-ending Sony Ericsson Championships - Doha 2008 where the top eight singles players and top four doubles teams will battle.

The film shoot captured eight of the top ten players in the world in varied scenes of a commercial film directed by renowned French director, Matthieu Mantovani that will be launched at the Tour's Wimbledon Player Party at Kensington Roof Gardens in London on June 19.

Maria Sharapova, Ana Ivanovic, Jelena Jankovic, Svetlana Kuznetsova, Serena Williams, Anna Chakvetadze, Venus Williams, Daniela Hantuchova, Maria Kirilenko and Yan Zi were all involved in the filming with over 30 singles and doubles players being pictured by noted American lifestyle photographer, Nathaniel Welch, for an accompanying print and digital campaign.

Serena Williams said: "This has been a fun experience and I love anything in front of the camera! Matthieu is a great director and I could really follow his vision." She added, "This is a great campaign for the Sony Ericsson WTA Tour and it's another sign that women's tennis is the leading sport for all female athletes worldwide."

Ana Ivanovic said: "It's a very exciting way to promote women's tennis. Rome has been an interesting place to film with lots of spectators looking on. The director and crew were really professional and made it easy for me, it will be great to see how it looks in the final film."

Sony Ericsson WTA Tour CEO, Larry Scott, who attended the film sets said: "It's been an exciting week for both the players and the Tour, to see our ideas and plans for this campaign come to life so brilliantly on the streets of this great city. The Tour has made an unprecedented investment in the promotion of players. The players too are very excited about this initiative and have made an impressive commitment to the campaign. It's been great to see them getting involved on set and enjoying the process."

Director Mantovani was excited about directing the Sony Ericsson WTA Tour commercial. He has previously directed visually stunning commercials all over the world, for many world-class clients such as BP, Renault, Barclays Capital, Molson, and Audi.

Mantovani said: "I love the idea of seeing the players in off-court, everyday situations that are interesting; not seeing them how we always see them. This allowed us to play with fiction and reality. It was important to create scenarios that are not too 'effects-heavy', so creating dramatic visual effects with a combination of still shots, split screen and graphics that are

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interesting and fun, but more realistic. The players were really fun to work with. They were all very professional, and they understand how to work with the camera. Even the few who were a little shy at first, showed a natural, surprising talent once the cameras turned on."

The Sony Ericsson WTA Tour agency of record for this global marketing campaign is the WPP Group, the parent company of Grey Group which delivered creative for the advertising campaign, GCI Group for public relations and Schematic for digital marketing.

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