



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **SONY ERICSSON WTA TOUR APPOINTS HEAD OF COMPETITION & MEMBER RELATIONS**

#### **20-Year tennis business veteran and former Deputy Tournament Director of the Australian Open Peter Johnston to oversee Tour's player and tournament relations and competition operations**

**ST. PETERSBURG, FL USA** – The Sony Ericsson WTA Tour announced today the appointment of Peter Johnston as Senior VP Competition & Member Relations for the Tour. The naming of Johnston, who will join the Tour on August 15, 2008, will enhance the Tour's operational support for its player and tournament members.

Johnston, who will be based out of the Tour's global headquarters in St. Petersburg, Florida and report to Tour President Stacey Allaster, brings a track record of tennis industry success across a number of disciplines to the position, including serving for the past four years as Deputy Tournament Director of the Australian Open, General Manager of the Australian Open Series events and Co-Tournament Director of the ATP's Adelaide tournament. Prior to those posts, Johnston held the position of General Manager of Men's Tennis & Business Development for Tennis Australia from 2000-2004, where his responsibilities included player development, sales and marketing. A former professional player on the ATP, Johnston's experience includes playing, coaching and promotion of tournaments ranging from Grand Slams to multiple tiers of professional events.

In his new role as Senior VP Competition & Member Relations, Johnston will oversee day-to-day on-site competition and in-house Tour operations, including calendar scheduling, tournament standards, rankings, officiating, and sports science and medicine. Additionally, he will oversee the Tour's delivery of services and benefits to player and tournament members, including development of best practices to improve the player, fan and commercial partner experience at tournaments, and enhanced communications with members.

"Peter has proven throughout his career that he understands professional tennis from a player, promoter and fan perspective," said Allaster. "Peter's track record of success covers all aspects of professional tennis, and we are thrilled he is joining the Tour to help continue our journey of innovating our sport and providing the very best sports entertainment product for fans and commercial partners."

"I am looking forward to joining an organization that has continued to break new ground and go from strength to strength," said Johnston. "The Sony Ericsson WTA Tour is heading into an exciting new period of growth, and I hope my blend of experience and understanding of players and tournaments will provide a valuable contribution."

During his tenure at Tennis Australia, as Deputy Tournament Director Johnston helped to spearhead the most successful Australian Opens in the storied tournament's history in each of 2006, 2007 and 2008, including in the areas of operations, sponsorship, broadcast, marketing and player relations. Among his many achievements in tennis, Johnston is credited with helping to establish the Australian Open series of events (Adelaide, Sydney, Hobart and Gold Coast) and linking them through a common marketing strategy; overseeing the Tennis Australia Men's Tennis Program; and from 1995 to 2000, was responsible for developing and driving Tennis Australia's marketing strategy to increase the popularity of the sport in Australia. From 1978 through 1985, Johnston competed as a professional tennis player on the ATP.

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The Sony Ericsson WTA Tour is the world's largest premier professional sport for women with more than 2,000 players representing 90 nations competing for \$70.8 million in prize money at the Tour's 60 events in 34 countries. More than 4.7 million people attended women's tennis events in 2007 with millions more watching events on television networks around the world. The Sony Ericsson WTA Tour season concludes with the Sony Ericsson Championships – Doha 2008 in Doha, Qatar, November 4-9, 2008. Further information on the Tour can be found on the Internet at [www.sonyericssonwtatour.com](http://www.sonyericssonwtatour.com).