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SONY ERICSSON WTA TOUR ANNOUNCES COMPREHENSIVE INITIATIVE TO ENHANCE PLAYER SAFETY, HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Expert recommendations of Player Security Taskforce instituted to ensure player safety

ST. PETERSBURG, FL, USA – The Sony Ericsson WTA Tour announced today the completion of the first phase of a multi-pronged initiative to enhance player safety, health and well-being. The initiative is highlighted by expanded player support team education, dedicated athlete assistance staffing, strengthened rules and procedures, and criminal background checks for those seeking access to secure player areas at tournament sites. The program reflects recommendations provided by a panel of international experts and tennis stakeholders following an extensive analysis of the women's professional tennis environment.

Core Program Elements

Key components of the sweeping safety initiative include: (i) appointment of a full-time Director of Athlete Assistance to provide counselling support to players on the road, (ii) expansion of the Tour's Code of Conduct to cover not only players and coaches, but other player support team members, including agents and parents, (iii) a series of coach, agent and Tour staff education sessions on player health and safety, in addition to an online safety and security module for players and International Tennis Federation (ITF) juniors, (iv) enhanced communication protocols to handle safety issues and (v) adoption of a policy to conduct criminal background checks on player support team members and Tour staff seeking tournament site credentialed access to secure player areas.

"The Tour's first priority and responsibility is the health and well-being of our athletes, and these steps represent the culmination of a comprehensive analysis aimed at ensuring a safe environment for players on Tour," said Larry Scott, CEO of the Sony Ericsson WTA Tour. "Safety is not an area where half-measures are acceptable – particularly in a sport with many young athletes - and I am very pleased that we have taken a series of bold steps that are in line with the very best practices in sport and beyond and that address areas where we identified a need for enhancements."

Program Implementation

The implementation of the criminal background check policy will begin with the tournaments starting this week in Doha and Bogota and represents the culmination of an implementation process of the above program components that began in 2007 and which stemmed from the recommendations of the Player Security Taskforce in November 2006.

Expert Advisors

Members of the Player Security Taskforce included Doctor Natalia Stambulova, a global expert in sports psychology and a former member of the Russian Olympic figure skating team; Doctor Rick Jenson, a leading authority in performance consultation and training to world-class athletes, who has worked extensively with the PGA Tour and LGPA; Micky Lawler, Managing Director of Tennis at Octagon and a member of the Sony Ericsson WTA Tour Board; Jackie Nesbitt, Head of Professional Circuits at the ITF; and senior Tour management, including Tour President Stacey Allaster and Tour COO & General Counsel David Shoemaker.

"The Tour's set of initiatives in the area of player health and safety, including the move to institute criminal background checks on those who wish to work with players and to have access to secure player areas, is consistent with best practice in the world of sport," said Doctor Stambulova. "This particular step is not only closing access to the Tour environment to people who can pose a threat to players' safety and well-being but also opening the door for professionals and player support team members with clean backgrounds. Both aspects here contribute to the players' right to be treated by honest

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 – Qatar 2008 in Doha, Qatar, November 4-9, 2008. Further information on the Tour can be found on the Internet at www.sonyericssonwtatour.com.



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people and also promote integrity as a value within the Tour. I applaud the bold steps taken by the Sony Ericsson WTA Tour to enhance the health and well-being of their athletes.”

The US Open and Australian Open have previously implemented policies that allow for criminal background checks on those seeking credentials to secure player areas, and with the education module covering ITF juniors, the Tour's program seeks to protect current and aspiring professional tennis players at all levels of the professional game.

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MEDIA CONTACT: Andrew Walker, Sony Ericsson WTA Tour, +1.727.871.5666, awalker@wtatour.com

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