

JANUARY 31, 2009

## **SERENA WILLIAMS RECAPTURES SONY ERICSSON WTA TOUR NO.1 RANKING**

- **By winning the 2009 Australian Open, 27-year old American recaptures the World No. 1 title for the third time in her career**

MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA – By winning the 2009 Australian Open, Serena Williams will emerge as the new World No. 1, replacing Serbia's Jelena Jankovic who held the title for 17 consecutive weeks (18 total), when the new Sony Ericsson WTA Tour rankings are released on Monday, February 2, 2009. It will mark the third time in Williams' career that she will be the World No.1 after holding the top ranking for a total of 61 weeks: 57 weeks from July 8, 2002 to August 10, 2003 and 4 weeks from September 8, 2008 to October 6, 2008. Serena reaches the World No. 1 ranking two days after becoming the all-time female athlete career prize money leader in all of women's sports, and one day after capturing the 2009 Australian Open doubles title with sister Venus. With the win, Williams is guaranteed to hold the World No. 1 ranking for at least two weeks.

Jankovic's fourth round exit at the Australian Open gave three players an opportunity to take the World No. 1 ranking – Elena Dementieva, Dinara Safina and Serena Williams. By defeating Dinara Safina in the final with the score of 60 63, Serena secures the title of the World No. 1, followed by World No. 2 Dinara Safina (RUS), World No. 3 Jelena Jankovic (SRB), World No. 4 Elena Dementieva (RUS) and World No. 5 Vera Zvonareva (RUS), according to the February 2, 2009 new rankings.

"The 2009 Australian Open will definitely be one of the most memorable tournaments in my career. I am thrilled with winning this title and the news of becoming Sony Ericsson WTA Tour World No.1 is an added bonus," said Serena Williams.

"Serena has proven that she is a champion time and time again. She is one of the great players in the history of our sport and winning the Australian Open and regaining the Sony Ericsson WTA Tour No. 1 ranking seven years after her first World No.1 title take Serena's career milestones to a whole new level," said Larry Scott, CEO of the Sony Ericsson WTA Tour.

"We're thrilled to see Serena recapture the Sony Ericsson WTA Tour World No. 1 ranking," said Aldo Liguori, Corporate Vice President and Head of Global Communications & PR at Sony Ericsson. "We congratulate Serena on her amazing Australian Open and applaud her for being such a great champion and ambassador for women's tennis."

Williams turned professional at the age of fourteen in November 1995 and played her first tournament in Quebec City, Canada. In her fourteen-year career she has won every major title in addition to ten Grand Slams, becoming only the fifth woman, other than Margaret Court, Chris Evert, Martina Navratilova, and Steffi Graf, to achieve such a feat. Of the current players, only Serena's older sister Venus Williams comes close to such an achievement, with seven Grand Slam singles titles to her name.

Williams was a winner at the US Open in 1999 beating Martina Hingis, at 2002 Roland Garros, Wimbledon, US Open and 2003 Australian Open, each time beating Venus Williams; 2003 Wimbledon, once again defeating sister Venus, in Australia in 2005 and 2007 over Lindsay Davenport and Maria Sharapova, respectively, and finally at the 2008 US Open defeating Jelena Jankovic. In addition, Williams won two Olympic Gold medals, both playing doubles with Venus Williams – in Sydney in 2000 and Beijing in 2008. Serena Williams holds 33 singles titles and 13 doubles titles.

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The Sony Ericsson WTA Tour is the world's leading professional sport for women with more than 2,200 players representing 96 nations competing for more than \$86 million in prize money at the Tour's 51 events and four Grand Slams in 31 countries. More than 4.8 million people attended women's tennis events in 2008 with millions more watching events on television networks around the world. The Sony Ericsson WTA Tour season concludes with the Sony Ericsson Championships – Doha 2009 in Doha, Qatar, from October 27-November 1, and the inaugural Commonwealth Bank Tournament of Champions in Bali, Indonesia from November 4-8. Further information on the Tour can be found on the Internet at [www.sonyericssonwtatour.com](http://www.sonyericssonwtatour.com)



PLAYER	DATE REACHED No.1	AGE	Years		WEEKS*
			Months	Days	
Steffi Graf (GER)	August 17, 1987	18	2	3	337
Martina Navratilova (TCH/USA)	July 10, 1978	21	8	22	332
Chris Evert (USA)	November 3, 1975	20	10	13	260
Martina Hingis (SUI)	March 31, 1997	16	6	1	209
Monica Seles (YUG/USA)	March 11, 1991	17	3	9	178
Justine Henin (BEL)	October 20, 2003	21	4	19	117
Lindsay Davenport (USA)	October 12, 1998	22	4	4	98
Amélie Mauresmo (FRA)	September 13, 2004	25	2	8	39
Tracy Austin (USA)	April 7, 1980	17	3	26	21
Kim Clijsters (BEL)	August 11, 2003	20	2	3	19
Jelena Jankovic (SRB)	August 11, 2008	23	5	13	18
Jennifer Capriati (USA)	October 15, 2001	25	6	16	17
Maria Sharapova (RUS)	August 22, 2005	18	4	3	17
Ana Ivanovic (SRB)	June 9, 2008	20	7	3	12
Arantxa Sánchez-Vicario (ESP)	February 6, 1995	23	1	19	12
Venus Williams (USA)	February 25, 2002	21	8	8	11
Evonne Goolagong Cawley (AUS)	April 26, 1976	24	8	26	2
<b>Serena Williams (USA)</b>	<b>February 2, 2009</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>61+</b>

\* Total weeks at No.1; can be non-consecutive

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**MEDIA CONTACT:** Andrew Walker, Sony Ericsson WTA Tour, +1.727.502.1222, [awalker@wtatour.com](mailto:awalker@wtatour.com)  
Amy Binder, Sony Ericsson WTA Tour, +1.727.895.5000, [abinder@wtatour.com](mailto:abinder@wtatour.com)

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