

August 5, 2009

## **DINARA SAFINA QUALIFIES FOR SONY ERICSSON CHAMPIONSHIPS – DOHA 2009**

- **Top ranked Russian first to secure spot at prestigious year-end Championships in Doha, Qatar**

**ST. PETERSBURG, FL, USA** – World No. 1 Dinara Safina is the first player to qualify for the season-ending Sony Ericsson Championships, set to take place for the second year in a row at the Khalifa International Tennis Complex in Doha, Qatar, from October 27-November 1, 2009. The world's top eight singles players and top four doubles teams from the 2009 Sony Ericsson WTA Tour season will compete for the coveted Sony Ericsson Championships title and a share of the record Championships prize money of \$4.45 million.

Safina, a Russian sensation from Moscow, will make her second appearance at the Sony Ericsson Championships, having previously qualified for the event last year. Safina is enjoying a spectacular 2009 season during which she attained the World No. 1 ranking for the first time in her career on April 20, won back-to-back titles at Premier events Internazionali BNL d'Italia in Rome and Mutua Madrileña Madrid Open, a title win at the Banka Koper Slovenia Open, reached the finals of the Australian Open and Roland Garros, and the semifinals at Wimbledon. Since becoming World No.1, Safina has a 34-4 match record and her 16-match winning streak is the best on the Tour this season. Safina's 2009 season comes on the heels of a career 2008 year during which she won four Sony Ericsson WTA Tour singles titles, in addition to winning the coveted US Open Series presented by Olympus and a silver medal at the Beijing Olympics. Since 2008, Safina's ranking has vaulted from No.17 to the current World No.1. To date, Safina has won 12 Sony Ericsson WTA Tour singles titles, and is projected to pass the \$9 million mark in career prize this year.

"Dinara has achieved great results this year and earned her spot as the first player to qualify for the Sony Ericsson Championships," said Stacey Allaster, Chairman and CEO of the Sony Ericsson WTA Tour. "Dinara's impressive performance this year has included a terrific run which started in the spring and included winning three tournament titles and reaching the pinnacle of the sport as the World No.1 along the way."

"We congratulate Dinara on being the first player to have qualified for the 2009 Sony Ericsson Championships in Doha. We look forward to building on the excitement of last year's tournament," said Aldo Liguori, Corporate Vice President and Head of Global Communications & PR for Sony Ericsson.

"Qualifying for the year-end Sony Ericsson Championships is one of the goals I set for myself at the beginning of the year," said World No.1 Dinara Safina. "I've accomplished a lot of milestones this season and am thrilled to be the first to qualify for the Championships. I look forward to returning to Doha and competing again for the Sony Ericsson Championships title."

Always at the forefront of innovation, Sony Ericsson is committed to bringing entertainment and glamour to tennis, and taking the sport to new places and new audiences. Sony Ericsson's style and technology has attracted a wider interest to women's tennis and provided unique opportunities to the stars of the Tour.

The Championships were first played in 1972 and since then the event has been held in such notable venues as Madison Square Garden, New York City; the Olympiahalle in Munich; Staples Center in Los Angeles; and the Recinto Ferial Casa de Campo in Madrid. Former singles champions include Tracy Austin, Kim Clijsters, Chris Evert, Evonne Goolagong, Steffi Graf, Martina Hingis, Martina Navratilova, Gabriela Sabatini, Serena Williams, Justine Henin and Venus Williams. Cara Black and Liezel Huber, defending champions in doubles, currently lead in the Doubles Race to Doha, followed by Anabel Medina Garrigues and Virginia Ruano Pascual.

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)

**RACE TO THE SONY ERICSSON CHAMPIONSHIPS - DOHA 2009**

(as of the week of August 3, 2009)

SINGLES			DOUBLES		
PLAYER	POINTS	RACE STANDING (as of August 3, 2009)	TEAM	POINTS	RACE STANDING (as of August 3, 2009)
Dinara Safina	6881	1**	Cara Black & Liezel Huber	5950	1
Serena Williams	6077	2	Serena Williams & Venus Williams	4750	2
Svetlana Kuznetsova	4262	3	Nuria Llagostera Vives & Maria Jose Martinez Sanchez	3825	3
Elena Dementieva	4175	4	Anabel Medina Garrigues & Virginia Ruano Pascual	3642	4
Venus Williams	3925	5	Rennae Stubbs & Samantha Stosur	3472	5
Victoria Azarenka	3840	6	Kveta Peschke & Lisa Raymond	3206	6
Caroline Wozniacki	3700	7	Shuai Peng & Su-wei Hsieh	2815	7
Vera Zvonareva	2682	8	Daniela Hantuchova & Ai Sugiyama	2782	8
Marion Bartoli	2432	9			
Virginie Razzano	2067	10			
Jelena Jankovic	2011	11			
Samantha Stosur	1953	12			
Agnieszka Radwanska	1922	13			
Ana Ivanovic	1881	14			
Dominika Cibulkova	1799	15			

**\*\* Denotes player/team has already qualified**

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