



## News Release



Monday, September 5, 2011

### WOZNIACKI, SHARAPOVA AND PESCHKE/SREBOTNIK FIRST TO QUALIFY FOR TEB BNP PARIBAS WTA CHAMPIONSHIPS - ISTANBUL

- *Wozniacki makes third consecutive WTA Championships appearance*
- *Sharapova returns for first time since 2007*
- *Peschke and Srebotnik's stellar season highlighted by Wimbledon victory*

NEW YORK, NY, USA – World No.1 Caroline Wozniacki, three-time Grand Slam champion Maria Sharapova, and the top doubles team of Kveta Peschke and Katarina Srebotnik have become the first players to qualify for the prestigious TEB BNP Paribas WTA Championships, which will be hosted at the state of the art Sinan Erdem Arena in Istanbul, Turkey. The WTA's year-end finale, to be held in Istanbul through 2013, will feature the world's top eight singles players and top four doubles teams competing for the coveted title and a share of the \$5 million in prize money.

"I congratulate Caroline, Maria, Kveta and Katarina on becoming the first players to reach the TEB BNP Paribas WTA Championships," said Stacey Allaster, Chairman and CEO of the WTA. "Caroline has been incredibly consistent in her performances over the last year and is close to holding the World No.1 ranking for 12 months. Having Maria back at the WTA Championships for the first time since 2007 is a true testament to all the hard work's she's put in since returning from shoulder surgery. Kveta and Katarina are having a great season, highlighted by an inspired Wimbledon victory and the ascent to the top of the doubles ranking. It will be great for fans around the world to see these players competing in Istanbul."

"We're delighted that these incredible players have qualified for the TEB BNP Paribas WTA Championships and look forward to welcoming them to Turkey in October," said Ayda Uluc, President of the Turkish Tennis Federation.

#### **Caroline Wozniacki:**

"I'm so excited to qualify for the Championships in Istanbul. It's always a big goal for the top players to end the year there. It's a wonderful city and it will be great to play in front of a new set of fans. Hopefully we can put on a good show and provide an exciting end to the year," said Wozniacki.

2011 marks the third consecutive appearance at the year-end event for Wozniacki, who reached her first year-end Championships final in Doha last year, losing to Kim Clijsters in three sets. The 21-year-old Dane has won a WTA-leading six singles titles so far this year: the Dubai Duty Free Tennis Championships, the BNP Paribas Open (Indian Wells), the Family Circle Cup (Charleston), Brussels Open, the e-Boks Sony Ericsson Open (Copenhagen) and the New Haven Open at Yale. Wozniacki has amassed 18 career titles in total and currently stands fifth on the list of most singles titles won by active players. Additionally, Wozniacki reached two finals in 2011: at the Qatar Ladies Open (Doha) and the Porsche Tennis Grand Prix (Stuttgart), as well as the semifinals of the Australian Open and the Internazionali BNL d'Italia (Rome). Wozniacki has a WTA-leading 56 match wins this season and – at 46 weeks at World No.1 – is the owner of WTA's ninth longest tenure at the top of the rankings.

The WTA is the global leader in women's professional sport with more than 2,400 players representing 99 nations competing for more than \$90 million in prize money at the WTA's 53 events and four Grand Slams in 33 countries. More than 5 million people attended women's tennis events in 2010 with tens of millions more watching on television and digital channels around the world. The WTA competitive season concludes with the TEB BNP Paribas WTA Championships in Istanbul, Turkey, from October 25-30, and the Commonwealth Bank Tournament of Champions in Bali, Indonesia, from November 3-6. Further information on the WTA can be found on [www.wtatennis.com](http://www.wtatennis.com).

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**Maria Sharapova:**

"I am so happy to have booked my spot in Istanbul. I haven't been to the year-end Championships since 2007 and I've really missed competing in one of the most exciting and important events of the year. I'm looking forward to making the most of playing in Istanbul," said Sharapova.

Sharapova will return to the TEB BNP Paribas WTA Championships for the first time since 2007. A two-time finalist, Sharapova defeated Serena Williams in three sets to clinch the title in 2004 and lost to Justine Henin in the 2007 final, which at 3 hours and 24 minutes remains the longest WTA singles final on record. 2011 will mark the Russian's fifth appearance at the WTA's season-ending finale, where she has never lost prior to the semifinals. The 24-year-old has had the best season so far since her comeback from shoulder surgery (October 2008) and has won two titles this season – at the Internazionali BNL d'Italia (Rome) and the Western & Southern Open (Cincinnati). Sharapova got to the final of Wimbledon and the Sony Ericsson Open (Miami) and has reached the quarterfinals or better at eight of 11 tournaments this year.

**Kveta Peschke and Katarina Srebotnik:**

"Kveta and I are so happy to have made it to the TEB BNP Paribas WTA Championships for the second year in a row as a team. It's a really special event and something we aim for every season. We've had a great year so far and now we're looking forward to finishing 2011 off in Istanbul and trying to win the title," said Srebotnik.

Peschke and Srebotnik achieved the World No.1 doubles ranking following their victory at Wimbledon in July, and have jointly held the top spot for the past nine weeks. At 36, Peschke is the oldest woman to reach the No.1 ranking (singles or doubles), while Srebotnik is the first Slovenian to hold the No.1 ranking (singles or doubles). Wimbledon was the first Grand Slam doubles title for both players, and is one of five titles they have won so far this year, in addition to the ASB Classic (Auckland), the Qatar Ladies Open (Doha), the AEGON International (Eastbourne) and the Mercury Insurance Open (Carlsbad). The pair is looking to win their first Championships title, having finished runners-up to Gisela Dulko and Flavia Pennetta last year. In addition, Peschke reached the final in 2008 with partner Rennae Stubbs, and Srebotnik finished runner-up in 2007, with Ai Sugiyama.

**RACE TO THE TEB BNP PARIBAS WTA CHAMPIONSHIPS (as of September 5, 2011)**

SINGLES			DOUBLES		
PLAYER	POINTS	RACE STANDING	TEAM	POINTS	RACE STANDING
<b>Caroline Wozniacki*</b>	6276	1	<b>Peschke/Srebotnik*</b>	7791	1
<b>Maria Sharapova*</b>	5985	2	Kirilenko/Azarenka	4955	2
Li Na	5342	3	Mirza/Vesnina	4508	3
Petra Kvitova	5287	4	Dulko/Pennetta	4106	4
Victoria Azarenka	4898	5	Huber/Raymond	3423	5
Vera Zvonareva	4295	6	Mattek-Sands/Shughnessy	3351	6
Marion Bartoli	4250	7			
Francesca Schiavone	3543	8			
Andrea Petkovic	3451	9			
Kim Clijsters	3161	10			

*\*Denotes player/team has already qualified*

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**About BNP Paribas:**

BNP Paribas ([www.bnpparibas.com](http://www.bnpparibas.com)) is one of the strongest banks in the world\*. The Group has a presence in more than 80 countries and more than 200,000 employees, including more than 160,000 in Europe. It ranks highly in its three core activities: Retail Banking, Investment Solutions and Corporate & Investment Banking. In Europe, the Group has four domestic markets (Belgium, France, Italy and Luxembourg) and BNP Paribas Personal Finance is the leader in consumer lending. BNP Paribas is rolling out its integrated retail banking model across the Europe-Mediterranean zone and boasts a large network in the western part of the United States. In its Corporate & Investment Banking and Investment Solutions activities, BNP Paribas also enjoys top positions in Europe, a strong presence in the Americas and solid and fast-growing businesses in Asia.

\* Rated AA by Standard & Poor's i.e. 3rd rating level on a scale of 22.

**About Türk Ekonomi Bankası (TEB):**

Türk Ekonomi Bankası (TEB), a reputable and prestigious institution in the Turkish banking sector, was established in 1927. Since its establishment, TEB, with its expanded network of branches and a diversified range of products and services, pursues operating in various fields of the banking sector as investment, leasing, factoring and portfolio management. In February 2005, BNP Paribas, one of the top 10 most important banks in the world and the largest in the Euro zone, operating in 85 countries, became a partner of TEB which went public in February 2000. In the wake of its partnership with the BNP Paribas, Türk Ekonomi Bankası carries its expertise in foreign trade, corporate, commercial and private banking over into the fields of retail banking and banking for small and medium-sized businesses. Following the merger between TEB and Fortis, New TEB embarked on its 'New Life' starting on the 21<sup>st</sup> of March 2010, as Turkey's 6<sup>th</sup> largest private bank with an asset size of 31.2 billion TL and more than 10,000 employees. New TEB also has become Turkey's fifth private bank in terms of network coverage with more than 600 branches and 1,000 ATMs.

**About BNP Paribas and Tennis:**

Long-standing partner to the sport of tennis since 1973, BNP Paribas is actively involved in the game at both local and international level, and in club, schools and social tennis as well as professional events. BNP Paribas has gradually become the number one sponsor in world tennis: official sponsor of Roland Garros since 1973 and sponsor of five ATP Masters 1000 events - the BNP Paribas Masters since 1986, Monte Carlo Masters since 2005, Internazionali BNL d'Italia in Rome since 2006, BNP Paribas Open in Indian Wells since 2009 and the Shanghai Masters since 2010. The Group is also title sponsor of the Davis Cup by BNP Paribas since 2001 and the Fed Cup by BNP Paribas since 2005, as well as being actively involved in many other international competitions including the Bank of the West Classic in California, the Grand Prix Hassan II in Casablanca, the Open 13 in Marseille and the BNP Paribas Showdown in New York. BNP Paribas is also an official partner of International Wheelchair Tennis, such as the "BNP Paribas World Team Cup". Through its support for more than 20 national tennis associations, 2000 clubs, 550 amateur tournaments, plus schools and social programmes around the world, BNP Paribas helps to promote tennis and encourage widespread participation in the game. The Group's commitment to social values is reflected in the sports sponsorships it has undertaken in numerous projects, including Yannick Noah's 'Fête le Mur' Association and the tennis Téléthon in France, the Oberer Tennis Camp in Switzerland and the BNP Paribas 'Taste of Tennis' in the United States. As part of its creative sports sponsorship policy, BNP Paribas is launching a website "[wearetennis.com](http://wearetennis.com)" entirely dedicated to tennis news. The Group's new sponsorship slogan 'We are tennis' underlines the fact that BNP Paribas promotes tennis for all, at all levels.