

## Press Release

# Sony Ericsson Championships in Doha Opens with First Ever Desert Island Game

- Ana Ivanovic and Elena Dementieva play historic match on a Desert Island in bay of Doha

- Sony Ericsson continues to bring innovation to sport, taking women's tennis beyond the confines of the traditional court to places it has never been before

Doha, Qatar – 3<sup>rd</sup> November, 2008 – To mark the start of the prestigious Sony Ericsson Championships in Doha, Sony Ericsson staged a unique tennis game in a place that has never been played in before - a desert island. Set against the stunning backdrop of the Doha skyline, Ana Ivanovic and Elena Dementieva rallied on a replica tennis court, specially built for the occasion, on Palm Island in the middle of Doha Bay in the Arabian Gulf.

After the game, 2008 Roland Garros Champion Ana Ivanovic said: "It was such a fun way to start the Sony Ericsson Championships; it was amazing and so unusual to be playing tennis on a deserted island with no one there but Elena, myself and the ballboys. I'm really looking forward to the tournament here in Doha and a great finish to the 2008 season."

The Sony Ericsson Championships is the prestigious end of season finale to the Sony Ericsson WTA Tour year; and sees the world's top eight women singles and top four women's doubles teams compete for the title and a share of a record prize money of \$4.45 million. The Championships sees female players from eleven countries: Australia, Czech Republic, Japan, Russia, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, United States and Zimbabwe compete to end the 2008 season on a high.

"This was a fantastic way to celebrate the beginning of the Sony Ericsson Championships. All the players have played brilliantly during the season and have earned a deserved shot at this prestigious title," said Aldo Liguori, Corporate Vice President and Head of Global Communications & PR. "We are committed to innovating and introducing unique activities in women's tennis to continue to attract new fans and broaden the appeal of the sport on a global basis. It has been a great year for the Sony Ericsson WTA Tour and I hope through events like this we can attract more fans to the Tour and the exciting prospect of the 2009 season."

The stunt involved a replica tennis court being constructed on Palm Island, similar to the court in the Khalifia Stadium where the Sony Ericsson Championships are being held.

The number 5 seed, Elena Dementieva commented: "It was such a special experience to play a game of tennis in the middle of the sea looking back at the Doha skyline - what a great memory to have of Doha. I'm really excited for the Sony Ericsson Championships to begin and showcase my best tennis to end the season."

The Sony Ericsson Championships will run from November 4th to November 9th and the line up for the tournament has been finalised: Jelena Jankovic (SRB), Dinara Safina (RUS), Serena Williams (USA), Elena Dementieva (RUS), Ana Ivanovic (SRB), Svetlana Kuznetsova (RUS), Venus Williams (USA) and Vera Zvonareva (RUS) will all compete for the singles crown. Doubles players Cara Black (ZIM) - Liezel Huber (USA); Anabel Medina Garrigues (SPN) – Virginia Ruano Pascual (SPN); Kveta Peschke (CZE) - Rennae Stubbs (AUS); and Katarina Srebotnik (SLO)- Ai Sugiyama (JPN) will compete for the doubles title. The Sony Ericsson Championships will be held in Doha, Qatar for the next 3 years, after being held in Madrid for the past two years, with Justine Henin having won the title in 2007.

Sony Ericsson is committed to bringing entertainment, innovation and glamour to tennis by creating unique sporting events such as the 2008 Sony Ericsson Championships in Doha. This tournament will bring the excitement of the game to a new audience, with the city of Doha set to benefit from the biggest tennis event ever to be held in the region. Sony Ericsson strives to energize the audience experience at the Championships, by bringing them closer to tennis through the integration of innovation and technology.

**ENDS**

**Notes to Editors:**

*Sony Ericsson is a top global industry player with sales of over 100 million phones in 2007. Diversity is one of the core strengths of the company, with operations in over 80 countries including manufacturing in China and R&D sites in China, Europe, India, Japan and North America. Sony Ericsson was established as a 50:50 joint venture by Sony and Ericsson in October 2001, with global corporate functions located in London. For more information about Sony Ericsson, please visit [www.sonyericsson.com](http://www.sonyericsson.com)*

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