



## THE NEW FACE OF TENNIS IN NEW HAVEN ENJOYS RESOUNDING SUCCESS

### *New Haven Open At Yale Presented By First Niagara Shines In One Of Its Most Successful Years To Date*

**NEW HAVEN, Conn., Sept. 8, 2011** – World No. 1 Caroline Wozniacki captured her fourth straight New Haven Open at Yale presented by First Niagara title in 2011, but she wasn't the only winner at this year's event – a strong player field featuring four of the top 10 players in the world, celebrity appearances, a new breast cancer initiative, fan-friendly sponsor activation, the addition of the US Open National Playoff Championships, and an expanded New Haven Food & Wine Festival gave fans an unforgettable experience at the WTA event that is part of the Olympus US Open Series.

Wozniacki took care of business in New Haven at the Connecticut Tennis Center and did not drop a set en route to the final where she faced qualifier Petra Cetkovska, who enjoyed an amazing "Cinderella Story" run to her first-ever WTA final. With Hurricane Irene fast approaching, Wozniacki dispatched Cetkovska in two sets just minutes before the rain came. With her victory she tied Venus Williams for four consecutive titles in New Haven (1999-2002), and ran her record in the Elm City to an incredible 18-0.

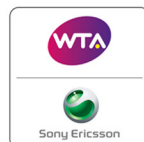
But that wasn't the only thing about Caroline's stay in New Haven that captured national and international headlines. Her new boyfriend and US Open golf champion Rory McIlroy was on-site all week providing her moral support and also helping out with a few tournament special events. In what has become an annual tournament tradition, the Yale Football Team made a visit to cheer on Wozniacki. After her semifinal victory over former French Open Champion Francesca Schiavone, Wozniacki greeted the football team on-court, but this year McIlroy surprised Caroline by appearing on-court wearing a Yale football jersey of his own and joining in a team photo.

McIlroy also helped out by participating in the CYBEX Pink Ribbon Run, which was part of the New Haven Open's new breast cancer awareness initiative. For every mile logged all week long on the CYBEX Pink Treadmill, funds were donated to the Susan G. Komen Connecticut Affiliate and the Breast Center at Smilow Cancer Hospital at Yale-New Haven. When finished, McIlroy signed the treadmill which had also been autographed by Wozniacki and the other top players at this year's New Haven Open including top-15 players Li Na, Schiavone, Marion Bartoli, Svetlana Kuznetsova and Agnieszka Radwanska. It was then auctioned off on charitybuzz.com.

Thanks to generous donations from First Niagara Bank, WTA, USTA and many fans, the tournament raised more than \$20,000 for the two breast cancer charities.

Perhaps one of the most influential aspects of this year's tournament was the activation of the new Cornerstone sponsors. From First Niagara's support of community programs (Free Lesson, Block Party, Latino Day, Boy and Girl Scout Nights, and Family Classic), to Yale partnering with the tournament to host a large scale meet-and-greet between Chinese megastar and 2011 French Open Champion Li Na and Yale's Association of Chinese Scholars & Students, to Yale-New Haven Hospital's support of the tournament's breast cancer initiative with its Mammography Van and giving pink hats to fans on finals day, to Aetna enhancing the Aetna FitZone which encouraged fitness and exercise for kids in a fun and healthy environment as well as launching an extensive pre-

-more-



900 Chapel Street Suite 622 New Haven, CT 06510 T (203) 776-7331 F (203) 772-4647

[www.newhavenopen.com](http://www.newhavenopen.com)



tournament advertising campaign that raised awareness regionally, to American Express promoting an exclusive VIP ticket offer to all cardmembers through news alerts and "Entertainment Access" emails, all of the Cornerstone sponsors helped to make the 2011 New Haven Open a resounding success.

"We're very proud to have played a key role in securing the tournament's future as an important component of both the economy and quality of life in Greater New Haven," said First Niagara President and Chief Executive Officer John R. Koelmel. "It was also a wonderful opportunity for First Niagara to introduce itself to the community in a fun and exciting way, and we are thrilled to be part of the team that helped make the tournament a tremendous success in 2011. We look forward to building on the new energy and momentum as we look ahead to next year."

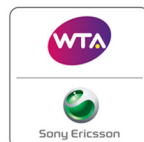
"As a global university that calls New Haven home, Yale is delighted to sponsor and host the New Haven Open," said Yale University President Rick Levin. "The quality of play this year was excellent and many from Yale attended to cheer on Caroline Wozniacki, Li Na and other top players. The tournament showcases New Haven at its best and we look forward to its growth in 2012 and beyond."

"Yale-New Haven Hospital was proud to step up and become a cornerstone partner of the New Haven Open this year and the results were impressive," said Vincent Petrini, Senior Vice President of Yale-New Haven. "We were able to drive strong awareness of breast cancer screening through the presence of our mammography van on-site throughout the tournament, through speakers at events, and through the incredible efforts of the players and attendees to support us by walking and running on the CYBEX pink treadmill. This continues to be a great event to showcase Yale-New Haven Hospital and the city of New Haven and we look forward to continuing these efforts in the years ahead."

"We believe the 2011 New Haven Open at Yale has set a new standard for community engagement at professional tennis events," said Floyd W. Green, Aetna vice president, Community Relations and Urban Marketing. "We were particularly excited with the enthusiastic response to Aetna Kids Day and the Aetna FitZone, which allowed families to enjoy the tournament, participate together in fun fitness activities, and also encouraged newcomers of all ages and walks of life to enjoy the fun of tennis. We look forward to continuing as a Cornerstone Partner for 2012."

Other fan-friendly enhancements around the grounds included an expanded weeklong New Haven Food & Wine Festival that included all-new events such as the BBQ Bash, Mixology 101, and Champagne Tasting, in addition to the fourth-annual sold out Grand Tasting and Ladies Day Luncheon & Fashion Show; and a two day visit from the USTA Mobile SmashZone, which complements the USTA's ongoing youth participation initiative, 10 and Under Tennis, where equipment and playing fields are scaled-to-size for kids making the game more fun and allowing them to learn and develop their skills in an enjoyable way.

The New Haven Open also played host to the US Open National Playoffs Championships, the culmination of 16 USTA sectional qualifying tournaments throughout the country, which featured men's and women's singles, and for the first time ever, mixed doubles. The event brought men's tennis back to New Haven and men's singles champion Blake Strode captured his second straight US Open National Playoffs Championships crown. On the women's side, 18-year old Robin Anderson marched through the draw defeating multiple seeds en route to the





title. Both Strode and Anderson earned a wildcard into the qualifying draws at the US Open. David Martin and Christina Fusano won the mixed doubles title and captured a wildcard directly into the mixed doubles tournament at the US Open.

“This year, the New Haven Open at Yale was about showcasing the new face of tennis in New Haven,” said Anne Worcester, tournament director. “Thanks to a talented field featuring 10 of the top 25 players in the world, and the amazing support of our new Cornerstone Sponsors, the future is bright. Even in the face of two natural disasters, and as the now infamous tee shirt says, neither rain nor hurricane nor earthquake could steal the show!”

The 2012 New Haven Open begins on August 16, with weeklong tickets available for purchase this fall, and individual tickets available on June 1, 2012. For more information, visit [www.newhavenopen.com](http://www.newhavenopen.com) or follow us on Facebook and Twitter.

#### **About New Haven Open at Yale presented by First Niagara**

New Haven Open at Yale presented by First Niagara has always been much more than a tennis tournament; it is a leading example of leveraging a large-scale international sporting event to generate \$26 million in regional economic impact and to build community pride, spirit and engagement, especially among youth. The 2011 tournament featured World No. 1 and now four-time defending champion Caroline Wozniacki, and three Grand Slam champions Li Na, Francesca Schiavone and Svetlana Kuznetsova. The women’s-only WTA event is part of the Olympus US Open Series and will be held August 16-25, 2012 at the Connecticut Tennis Center at Yale. The New Haven Open is prominently featured domestically on ESPN2 and also broadcast around the world. For more information about the tournament and tickets, visit [www.newhavenopen.com](http://www.newhavenopen.com) or call 1-855-4-NHTENNIS.

#### **About First Niagara Financial Group**

As of April 25th, First Niagara Financial Group, Inc., through its wholly owned subsidiary, First Niagara Bank, N.A., has \$30 billion in assets, 346 branches and \$18 billion in deposits. First Niagara Bank, N.A. is a multi-state community-oriented bank providing financial services to individuals, families and businesses across Upstate New York, Pennsylvania, Connecticut and Massachusetts. For more information, visit [www.fnfg.com](http://www.fnfg.com).

#### **About the Olympus US Open Series**

The Olympus US Open Series has established itself as a true regular season of hard court tennis, linking 10 summer tournaments to the US Open. Fans follow the action throughout the summer through national television coverage, culminating each week with back-to-back men’s and women’s finals every Sunday afternoon. Players battle for \$40 million, including a chance for bonus prize money at the US Open. In 2008, Olympus became the first title sponsor of the Series. The Olympus US Open Series is also supported by sponsors American Express and Evian.

Andy Murray won the 2010 Olympus US Open Series men's title and Caroline Wozniacki won the women's title. In 2007, Roger Federer collected the biggest paycheck in tennis history -- \$2.4 million -- for winning US Open and the Olympus US Open Series. In 2005, Kim Clijsters also captured both the US Open and the Olympus US Open Series, winning \$2.2 million -- the largest purse in women's sports history -- and again equaled that amount in 2010, winning the US Open and finishing the Olympus US Open Series in second place.

