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WTA TOUR

Wickmayer Confirmed For 2010 ASB CLASSIC

MEDIA RELEASE

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Six weeks after she was originally confirmed, top 20 ranked Yanina Wickmayer has been re-confirmed for the ASB Classic.

The Belgian No1 has been a rising star of women's tennis in 2009 and will play in January's 2010 ASB Classic featuring the Kia Motors Singles and Doubles.

A suspension imposed by the Flemish National Doping Organisation (NADO Flanders) regarding the 'whereabouts' rule has been lifted by a Belgian civil court (pending further appeal), therefore she is delighted to confirm her entry in Auckland as a wildcard.**

"It is such good news and the best possible Christmas present that I am able to play. I had such a great 2009 on the court and now look forward to starting my 2010 at the ASB Classic in Auckland," said Wickmayer.

With her ranking at No16 in the world Wickmayer will be the tournament third seed and adds an exciting extra dimension to the event alongside other top 20 players – Flavia Pennetta (Italy) at No12, Chinese star Li Na No15 as well as Italian Francesca Schiavone at No17 and Virginie Razzano ranked at No19.

"It has been a rollercoaster ride with Yanina and I am so thrilled for both her and the ASB Classic that the ride has finished on a high,"

It is an historic moment for ASB Classic to have for the first time five players in the top 20. This is just fantastic that the tournament has reached this status and to have such an amazing field of players," says ASB Classic tournament director, Brenda Perry.

Wickmayer jumped up 55 spots since the start of 2009 to break into the world's top 20. She has been one of the big movers this year going from world number 71 in January 2009 to a current career high of number 16, up from 18 when first announced by the ASB Classic.

In the last six months she has claimed two WTA Tour titles and also reached her first Grand Slam semifinal at the US Open in September.

She turned 20 years-old on October 20 and became ranked in the top 20 for the first time that same week. She is currently the second youngest player in the top 20 behind 19 year-old Caroline Wozniacki.

Standing at 1.82m tall Wickmayer uses her big serve to good effect and was able to reel off a number of good results around the world on different surfaces.

She captured the Estoril singles title on clay, reached the final of s'Hertogenbosch on grass as well as the quarters at Birmingham and semis at Nottingham also both on grass.

However her big results and best ever result at a Grand Slam came on the hardcourts at the US Open with the run to the semifinals putting her in the public eye and making the tennis world take note. It was in the rain delayed semifinals that she fell to finalist Caroline Wozniacki.

Just a few weeks after her US Open success Wickmayer captured her second career title with a win at the Linz tournament in Austria. She accounted for world then No11 Flavia Pennetta in the semis and Petra Kvitova in the final which resulted in her top 20 debut.

The following week she reached the semis at the Luxembourg tournament which took her to a then career high ranking of 18.

In 2008, ranked 175, Wickmayer was in the Main Draw of the ASB Classic courtesy of a Feed-Up spot from having won an ITF \$US50,000 title in China. She will return in 2010 as one of the top seeds.

Wickmayer has a further connection with Auckland having partnered NZ's current No1 player, Sacha Jones, in three Junior ITF Doubles events in 2006.

Two other wildcards have been awarded to Kiwis Jones and Marina Erakovic.