

I-play Serves Up Maria Sharapova Tennis During US Open

San Mateo, CA - 29th August 2005: I-play, the mobile games company, today announced the availability of 'Maria Sharapova Tennis', the mobile game starring the tennis champion, for this year's US Open. Created and developed by India's leading mobile games company, Dhruva Interactive, 'Maria Sharapova Tennis' is now available on major carriers and online portals across North America.

"As part of our drive to create mobile games for everyone, we are very pleased to bring an athlete of huge, global appeal like Maria Sharapova to mobile gaming. The game will be simple to play but difficult to master, just like tennis itself," said Paul Maglione, Senior Vice President of Publishing and Marketing of I-play.

Currently ranked number one in the world and seeded first at the U.S. Open, Sharapova, took the tennis world by storm last year when she won the 2004 All-England Championships tennis' most prestigious tournament. Just 18 and only a professional player for three years, she also captured the WTA tournaments in Seoul and Tokyo before beating Serena Williams in the 2004 final of the WTA Championships in Los Angeles. In 2005, she won titles in Tokyo and Doha, Qatar, and reached the semi-finals of the Australian Open in January. Recently, Sharapova was named one of People Magazine's 2005 "50 Most Beautiful People."

Rajesh Rao, CEO of Dhruva Interactive commented: "Our effort has been to make a compelling mobile tennis game that can be played by the mass market, not just high end phones. Dhruva has built its reputation on building high quality games. The mobile gaming market is at a critical development phase and we intend Maria Sharapova Tennis to be a genre defining game."

Players can fight it out as Maria in Maria Sharapova Tennis and compete across four Grand Slam tournaments with a range of shots and court surfaces. Career earnings are used to unlock pictures of Maria to store on player's phones.

Sharapova, who has taken considerable interest in the game, commented: "By using my name in a mobile gaming context, I hope that tennis fans will be able to share my passion, whatever the weather or conditions of play."

IMG, the world's premier sports and lifestyle management firm, manages the tennis star's relationship with I-play. Gregg Oldfield, Vice President Brand Marketing & Interactive Media, IMG said: "The increasing popularity of mobile games enables sports personalities to capitalize on new media opportunities. I-Play and Dhruva have developed a compelling Maria Sharapova mobile game that provides a high quality interactive experience for tennis fans worldwide."

I-play - did you know?

Research conducted by I-play and independent research agency SKOPOS, based on interviews with over 2,500 respondents aged between 12- 44 year olds across the US, the UK, Italy, Spain and Germany, found that an overwhelming 47% of females have played a mobile game. It also revealed that females get stuck into a mobile game more than their male counterparts: - this was most significant in the USA - where 42% of females played a single game for over 20 minutes compared to 27% of men and in the UK where 22% of females played for compared to 15% of men.