

Erste rules at Wiener Stadthalle

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Erste Bank Open succeeds Trophy this year

Largest Austrian tennis tournament has new name

Austria's largest and most important tennis tournament has a new sponsor. After 25 years with the same title sponsor, the tournament will be held under the auspices of Erste Bank as the **Erste Bank Open** this year from 22 to 30 October 2011, making it the absolute highlight of the tennis year in Austria. "The change in the main sponsor after 25 years is certainly the start of a new era," commented Tournament Director **Herwig Straka**, and will also boost the wave of innovation that the new organizer, e|motion successfully initiated last year. "We will remain loyal to our policy of continuing to well-established practices, but will offer something new every year."



Erste sets the tone at Stadthalle and Vienna's top sport events

"A great event, and we are very pleased to take over sponsorship this year," stated **Peter Bosek**, Member of the Management Board of Erste Bank. Erste Bank is now the new partner of the tennis tournament at Wiener Stadthalle. With this decision, Erste Bank not only sponsors Austria's most prominent tennis player, Jürgen Melzer and the venue, Erste Bank Wiener Stadthalle, but also the most important tennis tournament of the country.



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The City of Vienna is very active in sports and attracts many spectacular events to the capital. Erste Bank is happy to play the role of supporter and is involved in a many areas: main sponsor of the Vienna City Marathon and of the erste bank vienna night run, commitments in Vienna Capitals, cooperation with SK Rapid and now Erste Bank Open. "We are the bank of the Viennese. And because the capital city is very special to us, we engage in many different activities," added Mr. Bosek. The decision on cooperation with the prestigious tennis tournament for this season was taken on short notice to support this major event for the City of Vienna and also the sport of tennis.

"As Wien Holding we are highly pleased about the commitment of Erste Bank to the most important tennis tournament of the country. We have succeeded in securing this prestigious event for Vienna as a city of prime sports events and also a home for the tournaments at Wiener Stadthalle. I firmly believe that this ATP tournament to be held as the Erste Bank Open is not only a world class tennis event, but will also be a great social event and economic success," added **Peter Hanke** Managing Director of Wien Holding which is the parent company of Wiener Stadthalle.

Erste Bank Open is the fourth title that the tournament has been given in 36 years (Vienna Open at its foundation in 1974, then Fischer Grand Prix and the last and longest-lasting title CA or BA Tennis Trophy). It has developed to an outstanding and popular event – for sports but also for the economy and as a society event. The aim is to continue this development of the ATP tournament with the help of Erste Bank.

A first synergy effect results from the identity of the sponsor of the tournament and its current star, Jürgen Melzer. Austria's

sportsperson of the year might win the Hattrick in 2011 at Erste Bank Wiener Stadthalle. In none of the 36 tournaments to date have any of the greatest stars won three times in a row in Vienna. This marks the onset of a new historic era at Stadthalle.

A lot depends, of course, on the competition. According to current news, it will be enormous, as Vienna has always been a special point of attraction for world class players. And competition will be even more intense, as this year only one other tournament has been scheduled in the ATP calendar apart from Vienna. Many talks were held with the players of the Grand Slam tournament in Paris. At the top of the list are players like Gael Monfils, Jo-Wilfried Tsonga and also Juan Martin Del Potro who will certainly make it hard for Jürgen Melzer to defend his title.

Starting today, you can make ticket reservations for the Erste Bank Open. Reservations can be booked on the websites of Stadthalle (www.stadthalle.com) and the tournament (www.erstebank-open.com) now, and later on via Ö-Ticket. Erste customers can buy tickets at a discount at every branch of Erste Bank. Generally, entrance fees are not expensive.

Entrance fees

Monday: Standard price EUR 25, free seat selection

Tuesday to Sunday: EUR 20 to EUR 49 (depends on price category and tournament days)

Golden Ticket: EUR 120 for a VIP upgrade (valid only in conjunction with a ticket)

Children from 6 to 15 years pay half

On Monday, Erste Bank Open will open with Kids Day; Tuesday is Friendship Day on which Thomas Muster is also planned to make an appearance. On Wednesday, Jürgen Melzer will join the event. Further highlights will be announced later on.

Melzer: “Recoup Paris in Wimbledon – Make history in Vienna”

Question: Your goal is to get “back into the Top 10”. Will that be tougher than in the super year 2010?

Melzer: Not really. I don't have any more doubts about making it into the top 10. I know that I can do it. I will work just as hard as I have up to now!

F: Are you satisfied with the season 2011 apart from the results caused by your back injury or could you have done better?

Melzer: I am not fully satisfied. I played in Australia and in Monte Carlo like I had intended. But I did have some bad phases. The Davis Cup cost me a lot of time and energy. I only played three tournaments until the Davis Cup and that might not have been enough.

F: What are your plans for the second half of the tournament year, especially for Wimbledon?

Melzer: When I am completely recovered, I do expect to do real well in Wimbledon. I like to play on lawns and want to recoup the points lost there in Roland Garros.

F: One of the season's goals is Vienna, which now has your personal sponsor as well as the title sponsor. Does this make you even more ambitious?

Melzer: I think it is great that Erste Bank has decided to take over sponsorship of the tournament. For me, a third title in a row would be perfect especially under the new sponsor.

F: There is a historic component in the second game to defend your title in Vienna – no player has ever in the 36-year-old history won three times in a row in Vienna. Two victories in row were won by Brian Gottfried, Stan Smith, Roger Federer, Ivan Ljubicic and now Jürgen Melzer. Are such statistics of any significance to you?

Melzer: Let's make history in Vienna!