



Press Release

BVITB PROMOTES TRAVEL TO THE TERRITORY AT HIGH PROFILE

TENNIS TOURNAMENT IN CALIFORNIA

Road Town, Tortola, Monday, August 10, 2009 – The British Virgin Islands Tourist Board (BVITB) received an enthusiastic response as the presenting contributing destination sponsor of the 2009 Bank of the West Classic Tennis Tournament at Stanford University in Palo Alto, California from July 27 – August 2.

Between the good weather, appreciative tennis fans, and the presence of top players such as Venus and Serena Williams and Maria Sharapova, the BVI successfully reached a powerful market of affluent, cultured, active, healthy and ethnically diverse travelers. Before the match between Venus Williams and Sharapova, Perla George, General Manager for North American Sales & Operations, was invited to do the coin toss to begin the match.

“From the fantastic exposure we earned surrounding the event to the stream of affluent travel consumers – from Silicon Valley, San Francisco and throughout the Bay Area – this event was a successful platform to extend our awareness in an important and growing sector of the North American market,” said Perla George, General Manager for North American Sales & Operations.

“We look forward to welcoming many new visitors from Northern California to the British Virgin Islands in the months and years to come. This event is another important step in our aggressive strategy to promote and differentiate



the BVI as the premier Caribbean destination for leisure holidays at high-end events throughout our key feeder markets in North America.” George added.

Including George, three BVI Tourist Board staff; Tausha Vanterpool, Business Development Manager, West Coast, and Cynthia Christopher, Marketing Specialist, rotated attendance in a promotional tent hosted by the Board to encourage tournament visitors to discover the BVI. The tent featured beautiful imagery of the Territory; a television playing several enticing videos illustrating what to see and do in the BVI, a win-a-trip sweepstakes entry, and many brochures and product literature showcasing all the BVI has to offer. In addition, visitors learned about the “Summer of Savings” campaign, in which many BVI resort hotels, inns and villas are being promoted via special offers valid through September 30, 2009.

The Board was able to negotiate highly visible exposure for the British Virgin Islands surrounding the event. This included the Tourist Board’s logo showcased courtside as well as being featured on four VIP seats at the stadium, used to entertain travel agents from the northern California region. Additionally, the Territory’s new: 30-second television spot was featured within broadcasts of the tournament on ESPN2, the Tennis Channel and the scoreboard at the stadium during breaks in matches. The match was broadcast throughout the United States on ESPN2.

The Bank of the West Classic is the longest-running women-only professional tennis tournament in the world and is the first stop of the Olympus US Open Series. The tournament features a 32-player singles draw and a 16-team doubles draw with total prize money of \$700,000.

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Note to Editors:

Caption for photographs attached:

1. **BVITB and Players** – Perla George, General Manager, North America Sales & Operations, BVI Tourist Board, with Venus Williams and Maria Sharapova.
2. **Coin Toss** - Perla George, General Manager North America Sales & Operations, BVI Tourist Board, doing coin toss before match between Venus Williams and Maria Sharapova
3. **Serena Williams Serves** – Serena Williams serving before courtside signage for BVI Tourist Board.
4. **BVITB Booth** - BVI Tourist Board staff sharing information about the Territory with potential visitors.