



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
JULY 23, 2015**

**2010 FRENCH OPEN CHAMPION FRANCESCA SCHIAVONE ADDED
TO ODLUM BROWN VANOPEN WOMEN'S DRAW**

Vancouver, BC - Organizers of the Odlum Brown VanOpen are pleased to announce that 2010 French Open champion and former World No. 4 Francesca Schiavone is entered into the main draw of the women's competition August 15 - 23 at Hollyburn Country Club in West Vancouver.

The 35-year-old struggled throughout the 2014 season with a right shoulder injury, but still managed her 15th straight Top 100 season. In addition to winning at Roland Garros in 2010, Schiavone was runner-up in 2011. She has also played in four Grand Slam quarterfinals, at the Australian Open in 2011, Wimbledon in 2009 and the US Open in 2003 and 2010.

Schiavone is the first Italian woman to win a Grand Slam singles title and only the third Italian player ever to win a Grand Slam in singles play. Her career-high No. 4 ranking is the highest ever for an Italian woman.

"We are thrilled with the addition of such a high-calibre player like Francesca to our tournament," said Odlum Brown VanOpen Chairman Floyd Hill. "We continue to try and grow our event each year and provide fans in Metro Vancouver with the best possible tennis experience. Having a player like Francesca, who's been ranked among the top five in the world, will help take our tournament to a new level."

Schiavone turned pro in 1998 at the age of 18 and holds victories over a number of notable players in her career, including current World No. 1 Serena Williams, who she beat in the second round of the 2005 Italian Open. She also has career wins against former World No. 1s Amelie Mauresmo, Jelena Jakovic, Victoria Azarenka,

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Dinara Safina, Justine Henin, and Caroline Wozniacki. In total, Schiavone has 103 career wins against players who have been ranked in the WTA's Top-10.

"Francesca is one of the WTA Tour's most exciting players," said Odlum Brown VanOpen Tournament Director Ryan Clark. "Her mix of touch, shot-making, and athletic ability is always fun to watch – and we're excited to bring her to Vancouver."

Schiavone is a six-time winner and 11-time runner up in WTA career final appearances. In addition to her 2010 French Open win, she's been victorious at the 2007 Gastein Ladies in Austria, 2009 Kremlin Cup in Moscow, 2010 Barcelona Ladies Open, and 2013 Marrakech Grand Prix in Morocco. Schiavone also defeated former World No. 11 Alize Cornet in the 2012 Internationaux de Strasbourg final.

"I'm excited to visit Vancouver and play in this tournament," said Schiavone. "The city is beautiful and from what I've heard, the field is always strong, so I'm looking forward to the challenge of playing there."

In addition to an outstanding individual career, the Milan resident has helped lead her country to Fed Cup wins in 2006, 2009, and 2010. She has also represented Italy at three Summer Olympics, reaching the quarterfinals in 2004 in Athens, Greece and the third round in 2008 in Beijing.

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2015 marks the 14th year of the \$200,000 Odlum Brown VanOpen Presented By Miele and Trail Appliances, a dual sanctioned USTA Pro Circuit and Tennis Canada event. The event has an equal balance of prize money for both men and women and provides players with the opportunity to gain valuable world-ranking points on both the respective ATP and WTA Tours. Between the men's and women's events, it annually attracts 140 international and professional players to Vancouver from over

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*40 countries. **Maria Sharapova, Andy Murray, Marion Bartoli, Eugenie Bouchard, Jelena Dokic, Milos Raonic, Nicole Pietrangeli, and Vasek Pospisil** are among today's top stars who began their careers at the Odlum Brown VanOpen Presented By Miele and Trail Appliances, and on the USTA Pro Circuit.*

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