



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Sharapova Prevails In Tough Three-Setter To Reach Quarterfinals

Sharapova was one of four seeded players on Wednesday to earn a spot in the quarterfinals.

STANFORD, Calif. (www.BankOfTheWestClassic.com) – Returning to the Taube Family Tennis Stadium for the first time since last year's runner-up finish, second-seeded Maria Sharapova survived a scare from Daniela Hantuchova and registered a 6-2, 2-6, 6-4 victory on Wednesday night at the 2011 Bank of the West Classic.

Playing in her first tournament since reaching the final at Wimbledon, Sharapova opened her tournament run with a hard-fought three-set victory over Hantuchova, who entered the night having lost seven of eight overall in the all-time series.

Sharapova looked solid from the start, jumping out to a 6-2 lead. However after trailing 2-1 in the second frame, Hantuchova ripped off five straight games to even the match at one set apiece and steal the momentum.

Hantuchova continued her surge at the start of the third set, grabbing a 2-0 lead to make it a run of eight consecutive games. Sharapova countered with four straight games to go in front 4-2, and held serve to close out the victory. The match took two hours and 12 minutes to complete.

The three other seeded players in action on Wednesday also advanced to the quarterfinals. No. 3 Marion Bartoli cruised past Rebecca Marino 6-4, 6-3, No. 5 Agnieszka Radwanska fought off wildcard Kai-Chen Chang 6-4, 3-6, 6-0 and No. 8 wildcard Dominika Cibulkova opened the day session with a 6-4, 2-6, 6-3 triumph over Christina McHale.

Thursday's afternoon schedule is highlighted by the quarterfinal matchup between Serena Williams and Maria Kirilenko. That match will not start before 2 p.m. The evening session is headlined by fourth-seeded Samantha Stosur battling Sabine Lisicki at 7 p.m.

Tickets for the 2011 Bank of the West Classic can be purchased by calling the box office at 866-WTA-TIXS (866-982-8497) or by logging on to www.BankoftheWestClassic.com.

The Bank of the West Classic, a WTA Premier event, is now in its 41st year and features a 28-player singles draw as well as a 16-team doubles draw. The event is owned and operated by IMG and serves as the opening women's event of the Olympus US Open Series.



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