

## **VIRGINIA RUANO PASCUAL, THE SECRET CHAMPION**

**Bali, 11 September 2005...** Virginia Ruano Pascual from Spain is a 'secret' champion, because most of her success has come in doubles. And what a champion, with 34 doubles titles so far, mostly with Argentina's **Paola Suarez**. Last year they won three of four Grand Slams, taking home the Australian, French, and US Open titles. Even at Wimbledon, the only one they failed to win, they reached the semi-finals before losing to eventual champions **Cara Back** and **Rennae Stubbs**. This year, although Suarez has been injured for much of the seasons, she won the French Open, as well as Dubai and Indian Wells.

It's fair to say that Virginia and Paola are also one of the greatest doubles team of all time, after reaching nine consecutive Grand Slam finals stretching from Roland Garros in 2002 to Roland Garros 2004. Only **Martina Navratilova** and Pam Shriver's run of 11 straight finals is better.

Virginia also won the 2001 Roland Garros mixed doubles with **Tomas Carbonnel**, and she has represented her country in the Fed Cup almost continuously since 1992. Last year, she teamed up with fellow-spaniard **Concita Martinez** to win a silver medal at the Athens Olympics.

Although her success in singles is modest in comparison with her remarkable doubles achievements, she can look back on many fine victories. She's won four ITF tournaments, as well as three WTA Tour events in Tashkent, Budapest and Cardiff.

But one of her most remarkable results came at Wimbledon in 2001, when she defeated **Martina Hingis** in the opening round. It was only the third time since seedings began at Wimbledon in 1927 that the top seed had lost in the first round.

Virginia had another of career-best victories when she upset world number 12 **Ai Sugiyama** last year at Roland Garros, and she can also look back on a win over 11<sup>th</sup>-ranked Nathalie Tauziat at Hilton Head in 1998. Earlier this year, she reached the semi-finals of the Pattaya tournament in Thailand.

Away from the court, Virginia likes listening to music, watching sports, especially handball, and going to movies. She likes the actor **Kevin Costner**, the island of Hawaii, and eating paella.

## **WYNNE PRAKUSYA, INDONESIA'S OWN**

**Wynne Prakusya** takes over responsibility of carrying Indonesian hopes in this year's Wismilak International in the absence of injured Angie Widjaja. And with 32 singles wins behind her this year, as well as 27 wins on the doubles court, you can be sure that she will rise to the occasion.

In April, she won the doubles title with **Romana Tedjakusuma** at an event in Croatia, and the pair claimed the only victory in Indonesia's 4-1 Fed Cup defeat by Germany that month. In May, she won both the singles and doubles titles in Tarakan, defeating Romana in the singles final and then teaming with her to win the doubles. She also claimed the singles and doubles title (again with Romana) at the Ho Chi Minh City tournament in Vietnam.

Her run of victories continued in July, when she and Romana won the doubles at Evansville in the USA, and she followed that up by winning the singles and doubles at another American event, in St. Joseph. That doubles win once again came alongside Romana, and in August she teamed with **Mi-Ra Jeon** to win yet another title at Wuxi in China.

Perhaps her proudest moment came in Oklahoma City in 2001 when she teamed up with **Janet Lee** to beat one of the finest teams of recent years, **Lisa Raymond** and **Rennae Stubbs**, and later the same year they beat her heroine Monica Seles and partner **Meghan Shaughnessy** on their way to winning Stanford. Later, there was their semi-final victory over **Yayuk Basuki** and **Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario** at the Wismilak International.

Or her favourite victory so far might have come in 2002, when she and Janet beat one of the greatest team of all time, **Virginia Ruano Pascual** and **Paola Suarez**, in Charleston. Or another great team, **Cara Black** and **Elena Likhovtseva**, in Miami. Or it might have been when they claimed yet another upset, against **Anna Kournikova** and **Chanda Rubin**, on the grass at Eastbourne.

Other career highlights include winning titles in Karuizawa, Japan in 2004, Salt Lake City in 2000, Jakarta in 1998 and 1999, Wellington (1998), and Bandung in Indonesia in 1997.

Admiring former Indonesian icon Yayuk Basuki for her guidance and insight to life on the tennis tour, Wynne says her most memorable tennis experience was playing her first Grand Slam Junior event when she was mistaken for Asia's greatest player, former world number 4 player **Kimiko Date**.

***Editor's Notes :***

*Since its debut in 1994, the Wismilak International, part of the worldwide Sony Ericsson WTA Tour, has been held in Surabaya, Kuala Lumpur, and now Bali. Initially the event was named the "Wismilak Open", before changing its name to the "Wismilak International" in 1996 as a reflection of the organiser's corporate expansion into the international market. The Wismilak International is still the largest tournament in the WTA's calendar in South East Asia. For more information please visit [www.wismilakinternational.com](http://www.wismilakinternational.com)*

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