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**JAMES BLAKE – 2002 LEGG MASON TENNIS CLASSIC CHAMPION – RECEIVES  
WILD CARD BERTH INTO ATP WORLD TOUR 500 EVENT, JULY 31-AUGUST 8**  
*Former Top-Ranked American Slated for First Appearance Since 2006 at  
Olympus US Open Series Tournament; Was 2005 Runner-Up*

**WASHINGTON, DC** (20 July 2010) – **James Blake, the 2002 champion and 2005 runner-up**, will return to the **Legg Mason Tennis Classic presented by GEICO** for the first time since 2006, receiving a Wild Card berth (the third of four available spots) into the ATP World Tour 500 and Olympus US Open Series event. The Legg Mason Tennis Classic takes place **July 31 through August 8** at the William H.G. FitzGerald Tennis Center (16<sup>th</sup> & Kennedy Streets, NW).

Blake earned the first of his 10 ATP singles titles at the 2002 Legg Mason Tennis Classic, upsetting top-seeded Andre Agassi in the semifinals and capturing the hearts and imagination of fans, both on court and off. The following year he was a quarterfinalist (falling to Agassi), but he reached the final again in 2005, where three-time champion Andy Roddick stopped him.

“James Blake’s commitment to compete in the Legg Mason Tennis Classic adds yet another marquee name to our player field,” said Jeff Newman, Tournament Director. “We now have three former champions with James, Andy and Lleyton Hewitt, as well as all of the top American players.”

The former Harvard student was the top-ranked American in 2006, reaching a career-high of No. 4 in the world. In the past year, he has been slowed by injury. But one thing people have learned about James Blake is to never count him out. He is a man who has overcome tremendous adversity – including scoliosis in his teen years (requiring a brace), a fractured vertebrae in his neck suffered in Rome, falling ill with a condition that caused facial paralysis, affecting hearing and vision, and losing his father to cancer – fighting back every time, and willingly serving as a role model for young people. He has been featured in People Magazine’s “Sexist Man Alive” issue, done a fashion spread for GQ and authored a book, “Breaking Back: How I Lost Everything and Won Back My Life,” which went to #15 on The New York Times Best Seller list!

Featuring four Top 10 players, this year’s Legg Mason Tennis Classic field is led by two-time French Open finalist **Robin Soderling** (No. 5 on the South African Airways ATP Singles Rankings); Wimbledon finalist **Tomas Berdych** (No. 8); three-time (2001, 2005 and 2007) Legg Mason Tennis Classic Champion **Andy Roddick** (No. 9); **Fernando Verdasco** (No. 10); **Marin Cilic** (No. 13); marathon man **John Isner** (No. 18), and **Sam Querrey** (No. 19).

Ticket packages for the Legg Mason Tennis Classic are on sale now and can be purchased through the tournament hotline at 202.721.9500. Single session tickets, ranging in price from \$10-\$70 – based on location, session date and time – are also available through all TicketMaster outlets. For more information on the Legg Mason Tennis Classic presented by GEICO, please visit the tournament Website

at [leggmasontennisclassic.com](http://leggmasontennisclassic.com), follow the Legg Mason Tennis Classic on Facebook at [facebook.com/leggmasontennisclassic](https://facebook.com/leggmasontennisclassic), or call 202.721.9500.

An integral part of the sports and entertainment fabric of Washington, DC for 42 years, the Legg Mason Tennis Classic, a Lagardère Unlimited production, is owned by and benefits the Washington Tennis & Education Foundation, which seeks to improve the life prospects for DC area youth.

The Legg Mason Tennis Classic is part of the Olympus US Open Series which links ten summer tournaments to the US Open, the largest annually attended sporting event in the world. The Olympus US Open Series brings together these ten tournaments in North America, three television networks, tennis' sanctioning bodies and top corporate sponsors during the summer tennis season. Since its launch in 2004, The Olympus US Open Series has doubled television viewership of tennis, increased total event attendance and contributed to the growing popularity of the sport.

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#### **About The WTEF**

The Washington Tennis & Education Foundation (WTEF) was founded in 1955 as an organization designed to help disadvantaged youth through tennis. Since then, it has evolved into an organization that provides academic help to at-risk children, by helping them to apply the lessons learned on the tennis court in the classroom and beyond. Today, WTEF is a leader in the best practice of providing academic enrichment, supplemented by tennis and life skills instruction, as a means for developing the skills necessary to achieve academic and personal success. WTEF seeks to improve the life prospects of DC area youth, particularly those from low-income communities, through tennis, educational, and community-building activities that teach discipline, build confidence, and improve academic performance. [www.wtef.org](http://www.wtef.org)

#### **About Legg Mason**

Legg Mason is a global asset management firm, with \$685 billion in assets under management at March 31, 2010. The Company provides active asset management in many major investment centers throughout the world. Legg Mason is headquartered in Baltimore, Maryland, and its common stock is listed on the New York Stock Exchange (symbol: LM). [www.leggmason.com](http://www.leggmason.com)

#### **About Lagardère Unlimited**

Lagardère Unlimited (formerly known as Lagardère Sports) is a specialist in the sports economy comprised of six universes: representation of prominent artists and athletes, management of sports academies, events planning and logistics, management of medias, and marketing and consulting. Lagardère Unlimited has quickly become a major player worldwide through the integration of a portfolio of world-class companies, including the recently acquired BEST (*Blue Entertainment Sports Television*), Sportfive, IEC in Sports, Upsolut, PrEvent and World Sport Group. Current clients include Super Bowl MVP Santonio Holmes, Reggie Bush, 2009 AP Offensive Player of the Year Chris Johnson and 2009 AP Offensive Rookie of the Year Percy Harvin; NBA All-Star Shawn Marion, 2010 NBA Draft pick John Wall, 2009 NBA Lottery pick Ricky Rubio and 2009 NBA Sixth-Man of the Year Jason Terry; legendary ATP doubles team Bob and Mike Bryan, rising star Melanie Oudin, WTA #3 Caroline Wozniacki, seven-time Grand Slam Champion Justine Henin and 2003 US Open Champion and ATP #7 Andy Roddick; top MMA heavyweight Fedor Emelianenko; basketball legend Magic Johnson; boxing legend Floyd Mayweather, Jr.; entertainment personalities John Saunders, Jenn Brown and Matt Vasgersian. Media & Event properties include the US Open Tennis Championship, the French Open Tennis Championship, the Legg Mason Tennis Classic, numerous US-based ATP tournaments, Rock 'n Racquets, the Boston Marathon, the Superstars Competition, Ice Wars, The Showcase college basketball event, the Men's and Women's Fifth Third Bank Tennis Championships and experiential grassroots properties Hoop It Up, Kick It, Let It Fly and Rock The Box. [www.lagardere-unlimited.com](http://www.lagardere-unlimited.com)