

Serena Starts Title Defence  
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By Craig Gabriel

MIAMI: The glitz and glamour was out in force when Serena Williams walked on court to start the defense of her title at the Sony Ericsson Open. The four time champion carried her black and gold Lurex racquet bag over one shoulder stuffed with the most important tool she needs on a tennis court. Balanced on the opposite arm was her large handbag in matching gold.

Her Nike outfit was a two piece in a classic tennis style. The white skirt was offset by a mauve short sleeve sweater under which was a top in the same shade of mauve. It was complete colour co-ordination as the official colour of the Sony Ericsson Open is purple.

"This is (all) a different design, I like it and I think it was just a different look. I thought it was really feminine and really kind of 50's. High waisted and really flirty," said Serena.

It was a glorious day on Key Biscayne for Serena to get her campaign underway. The sun was beating down on the Stadium Court as a light breeze had the palm trees swaying, making them look almost like oversized spectators trying to get a peek of the action through the bleacher seats.

In next to no time Serena had taken control of the match against the Romanian Edina Gallovits and the relative new comer was struggling to keep up with things. Nerves certainly would not have helped her - playing a tennis great and in such a big stadium, she would have taken a while to settle down.

By that stage it was too late. The first set was over quickly and the second set did not last much longer, Serena winning 61 62 in just 54 minutes.

"I'm playing pretty good and just doing the things that I do in practice and trying to keep it there," said Serena. "It wasn't too tough of a match, but it was a good match to play. If I would have played different the score line would have been different, so it was important for me to play the way that I played."

This year Serena is attempting to win the Sony Ericsson Open for a record equaling fifth time. Only the great Steffi Graf has achieved that.

"I love playing here and I love having all my family come and see me play," she said. "My family always comes to this event. It's like playing at home, so I think any time you play at home, like the Patriots playing at home, you always have that extra umph."