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**WOMEN'S PROFESSIONAL SOCCER LEAGUE
TO LAUNCH IN 2009**

Seven cities committed today; additional markets in consideration to host teams featuring players from the 2007 FIFA Women's World Cup and 2008 Olympic Games

WSII CEO Tonya Antonucci named as new league's commissioner

SAN FRANCISCO (September 4th, 2007) – A new North American women's professional soccer league – under the temporary working title of Women's Soccer LLC – has been formally established in the United States by seven investor groups, with play beginning in the spring of 2009. Initial teams will be based in Boston, Chicago, Dallas, Los Angeles, New Jersey/New York, St. Louis, and Washington D.C.

Though funding could have allowed for a 2008 start date, team owners finalized the 2009 launch date based on a number of factors, including the 2007 FIFA World Cup and 2008 Olympic Games.

Launch Timing

“Careful consideration was taken in timing the launch of the league, as team owners are being judicious to ensure that this league is sustainable and successful in the long run. It's a simple matter of preparation and operational readiness,” said Tonya Antonucci, newly named league commissioner. “Also, we fully expect that the FIFA 2007 Women's World Cup, which will be broadcast on ESPN, as well as the 2008 Olympics in Beijing, broadcast on NBC and its family of networks, will provide excellent exposure for our players and sport as we build momentum toward opening day.”

“We would very much have liked to start playing games in 2008 and in fact several teams were able and ready to do so. However, as a league we are very focused on how we fit into the overall sports landscape and two overwhelming factors contributed to the decision to start playing in 2009,” added Michael Stoller, managing partner for Boston Women's Soccer, LLC, the ownership group overseeing the women's professional soccer team in Boston, the Boston Breakers. “The first was being sure that we have longevity in our league and we overwhelmingly believe that starting in 2009 will assure the long term success of each and every team.

“And most importantly our sport has two critical events during 2007 and 2008, namely the FIFA World Cup starting in several weeks and the Olympics next summer. We did not want to impact the various national teams between these two events and we did not want our league to take the focus away from these two great events for our players or our fans.”

A New Business Model

The seven ownership groups are comprised of the following: AEG L.A. Women's Soccer, LLC; Boston Women's Soccer, LLC; Chicago Professional Women's Soccer, LLC; Hendricks Investment Holdings, LLC (Washington D.C.); St. Louis United Soccer, LLC; Sky Blue Women's Soccer, Inc. (New Jersey/New York); and Sting Soccer Group LP (Dallas).

League operations will focus on cost-containment and shared infrastructure efficiencies, as guided by a conservative business model developed by not-for-profit Women's Soccer Initiative, Inc. (WSII) officials under the legal counsel of global law firm Shearman & Sterling LLP. The league will implement a comprehensive 18-month marketing and branding campaign leading up to the 2009 launch date. The league has also entered into an agreement with Soccer United Marketing (SUM), the commercial affiliate of Major League Soccer, to serve as the league's exclusive representative for the sale of national corporate sponsorship and consumer product licenses. Several of the teams will play in MLS' new, soccer-specific stadiums. Team owners also look forward to continuing their relationships with both the United Soccer Leagues W-League and Women's Premier Soccer League (WPSL).

“The integration of Sky Blue's amateur W-League team with our franchise in the new professional league will set an example of how future US soccer clubs will be structured,” said Thomas Hofstetter, CEO of Extolition, Inc. and lead investor for Sky Blue Women's Soccer,

Inc. "With the 170,000 participants in New Jersey Youth Soccer Association (NJYSA) supporting the team we can move forward with the integration from youth soccer, to amateur level all the way up the professional ranks."

League Leadership

Antonucci, after two and a half years as CEO of WSII, will transition to the role of league commissioner. Antonucci brings over a decade of sports business experience to the effort, having spent more than seven years with Yahoo, Inc., where she served as the director of Yahoo! Sports and subsequently as general manager of Yahoo's partnership with FIFA and the commercialization of the official, global web sites for the FIFA Men's and Women's World Cups. Antonucci played soccer at Stanford University and, following her college soccer career, spent years as assistant coach at both Stanford and Santa Clara University.

"Tonya's vision, knowledge and tenacity have been the consistent guiding forces that have allowed women's soccer to return to the professional sports landscape," said Peter Wilt, president and CEO Chicago Professional Women's Soccer, LLC. "Her background in soccer, marketing and business leadership make her the ideal candidate to lead this league through its critical birth and infancy."

Added John Hendricks, WUSA founder and chairman Freedom Soccer and Hendricks Investment Holdings LLC, "I have been very privileged to witness the inspiring and relentless movement in this country to establish a premiere women's professional soccer league in which the world's most elite and talented players can compete to the delight of their many fans.

"In Tonya Antonucci this movement has a new leader who has given the entire investment group the confidence that this new exciting new effort will succeed and be sustained for generations to come. As the league's commissioner, Tonya's passion for excellence, creativity, and integrity can now be fully unleashed for the lasting benefit of women's professional sports."

Player Perspective

"I am thrilled and elated that a professional league will be coming back in 2009. I know from my path to the national team, a league was the most important component to getting me completely prepared to play at the next level," said Abby Wambach, current star of the U.S.

Women's National Team. "What this means is that more women will have more opportunity to not only play at the next level, but also fulfill life long dreams of being a professional athlete. This is what may be most important; to make dreams come true, and today, I feel like many women's dreams are coming true."

"Our players have been hoping this day would finally come," said Flo Dyson, president of the Illinois Women's Soccer League (IWSL), which has already signed on as a partner of the Chicago-based women's professional soccer team. "Whereas the former league did not have any representation in Chicago, now there will be three teams in the heart of the country. The girls very much need and want the aspirational heroes that this league will create. We are proud to be partners with the Chicago team from the outset and we pledge our full support to the team and the league."

Women's Soccer in the United States

According to the U.S. Soccer Federation, soccer continues to experience unprecedented growth in the United States – particularly among America's youth, with more than 3.2 million players registered with the U.S. Youth Soccer Association and 4.5 million adults involved with the organization as parents, coaches, referees, and administrators. In addition, up to 250,000 U.S. adults play soccer at the amateur level. Meanwhile, MLS teams are seeing consistent increases in attendance and looking for ways to cater to their ever-expanding fan base, including the construction of more soccer-specific stadiums.

"The start of a women's professional league in 2009 is further evidence of soccer's continued growth and potential in the United States," said MLS Commissioner Don Garber. "We believe this will be the world's top league and destination for elite women's professional soccer players. Major League Soccer will make available resources, assets and facilities to the new women's league, helping to ensure a strong start in 2009 with stability and opportunity well into the future."

Kathy Carter, the executive vice president of SUM, added, "Soccer has a unique and powerful ability to connect with people, and that will be even more true with the relaunch of professional women's soccer in the United States. SUM is committed to connecting this league and the great fan base with partners in the corporate community."

“AEG’s investment in the new professional women’s league is in-line with our company’s commitment to growing soccer in the United States,” said AEG Executive Vice President, Marketing & International, Andrew Messick. “We expect that the mix of strong and committed leadership on a league level, the resources and experience of MLS and SUM, and an ownership group dedicated to launching this league in the most professional manner will create a viable and popular league. We can’t wait until our Los Angeles franchise takes the field at The Home Depot Center.”

In 2001, shortly after the U.S. brought home the championship at the 1999 Women’s World Cup, women’s professional soccer experienced relative success via the Women’s United Soccer Association (WUSA), which suspended operations in 2003. The new league, while honoring the WUSA’s great playing talent and devoted fan base, will embrace die-hard WUSA fans side-by-side with new soccer audiences and mainstream sports fans who respect the best of the best competing in sport on American soil.

The announcement of a new league comes prior to the start of the FIFA Women’s World Cup in China, Sept. 10-30. The National Team, ranked No. 1 in the world and led by U.S. legends such as Abby Wambach and Kristine Lilly, left for China on Monday, August 27, following a send-off ceremony and 4-0 victory in a friendly match vs. Finland at the Home Depot Center in Carson, Calif., on Saturday, August 25.

Also that Saturday, Julie Foudy and Mia Hamm – both former stars of the U.S. Women’s National Team, two-time Olympic gold medalists, and two-time FIFA World Cup champions – were inducted into the National Soccer Hall of Fame in Oneonta, N.Y. This marks the first time in the history of the Hall that female athletes were the sole inductees in the Player Category.

“For years, the U.S. has been home to some of the world’s best female soccer players. They and their international counterparts deserve to play on a professional stage, which will make this league a coveted destination for elite athletes from around the globe,” said Antonucci.

The Future of Women’s Soccer

“Much has changed since the WUSA took to the field in 2001. Most notably, there has been rapid growth in the number of people in America who play soccer and consider themselves soccer fans, thanks in large part to the collegiate opportunities afforded by Title IX and the growing success of the U.S. men’s national team and MLS. Soccer’s popularity has exploded in

this country and a women's league is a logical byproduct of the sport's ever-expanding fan base and following," said Antonucci. "We also now have a range of digital and online capabilities that allow us to put women's soccer front-and-center among fans and sponsors. But ultimately, it all comes back to the fact that our league will boast the world's greatest athletes playing the world's greatest game.

"At the same time, we'd be remiss in not examining the operations of the WUSA and learning from their experiences, particularly in the realm of operational efficiencies," added Antonucci. "The new league is taking every step to ensure that this league is a permanent fixture on the nation's professional sports landscape. We are not expecting overnight success, but are committed to long-term growth and profitability."

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