The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Russia's Maria Sharapova World's Highest-Paid Female Athlete

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August 13, 2014



Maria Sharapova

Russian tennis star Maria Sharapova has topped Forbes magazine's list of highest-paid female athletes for the 10th consecutive year, pulling in an estimated $24.4 million in endorsements and prize money between June 2013 and June 2014.

Sharapova, who suffered an injury-hit season, took home only $2.4 million in tournament winnings over the 12-month period — almost $4 million less than in the previous year, Forbes said Wednesday.

But she made up for that with a number of lucrative endorsements, which Forbes said totaled $22 million, including deals with athletic wear manufacturer Nike, watchmaker Tag Heuer and carmaker Porsche.

Meanwhile, Sharapova's $1 million annual deal with cosmetics company Avon helped offset

a loss of earnings when Nike in November sold shoemaker Cole Haan, from which she had received significant royalties on a best-selling line, Forbes said.

Sharapova, who was born in Russia but lives and trains in the U.S., was joined by no less than six other tennis players in the Forbes top-10 list.

Chinese star Li Na — whose marketing value has soared since 2011, when she became the first Asian-born star to win a Grand Slam — pulled in a total $23.6 million last year, Forbes said. Li has endorsement deals with Nike, technology giant Samsung and a number of Chinese companies among others.

Sharapova's fierce U.S. rival, Serena Williams, who took home five times more in tournament earnings than Sharapova did in 2014, pulled in an estimated $22 million in total — placing her third on the list.

Completing the tennis lineup were Belarus' Victoria Azarenka, who placed sixth with earnings of $11.1 million, Denmark's Caroline Wozniacki (seventh; $10.8 million), Poland's Agnieszka Radwanska (eighth; $6.8 million); and Serbia's Ana Ivanovic (ninth; $6.4 million).

Also featured were South Korean figure skater Kim Yuna (fourth; $16.3 million), U.S. race car driver Danica Patrick (fifth; $15 million) and U.S. golfer Paula Creamer (10th; $5.5 million).

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