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# 2004 OLYMPIC GAMES

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## Smashnova aims for Games despite sponsors row

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BERLIN, Aug 1 (Reuters) -- Israel's top tennis player Anna Smashnova-Pistolesi wants to compete at the Athens Olympics despite a sponsorship row over whose clothes she should wear.

"Being chosen to represent your country is special to every athlete," Smashnova-Pistolesi said in a statement released on Sunday by her management company, ITMS Sports.

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"I've worked very hard for this and I deserve this chance to both serve and make my country proud," she added.

Smashnova-Pistolesi, the world number 17 and a winner of nine career WTA titles, is one of her country's best medal hopes at the Games starting on August 13.

However, the Israeli Olympic Committee has said there is a real possibility the player will not be at the Games if she does not accept wearing only the clothes of the team's sponsor.

Smashnova-Pistolesi's regular clothing sponsor, Lotto, says it will allow her to wear the clothes of Speedo, the Olympic team's supplier, for all events in Athens expect her matches.

Speedo, however, insists Smashnova-Pistolesi should wear its clothes at all times.

ITMS Sports said in Sunday's statement it was still pushing for a solution despite the fact that the two companies had stopped corresponding directly.

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