

URBINA MAKES TIJUANA PROUD AS SHE CAPTURES SAN DIEGO OPPORTUNITY TITLE

San Diego, Calif. – The Tijuana tennis community has a reason to smile.

Twenty-one-year-old Nazari Urbina, a Tijuana resident, earned a wild card into the qualifying draw of the 2010 Mercury Insurance Open Presented by Tri-City Medical Center by winning the summer's third and final Opportunity Tournament on Sunday, July 18 at the San Diego Tennis & Racquet Club.

In Sunday's final, the third-seeded Urbina, who attends Texas A&M University on a tennis scholarship, defeated San Diego's Allison Denike, 6-2, 6-4 in one hour and 15 minutes.

The fourth-seeded Denike, who competed on the professional women's tour and reached a career high ranking of 102 in the world in 2001, got off to a good start in the match by holding serve at love in her first two service games.

However, at 2-2 in the first set, Urbina broke Denike's serve and then held at love to take a 4-2 lead. With the momentum in her favor, Urbina broke serve again for a 5-2 lead and eventually served out the set.

In the second set, Urbina, a native of Xalapa, Veracruz, continued to dominate as she secured two early service breaks to take a 5-2 lead. As Urbina served for the match in the eighth game of the set, Denike played her best game of the match as she fended off two match points and broke serve.

After Denike held served, Urbina again served for the match with a 5-4 lead. This time Urbina took a 40-15 lead and on her third match point, she cracked a winning down-the-line forehand to wrap up the title.

Earlier this year, Urbina completed her freshman year at Texas A&M. She posted a 32-5 singles record and became the Aggies' first freshman to be selected to compete in the NCAA Division I Women's Singles Championship.

Urbina, who has been played tennis since age 5, was named the Intercollegiate Tennis Association Player to Watch for the Texas Region in May.

Coached by her father Oscar, Urbina says her goal is to become a professional tennis player. During her vacation and the summer break, she plays ITF Circuit and Challenger events and has achieved a Sony Ericsson WTA Tour ranking of 1050 (as of 07/19/10).

Following her victory at the San Diego Tennis & Racquet Club on a warm, sunny afternoon, Urbina was asked what it meant to her to receive a wild card into the qualifying draw of the Mercury Insurance Open.

"I'm very happy. I think this is a big opportunity for me," she said. "To be able to play with the top players in that type of tournament is very important. I just try to improve everyday and work hard to improve my game."

When the Tijuana resident steps onto the court at the La Costa Resort and Spa on July 31, it will be the biggest tournament Urbina has ever played in.

The Tijuana tennis community will have something to smile about.