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FÉLIX AUGER-ALIASSIME AND LEYLAH ANNIE FERNANDEZ RECEIVE 2022 PLAYERS OF THE YEAR AWARDS

***Dabrowski, Shapovalov, Marino, Diallo, Mboko, Weekes, Shaw and McIntyre also
honoured***

Montreal, December 15, 2022 — Tennis Canada today announced that Félix Auger-Aliassime and Leylah Annie Fernandez are the recipients of the 2022 Tennis Canada Excellence awards for *Players of the Year* and *Singles Players of the Year* in the men's and women's categories respectively.

The other Excellence Awards went to Gabriela Dabrowski and Denis Shapovalov in the category of *Doubles Players of the Year*, Rebecca Marino and Gabriel Diallo as the *Most Improved Players of the Year*, and Victoria Mboko and Jaden Weekes, who took home the honours for *Junior Players of the Year*. In wheelchair tennis, Rob Shaw claimed the *Wheelchair Tennis Player of the Year* award, while Mitch McIntyre was named the *Wheelchair Tennis Most Improved Player of the Year*.

"We would like to offer our congratulations to all of this year's recipients of the Tennis Canada Excellence Awards," said Michael Downey, President and CEO of Tennis Canada. "2022 saw our athletes and organization reach new heights both on and off the court. Of course, having led Team Canada to its first-ever Davis Cup title and with four ATP singles titles to his name, Félix is a well-deserving recipient in the men's category. On the women's side, Leylah has continued to showcase her skills and prove that she is one of the top talents on the WTA Tour. It's especially pleasing to see Rebecca Marino named the Most Improved Player following a storybook season for her.

"Gaby has continued to establish herself as one of the world's best doubles players, while Denis has performed exceptionally in doubles too," added Downey. Special mentions must also go to youngsters Victoria Mboko, Gabriel Diallo, and Jaden Weekes who are deserving winners in their respective categories and shining examples as to why the future of tennis in Canada is so bright. And of course, our wheelchair tennis athletes Rob Shaw and Mitch McIntyre have represented Canada tremendously, both having career years on the wheelchair tennis circuit."

For the second straight year, Montreal's Auger-Aliassime clinched the title of *Male Player of the Year* and *Male Singles Player of the Year*. After securing seven titles this season, the 22-year-old finished with a career-high ranking of world No. 6. His remarkable 2022 campaign began in Sydney, Australia, where he helped Team Canada claim the ATP Cup. In February, he earned his maiden singles title at the ABN AMRO World Tennis Tournament and added to his total later in the season, winning three consecutive events in Florence, Antwerp, and Basel. Auger-Aliassime capped off his season with a stunning performance in Malaga, Spain, winning all four of his matches to lead Team Canada presented by Sobey's to its first-ever Davis Cup by Rakuten crown. He also competed at the year-end ATP Finals in November and was part of Team World – champions at the Laver Cup in September.

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On the women's side, Laval's Fernandez took home her third *Female Player of the Year* and *Female Singles player of the Year* awards. The 20-year-old enjoyed a strong 2022 season, defending her title at the Abierto GNP Seguros and reaching the quarter-finals at Roland-Garros with impressive wins over world No. 12 Belinda Bencic and No. 23-ranked Amanda Anisimova. She was also an integral part of the Canadian Billie Jean King Cup squad that swept Latvia in April, as well as the team that played in the Finals in Glasgow, United Kingdom. In 2022, Fernandez had a combined 5-1 record in Billie Jean King Cup action, losing her only match to eventual champion Belinda Bencic. She will finish the season as world No. 39.

Doubles, Juniors, and Most Improved Players of the Year

Ottawa's Gabriela Dabrowski had another successful year on the doubles circuit. Paired up with Mexican partner Giuliana Olmos for much of the season, Dabrowski, the world No. 7, clinched the WTA 1000 title at the Mutua Madrid Open and the WTA 500-level trophy in Tokyo, Japan. She also won an event with Luisa Stefani of Brazil in Chennai, India. Dabrowski competed alongside Olmos at the year-end WTA Finals and played with teammate Fernandez during the Billie Jean King Cup Finals in November. Dabrowski has now won the *Female Doubles Player of the Year* award for the 10th time in her career.

Meanwhile, Shapovalov, the 23-year-old from Richmond Hill, Ontario, won his fourth Excellence Award as the best male doubles player in Canada. He began his season with a pair of stellar wins alongside Auger-Aliassime at the ATP Cup in Sydney. In February, Shapovalov paired up with Rohan Bopanna of India to reach the Finals in Doha, Qatar, and finished off his season on the doubles court with Vasek Pospisil, defeating Germany's Kevin Krawietz and Tim Puetz in the Davis Cup quarter-finals.

Enjoying breakout seasons in 2022 were Rebecca Marino (Vancouver, BC) and Gabriel Diallo (Montreal, QC). Marino, the 32-year-old Vancouverite, re-entered the Top 100 for the first time in 10 years following a tremendous campaign. This season, she recorded 49 wins and clinched the biggest title of her career at the \$60,000 ITF event in Arcadia, California in March. Her year-end ranking will be a well-earned, No. 64 in the world. As for Diallo, he turned heads with his impressive championship run at the National Bank Championships in Granby, Quebec in August. The 21-year-old rose from world No. 988 to No. 228 in under 12 months. He was also part of the Davis Cup-winning squad, playing in his first match at the event during the knock-out stage in September.

In juniors, Mboko (Toronto, ON) and Weekes (Lasalle, QC) had fantastic seasons. Mboko won four junior titles (one singles, three doubles), and even added a first professional title to her name, winning the Saskatoon Challenger in July. The 16-year-old star will end the year as No. 6 in the girl's rankings. Her compatriot Weekes also won four titles (one singles, three doubles) and will finish the year as No. 48 in the boy's rankings.

Wheelchair tennis awards

Additionally, Shaw, the current world No. 7 in the quad division, received the *Wheelchair Tennis Player of the Year* award. The Ontario native had another great year, qualifying for the US Open, winning 10 titles (six singles, four doubles), and competing in the NEC Wheelchair Singles Masters and the ITF Wheelchair Doubles Masters. The *Wheelchair Tennis Most Improved Player of the Year* award went to British Columbia's McIntyre, who reached a career-high ranking of No. 13 in the quad division. He won three titles (one singles, two doubles) and jumped up 20 spots in the quad rankings over the past 12 months.



About Tennis Canada

Founded in 1890, Tennis Canada is a non-profit, national sport association with a mission to lead the growth of tennis in Canada and a vision to become a world-leading tennis nation. We value teamwork, passion, integrity, innovation and excellence. Tennis Canada owns and operates the premier National Bank Open presented by Rogers WTA and ATP Tour events, four professional ATP and ITF sanctioned events and financially supports four other professional tournaments in Canada. Tennis Canada operates junior national training centres/programs in Toronto, Montreal, Vancouver and Calgary. Tennis Canada is a proud member of the International Tennis Federation, the Canadian Olympic Committee and the Canadian Paralympic Committee, and serves to administer, sponsor and select the teams for Davis Cup, Billie Jean King Cup, the Olympic and Paralympic Games and all wheelchair, junior and senior national teams. Tennis Canada invests its surplus into tennis development. For more information on Tennis Canada please visit our Web site at: www.tenniscanada.com and follow us on Facebook and Twitter.

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