



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **THE WORLD CUP OF WOMEN'S TENNIS RETURNS TO VANCOUVER THIS APRIL AS CANADA HOSTS BELGIUM AT THE PACIFIC COLISEUM**

***The Billie Jean King Cup by Gainbridge Qualifiers tie will take place April 14-15***

**Toronto, January 18, 2023** — On Wednesday, Tennis Canada announced that the World Cup of Women's Tennis, the Billie Jean King Cup by Gainbridge, will return to Vancouver, BC in 2023. The Qualifiers tie between Canada and Belgium will be held at the Pacific Coliseum on April 14 and 15 with a 2023 Finals berth on the line.

"We are all very excited to host this Qualifiers tie in Vancouver," said Heidi El Tabakh, who will return as Canada's Billie Jean King Cup team Captain for the tie having missed the 2022 Finals due to the birth of her first child. "We felt the impact of an incredible home crowd at the Pacific Coliseum during last year's tie against Latvia and we look forward to having an arena full of loud and proud Canadians this April. Their support is certain to give us an important edge in what will be a tough test against a very talented Belgium team. Our focus is entirely on reaching the 2023 Finals and the chance to compete to be crowned World Champions."

"The athletes taking part in the Billie Jean King Cup are talented and skilled. We all look forward to cheering on our fantastic women tennis players," said the Honourable Pascale St-Onge, Minister of Sport and Minister responsible for the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec. "These athletes are a tremendous source of inspiration for young people, especially girls. By supporting this competition, our government is ensuring that our youth have role models for a more active lifestyle. I'm pleased that Canada is hosting this event and I wish all the athletes the best of luck."

"We are thrilled to host the Billie Jean King Cup in Vancouver," said Lana Popham, Minister of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport. "This is a high caliber international event, and it is exciting news for sport fans. We look forward to welcoming athletes, coaches, families and visitors to our beautiful province. Go Team Canada, Go!"

Ranked No. 6 in the world, Team Canada presented by Sobeys will face Belgium (No. 14) for the first time since April 2009, when the Canadians fell to a narrow 3-2 loss at the Grenslandhallen–Ethias Arena in Hasselt, Belgium.

Player nominations for the tie against Belgium will be announced in the weeks prior to the event. A strong contingent of Canada's top women's tennis' stars are expected to take part.

This will be the second year in a row Canada has hosted a Billie Jean King Cup Qualifiers tie in Vancouver after they defeated Latvia 4-0 at the Pacific Coliseum in April 2022 with a team consisting of Leylah Annie Fernandez (Laval, QC), Vancouverite Rebecca Marino, Gabriela Dabrowski (Ottawa, ON), Carol Zhao

1 Shoreham Drive, Suite 100  
Toronto, ON / M3N 3A6

t. 416.665.9777 / 1.877.2TENNIS  
f. 416.665.9017

285 rue Gary-Carter  
Montréal, QC / H2R 2W1

t. 514.273.1515 / 1.855.TENNIS.0  
f. 514.276.0070



(Toronto, ON) and Francoise Abanda (Montreal, QC). The contest against Latvia drew the largest home attendance for any Billie Jean King Cup tie in Canada.

“It’s a privilege to host a Billie Jean King Cup tie in Vancouver for the second year running,” commented Michael Downey, President and Chief Executive Officer, Tennis Canada. “British Columbia is seeing a sharp increase in tennis participation in no small part due to the inspiration provided by our top Canadians on the court. However, there is a shortage of indoor facilities for year-round play and that is why Tennis Canada, in partnership with Tennis BC, is dedicated to making the sport more accessible in British Columbia. We’ll do this by bringing more tournaments and events to the province and through the proposed Pacific Tennis Centre in Burnaby, which will provide a world-class infrastructure and facility as well as a first home for our national wheelchair tennis program.”

“We are excited to be hosting the Billie Jean King Cup Qualifiers tie in Vancouver for a second year in a row,” commented Mayor Ken Sim of the City of Vancouver. “Our sport-hosting experience has shown the world that Vancouver is a world-class destination with the most welcoming atmosphere for all. We look forward to cheering on Team Canada in April and inspiring the next generation of tennis stars to reach for their dreams.”

### **Tickets to go on sale February 6**

Tickets for the Qualifiers tie between Canada and Belgium will go on sale on February 6. Join us on April 14 and 15 at the Pacific Coliseum in Vancouver, BC and watch Canada’s star women’s tennis players as they vie for a place in the 2023 Billie Jean King Cup by Gainbridge Finals. [Sign up now to get access to our exclusive ticketing pre-sale when it goes live.](#)

The competition gets underway on Friday, April 14 with two singles matches. On the following day, the teams will play three matches: two in singles and one in doubles.

### **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](http://www.tenniscanada.com) and follow us on Facebook and Twitter.

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## Media Contacts

Oliver Wheeler  
Manager, Communications  
[owheeler@tenniscanada.com](mailto:owheeler@tenniscanada.com)  
+1 (647) 458-4005

1 Shoreham Drive, Suite 100 t. 416.665.9777 / 1.877.2TENNIS  
Toronto, ON / M3N 3A6 f. 416.665.9017

285 rue Gary-Carter t. 514.273.1515 / 1.855.TENNIS.0  
Montréal, QC / H2R 2W1 f. 514.276.0070