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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TENNIS CANADA PARTNERS WITH BENEVA TO CONTINUE ITS COMMITMENT TO MENTAL HEALTH INITIATIVE

Bianca Andreescu, Alexis Galarneau and Rob Shaw join Mental Timeout as ambassadors as Tennis Canada builds on its mission to lead the conversation on mental health

Montreal and Toronto, May 4, 2023 - Tennis Canada announced on Thursday that Beneva, the largest mutual insurance company in Canada, will become the lead supporter of its game-changing mental health program. ***The Mental Timeout initiative supported by Beneva*** will build on Tennis Canada's mission to improve the wellbeing of all tennis players across Canada and to ensure a safe and inclusive environment for all who pick up a racquet.

As it enters its second year, the project will aim to solidify Tennis Canada's commitment as an institution towards the future of the sport and to build on the success of the program in 2022, helped by the support of three ambassadors. Bianca Andreescu, WTA world No.27 and ambassador for Mental Timeout in 2022, Canadian No.5 Alexis Galarneau and Canada's top-ranked wheelchair player Rob Shaw will all become the faces of the initiative for 2023.

"Beneva is proud to support Tennis Canada's Mental Timeout initiative," said Jean-François Chalifoux, President and CEO of Beneva. "At Beneva, we have chosen to prevent anxiety one concrete step at a time. This focus guides our social and philanthropic action across the country. We are hearing more and more about the anxiety that athletes experience. By supporting Mental Timeout, Beneva is pleased to be able to contribute to improving the well-being of all individuals in the sports community and to be an agent of change."

Mental Timeout was brought to life at the 2022 National Bank Open presented by Rogers in Toronto and Montreal with the rollout of the **Positive Court Pledge** - a written commitment to ensuring a positive environment for all athletes performing in Canada. Ticket buyers, tournament staff, volunteers, media, and players, as well as those following on social media around the world, were all invited to sign [The Positive Court Pledge](#) – a way to promote a safe environment, but also to break the taboo, and open a discussion about the importance of mental health in sports.

Tennis Canada has extended the reach of the Positive Court Pledge to Canadian tennis events across all provinces and ages, starting with the Fischer Junior Nationals events that took place in April.

It is Tennis Canada's intention to enhance the player offerings at the National Bank Open in 2023 and to provide more opportunities for fans to become involved in the project with activities on site. In 2022, Tennis Canada introduced Tennis Therapy, a suite of initiatives for players that included a player-only



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relaxation zone with weighted blankets and an essential oils bar, 1:1 access to mental health experts, meditation and yoga, and a curated “Musical Timeout” Playlist.

“The pressures of competition can be tough to manage in an individual sport, and our priority as a top-tier international tournament is to find a way to make our athletes feel less isolated in dealing with these challenges,” said Valérie Tétreault, Tournament Director of the National Bank Open in Montreal. “By providing a safe space for players to unwind, to encouraging fans to show their support in an uplifting way, we want to make positive changes so that the players can thrive.”

A long-term commitment

Tennis Canada is committed to investing in the mental health of the entire tennis ecosystem and is currently building a best-in-class, long-term mental health strategy in conjunction with the University of Ottawa, the Canadian Centre for Mental Health in Sport, Own the Podium, the Canadian Olympic Committee and the Canadian Paralympic Committee. The implementation will be launched in 2024 and focus on leadership, awareness and promotion, education, prevention and evaluation. Year one will target the players, parents and coaches within the National and Regional Training Centre system, plus national teams, and be supported by the newly hired Director of Wellness, Marie-Josée Bellemare. The following year will see the roll-out to the competitive structure and its participants, with the ultimate goal of improving the health, wellness and lifestyle of tennis players across the country.

Ambassadors for Mental Health

Bianca Andreescu: “I am thrilled to continue in my role as an ambassador for The Mental Timeout initiative supported by Beneva. Last summer, I was able to bring attention to my own struggles with mental health and to contribute positively to the conversation by sharing my own learning experiences. To see the activations on site with the Positive Court Pledge and Positivity Postcards was really uplifting and I can’t wait to be involved in the plans going forward to ensure that we keep making progress.”

Alexis Galarneau: “I’m really excited to become the first ATP player to represent the Mental Timeout project as an ambassador. The mental health conversation in tennis is so important and I really admire the commitment Tennis Canada has made to making it a priority. I can’t wait get started and to help create an environment where players feel safe and supported.”

Rob Shaw: “I was honoured to be invited to join the steering committee for Tennis Canada’s long-term mental health strategy and have been so impressed by the work we are doing in this field. To become an ambassador for Mental Timeout gives me the opportunity to be at the forefront of the mission to ensure that all athletes feel seen, heard and valued when it comes to wellbeing.”

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. Tennis Canada values 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



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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 Website at: www.tenniscanada.com and follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

About Beneva

Created by the coming together of La Capitale and SSQ Insurance, Beneva is the largest mutual insurance company in Canada with more than 3.5 million members and customers. It has more than 5,000 dedicated employees: People looking out for people. Its human approach is rooted in the mutualist values supported by its employees. With \$25,1 billion in assets, Beneva is becoming known as a key player in the Canadian insurance and financial services industry. The head office is located in Quebec City. For more information, please consult www.beneva.ca.

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