



SOBEYS STADIUM
1 Shoreham Dr, Suite 100
Toronto ON M3N 3A6
T. 416.665.9777

STADE IGA
285, rue Gary-Carter
Montréal QC H2R 2W1
T. 514.273.1234

PRESS RELEASE

UNDER EMBARGO UNTIL JUNE 27TH, 7:15 A.M.

NATIONAL BANK OPEN PRESENTED BY ROGERS TO OFFER EQUAL PRIZE MONEY TO WOMEN AND MEN STARTING IN 2027

- *Prize money to increase significantly as Tennis Canada plots pathway to equity*
- *The tournament will adopt a 12-day main draw format starting in 2025*

Montréal, June 27, 2023 – Tennis Canada and National Bank are proud to announce that the National Bank Open presented by Rogers (NBO) will reach a historic milestone by awarding the same amount of prize money to its women and men players beginning in 2027. The pathway to equal prize money will see a significant increase in earnings for the women's event in the coming years.

The Canadian tournament also revealed that it will receive an upgrade in status on both the WTA Tour and ATP Tour, expanding from seven-day main draw events to 12 days starting in 2025, with the exception of Olympic years.

"This is a really exciting day for professional tennis in Canada," said Gavin Ziv, Chief Tournament Officer at Tennis Canada. "Creating a clear path towards equal prize money at our tournament has been years in the making and it required a lot of work. Fortunately, with the help of the WTA and National Bank, that goal will become a reality in 2027 and we couldn't be more delighted."

Pathway to equity at the NBO

Tennis Canada continues to advance equity for women and girls at all levels of the tennis ecosystem in Canada and two more important steps will be taken in the next four years that will bring the National Bank Open even closer to that goal:

1. **Additional resources from WTA Ventures:** the WTA Tour announced it had signed an agreement with CVC Capital Partners to create WTA Ventures. This new entity will centralize WTA commercial rights and assets (broadcast, betting, data, sponsorship, etc.), which will bring a gradual influx of funds for the National Bank Open. Tennis Canada's plan is to use these funds to significantly reduce the prize money gap between women and men at the tournament.
2. **Support from National Bank:** National Bank, the tournament's title sponsor and Tennis Canada's longtime partner, will continue to support the federation by providing resources to help reduce the gap over the next few years and offer equal prize money to both women and men starting in 2027. National Bank is a key partner in the gender equity movement at Tennis Canada, both for its critical financial investment and as a strategic planning partner, and today's announcement highlights its commitment towards creating more opportunities for women and girls in tennis, from the professional tours to the playgrounds.

"National Bank signed a long-term partnership with Tennis Canada as the title sponsor of the NBO two years ago," said Lucie Blanchet, Executive Vice-President, Personal Banking and Client Experience at National Bank of Canada. "From the very beginning, our vision included the goal of providing equal prize money. We knew the pathway to equity would take commitment, discipline, and determination. It requires removing barriers and putting intentional measures in place. We are very proud that the hard work we put



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in with Tennis Canada and the WTA led to the announcement of this significant milestone in Canada. It will support and benefit all tennis players and fans, but more importantly, it will empower more girls to get involved in tennis because they'll know that everyone can have the same opportunities to grow equally in the sport."

In the four years preceding 2027, the prize money will increase to reduce the current difference in pay between women and men players. Therefore, the National Bank Open's WTA prize money is projected to rise from roughly 32% of the ATP prize money in a 2-week format to nearly 60% by 2025, when both events expand to 12-day main draws, 78% in 2026 and to 100% by 2027. The total WTA prize money will be close to \$10M USD beginning in 2027, a 350% increase over just four years.

"Achieving equal prize money at the NBO is a crucial milestone of Tennis Canada's plan to provide women's tennis with more commercial opportunities," said Valérie Tétreault, National Bank Open Tournament Director in Montréal. "We have invested time and resources into giving the women's game the attention and place it deserves. Our 2023 marketing campaign stating that ***the best of women's tennis is the best of women's tennis*** is a clear example of these efforts. We have long believed that players on the WTA Tour showcase some of the highest level of skill and athleticism we have ever seen, and with the support of National Bank and the WTA, we will soon be able to recognize that fact with equal prize money. We couldn't be more thrilled."

The pathway to equity at the National Bank Open is one of the main goals of Tennis Canada's new Game. Set. Equity. commitment. Unveiled in March in partnership with National Bank, the commitment is an ambitious and holistic strategy for creating sustainable change for women and girls in all areas of tennis, from high-performance and coaching to leadership and beyond. Over the next five years, Game. Set. Equity. will be delivered through five key pillars that align with the ITF's Advantage All Strategy, one being the commercial advancement of the women's game. [Game. Set. Equity. - Tennis Canada](#)

12-Day main draws starting in 2025

While the ATP announced last year that several tournaments, including the NBO, will expand to a 12-day main draw event and adopt a structure closer to the one employed by the Grand Slams, the WTA announced this morning that the Canadian event and two other tournaments (Rome and Cincinnati) will also adopt the extended format. These changes will be accompanied by an increase in the size of the player field, with the tournaments featuring 96-player main draws for women and men - up from the previous number of 56 players in each event.

"By offering equal prize money and adopting a new main 12-day draw format, the NBO will now be part of a select group of tournaments on both the Hologic WTA Tour and the ATP Tour," added Gavin Ziv. "We want to congratulate the WTA and the ATP for their vision and to thank them for their trust. We also want to recognize our employees, volunteers, valued partners, customers, and fans for their tireless work and support throughout the years. It's largely because of their continuous commitment that our tournament has become one of the best sports events in the world, and they should all share in that triumph today."

The expansion to a 12-day format is also made possible thanks to major funding of nearly \$20 million via the Government of Canada's Major Festivals and Events Support Initiative (MFESI). In Toronto, \$9.3 million came from the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario (FedDev Ontario), while in Montreal, \$10 million was received from the Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions (CED). This investment, announced on the eve of the 2022 National Bank Open, will prove crucial in



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supporting various tournament enhancements over the coming years, such as infrastructure upgrades to accommodate more fans and improvements to product offerings.

It is important to note that the National Bank Open, like the Cincinnati tournament, will revert to a 7 or 8-day main draw tournament during Olympic years, due to a busy summer calendar. Thus, Tennis Canada and the Tours decided to implement its new structure starting in 2025 to ensure three consecutive years under the new format before the next Olympic Games in 2028.

About the National Bank Open presented by Rogers

The National Bank Open presented by Rogers is a Tennis Canada owned and operated world-class tournament celebrating over 129 years of the women's event from August 4-13 at IGA Stadium in Montréal and over 140 years of the men's event from August 5-13 at Sobeys Stadium in Toronto. As a Hologic WTA 1000 and ATP Tour Masters 1000 tournament, the National Bank Open presented by Rogers will showcase the world's best players. The National Bank Open presented by Rogers is the third-oldest title in tennis, behind only Wimbledon and the US Open. For more information and tickets visit www.nationalbankopen.com.

About National Bank of Canada

With \$418 billion in assets as at April 30, 2023, National Bank of Canada, together with its subsidiaries, forms one of Canada's leading integrated financial groups. The Bank has approximately 30,000 employees in knowledge-intensive positions and has been recognized numerous times as a top employer and for its commitment to diversity. Its securities are listed on the Toronto Stock Exchange (TSX: NA). Follow the Bank's activities at nbc.ca or via social media such as [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Twitter](#).

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Media Contacts

Marc-Antoine Farly
Manager, Communications, Tennis Canada
mafarly@tenniscanada.com - 514 444-3556