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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **TENNIS CANADA EMBRACES INNOVATION AHEAD OF 2023 NATIONAL BANK OPEN PRESENTED BY ROGERS**

***Several initiatives including ground-breaking Virtual Reality tennis tournament to be launched ahead of this summer's tournament***

**June 19, 2023, Toronto** – Tennis Canada announced today its plans to reimagine the tennis experience, mapping an exciting path to the future. With several innovative activations set to launch in the lead up to the 2023 National Bank Open presented by Rogers, Tennis Canada's goal is to unlock the full potential of tennis, enabling fans to connect with the sport and the tournament on a deeper level.

The initiatives that Tennis Canada is launching with the aid of Virtual Reality will now let fans *Feel Tennis* on a whole new level, bringing unique experiences that cannot be found elsewhere. While history could be made on the court, it's also being made off the court as the National Bank Open will be one of the first tournaments in the world to embrace and implement these types of innovations.

There are four pillars of innovation that Tennis Canada will use as navigation tools: **pioneering the future of sport** as the leading federation by pushing boundaries and introducing disruptive technologies; **fostering unparalleled fan engagement** by creating an immersive and interactive environment for fans at the National Bank Open; **extending the reach of tennis** by using innovation to attract and engage new audiences and **driving sustainable growth** through the long-term strategic implementation of initiatives that lead to new sources of revenue.

"This is a monumental step for Tennis Canada as we embark on a new journey with these innovative pillars in mind," said Anne Belliveau, Tennis Canada's Senior Vice-President and Chief Revenue & Marketing Officer. "Embracing changes in technology to enhance our fan experience will allow us to grow the sport of tennis and reach new audiences, including our younger generation. Becoming one of the first tournaments to implement these innovations, our goal is to not only help pioneer the future of tennis, but to get fans engaged on a level we've never seen before."

### **Tennis Canada Virtual Reality Tournament presented by the motorola razr**

One of the activations that will coincide with the 2023 National Bank Open is the inaugural *Tennis Canada Virtual Reality Tournament presented by the motorola razr*. With the help of VR Motion Learning, this ground-breaking tournament will invite fans to immerse themselves in the adrenaline-pumping world of virtual tennis to unleash their skills against tennis players around the world.

Thousands of participants will step into the virtual arena vying for a prize pool of \$15,000. With cutting-edge VR technology, players will feel the rush of the crowd, the thrill of each powerful shot and the tension with their opponents as they battle their way to victory.



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Those that wish to participate will need to have access to the game *Tennis Esports* which is available to play on the Meta Quest 2 or Pro headset. *Tennis Esports* has been chosen as the platform for Tennis Canada's first VR tournament because they provide the most realistic virtual tennis experience available today. More than just the game to be played, *Tennis Esports* is a virtual sport that was recently launched with the vision of growing the game of tennis. They have tailored a virtual competitive concept with branding and rules specific for Tennis Canada.

Participants will have the ability to connect with fellow players, engage in friendly competition and forge new friendships in the vibrant virtual community. Share strategies, exchange tips and learn from the best to take your game to new heights.

Qualifying matches will run from June 19 to July 30, allowing participants from all over the world to register as anticipation for the National Bank Open grows. Once qualifications wrap up, the two finalists will be flown out to Toronto and Montreal to play the finals on-site at the tournaments.

Fans attending the National Bank Open in Toronto and Montreal will be able to get in on the VR action too. They will have the ability to play virtual tennis themselves on-site throughout the tournament, with daily prizes up for grabs. In Montreal, the activation will be located next to the National Bank activation. In Toronto, it will be located in the Fan Zone.

Those that are interested in learning more and how to sign up can visit the tournament's official website [here](#).

### **VR Watch at the National Bank Open**

During the tournament, fans will be able to feel the action of the National Bank Open in a new way with VR Watch. With the help of our state-of-the-art VR cameras, fans will be able to visit a booth on-site in the Fan Zone to watch a segment of a previously played tournament match in VR. Getting as close to the action as possible, fans will *Feel Tennis* like never before, as if they were right there on centre court.

Virtual reality is going to be a driving force in the future of sports broadcasting, revolutionizing the way fans will be able to watch sports from the comfort of their own homes. By immersing viewers in a fully interactive environment, VR offers an unprecedented level of engagement and realism. By embracing this game-changing technology at an early stage, Tennis Canada is setting itself up to further develop its VR platforms for the future, establishing itself as one of the leading federations in the world of tennis.

### **Fan Reward program via National Bank Open app**

This year, fans will feel connected to tennis like never before. Those attending the tournament are encouraged to create a fan profile on the official National Bank Open mobile application to experience the fully immersive onsite experience and participate in a fantastic new rewards program. Fans will be able to earn points with every purchase at the different food, beverage and boutique offerings, as well when taking part in our onsite fan activities.



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Fans will have the chance to win exclusive experiences such as a VIP experience for the finals and the grand prize, a trip for two to Spain to cheer on Team Canada at either the Billie Jean King Cup or the Davis Cup Finals.

The official National Bank Open mobile application remains the best connection to tennis with exclusive updates about the tournament, real-time notifications, behind-the-scenes access and the ability to order food and merchandise directly from their seat. A great new feature this year will allow fans to keep track of their favourite players with up-to-the-minute stats, match schedules, and player profiles.

Apple users can download the app [here](#). Android users can download the app [here](#).

### **Redesigned web experience of the National Bank Open**

Tennis Canada recently redesigned its web experience with fan experience prioritized ahead of this summer's National Bank Open. A more immersive tennis experience was created that is sleeker, faster and more intuitive for all tennis fans. Whether they're new to the sport or they're an avid fan, navigating between the women's and men's tournament is now easier than ever.

The revamped website has streamlined tennis matches and player information including order of play, live scoring and complete player profiles, and it now has a more responsive interface for mobile navigation.

Fans can easily discover daily activities happening at the National Bank Open, as well as the complete food and beverage offerings onsite. This will help them to plan a more personalized visit, allowing fans to experience the tournament in their own way.

The website can be accessed [here](#).

### **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 Montreal 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](http://www.nationalbankopen.com).

### **About Tennis Canada**

Founded in 1890, Tennis Canada is a non-profit, national sport association with a mission to lead the growth, development and promotion of tennis in Canada and a vision to be 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 and Vancouver. Tennis Canada is a proud member of the International Tennis Federation, the Canadian Olympic Committee and



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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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