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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

VENUS WILLIAMS ANNOUNCED AS KEYNOTE SPEAKER FOR 2024 UNMATCHED: GENDER EQUITY IN SPORTS CONFERENCE PRESENTED BY TENNIS CANADA AND NATIONAL BANK

- *Star names also confirmed in speaker line-up include Marie-Philip Poulin, Natalie Spooner, Carmelina Moscato, and Laura Stacey*
- *Tickets are on sale now for the conference on Wednesday, August 7*

TORONTO, July 3, 2024 — Seven-time Grand Slam champion and former World No. 1 Venus Williams will be heading to Toronto this summer as the keynote speaker of the **UNMATCHED: Gender Equity in Sports Conference** presented by Tennis Canada and National Bank. Taking place on Wednesday August 7, this year's UNMATCHED theme will focus on *Champions of Equity*, inspired by Team Canada's victory at the Billie Jean King Cup finals as well as the wave of triumphs happening across the board in a historic year for women's professional sport.

A champion on the court, with 49 WTA singles titles, 22 doubles titles and four Olympic gold medals, Williams has made an equally significant impact off the court, as a pioneer in the WTA's drive for equity, an entrepreneur and interior designer. "The fight for equity is close to my heart and will continue to be so long after my tennis career is over," said Williams. "I am excited to be part of Tennis Canada's commitment to gender equity and to drive the conversation forward by speaking at UNMATCHED and being surrounded by other athletes who share my passion for championing the leaders of tomorrow."

After making a landmark speech to the Grand Slam Committee on the eve of winning the 2005 Wimbledon final, the following year Williams wrote an impassioned letter in The Times newspaper, arguing that women should receive the same prize money as their male counterparts. In 2007, Wimbledon made the historic announcement of parity and, appropriately, Venus was the first women's champion to receive the same amount as the men's winner that year, Roger Federer.

Below is the list of confirmed speakers with additional participants to be confirmed in the coming weeks.

- Host:
 - **Hazel Mae:** Host and reporter, Blue Jays on Sportsnet, returning as host of UNMATCHED for second successive year.
- Speakers:
 - **Marie-Philip Poulin:** The first hockey player of any gender to score in four Olympic gold-medal games, including the game-winner in three, Poulin was named team captain of the PWHL Montreal team at the start of its inaugural season in 2023.



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- o **Carmelina Moscato:** Former professional soccer player turned elite coach, Moscato has 94 caps for Canada, played in three FIFA Women's World Cups, and won an Olympic bronze medal.
- o **Natalie Spooner:** After three straight medal-winning appearances with the Canadian women's Olympic hockey team, Spooner – who gave birth to her son Rory in December, 2022 - led the PWHL in points and scoring through the inaugural season, leading Toronto to the playoffs. Also named PWHL MVP and top forward.
- o **Laura Stacey:** Competed in the Winter Olympics for the Canadian women's hockey team, earning a silver medal in 2018 and a cherished gold in 2022. She was also named alternate captain for Montreal's PWHL team.

UNMATCHED is part of Tennis Canada and National Bank's Game. Set. Equity. commitment, an ambitious and holistic strategy that focuses on how the federation will advance gender equity at all levels of the tennis ecosystem over the next five years. In June 2023, Tennis Canada and National Bank proudly announced that the National Bank Open presented by Rogers (NBO) would reach an all-important milestone by awarding the same amount of prize money to its women and men players beginning in 2027, with incremental increases until then.

"In our third year of hosting UNMATCHED, we are striving to raise the bar," said Eva Havaris, Senior Vice President of Tennis Development and Partnerships, Tennis Canada. "By welcoming Venus Williams as our keynote speaker, following Billie Jean King in 2022 and Maria Sharapova in 2023, we feel our theme, *Champions of Equity*, is perfectly encapsulated. We are all about champions building champions and are asking those who purchase a table to offer at least one of their seats to a next gen leader in their organization to promote mentorship and accessibility, this way they are already taking action before they set foot in the room."

At the end of 2023, The International Tennis Federation (ITF) recognized Tennis Canada's commitment to equity by announcing it as a recipient of the Gold Advantage All award. Tennis Canada has invested a significant amount of time and resources into bringing the women's game to the next level, with the 2023 and 2024 NBO marketing campaign stating that the best of women's tennis is the best of tennis, period, being a clear example of these efforts.

Tickets for the 2024 UNMATCHED conference are on sale at [TICKETS](#), while the National Bank Open presented by Rogers in Toronto will take place from August 4-12.

Venue: Paramount Event Space | 222 Rowntree Dairy Road, Vaughan, ON, L4L 9T2
Wednesday August 7, 2024 | 11:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. EST

For more information about the conference please click [here](#).

About Tennis Canada



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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 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 LinkedIn, X, Facebook and Instagram.

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