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## **2024 IN REVIEW: CANADIAN TENNIS ENJOYS EXCEPTIONAL YEAR ON AND OFF THE COURT**

- ***First Olympic medal in 24 years and maiden WTA Finals title headline on-court success***
- ***Outstanding participation numbers, increased gender equity and accessibility efforts stand out off-court***

**[TORONTO, ON] Tuesday, December 3, 2024** – Tennis Canada held its annual year-end press conference on Tuesday to reflect on an exceptional 2024 season with prominent highlights both on and off the court.

Gavin Ziv, Chief Executive Officer; Eva Havaris, Senior Vice President of Tennis Development and Partnerships; Valerie Tetreault, Vice President of Communications, Professional Events and Tournament Director, National Bank Open presented by Rogers - Montreal; and Guillaume Marx, Vice President of High Performance, led a detailed analysis of the year, looking back on everything from the performances of Canada's top professional players to the accomplishments and progress of the organization's grassroots initiatives.

*"It has been yet another encouraging year for Canadian tennis," said Ziv. "We have seen tremendous progress in our efforts to grow the sport across the country, highlighted by the positive results of the recently released ITF Global Report. We have also enjoyed exceptional and consistent results on the court, winning a first Olympic medal in tennis in 24 years, celebrating a historic WTA Finals title and particularly strong performances at our domestic events. As my first year as Chief Executive Officer, I will reflect on 2024 fondly but, most importantly, it has provided me and the entire organization with even more motivation and optimism heading into what is set to be an exciting 2025 and beyond."*

Click [here](#) to access our infographic which summarizes the 2024 Canadian tennis season by the numbers.

### **ON-COURT SUCCESS**

Throughout the year, Canadian tennis players collected titles, accolades and made history, continuing to cement Canada's place as a world-leading tennis nation. Some of the highlights included:

#### **Gabriela Dabrowski and Félix Auger-Aliassime claim bronze at Paris 2024 Olympics**

At the Paris Olympics, Gabriela Dabrowski and Félix Auger-Aliassime ended an almost-quarter century wait by winning Canada's first Olympic medal in tennis for 24 years (Daniel Nestor and Sébastien Lareau, Sydney 2000). The pair beat Wesley Koolhof and Demi Schuurs of the Netherlands in straight sets, 6-3, 7-6(2), to secure bronze. Auger-Aliassime also finished fourth in men's singles. Both players were celebrated during on-court ceremonies at the National Bank Open presented by Rogers in Toronto and Montreal.

#### **Dabrowski and Erin Routliffe win Canada's first-ever WTA Finals title**



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To go alongside her Olympic medal, Dabrowski was also victorious at the WTA Finals, alongside doubles partner Erin Routliffe. Another outstanding year culminated in the pair beating No. 8 seeds Katerina Siniakova and Taylor Townsend in the doubles final to claim the first-ever WTA Finals title in Canadian history. Dabrowski and Routliffe ended the year ranked No. 3 and No. 2 in doubles on the WTA Tour respectively, having also won the Nottingham Open in June.

### **Team Canada reaches Billie Jean King Cup and Davis Cup Finals**

Canada's Billie Jean King Cup and Davis Cup teams finished the year among the world's elite having both qualified for their respective Finals. After winning the title in 2023, the women's team secured automatic entry to the quarter-finals, where they were beaten 2-0 by Great Britain, while the men's team secured a Qualifier win over the Republic of Korea in February before sweeping Argentina, Finland and Great Britain at the Davis Cup Group Stage in Manchester, Great Britain. In the quarter-finals, they were beaten 2-0 by Germany. Both teams will now compete in their respective Qualifiers in 2025 with the men set to host Hungary in February.

### **66 titles won on the professional tours\***

There was consistent success for Canadian players on the WTA, ATP and ITF circuits in 2024. Overall, they won 66 titles – 19 in singles, 27 in doubles and 20 in wheelchair tennis. The pick of the bunch were Denis Shapovalov's second-career ATP title at the 250-level Belgrade Open, Dabrowski and Routliffe's aforementioned WTA 250 doubles title in Nottingham, Marina Stakusic's first-career title at the WTA 125 Abierto Tampico, and Rebecca Marino's biggest-career title at the WTA 125 event in Midland, USA. Other notable performances saw Auger-Aliassime reach a Masters 1000 final at the Madrid Open and Gabriel Diallo contest his first-career ATP final at the 250-level Almaty Open in Kazakhstan.

### **Canadian champions in seven events on home soil**

There was also tremendous success for Canadians in events on home soil, with champions in singles and doubles at seven domestic Challengers. Kayla Cross claimed three titles, winning the singles event at the Saskatoon Challenger and doubles at the Edmonton and Calgary National Bank Challengers. She also made the singles final at the Tevlin Challenger in Toronto. Marino won the singles title in Calgary, while the doubles pairing of Mia Kupres and Ariana Arsenault won titles in Saskatoon and at the Granby National Bank Championships. Liam Draxl (singles and doubles) and Cleeve Harper (doubles) won titles in Edmonton, and Draxl also enjoyed singles success at Saint-Augustin-de-Desmaures.

### **Eight Canadians reach career-high rankings inside the Top 300**

Over the course of 2024, eight Canadians have reached career-high rankings inside the Top 300 on the WTA and ATP Tours:

- Gabriela Dabrowski – doubles No. 3 (July)
- Gabriel Diallo – singles No. 86 (November)
- Marina Stakusic – singles No. 116 (October)
- Ariana Arsenault – doubles No. 149 (November)
- Kayla Cross – singles No. 182, doubles No. 269 (both November)
- Mia Kupres – doubles No. 185 (November)
- Liam Draxl – singles No. 233, doubles No. 152 (both October)
- Carson Branstine – singles No. 252 (November)

### **Rob Shaw and Frederique Berube Perron fly the Canadian flag in wheelchair tennis**



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Canadian wheelchair tennis athletes excelled on the world stage in 2024. Rob Shaw is ranked No. 7 in the world in quad singles and reached the quarter-finals of the 2024 Paris Paralympic Games, losing to eventual gold medallist and world No. 2 Niels Vink. Meanwhile, 18-year-old Frederique Berube Perron became the first Canadian ever to compete in a junior wheelchair tennis Grand Slam at the US Open, reaching the girls' semi-finals in September.

### **OFF-COURT HIGHLIGHTS**

While Canada's top players were triumphing on-court, Tennis Canada set about continuing to grow the sport and its participant base across the country in 2024.

#### **Canada confirms its place as a world-leading tennis nation with positive ITF Global Report results**

The ITF Global Report, the most comprehensive study of tennis participation and performance in the world, was released in November and the results for Canadian tennis were very positive. Among the highlights, it showed that Canada is now second globally for the percentage of its population playing tennis at 12.8%; gender equity in participation has also surged, with 46% of tennis players in Canada now being women and girls, up from 29.2% in 2021; and the number of Canadian competitive junior athletes with world-rankings has also grown, with an additional 16 boys and 12 girls since 2022.

#### **Gender equity remains a continued area of focus for the organization**

In 2024, Tennis Canada continued to prioritize gender equity via its *Game. Set. Equity.* (GSE) commitment in partnership with National Bank. This year, 21 programs – spread across nine provinces and one territory - received funding via the GSE Community Tennis Grants, bringing the total amount invested in community initiatives via the program to nearly \$200,000. Beyond that, GSE delivered 45 initiatives nationwide, impacting 4,500 women and girls over the course of 2024. Also in partnership with National Bank, the UNMATCHED: Gender Equity in Sports Conference hosted 575 attendees, including over 50 “Next Gen” community leaders at no cost, who enjoyed the opportunity to hear from keynote speaker, seven-time Grand Slam champion Venus Williams.

Gender equity was also front-and-centre during the National Bank Open (NBO) in Toronto and Montreal, with the umpires' chairs on centre court in both cities painted purple, the colour of equity. On Thursday, August 8, the tournaments hosted prominent women in sport to perform a pre-match coin toss. Shortly after the NBO, Tennis Canada ran a mass marketing campaign intended to raise awareness of its GSE program. Finally, the Billie Jean King Cup Champions Tour saw the famous trophy travel across all ten provinces, celebrating the past, present and future of the sport, with GSE activities offered at all stops to provide professional development opportunities for women leaders and inspire the next generation of women athletes.

#### **Accessibility remains a challenge Tennis Canada is tackling with its partners**

The ITF Global Report highlighted a decline in the total number of publicly accessible recreational courts since 2021 (-178), which can be attributed to varying factors including aging facilities and conversions to pickleball courts. However, the number indoor courts has increased since 2021 (+68) with that number set to grow further thanks to the *Year-Round Community Tennis Courts Program presented by Rogers*, which announced six new projects in 2024, and reached 37% of its objective of building 160 new indoor courts across 30 facilities by 2029. Meanwhile, the *National Bank Play Your Court Program* announced that four municipalities would receive funding in 2024. Upon their completion, seven projects for a total of 34 revitalized courts will have been aided by the program since its launch in 2022.



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### **First Tennis Month in Canada hosted in June, led by Rogers First Set programming**

Tennis Canada launched the first-ever *Tennis Month in Canada* earlier this year with events hosted in all ten provinces and in two territories throughout June. Activities, many of which were led by *Rogers First Set* programming, were focussed on inclusivity, welcoming players from all backgrounds and abilities. With Tennis Month, 60 unique programs across Canada adopted and implemented Rogers First Set programming in 2024, while First Set workshops and training sessions were attended by 250 coaches and organizers over the course of the year. Tennis Month and Rogers First Set are just two of the many initiatives being implemented to help ensure Tennis Canada reaches its goal to get 100,000 more youth playing tennis by 2027.

### **National Bank Open enjoys another stellar year, while 2025 12-day schedule is confirmed**

The National Bank Open events in Toronto and Montreal continue to be the cornerstone of the Canadian tennis calendar. 150,729 fans attended in Toronto, a record for a WTA event in Ontario, while the Montreal event recorded its second-best attendance ever (226,839) despite challenges due to inclement weather. Meanwhile, as attention turns to a new era for the tournaments in 2025, Tennis Canada confirmed the schedule for its first-ever 12-day, 96-player main draw NBOs. The 2025 events will take place from July 26 to August 7 with a *redefined* experience set to greet attendees, on and off the court. That means more tennis stars playing more matches, over more days, with more opportunities for fans to get close to their heroes in action.

*\*Accurate as of November 29, 2024*

### **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 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](http://www.tenniscanada.com) and follow us on LinkedIn, X, Facebook and Instagram.

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