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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **GABRIELA DABROWSKI AND FÉLIX AUGER-ALIASSIME NAMED TENNIS CANADA'S 2024 PLAYERS OF THE YEAR**

***Dabrowski also named Women's Doubles Player of the Year, while Auger-Aliassime claims the Men's Singles Player of the Year award***

**[TORONTO, ON] December 10, 2024** – Tennis Canada today announced its recipients of the 2024 Tennis Canada Excellence Awards, which included multiple wins for Gabriela Dabrowski (Ottawa, ON) and Félix Auger-Aliassime (Montreal, QC), who both received the distinction of *Player of the Year*, as well as *Women's Doubles Player of the Year* and *Men's Singles Player of the Year*, respectively.

### **2024 TENNIS CANADA EXCELLENCE AWARDS**

<b>EXCELLENCE AWARD</b>	<b>RECIPIENT</b>
Women's Player of the Year	Gabriela Dabrowski
Men's Player of the Year	Félix Auger-Aliassime
Women's Singles Player of the Year	Leylah Annie Fernandez (Laval, QC)
Men's Singles Player of the Year	Félix Auger-Aliassime
Women's Doubles Player of the Year	Gabriela Dabrowski
Men's Doubles Player of the Year	Liam Draxl (Newmarket, ON)
Women's Most Improved Player	Marina Stakusic (Mississauga, ON)
Men's Most Improved Player	Gabriel Diallo (Montreal, QC)
Junior Girls' Player of the Year	Nadia Lagaev (Vaughan, ON)
Junior Boys' Player of the Year	Nicolas Arsenault (Richmond Hill, ON)
Wheelchair Tennis Player of the Year	Rob Shaw (North Bay, ON)
Wheelchair Tennis Most Improved Player	Frédérique Bérubé Perron (Montreal, QC)

"We would like to extend our heartfelt congratulations to the recipients of the 2024 Tennis Canada Excellence Awards," said Gavin Ziv, Chief Executive Officer of Tennis Canada. "Over the past few years, Canada has solidified its place as a leading tennis nation, and this would not be possible without the achievements of Canadian players on the international stage. Gaby [Dabrowski] and Félix [Auger-Aliassime] medalling at the Olympics, Gaby becoming the first Canadian to win the WTA Finals, Frédérique [Bérubé Perron] qualifying for Canada's first-ever junior wheelchair tennis Grand Slam, and the incredible accomplishments and progress of the likes of Leylah Annie [Fernandez], Marina [Stakusic], and Gabriel [Diallo] are just a few of the many examples I can name from this season. It's been a pleasure to watch our athletes reach new milestones, and I can't wait to see what 2025 has in store. Congratulations once again to this year's award winners, the impact you have all had on the visibility and growth of Canadian tennis is truly remarkable, and we hope your ongoing success continues to put racquets in people's hands."

### **HISTORIC SEASONS FOR DABROWSKI AND AUGER-ALIASSIME**

For the first time in her career, Dabrowski, the world No. 3 in doubles, takes home the *Women's Player of the Year* award in what was a season to remember. Fresh from winning the US Open in 2023, her



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maiden Grand Slam women's doubles title, the Ottawa native started her 2024 campaign with a semi-final appearance at the Australian Open alongside partner Erin Routliffe. Later in the year, the duo finished runners-up at Wimbledon and in two WTA 1000 tournaments – the Miami Open presented by Itaú and the National Bank Open presented by Rogers. They concluded their season by claiming the WTA Finals in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, marking the first time a Canadian had been crowned at the year-end competition.

The history-breaking season didn't end there, as Dabrowski teamed up with Auger-Aliassime to clinch the bronze medal in mixed doubles at the 2024 Paris Olympic Games, Canada's first Olympic tennis medal in 24 years. Auger-Aliassime went on to finish fourth in men's singles, the best result ever achieved by a Canadian in this event. On the ATP circuit, the Montrealer, who will finish his sixth season ranked inside the top 30 (No. 29), reached his first ATP 1000 final at the Mutua Madrid Open in April. It was the first time since 2020, when Milos Raonic advanced to the Cincinnati Open final, that a Canadian reached the championship match of a 1000-level event in men's singles. This is Auger-Aliassime's fourth *Men's Player of the Year* award.

Dabrowski's phenomenal season also earned her a 12<sup>th</sup> consecutive *Women's Doubles Player of the Year* award, while Auger-Aliassime adds a fourth *Men's Singles Player of the Year* award to his list of accolades.

#### **FERNANDEZ, STAKUSIC, DIALLO, AND DRAXL MAKE WAVES IN 2024**

Fernandez, Canada's top-ranked singles player on the women's side (No. 31), collects her fifth consecutive *Women's Singles Player of the Year* award. The 22-year-old reached the sixth final of her career in June at the Rothesay International in Eastbourne, Great Britain. She also had two WTA 1000 quarter-final finishes at the Qatar TotalEnergies Open and Cincinnati Open. Representing Canada at the Olympic Games, Fernandez achieved her best Olympic result to date by reaching the third round in singles.

Enjoying a breakout season and receiving her second *Women's Most Improved Player of the Year* award is world No. 126 Stakusic. After spending the majority of 2023 on the ITF World Tennis Tour, the 20-year-old opened her season qualifying for the main draw of the Cymbiotika San Diego Open, a WTA 500 event. In the summer, she qualified for her first Grand Slam main draw at Wimbledon, then went on to win a WTA 1000 first-round match at the National Bank Open. To cap off her season, Stakusic claimed her biggest career title at the WTA 125 Abierto Tampico.

Also receiving a second *Most Improved Player of the Year* award is world No. 87 Diallo. The 23-year-old Montrealer played the hero at the start of the season, winning both of his matches at the Davis Cup Qualifiers in his hometown to send Canada to the Group Stage of the Davis Cup Finals. In May, Diallo advanced to his first Grand Slam main draw at Roland-Garros, before repeating the feat at the US Open, where he turned heads by reaching the third round as a qualifier. His stellar season included a title at the Chicago Men's Challenger and a second-place finish at the ATP 250 event in Almaty, Kazakhstan.

Newmarket's Draxl, the *Men's Doubles Player of the Year*, finished the season as the highest-ranked player on the men's doubles circuit (No. 132), winning five ATP Challenger titles and one at the ITF M25 event in Edmonton, Alberta. He will head into the 2025 season on an eight-match winning streak in doubles, having won his last two tournaments in Puerto Vallarta and Manzanillo, Mexico. The 23-year-old



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also took home some hardware in singles in 2024, winning ITF M25 titles in Edmonton and Saint-Augustin-de-Desmaures, Quebec, and an M15 title in Huamantla, Mexico.

In juniors, Lagaev and Arseneault – No. 61 and No. 84 in their respective junior rankings – had impressive seasons on both the junior and professional circuits. Lagaev, 16, won two J200 titles on the juniors' side, and reached her first professional final at the ITF W15 event in Antalya, Turkey. She held a record of 5-2 when representing Canada at the junior Billie Jean King Cup. Arseneault, 17, also won two titles on the junior circuit at the J100 events in Quebec City, Quebec and Burlington, Ontario. On the men's side, he played in the main draws of the Drummondville and Edmonton National Bank Challengers, as well as in the qualifying round of the National Bank Open.

### **WHEELCHAIR TENNIS AWARDS**

Additionally, Shaw, the current world No. 7 in the quad division, received the *Wheelchair Tennis Player of the Year* award. The Ontario native enjoyed another successful year, qualifying for Grand Slam events at the Australian Open and Roland-Garros. He also reached the quarter-finals in quad singles at the 2024 Paralympic Games. Shaw finished the year with five doubles titles and two singles titles, including one at an ITF 1 series competition, which marked the biggest singles title of his career.

The *Most Improved Wheelchair Tennis Player of the Year* award went to Bérubé Perron, the 18-year-old Montrealer ranked 7<sup>th</sup> in juniors and 65<sup>th</sup> in the women's rankings, an 89-place jump from her best ranking in 2023. This season, she won three ITF titles (one singles, two doubles), the women's singles and juniors' titles at the Birmingham National Wheelchair Tennis Championships, and qualified for the junior US Open, becoming the first Canadian wheelchair player to accomplish the feat.

### **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, it financially supports 15 other professional tournaments in Canada, as well as operating more than 60 events nationally across junior, wheelchair, university and Masters tennis categories. 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 masters tennis 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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