

Zverev ends Popyrin’s title defence

Alexander Zverev rallies past Popyrin, sets semifinal date with Khachanov after raucous Toronto quarterfinal

- Zverev wins 6-7(8), 6-4, 6-3
- Match briefly disrupted by fan outburst
- Khachanov ousts Michelsen 6-4, 7-6(3)

AFP | Toronto

Alexander Zverev reached his 21st Masters 1000 semi-final on Monday by ending the Canadian title defence of Alexei Popyrin 6-7 (8/10), 6-4, 6-3 at the ATP Toronto Masters.

The final game, with Zverev serving at 5-3, was interrupted by shouts from an unruly fan who was tossed out by security. The distraction ended a run of 14 consecutive points on serve, with the seed double-faulting once he was able to continue serving.

He finished off the evening with a sharp volley winner at the net on his first match point.

Zverev completed his 40th win of the year in just over two and a half hours.

The world number three won the tournament in 2017 but had not been past the quarter-finals in Canada since.

“After losing the first set, I had to tell myself we were both playing well,” the holder of seven Masters trophies said.



Karen Khachanov returns a shot to Alex Michelsen

“I had one or two mistakes at the end of the first, but it was a high-level match. “I felt that if I kept playing well, I would get my chances -- and I did. I can’t complain about the second and third sets.” Zverev will bid for the oddly scheduled Thursday final against three-time semi-finalist Karen Khachanov, who dismissed young American Alex Michelsen 6-4, 7-6 (7/3).

“It was a very close, competitive match,” Khachanov said. “I had to come back from some tough situations.

“How you handle that mentally is important. I was glad to close it out in the second set. “I had to try and not give him the opportunity to step in and attack; that’s what I did today.” Zverev has won five of the seven matches he has played against Khachanov.

Popyrin and Zverev duelled throughout the evenly matched 71-minute opening set as it went into a tiebreaker.

Zverev was unable to convert on two winning chances, but

“After losing the first set, I had to tell myself we were both playing well. I had one or two mistakes at the end of the first, but it was a high-level match. I felt that if I kept playing well, I would get my chances -- and I did. I can’t complain about the second and third sets

ALEXANDER ZVEREV



Alexander Zverev of Germany returns a shot to Alexei Popyrin of Australia

BETTER YOU KNOW

The match was interrupted at 5-3 in the third when security removed a disruptive fan, breaking Zverev’s rhythm after he’d won 14 straight service points

rin sent a volley wide. The top seed began the final set with a 3-0 lead on his way into the tournament final four at the pre-US Open event.

Popyrin remains winless against Zverev after losing all four of their matches.

Rybakina to face teen Mboko in WTA Canadian Open semis

- Rybakina advances via Kostyuk retirement
- Mboko beat Bouzas Maneiro 6-4, 6-2

AFP | Montreal

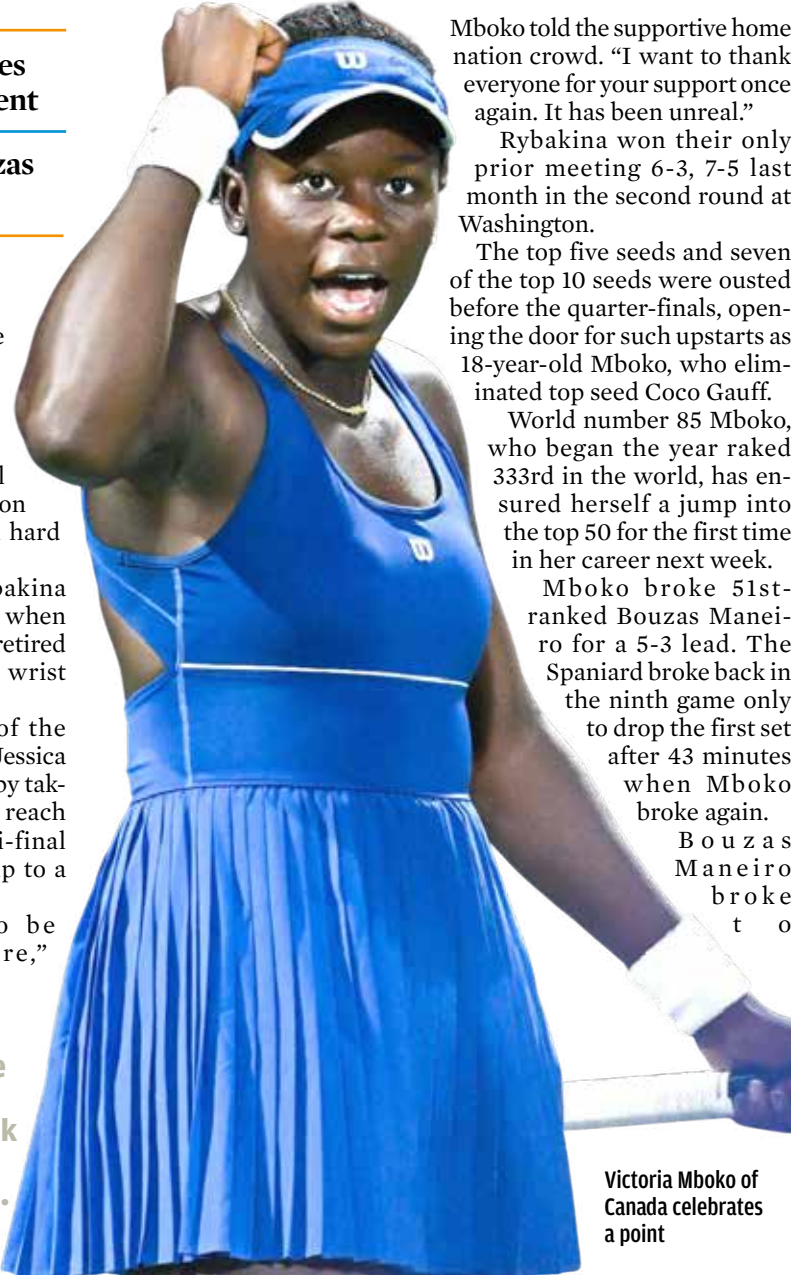
Elena Rybakina, the 2022 Wimbledon champion, and Canadian teen Victoria Mboko advanced to a WTA Canadian Open semi-final matchup with triumphs on Monday in the Montreal hard court event.

World number 12 Rybakina of Kazakhstan led 6-1, 2-1 when Ukraine’s Marta Kostyuk retired in the second set with a wrist injury.

Mboko, the shocker of the event, dispatched Spain’s Jessica Bouzas Maneiro 6-4, 6-2 by taking the final six games to reach her first WTA 1000 semi-final in pursuit of her first trip to a WTA final.

“I’m so excited to be in the semi-final here,”

“I’m so excited to be in the semi-final here. I want to thank everyone for your support once again. It has been unreal



Victoria Mboko of Canada celebrates a point

Mboko told the supportive home nation crowd. “I want to thank everyone for your support once again. It has been unreal.” Rybakina won their only prior meeting 6-3, 7-5 last month in the second round at Washington.

The top five seeds and seven of the top 10 seeds were ousted before the quarter-finals, opening the door for such upstarts as 18-year-old Mboko, who eliminated top seed Coco Gauff.

World number 85 Mboko, who began the year raked 333rd in the world, has ensured herself a jump into the top 50 for the first time in her career next week.

Mboko broke 51st-ranked Bouzas Maneiro for a 5-3 lead. The Spaniard broke back in the ninth game only to drop the first set after 43 minutes when Mboko broke again.

Bouzas Maneiro broke t o



Elena Rybakina of Kazakhstan plays a forehand against Marta Kostyuk of Ukraine

open the second set then held but Mboko never dropped a game from there, taking the match after 77 minutes when the Spaniard sent a backhand beyond the baseline.

The crowd, which chanted “it’s not over” in French after the match, has been the best part of the amazing run, Mboko said.

“I train here (in Canada) and it’s always a great opportunity to be here,” Mboko said. “My first time playing in Montreal has been an unreal experience and I couldn’t be more grateful.”

Rybakina, seeded ninth, seeks her third WTA title after Rome and Indian Wells in 2023. She has not reached a final since last year at Miami.

Rybakina broke 24th-seeded Kostyuk to open the match and led 2-1 when Kostyuk received

YOU KNOW WHAT

Mboko, ranked 333rd at the start of 2025, will crack the top 50 next week after becoming the first Canadian teen to reach the Montreal semis since Bianca Andreescu in 2019

medical treatment on her right wrist and forearm.

Kostyuk netted a backhand to surrender a break in the fifth game and Rybakina broke again to claim the first set in 37 minutes when Kostyuk sent a forehand long.

In the second set, Rybakina held twice before Kostyuk retired after 54 minutes due to her wrist issues, walking off the court in tears.

Tuesday’s quarter-final matches send four-time Grand Slam champion Naomi Osaka of Japan against Ukraine’s 10th-seeded Elina Svitolina and US sixth seed Madison Keys, this year’s Australian Open champion, against Danish 16th seed Clara Tauson.