

# Rybakina survives scare as Gauff, Osaka race into Toronto quarters

Rybakina recovers from two breaks down to defeat Liudmila Samsonova in Toronto

- Gauff cruise past Korneeva
- Osaka defeat Fernandez in straight sets
- Bencic beat Eala in 73 minutes

AFP | Toronto

World number two Elena Rybakina survived a huge scare to battle into the Canadian Open quarter-finals in Toronto while fourth-ranked Coco Gauff cruised through.

Kazakhstan's Rybakina recovered from 0-3 and two breaks down in the final set to beat Liudmila Samsonova 6-4, 4-6, 6-4 before American Gauff swept aside Russian teenage qualifier Alina Korneeva, 6-3, 6-1.

Rybakina will face four-time Grand Slam champion Naomi Osaka, who eliminated home



Elena Rybakina of Kazakhstan returns a shot to Liudmila Samsonova

hero Leylah Fernandez 6-4, 6-4. Gauff reached the last eight in Canada for the first time since 2023 and next meets 14th-ranked Swiss Belinda Bencic, who won 6-4, 6-0 in 73 minutes over 20th-ranked Alexandra Eala, a Filipina who won her

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**”**  
COCO GAUFF

Gauff, who has not dropped a set in Canada.

“Probably not the way I should be thinking but it worked today. “I’m proud of how the last three matches have gone and just knowing if I have to go the distance I’m ready, but obviously would prefer to cut it short if I can.”

Osaka broke in the seventh game of each set to advance in 82 minutes.

“It was all pretty good for me,” the 13th-ranked Osaka said. “She has a great attitude. She’s consistent and she will fight. She’s kind of like a bulldog.”

The Japanese star, who has

**10**  
consecutive matches against left-handed opponents have now been won by Belinda Bencic

never faced Rybakina, said sound groundstrokes were key.

“When I feel comfortable or at least confident in myself knowing I can run things down, I loosen up a lot,” Osaka said.

“I was catching my service toss a couple times. Hopefully in the next match I don’t do that as often.

“I need to be confident in myself, execute what I can and at the end of the day just try my best and whatever happens happens.”

Bencic connected on 64.4% of her first serves and won 72.4% of those points in a 73-minute victory, her 10th win in a row over left-handed opponents.

# Shelton sweeps Fonseca to reach Montreal quarter-final

- Fonseca struggles with wind
- Mensik advances over Van de Zandschulp
- Merida reaches career milestone
- Jodar also reaches quarter-finals

AFP | Montreal

Defending champion Ben Shelton kept a clean slate at the ATP Montreal Masters, holding off a challenge from Joao Fonseca to power 6-3, 7-6 (7/3) into the quarter-finals.

World number 10 Shelton has not dropped a set in reaching the last eight.

The 23-year-old American left-hander will play for a semi-final berth against 13th-seeded Czech Jakub Mensik, who beat Botic Van De Zandschulp 6-4, 7-5, claiming victory on a winning lob.

Van De Zandschulp served for the second set but was broken, with Mensik seizing the momentum as he won 12 of the final 14 points.

Brazilian teenager Fonseca, billed as one of the faces for the future of the sport, might have compromised his own chances when he landed badly on his ankle after missing a smash



Ben Shelton of United States plays a backhand against Zizou Bergs of Belgium

while leading 3-1, 40-30 in the second set.

The youngster was plagued by 32 unforced errors as his opponent mastered an annoying evening wind to earn the victory.

“It was tough today, not easy conditions,” Shelton said. “With the wind I struggled to find footing on a lot of balls.

“It all came down to grit. The tennis was not clean. Beating a high-quality player like that is huge for me.”

Shelton secured his ninth

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All eight Montreal quarter-finalists were born in the 2000s, creating the youngest elite eight in ATP Masters history

straight victory in Canada on the second of four match points as Fonseca hit the net with a return after leading in both sets.

Daniel Merida smothered Tallon Griekspoor 6-3, 6-1 as the Spaniard continued his rapid adjustment to hardcourt tennis in Canada.

The world number 63 joins compatriot Rafael Jodar in the Canada quarter-finals and will break through to a career-best spot inside the top 50 as a result of his fourth-round victory.

# Barcelona turn down PSG offer for Torres



Ferran Torres reacts during a match (file photo)

AFP | Barcelona

Barcelona yesterday rejected an initial offer from Paris Saint-Germain estimated at 40 million euros (\$46.2 million) for Spanish World Cup winner Ferran Torres, a source within the Catalan club told AFP.

“Negotiations are ongoing” between Barca and PSG, the same source added, confirming reports from the daily Mundo Deportivo.

According to Spanish media reports, Torres, scorer of the winning goal in the 2026 World Cup final, has agreed to join PSG and his former national team coach Luis Enrique.

Out of contract with Barca in June 2027, the 26-year-old forward remained vague about his future in recent interviews he gave during a promotional tour in the United States.

“I have a contract with

Barcelona, but in football you never know. I’m just waiting to make the right decision,” he said.

When asked if he had a “dream” destination in mind, Torres answered that he did, without revealing it: “I just want to be happy,” he replied.

Torres, signed in 2021 from Manchester City for more than 55 million euros, has been used as a centre-forward, backing up Polish striker Robert Lewandowski, since Hansi Flick took over on the Barca bench in the summer of 2024.

Often decisive as a substitute, Torres, who came through Valencia’s youth system, has scored 40 goals in 94 matches in all competitions over the last two seasons.

Torres scored Spain’s winning goal in extra time of the World Cup final against Argentina last month, giving La Roja their second world title.