

# National Bank Open

Sunday, August 3, 2025

Toronto, Ontario, Canada

## Ben Shelton

### Press Conference



B. SHELTON/F. Cobolli

6-4, 4-6, 7-6

THE MODERATOR: Ben, congratulations on the win. You obviously had a tough match out there, but what do you think made the difference to get the win?

BEN SHELTON: Yeah, I think I was really mentally tough tonight. I got to give credit to Flavio, he did a lot of things throughout the match that made it difficult. I thought he played very well. He's really fast, neutralizes a lot of things that I do well, and that's always a tough matchup for me, so just happy to come through it.

**Q. On the exchange with Flavio at the net, you mentioned after the match that he, that there was a gesture in the tiebreak. Can you just describe when that was, what type of gesture happened, and why it made you upset?**

BEN SHELTON: Yeah, we talked about it. He said it wasn't towards me. We're good. We talked about it in the locker room, so I'm not going to answer any more questions about that. There's no story, we're good, that's it, so, thanks.

**Q. Can you walk us through the third set. Obviously down 4-2, 5-4, how did you pull this one out?**

BEN SHELTON: I don't know, to be honest. It was tough. I was able to get a second chance by holding my serve and getting to the point where he had to serve it out. It's not always easy, especially on a night like this where it's windy and not as hot, not bouncing as high as it is during the day, to serve out sets in matches. Same with me in the first set. I got broke serving for the set, and then he got broke trying to serve to stay in it.

It was a neryv match and it was difficult, but yeah, I think kind of after getting through that game and, you know, being able to bring my energy level back to where I wanted it to be at, and to get a confident hold at 5-all was huge for me.

**Q. Bigger picture, you're on quite a run, what's it like, we saw your dad in the stands, what's it like sharing this with him?**

BEN SHELTON: Yeah, it's really cool. He's been there from the start with me since I was born (laughing). He knows me better than anyone, and sharing this journey together has been really, really cool. So, yeah, I enjoy it. He's at every tournament, but I enjoy every one of them.

**Q. You've had a few good weeks in between here and DC. Curious, what do you think earlier in this season has kept you from getting those same consistent results?**

BEN SHELTON: Yeah, I mean, I think it's a consistency thing. I think it's a motivation thing. There's so many good players in these tournaments that can knock you out in early rounds. Two out of the three matches that I've played so far here are against guys that were ahead of me in the head-to-head. It's difficult. It's not easy. Especially playing on surfaces that you're not as comfortable in, or places that you haven't been that much.

For me, I usually find my form and I'm the most consistent in this swing because it's a ball that I've used since I started tennis, courts and heat and humidity that I've dealt with since I started playing. I think that that level of comfortability helps me with my consistency and results in this swing.

I feel that I'm getting better and better on the other surfaces and in the other environments, and I'm getting closer to being where I want to be there as well.

**Q. A lot of players have spoken about the conditions. Can you just describe them, what it's like to us mere mortals playing with the wind swirling and that, the same for both players, but...**

BEN SHELTON: Did you say, "us mere mortals?" I'm a mere mortal, too. Yeah, like I said, I think that my game is well equipped to deal with these conditions, and it helps a lot of my weapons. But when you're not playing in these type of conditions throughout the year it can be difficult to adjust and find your range.



I said that I was tired after Wimbledon, and if it was a different situation, maybe I wouldn't have played that 500 in Washington. But in DC, it's like my second home, and there's some advantages to getting more matches in these type of conditions and feeling more and more comfortable.

The difficult part, you know, these two-week tournaments you're playing two-set matches, three-set matches, and you're getting a day off in between, which everyone talks about in the locker room now, the level of tennis suffers. The level is definitely higher in those one-week tournaments, when you're playing two out of three sets and you're playing back-to-back days and you get into a consistent rhythm of playing.

It's tough with the start and stop, and I think that a combination of those things is probably what players are talking about and what's throwing a lot of guys off.

**Q. I want to ask you about basketball. You're a great basketball fan, you admire Anthony Edwards and spent some time in Mallorca hitting some balls with Rudy Fernandez. I know how well, yeah, what is your skill level in basketball, but if you were a NBA player, would you be more like Anthony Edwards or more like Rudy Fernandez?**

BEN SHELTON: They're both great. But I would hope, well just personal preference, I'm not that athletic, but, yeah, I would like to be playing like Anthony Edwards.

Rudy had an amazing basketball career, and also one of the earlier guys from Europe to come and make a great career in the NBA, so it was really cool to get to meet him and just talk to him about the transition over from Europe. Obviously, he played with Luka in Madrid and knows him really well. So, it was kind of just cool to get to know how the basketball scene works in Europe and how those guys make it over to the NBA, and how big of a goal it is for them to get to the NBA. Yeah, Anthony Edwards is my favorite player to watch.

**Q. A quick word on Alex de Minaur. You play him next in the quarterfinals, curious your thoughts on the match, your first time playing against him, and someone who covers the court as well as he does.**

BEN SHELTON: Yeah, he's a dawg. I'm ready for it. And for people who haven't heard that saying, that's a good thing (laughing). He's very fast. He's in a great rhythm, you saw what he did in DC. He's a great front runner, and you can never count him out when he's down.

So I'm prepared for a war. I'm really excited. It's our first

matchup. We've had some practice, some competitive practice sets. He puts it on the line in practice as well, that's one of the things that I love about him. Yeah, I'm really excited. I love playing against, you know, some of the best players in the world in late stages of tournaments, so that's the only thing that you can hope for, and what I always look forward to.

He's playing amazing tennis. You guys saw it last week in DC. We saw some of the highlights of what he's done so far here. Yeah, I'm really enjoying and looking forward to that matchup.

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