The Badminton World Federation (BWF) Council will formally propose a suite of changes to enhance the sport at its Annual General Meeting (AGM) of members on Saturday 19 May.

These recommendations are being made to ensure badminton – which has enjoyed a steady rise in key areas in recent years – remains competitive in the fast-paced, cutting-edge sports-entertainment industry.

At its meeting last November, the BWF Council endorsed a package of initiatives which aims to build significant value for badminton. Some of these have already been introduced and the recent launch of the HSBC BWF World Tour is another platform to roll out more of these upgrades and enhancements. The BWF Council’s primary focus is to optimise the presentation of badminton at the highest level. BWF has a strategic, 360-degree approach that covers these elements:

- Enriching fan experience – attracting new fans
- Raising the profiles of stars and emerging talent
- Increasing the commercial value of badminton
- Strengthening badminton’s global recognition as a cutting-edge sport
- Enhancing the quality of its broadcast product
- Innovating competition rules

Under the banner Enhancing Badminton’s Future, the BWF Council has publicly outlined its rationale in detail, including the goal of building greater suspense in badminton and shortening the length of matches. It has also highlighted other considerations such as boosting badminton’s commercial value and sports presentation.

“Shorter matches will sharpen badminton as a commercial product and make it a more attractive television product. That translates into higher revenues and the resulting effect of that is higher player income,” said BWF President Poul-Erik Høyer (above).

He noted BWF cannot afford to rest on past successes – but rather needs to be bolder and to go further in innovation.

Continues on Page 4
Dear Colleagues and Friends

This year is already proving to be a busy one with many diverse things happening in the world of badminton.

A quarter of our first HSBC BWF World Tour season is gone and everyone is getting accustomed to the new tour branding and event structure. We have had a lot to do in preparation for this leap which we have taken to unify our tournaments as seamlessly as possible. It is an important step in the progressive evolution of our sport which has included improving broadcast production (also broadcasting more matches), upgrading sports presentation, introducing innovative technology and increasing badminton’s commercial value.

As we settle down into a smooth operation, I wish to thank all hosts for working closely and enthusiastically with BWF staff and other stakeholders to ensure our events are showcased to the highest standard.

On court, our players have done their part as we continue elevating our sport, treating us to some amazing matches in the seven tournaments held so far. Those who have excelled have been rewarded with more prize money – another key BWF commitment. Tournament jackpots will increase consistently as we provide greater opportunities for our athletes to earn a good living from badminton.

It is in keeping with this philosophy of strategically and steadily advancing our sport that the BWF Council will formally propose three changes to our technical regulations at the Annual General Meeting in May in Bangkok, Thailand. These enhancements are being sought to develop and modernise badminton further and secure its future in the ultra-competitive global sports industry.

My colleagues and I are confident this will prove a timely and important decision and we urge our member associations to support the following proposals:

• A new and enhanced scoring system to increase the excitement of the sport at elite level and to shorten the length of matches – based on best of 5 games to 11.
• A reduction in on-court coaching – introducing time-out options for players.
• A service-law change with a fixed height for serves to improve the quality and consistency of service judging.

Badminton must continue attracting and exciting fans globally in a cutting-edge sports-entertainment marketplace. Shorter matches will sharpen badminton as a commercial product, making it more appealing to broadcasters and other prospective corporate partners. Additionally, our players stand to benefit from these innovations which may result in less physical pressure, longer playing careers and increased earnings.

In the Badminton World Federation, we have been applauded for landmark achievements as we have taken bold steps throughout our 84 years. Now, it’s time to be even bolder; not just the BWF Council but all 189 member associations. This must be a collective journey on which we embark.

We in the BWF Council believe this is our destiny – and we must pursue it vigorously.

To our members, I say, please join us.

Poul-Erik Høyer

BWF President
England’s Jack Shephard cemented his position as the best men’s SS 6 player in the world, capturing a double at the year’s first para-badminton tournament, the Spanish Para-Badminton International, in picturesque Mallorca.

Shephard survived three match points in his World Championships final win against teammate Krysten Coombs last November, but he was impeccable in Spain, dominating Coombs at the start and holding his lead at the end of a tight second game to finish 21-15 21-19. The two team-mates then avenged their World Championships Men’s Doubles final loss to Chu Man Kai and Wong Chun Yim, beating the Hong Kong duo 21-18 21-10.

In the wheelchair events, Thailand’s Sujirat Pookkham, Korea’s Choi Jung Man and Kim Jungin (2), and Japan’s Yuma Yamazaki picked up two gold medals each. Others to win a double were Norway’s Helle Sofie Sagoy and Thailand’s Siripong Tsammarom.

Thailand’s Pookkham captured the WH 1 Women’s Singles crown beating defending champion Karin Suter-Erath (Switzerland) 21-15 21-19, before returning for the WH 1 – WH 2 Women’s Doubles with Amnouy Wetwithan. The Thais comfortably negotiated the challenge of Japan’s Ikumi Fuke and Yuma Yamazaki, 21-11 21-11.

Yamazaki however won her other two finals, the WH 2 Women’s Singles and the WH 1 – WH 2 Mixed Doubles with Osamu Nagashima.

The SU 5 Men’s Doubles final was closely fought, with Japan’s Taiyo Imai and Turkey’s Ilker Tuzcu emerging victorious over Korea’s Kim Gi Yeon/Shin Kyung Hwan, 23-25 21-10 21-19.

Tuzcu also picked up a silver in the SU 5 Men’s Singles, after he went down fighting to Singapore’s Tay Wei Ming, 21-18 21-11.

The SU 5 Women’s Singles all-Japanese final between top seed Mamiko Toyoda (3) and second seed Akiko Sugino was a neck-and-neck affair before it swung Toyoda’s way after 31 minutes, 21-16 23-21.

### PARA-BADMINTON EVENTS 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATES</th>
<th>TOURNAMENT</th>
<th>CITY</th>
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<tr>
<td>6 – 11 March</td>
<td>Spanish Para-Badminton International 2018</td>
<td>Alcudia</td>
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<td>10 – 15 April</td>
<td>1st Fazza - Dubai Para-Badminton International 2018</td>
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<td>23 – 29 April</td>
<td>Uganda Para-Badminton International 2018</td>
<td>Kampala</td>
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<td>30 April – 5 May</td>
<td>African Para-Badminton Championships 2018</td>
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<td>8 – 13 May</td>
<td>Turkish Para-Badminton International 2018</td>
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<td>19 – 24 June</td>
<td>Irish Para-Badminton International 2018</td>
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<td>23 – 29 July</td>
<td>Thailand Para-Badminton International 2018</td>
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<td>7 – 12 Aug</td>
<td>Brazil Para-Badminton International 2018</td>
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<td>25 – 30 Sept</td>
<td>Japan Para-Badminton International 2018</td>
<td>Tokyo</td>
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<td>8 – 16 Oct</td>
<td>Asian Para Games 2018</td>
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<td>16 – 21 Oct</td>
<td>Denmark Para-Badminton International 2018</td>
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<td>30 Oct – 4 Nov</td>
<td>European Para-Badminton Championships 2018</td>
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<td>6 – 11 Nov</td>
<td>Pan Am Para-Badminton Championships 2018</td>
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<td>20 – 25 Nov</td>
<td>Australia Para-Badminton International 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>25 – 29 Nov</td>
<td>Oceania Para-Badminton Championships 2018</td>
<td>Melbourne</td>
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Among the main enhancements that require the AGM’s endorsement are:

- A new and enhanced scoring system of 5 to 11.
- A reduction in on-court coaching.
- A service-law change to introduce a fixed height for serves.

Changing the scoring system – with specific focus on elite international tournaments – is an essential part of this strategic, multi-dimensional plan to innovate our competition rules.

“Our aim is to enhance and enrich our sport with wide-ranging initiatives that will realise badminton’s vast global potential; taking it to unprecedented heights in all spheres.

“We must continue attracting and exciting fans – fans who have countless, amazing choices in a competitive global sports market.

“It’s time for change: time to bring in more peaks, more excitement and increase broadcast and fan appeal,” said Høyer, urging his colleagues “to embrace change and do what is best for badminton”.

Furthermore, the BWF President reasoned the proposed innovations ultimately have the players’ interests at heart and can collectively improve their futures in diverse ways.

Presenting an infographic – Focusing on Our Players – of the positive impacts which enhanced rules could have for players, he listed less physical pressure, longer playing careers and increased earnings among the primary benefits, especially for those competing at the top level.

“As outlined in our Strategic Plan 2016-2020, players are at the centre of our decisions and a significant part of our mandate is to provide the optimal environment in which they can flourish as professionals,” he noted.

This latest step, Høyer pointed out, is in keeping with BWF’s many initiatives to continuously advance badminton, including upgrading sports presentation, improving broadcast production and introducing innovative technology.
BANGKOK BECKONS!

It was in 1976 that the Thomas Cup last visited Thailand.

In the four decades since then, badminton has evolved from a sport dominated by a few countries, to one in which the field is more competitive than ever before. It is particularly significant that, as the event in its current format – the TOTAL BWF Thomas & Uber Cup Finals – again makes its appearance in Bangkok, the host are among the title contenders in both the men’s and women’s tournaments.

Thursday 22 April saw Thailand drawn into Group B of both the Thomas and Uber Cup; while the men will battle with Indonesia, Korea and Canada, the women will face Chinese Taipei, Germany and Hong Kong. Boasting a wealth of talent that includes the likes of Tanongsak Saensomboensuk, Khosit Phetpradab, Dechapol Puavaranukroh and Kittinupong Kedren in the men’s, and Ratchanok Intanon, Nitchaon Jindapol and Sapsiree Taerattanachai in the women’s team, Thailand would want to capitalise on the rare opportunity of playing the Thomas & Uber Cup Finals on home soil and going one better than their Thomas Cup team of 1961, who lost to Indonesia in the final.

The Indonesians, meanwhile, have suffered a steady slide since their glory days of the Sixties and Seventies – the period in which they won most of their record haul of 13 Thomas Cup titles. They reached the final of the last edition in Kunshan, losing 3-2 to Denmark, and will be confident they have a more balanced team this time around. Their singles players have matured and the doubles is led by the best combination in the world – Marcus Fernaldi Gideon and Kevin Sanjaya Sukamuljo.

The team they lost to in that final – Denmark – are in Group D with Malaysia, Russia and Algeria. The Danes created history in Kunshan, becoming the first European team to win a world team championship; with much the same team in Bangkok, they have the ability and the experience to go all the way.

Continues on Page 6
Nine-time winners China, in Group A, do not quite have the formidable look that earlier Chinese teams sported. Nevertheless, with Lin Dan, Chen Long and Zhang Nan in their ranks, they have the ability to reverse recent history. China’s last title coming in 2012. India, France and Australia are their group-mates, and the Indians, with strong singles and at least one dangerous doubles pair, will be the ones everyone will be wary of taking on.

That leaves Group C – with Chinese Taipei, Japan, Germany and Hong Kong. Japan has a wealth of singles talent that has blossomed in recent months – Kento Nishimoto and Kazumasa Sakai being the notables – but a lot will depend on Kento Momota, who hasn’t quite regained the winning touch he had in 2015 and early 2016. With strong doubles pairs (Takeshi Kamura/Keigo Sonoda and Takuto Inoue/Yuki Kaneko), Japan appear to have a good enough team to repeat their 2014 success. But they will need to avoid early mishaps against Chinese Taipei and Hong Kong. Chinese Taipei have a strong all-round unit, while Hong Kong can pull of a surprise or two against higher-rated squads.

In the Uber Cup, top seeds Japan have the personnel that will be envy of all other teams: with five players ranked in the Women’s Singles top 15, and five Women’s Doubles pairs in the top 16, the East Asians are spoilt for choice. Japan are the team that could achieve what only China and Indonesia have managed – to hold both titles at the same time.

Japan’s women are in Group A with Canada, Australia and India – who are still heavily reliant on Saina Nehwal and Pusarla V Sindhu. Second seeds China, in Group D, are still in a rebuilding phase after the retirement of senior players in 2016, but their group-mates Indonesia, France and Malaysia aren’t likely to stop them making the quarter-finals. The young Chinese team will feel the weight of history – China have made every final since 1984, winning all but three. Anything less than another final will therefore be seen as a jolt for He Bingjiao, Chen Yufei, Chen Qingchen, Jia Yifan and their compatriots.

Thailand and Korea are the big names in groups B and C respectively. While Thailand have the depth to negotiate group-mates Chinese Taipei, Germany and Hong Kong to go far in the draw, Korea – with Sung Ji Hyun and Lee Jiang Mi in singles and Lee So Hee, Chang Ye Na, Shin Seung Chan, Jung Kyung Eun and Kim Hye Rin in doubles – will look to do what their mixed team did at the Sudirman Cup last year.

The last edition of the Thomas Cup in Kunshan had everything that makes the team events special – heroic performances by underdogs; upsets; nail-biting finishes. The event was marked by the quarter-final loss of China to a stunned home crowd in the Thomas Cup; the stirring triumph of Denmark by 3-2 margins in the quarter-finals, semi-finals and finals; and plucky performances by India and Korea in the Uber Cup. All indications are that the 2018 edition could lay out a similarly sumptuous feast.

TOTAL THOMAS AND UBER CUP FINALS 2018

**THOMAS CUP**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GROUP A</th>
<th>GROUP B</th>
<th>GROUP C</th>
<th>GROUP D</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 China</td>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>Chinese Taipei</td>
<td>Denmark</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 India</td>
<td>Korea</td>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>Malaysia</td>
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<td>3 France</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>Russia</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 Australia</td>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>Hong Kong</td>
<td>Germany</td>
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**UBER CUP**

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<th>GROUP A</th>
<th>GROUP B</th>
<th>GROUP C</th>
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<tr>
<td>1 Japan</td>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>Korea</td>
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<td>4 Australia</td>
<td>Hong Kong</td>
<td>Malaysia</td>
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‘H-ELO’ BADMINTON!

The Badminton World Federation (BWF) has announced ELO Water as the Official Water for its championship events and tour finales for the next four years.

This partnership encompasses all BWF Major Events – the TOTAL BWF World Championships, TOTAL BWF Thomas & Uber Cup Finals and TOTAL BWF Sudirman Cup – as well as the HSBC BWF World Tour Finals.

At a signing ceremony in Singapore on 26 March, officials highlighted the obvious rationale for ELO Water to get involved in the fastest racket sport. Badminton players depend heavily on speed, strength and endurance. Oxygen-rich ELO water – tested to produce measurable increase in tissue oxygen levels – is therefore ideal for players to maintain their peak sports performance. ELO Water is produced by HyfluxShop, the consumer arm of Hyflux Limited, a specialist in water treatment and among the top global desalination plant providers.

“It is my sincere pleasure to welcome ELO Water to the badminton family as the Official Water of BWF Major Events and the HSBC BWF World Tour Finals. This association is a perfect fit as ELO Water provides enhanced oxygen supply to muscle tissues, from which our players at all levels will benefit,” said BWF Commercial & Communications Director Owen Leed. “Badminton is an extremely demanding sport – both physically and mentally – and I am sure that ELO’s presence at our tournaments will be highly appreciated.”

Olivia Lum, Executive Chairman and Group Chief Executive Officer of Hyflux Ltd, agreed, stating: “ELO Water is honoured to be the Official Water for Badminton World Federation (BWF) Major Events and World Tour Finals for the next four years. Some sports enthusiasts have shared with us that drinking ELO Water improves their sports performance and provides faster recovery from muscle fatigue. This makes ELO Water an ideal drink for badminton players to maintain peak performance. We hope that through this sponsorship, your athletes will discover the benefits of ELO Water, not just for sports performance but also for personal health.”

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Starting with the TOTAL BWF Thomas & Uber Cup Finals (20-27 May; Bangkok, Thailand), ELO Water will have a presence at the following tournaments this season: TOTAL BWF World Championships (30 July-5 August; Nanjing, China); and the HSBC BWF World Tour Finals (12-16 December; Guangzhou, China).

BWF’S ‘GENIUS’ INTEGRITY STRATEGY

Badminton World Federation has formed a long-term integrity partnership with Genius Sports to protect its competitions against the threat of match-fixing.

The agreement will see Genius Sports provide the world-governing body with its state-of-the-art bet-monitoring system, which compares real-time odds movements from global betting markets with bespoke algorithmic models and intelligence from hundreds of betting operators, to identify and flag irregular activity in real time.

This technology, combined with Genius Sports’ team of expert integrity analysts, will monitor all elite badminton competitions, including the TOTAL BWF World Championships, TOTAL Sudirman Cup, TOTAL Thomas & Uber Cup Finals, the HSBC BWF World Tour and the BWF Tour Super 100.

Genius Sports is a global leader in sports data technology, distribution and integrity services. It is the trusted integrity partner of some of the largest leagues and federations in world sport, including Major League Baseball, the PGA Tour and the English Premier League.

“Badminton is an amazing sport that challenges the athletes both physically and mentally. We are delighted to be part of the BWF family, and we look forward to working closely with them to ensure the sport remains clean and fair,” said Genius Sports CEO and Managing Director Fredrik Neij.

“Genius Sports has built a strong reputation as a trusted partner in the world of sport and we are excited to bring their expertise and integrity monitoring solutions to the Badminton World Federation,” said BWF President Poul-Erik Høyer.

“This partnership will help to protect our tournaments from match-fixing and betting-related corruption.”

Ben Paterson (at left), Integrity Operations Director at Genius Sports, said: "Effectively combating match-fixing demands that sports are proactive. The Badminton World Federation has shown an exemplary commitment to prioritising the integrity of its competitions and we are delighted to have formed this long-term partnership, using our market-leading technology to provide round-the-clock protection.”
MEMORIES OF JUNG JAE SUNG

The badminton world was stunned by the sudden death of former Korean Men’s Doubles star, Jung Jae Sung (at left), on Friday 9 March.

The London 2012 bronze medallist, known for his big hitting and tireless energy, died of a heart attack at age 35.

One of the mainstays of the powerful Korean team of the 2000s, Jung’s most successful years were with Lee Yong Dae in Men’s Doubles – Lee’s youthful energy and sharpness at the net combined spectacularly with Jung’s heavy smashes from the back, making them one of the best pairs in the world. The Korean pair won 18 BWF World Superseries crowns together – including two All England titles (2008 and 2012).

At the BWF World Championships they were destined to finish second-best twice – in 2007 and 2009. An Olympic bronze, two Asian Games bronze medals and the Asian Championships gold in 2008 were among their best performances. Jung announced his retirement from international badminton after the London 2012 Olympic Games.

The Badminton World Federation extends condolences to his family, friends and the Badminton Korea Association.

FITNESS, EQUIPMENT IN FOCUS AT WORLD CONGRESS

The international federations of three of the world’s most popular racket sports – badminton, table tennis and tennis – are collaborating on the 6th World Congress of Racket Sport Science to be held during the TOTAL BWF Thomas & Uber Cup Finals 2018 in Bangkok, Thailand in May.

Various aspects of fitness, performance and racket design will be among the topics discussed at the meeting, which is organised by the Badminton World Federation, the International Tennis Federation, the Badminton Association of Thailand and Mahidol University, and supported by the International Tennis Federation, the Badminton World Federation, the International Table Tennis Federation, the Badminton Association of Thailand, the Mahidol University, and the Badminton Korea Association. The event is being held on 25-26 May at Arnoma Grand Hotel.

The congress will concentrate on factors which substantially influence the results of competitive racket sports and concern scientific fields such as coaching, biomechanics, ergonomics, fitness testing, injuries and their prevention, nutrition, physiology, rehabilitation and training. The theme of the congress is: ‘Racket Sports from a Multi-Disciplinary Perspective’.

The following aspects will be explored during the congress: Biomechanics; Children in Racket Sports; Coaching and Teaching; Doping; Fitness Testing; Management; Match Analysis; Medical Aspects of Racket Sports; Nutrition; Physiology; Players’ Adaptation to Rule Changes; Psychology; Racket Design and Performance; Social Science Aspects; Stress; Training; Women in Racket Sports; Sociology/Economics/Development; Training at School Level; Age Issues Related to Racket Sports; Equipment Design; Skills and Skill Analysis in Racket Sports.

Scientists, coaches, medical doctors, psychologists, physiotherapists and those interested in racket-sports research are welcome to attend.

The co-chairs of the Scientific Committee for the congress are Miran Kondric (Faculty of Sport, University of Ljubjana) of the International Table Tennis Federation, and David Cabello (Faculty of Sports Science, University of Granada) of the Badminton World Federation, while the guests of honour will be BWF President Poul-Erik Høyer and President of Badminton Association of Thailand, Khunying Patama Leeswadtrakul.

The submission deadline for abstracts is 10 April 2018, while the submission deadline for the revised abstract is 15 April 2018. Meanwhile, the registration deadline is 30 April 2018.


‘BADMINTON BIRTHPLACE’ HOSTS SCHOOLS CHAMPIONSHIP

Students from 13 countries will compete in the International School Sport Federation’s World Schools Championship Badminton 2018 to be held 19-25 April in Pune, India.

Contingents from Bulgaria, Belgium, Brazil, China, Chinese Taipei, Croatia, Czech Republic, England, France, Georgia, Italy, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, besides hosts India, are participating in the six-day event.

The event is set up as a team competition with two categories: ‘Selected’ and ‘Schools’ teams. While each Schools team comprises students from the same school, the ‘Selected’ teams comprise students from the same country.

This is the first time India is hosting an ISF badminton event. Organised by the School Games Federation of India with the help of the state government of Maharashtra and under the aegis of ISF, the event is particularly significant as the host city is considered the probable birthplace of badminton.

The six-day event includes a cultural festival and a ‘Friendship Mixed Doubles’ competition that is in keeping with the theme of promoting cross-cultural understanding.

In 2014, Badminton World Federation and ISF signed a Memorandum of Understanding to develop youth badminton, with BWF’s schools programme Shuttle Time being the primary platform to drive this initiative.

Other areas covered in the MOU were the development and implementation of a Technical Officials’ Education Programme; the promotion of the BWF-ISF alliance and related activities to both memberships and the public; and the designation of high-profile badminton players as ISF badminton ambassadors.

Badminton has been part of the World Schools Championships since 1996.
RESEARCH FOCUS: INJURY PREVENTION

Given the physical intensity of high-level badminton which makes players vulnerable to various injuries, projects on injury prevention have been prioritised for 2017-2018 BWF sport-science research grants.

Five of ten research proposals selected relate to injury prevention, strengthening, and closely-related topics:

Fiddy Davis, researcher at the School of Allied Sciences, Manipal University (India), is examining the effectiveness of a comprehensive badminton-specific injury prevention programme in reducing the risk of overuse and acute injuries.

Carla van der Merwe of Massey University (New Zealand) is focusing on the function and adaptation of the foot muscles while playing court sports that require sudden acceleration. The study will examine questions relating to training with shoes with minimal support and cushioning, or even training barefoot. These questions include whether training with minimalist/barefoot lead to strengthening of the foot muscles/upper limbs; change in the mechanics of the lower limbs; alterations in injury mechanisms; and change in performance of badminton players.

Dr. Olivier Girard and Dr Mohammed Ihsan of Aspetar Orthopaedic and Sports Medicine Hospital, Qatar, are looking at ‘The Effect of Ischemic Pre-conditioning on Recovery from Fatigue and Plantar Loading Characteristics following Simulated Match Play’, Ischemic pre-conditioning (IPC) is an experimental technique for reducing loss of blood supply, and thus oxygen, to tissues of many types. The study aims to determine the usefulness of IPC as a conditioning tool to facilitate recovery in badminton players.

Another study from the same institution (Dr. Olivier Girard and Dr. Jaime Fernandez-Fernandez) proposes to examine changes in explosive strength, and injury effects after badminton match play.

A collaborative project between Badminton Wales and Cardiff Metropolitan University will look at the effectiveness of strength and conditioning for young badminton players. With increasingly younger generations of players preparing for professional badminton, there is a need for research-based information on the importance of strength training to prevent injury and to maximise performance. The findings of this study are expected to help provide guidance for coaches and players about the use of strength and conditioning in junior players.

COMBATTING MYOPIA WITH BADMINTON

Kazan in Russia hosted a training course in February on ‘Badminton and Vision’, as part of a broader objective of using badminton to combat myopia in school-age children.

The course (14-17 February) was run by the National Badminton Federation of Russia in partnership with Badminton World Federation on the sidelines of the 2018 European Men’s & Women’s Team Championships. The course was aimed at those delivering Shuttle Time lessons, physical-education teachers at general schools, or people with experience in coaching children and adolescents. More than 30 participants from 12 countries attended the course.

The programme’s goal is to reduce the number of school-age children globally who suffer from, or were at risk of, myopic eye disease. This is to be achieved through implementation of grassroots badminton programmes, focused on getting children and adolescent groups systematically engaged in scientifically-developed badminton activities designed to reduce and prevent myopic disease.

The course was delivered by the National Badminton Federation of Russia together with the Helmholtz Moscow Research Institute of Eye Diseases, and qualified badminton coaches. The English course was a mixture of theoretical and practical study, followed by the detailed curriculum. There was no registration fee for course participants, and all necessary materials were provided.

BWF’s Chair of Development David Cabello, who was in Kazan, is confident the course will have far-reaching impact in battling eye diseases.

“Badminton has a unique potential for development as a grassroots sport, and involving people of all ages in badminton has an extremely important social impact. ‘Badminton and Vision’ project aims to contribute to the control of progressive myopia - a disease that has grown so drastically in our contemporary societies.”
‘BADMINTON FOR ALL’ REACHES THOUSANDS

More than 60,500 youth in Africa, including nearly 9,000 with disabilities, were introduced to badminton during last year’s Badminton for All project delivered by the world-governing body.

This Badminton World Federation initiative – funded by the Republic of Korea through the United Nations – was supported by the Badminton Confederation of Africa and benefited nine developing countries. There were several objectives, including engaging over 30,000 children, some with disability, in a ten-week period of safe, fun and inclusive badminton; empowering some 1,500 physical education specialists, class teachers and community coaches with the skills and knowledge to teach badminton; providing Shuttle Time tutors with disability awareness training; establishing mechanisms to ensure sustainability of projects beyond the 12-month funding cycle; and providing free badminton teaching materials to countries.

Each nation received branded school kits containing 20 rackets, two dozen shuttlecocks, two nets and a UN/Shuttle Time-branded bag. The participating nations were: Benin, Ivory Coast and Togo (Cluster 1); Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda (Cluster 2) and Lesotho, Zambia and Zimbabwe (Cluster 3).

In the first phase of delivery, BWF worked with all nine national associations to develop a National Implementation Plan for the project. Each association was asked to provide a national Shuttle Time co-ordinator, five people to be trained as Shuttle Time tutors, and to identify regions where teacher-training courses would be delivered.

In the second phase, BWF delivered three tutor-training courses, one in each cluster region. A total of 45 tutors attended the course and they were taught the Shuttle Time curriculum, tutoring adult learners, and about disability sport.

In the next phase, the national associations delivered a series of one-day Shuttle Time courses for groups of school teachers. More than a thousand teachers were trained to deal with a range of abilities in their pupils and about disability sport.

In the fourth phase, teachers who attended the courses began to deliver badminton to their schools. The sessions were inclusive and included pupils with physical and intellectual disabilities.

The fifth phase involved getting reports from the in-country activities. Some impressive statistics emerged – each country was able to engage thousands of school children – and with 45 trained tutors and 1,111 teachers, the groundwork has been laid for the future development of badminton in these regions. BWF will continue assisting the nine countries to ensure the legacy benefits of this project.