Quarter 2 of 2021 is set to be a defining one for the badminton community.
There is a sense of excitement in the air.

After 12 months of COVID-19 frustration, the coming months will see some important happenings in the badminton world.

The Olympic qualifying period will draw to a close with the conclusion of the Singapore Open. I wish all players still vying for crucial ranking points the best of luck.

It has not been an easy journey but I thank the BWF team, our Continental Confederations, all our Member Hosts, and of course the players, for making the staging of these key qualifying tournaments possible.

In May, we also have our last qualification tournament for the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games – the Spanish Para Badminton International 2021.

I would like to congratulate all players for being part of this very special qualifying process leading up to badminton's debut at the Paralympic Games in Tokyo.

It was so good seeing a number of you back on court in Dubai last month.

May also sees our 82nd BWF AGM, with a number of important proposals on the agenda. We have our BWF Council Elections, which this time uniquely falls in an Olympic year due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the postponement of the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

There is also a proposal from Indonesian Badminton Association and Badminton Association of Maldives, seconded by Badminton Asia, Badminton Korea Association and Chinese Taipei Badminton Association, to amend the Laws of Badminton relating to the scoring system.

This topic has been something I have been closely attached to and is part of my vision to make badminton more exciting as we look to increase the entertainment value for stakeholders and fans.

Continued on Page 3
The last time this was tabled in 2018, it did resonate with a significant section of our Membership. Unfortunately, it did not get the required two-thirds majority support. We concede the timing was not right back then, but I’m pleased to see this being driven by the Membership once more.

It’s important to note that this is only proposed to be introduced after the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games, and I’m confident this is a more favourable time to effect this change.

In advance of the AGM, I ask everyone within the badminton community – Member Associations, players, coaches and team management – to familiarise yourselves with the relevant scoring system information available on the BWF website and to consult internally within your Federations ahead of the 22 May vote.

Finally, a quick note to check out the BWF Annual Report 2020. The difficulties of the last year have been well documented, but there were also success points across a number of BWF-led activities, and we’d like to thank everyone within the badminton community for their cooperation, collaboration and support in helping us keep badminton relevant during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Stay safe, and I look forward to seeing many of you online at our second virtual AGM on 22 May 2021.

Poul-Erik Høyer
The 82nd BWF Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be held on 22 May, the third virtual one after last year’s AGM and January’s Extraordinary General Meeting.

A number of items are on the agenda, including the scheduled BWF Council Elections.

There is just one nominee each for three positions on the Executive Board: BWF President – Poul-Erik Høyer (Denmark); BWF Deputy President – Khunying Patama Leeswadtrakul (Thailand); BWF Vice President-Para Badminton – Paul Kurzo (Switzerland).

The incumbents for those positions stand to be re-elected unopposed, signalling continuity at the top of the BWF leadership.

There are a further 30 candidates for the remaining 20 Council positions. Elections will be conducted virtually using electronic voting systems.

All candidates have been put forward and declared eligible following a thorough vetting process by the new BWF Vetting Panel.

The Membership will also vote at the AGM to confirm the inaugural members of the BWF Vetting Panel, as well as BWF Independent Hearing Panel (IHP) and the President and Deputy President of the IHP.

The Council was delegated by the AGM 2020 to establish these inaugural panels.
Proposed scoring system change

One of the key topics that will be voted on by the Membership is the proposal from Indonesian Badminton Association and Badminton Association of Maldives, seconded by Badminton Asia, Badminton Korea Association and Chinese Taipei Badminton Association, to amend the Laws of Badminton relating to the Scoring System.

BWF Council decided to express its support for this proposal as it aligns with the objectives of the BWF Strategic Plan 2020-2024 to:

▸ Include new and innovative elements of the game to ensure this continues to evolve over time.
▸ Excite, engage and enhance our global fan base through inspirational performances at world-class events.

What you need to know?

▸ Proposal submitted by Badminton Indonesia and Badminton Maldives, seconded by Badminton Asia, Badminton Korea Association and Chinese Taipei Badminton Association.
▸ Based on 5 games to 11.
▸ Related changes regarding Change of Ends and Continuous Play also motioned.
▸ Not to be introduced until after the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Background of the 5x11 system

The proposal for a new scoring system was first articulated by the BWF Council in March 2014 as it was felt that matches were getting longer, while the shuttle was in play for much shorter periods than earlier.

At the Council Session in Montego Bay, Jamaica in November 2017, the proposal to implement the 5x11 system was discussed, presenting feedback from broadcasters.

The proposal was put to vote at the BWF AGM in May 2018 in Bangkok, and while it received 129 votes in favour and 123 votes against, it was not passed as it required a two-thirds majority of 168.

Action for BWF AGM 2021

BWF encourages all stakeholder groups within the badminton community - Member Associations, players, coaches and team management - to review the relevant material available and consult internally within their Federations.

More information will be circulated in the build up to the AGM on 22 May 2021.
Benefits of Proposed Scoring System Change

1. Upgrading our sport
   - Making badminton more exciting and engaging

   - Increase the commercial value of our sport
   - Enrich our fan experience
   - Enhance the quality of our broadcast product
   - Upgrade the presentation of the elite badminton
   - Strengthen our profile as a cutting-edge sport
   - Innovate our competition rules
   - Raise the profile of our stars and emerging talent
   - $ Upgrading our sport

2. Challenges
   - Current System
     - Longer matches
     - Longer breaks between points
     - Greater physical and mental stress on players leads to more injuries

3. Solutions
   - Enhanced scoring system
   - More efficient court management

4. Proposed scoring system
   - Best of 5 to 11
   - Current setting rules from 10-10 capped at 15
   - Changing sides in the 5th at 6

4. Strategic Goals
   - The proposed changes align with the BWF Strategic Plan 2020-2024:
     - Include new and innovative elements of the game to ensure this continues to evolve over time.
     - Excite, engage and enhance our global fan base through inspirational performances at world-class events.

www.bwfbadminton.com
Focusing on our players

This infographic illustrates the potential benefits the scoring system change could have for athletes and badminton’s overall development. This aligns with the objectives of the BWF Strategic Plan 2020-2024 to include new and innovative elements of the game and to excite, engage and enhance our global fan base.

Enhanced Rules

- Higher Player Income
- Greater Commercial Value
- More Fan Engagement
- Increased Viewership / Higher Revenues
- Better TV Product
- Controlling Match Length
- Longer Playing Career
- Less Physical Pressure
- Shorter Matches
- Higher Lifetime Income
- Lower Injury Risk

www.bwfbadminton.com
Equation gets harder

Saina Nehwal is on tricky ground as she seeks to qualify for her fourth Olympics.

Nehwal, currently No.22 in the Race to Tokyo, must finish the qualifying period within the top 16 if she has to qualify behind compatriot Pusarla V. Sindhu, who is comfortable at No.7.

The YONEX-SUNRISE India Open 2021 could have presented Nehwal a good chance to earn valuable points, but with its cancellation, she will find it much harder to qualify.

She will also have to dig deep to discover her best form, for her last quarterfinal at a HSBC BWF World Tour Super 500 or above tournament was at the PERODUA Malaysia Masters in January 2020.

Another well-known name and Nehwal’s peer, Sung Ji Hyun, is in a tight race, but stands a better chance. At No.16, she is in a dead heat with compatriot Kim Ga Eun for Korea’s second spot behind An Se Young (No.8).

Kidambi Srikanth, a Rio 2016 quarterfinalist and at No.20 in the Race to Tokyo second behind Sai Praneeth (No.13), has some catching up to do if he has to make the top 16.

Men’s singles is set to see a number of first-time qualifiers from the top 10 – Kento Momota, Anders Antonsen, Anthony Sinisuka Ginting, Jonatan Christie, recent All England champion Lee Zii Jia and Wang Tzu Wei.

In doubles, two pairs from a National Olympic Committee can qualify only if both are in the top eight.

Rio 2016 silver medallists Goh V Shem and Tan Wee Kiong are nearly 10,000 points adrift of compatriots Aaron Chia/Soh Wooi Yik, while another Malaysian pair, Dng Yew Sin/Tee Ee Yi, are close behind. The seasoned Malaysians need a lot of luck coming their way to make it from this position.

Among the veterans likely to miss out are Ko Sung Hyun/Shin Baek Cheol and Lee Yong Dae/Kim Gi Jung, who are some way down the rankings.

The top 10 of women’s doubles is dominated by Japan, Korea and China, and as a consequence, even their third or fourth pairs ranked as high as No.9 (Jung Kyung Eun/Baeck Ha Na) or No.10 (Nami Matsuyama/Chiharu Shida) are likely to miss out.

In mixed doubles, Rio 2016 silver medallists Chan Peng Soon/Goh Liu Ying (No.7) are ahead of two Malaysian pairs, with Goh Soon Huat/ Lai Shevon Jenise in their rearview mirror at No.11 with Tan Kian Meng/Lai Pei Jing two places further away.

The top two Chinese pairs in mixed doubles (Zheng Si Wei/ Huang Ya Qiong and Wang yi Lyu/ Huang Dong Ping) have been so dominant they seem like veterans but Tokyo 2020 will be their first Olympics.

Double Qualifiers

A few are possible double-qualifiers as they are well-placed in the Race to Tokyo: Yuta Watanabe, Seo Seung Jae, Marcus Ellis, Lauren Smith, Robin Tabeling, Selena Piek, Mark Lamsfuss, Jason Anthony Ho-Shue and Anuluwapo Juwon Opeyori.

Remaining Qualifiers

MAY
6-9: 56 Portuguese International Championships
25-30: CELCOM AXIATA Malaysia Open

JUNE
1-6: Singapore Open

www.bwfbadminton.com
The Sheikh Hamdan bin Rashid Al Maktoum 3rd Dubai Para Badminton International 2021 marked the return to competition for Para badminton athletes after more than a year.

When six days (30 March-4 April) of competition wrapped up, the players celebrated, coaches assessed performances and organisers breathed a sigh of relief.

Organisers the Dubai Club for People with Determination worked closely with sponsors and supporting bodies to put in place the necessary social distancing and safety rules that allowed players to feel comfortable and safe, and to focus on competition.

Hospitals and medical personnel were identified not just for regular on-court emergencies but also for COVID-19 testing procedures, while accommodation at the Al-Bustan Residencies, about two kilometres from tournament venue, provided the comfort and convenience to put all at ease.

Hotel management and staff outdid themselves in offering hospitality and a dining experience that catered to all requirements.

The Shahab Al Ali Stadium, which has hosted this event several times, was a venue that usually allowed freedom of movement. This time, the organisers strictly enforced movement through entry and exit access-controlled pathways and strategically placed sanitiser machines and rule signages.

The Dubai Club for People with Determination used its own fleet of mini vans, accessible to wheelchair users, and hired drivers tasked with limiting passengers for each trip in accordance with distanced seating arrangements.

While missing the conventional powerhouses, there were enough big names to light up the arena – Dheva Anrimusthi, Manasi Girishchandra Joshi, Pramod Bhagat, Leani Ratri Oktila, Lucas Mazur, Karin Suter-Erath.

A heightened level of play was also evident among the usually second string lineup, with Oksana Kozyna, Noor Azwan Noorland and Muhammad Ikhwan Ramly surprising even themselves with their wins.

Overall, officials and teams were satisfied with how things were run, and many are now looking forward to the Spanish Para Badminton International 2021 in Cartagena in May.

Back safe and sound

“Things are well organised and everything seems in place according to (safety) regulations. From transport to accommodation, the food and playing conditions.”

– Cynthia Mathez (Switzerland)

“After one year and one month, I feel lucky to be back. Not everyone could come because of travel restrictions. The atmosphere is perfect, the arena, the shuttles, everything.”

– Bartlomiej Mroz (Poland)
Dedicated towards making Para badminton an integral part of badminton’s overall growth, BWF continues to undertake exercises to reflect its commitment to the sport.

Following are milestones recorded in recent months:

**BWF Female Participation Grant**

Since 2017, scholarships have been provided to over 70 female athletes from more than 20 countries under the programme.

The Female Participation Grant 2021 closed on 26 March with 42 applications from 22 countries. A total of 29 scholarships were awarded to 20 countries across four Continental Confederations.

The female athletes will participate at upcoming Para badminton tournaments in Spain, Peru, Uganda and Bahrain.

**History Made**

In Dubai, three new countries – Nepal, Kuwait and Maldives – made their international debut at a Para badminton competition.

“*For the last month, I was so excited about coming here and playing my first international championships. I’m proud to represent Nepal,*” said 18-year-old Prakash Adhikari, who now holds the distinction of being the first Para badminton shuttler from his nation to compete internationally.

“I used to play with able-bodied players, now I want to play (Para badminton) professionally. *My dream is to play at the Paralympics and win for my country one day.*

Adhikari, who competed in Standing Lower (SL4 men’s singles and SL3-SL4 men’s doubles), was joined by Kuwaitis Rashed Al Qallaf (SU5) and Ali Fathallah (WH1) and Maldivians Ahmed Fayaz (SL4) and Abdul Latheef Mohamed (SL3) in making his international bow.

Nepal previously participated in the AGITOS Para Badminton Technical Workshop in Bangalore, India in December 2018 as did Kuwait in February 2019 in the UAE.

**BWF Wheelchair Donation**

Through the project, five countries received sport wheelchairs as part of the initiatives to develop Para badminton. UAE received two wheelchairs while Yemen, India, Kuwait and Syria one each.

Players from Yemen, UAE, India and Kuwait used their new equipment at the recent tournament in Dubai.

**Bahrain Arrives**

Bahrain Badminton and Squash Federation launched its national Para badminton development programme on 6 April at Emna Mall.

Its president Dr. Sawas Taqawi, said the programme is to prepare its players for the 2021 Asian Youth Para Games, which Bahrain will host in November.
Enabling equal opportunities for Para badminton players is a cause dear to badminton coach and Shuttle Time Tutor Paniz Yousefi Mojtahedi, one of the IOC Young Leaders.

Mojtahedi is the founder of ‘Parallel Play’, which she started in Uppsala, Sweden, in August 2019 to support the social inclusion of people with disability. Parallel Play tries to make badminton accessible by creating training groups for people with intellectual and physical impairments within existing clubs in Sweden. This work is in line with the Young Leaders programme, which IOC started in 2016 as part of its commitment to support young people through sport by empowering them to become social change-makers.

“Parallel Play is all about playing badminton and having fun, no matter what kind of impairment you have,” says Mojtahedi. “So it doesn’t matter if you have a physical or a mental impairment, it’s only about you and how you are on court.”

Parallel Play has reached over 600 people with disability and has started Para badminton in six badminton clubs. It has also worked closely with Badminton Sweden and the Swedish Parasport Federation, helping to add badminton as a sport at the ‘Start Your Impossible’ camps, which are designed to introduce people with disability to various sports.

“We want you to be able to go to a club and say ‘I want to start training’ and to be told ‘of course you can, we have a training group for you’.”

– Paniz Yousefi Mojtahedi
Despite the challenges presented by COVID-19, BWF’s Development department, in conjunction with Member partners, successfully conducted a few initiatives in Quarter 1 of 2021.

**AirBadminton**
- El Salvador Badminton Federation organised a competition for 29 participants as part of its official AirBadminton launch.
- With indoor sports arenas still not open, Costa Rica Badminton Association held an AirBadminton festival on grass to introduce and promote the game nationally.
- A number of clubs ran AirBadminton events across Australia on different surfaces.

**Tunisia Development Programmes**
- A six-day Coach Education Level 1 course in Arabic by Badminton Confederation of Africa Development Officer Ahmad Reda alongside BWF Dubai Badminton Development Manager Jaffer Ebrahim was held in March for 15 participants. A Para badminton workshop then introduced them to the sport’s six classes. A two-day Shuttle Time Tutor Course capped the experience, with the newly-certified tutors now ready to expand the programme to cities across Tunisia.
- Tunisia welcomed AirBadminton with a workshop and competition for 24 participants in Tozeur. Ong El Jamel, famous for being the filming location of Star Wars, provided a stunning backdrop. It also served as a test event for an international AirBadminton competition planned for November 2021.
- Graced by government officials, including the Minister of Education and Governor of Tozeur, the Tunisia Annual Badminton Development Conference highlighted recent achievements by Tunisia Badminton Federation and explored opportunities to grow the sport.
- Reda, alongside several newly-certified tutors, led an inclusive AirBadminton session in Sfax with able-bodied and Para players. The team then visited the Higher Institute of Sport and Physical Education of Sfax to discuss Shuttle Time implementation at universities.

**Virtual Graduation**
- BWF held its first “virtual graduation activities” for the pioneer groups of the groundbreaking Coach Education Level 3 course. The first two pilots were run in Malaysia and Denmark and the 20 graduates explored high-level topics in coaching, followed by a long-term project under the supervision of course tutors.
- The third and final pilot was held in Peru in 2019, with a group of candidates now nearing graduation.

**International Day of Sports for Development and Peace**
- Two programmes were conducted in partnership with Special Olympics UAE, UAE Table Tennis and Badminton Association and Peace and Sport in Dubai to mark the day on 6 April.
- The first was an AirBadminton session held next to the iconic Burj Khalifa, featuring a session in which two Para badminton players participated alongside able-bodied peers.
- The second, a webinar titled ‘Inclusive Badminton For All’ and addressed by BWF Senior Development Manager John Shearer, had 83 participants. Shearer’s presentation focused on BWF’s initiatives in fostering the inclusion of various communities – such as those with physical or intellectual disabilities, or from disadvantaged or displaced backgrounds.
With the aim of reaching more Member Associations (MAs), BWF launched two popular online courses – National Administrators’ Course and Event Management Course – in French and Spanish on 16 April.

Because of their importance in helping the badminton community remain involved and engaged during the COVID-19 pandemic, these Membership Capacity Building Courses were made available in the languages spoken by many Member nations, expanding their reach to more countries, especially those who are working at the grassroots level.

During the initial periods of lockdown across the globe in 2020, the online resources proved extremely popular, with badminton enthusiasts taking advantage of this “down time” to improve their knowledge and skills around the sport.

In fact, online activity hit an all-time high in 2020, with Event Management registrations almost double the previous year and National Administrators’ nearly triple.

The online courses provide a solid foundation to basic concepts, as well as to MA, Continental Confederation and BWF structures.

They can be used as a flexible introduction for those who are starting out, with the possibility of eventually participating in more applied face-to-face courses as part of a structured pathway (in either Event Management or Administration).

The courses are free and can be accessed by anyone, making them the perfect tool not only for MA-level personnel, but also regional or club-level enthusiasts.

The BWF Sport Science Research Grants programme provides the opportunity for research institutions and individual researchers to apply for research grants to assist in the funding of applied sport science research in badminton.

Since its inception in 2013, BWF has supported more than 70 badminton research projects globally across areas such as biomechanics, physiology, sport psychology, performance analysis, sport injuries/injury prevention, sports engineering and technology, sport sociology and youth development.

Opportunity granted

The BWF Sport Science Research Grants programme provides the opportunity for research institutions and individual researchers to apply for research grants to assist in the funding of applied sport science research in badminton.

This year, BWF is particularly interested in research connected to:

▸ Badminton for physical activity and well-being
▸ Inclusive badminton (people with disabilities/gender inclusivity/underprivileged and vulnerable communities/older adults)
▸ Injury prevention (BWF Consensus Project developed – pending review)

The online application closes on 31 May.
The Badminton World Federation (BWF) was recognised in the #SportOnSocial League Table 2021 rankings driven by Redtorch for its social media prowess.

The annual rankings report released on Tuesday 30 March 2021 reviews the social media performance of Olympic International Federations across Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and YouTube throughout COVID-19 affected 2020 (1 January – 31 December).

BWF:

- Leaped to 2nd from 4th in overall rankings.
- Ranked No.1 on Facebook (up 1 place) with an audience growth of 23.4%.
- 2nd on Instagram (up 4 places) with a growth rate of 87.5% and ranked 3rd for highest number of engagements with 9.4K video views.
- 2nd on Twitter (down 1 place) and placed 3rd on engagement per post.
- Placed 6th on YouTube (down 2 places); 144.6m channel views placing BWF 2nd overall and grew by 192.3K new subscribers.

In China, BWF also emerged as the fastest growing sports governing body on Chinese social media, and the most followed racket sports organisation.
Integrity campaign a roaring success

April saw the ‘I am badminton’ campaign build on its global success with the addition of 31 national and regional ambassadors, appointed by Continental Confederations and Member Associations.

In May, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) will unveil Pusarla V. Sindhu and Michelle Li as athlete ambassadors for its ‘Believe in Sport’ campaign aimed at preventing competition manipulation. Pusarla and Li will be working alongside other athlete ambassadors from around the world to raise awareness on the topic of competition manipulation among athletes and entourage.

Since 2015, BWF’s ‘I am badminton’ integrity awareness campaign has been at the forefront of communicating our approach to the integrity of badminton. Through the ambassador programme, BWF aims to encourage players to be active participants in shaping the integrity of the sport.

Ambassador Network

Badminton Confederation Africa
- Adel Hamek (Algeria)
- Hadia Hosny (Egypt)
- Georges Julien Paul (Mauretius)
- Dorcas Ajoke Adesokan (Nigeria)
- Johanita Scholtz (South Africa)
- Brian Kasiyie (Uganda)

Badminton Oceania
- Ogenya Mataul (New Caledonia)
- Remi Rossi (Tahiti)

Arab Badminton Federation
- Youcef Sabri Medel (Algeria)
- Adnan Ebrahim (Bahrain)
- Shaimaa Samy (Egypt)
- Rana Abu Harbesh (Saudi Arabia)
- Mohamed Al Zarooni (UAE)

National Ambassadors:
- Luka Wraber (Austria)
- Dominik Stipsits (Austria)
- Vitor Tavares (Brazil)
- Raúl Anguiano (Guatemala)
- Vivien Sandorhazi (Hungary)
- Gergő Pytel (Hungary)
- Chloe Magee (Ireland)
- Nhat Nguyen (Ireland)
- Misha Zilberman (Israel)
- Lino Munoz (Mexico)
- Robin Tabeling (Netherlands)
- Pilar Jauregui (Peru)
- Daniela Macias (Peru)
- Pablo Abian (Spain)
- Carolina Marin (Spain)
- Emre Sonmez (Turkey)
- Bahar Sabanci (Turkey)

The campaign has gone from strength to strength despite the COVID-19 pandemic and is now available in nine languages.

“It’s really important for Spanish badminton and me to have joined this initiative. We must show our respect and love for this sport and defend it against the threats of doping and corruption.”
- Marin

“It’s an honour to be nominated by the IOC as an athlete ambassador. I stand alongside my fellow athletes in the fight against any form of cheating or competition manipulation. Together we are stronger.”
- Pusarla
#iambadminton

i am clean
i am honest
i am badminton