Badminton is now just a touch away.

Enter Badminton4U
The Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games were an outstanding success for badminton.

We saw fantastic on-court achievements by our players, reached global eminence with the debut of badminton at the Paralympics, and achieved standout viewer and engagement numbers on all platforms – both mainstream and digital.

It was so fantastic to see badminton being talked about by so many people, and we have received extremely positive feedback from the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and International Paralympic Committee (IPC) about our respective competitions.

Importantly, data comparing search trends from the Rio 2016 Olympics to the Tokyo 2020 Olympics show that participation and consumption interest in badminton is at an all-time high – this despite COVID-19 severely impacting the organisation of badminton activities worldwide.

Strategically, we have since been able to leverage this heightened exposure with the launch of our brand-new mobile app, Badminton4U – a project long in the making.

The app offers fans a unique content and user experience designed to bring the badminton community closer to the action.

Our own research across the past five years into sports consumption trends and online preferences of the badminton community have helped us pinpoint the types of communication tools and technology required to take badminton to the next level digitally.

Badminton4U is a dynamic, user-friendly one-stop shop solution with an immersive user experience in which the fan is the pilot of their badminton journey.

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It gives a new dimension to how badminton is consumed and enjoyed, servicing not only our existing fanbase but new supporters with a comprehensive package that allows them to be immersed in the sport more often, making badminton a more competitive proposition on the global market.

With badminton tournaments now back in full force, and a host of Major Championships on the horizon in Q4 of 2021 such as the HSBC BWF World Tour Finals and TotalEnergies BWF World Championships, we feel this is the perfect time to unleash Badminton4U.

We’ve had good reviews following the TotalEnergies BWF Sudirman Cup Finals 2021 and TotalEnergies BWF Thomas and Uber Cup Finals 2020 and we’re excited to see more fans downloading it daily.

**Busy End to 2021 Calendar**

As mentioned, we have a packed until the end of 2021.

I would like to thank our Membership, not least our Hosts from Badminton Finland, Badminton Denmark, French Badminton Federation, German Badminton Association, Badminton Association of Indonesia and Spanish Badminton Federation for making these Q4 events possible.

There is nothing better than seeing badminton back, and your tremendous efforts in organising these tournaments against the COVID-19 backdrop have not gone unnoticed.

The unique staging of three Major Championships, plus the HSBC BWF World Tour Finals all within three months is something we will look back on as a special achievement for the sport.

Best wishes to the entire badminton community over the upcoming festive season, and may 2022 bring a fruitful year with plenty of badminton activities resuming in all regions and territories.

Poul-Erik Høyer
Badminton4U has landed

The Badminton World Federation launched its first global app on 23 September 2021.

Designed for a worldwide audience, Badminton4U showcases the very best badminton content and is initially offered in English and Chinese (simplified).

Available now, fans and users of the Badminton4U app can follow their favourite players, receive live scores, get notifications when their favourite player is on court and pick up all the latest news in a flash.

The launch of the Badminton4U app is a very special moment for BWF; for it marks the start of an exciting new journey to connect the global badminton audience with the sport all year round.

“It is a project close to our hearts and one that gives a new dimension to how badminton is consumed,” said BWF Secretary General Thomas Lund.

“The project has taken a great deal of time and work, and BWF is delighted to have reached this digital milestone in introducing our first mobile app,” Lund added.

With not many spectators allowed at stadiums the previous 18 months, COVID-19 has undoubtedly altered how fans consume sports content, but with badminton competitions back in full swing, Badminton4U could not have landed at a better time.

With Badminton4U, BWF aims to bring fans closer to the action, whether at home or in the stadium, with an immersive user experience.

The initial phase of the Badminton4U app launch continues to show promise in bringing the sport to people across the globe.

Badminton4U is free to download via the Google Play and Apple iOS stores.

“Be a badminton fan like never before. Download Badminton4U today.”

— Thomas Lund

Match Centre

Get the latest results as they happen with our real-time match data, all in the palm of your hand. Follow every minute, every match.

Player

Follow your favourite player in the Badminton4U app and get notified when your favourite player is on court.
Successful event amid great challenges

The Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games will be remembered in history as the first to be held amid one of mankind’s greatest challenges, the COVID-19 pandemic.

Three narratives played out at the Games.

The first was the staging of the event itself. For over a year since the pandemic raged, the Olympics looked in doubt. Even until the eve of the Games, there was speculation on whether it would be held, and what would unfold given the huge number of participants, officials, volunteers and others.

The staging of Tokyo 2020 was therefore a triumph in itself, for none of the doomsday scenarios came to pass. Badminton, like other sports, went ahead with clockwork precision. And while it played to empty galleries due to the safety protocols, Tokyo 2020 will be seen as a success story that was held in the most challenging of circumstances.

Chinese Resurgence

The second narrative was the dominance of China. After London 2012, China’s dominance at major events such as the Olympics, the World Championships, and to a lesser degree, the Major Team Championships, had slipped.

However, in the course of a fortnight at the Olympics, China completely reversed this trend. Even as other favourites – like Kento Momota and Marcus Fernaldi Gideon/Kevin Sanjaya Sukamuljo tumbled early, China kept a near-impeccable record, and in fact were in contention for a repeat of 2012, with Chinese contestants in all five finals. They returned with two gold and four silver, a rich haul by any measure.

Inspirational Performances

The third narrative was the idea most associated with the Olympics – that of the individuals who inspired themselves to tremendous feats despite the stiffest odds. Kevin Cordon was one such story – the Guatemalan, who hadn’t performed at a high level in several years, turned up and shot down one higher-ranked opponent after another, eventually falling in the semifinals. Then there was Greysia Polii, who was ushered out of London 2012 in ignominy, had contemplated retiring in 2016, and lost her brother earlier this year. Polii and partner Apryani Rahayu played with great gumption to land Indonesia their first ever Olympic gold in women’s doubles.

The Olympics also left us some lasting images – Viktor Axelsen’s emotions bursting through after his gold medal win, which made him the first European men’s singles winner in 25 years; Chen Yu Fei and Tai Tzu Ying collapsing to the floor after an epic women’s singles final; Polii and Rahayu’s jig after their women’s doubles victory; Wang Yi Lyu and Huang Dong Ping celebrating their takedown of compatriots Zheng Si Wei and Huang Ya Qiong, and Chinese Taipei’s first gold in badminton, with Lee Yang/Wang Chi-Lin powering through in the final to make history.
Roaring and soaring thanks to #RaiseARacket

Powered by the #RaiseARacket campaign launched on 19 July, BWF posted some strong numbers during the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games, maximising the period to its advantage with simple strategies to keep the engagement level high, despite the lack of organic native video content.

**Growth**
- BWF social channels generated **282.9k new followers** (6.7% growth rate), taking the overall total to 4.2m.
- On Weibo, BWF grew by more than **59,000 followers**.

**Performance**
- 1.2k posts generated **232.2m impressions** – of which 54% came from Instagram (126m).
- Facebook accounted for most video views (12.5m).
- Impressions on Weibo posts reached 78 million.
- Douyin videos hit over 10 million views and 200k engagement.
- Total video views exceeded 95 million across all platforms.

**Among IFs**
- 5th highest total engagement (1.3m) and responsible for 3 of the top 25 posts on Facebook.
- Highest absolute growth (134.0k) and highest growth rate (21.7%) on Instagram.
- Generated the most engagements (11.3m) and 2nd highest engagement rate (4.3%).
- Highest growth rate (10.8%) on Twitter and 2nd highest absolute growth (19.1k).
- No.1 average engagement on Weibo with over 4,000 engagement per post.

**Search & Website Traffic**
- Worldwide searches on where to play and where to watch twice as high as 5 years ago and peaked during Tokyo 2020.
- On Weibo’s trending topics page, 3-4 hot topics related to badminton featured each day.
- 2m web users (+562% increase) from same timeframe during Rio 2016.
- Average of 4.5 pages viewed each session (+36%), which generated over 15.9m pageviews.

The positive trend continued during the Paralympic Games.

- BWF social channels recorded **21.1K new followers** from 676 posts, generating **1.8 million engagements** and 37.9 million impressions.
- Instagram was the most engaging network with **1.49 million engagements** and 9.7K interactions per post.
- Final day of competition earned 428.9K engagements.
- #RaiseARacket produced **1.4 million engagements** and **30.1 million impressions** from 446 posts.

Pusarla V. Sindhu and her coach Park Tae Sang pose with her bronze medal.
For Lynne Nixey and Iris Metspalu, the journey towards gender equality in the sport of their choice, badminton, leapt a few steps forward at the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games.

The BWF Technical Officials – Nixey a deputy referee and Metspalu an umpire – left Japan optimistic after the showpiece showed women are able to have similar importance in officiating.

Metspalu, for one, was given the honour of umpiring the first medal match – the mixed doubles bronze playoff between Yuta Watanabe/Arisa Higashino and Tang Chun Man/Tse Ying Suet.

Nixey, who had umpired at two Olympics, believes women have greater opportunities nowadays and “it’s motivating them to raise their level of officiating”.

The New Zealander, also Badminton Oceania’s Administration Manager, was encouraged by the split among officials in Tokyo – 30 per cent female and 70 per cent male.

“We are trying to increase female participation, but we are meeting the minimum IOC (International Olympic Committee) guideline, so it’s a good base to improve from,” she enthused.

“The best way is to show it can be done. Having women officiate at these Games sends the message it is possible and encouraging them there is another pathway other than player-coach-retirement.”

Although from a non-badminton nation, Metspalu hopes to inspire other women and girls in Estonia to follow in her footsteps.

“IT doesn’t matter if you are a woman or a man, from a small or large country; if you want to do it, if your heart and mind are set on it, you can make it,” she said. “In Estonia, we have a female prime minister, a female president and I’m an example too.”

Nixey lauded the BWF Semi-Professional Umpires Programme, whose first batch of seven officials at the Asian Leg in Bangkok in January included Metspalu.

“BWF has determined the best way for us to best serve the area, and encouraging us to go further,” said Nixey, herself one of BWF’s eight semi-pro referees.

“It’s a great opportunity to be in this position because you are assigned more tournaments per year, you are part of a team you can feed off and talk to, and this helps bring up your level of officiating.”

Metspalu added: “There are more and more female umpires now in the system, with more financial investment towards development of women in badminton officiating.

“When I started, I was very much in a man’s world. I often wore skirt on court to show I can succeed as a woman.

“No one should be ashamed of who they are; male or female we just do the best we can, and rely on our experience to continue progressing, so let’s keep going!”
Showcasing extraordinary abilities

It could not have been a better debut. Para badminton made its long-awaited entrance at the Paralympics and left everyone spellbound.

The five days of action showcased everything that a sports fan could ask for – exciting matches, inspiring stories and engaging personalities.

After their disappointing performance at the Olympics, hosts Japan had better luck at the Paralympics, winning three gold, one silver and six bronze to finish among the successful teams. China was the most successful, with five gold, three silver and two bronze medals.

**Stars That Shone**

Leani Ratri Oktila was a three-gold favourite at the start of the Paralympics and very nearly fulfilled expectations, finishing with two gold and a silver. Other two-gold winners were China’s Qu Zimo and Japan’s Sarina Satomi, both in wheelchair events.

The breakout star in men’s singles WH2 was Daiki Kajiwara, who stopped title favourites Chan Ho Yuen Daniel in the semifinals and Kim Jungjun in the final. Other stars who shone bright were Liu Yutong, Pramod Bhagat and Lucas Mazur.

**The Human Element**

While the badminton itself was top-class, the stories of some of the participants added to the significance of what was being witnessed. There was, for instance, Uganda’s Ritah Asiimwe, who lost her dominant right hand to machete-wielding assailants. Unwilling to let the new situation dominate her life, she chose to relearn skills, such as writing and playing badminton, with her left hand.

**Overcoming Stigma**

For Krishna Nagar, who won the men’s singles SH6, the win would serve not only as a tale of personal triumph, but an inspirational one for the larger community of short statured people. “This win shows that no one should be counted out,” Nagar said.

His compatriot Manoj Sarkar’s journey was just as challenging, for Sarkar came from a family of modest means. Sarkar would remember his mother, who had bought him his first racket by selling beedis (a cheap alternative to cigarettes).

**Culmination of a Long Journey**

The Paralympics was the realisation of a dream that had spanned a decade or more for several senior players like SU5 gold medallist Cheah Liek Hou and SH6 bronze medallist Krysten Coombs (both in men’s singles). To those who had spent their entire careers competing in Para badminton, the Paralympics was the goal towards which they’d been working all their lives.

**Camaraderie**

What was striking was the camaraderie between victor and vanquished. Oktila, for instance, despite being denied a women’s singles gold that would’ve helped her to a three-event sweep, hugged her vanquisher Cheng Hefang on the podium in one of the most memorable images of the Paralympics.

**Contributing to the Community**

While they have to deal with their own challenges, several Para badminton players sought to keep the lens on the wider community. Australia’s Caitlin Dransfield, for instance, is doing a bachelor’s course on disability, while also using her extra time as a disability support worker. Through her own example, she hopes to inspire others like her.

“I’ve always loved learning about disability, proving to people what I can achieve,” Dransfield said.
Badminton’s debut at the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games coincidentally brought the Atlanta 96 Olympic men’s singles medallists together after a long time.

All three – gold medallist Poul-Erik Høyer, silver medallist Dong Jiong and bronze medallist Rashid Sidek – are now key players in Para badminton.

BWF President Høyer led the push to include the sport on the Paralympic programme while Dong and Sidek are involved in the daily hustle of making their compatriots better athletes.

Remarkably, Tokyo was the first time since Atlanta the trio had seen each other.

"After more than 25 years, huh? We’ve got grey hair now,” laughed Sidek, the coach of Cheah Liak Hou, when asked about their reunion.

Høyer reminisced: “I haven’t seen much of them over the years and all of a sudden, we are gathered at an event similar to the one from 25 years back.

"It’s fantastic to just reunite, look them in the eyes and say they look the same. I’m sure they are happy to see badminton at the Paralympics.”

Team China head coach Dong, who defeated Sidek in the semifinal before losing to Høyer in 1996, did not have the chance to do much catching up due to his schedule.

"We’ve said hello but we’re so busy doing the coaching stuff, we haven’t had time to chat,” he said.

Dong’s journey in Para badminton coaching began circa-2000 when he offered his services to the Sports Department of China Disabled Persons Federation after an encounter with a deaf-mute girl who wanted to learn badminton at his gym.

Almost two decades later, he was the proud trainer of the team that won China 18 World Championships medals in Basel, Switzerland in 2019.

In Tokyo, his mentees bagged 10 medals – five gold, three silver and two bronze.

“Em are all doing a really great job. I’m really proud of them,” Dong said.

Sidek, whose previous charges included Lee Chong Wei, has found the switch from able-bodied coaching eye-opening.

“It’s quite interesting, a new experience. I learned a lot about how to handle Para shuttlers,” he said.

Sidek’s protégé Cheah made history as he became the sport’s first ever Paralympic gold medallist when he defeated Dheva Anrimusthi in the SU5 men’s singles final.

Sidek, now 53, is happy he and his fellow Atlanta medallists are able to give back.

"After retirement, we are still involved in badminton. At least we can share our knowledge and experience with the youngsters, the up-and-coming players. To lift Para badminton standards so that people will recognise and appreciate this sport.”
A study commissioned by BWF under the Global Health Badminton project has been published in the Asia-Pacific Journal of Sports Medicine, Arthroscopy, Rehabilitation and Technology.

The study, conducted by Niels Christian Kaldau, Stewart Kerr (both former international badminton players, coaches and healthcare professionals), Steve McCaig and Per Holmich, is titled ‘Training and injuries among world elite junior badminton players’ and aims to provide a reference for long-term study of injuries in badminton. There having little published research on injury among elite badminton players, this study is expected to be a first step towards a comprehensive understanding of injuries in badminton.

The study was conducted at the BWF World Junior Championships 2018, with 164 out of the total of 436 players taking part in it. The two main objectives of the study were to report significant injuries among the best junior elite players, and to determine any correlation between injuries and player demographics, anthropometrics (height, weight and playing arm dominance) and weekly training load.

A detailed questionnaire was prepared based on the World Olympic Association Musculoskeletal Health Global Questionnaire, with suitable modifications.

Among the important discoveries of the study was that 48 per cent of the 164 participants reported one or more significant injury, with common locations being knee, ankle and lower back. Almost 50 per cent of the participants had sustained an injury that lasted around 90 days; in 34 per cent of these cases the player had lasting limitations or pain. The number of significant injuries did not differ between male and female players, or Asian and non-Asian players. Injury durations lasted between 30 and 1,800 days, with the average (90 days) being the same for males and females; 43 per cent of injuries occurred with gradual onset and 53 per cent with sudden onset.

The authors also note that stress fractures may be a serious underestimated problem in badminton. Players from Asian countries reported a higher number of stress fractures. Interestingly, it appeared that high training volume did not necessarily lead to higher risk of significant injury apart from stress fractures.

The authors caution of the worryingly high number of significant injuries, and that a notable portion of these are stress fractures, which are indication of overuse.
Badminton Pan Am Confederation organised its official continental AirBadminton launch on 18 July in Acapulco, Mexico, alongside the XXIX Pan Am Junior Championships U19 2021.

The event allowed Badminton Pan Am to fulfil its goal of putting a racket for the first time in the hands of as many people as possible, without the need for an indoor venue.

Mexican Badminton Federation, through its president, Javier Orozco, coordinated with authorities in Acapulco to host the launch inaugurated by Badminton Pan Am Administration Chair Zarko Cukic.

Highlights included exhibition matches of 3 vs 3 and 2 vs 2 mixed teams and also audience trying out the new outdoor game. A Team Relay tournament was also held involving athletes knocked out of the Pan Am Junior Championships. Overall, the AirBadminton launch turned out to be a success and Badminton Pan Am is encouraged the participants will continue playing the sport in their countries, cities and communities.

Badminton Pan Am also plans to continue holding similar AirBadminton events as part of its future international tournaments and assist in the implementation of AirBadminton activities in the region.

In cooperation with Badminton Netherlands, the Netherlands AirBadminton Test Event took place on 29 August in Utrecht at a King of the Court stadium completely converted into an AirBadminton arena with COVID-19 safety measures.

The Dutch AirBadminton team competed against Belgium, Germany and France for the Nations Cup 2021. Each tie involved five matches; women's doubles, men's doubles, mixed doubles and two triples. The team that reached 100 points first was the winner.

Players and spectators enjoyed an excellent AirBadminton experience where the Dutch team finished champions.

In September, the Spanish AirBadminton Test Event was conducted on 5 September at the outdoor facilities of the Elche City Council. The Mediterranean city was selected to host the first official AirBadminton competition in Spain as it was involved in the research process and development of the AirShuttle.

The Spanish Badminton Federation invited players from the Valencia region to participate, and they enjoyed a fantastic AirBadminton experience. As a result, the national federation now aims to increase the total number of players and locations so people of all ages and abilities can practice badminton anytime and anywhere.

Also in the pipeline is the implementation of an AirBadminton circuit parallel to their official national competitions for the 2022 season.
Named an integrity ambassador in May 2020 by the International Olympic Committee (IOC), Michelle Li has been working beside other athlete ambassadors from around the world to raise awareness on the topic of competition manipulation among athletes and entourage.

Speaking about the role nomination, after being contacted by the IOC for the honour, she told BWF during the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games that she “thought it would be interesting,” for her career as a professional athlete.

“I was approached by the IOC and asked if I wanted to be part of the programme. I looked over the campaign, and I thought this would be a really good cause.”

Taking up the appointed role with ambassadors from other sports, Li also fronts the campaign alongside 2019 world champion and Rio 2016 silver medallist and Tokyo 2020 bronze medallist Pusarla V. Sindhu.

As part of the IOC’s ‘Believe in Sport’ campaign leading up to the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games, Li engaged with the badminton athlete community through online webinars and social media messages to highlight the risks involved and educate them on how best to safeguard and protect themselves in light of opportunities to manipulate their competition.

“Being a role model to somebody and representing what the campaign means to sport, and putting the message out there is really important to me,” Li revealed.

In badminton, manipulation or match fixing includes influencing the course or the result of a match in order to obtain an advantage for the individual or others; and removing all or part of the uncertainty normally associated with the course or results of a competition.

Protecting honest athletes and keeping sports fair is a top priority for the Olympic Movement and both the IOC and BWF are committed to fighting all forms of manipulation that threaten the integrity and essence of sports.

Li, 29, is already a global ambassador for BWF’s ‘I am badminton’ campaign since April 2020.

“I talked to the people in my team to spread awareness about the campaign,” Li stated.

“They have seen the posters and asked me for more information. That’s already a great step in the right direction of how successful this campaign can be.”

The 2014 Commonwealth Games champion added: “We all want to be on the same start line. It’s important to be fair as that is a true representation of what your ability is.”

The IOC’s ‘Believe in Sport’ campaign was launched in 2018 to raise awareness among athletes, coaches and officials of the threat of competition manipulation.
Get closer to your favourite badminton players with the new Badminton4U app.

*The App is available in English and Simplified Chinese.*