It's official, badminton ruled social media in 2021

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The clock is ticking until the BWF Annual General Meeting on Saturday 7 May 2022. I look forward to seeing a number of delegates in Bangkok for the first time in a while. We have a full agenda ready including the Members’ Forum on Friday 6 May, and it’s great we are able to come together as a community following two pandemic-interrupted years. I know a lot of effort has gone into making the AGM and Forum possible, and I’d like to thank our friends at the Badminton Association of Thailand, as well as BWF staff, for their planning.

We will also be announcing the first winners of the Member Association Awards, and it’s important we celebrate some of the success stories in our sport. The Membership Grant Programme has enabled several of our Member Associations to reinvigorate interest in badminton during and after COVID-19 and deliver core development activities to support the growth of the sport. I look forward to the Membership Association Awards evolving in the coming years as this creates a great opportunity for Members to learn off each other and share best practice.

At the same time, we will be staging the first BWF Major Championships of the post-COVID-19 era. The TotalEnergies BWF Thomas & Uber Cup Finals 2022 returns to the vibrant city of Bangkok four years after it last hosted it, and I’m sure many participants are looking forward to it.

Much has changed in that time, and while the COVID-19 threat is not fully behind us, it certainly seems like we have overcome the worst of it. In this regard, may I congratulate all members of the badminton fraternity – players, entourage, fans, officials, sponsors, and media – for ensuring badminton stayed relevant during this difficult period, and has indeed bounced back strongly.

The TotalEnergies BWF Thomas & Uber Cup Finals represent the pinnacle of men’s and women’s team competition. There is a lot at stake as the top teams in the world face off against each other, and I can’t wait for the action to unfold. It’s only been eight months since we crowned our last champions, so I’m interested to see whether Indonesia and China can hold their titles.

Since the beginning of the year, we have welcomed two new Council Members: Greysia Polii as...
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Chair of the Athletes’ Commission, and Richard Perot who returns for his third term as Chair of the Para Badminton Athletes’ Commission. Congratulations to both of you and I look forward to collaborating at an executive level as we continue to drive improvements for our playing groups.

Finally, I want to congratulate the Marcomms department for delivering the top rank overall in the recent #SportOnSocial League Table, which is the definitive measurement of social media performance of Olympic International Federations. Our progression from 27th to 1st in five years is no mean feat and supports our intent of making badminton a more accessible sport to the youth. Our numbers are fantastic and help position us as one of the most popular sports in the world, as well as consolidating brand badminton as a valuable commodity.

Poul-Erik Høyer
In 2021, badminton ruled the digital sphere as the result of a super productive 12 months across social media platforms – the perfect catapult for the sport to launch itself out of a pandemic-disrupted 2020.

Two separate special reports highlighted the standing of Badminton World Federation (BWF) among International Federations (IF), with #SportOnSocial League Table delivered by Redtorch placing it top overall – no mean achievement considering its ranking of 27th as recently as 2017.

It justifies the switch to fan-first approach to engagement over the past three years.

Standout data from the reports:

**Redtorch**

- Instagram
  - No.1, overtaking Volleyball World.
  - Growth rate of 142% highest of any IF (633k new followers).
  - BWF responsible for 18% (81.6m) of the 445 million engagement earned by all IFs.
  - 70% of top 50 posts were from BWF.

- Twitter
  - Highest growth rate (65%) – 104.2k new followers is the 2nd highest after FIFA.

- YouTube
  - Up 6 places to No.2.
  - 30% growth (from 1.6m to 2.1m subscribers).

**BCW Sports**

- Instagram
  - 2nd fastest growth rate of 142%.
  - 2nd most interaction with 102,091,981, averaging 354,486 per post.

- Facebook
  - 90% growth rate.

- Twitter
  - 64% growth in followers, No.1 among top 10 IFs.

- YouTube
  - 3rd most subscribers at just over 2 million.
  - 3rd best growth rate.

**More jewels to crown**

Badminton’s growing appeal to the global sporting audience was also reflected in the new broadcast deals confirmed for 2022 for five territories spanning six countries.

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This follows the announcement in January by BWF and its broadcast and commercial partner Infront Sports & Media of a five-year, multi-million-dollar broadcast and digital deal with SPOTV, covering 12 Asian territories and is inclusive of all HSBC BWF World Tour tournaments and TotalEnergies BWF Major Championships.

Badminton attained additional global prominence thanks to the inclusion of women’s singles star Pusarla V. Sindhu at No.7 on the Forbes list of the highest-paid female athletes of 2021.

The 26-year-old Indian’s total earnings of US$7.2 million made her the only shutter among the world’s top-earning sportswomen like Japanese tennis idol Naomi Osaka and American gymnast Simone Biles.

Pusarla herself acknowledged her entry was an indicator of the sport being a rewarding career option.

“A lot of parents tell me they want to enroll their kids in badminton, so definitely it’s a good game if you work hard and do well for yourself. You will get a lot of success,” she said.
Paris Calling

Qualification Regulations for Next Olympics

The Badminton World Federation’s (BWF) qualification regulations for Paris 2024 have been approved by the International Olympic Committee (IOC). The Race to Paris Olympic Qualification Period begins in 12 months’ time on 1 May 2023.

Qualification will run until 28 April 2024 with the Race to Paris ranking lists as of 30 April 2024 used to determine the initial list of qualifiers.

The total quota for badminton remains 172 places (86 men and 86 women), which includes two host country places and four universality places in addition to the regular quota places of 166.

Each National Olympic Committee (NOC) has a maximum quota of eight places each for men and women.

Singles
In each singles discipline, an NOC has a maximum of two quota places if the players are ranked within the top 16 of the Race to Paris rankings on the qualification date. There is a total of 35 quota places, one host country place, and two universality places.

The universality places will be confirmed by the Tripartite Commission after the end of the qualification period. Each singles discipline must also have at least two athletes from each of the five Continental Confederations, provided the player is ranked within the top 250.

Doubles
In each doubles discipline, an NOC has a maximum of two quota places if both pairs are ranked within the top eight on the qualification date. There should be at least one pair from each of the five Continental Confederations, provided they are ranked within the top 50 on the qualification date.

Considering qualification in all events, no NOC can qualify athletes/pairs in more than two disciplines through the Continental Representation Place system.

View the approved Race to Paris Olympic Qualification Regulations and here on the IOC Website.

Back to 52-Week Rankings

After a prolonged period of freezing of the World Rankings, BWF will transition towards a live 52-week ranking commencing 2 August 2022. The complete live 52-week ranking will be published on 3 January 2023.

This timeline will help Member Associations prepare for the Race to Paris Olympic Qualification Period mentioned above.

More Here
The BWF Annual General Meeting 2022 is being held on Saturday 7 May in conjunction with the TotalEnergies BWF Thomas & Uber Cup Finals 2022.

The AGM will be conducted in a hybrid format with attendees present in Bangkok as well as tuning in virtually from afar.

The meeting will start at 1800 Bangkok time (1900 Kuala Lumpur time and 1300 Central European time).

Delegates who are not able to travel to Bangkok will be able to register to attend virtually and then log into the meeting, listen, ask questions, and vote online. The meeting will last approximately three hours.

There are two Council proposals for BWF Honorary Life Vice Presidents, plus a vote to confirm the members of the Independent Hearing Panel (IHP) and the President and Deputy President of the IHP.

The BWF Members’ Forum 2022 is on Friday 6 May from 0900 to 1630, followed by a Welcome Cruise on the Chao Phraya River.

Be sure to read the BWF Annual Report 2021 available here.
BWF Member Association Awards

During the Members’ Forum, BWF will announce the inaugural winners of the Member Association Awards, which are designed to showcase excellence and promote best practice across BWF’s 198 Member Associations.

There are four award categories:

▸ BWF Membership Grant Programme Impact Award

▸ Participation Award

▸ Inclusion Award

▸ Promotion Award

The first award is only eligible for Member Associations who were recipients of the BWF Membership Grant Programme in 2020 and 2021.

All other Member Associations who were in good standing with the BWF at the time of application were eligible to nominate themselves for the three other awards.

Member Associations were required to select a specific project or activity and asked to demonstrate clear achievements in one or more of the Membership Award Selection Criteria Areas – Excellence, Innovation, Impact, and Sustainability.
Team battles to resume

The joy of their long-sought Thomas Cup triumph having barely sunk in, Jonatan Christie and Co will have to get once again into battle mode to defend that big prize.

On the face of it, not much has changed since Indonesia and China triumphed at the TotalEnergies BWF Thomas & Uber Cup Finals in Aarhus last October. There have been few notable changes among the top teams – but some patterns have emerged in the intervening months that might offer clues on the fortunes of a few squads.

Recent weeks have seen Korean women’s pairs shoot into the limelight, and that augurs well for them. While their top pair Lee Sohee/Shin Seungchan have had a quiet early season, their compatriots have done well. Kim Soyeong/Kong Heeyong won the Gwangju Korea Masters, but it was the performance of Jeong Na Eun/Kim Hye Jeong and Baek Ha Na/Lee Yu Rim that caught everyone’s attention. Jeong/Kim were semifinalists at the YONEX All England and went on to win the Korea Open. Baek and Lee, in only their fourth tournament back together after a split, made the final of the Korea Masters.

With the reliable An Se Young as spearhead, Korea will have a spring in their steps. There will be a lot riding on the second singles, most likely Kim Ga Eun, if the Koreans have to go all the way. The current generation of players will want to repeat the Cup-winning feat their seniors last achieved in 2010.

China’s All-Round Strength

While China’s women remain as formidable as ever, particularly given the strength of their three singles and top doubles, there will be some concerns over Japan. Yuki Fukushima/Sayaka Hirota lost the only match they played after Hirota’s return from injury, while Mayu Matsumoto/Wakana Nagahara haven’t played since their bronze medal finish at last year’s World Championships.

Still, Japan did make the last final despite similar challenges, and with Akane Yamaguchi in great form, and adequate resources in both singles and doubles, the 2018 champions will be expected to go far.

Japan’s men’s team will be heavily dependent on Kento Momota, Takuro Hoki/Yugo Kobayashi, and possibly Yuta Watanabe, who is effective in any combination.

Concerns for Indonesia

On the men’s side, Indonesia have had a lot of positives in their doubles department. Among their big moments was Muhammad Shohibul Fikri/Bagas Maulana’s All England win. Indonesia’s main concerns will be whether Christie, Anthony Ginting and Shesar Hiren Rhustavito can swing the ties their way the way they did in Aarhus. While Christie did win the Swiss Open, Ginting and Rhustavito haven’t had much to celebrate.

Given their all-round strength, Denmark have the personnel to go all the way. With Viktor Axelsen nearly unstoppable in recent months, Anders Antonsen, Rasmus Gemke and Hans-Kristian Solberg Vittinghus in singles, and several options in doubles, the Danes will be a hard team to beat.

Debut Winners?

Can this be a year of surprises? The possibility is stronger in the Thomas Cup. India can bank on three strong singles and at least one strong pair; Chinese Taipei (Chou Tien Chen, Wang Chi-Lin/Lee Yang, Yang Po-Han/Lu Ching Yao) and Malaysia (Lee Zi Jia, Aaron Chia/Soh Wooi Yik, Goh Sze Fei/Nur Izzuddin) too are quite capable of taking three points against any team.

Teams to Watch

Outside the traditional powerhouses, France in the men’s and Canada in the women’s might cause a few ripples, if not an outright upset. France will bank heavily on the Popov brothers, and with Fabien Delrue/Willem Vlenger in good touch, the French will hope to punch above their weight in Group B, where they are alongside Denmark, China and Algeria.

A quarterfinal place is well within Canada’s reach in the Uber Cup. While Korea are favourites to win their group, Canada can look to Michelle Li, Rachel Chan, Zhang Wen Yu and Rachel Honderich/Kristen Tsai to finish second.

Not Just ‘Minnows’

Teams like Algeria in the men’s and Egypt in the women’s might not be crowd-pullers, but their standards have gone up noticeably. The performances of Youcef Sabri Medel and Koceila Mammeri for Algeria and Nour Youssef and Doha Hany for Egypt will be closely followed.
BWF THOMAS CUP FINALS 2022 DRAW

GROUP A  GROUP B  GROUP C  GROUP D
Indonesia  Denmark  Chinese Taipei  Japan
Korea  China  India  Malaysia
Thailand  France  Germany  England
Singapore  Algeria  Canada  New Zealand

BWF UBER CUP FINALS 2022 DRAW

GROUP A  GROUP B  GROUP C  GROUP D
Japan  China  Thailand  Korea
Indonesia  Chinese Taipei  Denmark  India
France  Spain  Malaysia  Canada
Germany  Australia  Egypt  USA
Save the date!

**DATES:**
22-28 August

**TotalEnergies BWF World Championships 2022**

**VENUE:**
Tokyo

**TRIVIA:**

- This will be the **first ever** World Championships in Japan since the competition was inaugurated in 1977.
- The tournament returns to Asia after stops at Basel, Switzerland (2019) and Huelva, Spain (2021).
- Representatives from **21 countries** have medalled.
- Ratchanok Intanon, at 18, became the **youngest singles world champion** in 2013.
- Lin Dan, Park Joo Bong and Zhao Yunlei are the **most successful** with five titles each.
- Home shuttlers Akane Yamaguchi and men’s pair Takuro Hoki/Yugo Kobayashi are defending champions in their respective categories.
Perot re-elected

Richard Perot was in March re-elected Chair of the BWF Para Athletes’ Commission after a vote between the six members.

Voted in for a third consecutive term, the Frenchman will continue his role with the BWF Council until the next elections in 2025, bringing a recognised sense of enthusiasm, vitality, and experience to the board.

Perot was first elected to the Para Badminton Athletes’ Commission (and Chair) in 2013, and re-elected in 2017, serving a second four-year term as Chair.

The Chair of the Para Badminton Athletes’ Commission and the Chair of the Athletes’ Commission (Greysia Polii) are voting members of the BWF Council and responsible for providing advice to Committees and BWF Council on issues concerning athletes.

“I am proud of this new group composed of many passionate athletes already promoting Para badminton in their home countries,” said Perot upon his re-election.

“Their ideas and those of the athletes and the continents they represent will play an important role in the development of Para badminton towards 2025.”

Guatemala’s Raúl Anguiano Araujo was elected Deputy Chair.

The pair are joined on the commission by Amy Burnett (USA), Chan Ho Yuen Daniel (Hong Kong China), Cathrine Rosengren (Denmark) and To Man-Kei (Belgium).

Congratulations to our six Para athletes.

BWF Para Badminton Athletes’ Commission objectives:

1. Liaise with players, organise player meetings at tournaments and canvas their views and opinions on rules and regulations, development and direction of Para badminton

2. Represent the views of Para badminton athletes at BWF Para Badminton Commission meetings

3. Report back to the players on outcomes of meetings and representations made at BWF Para Badminton Commission meetings.

Raul Anguiano (GUA)
Anguiano was first elected to the BWF Para Badminton Athletes’ Commission in 2017 and has been an International Paralympic Committee (IPC) Proud Paralympian Educator since 2018.

Chan Ho Yuen Daniel (HKC)
Bronze medallist at the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games, BWF Para Badminton Athletes’ Commission member since 2018 and BWF ‘I am badminton’ Integrity Programme Ambassador.

To Man-Kei (BEL)
WH1 player who started international Para badminton in 2015. With multilingual skills, Man-Kei has canvassed European and Asian players around issues and challenges for them.

Amy Burnett (USA)
The WH1 athlete is on the USA Badminton Board of Directors as well as the Athlete Advisory Committee and the High-Performance Athlete Advisory.

Cathrine Rosengren (DEN)
Started playing Para badminton in 2016 and competed at the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games.

Richard Perot (FRA)
Discovering badminton in 2010, Perot is also an IPC ambassador and an educator at the IPC’s Agitos Foundation.
Celebrate the very first WORLD BADMINTON DAY this 5 July 2022

REGISTER YOUR EVENT HERE

#WorldBadmintonDay

More Here
Dubai Legacy Projects

**January-March**

**Unified Champion Schools (UAE)**

As part of the Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools programme, UAE Badminton and Special Olympics UAE delivered four Shuttle Time Teacher Training courses to more than 70 teachers in the first quarter of 2021. The aim of the courses was to qualify teachers to run inclusive, fun and enjoyable badminton sessions by implementing Shuttle Time activities.

In addition, participants were encouraged to form unified badminton clubs at their schools to provide inclusive opportunities for the people of determination.

The Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools is aimed at promoting social inclusion through intentionally planned and implemented activities affecting universal change.

With sports as the foundation, the three-component model offers a unique combination of effective inclusive sports, youth leadership opportunities with tools and training, and whole-school engagement to create climates of acceptance.

Students with intellectual disabilities feel welcome and are routinely included in all activities, opportunities, and functions.

**February**

**West Asia Para Games 2022 (Bahrain)**

The 3rd West Asia Para Games in Bahrain (19-26 February) featured badminton for the first time in its history.

As many as 700 athletes from 11 countries competed in seven sports, with the Games providing an ideal platform to showcase the region’s badminton talent at its biggest Para multi-sport event.

Six countries participated across eight classes and nine gold, seven silver and 12 bronze medals were awarded to winners.

**International celebrations supported in Q1:**

- **International Women’s Day**
  
  [Link](https://development.bwfbadminton.com/whats-new/international-womens-day-xu-gives-back-to-badminton)

- **World Autism Awareness Day**
  

- **International Day of Sport for Development and Peace**
  
  [Link](https://development.bwfbadminton.com/whats-new/raise-your-whitecard-for-peace-in-sport)

- **World Health Day**
  
  [Link](https://development.bwfbadminton.com/whats-new/world-health-day-pick-up-a-racket-and-get-active)
Great things are in the pipeline for Quarter 2 of 2022 with these development inclusivity initiatives taking precedence.

1. **BWF Female Participation Grant**

From the January 2022 cycle, 12 applicants will make their international debuts at the following tournaments.

- Brazil Para Badminton International (19-24 April) – two players from Peru and Brazil.
- Bahrain Para Badminton International (16-21 May) – four players from Poland and Yemen.
- Dubai Para Badminton International (23-29 May) – six players from Australia, Iran, Finland and India.

The grant offers female athletes opportunities to apply for financial support to attend and be Internationally Classified at a number of BWF-sanctioned international tournaments.

At the season-opening Spanish Para Badminton International II 2022 in Vitoria, Milena Surreau (SL4, France), Cristina Sánchez de Lechina Tejada (SU5, Spain) and Anya Butterworth (SH6, England) made their first appearances for their nation.

2. **National Level 2 Classifier Workshop 2022**

Building on the first BWF Para Badminton National Level 1 Classifier Workshop in Vitoria, which attracted 12 participants from eight countries, a Level 2 Classifier Workshop will be held in the UAE in conjunction with the Dubai Para Badminton International in May.

3. **Special Olympics World Games Pledge Signing**

Another significant pledge signing will be held during the BWF Annual General Meeting between Badminton Association of Thailand and Special Olympics Thailand in Bangkok in May.

This follows the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in November between Special Olympics UAE and UAE Badminton Committee pledging training support for Special Olympics UAE badminton players at the 2023 World Games in Berlin, Germany, which will feature more than 200 shuttlers from over 60 countries.

**Important Q2 dates**

**Programmes:**

- BWF-World Academy of Sport
  Online Resources to be launched in May include Marketing and Communications Online Course in English and Coach Level 1 Online Component in French and Spanish.
- Application for the BWF Sport Science Research Grants Programme, which provides the opportunity for research institutions and individual researchers to apply for assistance in the funding of applied sport science research in badminton, closes 30 May.
- Dual career scholarships: The new Athlete Certificate’s application cycle opens on 1 June and Postgraduate Certificate in International Sport Management on 13 June.

**International Days:**

- 20 June: World Refugee Day
- 23 June: Olympic Day
Get closer to your favourite badminton players with the new Badminton4U app.

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