



PRESS RELEASE

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BARFOOT & THOMPSON BWF WORLD JUNIOR CHAMPIONSHIPS 2020 CANCELLED

Organisers of the BARFOOT & THOMPSON BWF World Junior Championships 2020 have today confirmed that the event has been cancelled.

The ongoing COVID-19 restrictions and uncertainty left BWF, Badminton New Zealand and tournament organisers no choice but to cancel the event.

BWF Secretary General Thomas Lund said: "We are of course disappointed not to be able to stage the 2020 version of the BWF World Junior Championships, but the entry restrictions in place and complexities related to the COVID-19 situation makes it impossible for the event to be planned and therefore hosted in New Zealand in January 2021 as currently scheduled."

With a host for the next edition already in place for later in 2021, and the uncertainty of the COVID-19 situation expected to stretch into next year, postponement was not an option.

However, Badminton New Zealand are still committed to hosting the BWF World Junior Championships and the BWF have accepted a proposal for them to stage the 2024 edition as a replacement for the edition lost.

Hosts for the 2021, 2022 and 2023 championships were already awarded by BWF Council in 2018, making 2024 the next available year.

"We would like to thank Badminton New Zealand, tournament organisers, its partners ATEED and the New Zealand Government, for their enthusiasm and commitment to staging the World Junior Championships," said Lund.

"It only seems fair recognition of their efforts to stage these championships that we award them the 2024 edition.

"We appreciate that some junior players will turn 19 years old in 2021 and unfortunately miss out on a BWF World Junior Championships experience. We can only encourage them to continue to develop their talent as badminton athletes and start to enter open international events.

"It has been a difficult and extraordinary year during the pandemic but we all look forward to a more consistent junior international badminton calendar in 2021 and the next BWF World Junior Championships in China in October 2021."

Badminton New Zealand Chief Executive Joe Hitchcock said: "Although we are tremendously disappointed with this news, it is the right decision to make due to the current situation. We know that the world was looking forward to visiting New Zealand and enjoying a truly inspiring event with the best young badminton players on the planet and we feel for all those impacted by this cancellation.

"We are, however, thrilled that fans and players from around the world will still be able to enjoy a uniquely Kiwi badminton experience, albeit a few years later than originally planned. We are particularly grateful to the BWF, Barfoot & Thompson and our event partners, who have been incredibly supportive and accommodating to ensure that we could get across the line to host the 2024 event," Hitchcock said.

ATEED Head of Major Events, Richard Clarke, said: "Whilst the news is understandably disappointing for the badminton community and Auckland as a host, we are delighted to hear that the event will not be lost to our region.

"The decision by the international governing body to award the 2024 event to New Zealand speaks volumes for our reputation as a world-class events destination and we cannot wait to extend our manaakitanga (hospitality)," Clarke added.

The new date sets up an exciting period of international badminton events in Auckland, New Zealand, with the BARFOOT & THOMPSON BWF World Junior Championships secured for 2024 to be followed by the BARFOOT & THOMPSON BWF World Senior Championships in 2025.

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Contact:

pressoffice@bwfbadminton.org

Lloyd Green
Communications & Media Manager
Mobile: +60 19-384 0556

Dianne Pierre
Deputy Communications & Media Manager
Mobile: +44 7961 714540

ABOUT BWF

The Badminton World Federation (BWF) is the international governing body of the sport of badminton, recognised by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and the International Paralympic Committee (IPC). It was originally the International Badminton Federation (IBF) which was founded on 5 July, 1934, before being rechristened the Badminton World Federation in 2006.

The purpose and objectives of BWF include regulating, promoting, developing and popularising the sport of badminton throughout the world and organising, conducting and presenting international events at the highest level.

The BWF's vision is to make badminton a leading global sport accessible to all – giving every child a chance to play for life. Its mission is to lead and inspire all stakeholders; to deliver entertainment through exciting events to drive fan experience; and to create innovative, impactful and sustainable development initiatives.

BWF has its headquarters in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, with 196 Member Associations worldwide.

Poul-Erik Høyer is the BWF President and Thomas Lund is the BWF Secretary General.

Websites: www.bwfbadminton.com and www.bwfcorporate.com

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