

# STATE OF PLAY.

VOLUME 1.

## BADMINTON AUSTRALIA

### AUSTRALIAN BADMINTON OPEN



### PARTICIPATION FUNDING



### SUDIRMAN CUP & ARAFURA GAMES RECAP



### WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS COLLIDE



Welcome to the state of play; Badminton Australia's quarterly newsletter giving you a low down of what's happening in Australian badminton. Every quarter we'll give you a brief summary of the major news, events and results in badminton and occasionally some teasers too!

For our inaugural edition we've compiled six short briefs from different areas of badminton that have been some of the big stories of 2019 so far!

## Australian Badminton Open

Where do we start with the 2019 Crown Group Australian Badminton Open (ABO). There were some fantastic highlights on the court and some amazing feats behind the scenes. Venue Manager and Acting Badminton Australia CEO Peter Roberts had a few words to say when reflecting on the ABO for 2019.



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In speaking about the standard of the competition Pete was quick to highlight the context of the ABO with it running for such a long time in Sydney and returning to the Quay centre once again. 'The consistency of venue makes it great for volunteers and spectators alike because it becomes a major item on the calendar in their minds'. One of the hidden successes of the entire tournament was the set-up of the centre, 'the back of house operations ran extremely smoothly' with entire set up completed well on time and the pack up completed before 9pm Sunday night after competition wrapped around 5.30. 'We have a team of extremely experienced volunteers and officials who did an excellent job' said the acting CEO, indeed many of the crew who looked after the set up and pack up have been doing so for 5+ years. 'A massive thank you to all our fantastic volunteers, we could not run an event of this size without you. Also, a huge thank you to all our court officials who work long hours, sometimes back to back on court, an amazing effort'. Similar sentiments from BA Board member and Event Director Loke Poh Wong, adding that a number of people had 'put in more than expected of them' and that 'the 2019 crowd was a testament to the legacy of the ABO and its dedicated coordinators.

Loke Poh also went on to say that the 2019 Crown Group Australian Open was the best event run to date, not only the logistics of the tournament but the quality of the players and standard of play 'not just lots of top ten world ranked players but also the lower players were highly ranked too, hence we have the early round matches going past midnight to complete! High quality matches right from the start'. The standard led to a substantial crowd, 2-3 times larger than previous years and 'for a world tour level 300 tournament it is very good!'.

A great tournament all round with some very high calibre players and contests, it is certainly a valuable competition on the lengthy BWF calendar but holds a special place in the hearts of Australian badminton.

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## Participation Funding

Earlier in the year Badminton Australia put out the call to all states/territories for participation funding expression of interest and four states/territories returned with some fantastic initiatives. The areas that will receive attention as an outcome of this funding are junior participation through Shuttle Time programs, Para/Disability Badminton participation, Cultural and Linguistically Diverse groups, regional and rural clubs, coach education and infrastructure. All areas highlight the challenge that state/territory administrators have in serving the varied and wide-ranging groups that need attention within badminton, and the sport landscape generally. In total it is expected that the funds will engage a minimum of 700 new participants to the sport of badminton outside of the regular engagement that states/territories have already. "It's great to see the want for states and territories to continue to introduce the sport to new players, particularly during a year of change in badminton" Participation Manager Matt Simpson said. "All states and territories do such a fantastic job with engaging people in badminton already, it's a testament to their love of the sport, but for some states and territories to put their hand up and say we can do more is brilliant. We hope that in the future we can see all states and territories in a position where they feel comfortable to put their hand up and say we need more money so we can deliver to more people".

The Sporting Schools program engaged with over 8,000 school children in 2018, prep through to year 8's, and this doesn't include participants in years 9-12 where in some states and territories where these ages are targeted. The spread of badminton as a sport for all is marching on and for 2019 badminton has already reached more than 6,000 children through sporting schools. With the funding provided it's expected that the expanse of badminton will continue to reach new highs for 2019.

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## World Championships and Para-Badminton World Championship Competitors

For the first time ever both Badminton World Championships and Para-Badminton World Championships will be held in the same location at the same time this year. The setting is Basel, Switzerland, where the borders of France, Germany and Switzerland meet, and home to a rich cultural scene. The tournament will be held at the St Jakobshalle venue that can seat up to 9,000 spectators.

For the tournament Australia will be sending 11 athletes, six able body players and five para players. The players are as follows; Daniel Fan (MS), Wendy Chen (WS), Simon Leung (MD, XD), Mitchell Wheller (MD), Gronya Somerville (WD, XD) and Setyana Mapasa (WD). Our Para-Badminton players will be; Caitlin Dransfield, Celine Vinot, Duke Trench-Thiedman, Luke Missen and Grant Manzoney.

No doubt the world championships is one tournament that players will be eagerly preparing for, and one that will be firmly in their competition rosters as a milestone tournament. Players have had from the 29<sup>th</sup> of April 2019 to gain valuable points to boost their rankings ahead of the Olympic and Paralympic games next year in Tokyo. The qualifying period is open for an entire year and was a significant influence on the high-profile players attending the CROWN GROUP Australian Badminton Open earlier last month (June 2019).



*Gronya Somerville, Setyana Mapasa (left) Daniel Fan (centre) and Caitlin Dransfield (right) are all heading to World Championships this year*

## Sudirman Cup & Arafura Games Recap

Only two weeks before the CROWN GROUP Australian Open 9 of the best players in Australia made their way to Nanning, China, to compete in the 16<sup>th</sup> Sudirman Cup. The team that was sent over consisted of; Ashwant Gobinathan, Tiffany Ho, Simon Leung, Louisa Ma, Setyana Mapasa, Jacob Schueler, Sawan Serasinghe, Gronya Somerville and Eric Vuong.

Australia took on our closest rivals first in New Zealand, the Aussie team was able to take the win with four wins and one loss. It was a tighter battle against the Nepalese team taking it to a final game to decide the win, 3-2 in Australia's favour. Our final match was against the Irish team and it was a tight contest all the way through, the XD and MS went the way of the Irish, WS and WD went to the Aussies and the final MD game going the way of the Irish. The final match for the Australian team was against Switzerland which an almost identical finish to the group stages, Switzerland winning 3-2.



*The BA Junior Team at the Arafura Games in Darwin*

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Our open team had a great time at the Sudirman cup, our Junior squad made their way to the Arafura Games held in Darwin and had a challenging but rewarding experience. The BA Juniors saw two defeats but 'dug deep to display true fighting spirit to defeat a strong Malaysian college team'. Stu Rowlands, the current National Junior coach, also believes that the experience of the tournament has benefits for the team, specifically instilling the importance of 'playing for Australia' to ingrain that sense of Australian pride which endures in many of our high-level sport stars.

## **Coaches Fill Up Courses!**

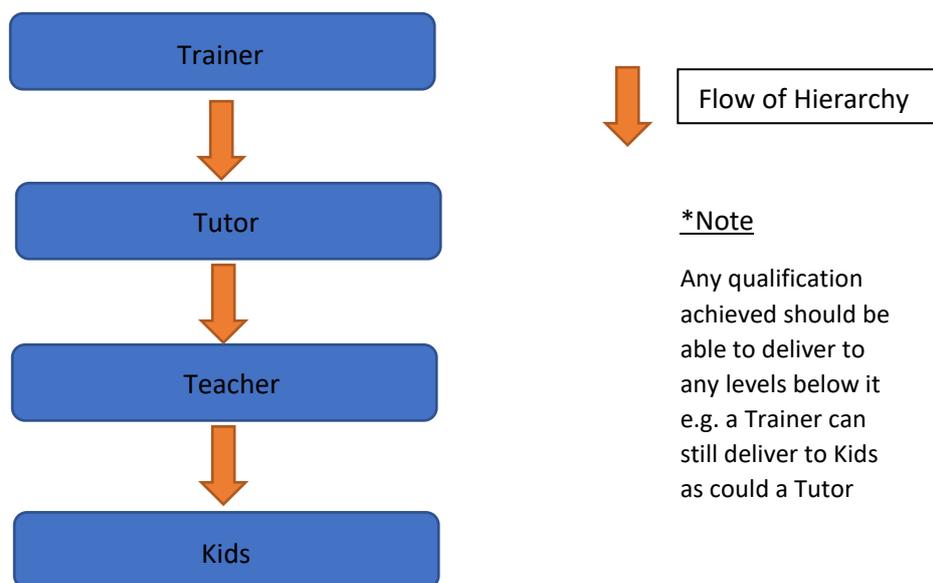
**T**he first six months of 2019 saw a slow start in respect to coaching education programs with little activity within the first three months of the year. However, some challenges prevented these programs being organised and it was clear that the demand was building up by the numbers that have recently completed the subsequent courses.

NSW and Victoria have been able to run a BWF level 1 course, both courses were fully booked out (NSW 16 participants and Vic 16 participants), in fact NSW was oversubscribed with applications which is fantastic. In addition to the BWF level 1 courses, four Shuttle Time Teacher courses have been run across three states (NT, SA and VIC) since March. In total 22 people can now deliver Shuttle Time to kids, great news to see the continued growth in the workforce! A number of courses are yet to commence across the rest of 2019, Tasmania, Western Australia and the ACT are all planned to complete at least one. For reference, last year Australia trained up 120 Shuttle Time teachers, our counterparts in New Zealand managed to edge us out at 125.

One big opportunity that exists within the Australian Shuttle Time landscape is the lack of Trainers, these are the individuals who train Shuttle Time

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Tutors, who in turn train all of our Shuttle Time Teachers. The distinctions can be confusing so check out the diagram below for a visual. There are only 3 Trainers within Australia and Badminton Australia is working with Badminton Oceania and the BWF to improve this number. If you're reading this thinking there is someone who might fit the bill to become a trainer, keep an eye out for further details on a course date!



***The Hierarchy of Shuttle Time Education***

## Women's Doubles Pair Take the Win In Canada!

Our leading Women's double pairing of Gronya Somerville and Setyana Mapasa managed to take first place at the 2019 YONEX Canada Open. The pair had their longest match in the opening match of the round of 32 against Chinese pair Kang Yue and Xie Zhi Ting. A match of three games they lost the first (21-23) but took the second and third, 21-11 and 21-16 respectively. From then on they worked over two more teams in two games, first a pair from Chinese Taipei, a second Chinese pair and a walk over of a Canadian pair. They met up against the South Korean pair of Chang Ye Na and Kim Hye Rin in the final, convincingly taking them down in two games 21-16 and 21-14. A great win for Gronya and Setyana to build their confidence, in a long social media post Gronya thanked the team for their support and the loyal fans who've supported them all the way. A great result for them and great to see the success coming out of Australia in the lead up to the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games.



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Thanks for reading! We look forward to bringing you more news items to keep you up to date with all that has been happening in the world of badminton!