



PRESS RELEASE

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BWF'S STAR CREATION PROGRAMME A SUCCESS

Digital and social media plays an important role in promoting sports participation and generating engagement for fans.

In recognition of the need that the long-term growth of badminton is dependent on creating star players who act as role models for badminton and inspire fans across the world, the Badminton World Federation (BWF) partnered with one of the world's leading digital and social consultancy agencies, [Seven League](#), to deliver its Star Creation Programme.

The Star Creation Programme is designed to help grow both the global popularity of badminton players and of badminton as a sport.

Over the past six months leading athletes Kim Astrup (DEN), Mia Blichfeldt (DEN), Ashwini Ponnappa (IND), Sapsiree Taerattanachai (THA) and Beiwen Zhang (USA) participated in a practical social media tutoring course with the goal to:

- Enhance their social media skills and understanding
- Grow their social media followers
- Generate better engagement with their fans
- Build their personal brand
- Inspire the next generation of players and fans; and
- Increase their brand value

In April 2020, the five players graduated from phase one of the pilot programme taking away with them a number of social media best practices.

"The [Star Creation] Programme was great. I loved being part of it," said Ponnappa.

"The team [at Seven League] helped me understand the importance of social media and interacting with fans.

"I loved the creative ideas that were shared and I have definitely enjoyed posting and being more open about sharing things."

Blichfeldt added: "The programme has given me more confidence and the understanding of how to make good content and get more involved with my followers."

BWF Secretary General Thomas Lund said he hoped each Star Creation athlete would encourage their peers to consider joining the programme.

"Badminton players have a unique opportunity to develop a close relationship with fans.

"We worked with Seven League to develop a programme to help athletes do this so that they can become a star on and off the court.

"We are very satisfied with the results of the pilot programme and we look forward to seeing more players sign up in the coming years.

"Hopefully, this will inspire all our players to become even more active on social media to create even more attention on themselves as stars and badminton in general."

A second batch of players have already begun their weekly sessions with Seven League as part of phase two of the project.

They include Michelle Li, Gronya Somerville, Chirag Shetty, Sikki Reddy and Lu Ching Yao and Yang Po Han.

The next step is to commence advanced interview and media training tips to help prepare athletes for major tournaments like the Olympic Games.

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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 194 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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