



***The Year in Review (2017 -2018)***

From the last Annual General Meeting (AGM) the board of the Trinidad and Tobago Badminton Association (TTBA) continued on the path of moving badminton forward. One of our first ventures was the hosting of the 2017 Caribbean Regional Badminton Confederation (CAREBACO) Championships. Here, we took the opportunity to acquire 10 international standard badminton mats as well as rubber tiles to facilitate the playing of badminton at the National Racquet Centre. We were able to properly cement badminton at the venue and took another step to making it the home for our sport. This also allowed us to increase the asset base of the TTBA. The outfitting of the facility and procurement of the necessary infrastructure allowed Trinidad and Tobago to host our first CAREBACO Championships in 14 years. The hosting of this event also enabled us to expose the maximum number of athletes to the tournament as well to promote the sport of badminton to the general public on a level that has not been done in our recent history. We held, 5 events in 15 days; CAREBACO, junior team event, senior team event, junior and master's individuals, under 19 International and an International Series, this was the largest event ever held in the history of badminton in Trinidad and Tobago. This mammoth task was only possible due to the work of those members of the Local Organizing Committee (LOC) and volunteers. The hard work of the volunteers and athletes allowed Trinidad and Tobago Badminton to have our most successful year in history. This was our display piece for the Ministry of Sport and Youth affairs as well as the Pan American Badminton Confederation which brought us praise for this initiative and the benefits from hosting this event are still being enjoyed today.

Also in August, the TTBA received the letter of award for the hosting of the Pan American Male and Female Team Continental Championships. This would be the first time in the history of Trinidad and Tobago a tournament of this level was being hosted.

Prior to the CAREBACO Championships being hosted Trinidad and Tobago were able to field one of the largest contingents to ever participate at a Pan American Junior Championships. We saw a contingent of parents, athletes and delegates travel to Markham, Canada for the event. Here we continued the initiative taken in 2016 to sponsor two athletes to participate in the Pan American Junior Championships and training camp. We were also represented by two technical officials at the event. The tournament also allowed parents to appreciate the level of competition outside of the Caribbean and what is required to develop our junior athletes. Also at this event, a significant meeting was held with consultant for the Pan American Badminton Confederation Mr. Martijn Van Doormelan. This meeting would bear fruit in the future.

After CAREBACO we saw the newly reformed Secondary Schools Badminton Association (SSBA) host their first tournament for the year 2017. This event allowed 46 schools and 462 students around Trinidad to participate in district qualifying events culminating with the finals being hosted at the National Racquet Centre. For the first year of operating, the figures achieved shows great signs of encouragement for our sport at the school level. Due to the level of success and the efficient operation of the board of the SSBA, the TTBA decided to appoint the SSBA as the coordinator of the Badminton World Federation Shuttle Time program. This opportunity was fully embraced by the SSBA who facilitated the certification of 52 Physical Education Teachers as shuttle time tutors.

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In November we were fortunate to have one of our athletes be selected for a Pan American Development camp being held in Suriname. This opportunity was only made possible due to participation at the Pan American Junior Badminton Championships where the athlete was observed. It was also in November that the president of the TTBA travelled to meet with Mr. Martijn Van Doormelan to negotiate his terms of engagement. Also in November the Board provided the Terms of Reference for the Pan American Male and Female Team Continental Local Organising Committee.

In December preparation began for the Calendar year 2018 as well as review of existing policies with an aim to improve the level of service provided for the badminton fraternity of Trinidad and Tobago.

January began with the hosting of the 2017 awards ceremony. Here we were fortunate to have in our presence the Minister of Sport as well as the director of sport in the Ministry of Sport and Youth affairs. The hosting of this ceremony was only possible due to the benevolence of our sponsors as we face dire economic constraints. In January the TTBA was fully engaged with the visit of the High Performance Technical Director and the preparation of upcoming Pan American Male and Female Team Continental Championships.

Martijn Van Doormelan began his visit by holding sessions with the National Squad and interviewing members of the technical staff. He then proceeded to visit the different clubs interviewing members of the badminton fraternity to obtain as much information from all our stakeholders to provide the board of the TTBA with a report and strategic plan. Martijn spent two weeks in Trinidad performing his assessment of our sport and providing his recommendations.

The Board of the TTBA was appraised of the current situation of badminton in a transparent and impartial manner. The recommendations were taken into consideration and the board committed to working with Strategic plan set out. Next the board provided the report and Strategic plan to the membership to ensure that the assessment and recommendations could be properly communicated. A seminar to have open discussions on the recommendations were held in February. Feedback and recommendations were put forward by the clubs as a productive session was held.

An operational committee was formed to implement the necessary actions to bring the TTBA in line with the plans set out by the report and Strategic plan.

February the TTBA began the task of hosting the Pan American Male and Female Team Championships. This event represented the 2<sup>nd</sup> International event in 6 months, firmly place Trinidad and Tobago as the top destination for badminton tournaments in the Caribbean Region. A fact that was observed by the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs. The event saw teams from eight different countries participate for one spot each in the Male and Female categories to represent our region at the finals to be held in May in Thailand. Apart from the tournament the benefits associated with the hosting of this event included:

- Introduction of new rules by the Badminton World Federation (BWF) utilizing fixed height technology. This course allowed for exposure of local technical officials to BWF training.
- The highest level tournament ever held in Trinidad and Tobago.
- The visit of the president of the Pan American Badminton Confederation who held discussions with the Minister of Sport and members of the executive as to the possibility of a high performance centre in the region.

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- A two-day coaching conference where members of the local coaching fraternity were able to participate in seminars with experts brought in by the Pan American Badminton Confederation.
- A 5-day High Performance Training Camp which exposed two local athletes to training with athletes from around the Pan Am region.
- Meetings with Pan Am officials to discuss improvement of the implementation of the Shuttle Time program.

It should be noted that the TTBA was able to host this event to the satisfaction of Pan Am on a shoe string budget and at one of the most difficult times for logistics in Trinidad and Tobago. Credit must be given to the hard working members of the LOC.

All necessary preparations for the upcoming Annual General Meeting were carried out in February.

Throughout the year, it should be noted that many activities were undertaken to increase the influence of our sport. These included:

- Training and certification of new umpires and referee
- Increase in the assets of the TTBA, mats, tiles, poles, nets, umpire's chairs and projector.
- Successful hosting of CAREBACO 2017
- Record breaking year for medals earned.
- First time in over a decade an athlete qualified for the World Championships
- The opening of a US bank account to transparently account for US currency received
- First time ever to have audited financial reports
- Upgrade to the TTBA website.
- The hosting of the first Secondary Schools Badminton Association Tournament in 5 years
- Training and Certification of 52 new shuttle time tutors
- Exposure of 5 athletes to International training camps
- Historic Hosting of Pan American Male and Female Team Continental Championship
- Coaching conference and high performance camp.
- Progressive consultation by foreign high performance technical director
- Consultation with the Ministry of Tourism to highlight badminton in their upcoming features.
- Increase in the number of clubs applying for membership

### ***Observations***

I have listed below some of the observations that were made over this year of our term.

- As with all sports the focus is always solely on the High Performance level. This is often to the detriment of the other areas necessary for our sport to thrive in a sustainable manner.
- We have a cultural issue in our sport where persons believe that holding a position on the TTBA allows them to focus on their personal agenda and self-promotion at a cost to our sport.
- We have been provided with an opportunity to change the culture if we embrace the paradigm shift provided by the Strategic plan set out for us. It is up to all of us to embrace this change and work together for the sake of all involved in the sport.

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- We are currently in position to see badminton progress in a new direction, with the established home, a functioning SSBA and with a strategic plan outlining how. We have areas to improve and are committed to do so.

### ***The Future***

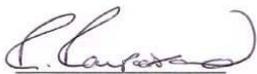
Here I take this opportunity to highlight some of the upcoming ventures of the TTBA

- Increased numbers of tournaments held locally. The aim is to have 6 tournaments per age category by 2020.
- Consultation with clubs to host tournaments with the aim to earn revenue.
- Allocation of training times for the clubs at the National Racquet Centre
- Improved administrative capacity.
- Improved Communication with the membership.
- Fund raising initiatives.
- The hiring of a foreign coach with aim of providing improved technical ability
- Coaching Certification and Shuttle Time Programs
- Increased numbers of Secondary Schools participating in badminton
- Hosting of the 2019 Pan American Junior Championships

These are just some of the activities identified for the year 2018-2019.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all my members of the Board for their time, effort and unwavering belief in this endeavour that we have embarked upon. It will not always be perfect but we are making progress. To our membership we are now at one of the most important junctures of sport in our recent history. We have an opportunity to move our sport forward in a manner that will see the maximum benefit be derived. We have for far too long embarked on a vicious cycle which is not progressive, together we have an opportunity to change that. Be the change you wish to see and together we can take badminton in Trinidad and Tobago to the heights we know it belongs.

Sincerely,



Rahul Rampersad  
President  
Trinidad and Tobago Badminton Association