BWF Introduces ‘Equal Gender Representation’ and ‘four-term’ limit on its President’s position

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The 81st Badminton World Federation (BWF) annual general meeting (AGM) has placed a four-term limit on its President’s position besides approving the introduction of “geographical and gender representation” in its Council. The decision was in line with the International Olympic Committee (IOC)’s recent directive to its National Olympic Committees (NOCs) to maintain gender equality in decision-making positions by 2020. The BWF Membership also passed proposals to include the Chair of the Para Badminton Athletes’ Commission on Council.

Proposal 5.4 concerned gender and continental representation on the BWF Council.Now passed, it means a minimum 30 percent of the Council must be female and likewise a minimum 30 percent male.The 30 percent minimum also applies to each continent's representation on the body.

Two new ordinary Council members will be added - taking the total to 30 - but only 27 members are included in the quotas.

Para-badminton's vice-president, as well as two athlete representatives, are free to be any gender and from any continental area.

The President, their deputy, five vice-presidents and 20 remaining ordinary members must have the following configuration; 10 Asian representatives, nine from Europe, three from the Americas, three representing Africa and two from Oceania.

Given there must be 30 percent gender representation for each continent. For instance, Oceania's two Council members,need to be one woman and one man.

In future elections, if there were not enough Council candidates from a certain gender or region, positions would be left vacant for a year until another election can take place.

BWF president Poul- Erik Hoyer said in a release, “I want to congratulate the Membership for passing the landmark vote to approve the constitutional change. It is to ensure gender equality on the BWF Council and for taking another important step to improve our governance practice by bringing in a vetting process for officials of the BWF.”

In May, the BWF had unveiled a revised international calendar to salvage the remainder of the season.However, with the global health crisis showing no signs of abating, many events were cancelled from the reworked calender.