

'There has been a problem here'

The badminton world scrambles to avoid future scandals. **Wu Ying** and **Tang Zhe** report.

Amid the cacophony of athletes and coaches apologizing after eight shuttlers were disqualified for throwing matches at the London Olympics, another sound cut through.

It was a cry for Olympic organizers to review the badminton format that inadvertently led to the controversy in the first place.

The shockwaves caused by the expulsion of four doubles pairs — including China's top duo of Wang Xiaoli and Yu Yang — triggered a discussion as to who was at fault: Those who broke the rules or those who set up a system that encouraged the behavior.

Popular CCTV news commentator Bai Yansong lashed out at the rules.

"Before we attack our own players, we should think about what they had to face," he said during a CCTV Olympics program.

"Should they, knowing they've already got through to the next round, still play with 100 percent of their energy to lock an uncertain group win so that they can meet their compatriots as early as possible and kill each other? Are they stupid; or is something wrong with their minds?"

"I think the unreasonable rules are the real absurdity here. Any rules by which someone can benefit from losing should be changed, and we should not pin all the blame on the individuals."

A netizen named Paul echoed Bai and wrote on China Daily's website: "If the existing contest structure leads to better chances by losing a match, the committee should rather re-think their contest structure!"

Popular portal Sina.com conducted an online survey of netizens' reactions to the decision. As of Thursday morning, 46.7 percent of the more than 510,000 who responded supported the decision, saying the Olympic spirit should not be tarnished.

About 26.9 percent disagreed, believing the shuttlers didn't break the rules. And nearly 70,000 participants sympathized with their plight.

"We had injuries, we chose to make use of the rules so we gave up that match and we just wanted to play better in the knockout stage," Chinese shuttler Yu Yang wrote on her Tencent Weibo account, retweeting the BWF's decision. "This is the first time the Olympics introduced the round-robin stages. Do you understand athletes' injuries? Four tough years with all those injuries, and you just disqualified us. You ruthlessly shattered our dreams. That's it — not complicated but unforgivable."

Later, she said she was retiring. "This is my last game. Goodbye my beloved badminton," she wrote.

Badminton World Federation Secretary General Thomas Lund said the event's governing body needs to review its regulations to prevent a



Chinese shuttlers Yu Yang (left) and Wang Xiaoli talk at the end of their women's doubles match against Jung Kyun-eun and Kim Ha-na of South Korea on Tuesday. The four players, together with another two South Korean and two Indonesian players, were disqualified from the Games on Wednesday for intentionally losing their final group matches in order to secure better matches in the knockout stage.

reoccurrence.

"The group play has generally been a tremendous success for this tournament — it has created really good matches, and a lot that we've never seen before," Lund said in a news conference announcing the decision.

"But we also have to be clear that there has been a problem here, we have to take that problem very seriously."

The eight shuttlers from China, South Korea, and Indonesia were charged by the BWF with "not using one's best efforts to win a match" and "conducting oneself in a manner that is clearly abusive or detrimental to the sport."

South Korea and Indonesia appealed the disqualification, but the BWF rejected the South Korean appeal. Indonesia withdrew its appeal

later, but called for Olympic organizers to review the format.

"Indonesia always greatly honors the Olympic values and spirit, as well as a fair game," Indonesian Sports and Youth Minister Andi Mallarangeng said in a statement posted on the Indonesian Badminton Association website.

"We respect the Badminton World Federation's decision, but we want the BWF to review the competition system they used."

The scandal put the BWF under fire, and some reports said it would jeopardize the sport's place in the Olympics.

Badminton chief Thomas Lund apologized for the scandal, but insisted the sport's future in the Games was secure.

"No, I am not embarrassed. I am very very sorry it has happened," he

said. "The most important thing is that we have dealt with the issues, and done it in the interests of all the players in the tournament. There has been a very hard consequence for the eight players, but we have 172 players and we must act in the best interests of them all."

"This will not affect the future of badminton as an Olympic sport. We will have fabulous matches in the following days, and medals will be distributed."

But he admitted the BWF should review the format.

"This needs to be a thorough review through our committees and council through next month and year up to Rio 2016," he said.

The Chinese delegation accepted the decision, saying "the behavior

QUOTE ME ON THAT

"Any rules by which some can benefit from losing should be changed, and we should not pin all the blame on the individuals."

BAI YANSONG, CCTV news anchor, commentator

"So, in the end, it could mean that badminton is being taken off the Olympic program in 2020. When something like this happens, it's not good publicity."

THOMAS LAYBOURN, Danish mixed doubles player

"Why would the tournament rules people have (a format) like this? If they just had a knockout round it would all be fine. You lose, and that's it."

LIN DAN, China's top men's player

"This is my last game. Goodbye BWF. Goodbye my beloved badminton."

YU YANG, China's shuttler disqualified by the BWF

"This is the first time the Olympics introduced the round-robin stages, and I didn't fully understand the new rules, so we didn't go all out to compete."

WANG XIAOLI, China's shuttler disqualified by the BWF

of Yu Yang and Wang Xiaoli on the court violated the Olympic ideal and the spirit of fair play. The Chinese delegation feels distressed over this matter."

Li Yongbo, China's badminton head coach, apologized for the scandal on Thursday, saying: "It's me to blame."

Li said he and his players had not fully understood the new format.

"We thought we've already gotten through the round-robin stage," he said. "In order to play better in the following stage, we didn't compete with a real positive attitude."

Xinhua and AFP contributed to the story.

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HOTONWEB

@Ma Lin

"Very harsh competition in sports, especially in the finals between teammates. Can they share the title?"
Chinese table tennis player Ma Lin on the competition between Chinese teammates Ding Ning and Li Xiaoxia

@Zhang Yining

"I know that Ding Ning also plays very well!"

Former Olympic table tennis champion Zhang Yining on Ding losing the finals

@Denghuade

"Wow! 4 million (followers) now! Thank you to all the fans for the love and support. It means a lot to us. Today is another big day for Team China — I hope you will be proud of our efforts against Australia."
Chinese men's basketball coach Bob Donewald on the growing number of fans on his micro blog

@Guo Wenjun

"Is it 8 o'clock London time? I'm still not sleepy."
Guo Wenjun, the Chinese champion in women's 10m air pistol, after returning to Beijing from London

@ladygaga

"@McKaylaMaroney i mean id totally never be ready for 2016. the outfits alone would take 5-6 years of planning. oh and the training!"
International pop icon Lady Gaga showed her appreciation for American gymnast McKayla Maroney

@jtimberlake

"OK...Table tennis is officially my favorite event. #OlympicEventsThatShouldInLoveBeer"
US pop star Justin Timberlake on the women's table tennis final

@usainbolt

"The month of 'glory' is upon us"
Jamaican sprinter Usain Bolt on the upcoming track and field events



@paugasol

"The book that I'm reading talks about adversity and leadership! I'm not sure if there's an English version of it!"

Spanish basketball player Pau Gasol, who spent some time reading ahead of Spain's game against Great Britain

@MichaelPhelps

"Just got a pretty cool phone call on the way to the pool from Mr. President @BarackObama !!! #USA"

US swimmer Michael Phelps, who received a phone call from US President Barack Obama

@themichaelowen

"Huge respect to the Rowers. Anybody who has pushed themselves to exhaustion on a Rowing Machine will know it's the hardest event physically."
British soccer player Michael Owen on the rowing event

@rioferdys

"Team GB are set up to play modern international football, packed the midfield, retaining the ball, attacking with pace from wide."
British soccer player Rio Ferdinand on the British soccer team

@ryanlochte

"Shout out to @Matt_DeLancey the best trainer in the world. Thanks for everything especially those painful Sundays! #hardwork."
US 400m medley swimming gold medalist Ryan Lochte



@sebcoe

"2 golds. Delighted. Winning is infectious."
London Games chairman Sebastian Coe reacting to Britain's first gold medals

London entices Chinese with piece of Olympic legacy

By **CECILY LIU** in London
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With troubles lingering in the eurozone and the global economy, Britain is hoping to lure investments from China by capitalizing on the buzz of the London Olympics.

"There are a number of investment opportunities being promoted to Chinese businesses," said Paul Brickell, an executive director at the London Legacy Development Corp.

LLDC, the planning authority for London's Olympic Park and some of its surrounding areas, has been promoting several projects to Chinese businesses and investors through London & Partners, an investment agency with subsidiaries in Beijing and Shanghai. Opportunities for individual Chinese businesses include two new commercial complexes inside Olympic Park in Stratford City, East London, Brickell said.

The first, called The International Quarter, offers 372,000 square meters of workplace. It will be developed by a joint venture between property firm Lend Lease and London and Continental Railways.

The second, which offers 91,000 sq m of office space, will be developed by iCITY, a joint venture between real estate investor Delancey and data center operator Infinity SDC. This space is currently used as the Olympic media center.

Chinese property developers are also encouraged to invest in the development of 5,000 residential homes in the Royal Docks, south of Olympic Park, Brickell said.

"So we're very much hoping that Chinese businesses will come and put their money in," he said.

Brickell's words came a week after a preliminary estimate from Britain's Office for National Statistics showed that the country is experiencing the longest double-dip recession since quarterly records began in 1955.

On July 27, British Foreign Secretary William Hague and Business Secretary Vince Cable attended a summit organized by the country's inward investment agency for leading Chinese entrepreneurs.

Bilateral trade between China and Britain grew to more than \$60 billion last year and is projected to rise to \$100 billion per year by 2015.

Although no Chinese business has



Paul Brickell, an executive director at the London Legacy Development Corporation

come forward with plans to invest in areas in and around Olympic Park, Brickell stressed foreign investment is welcome, making reference to other international investments that have been finalized.

Westfield, a newly-opened shopping center adjacent to Olympic Park, has thus far attracted Australian and Canadian investors.

After the Games, the development arm of Sweden's IKEA Group will build 1,200 new homes in Stratford in a zone known as Strand East. A real estate unit of Qatar's sovereign wealth fund, in a joint venture with a British developer, is purchasing the rights to the Olympic Village.

"The London Olympics' legacy assets will be open to investors and

businesses of all countries. There is no restriction," Brickell said.

Brickell said an "open and transparent" bidding process would be used to sell off assets that are still under the management of LLDC.

Redevelopment of relatively run-down East London is an important part of London's Olympic legacy. After the Games, LLDC will transform the Olympic Park into a community that includes schools, nurseries, community spaces, health centers and 6,800 new homes, creating 8,000 permanent jobs in the process.

Development since London won the bid to host the Olympics in 2005 also includes transportation infrastructures, like upgraded underground lines, high-speed trains and cable cars. Brickell said the new transport links, new office spaces, a young and mobile workforce and good community facilities will all help East London attract international businesses.

"We're not necessarily asking businesses to invest in East London because of its association with the Olympics, but because the investments we've put in will make this area the future of London," he said.