

Badminton set for line-call review system

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KUALA LUMPUR: Badminton is set to follow tennis and football by introducing technology to review disputed line-calls, officials said Wednesday, in an attempt to ease one of the sport's major flash-points.

A test set-up will be used at next month's Sudirman Cup in Malaysia before the new system goes live at the Indonesian Open in September, the Badminton World Federation (BWF) said in a statement.

“What we are doing is similar to other sports — the rules and principles are essentially the same as sports such as tennis, though the technology and process may differ slightly,” said BWF deputy president Paisean Rangsitkitho. “At the end of the day we want to further enhance the integrity of match play and the decisions which are made.”

However, the new system remains very much in the planning stages with the BWF still undecided on which of the various available technologies to use, just a month from the start of the Sudirman Cup. “This decision is more about the rules than (about) the exact technology,” Rangsitkitho said. “We are still considering various options but it will be a camera-based system which makes it possible for a line-call referee to reassess the call with slow-motion technology.

“We want to get the mechanics of this operation working properly and ensure that both players and match officials understand how it should be done, step by step. That's our priority right now.”

Britain's Hawk-Eye system has become part of the landscape in top-level tennis, and is also well established in international cricket, although India, which wields great financial clout, remains suspicious.

Line-calls are a perennial bone of contention in badminton, with players often complaining about officials making erroneous or biased decisions.

In one notorious incident at the 2002 Asian Games in South Korea, Indonesian star Taufik Hidayat stormed off the court after protesting that judges were favoring home hope Shon Seung-Mo, causing a long delay.
