

# Olympic Badminton Teams Disqualified

By Ryan Yuen  
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Four female badminton pairs, the top seeds from China, one from Indonesia and two from South Korea, have been ejected from the Olympics for trying to lose matches on Tuesday. They were kicked out of the tournament the next day and have been charged 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," by the Badminton World Federation (BWF).

The players were accused of "not doing their best to win a match and abusing or demeaning the sport" by the BWF so that they could play less challenging opponents in future matches. Their continuous serves to the net and returns out of bounds made it apparent that all four pairs were not trying their best. Spectators replied with boos and downward pointing thumbs, expressing their anger towards the players for their awful performance and sportsmanship. All the players had been qualified for the quarterfinals before the matches on Tuesday, not giving them many benefits of winning and making the more favorable choice to seem like losing.

China lost the match to South Korea 21-14, 21-11, proving themselves to be the better losers and successfully getting into the less challenging side of the draw to avoid playing China's number two seeded pair.

The Chinese doubles pair gave their apologies for their actions after their disqualification.

"I think firstly we should apologize to the Chinese audience, because we did not demonstrate the Olympic spirit. ... We did not give the audience a game that fully demonstrated our skills," Yu said. "And it really resulted in a lot of negative influence."

Yu's partner Wang Xiaoli then added "We didn't take each competition seriously and follow the Olympic spirit of 'higher, faster and stronger' as professional athletes."

"The behavior by Yu Yang and Wang Xiaoli on court violated the Olympics ideal and the spirit of fair play," the Chinese Olympic leaders said in a statement released to the Xinhua news agency. "The Chinese delegation feels distressed over this matter."

China's Yu Yang, defending champion of the Olympics took this matter further and announced after her team's disqualification that she would retire from badminton.

"This is my last game. Farewell Badminton World Federation. Farewell my dear badminton" said Yu on the Tencent Microblogging Service.

The Chinese head coach Li Yongbo expressed his sorrow and took all the blame for the actions of Yu Yang and Wang Xiaoli.

"As the head coach, I owe the fans and the Chinese an apology," Li Yongbo said, "Chinese players failed to demonstrate their fighting spirit of the national team. It's me to blame."

What happened on Tuesday led to an intense debate on whether the badminton system was poorly designed and the players were just practicing their tactics or whether the players really failed the Olympic spirit.

"Especially for the audience," China's Lin Dan, Olympic men's champion in singles said, "This is definitely not within the Olympic spirit. But like I said before, it's not one-sided. Whoever sets the rule should make it knockout so whoever doesn't try will just leave the Olympics."