



SUHANDINATA CUP DRAW – MALAYSIA GUNNING FOR REVENGE

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Despite a 3-2 loss in the recent Asian Junior Championships team event final, Malaysia's Ow Yao Han firmly believes that Malaysia has what it takes to turn the tables on defending champions China in the Suhandinata Cup on 16-25 April in Guadalajara, Mexico.

The Suhandinata Cup is the World Junior Team Championships and will be contested by 24 teams while the individual events for the Bimantara Cup has attracted a record 40 Member Associations.

The draw for the Suhandinata Cup was conducted in a hotel in Kuala Lumpur on Friday witnessed by Badminton World Federation Secretary General Stuart Borrie, BWF Events Director Darren Parks, Badminton Association of Malaysia General Manager Kenny Goh and members of the media.

Also present at the draw were Yao Han and his former partner Chooi Kah Ming who won the World Junior Championships men's doubles title in Malaysia last year.

Yao Han, who will be making the trip to Guadalajara for the World Juniors, said Malaysia was unfazed with the prospect of taking on China again.

"We lost to them in the team final in the Asian Junior Championships but I believe we are strong enough to beat them," said Yao Han who will be playing with a new partner as Kah Ming over-aged.

The 24 teams will be divided into four groups with each group further divided into two sub-groups. The winners of the sub-groups will play each other to decide the overall winner of the group who will then progress to the semi-finals.

China, who were drawn in Group W1 are likely to take on Japan (W2) to decide Group W champions while Malaysia, in Group Z 1, will most probably play India (Z2) to decide who tops Group Z. The winners of Group W will play the winners of Group X in the semis while Group Y and Group Z champions will square off in the second semi-finals which means China is likely to play Indonesia in the semi-final while Malaysia will probably take on Thailand or Korea in the last four.

"I will also be playing with a new partner this year and we are confident of a good performance in Mexico," added Yao Han.

"The aim is to win and we will play our best."

China, who are the No 1 seeds, beat Malaysia 3-2 en route to the Asian Junior Championships team gold with the tie being decided in the women's doubles. Besides China, the other teams in Group W1 are France and hosts Mexico.

Malaysia will have Singapore and Dominican Republic in Group Z1.

"The BWF is pleased to note that the Pan American continent will be represented by 12 teams while Asia and Europe will also have 12 teams each," said Borrie.



“The Championships has generated a lot of interest in the Pan Am region and that is a positive development for badminton.”

The Suhandinata Cup will run from 16 to 19 April followed by a rest day before the Bimantara Cup commences on the 20th.

Groups:

W1: China, France, Mexico; **W2:** Japan, Germany, Austria;

X1: Indonesia, Canada, South Africa; **X2:** Chinese Taipei, England, Peru

Y1: Thailand, Netherlands, Puerto Rico; **Y2:** South Korea, Hong Kong, Turkey

Z1: Malaysia, Singapore, Dominican Republic; **Z2:** India, Denmark, USA

ABOUT THE SUHANDINATA CUP

In December 2008, the Badminton World Federation Council unanimously agreed to re-name the World Junior Team Championships as the Suhandinata Cup.

This is in recognition of the immense contribution and commitment of the Suhandinata family, namely Suharso Suhandinata, who played a key role in the unification of the then split International Badminton Federation and World Badminton Federation in the 80s.

A former Council member, Suharso Suhandinata’s efforts, together with several other members, in unifying the two bodies was a significant step towards the sport’s inclusion in the 1992 Barcelona Games. His two sons, Justian and Juniarto, are also no strangers to the badminton fraternity.

As a former national player and IBF vice president from 1986-2002, Justian was instrumental in organising the World Junior Championships from 1983 to 1991.

He enlisted the help of the Bimantara Group to sponsor the championships, hence the five trophies for the individual events, hence the individual championships is also known as the Bimantara Cups.

Justian was recently elected as a BWF Council member at this year’s Annual General Meeting in Guangzhou.

Even Justian’s wife, Poppy Tumengkol, is involved in the sport as she represented Indonesia in the Uber Cup from 1968 to 1974.

His brother Juniarto, also a former national player, is now active as a BWF certificated Referee and has officiated in numerous tournaments. He is also currently serving as a vice president of Persatuan Bulutangkis Seluruh Indonesia.

The family also run the Tangkas Badminton club, one of the leading badminton clubs in Indonesia. The club can also proudly boast of having produced several world and Olympic champions.

Players like Icuk Sugiarto, Hermawan Susanto, Ricky Subagja, Remy Mainaky, Joko Suprianto, Luis ponggoh, Verawaty Fajrin are all products of Tangkas Badminton Club.