

## World Masters Games 2017 – Fun, Medals, and great Badminton in Auckland New Zealand

### Impressions by Ian Bishop (RA Badminton Club)

The 2017 World Masters Games was held in Auckland New Zealand 21<sup>st</sup> April 2017 to 30 April 2017 with over 28,000 athletes from more than 102 countries competing in various sports.

The RA Badminton Club was well represented by 2 of its members:  
Angelina Lee-Chan competing in the +55 “B” Group won Team.

Ian Bishop competing in the +65 “A” Grade won Team Gold and Mens Singles Silver and Mixed Doubles Bronze (with Lianying Cai USA).



Left to Right: Rose Lei (USA), Ian Bishop (Canada), Curt Dommeyer (USA), John Wong (New Zealand), Frits Mainaky (Indonesia), Sue Dommeyer (USA), Lianying Cai (USA).

The Badminton competition was capped at 1200 entrants playing in “A”, “B”, “C” levels with both a Team Championship and then individual Championships . The level of play was outstanding and for those people playing both Team and Individual events, very very testing of your training. The “A” and

“B” levels were played at the Auckland Badminton Centre which had 12 outstanding courts (almost but not quite as good as the RA Badminton Club Courts).

From my personal point of view (Ian Bishop) it was a fantastic trip – I managed to get an Exit Row seat on the flight out – 13 hours of extra leg room – and some great food (and a beverage or 2) and arrived in Auckland to a very sunny sky and warm weather which was great because I had shoveled snow just before leaving Ottawa thanks to our last snowfall of the season.

Stayed 2 days in The Downtown Best Western Hotel and had a great chance to see Auckland and the dynamic people that made up this city of 1.5 million. After 2 days it was off to stay with my host for the next 10 days – Mr. John Wong – who put our whole team up in his home (7 athletes, a wife, 3 friends just in town for the games and 2 cats) wow! What a Crazy household this became. The playing venue was just a 10 minute walk from John’s home but it was all downhill going and way steeper coming back – trying to walk there with playing gear was not bad but after a few hard matches and wet clothing it was an SOB to get back.

The Badminton was fantastic with so many players from countries where badminton is like hockey is here – there were no easy matches and the body paid a very high price to keep going out and having fun playing day after day (yeh!).

The highlight of the Team matches was watching a team of European players who were fantastic, playing a team of Indonesians led by former World Champion Tony Gunawan and Harijanto Arbi – the skill, power and control was unbelievable.

The highlight of the individual events was surviving them – the final day was very rough with Doubles and Mixed Semis (plus finals or bronze medal matches) and a Mens Singles final – 5 matches against very high level, skilled players - all in all too much for my body.

The flight back was bad – stuck in Row 55 and in a centre seat for 13 hours and then a chance to tell customs why I was bringing back \$8 New Zealand of cheese and then having my medals in my carryon get the security screeners all excited – not in a good way.

All in all a fantastic trip with so many memories – the time spent flying, the city of Auckland, the great new friends made over the 16 days there but mainly the effort Mr. John Wong put into making this visit to his home so magnificent – meeting his friends and sharing time at their homes, the great food (including but not limited to Chicken feet, Jellyfish and a whole fish that just disappeared).

All in all Yeh! – Bring on Japan in 2021.

