**THREE NEW SPORTS PROPOSED FOR THE BIRMINGHAM 2022 COMMONWEALTH GAMES**

Women’s T20 cricket is one of three new sports that could be added to the programme of events at Birmingham 2022, after proposals were given approval by the Commonwealth Games Federation’s Executive Board.

Under the proposals, beach volleyball and Para table tennis have also been recommended for inclusion in the programme, in a move that could see more medals available for women and more para-sports included, than at any other previous edition of the Commonwealth Games.

The addition of women’s cricket to the schedule is likely to be popular not only with spectators locally in Birmingham, but also for fans across competing nations, with 90% of the sport’s one billion fans worldwide thought to reside in the Commonwealth.

Birmingham’s Edgbaston Stadium, where all of the women’s cricket matches would be played, is a world-class venue that is no stranger to staging major cricket events and is currently hosting matches at the ICC Cricket World Cup and, in just a few weeks, will host the opening Test of the Ashes series. It’s also home to Warwickshire, Birmingham Bears and a team in The Hundred, the new ECB competition that’s set to launch next year.

It is expected that the inclusion of the new sports will bring a young and diverse audience to the Games, a pivotal factor in the selection of beach volleyball. Boasting a full stadia throughout both the London 2012 Olympic Games and Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games competitions, it is believed that beach volleyball could enjoy similar success for Birmingham 2022. Teamed with its broad appeal, it was felt the inclusion of the sport could bring an added energy and dynamism to the programme.

Para table tennis, meanwhile, could be integrated into the existing table tennis programme, easily enabling the addition of this sport. Its introduction would further the diversity of the programme by showcasing an unprecedented eighth para-sport.

**Ian Reid, CEO of Birmingham 2022 said:** “Ever since the sports programme for the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games was announced, there has been interest from all five optional sports that were not originally selected by Birmingham’s bid team and we are grateful to all of the sports for their participation and enthusiasm during this review process.

“Our recommendation of adding women’s cricket, beach volleyball and Para table tennis is the result of a thorough review and we believe these sports would help us to enhance the existing programme and reach new audiences, while showcasing the sports to our local community, spectators and fans across the world, watching on TV.

“It’s also a selection that could help ensure that the 2022 Commonwealth Games will be the most inclusive in history, with a potential for the largest ever para-sports programme and more female medallists than ever before, representing a great story not just for Birmingham 2022, but for women’s sport in general.”

The three sports were chosen to be added to the programme following presentations from national and international governing bodies to an ‘Additional Sports Review Panel’, whose recommendations were then approved by the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games board.

These recommendations were then sent to the Commonwealth Games Federation, for consideration by both their Sports Committee and Executive Board and, now they’ve given the green light, the plans will be put to a final vote of the Commonwealth Games Federation’s General Assembly, which is made up of the 71 member Commonwealth Games Associations.

**CGF President, Dame Louise Martin DBE, said:** “We welcome the proposal from Birmingham 2022 to include the three additional sports of women’s cricket, beach volleyball and Para table tennis at the Games. Following a careful review, the CGF Executive Board agreed to recommend to our Commonwealth Games Associations (CGAs) that they approve the proposed sports joining the programme. However, for the sports to be confirmed, we will need to receive a positive response from a minimum of 51% of the CGAs.

“We must respect this process and hope to make a positive announcement in late July or early August following the conclusion of the vote.”

Once the outcome of the General Assembly’s vote is known a second announcement will be made.

[ENDS]

**Notes to editors:**

**About the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games**

* The Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games will be staged from 27 July to 7 August – twenty years after the Manchester 2002 Commonwealth Games and ten years on from the London 2012 Olympic Games. It will be the biggest sport and culture event ever to be staged in the West Midlands. More information about the Games can be found at [www.birmingham2022.com](http://www.birmingham2022.com)

**About the proposals**

* The proposed additional sports have been selected by a panel of representatives from the Birmingham 2022 Organising Committee, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, Birmingham City Council and Commonwealth Games England.
* The Review process was fair, logical and transparent and conducted as an open tender process. Key criteria were set, written submissions invited, and face-to-face presentations made to the panel from each sport. The criteria included: financial considerations; the availability of suitable venues; the potential for additional revenue streams from ticket sales and/or sponsorship; as well as alignment with the Commonwealth Games Federation Constitution and with the objectives of Games Partners. Submissions from each of the sports were reviewed and evaluated and a report was then presented to the Birmingham 2022 Board.
* The five sports and disciplines involved in this process were: Archery (Recurve); Cricket; Shooting (Clay Target, Full Bore, Pistol and Small Bore); ParaTable Tennis and Beach Volleyball.
* Of the optional sports (disciplines) to be considered, Archery (Recurve) and Shooting (Clay Target, Full Bore, Pistol & Small Bore) were not successful in their proposal to be added to the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games sports programme.
* Representatives of the sports (disciplines) provided extensive materials and presented well to the Panel. However, the Panel determined that factors such as the para-sport element of table tennis, commercial benefits, broader appeal to broadcast viewers and spectators, the showcasing of iconic Birmingham venues and the positive effect on the atmosphere and festival feel of the Games were more prevalent in the other sports (disciplines) considered.
* All five of these sports are on the CGF’s list of optional sports for the Games and they are the sports that were not included in Birmingham’s successful bid for the 2022 Commonwealth Games. The Additional Sports Review process was established following enthusiasm shown by all five sports, after the Games was awarded to Birmingham in December 2017.
* Although the CGF Executive Board has approved the recommendations, they must now seek the agreement of their General Assembly because, if accepted, these additions would mean that Birmingham 2022 would exceed the CGF’s agreed limit for the number of athletes taking part in optional sports and would also mean the inclusion of six team sports at the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games, as opposed to the CGF’s current limit of four.

**For more information about the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games, please contact:**

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