



BWF World Championships 2026 Draw: Loh Kean Yew Faces Brian Yang as Singapore's Champion Targets New Delhi Glory

Description

The draw for the **BWF World Championships 2026** has been conducted, and Singapore's Loh Kean Yew – the defending champion from 2021 – has been handed a testing but navigable opening assignment. The former world No. 1 will face Canada's Brian Yang in the first round as he bids to reclaim the sport's most prestigious individual title when the tournament gets underway in New Delhi from 17 to 23 August 2026.

Seeded fifth at the tournament, Loh heads into New Delhi as one of the genuine medal contenders, carrying the hopes of Singapore badminton on his shoulders once again.



Loh Kean Yew in action at the KFF Singapore Badminton Open 2026. The former world champion is targeting glory in New Delhi (Â© Singapore Badminton Association)

The Draw: Loh Kean Yew vs Brian Yang

Loh's first-round opponent, Brian Yang, is a capable player from Canada who competes regularly on the BWF World Tour. While Yang does not carry the same profile as the top seeds, first-round matches at the World Championships are never straightforward – players at this level are all capable of an upset, particularly in a best-of-three format that leaves little room for complacency.

Loh has plenty of experience at the World Championships, having won the title in 2021 in Huelva, Spain – a performance that announced Singapore's arrival as a genuine force in men's singles badminton. Since that triumph, he has continued to compete at the highest level, [reaching the final of the KFF Singapore Open 2026](#) before a narrow defeat to France's Alex Lanier on home soil.

The [confirmation of Loh's fifth seeding](#) for New Delhi underscores his consistent performances over the past 12 months and the respect with which the badminton world regards the Singaporean.

Loh's Road to the Title

As fifth seed, Loh occupies a challenging but not unfavourable section of the draw. Should he progress through the opening rounds as expected, he is likely to face stiffer tests in the quarterfinals and beyond, with the higher seeds from China, Indonesia, and Denmark potentially crossing his path.

The top seed Shi Yu Qi of China enters New Delhi as the tournament favourite, and a potential semifinal clash between Loh and one of the Asian powerhouses would capture Singapore's full attention. Loh has shown in recent tournaments – particularly his run at the India Open earlier this year – that he is more than capable of beating elite opponents when at his best.



Loh Kean Yew with Singapore national badminton coaching staff in 2026 preparation has been central to his renewed push for world glory (© Singapore Badminton Association)

Singapore's Badminton Ambassador

Loh Kean Yew's story is one of Singapore sport's most compelling. When he won the 2021 BWF World Championships as a virtual unknown at the age of 24, he became not just Singapore's first world badminton champion, but one of the most unlikely champions the sport had ever seen. The victory in Huelva was greeted with an outpouring of national pride back home, and Loh has carried that legacy with him ever since.

In the years since, the Singaporean has worked to cement his place among the sport's elite. His world ranking has fluctuated as the tour's landscape has shifted, with new challengers from China and the established powers of Indonesia, Denmark, and Malaysia maintaining the relentless pressure that characterises men's singles badminton at the top level. But Loh has demonstrated time and again that his 2021 triumph was no fluke – it was the product of elite athleticism, smart tactical thinking, and an unshakeable competitive mentality.

At the [KFF Singapore Open 2026](#), Loh captured the hearts of his home fans with a brilliant run to the final, eventually losing a tight match to Lanier. The performance was a reminder of what he is capable of – and a signal that his hunger for major titles is as strong as ever.

The Tournament: New Delhi 2026

The BWF World Championships return to India for 2026, with New Delhi hosting what is expected to be one of the most hotly contested editions in recent memory. The tournament runs from 17 to 23 August, with early rounds beginning the week and the finals scheduled for the weekend.

The draw spans all five disciplines – men's singles, women's singles, men's doubles, women's doubles, and mixed doubles – and India will be hoping for strong performances from its own contingent on home soil, led by men's singles contender H. S. Prannoy and rising doubles partnerships.



Singapore's badminton contingent have been in fine form ahead of the World Championships, with the KFF Singapore Open showing the depth of home talent (© Singapore Badminton Association)

For Singapore, all eyes will be on Loh Kean Yew. The 28-year-old is at an age where his physical peak should align with his accumulated match experience – a potent combination for a player who has already demonstrated he can win the biggest prize in the sport.

Form and Preparation

Loh’s preparation for New Delhi has included careful tournament selection on the BWF World Tour, with the Singapore Badminton Association (SBA) and coaching staff focused on ensuring he arrives in India physically fresh and mentally sharp. His recent results – including the India Open semifinal and Singapore Open final – have confirmed that his form is trending in the right direction at exactly the right time.

The conditions in New Delhi in August – warm, with the humidity that Loh and many Southeast Asian players are accustomed to – should suit the Singaporean’s athletic, high-tempo style. He has historically performed well in such environments and will be hoping to make the most of any advantage they offer.

Can Singapore Produce Another World Champion?

The question that every Singapore badminton fan is asking ahead of New Delhi is simple: can Loh do it again? The draw has given him a workable opening, his form is encouraging, and his motivation is unquestionable. But the World Championships is the sport’s ultimate test, and the path to the title runs through the world’s very best.

Singapore will be watching with pride and expectation. Whatever the outcome, Loh Kean Yew’s presence as a seeded contender at the world stage is a testament to how far Singapore badminton has come – and a reminder of what is possible when a small nation dares to dream big.

BWF World Championships 2026 at a Glance

- **Tournament:** BWF World Championships 2026
- **Venue:** New Delhi, India
- **Dates:** 17–23 August 2026
- **Singapore’s entry:** Loh Kean Yew (Seed 5, Men’s Singles)
- **First round:** Loh Kean Yew vs Brian Yang (Canada)

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