

CHERISH RETI IMPARTS HER UMPIRING WISDOM ON INTERNATIONAL DAY OF SPORT FOR DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE

Leadership

Last updated: October 12, 2021



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Badminton brings communities together so that everyone can reap the physical and emotional benefits while living the values of development and peace. Cherish Reti, was part of Samoa's national junior team which competed in the VICTOR Oceania Championships 2019. Reti continued to devote her time to the sport, taking on the Pacific Junior Umpire award and umpiring at the Samoa 2019 Pacific Games, before earning a sport on the Pacific Technical Official Development programme.

Every year on April 6, the United Nations and International Olympic Committee celebrate the International Day of Sport for Development and Peace. The day acknowledges sport's ability to act as a vehicle for change in promoting development and peace.

In 2021, it comes as no surprise that the theme is #OnlyTogether which focuses largely on the pandemic and how we need to reaffirm the place of sport in the recovery from the pandemic and beyond.

Badminton is a fine example of a sport that promotes social cohesion and opportunities to bring communities together so that everyone can reap the physical and emotional benefits of the game and uphold the values of development and peace.

Cherish Reti, was part of Samoa's national junior team which competed in the VICTOR Oceania Championships 2019. Taking a liking to the sport, Reti continued to devote her time to the sport, taking on the Pacific Junior Umpire award and umpiring at the Samoa 2019 Pacific Games, before earning a sport on the Pacific Technical Official Development programme which included an invite to gain international experience at the Continental Championships just one year later.

Alongside her brother, Joel, the Reti's flew to Ballarat to gain experience and learn from Oceania's other talented technical officials.

Their experience umpiring in Ballarat was timed just before the COVID-19 pandemic seized control on an international scale, with the VICTOR Oceania Championships 2020 being one of the final tournaments to take place before the

tournament calendar faced major disruption.

However, following Samoa's local government's initial lockdowns, quarantine, and monitoring of the situation, lockdowns started to ease (other than closed borders) allowing for a relatively fast return to the courts, in comparison to many other countries around the world.

Seizing the opportunity, Cherish jumped back onto the umpire chair when Samoa Badminton Federation launched some tournament initiatives earlier this year, including the 'Boss of the Court' competition – promoting the sport and the rules, while upholding the values of development and peace to deliver a successful event.

“It was great to be back on court umpiring again, I was excited to be able to do it again because I enjoy umpiring more than playing, and the fact that umpiring has helped build my confidence in speaking to people and being assertive and firm in decision making”

“My brother and I always attend training which is usually held from Tuesday-Saturday at the multipurpose gym and we are always asked by the players to umpire their social games. This is how we remember the skills we learned from when we umpired for the Pacific Games and the Oceania Games that was held the previous year”

Their enthusiastic return to the court allowed them to unite players and promote development through sharing knowledge with other players and aspiring umpires who still have a lot to learn about badminton.

“The Boss of the Courts Tournament was a great opportunity for my brother and me to teach the basics of umpiring to players who enjoyed and had the potential to be recruited as future umpires. We taught the players the basics such as the announcements for individual or team events, the types of service faults and how to call them if you're the umpire. In addition, they were taught the importance of scorekeeping, watching the game properly and emphasize that when they go on the court that what the umpire says, you have to listen”

“For future umpires or those who hope to be umpires that it is a fun and thrilling event to be a part of in terms of witnessing the different types of skills demonstrated by the players when they are on the court and the fact that you are able to witness firsthand the determination of the players to make their countries proud as well as themselves. Furthermore, I would also let them know that umpiring is not an easy job because you have to make sure that you are confident in the calls you make, watch the game and make sure that your line umpires make the right calls but that it is worth it in the end when you learn new skills from the players and the umpires you work with are able to teach you new things as well”, says Cherish.