



**SPORT
NEW ZEALAND**
IHI AOTEAROA

Sport Season Transition Guidelines

—
Winter to Summer Sport
September 2021

Background

The timing of the current outbreak of Covid-19 has again forced NZ into lockdown at a time where we are approaching the transition from winter to summer sport. This presents a number of challenges for both the rangatahi participating in sport and those charged with organising community and school sport. For that reason it is not your traditional season transition period.

Purpose of Guidelines

The purpose of these simple guidelines is to provide some guidance and clarity to administrators and organisers at both a national and regional level as they wrestle with decisions regarding cancelling or rescheduling community sport fixtures that have been affected by the lockdown. We also appreciate that there are likely to be different regional / local approaches due to different alert levels,

These guidelines should be regarded as an update to the original 2020 Season Transition Guidelines which were issued last year and can be accessed at <https://sportnz.org.nz/covid-19-response/advice-guidance-and-resources/sport-season-transition-guidelines>

Guidelines

- In keeping with Balance is Better principles the key consideration should always be what is in the best interests of the participant, rather than the immediate needs of the sport or organisation.
- Balance is Better aims to promote the opportunity for participants to experience a range of sports for as long as possible. A key factor in allowing this is avoiding clashes between winter and summer sports whenever possible.
- This traditional seasonality of sports is also reinforced by three important practical considerations:
 - a. Councils and Territorial authorities require a time window between seasons to prepare and maintain grass fields to an acceptable standard.
 - b. Secondary school sport is organised on the basis of winter sport in Terms 2 & 3 and the holidays that follow, with summer sport in terms 4 & 1 and the holidays that follow.
 - c. Schools are also challenged with providing enough time for rangatahi to complete their academic programme. Completion of internal course work and exam preparation in particular have been negatively impacted by the lockdown.
- For these reasons the starting point for considering what to do in regard to national and community sport tournaments or competitions that have been lost due to the lockdown should be cancellation rather than rescheduling. This provides early surety for rangatahi, their parents and whanau, and summer sports codes that are preparing for the start of their season.
- School Sport NZ has formally adopted this position and will not sanction any National Secondary School competitions that are rescheduled into Term 4 from the winter sport season. Sport NZ fully supports this position and would encourage NSOs to take the approach.
- However, it is recognised that most community sport is delivered at a regional and local level and that in some cases it may be possible to reschedule some fixtures without impacting on ground preparation or next-season arrangements (including pre-season trials and exchanges).

These cases should be treated as the exception rather than the rule and in all such cases administrators should consider carefully:

- a. Is this really based on participant demand?
- b. Is it scheduled in such a way as to avoid a clash with summer sports?

Contact us

For further guidance regarding any season transition issues please do not hesitate to contact:

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