

Contents

Coverage	6
The Media	17
Portrayal	28
Appendix One: Methodology	36
Appendix Two: Programme and publication list	37
Appendix Three: New Zealand media	38

About this report

This is the third annual report from the Sport New Zealand Ihi Aotearoa (Sport NZ) and Isentia study of gender balance in sports news coverage in Aotearoa New Zealand.

The Sport NZ – Isentia study involves human analysis of around one-third of all sports coverage, selected randomly each day.

This includes print, broadcast and online, but excludes match broadcast and live blogging of sports fixtures. As a result, Spark Sport and Sky Sport are not included in this report.

Summary

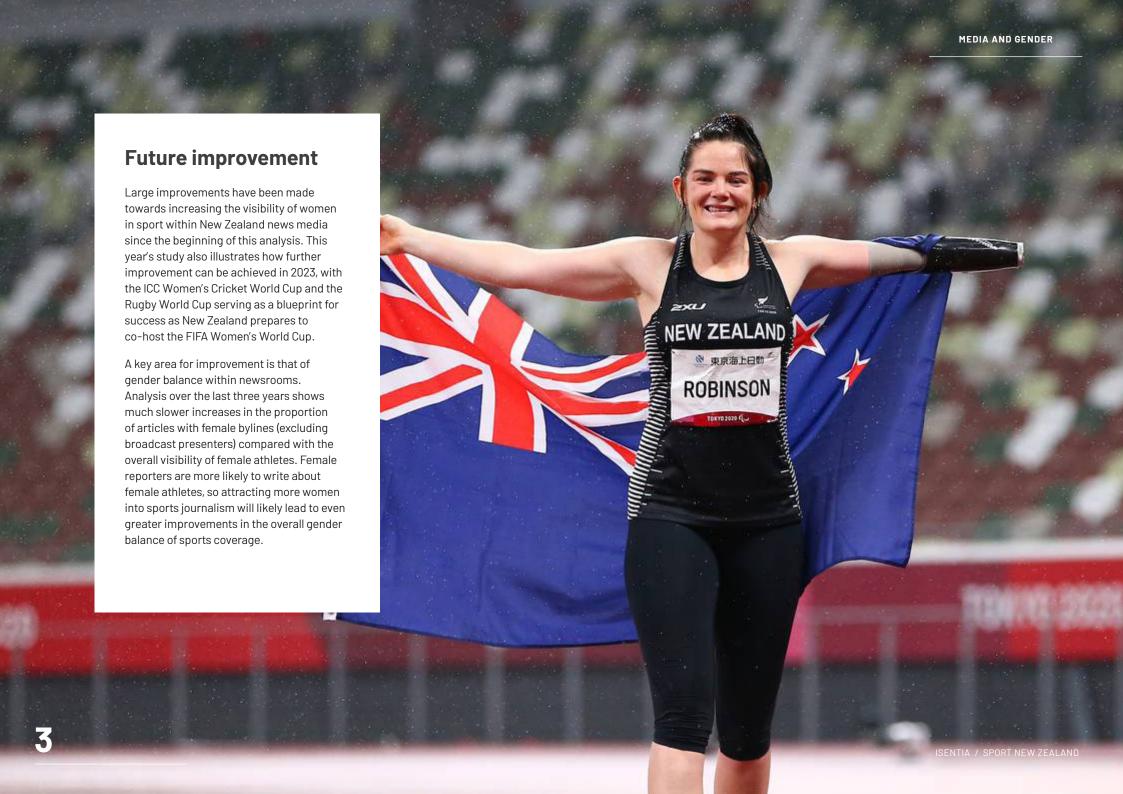
This study shows significant advances in the balance of women's sport in New Zealand media for a second consecutive year, increasing from 21% in 2021 to 28% in 2022. Over the three years of the study, it has risen by 13% (from 15% in 2020).

Improvements were driven by strong interest in the two world cups hosted locally in 2022, the ICC Women's Cricket World Cup and the Rugby World Cup. However, when these two events, and the Birmingham Commonwealth Games were excluded, gender balance still increased to 23% in 2022.

The quality and depth of women's sports coverage continues to grow along with the volume of reporting. Topics of discussion have broadened over the last two years, with an increased focus on training and preparation, as well as results. While female athletes previously may have had to achieve success to generate media interest, a growing proportion of coverage with narratives around disappointment and struggle suggest media are now more inclined to report on women in sport, regardless of results.

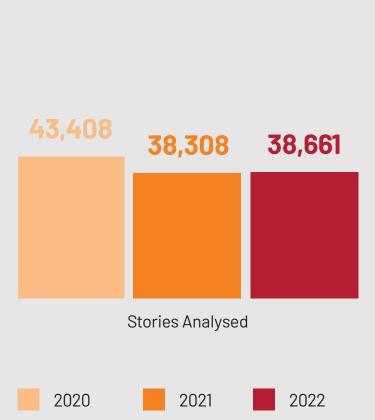
Analysis continues to show minimal framing of female athletes in an unfair or problematic way. Sexualised images of female athletes account for less than 1% of all imagery, with sports photography generally placing both male and female athletes in uniforms or training gear, and in a sporting context. These findings are consistent with analysis in 2020 and 2021, which showed the issue of gender balance in New Zealand sports coverage is largely due to an uneven amount of representation, rather than differences in the way female athletes are portrayed.

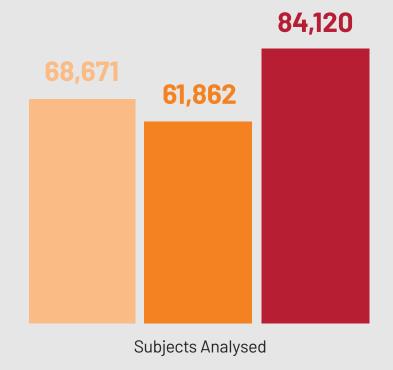
ALL IMAGES © PHOTOSPORT NZ



The Dataset





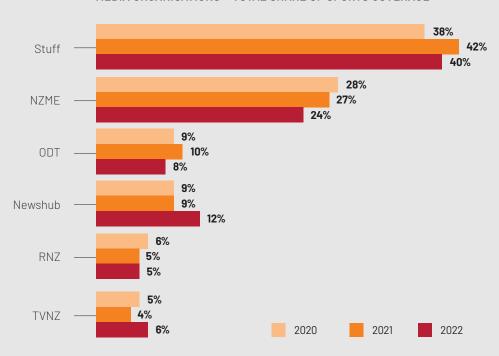


Media sample

This chart shows the total share of voice for each media network across all sports coverage.

This is based on volume and does not take into account any weightings for audience reach or influence. It is a reflection of the amount of relevant sports content produced by each of these networks each day.

MEDIA ORGANISATIONS - TOTAL SHARE OF SPORTS COVERAGE



Note: NZME = New Zealand Media and Entertainment; ODT = Otago Daily Times; RNZ = Radio New Zealand; TVNZ = Television New Zealand.

This section looks at the overall presence of women in sports coverage. This includes the amount of media content that is focused on women's sport, the visibility of women across all sports coverage, and the impact of major sporting events.

The study explores both balance and visibility in sports news coverage. These are different but both are important metrics. Balance is our main measure and is used for reporting throughout this report. This is the percentage of all sports news stories that are focused on women's sport. Visibility is about those who feature in sports news coverage, whether that's athletes, coaches, administrators or fans, and the percentage of all of these who are female.



Overall result

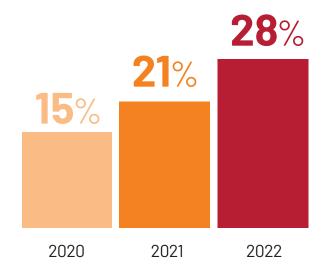
For the first time, more than a quarter of sports coverage in New Zealand (28%) was about women. There was also a greater representation of women in sports coverage, with visibility at 26%.

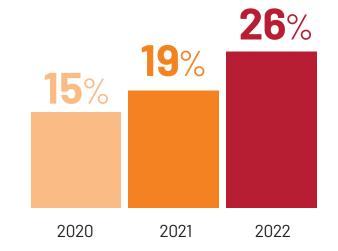
BALANCE

VISIBILITY

GENDER BALANCE - ALL SPORTS COVERAGE

FEMALE VISIBILITY - ALL SPORTS COVERAGE





^{* 2020} is defined as as the time period where the first release of the Media & Gender Study took place, from prepandemic period July 2019 - February 2020 and post-Covid period July -December 2020.

The impact of major sporting events

Women's sport coverage spiked around these major sporting events:







2022 ICC Women's Cricket World Cup

> March-April 2022

2022 Commonwealth Games

> July - August 2022

2022 Rugby World Cup

October-November 2022

These figures represent the proportion of all women's sport within sports news coverage during the tournament periods.

Note: without these three key events the overall gender balance would be 23% - still higher than the 21% in 2021.



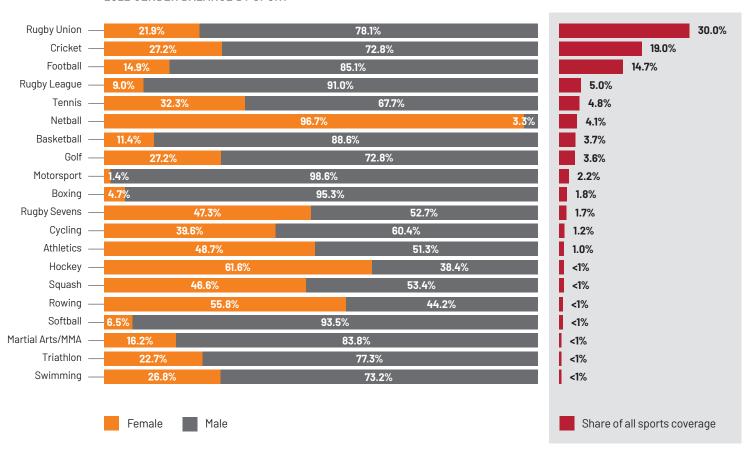
Gender Balance by Sport

This chart breaks down the overall balance of gender by sport and shows the gender share of all sports news coverage. All coverage is from New Zealand media but may include coverage of international athletes and events.

The coverage of women in the top three sports has grown significantly, with the three codes averaging 21% in 2022 – compared to 11% in 2021.

The Rugby World Cup and the ICC Women's World Cup had a positive impact on gender balance in 2022. The share of coverage focusing on women increased by 14.3% in rugby union and 13.4% in cricket. Football was up by 4.1%.

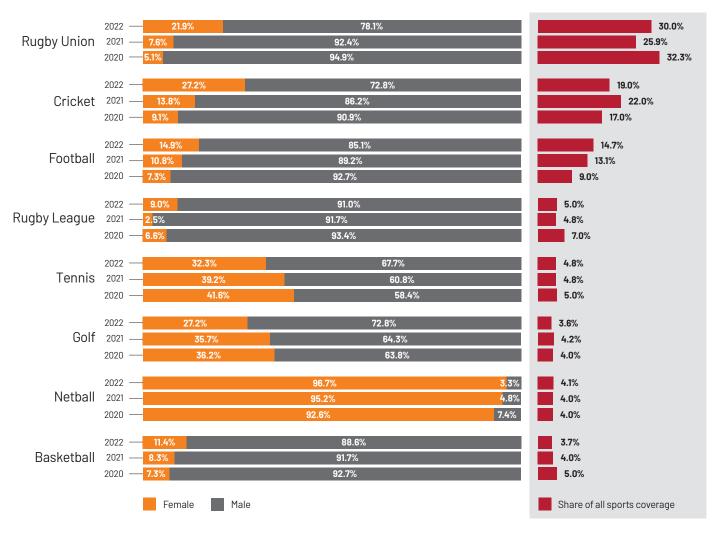
2022 GENDER BALANCE BY SPORT



Coverage Sports

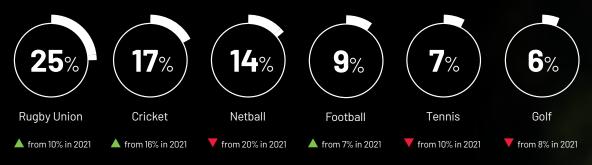
The chart shows the overall balance of gender of the top sports and also the share of sports news coverage throughout the longevity of the study. The top four sports, Rugby Union, Cricket, Football and Rugby League all show improved gender balance - noting that Rugby, Cricket and League had Women's World Cups last year.

GENDER BALANCE OF TOP SPORTS - 2020 VERSUS 2022



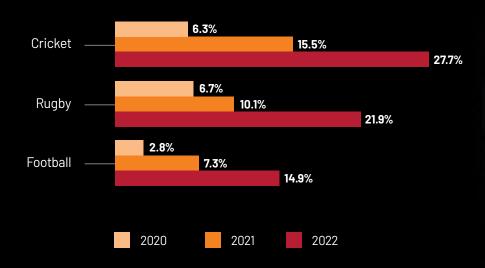
Top sports of women's coverage

Based on individual share of coverage of all women's sport.



Among these top sports, strong year-on-year growth has occurred in the share of all women's coverage coming from the three sports in which New Zealand has hosted/will host women's world cups over 2022 and 2023.

PROPORTION OF WOMEN'S COVERAGE - TOP THREE SPORTS





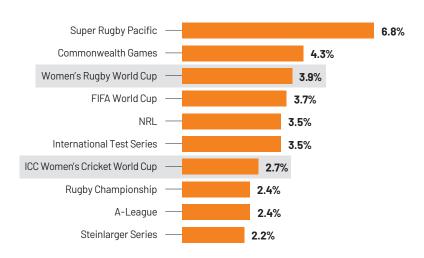
Top Events

The Women's Rugby World Cup and the ICC Women's World Cup were the first and second most reported sporting events held in NZ across all sports coverage for both men and women.

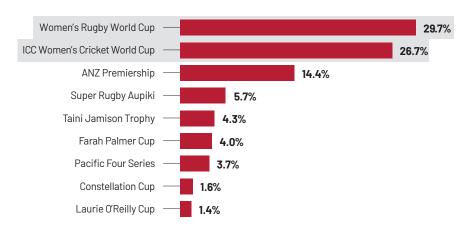
The gender split for coverage of the Commonwealth games was 53.1% female and the A-League was 12.3% female.

The top sports that drove reporting on women at the Commonwealth Games were netball, cricket, cycling, squash, and rugby sevens.

2022 TOP 10 EVENTS/TOURNAMENTS - EVENT COVERAGE SHARE OF VOICE



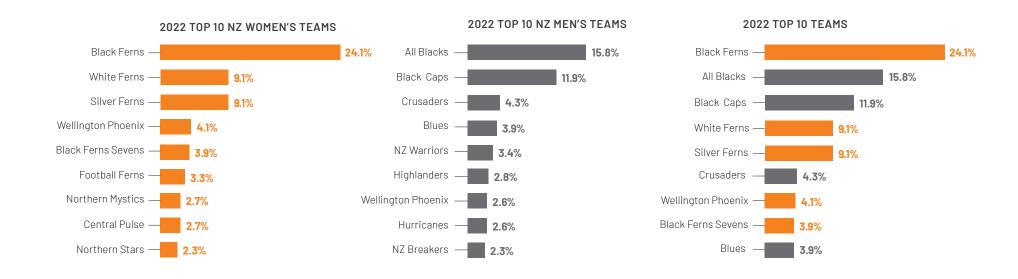
2022 LEADING NZ EVENTS/TOURNAMENTS - FEMALE SHARE OF VOICE



Top teams

The top 10 New Zealand teams continue to make up a similar number of overall sports reports as the previous year - 24.1% in 2022 up from 23.5% in 2021.

The proportion of this coverage to focus on women has increased significantly from 2.6% in 2021 to 26.9% in 2022. The Black Ferns were the biggest driver of this increase, as the team jumped from outside the top 10 in 2021 into first place overall in 2022. The White Ferns were also a big mover, rising from ninth place to fourth overall.

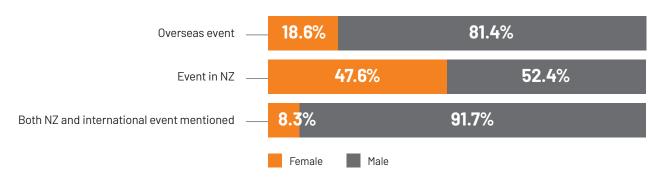


^{*}The proportions shown in this chart were based on respective gender balance

Location of sporting events

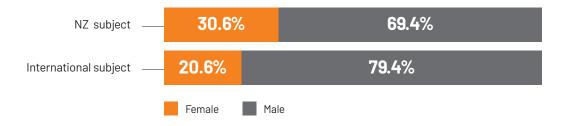
This breaks down media coverage of a New Zealand athlete or event, compared to international. Gender balance is at its highest when an event is held in New Zealand or is about a New Zealand athlete.

SHARE OF COVERAGE



The two World Cups in NZ helped to double female representation in NZ events with 47.6% compared to 27.7% in 2021.

SHARE OF SUBJECTS QUOTED

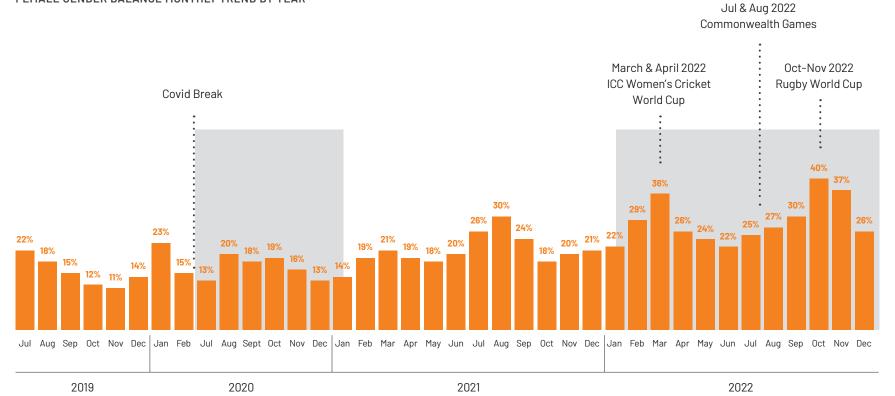


Trend

Visibility of women in sport spiked during events like the inaugural Super Rugby Aupiki tournament, and the ICC Women's Cricket World Cup. Visibility peaked during the Rugby World Cup in October at 38%, the highest monthly level seen across the past three years of analysis.

The average visibility of women's coverage did not drop below 20% in any month in 2022, meaning the baseline now sits at a point that would have been considered a strong result only two years ago.

FEMALE GENDER BALANCE MONTHLY TREND BY YEAR



This section looks at the gender balance and bylines of major media outlets to explore what kind of patterns or preferences can be seen by media type, network and sport.

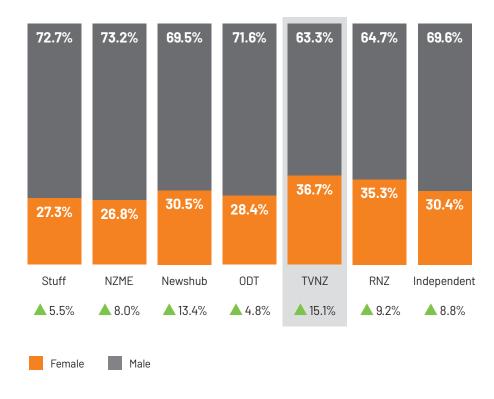
Our reporting of media performance is backed by ongoing discussion with national sports editors, and others within media organisations, about the insights provided by this study and how they relate to newsroom resourcing and the priorities of media outlets.



The Media Balance

All media networks increased the proportion of reporting on women in sport. TVNZ achieved the biggest increase – now at 36.7%, up from 21.6% in 2021.

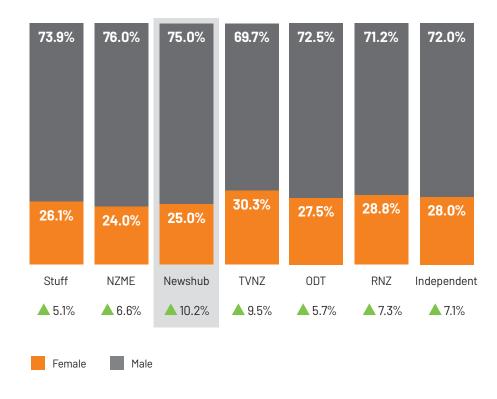
2022 GENDER BALANCE BY MEDIA OUTLET



The Media Visibility

All media networks saw an increase in visibility of women in sports coverage. Newshub achieved the biggest increase – now at 25%, up from 14.8% in 2021 – although it remains just below the average benchmark of 25.7%.

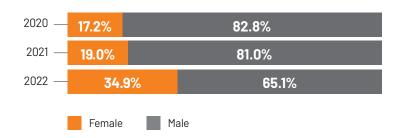
2022 GENDER VISIBILITY BY THE MEDIA



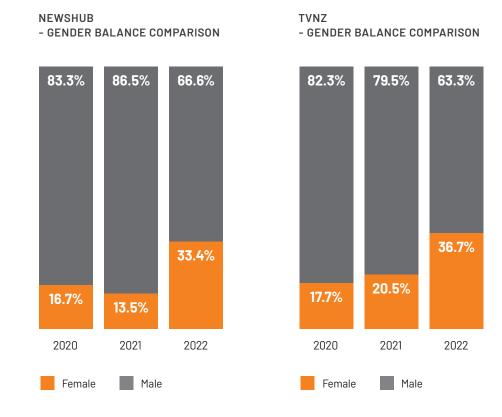
Balance - Television

2020-2022 COMPARISONS

TELEVISED NEW GENDER BALANCE



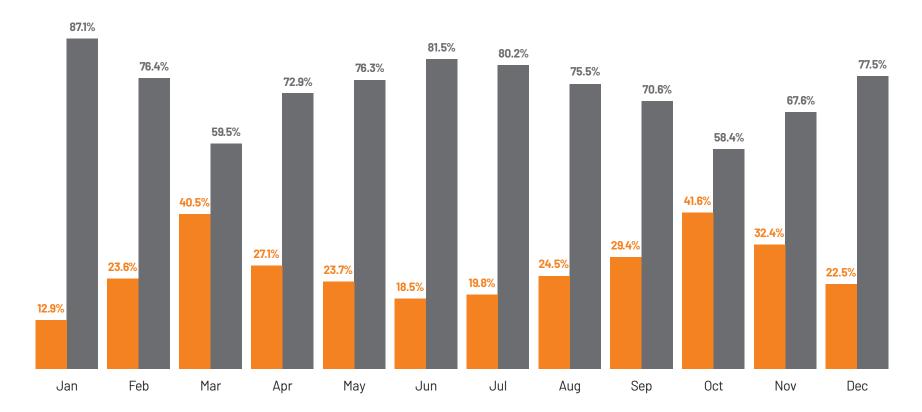
It is important to note the limit on duration for sports bulletins in television news – **particularly the main 6pm bulletin.**



Balance - Television

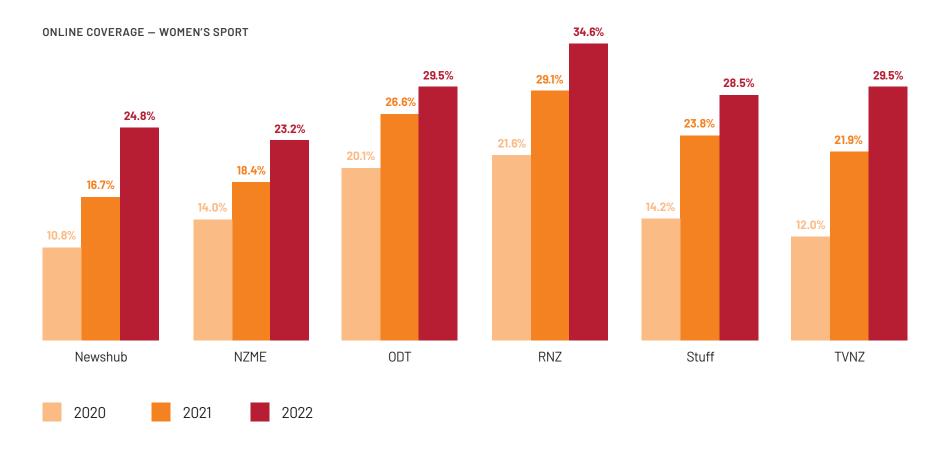
There is a clear correlation between improved gender balance and major events, with the Women's Cricket and Rugby World Cups peaking at over 40% coverage of women's sport.

2022 MONTHLY TREND



Media type

This section examines the gender balance of sports news coverage across individual media outlets in each of the four media types analysed in this study: online, television, radio and print. The findings continue the positive trend in gender balance of sports news coverage. Just as all media outlets were up overall, each has also improved in every individual media category.

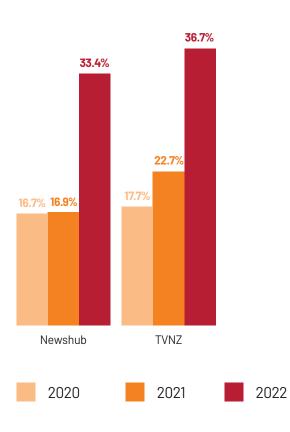


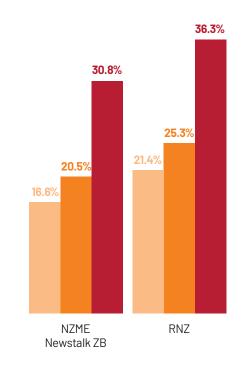
Media type

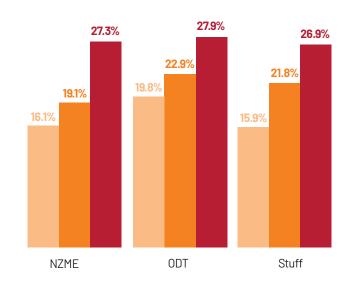
TV COVERAGE - WOMEN'S SPORT

RADIO COVERAGE - WOMEN'S SPORT

PRINT COVERAGE - WOMEN'S SPORT







The Media Bylines

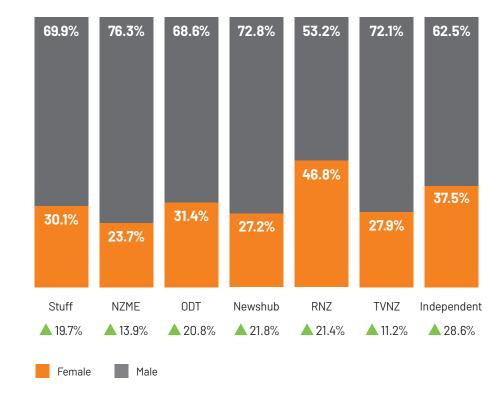
Bylines identify the journalist or presenter delivering each story. They are important because they reflect the visibility of females in sports journalism, which is traditionally a male dominated profession.

REPORTERS

All major media networks showed a marked upward trend and overall, female bylines are up 2.1% to 12.1%. The average over the last three years still sits at 11%, while the overall gender balance of sports reporting is trending upwards. This tells us that while male reporters continue to dominate the profession of sports journalism, they are beginning to report more frequently on female athletes.

Note: Broadcast - In this analysis we account for the gender of the presenter, as well as any named reporters. It does not account for voiceover stories read by a presenter, or where the presenter may have been the reporter on a story.

REPORTER BYLINES BY MEDIA OUTLET



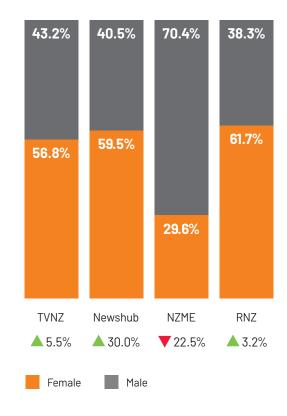
The Media Bylines

PRESENTERS

Broadcast presenters and newsreaders are separated from reporters here due to the impact that a high level of representation of women reading the sports news can have on balance. All major networks followed an upward trend, apart from NZME which dropped significantly.

Note: Broadcast - In this analysis we account for the gender of the presenter, as well as any named reporters. It does not account for voiceover stories read by a presenter, or where the presenter may have been the reporter on a story.

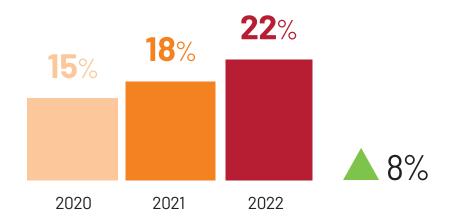
PRESENTER BYLINES BY MEDIA OUTLET



Sources

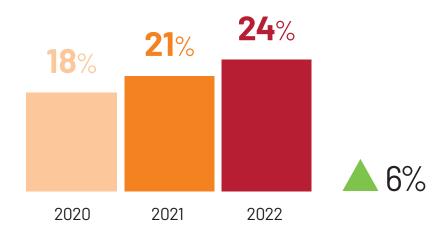
Sources are people quoted in a story. This can include athletes, coaches, whānau, fans, officials, administrators. These have been analysed for gender (where available), their relationship to the subjects, and what they were commenting on.

FEMALE SOURCES BALANCE



Sources remain more likely to discuss the personal life or appearance of a female athlete than a male athlete. A higher proportion of discussion about female athletes' personal lives comes from the athletes themselves (73%) than it does for males (63%).

FEMALE FANS QUOTED



The most commented on sports were Football, Rugby Union, Tennis, and Cricket. The most commented on teams were the Black Ferns, the All Blacks, and the Argentina Football Team.

Fans were 3x as likely to comment on the appearance of a female athlete than a male athlete.

The Media Independents

A total of 12 publications/outlets are categorised as independent in this study, to separate them from the larger media networks. This section isolates the top eight.

INDEPENDENT MEDIA – FEMALE COVERAGE AND SHARE OF SPORTS COVERAGE

Outlet	Female	All coverage
Gisborne Herald	20.4%	2.6%
Radio 531PI	20.3%	0.8%
Gisborne Herald Online	24.4%	0.6%
Te Ao Māori News	34.9%	0.5%
Ashburton Guardian	31.7%	0.4%
Newsroom (incl. LockerRoom)	93.8%	0.3%
thespinoff.co.nz	40.4%	0.1%
Waatea news.com	71.4%	<0.1%

This section examines the differences in how men and women are reported through topics, language and images.

It focuses on three areas:

- the topic or focus of a story
- the main narratives coming through in sports news reporting
- the nature of images used

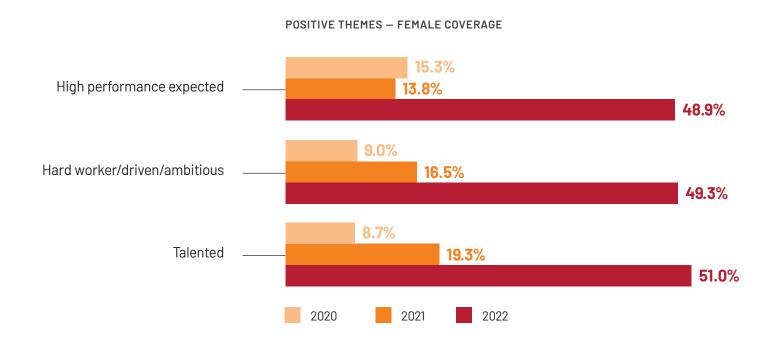
In each area, we compare female athlete portrayal year-on-year, and female and male portrayal in 2021.

A study by the New Zealand Olympic Committee and Isentia around the 2016 Rio Olympics found significant imbalance in the portrayal of male and female athletes. Our on-going study has found this imbalance has all but disappeared. Despite this, it remains an important area, because any significant differences in portrayal could undermine the improving gender balance in overall sports news coverage.



Themes

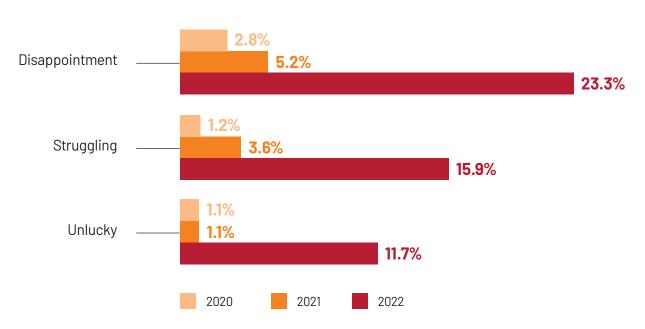
Themes around high performance, athletes being hard working, driven, ambitious and talented all increased significantly in 2022.



Themes

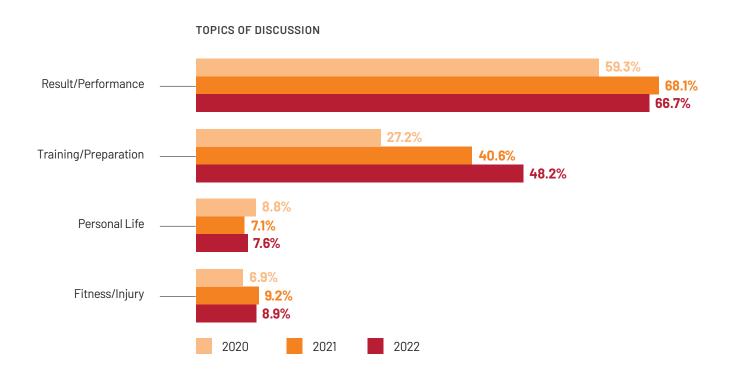
Negative narratives around disappointment, struggle, and bad luck continued trending upwards in 2022. This was slightly influenced by reporting on the White Ferns unsuccessful ICC Women's World Cup campaign, although the trend is still evident with this specific example excluded. These findings suggest that female athletes do not necessarily need to be successful in their sporting endeavours in order for news media to report on them.

NEGATIVE THEMES – FEMALE COVERAGE



Themes

Discussion around training and preparation for female athlete was up by 7.6% which suggests media is expanding its focus to previews and profiles, as well as results and performance.



Note: the higher proportion of narratives across 2022 is driven by a significant increase in individual subjects analysed when compared to 2021. The number of subjects nearly doubled in this reporting period.

Themes

GENDER COMPARISONS (2022)

Coverage of both female and male athletes continued to focus on narratives around performance and potential.

The only significant distinction between men and women in this context was a higher occurrence of male athletes framed as "troubled", "ungrateful" or "lacking integrity", while women were more often labelled a "quiet achiever".

POSITIVE THEMES - FEMALE VERSUS MALE COVERAGE

NEGATIVE THEMES - FEMALE VERSUS MALE COVERAGE

23.3%

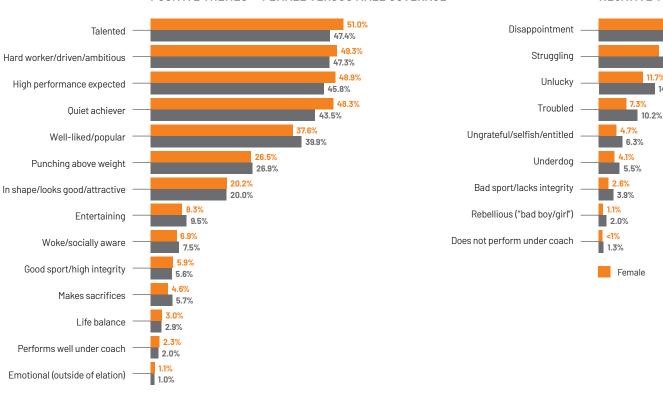
15.9%

14.8%

17.3%

Male

25.2%



Male

Female

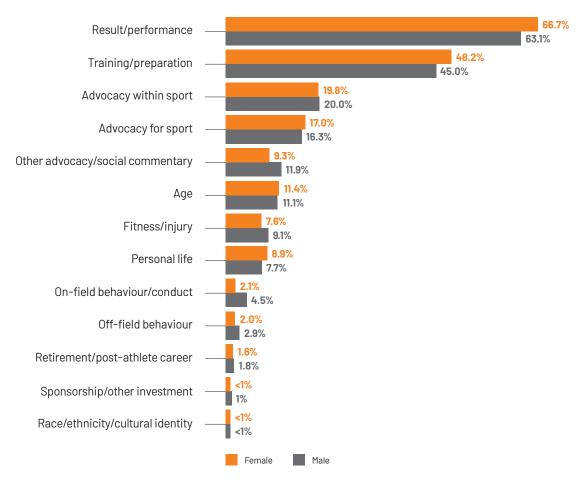
Portrayal Topics

GENDER COMPARISONS (2022)

There were no major differences within the topics of conversation between male and female athletes, with results/performance and training/preparation continuing to be the dominant focus for both genders.

The topics of age and personal life were slightly more apparent within coverage about women, while men were more likely to be the focus of discussion about on-field or off-field behaviour/conduct.

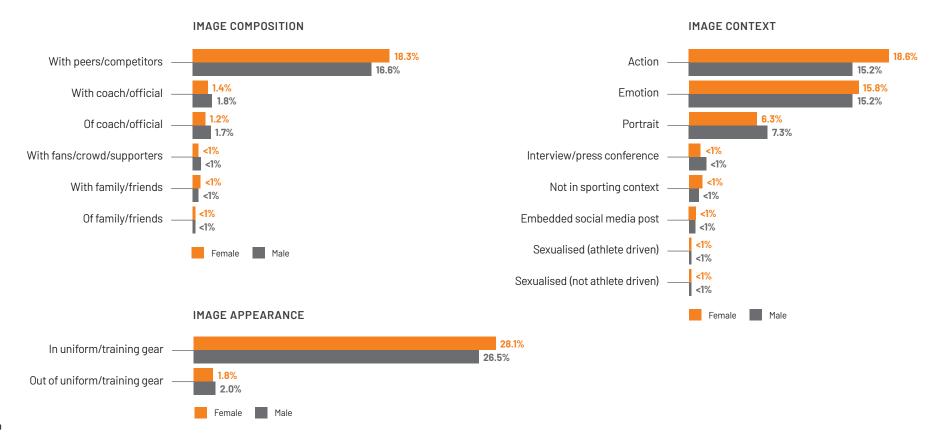
TOPICS - FEMALE VERSUS MALE COVERAGE



Imagery

GENDER COMPARISONS (2022)

Differences in imagery of women in sport compared with men continue to be negligible. Women are slightly more likely to be pictured with their peers or competitors than men. Images of both genders remain focused on a sporting context, with athletes generally pictured in uniform and sporting gear. There was minimal problematic or sexualised imagery of either men or women, consistent with previous analysis.



Appendices

- Scope and methodology
- Programme and publication list
- New Zealand media

Appendix One: Methodology

In order to look at how the media frame women in sport, it is necessary to look at how the media frame all sports coverage so that comparisons and points of difference can be made. The purpose of this study is to determine the overall gender balance of sports media coverage available in New Zealand, and whether there are any fundamental differences in how men and women are framed in media coverage.

This project has been designed to give a representative sample of sports news coverage that is aired or published in New Zealand.

We have taken a broad view (rather than only coverage of New Zealand athletes and sports) to examine the information that the wider public has access to in the form of sports news. This report covers sports news in New Zealand from 1 January - 31 December 2022.

Sampling

In order to gather a significant representative sample, the sample was taken from all news content monitored by Isentia that mentioned a sport across print, online, radio and television. The only exclusions from the standard media list were community publications and low audience magazines. Radio news bulletins were limited to three times daily per station. After modelling for publishing trends across the week, it was determined that a consistent amount of sports content is published every day, and a randomised sample across all media collected was analysed each day. A randomised sample on a dataset this large ensures a proportional amount from each media type based on the volume of coverage they produce. This sample was 100 media items per day.

Analysis

This study involved human analysis of media coverage mentioning sport that was aired or published in New Zealand during the project period. This used a priori design scheme to allow each media item to be coded for a number of predetermined factors, including imagery and language. Each gender mentioned in an item (referred to in this study as "subject"), whether for an individual, a team or a sport, was analysed and coded by a team of human researchers. Multiple researchers worked on the project to ensure inter-coder reliability and consistency.

In order to consistently and effectively analyse the way that the media framed each subject, a coding design was established to assess the coverage of each subject against the same criteria. The criteria focused on the images, language and narratives used, and the source of these markers. The analysis of gender also extended to all sources present in coverage as well the journalists and comperes authoring content.

Main criteria:

- Media information (including publication, reach, date, length and byline)
- · Subject information (who the item is about including their gender and sport)
- Purpose of coverage (what has caused the coverage)
- Imagery (who the subject of the image is, who are they with and how are they framed)
- Narratives (the themes evident in reporting on any of the subjects)
- Sources (who is speaking about a subject, their gender, their relationship to the subject and the topics they are commenting on)

Appendix Two: Programme and publication list

Below are the programmes and publications that were analysed in 2021:

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ASHBURTON GUARDIAN BAY OF PLENTY TIMES CANTERBURY FARMING DAIL Y POST

DOMINION POST

DOMINION POST WEEKEND

GISBORNE HERALD GREYMOUTH STAR

HAWKES BAY TODAY

HAWKES BAY WEEKEND HERALD ON SUNDAY

HOKITIKA GUARDIAN MANAWATU STANDARD

MARLBOROUGH EXPRESS

NELSON MAIL

NEW ZEALAND HERALD NORTHERN ADVOCATE

OTAGO DAILY TIMES

SOUTHLAND TIMES

SUNDAY NEWS

SUNDAY STAR TIMES
TARANAKI DAILY NEWS

THE NEWS - WESTPORT

THE PRESS
TIMARU HERALD
WAIKATO TIMES

WAIRARAPA TIMES AGE

WAIRARAPA TIMES-AGE WEEKEND

WEEKEND HERALD WEEKEND PRESS

WHANGANUI CHRONICLE

Internet

1NFWS ONLINE

BAY OF PLENTY TIMES ONLINE
DOMINION POST ONLINE
GISBORNE HERALD ONLINE
HAWKES BAY TODAY ONLINE
MANAWATU STANDARD ONLINE
MARLBOROUGH EXPRESS ONLINE

NATIONAL BUSINESS REVIEW ONLINE

NELSON MAIL ONLINE

NEW ZEALAND HERALD ONLINE

NEWSHUB.CO.NZ NEWSROOM.CO.NZ

NEWSTALK ZB ONLINE

NORTHERN ADVOCATE ONLINE

NORTHLAND AGE ONLINE

OTAGO DAILY TIMES ONLINE
RADIO NEW ZEALAND ONLINE

ROTORUA DAILY POST ONLINE SOUTHLAND TIMES ONLINE

STAR NEWS ONLINE

STUFF.CO.NZ

TARANAKI DAILY NEWS ONLINE

TE AO MAORI NEWS ONLINE

THE PRESS NZ ONLINE THESPINOFF.CO.NZ

TIMARU HERALD ONLINE

WAATEA NEWS.COM

WAIKATO TIMES ONLINE

WAIRARAPA TIMES-AGE ONLINE
WHANGANUI CHRONICLE ONLINE

Radio

NEWSTALK ZB (AUCKLAND)

07:00 NEWS

07:00 NEWS (SATURDAY)
07:00 NEWS (SUNDAY)

12:00 NEWS

12:00 NEWS (SATURDAY)

12:00 NEWS (SUNDAY) 15:00 NEWS (SUNDAY)

17:00 NEWS

17:00 NEWS (SATURDAY)

17:00 NEWS (SUNDAY)

DRIVE

EARLY EDITION

KERRE MCIVOR MORNINGS

MIKE HOSKING BREAKFAST

TODAY FM

(CEASED OPERATION AS OF 2 APRIL 2023)

07:00 NEWS (SATURDAY)

07:00 NEWS (SUNDAY)

12:00 NEWS

12:00 NEWS (SATURDAY)

12:00 NEWS (SUNDAY)

17:00 NEWS

17:00 NEWS (SATURDAY)

17:00 NEWS (SUNDAY)

NEWSTALK ZB (WELLINGTON)

06:00 NEWS

07:00 NEWS 08:00 NEWS

09:00 NEWS 12:00 NEWS

WELLINGTON MORNINGS

NEWSTALK ZB (CHRISTCHURCH)

06:00 NEWS 07:00 NEWS 09:00 NEWS

12:00 NEWS

CANTERBURY MORNINGS

Television

THREE

AM

RADIO N7 - NATIONAL

07:00 NEWS (SATURDAY)

12:00 NEWS (SATURDAY)

17:00 NEWS (SATURDAY)

17:00 NEWS (SUNDAY)

12:00 NEWS (SUNDAY)

07:00 NEWS (SUNDAY)

07:00 NEWS

12:00 NEWS

17:00 NEWS

AFTERNOONS

CHECKPOINT

MIDDAY REPORT

MORNING REPORT

NINE TO NOON - LATE

THE PANEL WITH WALLACE CHAPMAN

(CEASED OPERATION AS OF 1 APRIL 2022)

FIRST UP

RADIO 531PI

07:00 NEWS

12:00 NEWS

RADIO HOKONUI

12:00 NEWS

17:00 NEWS

THE COUNTRY

MAGIC TALK MAGIC DRIVE

07:00 NEWS (SATURDAY)

12:00 NEWS (SATURDAY)

17:00 NEWS (SATURDAY)

17:00 NEWS (SUNDAY)

MAGIC AFTERNOONS

LLOYD BURR LIVE

MAGIC MORNINGS

RURAL TODAY

12:00 NEWS (SUNDAY)

07:00 NEWS (SUNDAY)

EARLY AM

NEWSHUB LATE

NEWSHUB LIVE AT 11:30AM

NEWSHUB LIVE AT 4:30PM

NEWSHUB LIVE AT 6PM

NEWSHUB LIVE AT 6PM (WEEKEND)

NEWSHUB NATION

THE HUI

THE PROJECT

TVNZ 1

SUNDAY 1NEWS

1 NEWS (WEEKEND)

1 NEWS SPECIAL 1 NEWS TONIGHT

BREAKFAST

COUNTRY CALENDAR

FAIR GO MARAE MIDDAY

Q+A

PRIME

SEVEN SHARP TE KARERE

PRIME NEWS

THE CROWD GOES WILD

MĀORI TV

TE AO

Appendix Three: New Zealand media

Below are the main media organisations featured in this study and their categorisations. A number of changes occurred in late 2021 that will be reflected in year three of this research.

Stuff: New Zealand's largest print and digital stable, the main website leads the editorial agenda for the network and content is highly syndicated across all publications.

New Zealand Media and Entertainment (NZME): Publisher of The New Zealand Herald, Newstalk ZB and commercial radio assets. With a smaller network of publications, content is less widely syndicated, and some premium content is behind a paywall on The New Zealand Herald website.

Otago Daily Times (ODT): A South Island owned media company with interests in regional and community publications and regional television. Owned by Allied Press along with of a series of community publications across the South Island.

Television New Zealand (TVNZ): A government owned public broadcaster (not public service) and has the highest rated television news bulletins on New Zealand television. TVNZ Is government owned but operates on advertising revenue to operate and return a dividend to the government.

Newshub: News brand of Discovery, owner of television channel Three, and a series of commercial radio stations. Has been embattled in recent years with declining ratings and advertising revenues. It has argued that it is disadvantaged by the fact that its main broadcast competitor (TVNZ) is government-owned and not as impacted by declining revenues and fragmentation of younger audiences.

Māori Television: A government funded channel dedicated to programming that makes a significant impact on the revitalisation of Te Reo and Te Ao Māori. Includes local and international programmes across a range of genres.

Radio New Zealand (RNZ): Public service radio broadcaster. Funded by the government rather than advertising revenue, and is focused on news, current affairs, local content and stories.

Sky: Pay television service providing satellite and media streaming. Has a strong focus on sports broadcasting and production and has the broadcasting rights to a number of key sports in New Zealand. Is not focused on news and current affairs. Sky owns free-to-air channel PRIME, whose flagship Prime News show is produced by Mediaworks. This content is categorised as Newshub in this study.

Newsroom: An independent news and current affairs website funded by subscribers and corporate partners. Focused on long form, investigative journalism. Content is also shared across NZME's digital network.

The Spinoff: Online commentary and opinion site that has become well known for its breadth of content across pop culture and news and current affairs. The Spinoff is funded by partnered content with brands, website members, and New Zealand On Air.

SENZ: Sports talk radio that launched in mid-2021. Owned by Australian based Sports Entertainment Network. Content from SENZ is not currently included in this study.

Additional government funding for public media in New Zealand is distributed by New Zealand On Air, this includes additional funding for Local Democracy Reporting (LDRs) in areas where local publications are impacted by the economic environment, and has funding available for content considered beneficial for New Zealand audiences that otherwise may not be made.



