

Introduction

The NZSSSA (New Zealand Secondary Schools Squash Association) is the organising body of schools formed to organise a national squash competition between secondary schools in New Zealand. The first national secondary school championships were organised by Tim Cooper in Auckland, attracting 34 schools from around the country. The first event was held in August 1985 and has been held every year in the August timeframe.



The New Zealand Secondary Schools Championships are contested annually and represent the pinnacle of secondary schools squash competition in New Zealand. The event is run by the New Zealand Secondary Schools Squash Association (NZSSSA). Secondary schools can enter teams of five in either/both the boys (Ross Norman Trophy) and girls (Susan Devoy Trophy) competitions, with ties played in pool and/or knockout format to decide the winners. Since 2010 a co-ed trophy has also been contested. Where there is capacity, schools may enter multiple teams. There are no mixed gender divisions.

Up until 2015, the championships moved to different centres each year. However the past four years, the decision was made to hold the championships in one centre - in this case Palmerston North - as the cost of moving it around every year was deemed too high, and with the introduction of the Trans-Tasman exchange, funds were needed to support that team and competition. Therefore the hosting cycle has now been introduced as well as a hosting fee requirement. For the next three years the championships will be hosted by the Devoy Squash and Fitness Centre in Tauranga. The decision regarding future hosting locations and length of tenure will be made in August 2020.

The National Tournament operates outside of the official Tournament Week. A pre-existing agreement with Principals allowed the Tournament to commence on the Friday of the first or second weekend of August each year and finish on the Sunday prior to the more modern guidelines set out by the governing body for all Secondary School sport in NZ (School Sport NZ - previously known as School Sport NZ). For this reason, the length of time for the operation of this tournament cannot be adjusted without either moving the tournament into the official Tournament Week, or into one of the school holidays. Further, a "Tournament Dinner" is not permissible on the Thursday Night prior to competition as this is outside the set time. The NZSSSA is grateful that most schools allow their teams time to travel to this tournament.

PART A - Eligibility

In 2007 School Sport NZ introduced eligibility regulations for the events it sanctions. These were deemed necessary to recognise the importance of consistency, equity and fair play for participation in National and Island secondary school sporting events and to protect long held school values by:

- ensuring all the educational needs of the young person were being considered, not solely their sporting development
- maintaining a level playing field in school sport by preventing the formation of 'super teams' through "loading" a team with imported players.
- protecting schools from being stripped of students they had worked to develop, students who were often leaders in many fields, not solely the sporting arena
- providing a pathway for home grown players to get into and remain in their school's premier teams and not find themselves superseded by short-term imports

1. Student Eligibility

The following eligibility criteria is based upon the criteria from the School Sport NZ website. The areas listed in red are the optional eligibility criteria that has been agreed upon by the NZSSSA. Any proposed changes to student eligibility by the NZSSSA must be ratified by School Sport NZ.

- a) A student eligible to compete in the NZSS Squash Championships must:
1. be enrolled as a bona fide student at the school of representation and studying at least 80% of a programme that is part of the timetable provided by the school for at least four weeks immediately prior to the event. Schools that enrol Year 7 or 8 students may also be entered (Area schools, 7-13 schools, 7-10 schools). Students from contributing Intermediate or Primary schools are **NOT** eligible.
 2. have a satisfactory attendance record at the school. The final decision will be at the Principal's discretion. Any protests can result in the School Sport NZ requiring ENROL information to be made available, otherwise said players will not be eligible.
 3. be under 19 years of age at the first of January in the year of the competition.
- b) The school must authenticate a student's birth date. Organising committees may require validation by a birth certificate or passport.
- c) All teams and individuals participating in National or Island events must be declared at the date prescribed by the accredited sporting body.
- d) students who otherwise meet the criteria in a) above and who transfer from one school to another are eligible to compete provided they are on the roll of the participating school and

have attended classes for at least four weeks immediately prior to the time of the event. (Dispensation for those who transfer within four weeks of the competition is at the discretion of the organising committee). If this is an issue for your school, it is best to contact the NZSSSA prior to entering your team.

2. School Team Eligibility

The following eligibility criteria is based upon the criteria from the School Sport NZ website. The areas listed in red are the optional eligibility criteria that has been agreed upon by the NZSSSA. Any proposed changes to student eligibility by the NZSSSA must be ratified by the School Sport NZ.

a) A school team eligible to compete in the NZSS Squash Championships must not exceed the quota of students new to the school in the 2 years preceding the first day of the event as specified by School Sport NZ rules. Currently the limit for Squash is **2 players**.

1. For clarity, the student's most recent enrolment date at the school must be used. Teams are limited to a maximum of two (2) non domestic students and any non domestic student must *always* be included in the quota allowed.
2. Domestic students are defined as:
 - a. a NZ Citizen
 - b. the holder of a residence permit
 - c. an Australian citizen
 - d. a NZ passport holder (e.g. Cook Islands)
 - e. a dependent of a work permit holder, refugee, diplomat
 - f. Exchange Students on MOE approved Exchange Organiser Programmes (www.minedu.govt.nz/EPO)

or whatever definition the Ministry of Education currently applies.

b) Where the family or primary caregiver of a student has changed address and, *as a consequence of the primary caregivers relocation*, the student could not reasonably have been expected to remain at their previous school, an application for exemption may be submitted to the Regional Sports Director responsible for the region of the new school. The application must be on the official Application for Exemption form available [HERE](#), be signed by the principal and parent/primary caregiver and have evidence of the address change attached as outlined on the application form. *A MAXIMUM of 2 PCRE's issued in any calendar year may be included in any team that has a School Sport NZ NTS quota.* Any appeal must be lodged in writing with the executive director of School Sport NZ.

c) Schools that allow entry for some students only at some time after Year 9 (e.g. girls in Year 12 and above) and The Correspondence School will not be bound by the numbers permitted here but will be restricted to those maximum numbers for each code when enrolling students who had previously represented another school in that code in a competition listed here.

- d) Students who have attended a middle school and transfer at the end of the final year level of that middle school will not be considered new to school at their school of first enrolment following middle school.
1. Students who start their attendance at a school in year 9 and below and those in the first two years above the entry level for a school (e.g. girls admitted at Year 12 to a school that admits only boys below Year 12) are not included in the maximum permitted numbers here. Further, students that attend a middle school, or attend a year 7-13 school below year 9, and then move to a 9-13 school are not included in the maximum permitted numbers here.
- e) Teams from 'host school/attached school' agreements that introduce students 'new to either school over the past two years' must include these in the maximum number allowed in a team.
- f) Any final decision on the eligibility of a student or team will rest with School Sport NZ.

3. Composite Teams

Composite teams are currently generally **NOT** permitted at the NZSS Squash Championships. Any change to this regulation would require unanimous support at an NZSSSA AGM, and then would have to meet the composite team eligibility criteria as set out in the School Sport NZ eligibility criteria. The NZSSSA reserves the right to make exceptions on a case-by-case needs basis.

4. Transgender Students

All school sports are different in their characteristics and this will affect the way in which individual sports consider this issue. To this end, an School Sport NZ policy across all sports would be inappropriate and each sport is encouraged to develop a transgender policy for school sport which is appropriate to its own characteristics.

In doing so, School Sport NZ provides sport with the following guidelines.

- all cases should be considered on individual merit
- including the student within the sporting competition with which gender they identify be permitted provided event organisers are satisfied that due consideration of the issues described here provide no cause for concern;
 - Health and safety of **all** participants – the physical contact nature of some sports may provide an unacceptable safety risk for some of the participants
 - Unfair advantage – the nature of sport means that the physical capabilities of some participants may advantage a particular group

- Current stage of the young person in the gender transformation process. Young people are generally not as advanced in their gender transformation pathway with regard to hormone therapy and reassignment procedures. While aimed at adult sport, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) policy says only those who have:
 - *undergone sex reassignment surgery*
 - *had hormone treatments for at least two years, and*
 - *received legal recognition of their transitioned sex*
 - may participate consistent with their gender identities.

5. Poaching

School Sport NZ does not condone any inducement of students to transfer from one school to another for sporting reasons, other than by way of publicly advertised scholarship. Where a Regional Principals Association advises School Sport NZ in writing that it has investigated and is satisfied that inducement has taken place, School Sport NZ may, in support of the Regional Principals Association, invoke the procedures outlined in the School Sport NZ Integrity Framework and, if proven, impose a penalty which may include exclusion of a student(s), team or other personnel (coach, manager etc) from School Sport NZ sanctioned events.

PART B - Tournament Rules

The tournament rules are loosely based on Squash NZ teams event rules, however there are a number of differences.

1. Entries

- a) Schools must register their teams with the NZSSSA before the publicised closing date.
- b) Late entries will only be accepted at the discretion of the tournament organising committee
- c) All teams must fulfil ALL requirements of PART A - Eligibility. All teams **can** consist of up to seven players. 5 players will compete in each tie with 2 players stood down in each tie.
- d) All teams are gender based. There are no mixed gender teams.
- e) A school may enter more than one team per gender.
- f) All players must be entered on the national grading list as of 1 week prior to the commencement of the event. Players should be accurately graded, and if any doubt place as a J3. It is preferable that all newly graded players where possible play in a local club tournament prior to the championships to ensure grading is correct.
 - I Disputes regarding over/under grading of players will be dealt with by the disputes committee. Actions that can be taken by the committee can be as follows
 - Official warning to the school
 - Forfeiture of the result between schools
 - Expulsion from the tournament (obviously for extreme situations)
- g) *(Suggested change for AGM) As of 2023, all players must have passed the online national club refereeing exam before the tournament commences.*
 - i. *This qualification is valid for two seasons e.g. if you sat the test in 2022 the exam will have expired by 2024.*

2. Team Playing Order

- a) Team playing order will be listed in points order as of the Friday before the tournament. The organising committee has the right to change the order of the team based upon this clause if the order on the entry form differs from the grading list. Where two or more players have the same grading points, then the order is at the discretion of the school of such players, however that order remains the same throughout the tournament.
- b) All players are required to play in the order the team is submitted and there shall be no change to the team playing order between ties. The team orders confirmed by the Tournament Director shall apply for all rounds of the competition.
- c) Team Managers are to provide the playing team for each round to the venue controller at
LEAST ONE HOUR before the commencement of that round. Manager packs will include forms for this purpose.

3. Replacing Players before the start of the Tournament

- a) All teams are able to substitute players in or out of their team when submitting their final team playing order prior to the publicised closing date of entries.
- b) Any teams needing to substitute players in or out of their team after the closing date of entries shall make application in writing (by email) to the Tournament Director no later than 5.00pm on Friday preceding the competition.
 - 1. The Tournament Director will make all decisions on team substitutions and communicate these within 48 hours of the request being made. The Tournament Director will make the final call on where the introduced player(s) appear in the team playing order – this will be based on grading points.
 - 2. Any substitutions may result in a reseeding of the draws. This will be at the Tournament Directors discretion.
- c) Any teams requesting substitutions to their team after the Friday preceding the competition must receive unanimous agreement from all managers at the Managers meeting.
- d) Any protests (such as those relating to player eligibility and team eligibility) must be submitted to the Tournament Director prior to competition starting. The Disputes committee (in conjunction with Squash New Zealand if needed) will rule on any protest. All decisions will be final with no discussion being entered into.

4. Replacing Players after the start of the Tournament

a) Players are not allowed to be substituted for any reason once the tournament has begun. This includes the movement of players between school teams with more than one team at the event.

5. Tournament Play

a) Draws will be made by the tournament director at their discretion

1. The tournament shall be organised in a manner that each team at the start of the event has the opportunity to win the tournament overall, where this is practicable. In the event of team entries not allowing this to happen within the three-day schedule, other alternatives will be considered.

2. Where possible it is preferred that teams will get a minimum of 5 games, the only exception is where the presence of byes, or the number of teams preclude this from happening.

b) Matches

1. All games will be played PAR to 11, best of 5.
2. All matches in a tie are to be completed, even if the tie result is already known.

c) Results will be uploaded to the grading list by the tournament director no later than 3 days after the conclusion of the event

d) Disputes. Any disputes will be resolved by the disputes committee. The disputes committee are selected by the NZSSSA President before the team entries are due. Their decision will be final.

e) Daily order of match play.

1. The daily order of match play shall be drawn by lots, except that the match between each team's number one shall be the third match in each contest.
2. A separate order of play shall be made for each day's play. The order of play for each day will be made by the host club's Tournament Director prior to the start of the competition and will be printed in the tournament handbook.

f) The teams in playing order for the first round must be handed to the Tournament Director at least one hour prior to the start of play. You may telephone or e-mail the Tournament Director with your playing order if you are unable to meet this deadline. The Tournament Director will display the appropriate team playing orders as soon as all teams have been submitted.

- g) Eyewear is compulsory at all times on court for all players.
- h) The tournament ball is the Dunlop single yellow dot ball. "A" and "B" grade players play with the approved alternative, a Dunlop double yellow dot ball. Where an "A" and "B" grade player is playing a "C" grade or lower player, then the higher graded player has the choice of single or double yellow dot ball.

6. Tournament Placings and Awards

- a) Where possible, a team entered has to have the theoretical possibility of winning the championship. This chance is usually ended once a team loses their first match. However, should the tournament have entry numbers of the size that makes this impractical, the organisers can design a draw that seeds the bottom ranked teams so that they are unable to win the main championship.
- b) The Plate trophy is awarded to the team that loses their first game in the championship round, but then wins all the rest of their matches. In a 32 draw, this would be the 17th placed team. In a 16 draw, this would be the 9th placed team.
- c) Medals are given to the teams that finish 1st, 2nd and 3rd.
- d) Co-Ed cup. The Co-Ed cup is an award that is given to the co-educational school that has the best results where they have entered at least 1 boys and 1 girls team into the event. To determine the winner, the placings of that school's 1st teams are added together (co-ed rank-score), and the school with the lowest rank score wins the Co-Ed cup. If the situation occurs that the rank-score is the same, then the following criteria will be used to find the winner in this order should there continue to be a tie;
 1. Number of matches won
 2. Number of games won
 3. Number of points won
 4. Whichever school had the highest finishing rank of either team
 5. The result of any Head to Head between the schools at the tournament
 6. Highest seeding to final placing differential
- e) Where a school enters more than one Boys or Girls team, only the named 1st team is considered for the Co-Ed cup. Should the 2nd team finish higher than the named 1st team, the placing of the named 1st team is used to determine the rank-score.
- f) A Co-Ed school is one as defined by the Ministry of Education.

Part C - Trans-Tasman Exchange

The Trans-Tasman Exchange consists of two competitions that run back-to-back a couple of weeks after the NZSS Squash championships. It begins with the Trans-tasman Challenge between NSW, QLD and NZ to find the best 'State' secondary schools team. (QLD and NSW use this to double up for their own state challenge as well). In 2022 it is hoped that South Australia will enter a team (perhaps in conjunction with Northern Territory). The aim is that more states will enter. On the final evening of the Trans-Tasman Challenge, the Australian selectors name an Australian team to play New Zealand the following day in the "test match".

The hosting of the Exchange is on a rotation basis. Queensland is hosting the Exchange in 2022 and the host club is currently set as the Daisy Hills Squash Centre in Brisbane, although this is to be confirmed. Regardless of the number of Australian state sides, it was agreed at the Trans-Tasman Exchange Committee meeting in 2018 that NZ would host every 3rd year to assist with travel costs for the NZ players. As a result of COVID19, the 2020 and 2021 editions, due to be hosted by Queensland, have been postponed to 2022. Therefore, unless there are any further postponements, New Zealand will next host in 2024.

1. Eligibility and Selection Criteria

- a) At the commencement of the NZSS Squash Championships, the NZSS selectors get together and name 5 players plus a non-travelling reserve in each of the following groups to make up the New Zealand Secondary Schools Squash Team.
 - Senior Boys (years 11-13)
 - Senior Girls (years 11-13)
 - Junior Boys (years 9-10)
 - Junior Girls (years 9-10)
- b) A year 9-10 player is ineligible to be selected for the Senior team. Year 7-8 players that are eligible to play in the NZSS Squash Championships are ineligible to play for the New Zealand Secondary Schools team.
- c) To be considered for selection, players must be nominated by the date set by the NZ Secondary Schools Squash Association, on the required nomination form. Nominations are due with school NZSSSA Nationals Entries by the due date. In years that the NZSS team is not playing (i.e. COVID years), nominations are not required.

- d) Once nominated, players must meet the following criteria to represent the NZSS Squash team
- Attend and compete in the NZSSS National Tournament for that year.
 - a NZ Resident/Citizen, or a Domestic student as defined by the MOE.
 - No past issues with NZSS Squash Selection
- e) The President of the NZSSSA, or Tournament Organising Committee reviews all team lists once they've been submitted to make sure a school hasn't forgotten to nominate an obvious player. These late Nominations, through a school-based error will be accepted.
- f) 8 – 10 players for each team will be short-listed by the date set by the NZSSS Association. This is usually within 2 weeks of the Team Entries being due. Players are asked for a deposit to confirm their availability by a due date.
- g) Players will be short-listed based on their current grading plus their match results over the previous 6 months. Squash NZ Junior Selectors may contribute to this process and provide relevant information to allow for shortlisting to be consistent and allow for emerging talent.
- h) Draft selection of the team will take place on the Saturday night of the NZSSS National Tournament. Only if critical match-ups are scheduled to occur on the Sunday of play will those matches be considered for selection. The results of these matches may require the Selectors meeting directly prior to Prizegiving.
- i) Final selection will be based on:
- Grading, results and current playing form up to the start of the tournament.
 - Tournament results, especially if there is a head-to-head clash, as well as, current grading and match results prior to the NZSSSA tournament.
 - Player attitude and general behavior will be taken into consideration, especially if two players are very close in grading and ability.
 - The schooling age of a player may be considered if two players are very close in grading and ability.
- j) A selector cannot select their own child for a team. The other selectors must make the selection. The President of the NZSSSA will have the casting vote in this situation, if required.

2.Team and Costs

- a) The team management will comprise the following roles
- Team Manager
 - Head Coach
 - Assistant Coach

- Assistant Manager

There is scope to alter the roles of the coaches to the following at the NZSSSA President's discretion.

- Boys team Coach
- Girls Team Coach

- b) The management team is selected by the NZSSSA President
- c) It is desirable that the NZSSSA President be the overall team manager, but this is not set in stone.
- d) Parents and other whanau are welcome to travel to watch the games, however the players remain with the team. It is preferable that the players and team management accommodation be separate to travelling supporters.
- e) The cost of travelling to the Trans-Tasman Exchange is mostly self-funding. Students must have paid a deposit before the team is announced and all payments must be made at least 1 week prior to departure.
- f) The cost set by the NZSSSA to be paid by the players will cover the following costs
- Air travel to and from Australia
 - All reasonable food costs
 - All reasonable ground travel costs
 - All reasonable accommodation costs
 - Travel Insurance
 - Any reasonable Amusement attraction costs as part of the itinerary
- The general cost of past trips to Australia has been between 1500 and 1800 NZD as a guideline.
- g) The NZSSSA will cover the airfares for the management team from their home location. Each member of team management will receive an honorarium of \$150.
- h) For trips to Australia, players must find their own way to and from Auckland Airport at their own cost. Should a night's stay be required in Auckland prior or after the trip, a member of team management will stay with those players.
- i) When the exchange is hosted by New Zealand, players must find their own way to the host location at their own cost. The overall cost set by the NZSSSA for home events is typically much less than for events in Australia.
- j) Players and team management will stay at the same accommodation. There will be no billeting of team members or management.

- k) Each player (and non-travelling reserve) will receive a playing pin. In addition, a pin will also be presented to each member of the Australian team as a player gift.

Part D - Under discussion items

NOTE to discuss. These are not part of the rules, but must be discussed at AGM/committee at some stage

Introduction of Singles and Doubles event. This is not a high priority (AGM 2018) - Rejected 2020 AGM

To be discussed.

(Suggested change for AGM) As of 2023, all players must have passed the online national club refereeing exam before the tournament commences.

i. This qualification is valid for two seasons e.g. if you sat the test in 2022 the exam will have expired by 2024.