

## NEW ZEALAND RUGBY NATIONAL SEVENS TOURNAMENT RULES - MEN'S AND WOMEN'S

### Tournament Rules

1. The National Sevens Tournaments (the “Tournament”) will be played over two days according to the World Rugby Laws of the Game and Regulations with Seven-a-Side variations as framed by World Rugby.

World Rugby Sevens Laws;

<http://laws.worldrugby.org/>

<https://laws.worldrugby.org/?variation=2>

### The below player movement protocol has been adopted

International Law assumes the use of the HIA Protocol, which is used during the International 7s tournaments. This HIA protocol does not exist for the NZR tournaments, however the Blue Card Concussion Initiative is in place. To this end we have a “hybrid” player movement protocol as follows.

- Each team may nominate up to 5 replacements
- Each team may make up to 5 replacements during the match

In **addition** to the 5 replacements, each team may replace a player who:

- Has an open or bleeding wound
- Has been injured due to foul play
- Has been removed from the field of play due to the issuing of a Blue Card

The following NZ Rugby Domestic Safety Law Variations (DSLTV) will apply at this tournament:

- Law 4 - Players clothing: The wearing of a mouth guard is compulsory.

### Law 4 - Players Clothing:

The wearing of a mouthguard is compulsory at all levels of New Zealand Domestic rugby, yet many players are not adhering to this rule. The safety of players is paramount, requiring that this rule be observed more strictly.

The wearing of a mouthguard is a player/manager/coach responsibility and NZ Rugby fully supports all Match Officials in strictly enforcing the above. NZR would also request that Team Managers and coaches enforce the wearing of mouthguards at team trainings. Adopting this practice will ensure it becomes common practice for players to wear a mouthguard at all times when involved in playing or training.

The wearing of a mouthguard is compulsory at all levels of New Zealand Domestic rugby, yet many players are not adhering to this rule.

- The first player observed not wearing a mouth guard is to be penalised under Law 9.7.a (A player must not intentionally infringe any law of the game) and will be issued a Yellow Card. At this time the referee is to speak to the captain and advise that any further players not wearing a mouthguard will be issued with a red card. The player yellow carded can return to the field of play upon expiry of the 2 minute (playing time) Temporary Suspension period, but only if the player is wearing a mouth guard.

- If the offending player is unable to return wearing a mouth guard, then that player can be replaced. This will be deemed to be a permanent replacement and the offending player will not be permitted to return to the field of play under any circumstances.
- If subsequent players from the same team are observed not wearing a mouth guard these players will be issued a Red Card in accordance with Law 9.8 (A team must not repeatedly commit the same offence)
- Any player issued with a Red Card for failing to wear a mouthguard will receive an additional automatic one match suspension.

Note: If a player produces a medical certificate stating they should not wear a mouthguard that player will be exempt from the requirement.

### Qualifying for National Sevens Tournament

2. The following number of teams will qualify from each Regional Tournament for the National Sevens Tournament:

REGION	MENS	WOMENS
Northern	Top 6 ranked teams	Top 5 ranked teams
Central	Top 5 ranked teams	Top 4 ranked teams
Southern	Top 5 ranked teams	Top 3 ranked teams

Only one team per Provincial Union (Men's and Women's) can qualify for Nationals.

3. The three Regional Tournaments will be defined as follows with the associated Provincial Unions listed only permitted to enter that Regional Tournament:
  - **Northern Region:** includes Northland, North Harbour, Thames Valley, Auckland, Counties Manukau, Waikato, Bay of Plenty & King Country
  - **Central Region:** includes East Coast, Poverty Bay, Taranaki, Hawke's Bay, Wanganui, Manawatu, Horowhenua Kapiti, Wairarapa Bush & Wellington
  - **Southern Region:** includes Tasman, Buller, Canterbury, West Coast, Mid Canterbury, South Canterbury, North Otago, Otago & Southland
4. If a team that qualifies chooses not to compete at the National Tournament, the next highest ranked team from the Regional Tournament at which that team competed, will be invited to enter the National Tournament.
5. The seedings for the 2019 National Tournament (Men's and Women's sections) will be based on a combination of 2018 Nationals and 2019 Regional placings. As introduced for the 2014 Tournament the final placing of each Union at the preceding National Tournament secures their Region (not themselves) that seeding for the following years Nationals.

By way of example;

In the Men's division, by Tasman winning the 2018 National title, they have secured "Southern 1" the first seed spot. The winner of the 2019 Southern Regional Tournament will therefore go into the 2019 National Sevens as 1<sup>st</sup> seed.

Full Seeding details for the December 2019 National Sevens Tournament are outlined below.

Seedings/Pools - 2019 National Men's Sevens			
POOL A	POOL B	POOL C	POOL D
SOUTHERN 1	NORTHERN 1	CENTRAL 1	NORTHERN 2
Canterbury	Waikato	Wellington	Bay of Plenty
NORTHERN 3	SOUTHERN 2	CENTRAL 3	CENTRAL 2
Auckland	Tasman	Hawke's Bay	Taranaki
NORTHERN 4	SOUTHERN 3	SOUTHERN 4	NORTHERN 5
Counties Manukau	Otago	Southland	North Harbour
CENTRAL 5	SOUTHERN 5	NORTHERN 6	CENTRAL 4
Wairarapa Bush	South Canterbury	Thames Valley	Manawatu

Seedings/Pools - 2019 National Women's Sevens		
POOL 1	POOL 2	POOL 3
CENTRAL 1	NORTHERN 1	NORTHERN 2
Manawatu	Waikato	Auckland
NORTHERN 4	SOUTHERN 1	NORTHERN 3
Counties Manukau	Canterbury	Bay of Plenty
CENTRAL 2	SOUTHERN 2	SOUTHERN 3
Hawke's Bay	Tasman	Otago
CENTRAL 4	CENTRAL 3	NORTHERN 5
Taranaki	Wellington	North Harbour

## Tournament Format

### **MENS DIVISION**

- 16 teams will take part in 4 pools of 4.
- Teams will be seeded as per clause 6 above.
- On day one the teams in each pool will play against each other on a round robin basis.
- Following the completion of the pool matches teams will go forward to the play-offs on day two as follows;
  - Teams ranked first and second in each pool will progress to the quarter finals for the Cup;
  - The winners of these matches will proceed to the Cup semi-finals, and the winners of those matches to the Cup Final;
  - The losers of the Cup quarter finals will proceed to the Plate semi-finals, and the winners of those matches to the Plate Final.
  - Teams ranked third and fourth in each pool will progress to the quarterfinals for the Bowl;
  - The winners of these matches will proceed to the Bowl semi-finals, and the winners of those matches to the Bowl Final;
  - The losers of the Bowl quarter finals will proceed to the Shield semi-finals, and the winners of those matches to the Shield Final.
- Winners of the Shield, Bowl and Plate finals will be presented with trophies.
- The winner of the Men's Cup Final will determine the December 2019 National Sevens Men's Champions and be presented with the winner's trophy and medals.

## WOMENS DIVISION

- 12 teams will take part in 3 pools of 4.
- Teams will be seeded as per clause 6 above.
- On day one the teams in each pool will play against each other on a round robin basis.
- Following the completion of the pool matches teams will go forward to the play-offs on day two as follows:

- The teams in a pool are ranked one through four based on their cumulative competition points, and identified respectively as winner, runner-up, third and fourth as illustrated below:

Pool A	Pool B	Pool C
A1: Winner	B1: Winner	C1: Winner
A2: Runner-up	B2: Runner-up	C2: Runner-up
A3: Third	B3: Third	C3: Third
A4: Fourth	B4: Fourth	B4: Fourth

- Eight teams will play quarter-finals in the Cup competition. The draw for the quarter-finals of the Cup will be;  
QF1: A1 v second-best third place  
QF2: B1 v best third place  
QF3: C1 v A2  
QF4: B2 v C2
- The remaining four teams will play semi-finals for the Bowl competition. The draw for the semi-finals of the Bowl will be;  
SFB1: Third best third place v third best fourth place  
SFB2: Best fourth place v second best fourth place
- In order to rank the third placed teams and the fourth placed teams across the pools, the criteria set out in clauses 9 and 10 will apply.
- The winners of the Cup quarter-finals will go on to play in the Cup semi-finals. The draw for the semi-finals will be:  
SF1: Winner QF1 v Winner QF4  
SF2: Winner QF2 v Winner QF3
- The losers of the Cup quarter-finals will go on to play in the Plate semi-finals. The draw for the Plate semi-finals will be;  
PSF1: Loser QF1 v Loser QF4  
PSF2: Loser QF2 v Loser QF3
- The winners of the Cup semi-finals will compete for the Cup (first place). The losers of the Cup semi-finals will compete for third place.
- The winners of the Plate semi-final will compete for the Plate (fifth place). The losers of the Plate semi-finals will compete for seventh place.
- The winners of the Bowl semi-finals will compete for the Bowl (ninth place). The losers of the Bowl semi-finals will compete for 11th place.
- The winners of the Bowl and Plate finals will be presented with trophies.
- The winner of the Women's Cup Final will determine the December 2019 National Sevens Women's Champions and be presented with the winner's trophy and medals.

6. Competition points will be awarded for pool matches on the following basis:

Win	= 3 points
Draw	= 2 points
Loss	= 1 point
No show	= no points
  
7. If a team refuses to play, or wilfully abandons a match in progress, without the prior consent of the Host Union Match Manager in consultation with NZR, then, subject to confirmation by the NZR Tournament Director, that team will be expelled from the Tournament. If a team is expelled from the Tournament, for whatever reason, then all matches against that team will be deemed null and void. This means that any competition points awarded in matches against the expelled team, or points or tries scored or conceded against the expelled team, will not be taken into account in determining standings in the pool.

#### **Determining Standings at Conclusion of Pool Matches**

8. Positions in the pool competition table shall be determined by competition points as set in clause 6.
  
9. In the event that two or more teams in a pool are tied on points at the conclusion of pool play the finishing positions will be determined in accordance with the following criteria, which will be applied in the order in which they appear until the tie is broken:
  - a. Where two teams are tied on points:
    - i. The team that won the match between the two teams shall be deemed to have finished higher;
    - ii. The team with the highest points difference for and against in pool play shall be ranked higher;
    - iii. The team with the highest positive margin of tries scored for and against in pool play shall be ranked higher;
    - iv. The team that has scored the highest number of points in pool play shall be ranked higher;
    - v. The team that has scored the highest number of tries in pool play shall be ranked higher;
    - vi. In the event the tie cannot be broken as set out above then the tie will be resolved by the toss of a coin between the Team Managers concerned.
  
  - b. Where three or more teams are tied on points:
    - a. The team with the highest points difference for and against in pool play shall be ranked higher;
    - b. The team with the highest positive margin of tries scored for and against in pool play shall be ranked higher;
    - c. The team that has scored the highest number of points in pool play shall be ranked higher;
    - d. The team that has scored the highest number of tries in pool play shall be ranked higher;
    - e. In the event the tie cannot be broken as set out above then the tie will be resolved by the toss of a coin between the Team Managers concerned.

#### **Play-offs**

10. Following the completion of the pool matches all teams will go forward to the play-offs as outlined in the Tournament Draw.

11. During the play-offs, in the event of a match being drawn at the end of normal time, extra time will be played until a winner is determined. Following the end of normal time, a two minute break will be observed. Extra time will be in periods of five minutes. A representative from each team will gather with the referee on halfway to toss a coin to determine who kicks off first the first period of extra time. Subsequent kick-offs will alternate between the two sides. After each period the teams will change ends without interval. In extra time the team which scores first will immediately be declared the winner without further play.
12. The winner of the FINALS (Men's and Women's) will be recognised as the Tournament Champions for that year.
13. At the completion of the Tournament all teams will be given a final ranking based on their results in that Tournament. This regional ranking will carry forward to the December 2020 National Sevens Tournament.

#### **Duration of the Matches**

14. The duration of all pool play and play off matches (including the Women's and Men's Cup Finals) will be seven minutes each way, with a one minute interval. No extra time will be played in pool play matches.

#### **Abandonment of Matches**

15. Apart from the wilful abandonment of a Match and subsequent expulsion under Clause 7, in the event of a Match having to be stopped after its commencement under the provisions of the Laws of the Game, then subject to confirmation by the NZR Tournament Director, the following procedure shall apply:
  - a. Pool Play Matches
    - i. Where a Pool Play Match has been abandoned either at half-time or at any time in the second half the result and any points and tries scored by each Team in the Match shall stand.
    - ii. Where a Pool Play Match has been abandoned during the first half the result shall be declared a draw.
    - iii. Where a Pool Play Match has been declared a draw then for that Match each Team will be awarded two Match points and any points and tries scored will count towards the total points and tries scored by each Team in all their pool.
  - b. Play Off Matches
    - i. Where a Match has been abandoned either at half time or at any time in the second half the result shall stand.
    - ii. If a Match has been abandoned during the first half the result shall be declared a draw.
    - iv. In b (i) & (ii) above, where the match is drawn, then the team having been awarded the most competition points in pool play shall be declared the winner.
    - v. If this does not produce a winner, then the provisions of Clause 10 shall be used to ascertain the winner with points scored in all Matches in the Tournament taken into consideration. However, if one of the Teams participated in a Pool where a Team was expelled, for whatever reason, then the matter will be referred to the NZR Tournament Director which shall decide the most appropriate method for determining the winner of the tied knock out Match.

### Playing Kit

16. All teams must comply with the NZR Branding and Jersey Regulations as per direction from NZR. Approval for the Team Playing Kit from NZR must be obtained prior to the Tournament. Any breach of these regulations will be dealt with by the NZR Tournament Director.
  
17. Team Jerseys - Colour Clashes
  - i. Every endeavour will be made to avoid clashes, however the participating Unions acknowledge that the issue of colour clashes between Team Kits normally worn by Participating Unions is of critical importance.
  - ii. Teams must play all matches in the registered jersey/shorts colours. No variations to these will be permitted except in the case of a pre-determined colour clash, or by prior approval from the Tournament Director.
  - iii. NZR will produce a jersey clash chart before the tournament. Where determined colour clashes do occur, the alternate colours must be registered.
  - iv. Where neither team has an alternate kit, one team must wear generic NZR Training Kit provided by NZR.
  - v. The following rule shall be observed by Participating Unions and the Teams:  
For all matches where there is a colour clash, the team wearing the alternate kit will be determined by coin toss, unless otherwise agreed between the two team managers and approved by the Tournament Director.
  
18. Water Carriers and Medical Personnel are required to wear bibs to clearly identify themselves. Teams should wear their existing bibs as worn in the Mitre 10 Cup or Mitre 10 Heartland Championship. If teams do not have bibs for this purpose, NZR will supply a set to these teams.