



SPORTS TRIBUNAL
of New Zealand

ANNUAL REPORT
2023 / 24

MISSION OF THE SPORTS TRIBUNAL OF NEW ZEALAND

The mission of the Sports Tribunal is to ensure that national sport organisations, athletes and other parties to a sports dispute have access to a fair, objective and just means of resolving sports disputes within the Tribunal's jurisdiction that is also affordable, timely and efficient.

PERIOD COVERED BY THIS ANNUAL REPORT

The 2023/24 Annual Report of the Sports Tribunal reports on activities and cases decided during the time period 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024.



CONTENTS

CHAIRPERSON'S FOREWORD.....	2
ABOUT THE SPORTS TRIBUNAL.....	3
CASES DEALT WITH BY THE TRIBUNAL 2023/2024.....	4
OTHER MATTERS INVOLVING THE TRIBUNAL IN 2023/2024.....	14
SPORTS TRIBUNAL BIOGRAPHIES.....	15



CHAIRPERSON'S FOREWORD

Tēnā koutou katoa,

The 2023–2024 financial year has proved to be one of the Tribunal's busiest years. I sense that its workload might continue to increase as athletes and sporting organisations hear more about the Tribunal through the extensive media coverage experienced this year, and with its new appellate role in respect of matters coming from the Sport Integrity Commission.

It is therefore timely that we have had four new members appointed to the Tribunal. Although the appointments came after 30 June 2024, I mention them now and welcome Andrea Twaddle as a new Deputy Chairperson and Dr Sarah Beable, Sam Fellows and Harete Hipango as new Tribunal members. Their biographies appear at the end of this report. They bring a level of experience in law, sports medicine and sport which will enhance and strengthen the Tribunal.

At the same time, I take the opportunity to thank and farewell Tribunal member Paula Tesoriero whose tenure came to an end on 14 July 2024. Paula served the Tribunal for 11 years and brought a perspective and background as a Paralympian and lawyer which was enormously helpful. I wish Paula all the best for the future.

We also farewelled Georgina Earl (nee Evers-Swindell) another long serving Tribunal member during the year. Georgina brought an elite athlete perspective to the panels she sat on, and I thank her for her contribution and wish her all the best as she focuses on her young family.

Turning to the other members of the Tribunal, Deputy Chairperson Warwick Smith and members Ruth Aitken DNZM, Dr Helen Tobin and Pippa Hayward, they have worked incredibly hard this year and have helped navigate some complex and demanding cases, many of them under urgency. I greatly appreciated their willingness to give up weekends and evenings (sometimes to as late as midnight) during the Olympic nomination period when we managed six cases in one week.

I also acknowledge the splendid work of Helen Gould, the Registrar of the Tribunal, who has worked tirelessly during the year to ensure that all athletes and sporting organisations who have come before the Tribunal have had access to an efficient dispute resolution process.

Ngā mihi nui,

John Macdonald
Chairperson

ABOUT THE SPORTS TRIBUNAL

The Sports Tribunal is an independent statutory body that determines certain types of disputes for the sports sector. It was established in 2003 by Sport and Recreation New Zealand (now known as Sport New Zealand) in response to recommendations of a 2001 Taskforce which identified a need to help National Sporting Organisations (NSOs) avoid lengthy and costly legal battles, and to provide athletes with an affordable forum where they could access high quality and consistent decision-making to resolve disputes.

The Tribunal was continued under the name of the Sports Tribunal of New Zealand by the Sports Anti-Doping Act 2006 (the Act). The Tribunal is to get its own act on 1 July 2024, the Sports Tribunal Act 2006 which is largely the same as the original Act but which lifts the cap from the number of members that can sit on the Tribunal and accommodates an expanding role as a result of the inception of the Integrity Sport and Recreation Commission.

The Tribunal hears and decides the matters set out in section 38 of the Act. These are:

- Anti-doping violations, including determining whether an anti-doping violation has been committed and imposing sanctions;
- Disputes arising from the application of an integrity code;
- Appeals against a decision of a disciplinary panel under subpart 4 of Part 4 of the Integrity Sport and Recreation Act 2023;
- Appeals against a decision of a disciplinary body established by an organisation that has adopted an integrity code;
- Appeals against decisions made by a NSO or the New Zealand Olympic Committee (NZOC) if the rules of the NSO or NZOC allow for an appeal to the Tribunal. Such appeals include:
 - appeals against not being selected or nominated for a New Zealand team or squad;
 - appeals against disciplinary decisions;
- Other "sports-related" disputes that all parties to the dispute agree to refer to the Tribunal and that the Tribunal agrees to hear;
- Matters referred by the Board of Sport New Zealand.

The Act sets out the requirements for the appointment of Tribunal members including the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson(s). These include both legal experience and substantial involvement in sport. Information about the current Tribunal membership is provided at the end of this report.

Further information about the Tribunal's procedures and decisions can be found on its website: www.sportstribunal.org.nz

CASES DEALT WITH BY THE TRIBUNAL 2023/24

Nineteen cases and five provisional suspension applications were filed with the Tribunal during the year and the Tribunal issued nine decisions by 30 June 2024 with four matters resolving before a hearing was held, five decisions issued post 30 June 2024 and one matter still to be heard. These are classified by proceeding type below.

	NUMBER OF PROCEEDINGS FILED	NUMBER OF DECISIONS ISSUED
Anti-Doping (Provisional Suspension)	5	5
Anti-Doping (Substantive)	5	3
Appeals against decisions of NSOs or NZOC	13	5
Sports-related disputes by agreement	1	0
Other	0	1
Total	24	14

OVERVIEW

The Tribunal dealt with nineteen proceedings this year which is an increase on the previous year and the largest number of cases for many years.

The number of appeals filed against decisions of NSOs and the NZOC was 13 in 2023/24 as opposed to six in 2022/23. The nominations and selections for the 2024 Paris Olympics occurred during this time period.

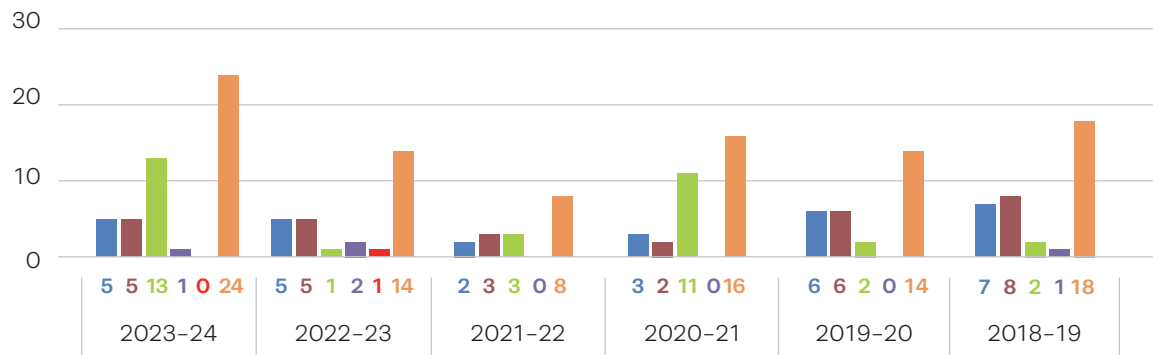
The number of anti-doping cases remained the same this year as last year, with five substantive anti-doping proceedings filed, three of these were decided by the Tribunal, one decision was released after 30 June 2024, and one is awaiting a hearing.

We anticipate an increase in future cases due to the establishment of the Sport Integrity Commission.

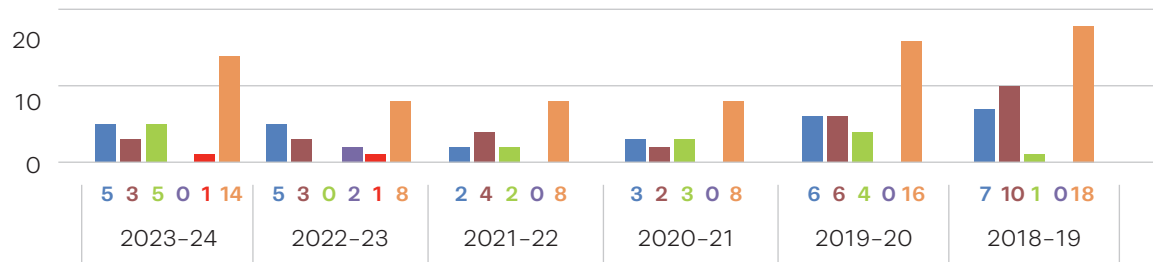
COMPARISON WITH PREVIOUS FIVE YEARS

The following graphs show the number of proceedings filed with the Tribunal and decisions issued (classified by proceeding type) in 2023/24 alongside each of the previous five years.

Number and type of proceedings filed – yearly comparison



Number of decisions issued – yearly comparison



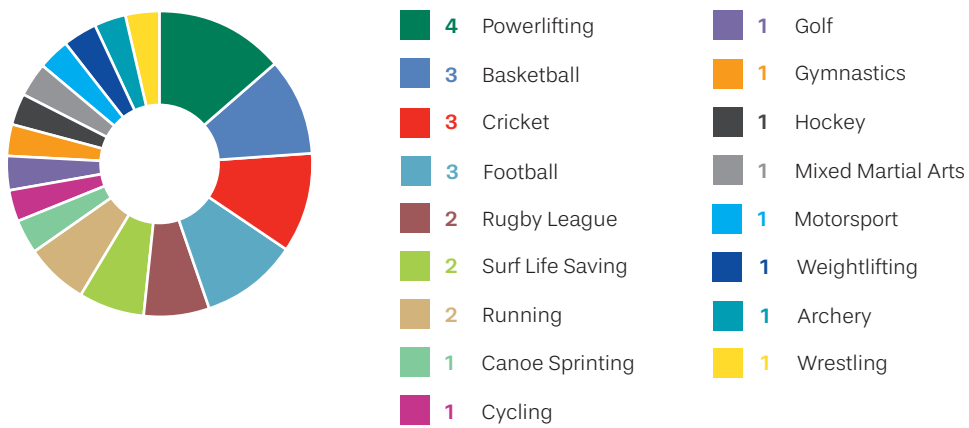
- Anti-Doping (provisional suspension)
- Anti-Doping (substantive)
- Appeals vs NSO and NZOC decisions
- Sports related disputes by agreement
- Other
- Total

The charts below reflect the types of anti-doping cases and the sports involved over the last five years.

Anti-Doping Tribunal decisions 2019/20 to 2023/24 by Anti-Doping Rule Violation type



Anti-Doping cases heard by the Tribunal: Sports involved 2019/20 to 2023/24



ANTI-DOPING CASES

The Tribunal hears provisional suspension applications and substantive proceedings for anti-doping rule violations filed by DFSNZ (now the SPort Integrity Commission), New Zealand's National Anti-Doping Organisation (NADO). The Tribunal is empowered to determine whether a violation has occurred and to impose the appropriate sanction under the Sports Anti-Doping Rules (SADR) promulgated by DFSNZ. The SADR mirror the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) Code, a revised Code took effect on 1 January 2021.

2023/2024

This year four substantive anti-doping proceedings were heard and decided by the Tribunal, with a further substantive case underway but not concluded by 30 June 2024. These decisions are summarised in the table below.

These cases were determined under the 2023 and 2024 Sports Anti-doping Rules which were written under the 2021 Code. All cases involved the intentional and unintentional presence of a prohibited substance and three of the cases were "substances of abuse" cases.

ANTI-DOPING VIOLATION	PENALTY	SPORT
Presence of prohibited substance - Cocaine	3 months ineligibility	Rugby league
Presence of prohibited substance – Methylphenidate metabolite Ritalinic Acid	2 years ineligibility	Powerlifting
Presence of prohibited substance – metropolol and its metabolite a-hydroxy-metropolol	2 years ineligibility	Archery
Presence of prohibited substance – Carboxy-THC metabolite: 11-nor-delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol carboxylic acid (Cannabis)	Decision not given before 30- June 2024	Football
Presence of prohibited substance - Cocaine	Matter not heard before 30 June 2024	TBA

These decisions are summarised on the following pages.

PRESENCE OF A PROHIBITED SUBSTANCE – COCAINE

Drug Free Sport New Zealand v Evaan Reihana

The Sports Tribunal banned Evaan Reihana, a rugby league player, for three months following an Adverse Analytical Finding (AAF) which detected the presence of cocaine, a prohibited substance and substance of abuse.

Being classified as a substance of abuse means it is acknowledged that cocaine is a substance which is abused outside of sport. That acknowledgement meant that if Mr Reihana took the substance outside of competition and not for the purposes of enhancing performance, he would be entitled to a reduced sanction. DFSNZ accepted that was the case and so the Tribunal imposed a period of ineligibility of three months.

PRESENCE OF A PROHIBITED SUBSTANCE – METHYLPHENIDATE METABOLITE RITALINIC ACID

Drug Free Sport New Zealand v Chris Kennedy

Powerlifter Chris Kennedy was suspended by the Sports Tribunal for a period of two years from participating in all sports which are signatories to the Sport Anti-doping Rules (SADRs).

Mr Kennedy participated in the New Zealand Powerlifting Federation Nationals in September 2023 and underwent a drug test. His sample showed the presence of Methylphenidate metabolite Ritalinic Acid (better known as Ritalin) which is a specified substance prohibited in competition.

Mr Kennedy said he took the substance out of competition but that it was still in his system at the time that the competition began. DFSNZ submitted that there was not enough evidence to establish that Mr Kennedy had used the substance in competition and did not seek to establish that Mr Kennedy had taken the substance intentionally to enhance his performance.

The Tribunal accepted that the presence of the prohibited substance in Mr Kennedy was sufficient to establish that an anti-doping rule violation had occurred and further accepted that Mr Kennedy had no intention of using the substance in competition. Accordingly, the Tribunal imposed a sanction of a two-year period of ineligibility.

The period of ineligibility was not backdated to the date of the provisional suspension order imposed on Mr Kennedy on 22 November 2023 as would usually occur because Mr Kennedy had coached his brother, a member of an organisation which is a signatory to the SADRs, during his provisional suspension period. Consequently, Mr Kennedy was suspended until 25 March 2026.

POSSESSION OF A PROHIBITED SUBSTANCE – METROPOLOL AND ITS METABOLITE A-HYDROXY-METROPOLOL

Drug Free Sport New Zealand v Robert Knight

Competitive Archer Robert Knight was suspended by the Sports Tribunal for a period of two years from participating in all sports which are signatories to the Sport Anti-doping Rules (SADRs).

Mr Knight participated in the North Island Senior Target Champs in April 2023 and underwent a drug test. His sample showed the presence of the Beta Blocker metoprolol and its metabolite a-hydroxy-metoprolol which is a specified substance prohibited at all times for Archery Athletes.

Mr Knight, who admitted the violation, said that he had been prescribed metoprolol by his doctor, who he claims knew he was a competitive archer, to treat an ongoing condition and he did not know it was a prohibited substance. Drug Free Sport New Zealand (DFSNZ) did not seek to establish that Mr Knight had taken the substance intentionally to enhance his performance.

The Tribunal accepted that the presence of the prohibited substance in Mr Knight's system was sufficient to establish that an anti-doping rule violation had occurred and further accepted that Mr Knight had no intention of using the substance in competition. Accordingly, the Tribunal imposed a sanction of a two-year period of ineligibility.

The period of ineligibility was backdated to the date of the provisional suspension order imposed on Mr Knight on 10 November 2023 meaning he is suspended until 10 November 2025.

APPEALS AGAINST DECISIONS OF NSOs OR NZOC

Fourteen appeal proceedings were filed with the Tribunal in the reporting year. Four of those proceedings resolved themselves without the need for a hearing. Of the remaining cases, seven were appeals against the NSO for the non-nomination for the 2024 Paris Olympics Games. Of the remaining three, one was an appeal against a disciplinary decision of the NSO, one was an appeal over a change to how points were calculated, and the last was an appeal against non-nomination to a World Championship event.

Five of the non-nomination appeals were dismissed by the Tribunal, one was upheld due to an error of fact and the other was upheld because two of the grounds of appeal were made out.

The appeal against a disciplinary decision of the NSO was upheld and the decision of the NSO's Association Disputes Tribunal was quashed.

Five of the decisions were given before 30 June 2024 and are summarised below.

APPEAL AGAINST DECISION OF NSO

Anon v New Zealand Canoe Polo Association (NZCPA)

The NZCPA became aware of bullying behaviour at a junior development camp and as the complainant, took the matter to its Squad Disputes Tribunal (SDT). The SDT conducted a review of the camp and interviewed 11 boys who were alleged to have participated in the bullying behaviour. Following the interviews, the SDT informed the boys that they had breached the NZCPA Code of Conduct and informed them of their punishment which was to write an apology letter to the victim and varying periods of monitoring depending on the assessed level of involvement in the bullying behaviour. The athlete in this case had one of the higher monitoring periods.

The appellant, unhappy with the process followed by the SDT because he was not informed of what he had done to breach the Code, appealed to the Association Disputes Tribunal (ADT) as he had been advised to do in the letter informing him of his sanction if he was unhappy with their decision.

The ADT concluded the SDT had not properly followed the disciplinary process and had jumped from the investigation to imposing a sanction which missed the important step of allowing the boys involved to be heard on the sanction.

What then followed was a muddled process, due to their being an absence of guidance in the NZCPA disciplinary policy, which resulted in the appellant's appeal against the SDT being upheld, the ADT considering the matter de novo and then imposing a higher sanction than before.

The appellant appealed against this decision on the basis that natural justice had been denied.

Having heard all the evidence, the Tribunal concluded that natural justice had been denied because the appeal process was unclear, the appellant was unaware that an appeal could result in a higher sanction, the appellant was not properly provided with an opportunity to respond to allegations made against him, he was not given the opportunity to be heard on sanction and there had been an error in fact when reaching its decision as to the level of the appellant's involvement in the behaviour.

The appeal was upheld, and the ADT decision was quashed. It meant that the original sanction of the SDT remained in place. As the monitoring period of six months had passed the appellant was free to train and compete like all the other athletes.

Eden Worsley v Artistic Swimming New Zealand (ASNZ)

Ms Worsley brought an appeal against the decision of ASNZ not to nominate her for selection for the 2024 Paris Olympics.

Ms Worsley cited the four grounds of appeal available to her in the selection policy which mirror the grounds of appeal at Rule 42(e) of the Tribunal Rules, and which include that the decision was affected by actual bias.

Ms Worsley first brought the appeal to the Tribunal on 18 December 2023. The Tribunal understood the matter to be urgent given that the Olympic selection events set down for the ASNZ duet were to commence in late February or early March 2024.

Following pre-hearing conferences, timetabling was agreed upon by counsel and presented to the Tribunal with a request for a hearing after 13 March 2024. The Tribunal set down the dates of 25 and 26 March 2024 for the hearing based on availability.

The hearing was then adjourned part-heard due to the parties entering negotiations that might resolve the matter. A period of two weeks passed before the Tribunal was made aware that negotiations had broken down and the hearing needed to be resumed. Despite its best efforts, the Tribunal was unable to accommodate a hearing in time for the real issue of whether Olympic selection was still to be available to Ms Worsley. On the basis that there was no longer time for Ms Worsley to be selected for the Olympics and with no other remedies available to the Tribunal pursuant to Rule 49, the appeal was dismissed.

Thompson v Canoe Racing New Zealand (CRNZ)

Quaid Thompson brought an appeal against the decision of CRNZ not to nominate him for selection for the 2024 Paris Olympics.

Mr Thompson cited that the criteria had been improperly applied, that there was lack of communication and over-emphasis on selecting a K4 boat, that he did not have a reasonable opportunity to fulfil the criteria and there was actual bias in the nomination process as his grounds of appeal.

The Tribunal arranged a hearing of the matter which began with an argument from counsel for CRNZ that the Tribunal did not have jurisdiction to hear the appeal.

CRNZ argued that because Mr Thompson was seeking for the K1 to be reconsidered as the priority boat, for him to be considered for the K2 and K4 boats, for there to be a re-trial for the K4 boat and that for him to join the group of five paddlers trialling for the K4 boat, this was not a non-nomination appeal but was an appeal against the nomination of other paddlers for which the Tribunal does not have jurisdiction.

Counsel for CRNZ cited the CAS case of YNZ v Murdoch CAS 2004 in which CAS said in the strongest terms (that it was 'wrong in law') for the Tribunal to hear an appeal against the nomination of another athlete; the NZOC Selection Regulations precluded such an appeal.

CRNZ submitted that the appeal could not be against Mr Thompson's nomination because there was no K1 boat going to the Olympics so he could not be nominated in that event. He had also not made himself available to the crew boat process and had not been part of the sprint squad which was a nomination criterion. The submission was that as Mr Thompson was ineligible for nomination to the Olympics there was no non-nomination relating to him.

Counsel for Mr Thompson argued that Mr Thompson was eligible for nomination and therefore the Tribunal could hear the appeal.

The Tribunal concluded that he was ineligible because there was no K1 boat quota for him to be nominated to and he did not meet the criteria to be nominated to a crew boat. Consequently, the Tribunal was satisfied that it did not have jurisdiction and so dismissed the appeal.

As the matter had gone to a full hearing, the Tribunal commented that even if it had jurisdiction to hear the appeal it would have found that none of the grounds of appeal relied upon by Mr Thompson would have been made out.

Walton-Keim v Yachting New Zealand (YNZ)

Lukas Walton-Keim brought an appeal against the decision of YNZ not to nominate him for selection for the 2024 Paris Olympics in the Men's Lite Foil event.

His ground for appeal was that YNZ had not properly followed and/or implemented the applicable nomination policy

Mr Walton-Keim cited nine areas where he submitted the nomination criteria were not properly followed or implemented.

Following a hearing held in May 2024, at which extensive evidence from both parties was presented, the Tribunal concluded that the selectors and therefore YNZ had properly followed and implemented the nomination criteria.

The Tribunal did find, though, that when considering the result from the second Selection Regatta, the selectors had based their conclusions as to Mr Walton-Keim's performance on incorrect information. That incorrect information led the selectors to assess the second Selection Regatta as being a weakened field and therefore could not be viewed in the same way as the first and the third regattas.

Consequently, the Tribunal concluded that it would be unsafe to assume that considering incorrect information did not lead the selectors to make the wrong decision on whether the appellant met the clause 4.2 criteria and so the appeal should succeed on that point.

The nomination decision was sent back to YNZ to determine using the correct facts in relation to the quality of the field in the second Selection Regatta.

Hourigan v Tennis New Zealand (TNZ)

Paige Hourigan brought an appeal against the decision of TNZ not to nominate her for selection for the 2024 Paris Olympics to partner Erin Routliffe in the Women's Doubles tennis event.

Ms Hourigan cited the four grounds of appeal available to her in the selection policy which mirror the grounds of appeal at Rule 42(e) of the Tribunal Rules, and which include that the decision was affected by actual bias.

Ms Hourigan submitted that the selectors had erred in not considering other competitions outside of the key events and had added in considerations that had not been communicated to her, such as singles results and results on clay court surfaces. Ms Hourigan submitted that not having been told these would be taken into account meant she did not have a reasonable opportunity to meet the nomination criteria. She also submitted that the selectors should have but did not consider the players in contention as doubles pairs rather than as individual players.

Ms Hourigan also submitted that the nomination decision was affected by bias because of the efforts made by TNZ to bring the other player in contention, Lulu Sun, under the TNZ umbrella when she repatriated to New Zealand from Switzerland.

Following an urgent hearing and having read and heard a substantial amount of evidence, the Tribunal concluded that none of the grounds of appeal were made out and consequently dismissed the appeal.

OTHER APPEALS

The Tribunal dealt with one dispute brought before it between two regional golf clubs, the constitution of which provides for an appeal to the Tribunal.

At the Tribunal's discretion the decision in this matter was not published, largely because there had been a considerable amount of co-operation between the parties to assist the Tribunal in resolving the matter.

URGENCY

The Tribunal continued this year to process cases efficiently and speedily and handle urgent applications at short notice; this was particularly apparent during the Olympic nomination and selection period with six matters needing to be dealt with under urgency at the same time.

MEDIATION ASSISTANCE AND OTHER SUPPORT

In appropriate cases, the Tribunal offers advisory assistance and forms of mediation to parties to help settle their disputes by agreement without the Tribunal needing to adjudicate. The Tribunal can conduct mediation at the request of the parties, or in appropriate cases, it can order parties to undertake mediation.

The Tribunal was approached with several matters relating to disputes between players and regional sporting organisations and enquiries relating to contract disputes or integrity matters and, where appropriate, the Tribunal recommended matters should be taken to the Sport and Recreation Complaints and Mediation Service.

OTHER MATTERS INVOLVING THE TRIBUNAL IN 2023/2024

PUBLIC ENQUIRIES

In addition to the matters heard by the Tribunal, the Tribunal fielded 63 enquiries ranging from queries regarding matters before the Tribunal, about how to make an application to the Tribunal, seeking information about legal support, enquiring as to whether a matter should be brought to the Tribunal, responding to questions from academics and journalists and assisting with finding previous decisions.

CONFERENCES AND TRAINING

The Tribunal Chairperson and Registrar attended the Australia New Zealand Sport Law Association (ANZSLA) annual conference held in Melbourne in October 2023. The conference represented an excellent networking opportunity and an opportunity to hear of new developments in the sport law field. A conference reflections document was prepared by the Registrar.

CONSULTATION

The Tribunal was asked to review and provide feedback on the Sport Anti-Doping Rules (SADRs) for 2024.

The Tribunal was asked to review and provide feedback on the draft Integrity Sport and Recreation Code.

The Tribunal made submissions on the WADA review of the Code and other documents.

The MOU to cover the 1 July 2024 – 30 June 2027 period was drafted and signed.

The Tribunal began a review and redraft of its Rules and Information Guide to reflect the changes in legislation and the introduction of the Sport Integrity Commission.

LEGAL ASSISTANCE PANEL

Parties to anti-doping proceedings continue to benefit from access to support for legal services through the Tribunal's Legal Assistance Panel; an up-to-date list of lawyers on the Panel can be found on the Tribunal website.

EXPENDITURE

Under the Memorandum of Understanding between the Minister for Sport and Recreation, Sport NZ and the Tribunal, Sport NZ employs the Registrar of the Tribunal, provides accommodation for the Tribunal office and funds support and information technology costs.

Sport NZ also funds the other operating costs of the Tribunal, which include those associated with hearing and deciding cases (such as the remuneration paid to Tribunal members authorised by the Remuneration Authority, travel, hiring of hearing venues and teleconferencing costs) and producing information resources.

In 2023/24 those operating costs totalled \$124,564 with the bulk of that (\$107,238) going on fees for hearings which reflects the increase in the number of cases dealt with by the Tribunal.

SPORTS TRIBUNAL BIOGRAPHIES

CURRENT MEMBERS OF THE SPORTS TRIBUNAL



CHAIRPERSON:
JOHN MACDONALD

John (Rangitāne, Ngati Raukawa) was appointed Chairperson of the Tribunal in November 2022. He is a former District Court Judge (1990–2022) and a former Panel Convenor of the New Zealand Parole Board (2002–2016). He played basketball for New Zealand between 1969 and 1981, captaining the first side to beat Australia in 1978. Before concentrating on basketball, John had played cricket for Otago Brabin Cup and under 23 sides. He also played for New Zealand Universities, scoring a century on its 1969/70 Australian tour. John has been the patron of Basketball New Zealand since 2012. He was inducted into the Basketball Hall of Fame in 2017 and the Māori Sports' Hall of Fame in 2019.



DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON:
WARWICK SMITH

Warwick is a former Associate Judge of the High Court (2014–2021), and a former member of the Copyright Tribunal of New Zealand (2012–2013). He currently practises as an arbitrator and mediator from chambers in Auckland and holds the offices of Legal Aid Review Authority under the Legal Services Act 2011 and assessor for the Ministry of Justice's Criminal Justice Assistance Reimbursement Scheme. He is on the international arbitration panels of the New Zealand International Arbitration Centre and the Singapore International Arbitration Centre, and regularly acts as a domain name panellist for the World Intellectual Property Organisation. Warwick is a lifelong sports enthusiast, having played cricket at senior club level and later serving on the management committee of the North Shore Cricket Club. Prior to his appointment to the bench, he was a member of Auckland Cricket's disciplinary committee.



**DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON:
ANDREA TWADDLE**

Andrea Twaddle is a director of DTI Lawyers. She is an experienced lawyer specialising in sports law, employment law and independent investigations. Andrea is a member of the Australian and New Zealand Sports Law Association and Association of Workplace Investigators. She has served as the Selection Review and Appeals Commissioner for NZ Rowing. Andrea has considerable legal experience within the sports sector, including integrity, health and safety, and governance matters. A former age-group representative hockey player, she has been involved in many sports as a participant, coach, administrator and support person.



DAME RUTH AITKEN DNZM

Ruth represented New Zealand at netball in 1979 and was the Silver Ferns coach from 2002–2011, leading the team to two Commonwealth Gold Medals (2006 and 2010) and the 2003 World Netball Championship title. Named Halberg Coach of the Year in 2003 and awarded the ONZM in 2011 for services to netball, she retired as the most capped international netball coach in the world with 112 test matches to her credit. In 2021, as well as receiving a Service Award from World Netball, she was made a Life Member of Netball New Zealand. In the 2022 Queen's Birthday and Platinum Jubilee Honours, Ruth was promoted to Dame Companion of the New Zealand Order of Merit, for services to netball.



DR HELEN TOBIN

Helen is an orthopaedic surgeon working at Hutt and Boulcott Hospitals. She specialises in hip and knee replacement. She is currently the Clinical Director of Surgery and Women at Hutt and Wellington Hospitals. She is an examiner for the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons and a trustee for the Wishbone Trust (fundraising for orthopaedic research) and for the Hip Fracture Registry.



PIPPA HAYWARD

Pippa is a Crown Prosecutor and senior solicitor at Meredith Connell, having obtained Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Laws degrees from the University of Auckland. She represented New Zealand in hockey between 2012 and 2018, retiring after the Commonwealth Games on the Gold Coast where her team won gold. She was a member of the women's hockey team at the Olympics in Rio de Janeiro and played over 150 tests. During her time in the Black Sticks she was a board member of the Hockey Players' Association.



DR SARAH BEABLE

Dr Sarah Beable is a Sports and Exercise Physician at Axis in Queenstown and medical director for Snow Sports NZ, having previously been medical director for Cycling New Zealand. She has worked with a wide range of athletes and sports, taking her to multiple Olympic and Commonwealth Games and touring with the Silver Ferns. She has a research background and a special interest in athletic women's health and mental health in athletes. She has a good understanding, from a sports medicine perspective, of the role of the Tribunal. She still regularly participates and competes in a variety of sports.



SAM FELLOWS

Sam Fellows (Ngāi Tahu) is the General Counsel for the Tauranga City Council. He was previously a solicitor with Holland Beckett and Simpson Grierson. Sam has also taught sports law at the University of Waikato, including lecturing on contemporary issues in sports law. He has considerable knowledge of Tribunal decisions and of integrity in sport issues and has appeared before the Tribunal on a number of occasions. He also has had a lengthy involvement in sport as a participant, an official and in sports governance.



HARETE HIPANGO

Harete Hipango (Whanganui/Te Āti Haunui-a-Pāpārangi, Ngāti Apa, Ngāti Whitikaupeka/Ngati Tamakōpiri) served six years as a Member of Parliament in the 52nd and 53rd NZ Parliaments. Prior to that, since 1991, she was a barrister and solicitor of the High Court of New Zealand which included court litigation, mediation, tribunal work and legal advocacy/representation specialising in criminal, family, children and young persons, and mental health law also with broad governance service and experience. Harete has a lifetime involvement and interest in sport. This includes her own participation as a multi-provincial age-group and franchise representative netballer, competition coaching, managing, event organising in netball and as parent support in age group rugby, tennis, athletics and New Zealand junior representative and USA College rowing. Harete is training for her first half marathon to compete in Iron Māori at Ahuriri Napier in November 2024.

RECENTLY RETIRED MEMBERS OF THE SPORTS TRIBUNAL



PAULA TESORIERO MNZM

Paula was a New Zealand Paralympics racing cyclist. Among her many achievements, her world record-breaking time in the women's 500m time trial secured New Zealand's first gold medal at the 2008 Summer Paralympics and she then went on to win bronze in both the individual pursuit and the women's individual road time trial. Paula has held senior management positions in the public service. Paula is a former Board member of the Halberg Disability Sport Foundation, and the New Zealand Artificial Limb Service, and currently serves on the Boards of Sport Wellington and Paralympics New Zealand. Paula took up the role of Disability Rights Commissioner in July 2017 and during her appointment was the Acting Chief Human Rights Commissioner from 2018 to 2019. In September 2022 Paula was appointed as the inaugural Chief Executive of Whaikaha – Ministry of Disabled People.



**GEORGINA EARL ONZM
(FORMERLY GEORGINA EVERS-SWINDELL)**

Georgina is a former New Zealand rower. She competed in the double sculls with her sister Caroline Meyer. Among her many achievements, Georgina is a double Olympic gold medalist, having won at Athens in 2004 and Beijing in 2008. In 2016 she and Caroline were awarded the prestigious FISA Thomas Keller Medal.



CONTACT INFORMATION

The Sports Tribunal's office is in Wellington.

Enquiries should be directed to the Registrar of the Sports Tribunal.

The Sports Tribunal's preference is for documents to be filed by email.

CONTACT DETAILS

Registrar

Sports Tribunal of New Zealand

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