



Cousins Shield and Mitchell Cup
2024 Rules

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1. Competition Information

The Cousins Shield and Mitchell Cup are the premier club team's events for men and women squash in NZ. The purpose of the event is to determine the best Men's and Women's team from a NZ club for that calendar year, as well as encourage clubs' participation.

This competition is played from Friday to Sunday over the Kings' Birthday Weekend and teams entered must be able to field a team on each day.

2. Eligibility

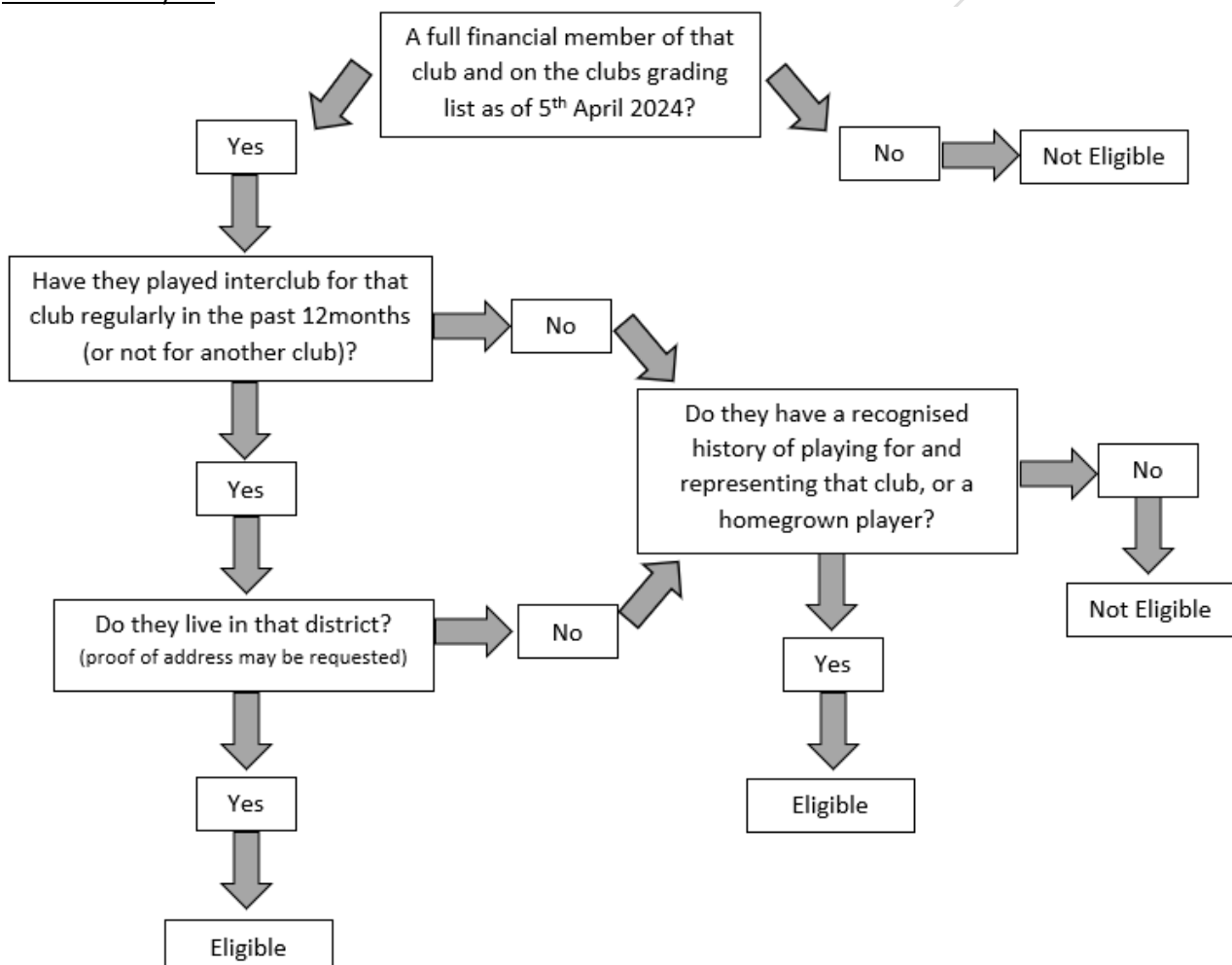
2.1 Club Eligibility

Any Squash New Zealand Poipātū Aotearoa (SNZ) affiliated club can compete in the Cousins Shield and Mitchell Cup competitions.

2.2 Player Eligibility

To represent a club all competing players (men and women) in any one team must fulfil the following criteria – except for the import (domestic) and/or homegrown player(s) permitted to teams as per the criteria below.

2.2.1 Club Players:



2.2.2 Import Players

2.2.2a Domestic Imports

- a) Mitchell Cup teams with two or fewer 'A-grade' players (that are not A1) are eligible for a single domestic import (someone who normally lives in NZ and is a member of a SNZ Club) that does not fulfil the club criteria above. **The tournament disputes panel (TDP) reserves the right to increase the number of domestic imports for a team in the spirit of participation (Mitchell Cup competition only).*

- b) Cousins Shield teams with two or fewer 'A-grade' players (who are not both A1) are eligible for a single domestic import (someone who normally lives in NZ and is a member of a SNZ Club) that does not fulfil the club criteria listed above.
- c) The grading list as of April 5th for entries shall be used to judge the number of 'A- grade' players a club has.
- d) A club may not leave out an 'A-grade' player who is willing/available to play in the Cousins Shield/Mitchell Cup competitions in order to qualify for a domestic import. Where this occurs, the TDP will review the case and make a final ruling on eligibility.

2.2.2b Homegrown Players

- a) To support clubs who invest significant time and resources into the development of juniors or other players; players may continue to play for the club they were a member of as a junior after moving away from that district for study/work opportunities.
- b) Once a player plays Cousins Shield/Mitchell Cup for a different club, this rule will no longer apply to them.
- c) This rule may be waived where a player has not had the opportunity to play for their club due to a team not being entered from their club. Where a player competes for another club in the same year where their club has entered a team this will remove their ability to apply the homegrown player rule.

SNZ and the TDP reserves the right to apply dispensations to individual players in respect of rule 2.2. The TDP decision will be final with no discussion being entered into and does not set a precedence for future events.

3. Entries

Teams can consist of up to seven players of any grade. Five players will compete in each tie with two players stood down in each tie. SNZ affiliated clubs can only enter one team in each Cousin's Shield and Mitchell Cup event.

All teams must:

- Fulfil **ALL** requirements of Section 2 Eligibility.
- Submit entries to the Tournament Director by April 12th, no late entries will be accepted.
- Have the appropriate entry fee accompanied with the official entry form.
- Submit players in level order as shown on the April 5th Grading List.

All entries will be vetted by the TDP to ensure the above criteria has been meet.

As a condition of entry all teams must accept that the TDP retains the right to make the final decision on player eligibility and allow players into a team that may not meet all the above criteria. All teams must abide by the TDP decisions. Dispensations will not be made until all the teams lists and/or protests are received.

4. Team Playing Order

Team playing order will be determined by players levels as at the May 24th grading list. Players will be listed in their SquashLevels rating order from highest level to lowest level. Players are not permitted to play out of this order, no exceptions.

SNZ will publish all grading lists on the SNZ website under the Cousins Shield and Mitchell Cup event page.

SNZ reserves the right to alter playing order and seedings should there be evidence of withholding results.

Prior to the manager's meeting, the Tournament Director will make a final check of the team compositions. Final ratification of all teams and playing orders will take place at the managers' meeting. The team orders confirmed by the Tournament Director shall apply for all rounds of the competition.

5. Replacing Players – Prior to the Event

5.1 Substituting Players

Teams needing to substitute players in/out of their team after teams have been entered and playing orders

have been circulated shall make application in writing (by email) to the Tournament Director no later than 4.00pm May 28th.

Where proposed substitutes are eligible as per player eligibility rule 2, and they have a **smaller** player level than the player they are replacing, the Tournament Director will add the player to the team list in their level order as of May 24th grading list.

Where proposed substitutes are eligible as per player eligibility rule 2, and they have a **greater** player level than the player they are replacing, the Tournament Director will add them to the team in their level order as of May 24th grading list and circulate the proposed change among team managers for approval, managers will have 48 hours to protest changes. All team managers will be informed of changes to team seedings.

Any substitutions will result in a reseeding of the draws.

A player who has been substituted out of the team cannot be substituted back in at a later stage.

Any teams requesting substitutions to their team after the Tuesday preceding the competition must receive unanimous agreement from all managers.

5.2 Replacement Players

Any changes to team composition occurring after team submission that are **NOT** substitutions (i.e., do not meet eligibility rule 2) may only occur with the unanimous permission of the other teams in the competition.

6. Event Logistics

6.1 Event Format

The Cousins Shield and Mitchell Cup competitions will be played in a monrad draw format (unless numbers are such that a pool draw is more appropriate (at the discretion of the tournament director). Wherever possible all teams will play a minimum of three ties.

6.2 Event Seeding

The Cousins Shield and Mitchell Cup will be seeded according to the sum of the top five players levels. Levels for seedings are initially taken from the April 5th Grading List. Team seedings will be updated based on the May 24th grading list and updated team lists will be sent to all managers on the May 27th.

The tournament director reserves the right to reseed the event at any time in the lead-up to the competition.

6.3 Tournament disputes panel (TDP)

The TDP shall deal with all disputes that arise during the event and rule on any protests made by teams about the Cousins Shield and Mitchell Cup Event Rules.

The TDP shall comprise the Tournament Director, a SNZ Representative, and at least one other suitable person. The TDP can, as they see fit, defer to other people for advice before making their decision.

All decisions made by the TDP will be final with no discussion being entered into.

6.4 Team Protests

All clubs who have entered Cousins Shield/Mitchell Cup competition have the right to protest (stating their case in writing to SNZ) against other teams regarding player eligibility, if appropriate.

Protests must be received before 4:00pm April 26th – late protests will not be considered.

All protests must refer to the rule the protesting team/person believes has been contravened.

The TDP in conjunction with SNZ will rule on any protest. Their decision shall be notified to all team managers by May 3rd. All decisions will be final with no discussion being entered into.

6.5 Managers' Meeting

A Managers' Meeting must be held at least one hour prior to the commencement of the first round of play. This meeting may be used as a forum to make final alterations to teams if proposed changes receive unanimous approval from all managers. If there is any opposition to proposed changes, they may not occur.

Any managers not attending the managers meeting forfeit all rights to protest any changes.

The Tournament Director will chair the meeting alongside a SNZ representative.

6.6 Daily Order of Match Play

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. A separate order of play shall be made for each day's play.

The order of play for the first day will be made by the Tournament Director prior to the start of the competition and will be notified to participating teams on or before Monday 27th May.

The order of play for subsequent days will be drawn at the managers' meeting.

6.7 Submission of Teams

The teams in correct playing order for the first round must be handed or sent to the Tournament Director at least one hour prior to the start of play.

Teams for each subsequent round must be handed to the Tournament Director within half an hour of the finish of play in the preceding round. This applies also to teams that have a bye in any round of the competition.

The Tournament Director will display the team playing orders as soon as all teams have been submitted.

6.8 Scoring

Each individual match shall be the best of five games with PAR to 11 (must win by 2).

6.9 Tie Rules

The first players must be on court ready to warm up no more than fifteen minutes following the conclusion of the previous match, or the scheduled start time of the tie, unless a valid reason why they will not be ready to commence is communicated with tournament control prior. Failure to do this will result in the match being defaulted if a complaint is made to the Disputes Committee by the opposition team manager. If after another 45 minutes (one hour total from the scheduled start time) the second player is not on court, then the entire tie is defaulted unless further time is allowed at the discretion of the tournament director.

In pool play, each team will play the other teams in their pool once with each tie consisting of five matches, with team members playing their correspondingly ranked member of the opposing team once. All matches in pool play must be played.

In the final playoff where an outright winner is found before all matches have been completed teams can opt to not complete the remaining matches. Matches will only be played if there is agreement from both players.

6.10 Winning Ties/Countbacks

Each tie shall consist of five matches, the team winning the most matches shall win the tie. In Pool play, the final order of merit in that Pool is decided based on all results in that Pool, as follows:

- a) First by greater number of Ties won.
- b) If two teams have won, the same number of ties then by the result between those two teams.
- c) If three or more teams have won the same number of Ties, then teams will be ordered based upon the number of matches won in the ties between those three teams only.
- d) If two teams are still equal i.e., have won the same number of ties and matches, then by the result between those two teams.
- e) If three or more teams still equal i.e., have won the same number of ties and matches, then by greater positive difference between games won and lost in ties between those three teams.
- f) If two teams are still equal after positive difference between games won, then by the result between those two teams.
- g) If three or more teams are still equal, then by greater positive difference between points won and lost in ties between those three teams.
- h) If two teams are still equal, then by the result between those two teams.
- i) If more than two teams are still equal, then by random drawing of places.

7. Replacement Players – Prior to start of tie.

At any time after the submission of teams and prior to commencement of play in any one tie of the competition, a player may be replaced by another nominated team member at the discretion of the TDP.

Replacements will only be granted in the case of illness or injury (medical report or other such evidence is required), or urgent personal business, that prevents the player from taking part in the tie after having been named in the team after the previous round. The TDP will have the final say on whether the illness/injury/personal business justifies a replacement being permitted.

Replacements may only be from other nominated team members or reserves. The team playing order may need to be resubmitted to satisfy section 4.

When a team must default a match within any one tie of the competition, and is unable to field a replacement player, the default will apply to the No. 5 position with all other players moving up to play matches from 1 to 4.

Replacements from outside of the nominated team members may only be permitted by the TDP where, due to injury or urgent personal business, a team has less than five players able to play for any round. The replacement player(s) must be no higher on the grading list than the original player(s). Matches played by replacements from outside of the nominated team members will count as automatic losses for the team, although may count for SquashLevels ratings if both players agree.

8. Replacement Players – After commencement of tie

After the commencement of any one tie of the competition, replacements for that tie are not permitted. If the tie has already commenced and players cannot move up to play the matches from 1 to 4, the default will apply to the position the defaulted player was named in 6.7, with all players remaining in their named positions. The defaulted match counts as an automatic 3/0 loss for the team.

9. Results

The Tournament Director is required to display the full match scores throughout the event and to forward these to SNZ at the end of each day. The “Teams Result Sheets” provided should be used.

These results will be communicated to the media and copies of the full results will be available for participants from SNZ immediately after the end of the event.

The host club is required to enter the results into the iSquash within five days of the event’s conclusion.

10. Timeline

- April 5th: Grading list run by SNZ to determine player eligibility and team seedings.
- April 13th: All entries due to SNZ.
- April 19th: Team playing orders circulated to all team managers.
- April 26th 4pm: Any protests of personnel due to SNZ in writing.
- May 3rd: Ruling of protests advised to all team managers.
- May 24th: Grading list run to determine final playing orders within teams.
- May 27th: Daily order of play for first day's matches and updated team lists sent to managers.
- May 27th 4pm: Final request for substitutions to tournament director made in writing.
- May 31st – June 2nd: Cousins Shield & Mitchell Cup Competition.

11. Trophies

SNZ will provide pennants for the following places for the Cousins Shield and Mitchell Cup: Winners, Runner Ups, and Plate winners.

In addition, the Cousins Shield (Men's Trophy) and Mitchell Cup (Women's Trophy) will be awarded to the two winning teams.

Winning teams can keep trophies for a year on the condition they are returned in the state they were received.

New trophy added from 2021.

Tanya Laurence Sportsmanship and Values Award, on behalf of the Laurence Family.

Recently we lost a great well known and incredibly liked and respected squash player, Tanya Laurence. Mitchell Cup was Tanya's most favourite tournament in the calendar. The trophy will epitomise what Tanya stood for as a player, competitor, and friend.

The Tanya Laurence Sportsmanship and Values Award to be presented at Cousins Shield/ Mitchell Cup to the individual who displays the following:

- Visibly lifts their game for their team - a total team player.
- Has integrity both on and off the court.
- Shows true sportsmanship to their team members, opponents, and referees.
- Demonstrates a genuine love for the game and especially this event.
- Has a true sense of fellowship with their competitors.

Nominations will be accepted from the Team Managers.