



TABLE TENNIS  
NEW ZEALAND

STAG  
INTERNATIONAL



31<sup>st</sup> August 2020

## THE 2020 JUNIOR AND SENIOR OPEN CHAMPIONSHIPS WILL CONTINUE

### THE 2020 NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP FOR ATHLETES WITH A DISABILITY IS POSTPONED

#### [A] The NZ Open Championships

The Board of Table Tennis NZ have confirmed that the 2020 NZ Junior and Senior Open championships, in Auckland, 3-11 October will continue, but possibly with restrictions on the Teams competitions.

The closing date for entries to the NZ Open championship will be extended to 11.59pm, Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> September, 2020. Entries will only be accepted with full payment by the closing date. Payments made for teams not accepted will be refundable in full.

#### Teams competition restrictions under Covid19 Pandemic Level 2.

The total number of teams in each teams section (junior and senior) will be restricted. The final number may be about 36 teams but could vary according to the number of grades with byes, and whether we can do without grading matches.

Any Association will only be guaranteed one team in each event but may enter multiple teams in priority order for subsequent inclusion via a TTNZ ballot draw should additional spaces be available.

Drafting pool requests may not all be satisfied, but most should be.

The change in format to accommodate pandemic level restrictions will require greater amounts of cooperation from players/coaches to keep to the competition schedule. An allocation of 1½ tables will be made to each contest. With these team restrictions Rule 18.5 in the TTNZ handbook- national championships, will not apply. i.e. teams will be expected to use two tables when possible.

Teams when playing in a session will be permitted to have up to 5 persons in the venue e.g. 4 players and 1 coach.

#### What if Auckland is back to Level 1 by October?

**Associations may supply two sets of team entries, one for Pandemic Level 2 ( with restrictions as above) and another for Pandemic Level 1 ( no team restrictions) .**

We will prepare a draw and schedule for both scenarios.

#### Restrictions and changes as a result of Covid19 Pandemic Levels and Government requirements

To ensure a safe environment, the event will operate following hygiene and contact tracing requirements. There will most likely be restrictions on the number of people inside the Auckland Table Tennis Stadium and there is a possibility that other changes may be required at short notice. The wearing of face masks may be required in areas outside the playing court.

Each Association is requested to appoint a Liaison Officer as the first point of communication, for any changes required in response to the Covid19 pandemic levels.

## [ B] The TTNZ National Championships for Athletes with a Disability

This event, at the Manurewa TT Club, Manukau, 3-4 October, 2020 has been postponed. Another date in November has yet to be confirmed.

## [C] Background

TTNZ has an obligation to provide a safe playing environment for participants. In the past week, TTNZ has been reviewing the risk of holding the 2020 national championships in Auckland so that a decision could be made to provide more certainty to participants.

In reviewing the risk TTNZ considered three contingency options:

- A. Make no changes. Leave the format as it is and modify the format only if a Government decision forces this. Any last moment changes may require additional resources to deliver the event, and players would need to make their own decisions on the feasibility of participation. Any financial commitment incurred by a participant would be their own responsibility.
- B. Recognise that a restriction in gathering size is very probable and modify the format. Changes in format may include limiting team numbers , or playing in more than one venue, or excluding all teams.
- C. Cancel the event as the risk to participants and the risk of the event being a breeding ground is too high.

The Covid19 pandemic level in Auckland, is currently Level 2.5, with a gathering restriction in Auckland of 10 people. Under Level 2, there is still a risk of community transmission of the virus. There is a risk to ensure a safe playing environment exists for participants, but in holding the event there is also a risk the event will stimulate a breeding environment for Covid19.

There is no indication if and when the Level 2.5 restriction in Auckland will change. It may fluctuate between alert levels. The previously advertised competition format could only operate if Auckland was in alert level 1, or if in alert level 2, the gathering restriction was greater than 175. The event could continue with a modified format if Auckland were in Level 2 with a gathering restriction of 100.

With the exception of a few Associations, most participants have yet to enter, preferring to wait as long as possible to assess the impact of the Covid19 pandemic on the event. Most Associations would prefer to have some competition for players than no competition at all. It is assumed that the individual's competition will continue to occur if a restriction on gathering size of 100 existed. If competition session times only allow 100 people in the Stadium, spectators would not be possible.

The current competition timetable is:

Junior Teams		Junior/Vets Individuals		Senior Teams		Senior Individuals		
3-Oct	4-Oct	5-Oct	6-Oct	7-Oct	8-Oct	9-Oct	10-Oct	11-Oct
Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
U18, U15, U13		U18	U15	Open		Open		U21
		U13	U11	O45, O55		B,C,D		O30
		O55	O45					

Table Tennis NZ will continue to monitor the risk of holding the national championships and maintain regular communication with Associations and participants.