

**NEW ZEALAND SECONDARY  
SCHOOLS ATHLETICS ASSOCIATION**  
**53<sup>rd</sup> TRACK & FIELD and ROAD RACE CHAMPIONSHIPS**  
*11-13 December 2026 - Cooks Gardens, Whanganui*

**NEWSLETTER #2**

*Nau mai, haere mai, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou katoa.*

*Welcome to the second newsletter for the 2026 New Zealand Secondary Schools Track & Field and Road Championships.*

The Local Organising Committee (LOC) wish to confirm that the NZSSAA Track & Field Championships are to be held over two and a half days, commencing on **Friday 11 December 2026 at 12.00 pm at Cooks Gardens, Whanganui** and being completed at approximately **5.00pm on Sunday 13 December**.

The Road Race Championships will be run on the Whanganui Collegiate School campus on a 1 kilometre circuit. **Please note the changes of age group and distances.**

- Year 9s will be running in the Junior race over 4km. Yr 9s, Junior Boys and Girls both run 4 laps of 1 km. There will be individual medals for Under 14, Under 15 and Under 16.  
There will be Team medals for 3 and 6 to score for the combined race.
- Para Athletes running 2km will have 3 grades: Under 15, Under 17 and Under 20 (Under 22 for ORS funded). Para Athletes who wish to run the full distance can do so with non-para athletes. Under 15 and Under 17 will compete as Juniors and Under 20 as Seniors. In this case, their placings overall can count in the results for their school team and their para athlete performance will be recognised separately.
- Senior Boys and Senior Girls will have individual medals at Under 17 and Under 20 and team medals for the combined race. Senior Boys will race 5 laps of one kilometre and Senior Girls will race 4 laps of 1 kilometre. **Ages taken from 31 December 2026.**

Please note there is no managers' meeting this year. Any changes to the programme after the close of entries and other issues will be notified in the final newsletter and all questions will be answered at TIC. Details are as follows:

**TIMELINE**

- The draft T&F programme is available for comment on NZSSAA website. **Please note that requests for possible changes are to be made to [oe@nzssaa.co.org.nz](mailto:oe@nzssaa.co.org.nz) before 5pm on Monday 21 September.**
- Week beginning 7 September Newsletter #2
- Entry portal opens Monday 12 October
- Monday 2 November Newsletter #3
- Monday 23 November Entries close. Late entries accepted for an additional \$10 per athlete providing space is available in desired event/s until Sunday 6 December.
- Tuesday 1 December Newsletter #4.
- Wednesday 9 December Online scratchings close at 11.59 pm. Thereafter scratchings need to be done through the **Technical Information Centre (TIC)** 90 minutes prior to the scheduled time of the event.
- 10 December ground being set up for championships and the venue should be open for inspection and light training.

Details to follow in the next newsletter.

- 10 December 3pm to 6pm Managers packs available at the **TIC** and from **9am, 11 December onwards as required at TIC located by the gate entrance on Cooks Street.**
- 11-13 December Track and Field Championships at Cooks Gardens, Whanganui.
- 13 December *Road Race Championships* at Whanganui Collegiate School.
- 13 December at 4.30pm (or earlier if possible) the NZSSAA New Zealand Team and Athletes of the Meeting will be announced. Preliminary selections will be announced throughout Sunday afternoon. Certificates for team members available throughout the afternoon for those athletes who have had preliminary selection.

## AGE GROUPS

- All athletes must have turned 13 prior to 31 December 2026 (born 2013 or earlier)
- Junior - Under 16 as at 31 December 2026 (born in 2011, 2012)
- Senior - Under 20 as at 31 December 2026 (born in 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010)
- Road Race - There are three grades in the junior race: Under 14, Under 15, Under 16, on 31 December 2026. There are two grades in the senior race: Under 17, Under 20, on 31 December 2026. Team races for 3 and 6 to score in the combined junior grades and the combined senior grades
- Para Athletes - Junior – Under 17 (born on or after 1 January 2009). Senior as above except the senior age for ORS funded students is under 22 on 31 December 2025. Contact [oe@nzssaa.org.nz](mailto:oe@nzssaa.org.nz) to enter over 20 years of age athletes.

## ENTRIES

All entries must be made online on the NZSSAA website **on or before 22 November 2026.**

The website will be **open for entries from 12 October 2026 and will close on 22 November 2026 at midnight.**

## AFFILIATION

The Association collects school affiliation fees with entries. Schools that did not have competitors at the Cross-Country Championships will have the \$55.00 affiliation fee added to their entries invoice.

## ENTRY FEES

The entry fees payable per athlete for track and field and/or road race are as follows:

- \$40.00 - one or two events (including the road race)
- \$55.00 - three or more events
- \$15.00 - relay only competitors

## PROGRAMME OF EVENTS

The guideline programme is available on the NZSSAA Website and Facebook page.

## TRACK VENUE

Cooks Gardens has held the NZSSAA Track & Field Championships on three previous occasions as well as the Athletics New Zealand Championships twice since the track was laid in 1996. The 8-lane track has been resurfaced twice, most recently in 2024. The main grandstand is on the home straight with corporate boxes at the back of the grandstand along with photo timing and the conference centre which will be the base for officials. The two grandstands combined have 4 000 seats.

## CORPORATE BOXES

All boxes have now been hired. There is a possibility of being able to book tent spaces but this will be limited by the flat areas available at Cooks Gardens. **Please note that there is considerable space in the covered grandstands.** If tent spaces become available we will advise on the NZSSAA website and Facebook.

### **WARM UP TRACK**

The warm-up track will be at Whanganui City College and is 300m from the Cooks Gardens Cook Street Gate and 340m from the Call Room. There is a large all-weather tennis courts at Whanganui City College where hurdles will be provided and a grass 300m track on the adjacent field. There will be concrete for throwing but throws warm-up athletes require an adult supervisor.

### **ROAD RACE VENUE**

The Road Race venue is at Whanganui Collegiate School. Whanganui Collegiate is a mile from the Cooks Street gate. The course is over a 1 kilometre circuit. 4 kilometres for junior girls, junior boys, and senior girls. 5 kilometres for senior boys. Full details including parking will be released in the next newsletter and posted on the NZSSAA website and Facebook.

### **EQUIPMENT**

Starting blocks and throwing implements are provided. If you wish to use your own implement this will be required to be measured and weighed and if passed, will be held in the equipment storeroom and brought out at competition time. The times to do this will be provided closer to the event.

Pole vault poles are an athlete's responsibility.

### **SPIKES**

The spikes approved for the all-weather track are Pyramid (cone shaped) or Christmas tree (compression tiered) spikes. Needle or Pin spikes are not allowed even if they have a flat surface at their contact point.

### **COMMUNICATION**

We will endeavour to place all information on the NZSSAA website and the NZSSAA Facebook Page.

For questions concerning entries/order of events contact [oe@nzssaa.org.nz](mailto:oe@nzssaa.org.nz).

### **ACCOMMODATION**

Accommodation is tight in Whanganui, but it is worth noting that Marton and Bulls are only 30 minutes to Cooks Gardens and Palmerston North is one hour. We urge you to secure accommodation early.

### **OFFICIALS AND VOLUNTEERS**

Graded Officials and Volunteers are welcome to make contact to assist us in delivering successful championships even for part of the time.

**Officials** should sign up via the ANZ Officials portal link. <https://events.mygameday.app/event/nzaaaaandrrc2026>.

Officials are asked to email Alec McNab – [alec.mcnab@collegiate.school.nz](mailto:alec.mcnab@collegiate.school.nz) 021 421 145, if you require any information regarding officiating.

**Volunteers** are asked to email Gary Johnston -[gjohnston@welearn.school.nz](mailto:gjohnston@welearn.school.nz). if you have any volunteers that would like to help us out for the duration or part of the champs. We would especially like our large School Teams of more than 12 athletes to nominate a volunteer for one day support. This can be a senior student giving them a valuable experience.

The LOC has accommodation for visiting officials. The LOC is offering 2 nights accommodation for all graded officials on a twin share basis. Only Officials living outside Wellington, Manawatu/Whanganui, Taranaki may apply for 3 nights accommodation.

### **TEE SHIRTS**

Souvenir Tee Shirts and other merchandise will be available for purchase and details will be included in Newsletter #3.

These will be available for purchase online.

Alec McNab  
LOC Chair

