

**NATIONAL
SPORT CLUB
SURVEY**



**AMATEUR
SPORT
ASSOCIATION**



BEHAVIOUR RELATED ISSUES IN COMMUNITY SPORT

Insights from the
2025 National Sport Club Survey

Prepared for :

**Sport Integrity Commission Te Kahu Raunui
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Background

The National Sport Club Survey (NSCS) provides an annual snapshot of the management, operation, and governance of sport clubs in Aotearoa New Zealand. Delivered through a partnership between AUT's Sport Research Institute New Zealand (SPRINZ) and the New Zealand Amateur Sport Association (NZASA), the survey captures the perspectives of club Chairs, Presidents, Secretaries, and other leaders. In 2025, 747 clubs across over 78 sports and all 16 regions participated.

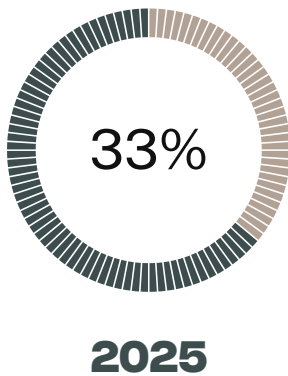
Community sport clubs play a central role in providing safe, inclusive, and positive environments for participants. However, behaviour-related issues, such as verbal abuse, physical aggression, and poor sideline conduct, continue to present challenges for clubs. These behaviours can influence not only the immediate sporting experience, but also broader outcomes including member retention, volunteer sustainability, and the willingness of officials to remain involved.

In response, the 2025 NSCS included a focused set of questions examining the nature, prevalence, and perceived impacts of behaviour-related issues within community sport settings. This reflects growing sector interest in gaining visibility of the types of behaviour-related issue occurring within clubs, the scale of these issues, and who may be most impacted. The findings are intended to support ongoing sector conversations and help identify areas where additional attention, guidance, or support may be beneficial.

The aim of this report is to provide a national overview of behaviour-related issues as experienced by community sport clubs. The findings are intended to support sector understanding, inform ongoing conversations, and highlight areas where clubs may benefit from additional guidance or support. National results reflect all participating regions and sports, with more detailed breakdowns presented where response numbers allow for meaningful interpretation.

Verbal Behaviour

→ Inappropriate or concerning verbal behaviour during sport activities is a concern for our club



In the 2025 NSCS, 33% of responding clubs reported that inappropriate or concerning verbal behaviour during sport activities is a concern for their club committee/board

BY REGION

Northland	40%
Auckland	51%
Waikato	20%
Bay of Plenty	67%
Hawkes Bay	55%
Nelson	50%
Taranaki	13%
Manawatū-Whanganui	22%
Wellington	13%
Canterbury	29%
Otago	44%

Verbal Behaviour

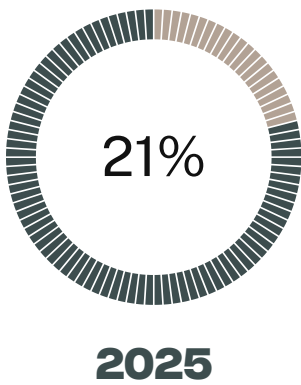
BY SPORT

Athletics	60%	Golf	10%
Basketball	33%	Hockey	0%
Bowls (Outdoor)	14%	Netball	60%
Cricket	33%	Rugby Union	78%
Croquet	0%	Softball	25%
Cycling	13%	Swimming	0%
Equestrian	57%	Tennis	22%
Football	59%	Yachting	20%



Physical Behaviour

➔ Inappropriate or concerning physical behaviour during sport activities is a concern for our club



In the 2025 NSCS, 21% of responding clubs reported that inappropriate or concerning physical behaviour during sport activities is a concern for their club committee/board

BY REGION

Northland	20%
Auckland	30%
Waikato	30%
Bay of Plenty	22%
Hawkes Bay	27%
Nelson	50%
Taranaki	13%
Manawatū-Whanganui	11%
Wellington	13%
Canterbury	17%
Otago	44%

Physical Behaviour

BY SPORT

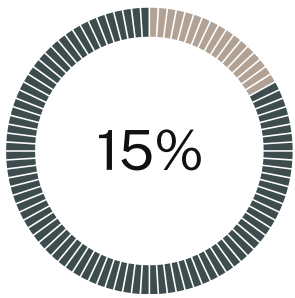
Athletics	40%	Golf	0%
Basketball	0%	Hockey	0%
Bowls (Outdoor)	0%	Netball	40%
Cricket	25%	Rugby Union	44%
Croquet	0%	Softball	0%
Cycling	0%	Swimming	0%
Equestrian	43%	Tennis	0%
Football	47%	Yachting	20%



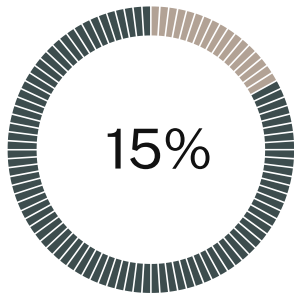
Incidence Trend

➔ In the past five years, have incidence of poor behaviour in your sport at the community level increased, decreased, or stayed about the same?

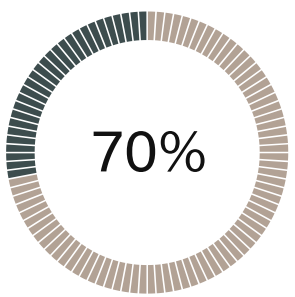
In the 2025 NSCS, 15% of responding club committees/ boards reported that in the past five years, incidences of poor behaviour in their sport at the community level had increased



INCREASED



DECREASED



STAYED THE SAME

BY REGION

REGION	INCREASED
Northland	0%
Auckland	37%
Waikato	0%
Bay of Plenty	44%
Hawkes Bay	9%
Nelson	0%
Taranaki	13%
Manawatū-Whanganui	13%
Wellington	7%
Canterbury	9%

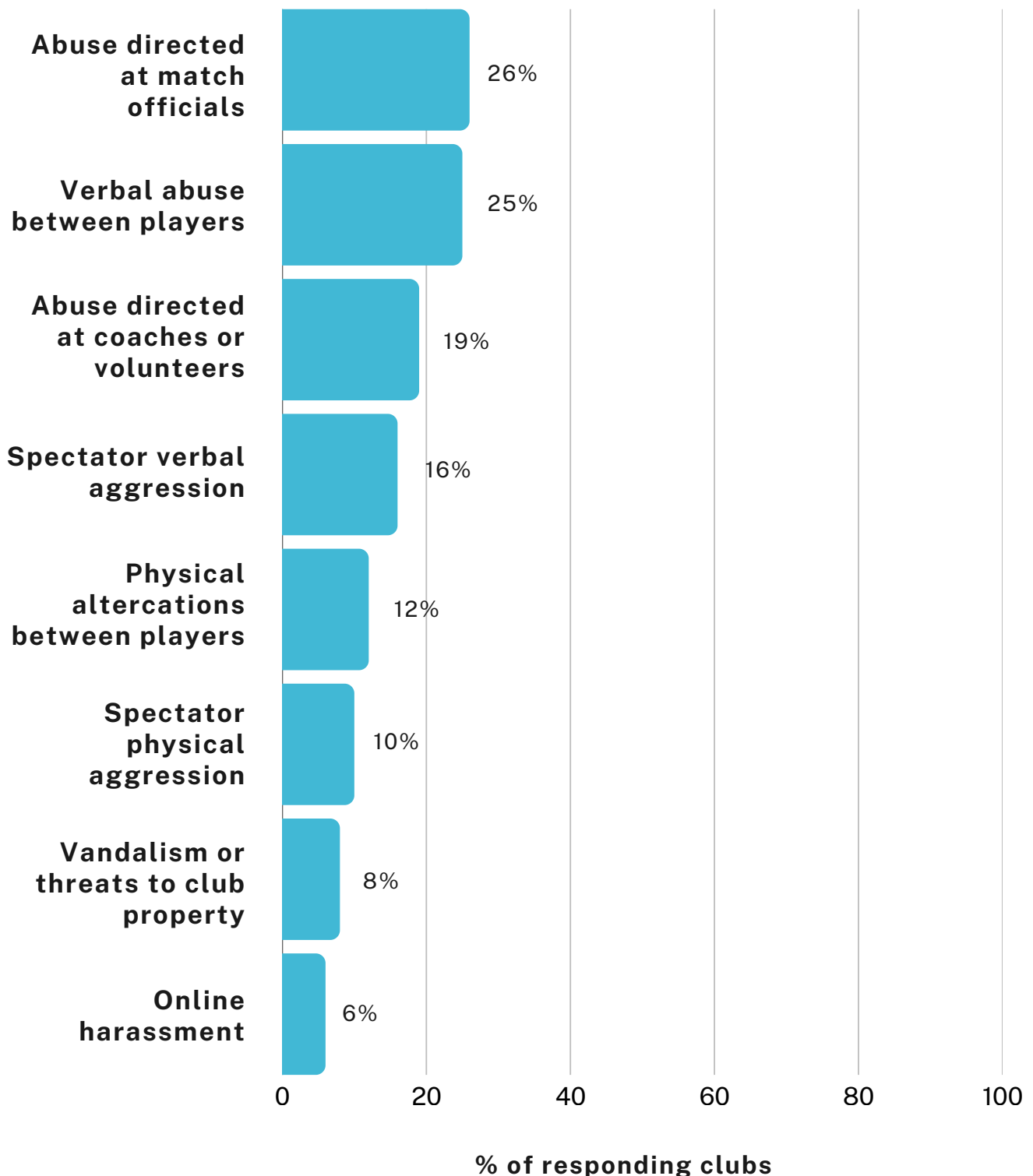
Incidence Trend

BY SPORT

SPORT	INCREASED	STAYED THE SAME	DECREASED
Athletics	20%	80%	0%
Basketball	33%	34%	33%
Bowls (Outdoor)	0%	86%	14%
Cricket	25%	58%	17%
Croquet	0%	50%	50%
Cycling	0%	100%	0%
Equestrian	29%	57%	14%
Football	24%	65%	11%
Golf	5%	91%	4%
Hockey	0%	75%	25%
Netball	70%	20%	10%
Rugby Union	11%	56%	33%
Softball	25%	50%	25%
Swimming	0%	100%	0%
Tennis	11%	78%	11%

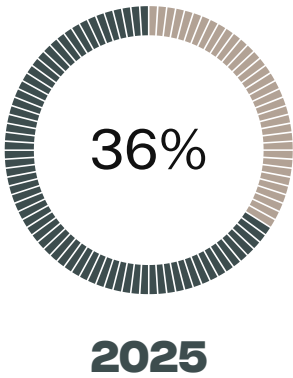
Behaviour Types

➔ In the past 12 months, has your club experienced or been made aware of the following types of behaviours?



Member Impact

➔ Our club is concerned that behaviour-related issues could negatively impact our ability to attract or retain members



In the 2025 NSCS, 36% of responding club committees/ boards reported that they were concerned that behaviour-related issues could negatively impact their ability to attract or retain members

BY REGION

Northland	33%
Auckland	39%
Waikato	25%
Bay of Plenty	44%
Hawkes Bay	36%
Nelson	50%
Taranaki	63%
Manawatū-Whanganui	22%
Wellington	14%
Canterbury	36%
Otago	60%

Member Impact

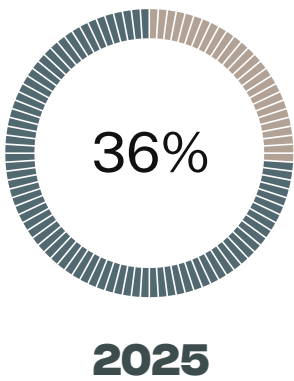
BY SPORT

Athletics	40%	Golf	20%
Basketball	33%	Hockey	50%
Bowls (Outdoor)	0%	Netball	70%
Cricket	42%	Rugby Union	67%
Croquet	0%	Softball	25%
Cycling	0%	Swimming	17%
Equestrian	57%	Tennis	56%
Football	41%	Yachting	0%



Officials Impact

➔ Our club is concerned that behaviour-related issues could negatively impact our ability to attract or retain match officials (e.g. referees, umpires)



In the 2025 NSCS, 36% of responding club committees/ boards reported that they were concerned that behaviour-related issues could negatively impact their ability to attract or retain match officials (e.g. referees, umpires)

BY REGION

Northland	33%
Auckland	45%
Waikato	20%
Bay of Plenty	56%
Hawkes Bay	36%
Nelson	50%
Taranaki	38%
Manawatū-Whanganui	11%
Wellington	10%
Canterbury	43%
Otago	71%

Officials Impact

BY SPORT

Athletics	60%	Golf	10%
Basketball	33%	Hockey	50%
Bowls (Outdoor)	0%	Netball	70%
Cricket	46%	Rugby Union	56%
Croquet	0%	Softball	50%
Cycling	0%	Swimming	17%
Equestrian	57%	Tennis	44%
Football	65%	Yachting	0%



Key Considerations

The findings from the 2025 NSCS indicate that behaviour-related issues are a consistent feature of the community sport landscape, although their incidence and impact vary across regions and sports. While many clubs report stability in behaviour over time, a significant proportion continue to experience concerns, particularly in relation to verbal interactions, sideline conduct, and behaviours directed at officials.

From a system perspective, the findings reinforce that behaviour-related issues extend beyond isolated incidents. They are perceived by many clubs as having the potential to influence broader outcomes, including participant experience, member retention, and the recruitment and retention of officials. While this study does not measure these outcomes directly, the findings suggest that behaviour is viewed by clubs as an important factor that may affect both the quality and sustainability of community sport.

The variability observed across clubs suggests that context matters. Differences in club size, competition structures, volunteer capacity, and local norms are likely to shape both the types of behaviours experienced and how clubs respond. This points to the need for flexible, context-sensitive approaches rather than uniform solutions.

Within this context, there is an important role for the Sport Integrity Commission Te Kahu Raunui, alongside national and regional sport organisations, in supporting a more consistent and coordinated approach across the system. As expectations around safe, fair, and respectful sport environments become more clearly articulated across the sector, there is an opportunity to embed these principles more consistently within day-to-day club environments.

The findings demonstrate the importance of supporting clubs with practical, easy-to-apply tools that translate expectations into everyday practice. This may include clear guidance on acceptable conduct, simple processes for responding to incidents, and resources that build confidence among volunteers to manage challenging situations effectively. Given the volunteer-driven nature of many clubs, these supports should prioritise simplicity and accessibility.

There is also an opportunity for the wider sport system to reinforce shared responsibility for behaviour, recognising that expectations extend beyond club governance and management to participants, coaches, spectators, and officials. Strengthening consistency in messaging across the system may help reduce ambiguity and support more positive sport environments.

Key Considerations

Overall, the findings suggest that behaviour-related issues remain a feature of the community sport landscape in Aotearoa New Zealand. While 70% of clubs reported that behaviour-related issues had remained stable over the past five years and a further 15% reported a decrease, 15% identified an increase in such issues. Reports of inappropriate behaviour directed towards officials, participants, coaches, volunteers, and spectators indicate that these concerns are experienced across multiple parts of the sport system. Together, the findings highlight the value of ongoing efforts to promote positive behaviours and support safe, fair, and respectful sport environments.

Sports represented in the 2025 National Sport Club Survey.

AFL (n=1)	Marching (n=4)
American Football (n=1)	MotorSport (n=9)
Archery (n=4)	Netball (n=26)
Athletics & Harriers (n=19)	Orienteering (n=5)
Badminton (n=9)	ParaSport (n=2)
Baseball (n=2)	Petanque (n=6)
Basketball (n=11)	Polo (n=2)
Bowls (Outdoor) (n=82)	Pony Club (n=6)
Bowls (Indoor) (n=34)	Radio Yachting (n=2)
Boxing (n=6)	Rodeo (n=3)
Bridge (n=17)	Rowing (n=8)
Canoeing (n=7)	Rugby League (n=8)
Cheer Union (n=1)	Rugby Union (n=21)
Climbing (n=3)	Shooting (Clay Target) (n=5)
Cricket (n=24)	Shooting (Pistol) (n=6)
Croquet (n=29)	Shooting (Rifle) (n=5)
Curling (n=1)	Shooting (Target) (n=6)
Cycling (n=14)	Skate (n=6)
Darts (n=11)	Snow Sports (n=1)
Disability Sports (n=8)	Softball (n=13)
Diving (n=1)	Special Olympics (n=15)
Dragon Boating (n=2)	Sport Fishing (n=9)
Equestrian Sports (n=17)	Squash (n=18)
Fencing (n=5)	Surf Life Saving (n=14)
Floorball (n=3)	Surfing (n=1)
Flying (n=6)	Swimming (n=21)
Football (n=35)	Table Tennis (n=4)
Gliding (n=5)	Tae Kwon Do (n=2)
Golf (n=47)	Tennis (n=31)
GymSports (n=12)	Tenpin Bowling (n=3)
Hang Gliding (n=1)	Touch Rugby (n=3)
Hockey (n=12)	Triathlon (n=5)
Ice Figure Skating (n=1)	Volleyball (n=4)
Ice Speed Skating (n=1)	Waka Ama (n=17)
Inline Hockey (n=1)	Water Polo (n=9)
Jiu-Jitsu (n=2)	Water Skiing (n=1)
Judo (n=7)	Yachting (n=16)
Karate (n=5)	Other (n=20)
Kendo (n=1)	

*Not all respondents reported the sport of their club

**10% of responding clubs reported that they are associated with more than one sport

REGIONS

Regions represented in the 2025 National Sport Club Survey.

Northland (n=21)
Auckland North (n=36)
Auckland West (n=16)
Auckland Central East (n=28)
Auckland South (n=18)
Waikato (n=73)
Bay of Plenty (n=28)
Gisborne (n=4)
Hawkes Bay (n=24)
Nelson (n=14)
Taranaki (n=23)
Manawatū-Whanganui (n=31)
Wellington (n=72)
Tasman (n=6)
Marlborough (n=8)
West Coast (n=5)
Canterbury (n=101)
Otago (n=44)
Southland (n=17)

*Not all respondents reported the sport of their region

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Further Information

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