

Competition manipulation myths



National Sport
and Recreation
Integrity Wānanga



Sport Integrity
Commission
Te Kahu Raunui



BUSTED

Myth: There's no evidence of competition manipulation in New Zealand

The Commission received 238 in-scope complaints in its first year.

Of these, 5% (or one in 20) complaints were related to competition manipulation.

Source: [sport-integrity-commission-annual-report-202425.pdf](#)

A hand is shown interacting with a tablet device. The background is a blurred blue light.

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Myth: New Zealand is not at risk of exposure to competition manipulation

New Zealand is part of INTERPOL's Asian Zone.

This zone has the second highest number of investigations and sanctions globally.

For two hours each Saturday, New Zealand is the only country offering live sport in this market.

Source: [Analysis of patterns and trends in competition manipulation in sport global data: 2018–2023](#)

Source: [New Zealand's amateur football league is attracting hundreds of millions in offshore betting | RNZ News](#)



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Myth: No-one is betting big on New Zealand sport

In 2024, \$212 million NZD was bet on the National League (football).

There was an average of 96 bookmakers per game, almost all from Asia online.

Between \$500,000 and \$1.4 million was spent on each game.

Source: [New Zealand's amateur football league is attracting hundreds of millions in offshore betting | RNZ News](#)



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Myth: New Zealanders only bet on mainstream sport

Table tennis is the sport with the fourth highest betting turnover - 10%.

Prior to 2020, turnover was less than 1%. But as one of the only sports to continue during COVID, its turnover surged.

While turnover is now decreasing, the sport has still maintained a high level of interest.

Source: TAB



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Myth: Competition manipulation investigations are rare

In 2020 there was just one inter-regional INTERPOL investigation into competition manipulation, by 2023 this rose to 21. This was in addition to 88 single zone investigations.

Possible reasons for the increase are:

- increased manipulation activity
- the existence of the Macolin Convention (a new global treaty to protect clean sport)
- growing social awareness
- proactive focus of some sports
- policing, technical (AI) advances

Source: [Analysis of patterns and trends in competition manipulation in sport global data: 2018–2023](#)



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Myth: Participants don't bet on their main sport

In 2025, a study found 35% of Australian athletes at all levels and 42% of coaches reported betting on their main sport.*

Nearly one in 10 (8%) athletes also reported they had been asked to deliberately do something that disadvantaged themselves or their team while competing. This rose to 14% for athletes at state level or higher.

Source: [SPORT INTEGRITY AUSTRALIA | Positive Behaviours in Sport Survey | 2025](#)

*SIA notes the betting results do not necessarily represent a breach of sport wagering policy, depending on the rules of the sport.



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Myth: Competition manipulation only happens in adult sport

In global monitoring, 12% of suspicious betting alerts involve youth sport (participants under 21-years-old).

First and second tier of domestic competitions account for over half (57%) of suspicious activity.

Source: [Integrity in Action: 2025 Global Analysis & Trends](#)