

News Release
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International Korfball to Make NZ Debut

International korfball will be played for the first time in New Zealand in Christchurch from 6-11 July, with Korfball New Zealand hosting the Sixth Asia-Oceania Korfball Championships at Pioneer Stadium.

Korfball New Zealand chairman Rob Smith said the five nation event promises spectators a first taste of the world's only truly mixed team sport played at the top level, with the Chinese Taipei team, fourth in last year's world championships, hot favourites.

"The Chinese Taipei players have great skills and have come through a progressive age group system, which takes two or three young teams to Europe, for high level competition, each year. Chinese Taipei has been playing international korfball for around 20 years. The New Zealand team is relatively young, and had their first international competition early last year at the Asia-Oceania Under 23 Championships, so we are short on experience, but should make up in flair and determination," he said.

Other participants are Australia, which finished seventh in last year's world championships, Hong Kong which just pipped New Zealand at Under 23 level last year, and Indonesia, which has not played international korfball for around 15 years.

"Like the Taiwanese, Australia also has more than 20 years of international korfball, but apparently the Australian team will not be at full strength, so we should see some good close matches, as well as the odd 'master class' from the Taiwanese," said Smith.

Korfball New Zealand has received financial assistance for the Asia-Oceania Korfball Championships from the Southern Trust and Pub Charity Inc.

The world's only truly mixed team sport, the aim of korfball is to elude your defender to shoot a ball through a basket on a 3.5 m post, which can be attacked from 360 degrees. Teams of eight – four male and four female players – play in 'attack' and 'defence' zones, with attackers and defenders switching roles after every two goals.

Korfball New Zealand was incorporated in Christchurch in 1998 and has recently established the sport in Wellington. It has also just been granted associate membership of the NZOC.

More information
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