



NOMINATION & JUDGING GUIDELINES

General Criteria

1. The qualifying period for the 2025 awards is from 1 January 2025 to 31 December 2025.
2. Nominees should be affiliated to a Regional Sport Organisation (RSO), Club or other appropriate body within New Zealand during the time of their nominated performance(s).
3. Where no RSO or club affiliation exists or is unclear, the nominee must have been a permanent resident in New Zealand during the period of their nominated achievement(s).
4. Awards shall be made in the following categories:
 - Performance Awards – for Rural Sports only:
 - NZ Rural Sportsman of the Year
 - NZ Rural Sports Woman of the Year
 - Young NZ Rural Sportsperson of the Year
 - Performance Awards – open to any sportsperson from/with a Rural background:
 - Rural Sportsperson with a Disability
 - The Sir Brian Lochore Memorial Award for Outstanding Sportsperson from a Rural Background
 - Contribution Awards:
 - Outstanding Contribution to NZ Rural Sports
 - Lifetime Legacy Award
5. RSO's are limited to only one nomination in each category.
6. The judging panel reserves the right to add nominations at their discretion.

Judging

1. All applications are considered by an independent panel of judges from a range of backgrounds who are deemed to have appropriate knowledge and expertise. All winners will be kept confidential until the awards presentation.
2. The Performance Award categories are judged solely on sporting performance as defined by the judges. The judging panel will consider several factors including the level of competition (international, national, regional or club), the strength of the sport/event and the context of the achievement(s).
3. Nominees for the Young NZ Rural Sportsperson must be 21 years or age or under as at 31 January 2025. The judging panel will not only take into account achievements at age group level but consider all achievements of note during the qualifying period.

4. All nominees eligible for the Junior Sportsperson will automatically be included in this category.

5. Supreme Award Winner: The winner of the Supreme NZ Sports Award will be selected by the judges from the winners of the following Performance Categories (Rural Sports) only:

- NZ Rural Sportsman of the Year
- NZ Rural Sports Woman of the Year
- Young NZ Rural Sportsman of the Year

6. The Outstanding Contribution to NZ Rural Sports category aims to recognise individuals who have made an exceptional contribution to any aspect of rural sport – often behind the scenes. This award is not targeted at recognising sporting achievement. Officials, administrators, supporters, coaches, media personnel or any other person who has given outstanding service to rural sport are eligible for nomination. Previous recipients of this award are not eligible to be nominated. Finalists are not named in this category, instead those who receive the award will be announced at the Awards Dinner.

7. The Lifetime Legacy Award does not have a defined qualifying timeframe and recognises the positive impact and inspiration that a person has made to a rural sport through high performance achievement over many years. It can also take into account other contributions made by that person after retirement from their competitive involvement. Previous recipients of this award are not eligible to be nominated. Finalists are not named in this category, instead those who receive the award will be announced at the Awards Dinner.

8. Rural Sportsperson with a Disability. A person with a rural background may be nominated for this category if they have an impairment that prevents them from competing on an equal basis with their able-bodied peers in their chosen sport. In all cases the judges reserve the right to determine if the athlete meets this criterion.

There is no requirement for an athlete with a disability to be automatically nominated for this award and, if eligible, they can be nominated instead for Senior Sportsman, Sportswoman, Young Sportsperson if they wish.

9. The Sir Brian Lochore Memorial Award and the Hydroflow Contribution to Rural Mental Health Award are solely selected by the judging panel. Nominations are not sought for this award, instead, the panel of judges will announce finalists and a winner at the Awards Dinner.