



## MARKET RELEASE

10 October 2019

### **Spark New Zealand further expands sport offering by securing New Zealand Cricket rights**

Spark is pleased to announce that from April 2020, Spark Sport will be the official rights partner for all New Zealand Cricket's (NZC) matches played in New Zealand, with TVNZ joining as the free-to-air partner for a selected number of T20 International and Super Smash matches.

The rights period is for six years and includes all international and selected domestic cricket matches played in New Zealand under the umbrella of NZC. This includes:

- All Blackcaps and White Ferns matches played in New Zealand;
- All Men's and Women's Super Smash matches (including semi-finals and final);
- The Ford Trophy final;
- The New Zealand Cricket Awards.

The 2020-21 season will include visits from the West Indies, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Australia men's team to New Zealand, in addition to the India and England women's teams.

Spark Chief Executive, Jolie Hodson said, "Cricket is an iconic sport that has continued to innovate. So we're excited to announce this new partnership with New Zealand Cricket, one that cements our place as a significant player in New Zealand's sports viewing landscape.

"This partnership with NZC is another major step towards Spark's strategy of building a profitable sports media business that offers viewers a range of premium domestic and international sporting events over Spark Sport at an affordable price and across an array of devices.

"At Spark, we believe that streaming is the future of sports viewing, so we are immensely proud to partner with NZC to stream world-class cricket across a range of series.

Spark Sport will give cricket fans access to a range of content including educational and coaching pieces, fan engagement content and review shows. Plus, Spark Sport will make available a range of highlights programmes on a free-to-view and paid basis.

NZC CEO, David White hailed the new agreement as 'ground-breaking' and a nod to the future, saying it was as much about catering for the demands of tomorrow as it was about the demands of today.

"This is a deal which future-proofs the whole of cricket in New Zealand," said Mr White.

"Live streaming is the future. It allows viewers to free themselves from fixed linear schedules to watch live, delayed, highlighted or clipped content when and where they choose, and on a wide range of devices.



"Together with the free-to-air component provided by TVNZ, this accord means more cricket games than ever before will be broadcast live.

"It's timely that we make this move now, at a time when more New Zealanders than ever – and especially young Kiwis, consume their sports content through digital devices."

Spark Sport will be responsible for all aspects of delivering a world class production for NZC. Jeff Latch, Head of Spark Sport explains, "This will also be our most significant move yet into live sports production. We're looking forward to bringing a fresh look and feel to the coverage of cricket, including an engaging commentary team, world class decision review systems, team and individual analysis and on-screen graphics."

As the free-to-air partner for T20 Internationals and Super Smash, TVNZ will show a selection of matches on TVNZ. These include the first T20 International of each series live (BLACKCAPS and WHITE FERNS); two regular season Men's Super Smash matches per week; and two regular season Women's Super Smash matches per week.

Spark will also be the official telecommunications and technology partner for NZC, BLACKCAPS, WHITE FERNS and Super Smash.

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