



**Media Release**  
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## **Spark reveals New Zealand's first 5G-powered esports hub**

Spark has partnered with world-leading esports investment firm, Guinevere Capital, and New Zealand's national stadium Eden Park to kit-out and power New Zealand's first 5G high-performance esports hub.

The Spark esports Hub will be the home training ground for both professional and aspiring gamers, offering them a dedicated space connected via both fibre and 5G— providing a reliable back-up for players when gaming in the training rooms as well as the chance to practise their mobile gaming over 5G.

The space is fully equipped with dedicated training rooms, broadcast capabilities, a 5G mobile gaming area and a venue to host future major esports events.

Spark's Marketing Director Matt Bain says Spark has long had a strategic focus to get customers closer to the things they know and love and the vision behind the launch of Spark's 5G esports hub is no different.

"We already provide Kiwis with some of the best experiences New Zealand has to offer through our exclusive partnerships with Spark Arena, Netflix and Spotify to name a few. The launch of Spark's esports Hub is a natural extension to our strategy, with two thirds of New Zealanders engaging in some form of interactive digital entertainment such as mobile and PC gaming<sup>1</sup>."

One such New Zealander is 26 year-old Dire Wolves member Andy Van Vyer, better known as Cupcake, whose full-time job is to train and compete in the multiplayer online battle game League of Legends.

"There's a common perception that esports is not a real sport, but we have very similar needs – we train for six to eight hours a day, we aspire to compete on the world stage and we get millions of people tuning in to watch us do what we do best."

The Spark esports Hub is not only going to provide gamers with a place to develop their PC gaming skills, but also the chance to immerse themselves in the future of mobile gaming, providing access to 5G compatible phones with clip-on mobile controllers.

"The future of 5G is something the New Zealand gaming community is really excited about. Having access to speeds up to 10x faster than 4G can be the difference between victory and defeat when gaming on the go. As 5G reaches more places, it has the potential to transform the way we game and interact with our peers through technology such as augmented and virtual reality," says Shok.

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<sup>1</sup> The Digital New Zealand 2020 report, *The Power of Games*.



The global esports market is estimated to be worth USD \$1.1 billion and is an industry enjoyed by both players and spectators with more than 40% of New Zealanders having watched esports to improve their own gameplay or follow a favourite team<sup>1</sup>.

Principal Architect of the facility and owner of national e-sport team Dire Wolves Jason Spiller says the New Zealand gaming industry has a lot of potential for growth and the Spark 5G esports hub is a major step in giving both professional and aspiring gamers the ability to hone their skills in an environment that's custom built for them.

“Spark esports hub is also a critical piece of infrastructure to put New Zealand on the map as an esports destination. It's a place for Kiwi gamers to physically be together, plan and strategise gaming tactics, all of which will provide that level up to help them compete with international teams.”

The Spark esports hub is located at Entry A, Walters Road Eden Park and is a free, bookable space for any kind of gamer nationwide. The space can be booked online from early May at [www.esportshpc.com](http://www.esportshpc.com)

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