



2026 NZ Secondary School Waka Ama Championship

Online Managers Meeting - Friday 20 March

2026



waka ama
Aotearoa New Zealand

Wakuta

He mihi

- Karakia
- Overview for Sports Coordinators and Teachers in Charge
- Purpose of the hui

Key Reminders

- Please remain on mute
- Update your name to: Your name - School Name
- If you have any pātai, please pop them in the chat anytime and we will pause along the way to answer
- Read the pānui and all info found on the website - all updates go there from now on



Event Stats & Background

- Biggest event during Summer Tournament Week in 2026
- Biggest Secondary School Waka Ama Nationals in history!

23rd Annual Event

2,300 Tauira

100+ Kaitūao

141 Kura

5 Days of racing

235 Races

280+ Kaiako/Whānau Support



Pōwhiri

- All manuhiri are asked to assemble in the car park behind the tent village at 9:00am.
- From 9:10am, manuhiri will hīkoi through the Village and be seated on the Terraces facing the lake by 9:20am.
- The pōwhiri begins at 9:30 am sharp on Monday.
- Schools holding last year's taonga should position themselves at the front of the procession. Manawhenua and all Rotorua kura are asked to assemble behind the paepae by 9:15am.
- Please read the full pōwhiri details for each group on the event page, including hīkoi maps: [NZSS Waka Ama Pōwhiri Instructions](#).

Site Map

- See next slide
- Share with new whānau who haven't attended before





- | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|---|--|---|--|----------------------------------|
| Section 1
Paddler & Spectator
Village
Toilet Truck | Section 2
Finish Line
Live Stream
- Camera
Main Stage
Results
Vendors | Section 3
Drone Pad
First Aid
Live Stream
- Crew
Vendors
Volunteers | Section 4
Admin Building
Marshalling
Portaloos
Spotters
- Scissor Lift
Loading Bay
- W6
- V1 | Section 5
Starters
Start/ Turn Line | Section 6
Public
- Swimming
Area
- Carpark | Section 7
Race Course
Waka Launching
Emergency Bus
Park | Section 8
Main Carpark |
|--|--|--|---|--|---|--|----------------------------------|



Admin Desk & Set-up Times

- Located in the Ski Club onsite
- Come to admin for any questions, queries, ID Card replacements, paddler changes, protests et
- **Sunday 22nd March – 2:00 -6: 00pm**
- Admin desk open for payments and queries
- ID Card Collection
- School tents can set up in the Tent Village after 2pm

ID Cards and Paddler Roster

- You can replace any IDs cards or request late ones inside the Ski Club onsite @ a cost of \$17 per card.
- Paddler roster changes can be made at admin
- Please note - as long as all the paddlers are on the online paddler roster, during the heats, the system will pick up the first 6 (or 12) paddlers to swipe their ID cards
- If you need to add a NEW paddler to the roster please come to admin well before the race it is required





Tent Village

- School tents are for gear storage and paddler shelter and will be located in the designated Tent Village area (not in spectator viewing areas).
- No tents or gazebos are allowed on the terrace seating, lake edge/beach, near the 250m start line, admin building, or vendor areas.
- Tent space will be allocated based on the number of paddlers and all schools must check in with the Village Coordinator on arrival to be shown their site.
- Tents can be set up from 2pm Sunday or Monday 7–9am (before pōwhiri) and must be securely pegged, kept tidy, and managed safely.
- BBQs, gas bottles, generators, and cooking are **not permitted** in the Tent Village in 2026 for safety reasons.

Car Parking and Access

- Designated drop-off zone for permit holders only
- Drop-off only – no parking
- Area must stay clear for pedestrians & emergency access
- Only Waka Ama NZ car pass holders can access ramp area
- Strict traffic management in place all week
- Drop-off zone at Village entrance for gear
- All vehicles park in managed area across the road
- Controlled pedestrian crossings at all times
- No parking on grass edges along the roadside
- Allow extra time and follow volunteer directions

Media Accreditation

- Anyone attending to capture media must complete the 2026 Secondary School Media Accreditation Form prior to the event
- Once approved Media must respect any school that opts out of livestreaming or media coverage.



Venue Rules and Tikanga

- Alcohol, drug, smoke and vape free
- **No dogs permitted at all times**
- First aid - based on the boat ramp (lake side)
- Lost property and lost children - admin building
- No scooters/skateboards/bikes
- Respect the Venue and the facilities

Official Event Merchandise

- Can be purchased onsite and online following the event

Water stations

- There will be high-volume water stations with taps available for filling water bottles.
- PLEASE, ensure students bring their own drinking bottles.



Vendors

- 20 Vendors onsite - with a range of food vendors, retail vendors and rangatahi engagement

Waka Use - Te Wānanga o Aotearoa

- Ngā mihi nui to Te Wānanga o Aotearoa and our local clubs for providing the waka
- Please treat our waka as you would your own

Livestream and Event Photos

- Livestream links will be on Māori+ and shared on WAANZ social media including all photos
- All live-streaming is FREE via Māori+ on YouTube



Lane Draw and Race Schedule

- Please note the times are an indication **ONLY**
- Races will run in order unless advised
- Please ensure you are aware of the race calls (first one 30mins before each race) and prepare teams to be ready
- Ensure there is ample time between races for paddles and lifejackets - we will not wait for crews who are sharing equipment
- Please let us know ASAP if you have any **back to back races**
- Liveresults will show any changes as they are actioned

Race Progressions

- Can be found on the [WAANZ Website](#) and printed on the results board





Announcements

- Race Announcers will call for teams/W1 paddlers 3 times.
- First Call- Teams should be getting ready
- Second Call- Teams should be making their way to the Marshalling Area
- Third and Final Call- Teams should be at Marshalling waiting to go inside

Marshalling

- Located behind the Ski Club
- At Marshalling Paddlers must:
 - Have their ID cards
 - Be in the correct uniform
 - Be wearing their lifejackets
 - All paddlers must be present

Registration

- Once paddlers are loaded into the marshalling schupepe tent, all teams/paddlers will be called lane by lane to swipe their ID cards
- No manager, coaches or teachers are permitted in this area
- Please ensure all paddlers enter the marshalling tent with their own ID cards
- If you need a new ID card - please organise this well in advance at the admin desk inside the Ski Club

Loading Bay

- Plastic tubs are available for gear in the loading bay. Please don't bring anything valuable, including Birks, phones, & boom boxes
- Teams must follow loading bay instructions from Kaitūao, who will guide you to your waka





Loading Bay Cnt'd

- W12 loading - please be mindful and safe when loading in and out of the W12s
- Please ensure paddlers listen to the instructions of the Kaitūao
- Paddlers must know their race number and lane and follow directions

Tips for the startline

- Load out as instructed
- Don't cut across the lake to your lane - follow the wakas along the lake side
- Don't rush the start line, depending on conditions give yourself a wide entry onto your lane
- Ensure you are heading down to the startline with your fellow waka - not too far ahead, not hanging too far back
- For the turns - don't head off for a warm up - head straight to your line
- Be mindful of other waka in race and approach startline together
- Remember to hold water once on the startline - don't drift over

Race Course and Water Safety

Race Course - Maps on the WAANZ Website

- False startlines
- Steerers should be familiar with all flag markers.

Flag Colours

- Ensure your crews are aware - maps are online and will be placed around the venue

Water Safety

- Safety Boats are there to assist - if there is a safety or medical emergency on the water paddlers must raise their paddle to alert the water safety crew

Steerer tips!

- Ensure your steerers can distinguish the false start line from the start line
- Watch a few other race starts & turns before your own race
- Take into consideration conditions on the day and how this will affect the start - which way the wind is blowing canoes at the startline etc.





Race Start Procedure

White Flag - Proceed to the false startline

RED Flag - Once the waka are aligned the red flag indicates move to the startline and HOLD.

BLACK Flag - indicates a waka is over the start line. This allows time for crews to correct themselves if they are over the start line.

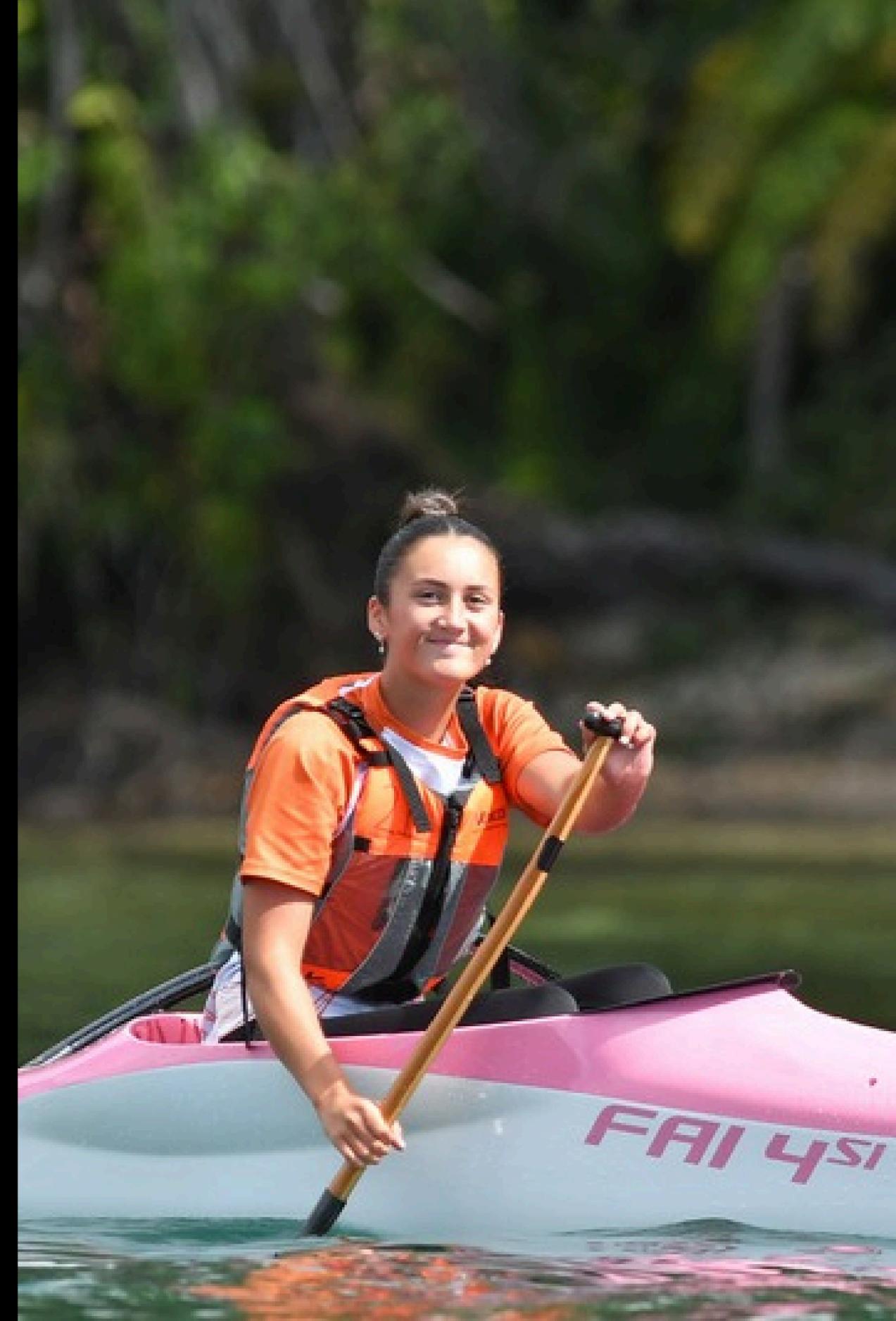
- If the waka are corrected, the BLACK Flag will be lowered and the **GREEN Flag** will indicate the start of the race.
- If after a reasonable amount of time the waka have not been corrected. The BLACK Flag will remain raised and the **GREEN Flag** will start the race. There will be at least one team disqualified for a **START LINE FAULT**

W1 Process

- Drop off times are Sunday March 22nd 2 - 7pm and Monday 23rd 7 - 9am ONLY
- All W1 waka that finish racing on Monday must be Check Clean Dry compliant and removed from the Loading Bay from 3:30pm.
- Tuesday 24 March (after Finals) all remaining W1 waka must be Check Clean Dry compliant and removed from the Loading Bay.
- Access from 9:30am.

W1 Waka - Waikato, & Surrounding Areas

- Under Government requirements, all W1 waka from the Waikato region must be washed and scanned at the Te Ngae Rd Wash Station between **4-6pm on Sunday 22 March**.
- Any paddles, lifejackets, and clothing used in the Waikato River within the past 30 days must follow MPI soak and bleach requirements - see info in pānui 2
- Please ensure whānau transporting W1 waka are aware of these procedures, to avoid hold-ups at W1 check-in



Results

- Live Results - www.liveresults.co.nz
- Results tent - located lakeside under the blue and yellow tent
- Full results posted on the WAANZ website each night

Protests

- A 10 second time penalty will be applied for all infractions in heats.
- Protest must be made no more than 20 minutes after notification of race result.
- Protests cost \$100 to be paid when a protest is lodged - cash is preferred
- Refundable if protest is upheld.
- Protest forms will be available at administration
- Only TIC can submit protests





Event Trophies

PUTU MIHAKA TROPHY

The Putu Mihaka Trophy is awarded to the school that displays manaaki, awhi, and an overall positive attitude throughout the event. This award pays homage to the late Te Putuangaanga (Putu) Mihaka nō Ngāti Pikiao. Putu was a strong advocate of rangatahi Māori, played significant roles in organisations like Te Waiariki Purea Trust, and was a huge supporter of the waka community.

LAURIE DURAND MEMORIAL AWARD - TE POU TAUTOKOHIA

Te Pou Tautokohia is awarded to the school that displays tautoko to others and the event. Te Pou Tautokohia pays homage to the late Laurie Durand, a stalwart of Te Waiariki Purea Trust, Waka Ama, and the National Secondary School Event.

Prizegivings

- Held Tuesday, Thursday and Friday at the main stage
- Teams must wear correct school uniform.

Other awesome kaupapa!

- Air Tahiti Nui giveaway
- Rangatahi Engagement survey and giveaway
- Keep an eye on the social media stories for any competitions and giveaways!
- Support local! If you finish early/start late, go visit some of the tourist attractions, the hot pools, or night markets.





Sports Coordinator & TIC Tips!

- Read the pānui, and website documents!
- Check the race schedule daily
- Check the results after each event online or onsite
- Replace ID Cards at the admin desk well before the it is needed
- If you need to make a replacement for a medical or other reason - come to the admin desk
- Buy yourself some merch - you deserve it!
- Remember to breathe - we're here to help you!
- Good comms to your students makes a huge difference!
- Stay hydrated and warm - it's a big week!
- And finally...

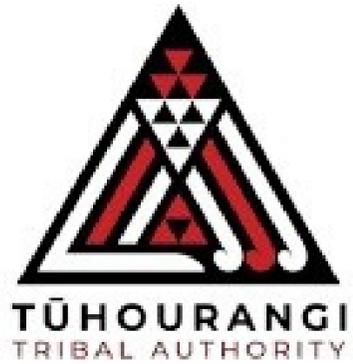
Ngā mihi nui ki a koutou katoa - THANK YOU!

This event would not be possible without the time, support and aroha from our amazing kaiako, kaitūao and kaihoe!

Waka ama - for all - for life!

Ngā mihi nui ki ngā kaitautoko

W H A K A A T A
MĀORI | **MĀORI+**



Nateva



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trust