

Tuakana Customs M2M 32km: Race Recap 2026

What a spectacular day on the water for the Tuakana Customs Maketū to Mount (M2M) 32km challenge! We couldn't have asked for better conditions, a beautiful sunny day with a light South-East breeze that provided some fun runners and waves to work on for the first 20km before the conditions flattened out for the final push into Pilot Bay.

The standard of paddling this year was next-level, particularly from our rangatahi. A massive shout-out to Taurea and Bhutty 19s, both of these junior teams are stepping up and proving they belong at the front of the pack. In a thrilling finish, both teams managed to hunt down and pass the Bhutty Boys in the final 5km, while making significant gains on the race leaders, Pineula and Vaka Manu.

It was also fantastic to welcome Kaiarahi Toa for their first-ever M2M, a great debut performance! Meanwhile, the Howlers continue to be a staple of this event, showing up with another incredibly strong race. We also saw a classic "battle within the race" between our Senior Master crews, with Bhutty OG just pipping Parihaka at the finish after they traded blows the whole way.

Our hats go off to Te Aurere, who brought two women's teams (Senior Master and Golden Master). Their energy was infectious, they loved every minute of the event and have already promised to be back next year!

A special mention to Nga Kahu, who won the "Heads and Tails" after a hard-fought day on the water. While turtles have been spotted in the area recently, they must have been camera-shy today, as none were seen during the race, but the clear water and sunshine made for a perfect scenic run regardless.

The competition was fierce, and while everyone put in a massive effort, the final results do reflect a 1-hour penalty for the Bhutty Brothers due to a course violation. We take race rules seriously to ensure the safety of all participants and the fairness of the event, and we know the boys will be back next year to tackle the full 32km line!

Safety is always our priority, and the day went off without a hitch. No issues on the water, thanks to the incredible work of our Water Safety crew and the volunteers who worked tirelessly to keep things organised.

To top it all off, the post-race feed from Hello Banh Mi was the perfect way to refuel and share stories from the run.

Finally, a massive well done to our podium placers and a huge thanks to every single team that took part. Your dedication to the sport is what makes this event what it is.

See you all next year!

Rank	Bib	Team Name	Division	Actual Race Time
1	13	Pineula	Men	2:09:32
2	6	Vaka Manu	Men	2:10:09
3	4	Bhuttiy 19s	Men	2:11:29
4	20	Taurea	Men	2:11:57
5	1	Bhuttiy Boys	Men	2:12:50
6	5	H.O.T	Men	2:17:14
7	11	A'arua	Men	2:17:40
8	7	Pure OCC	Men	2:20:52
9	3	Bhuttiy OG	Men	2:22:44
10	12	OCC Oncore	Men	2:26:23
11	14	Parihaka Pirates sm	Men	2:28:01
12	21	Gherkin Surf	Men (4-man)	2:32:22
13	16	Nga Hau e Wha	Mixed	2:33:45
14	8	Nga Kahu	Men	2:34:05
15	9	Howlers	Men	2:36:19
16	17	Autaikura	Women	2:37:00
17	15	Hawom	Women	2:38:55
18	10	Kaiarahi Toa	Women	2:43:10
19	18	Manawarere	Women	2:46:34
20	19	Matawera	Women	2:57:20
21	2	Bhuttiy Brothers	Men	3:25:58 (Penalty)