NZ Secondary School Waka Ama Nationals

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs) 2027

EVENT LOGISTICS

We wish to attend the Pōwhiri. What time do we need to be at Lake Tikitapu on Monday March 15th?	Schools need to be onsite by **9:30am**** at the very latest. The **pōwhiri will start at 10am sharp**, to ensure we get through the full day of racing. **Schedule for Monday Morning:** ● 10:00 – Pōwhiri ● 11:00 – First race Call ● 11:30 – First Race Start **Please be early, to avoid traffic and parking delays.
When can we put up our school Tents and Marquees in the Tent Village?	Schools can start putting tents and marquees up on: **Sunday March 14th from 2pm to 6pm.** **Important:** We ask that schools be patient and do not access the Village before this time. ● **Tents put up before 2pm Sunday will be taken down.** ● Tents can also be put up on Monday morning **7 - 9am** or any time **after the Powhiri, from 11am.**
Are there any rules and regulations in the Tent Village?	● You must check in with one of the Village Site Managers on arrival to be allocated a spot. ● Due to the large number of entries, schools will be restricted to the tent space that they have been notified of, based on their entry numbers. ● **Please do not bring bigger tents than you should.** ● If your tent area is larger than 100m3, you will need to apply for a special permit from the RotoruaLakes Council ● Bring a ground sheet/tarp for sitting on the rocky gravel. ● Bring warm clothing and blankets, as it is likely to be windy. ● There are to be NO gazebos erected on the terraces. The Site Map, Tent Village Info, and Tent Allocation spaces will be uploaded to the web page 1 week before the event Waka Ama Aotearoa NZ - Secondary School Nationals
Can we bring a BBQ or generator if we want to cook lunch for our paddlers?	**No.** For safety reasons, there is to be **NO BBQs, gas bottles, generators or cooking in the Tent Village.**
Is there parking available close to the race area?	● There will be a **Drop-off zone** available near the entrance to the Village for tents, paddling gear, chilly bins, etc. ● All cars and school vans/buses will be directed to park in the grass area across the road from the Tent Village. ● There will be controlled road crossings at all times for all competitors and spectators. ● **There is to be NO parking on the grass verges and sides of the roads at any time.** **Important:** All parking will be under strict traffic management protocols for safety purposes.

What will the weather be like?	It will most likely be cold, wet, foggy, and windy at some time during the week! See Windguru - Rotorua for weather predictions for the area. Please bring appropriate gear for the weather, it may start sunny, but it will likely get cold.
Is there a Teacher in Charge (TiC) / Team Managers' meeting?	**Yes.** There will be an **online** TiC / Manager's hui **7pm Wednesday 10th March.** For those who can't make Wednesday's session, the Powerpoint presentation can be shared by request.
Where do we collect our ID cards?	From the Admin desk at Lake Tikitapu, at the following times: ● **Sunday 14th March - 2 - 6pm** ● **Monday 15th March - 7 - 9am** ● **Monday 15th - from 12pm onwards.**
Does everyone need an ID card?	**Yes**. Students will need to scan through at Marshalling before every heat, semi and final. ● If cards are lost, damaged or left behind at your accommodation, replacement cards can be printed at the Administration desk. ● The cost for replacement cards is **$17 per card.**
Will we get Lanyards for the ID cards?	**Yes**. Lanyards will be supplied for every competitor.
Is the racing available to watch online?	**Yes**. The races will be filmed and uploaded to YouTube for each day's racing. The link will be provided 1-2 days before the event starts.
Where can I find the course maps of the lane layouts?	On the web page: Waka Ama Aotearoa NZ - Secondary School Nationals
Will there be merchandise for sale?	**Yes**. There will be event clothing and accessories for sale. ● The full range will be advertised and sold online early in Term 1 2027, with free pick-up available at the event. ● It is recommended schools and students order and purchase online before the event, to ensure they get the right size and colour of the item they want. ● There will be a smaller selection for sale onsite, but with limited styles, sizes, and colours due to space. ● Eftpos will be available on-site for purchases.
Can we enter teams on the day?	**No.** We will only accept scratchings on the day, no entries.

RACING	
We have more than one team. Do the team members in each team need to be confirmed now?	**No.** As long as all the paddlers who are attending are registered on your School Roster in the online system. ● You can decide who races in each team on the day, before they head into the marshalling tent. ● Then those 6/12 paddlers who competed in that heat/race, **must remain unchanged** through all of the progressions to semis and finals. ● You can have a different configuration of team members in the straight race (250m) and the turns race (500m), as long as they meet the age requirements - see below.
So we can't change the paddlers who raced in a heat?	**Correct.** For example, the 6 paddlers who raced in the 250m heat need to be the same 6 paddlers in the Semi/ Finals
What if a paddler gets injured or sick?	● You may request a change as long as you have a medical certificate, or sign-off from the medical staff onsite. ● **This change needs to be made at the admin desk and BEFORE** the team goes into marshalling. ● Changes cannot be made in the marshalling area, at the scanning desk, or when loading into the waka.
Can paddlers paddle in both the J16 and J19 Categories?	**Students can only paddle in one age category for each event.** ● One W6 250m event (either U16 **OR** U19); ● One W6 500m event (either U16 **OR** U19); ● One W12 250 event (Boys **OR** Girls **OR** Mixed) Eg, if you are a paddler competing in the J16 250m, you cannot also compete in the J19 250m
Does everyone have to wear a lifejacket?	**Yes**. Approved vest style lifejackets are compulsory for all padders. More info can be found here
Can we wear the ones that just go around your waist?	**No**. They must be life jacket-style PFD's - **no inflatables or horseshoe styles** More info can be found here
Where can I find the racing progressions?	These will be uploaded to the website closer to the event based on the number of heats in each category Waka Ama Aotearoa NZ - Secondary School Nationals
Will W1 waka be supplied for students racing in this event?	**No.** The event hosts do not supply W1 waka. ● If your School needs to borrow a W1 waka, then you will need to contact the student's club to organise this. ● All W1 Waka must comply with Biosecurity requirements
What is the process for dropping off W1 waka?	Due to traffic management protocols and safety, the following requirements must be adhered to at all times: ● All W1 waka must in the loading bay area (located past the Water Ski Club) **before 9am on Monday March 15th** ● All W1 waka must be checked in and out of the loading bay ● Check in time (1) = **Sunday March 14th 2-6pm**,

	• Check in time (2) = **Monday March 15th 7-9am** - **before the pōwhiri** • W1s will need to be carried through the gates, as there is no vehicular access.
What is the process for W1 waka coming from the Waikato River area?	**Important:** • As directed by the Ministry for Primary Industries, there are strict protocols in place for all Te Arawa Lakes. • All W1 Waka that have been paddled in the Waikato River in the previous 30 days, **and/or** coming from the Waikato area, **MUST visit the designated wash station in Te Ngae Rd, Rotorua** on Sunday **BEFORE** coming out to the Lake. • You must record (video/QR code) your waka being washed • Additional instructions will be sent to affected schools/ families after entries close.
Will there be number holders for W1 waka for sale at the venue?**	**Yes.** These will cost $8 per holder from the Admin desk. ** **All** W1 waka are required to have a number holder taped to the top side of the nose/bow before racing. This is the responsibility of the paddler/school.
How are the lanes seeded?	• **8 lanes (turns)** - starting with the fastest qualifier = Lane 4, 5, 3, 6, 2, 7, 1, 8 • **12 lanes (straights)** - starting with the fastest qualifier = Lanes 6, 7, 5, 8, 4, 9, 3, 10, 2, 11, 1, 12 **W1, W6 & W12 250m (straights) – Half Lanes** All 250m W1, W6 and W12 events will use half lanes. There could be up to 12 teams in each W1, W6 & W12 race.
What are lanes 9 and 13 for?	Lanes 9 and 13 are used for the international school teams joining us. These lanes are not used for NZ School teams.
Will there be a sound system on the start line?	**No.** Waka Ama starts are run purely on flags. Please ensure your students are familiar with this process - **see below**
How do the starts work?	1. **Raising the white flag** - indicates two minutes before the race start. The race shall start at any time within that two minutes (waka to move to the false start line) 2. **Raising of the red flag** – Waka move to a starting position behind the start 3. **Raising of the green flag** indicates the start of the race. • Please note: If the starter **raises a black flag** during the starting procedure, this indicates that an infraction exists and the bow of at least one canoe is across the start line. • Competitors will be allowed time to line up correctly. • If, after a reasonable time, the infraction has not been corrected (in which case the black flag will not be lowered), the race may be started, resulting in time/DQ penalties for those canoes that caused the infringement.
Are there time penalties for disqualifications (DQ) and infringements?	**Yes**. There are time penalties (10 seconds per infraction) in all heats. For the Semi-finals and Finals DQs will result in elimination.

POST RACING	
Where are the results and progressions posted?	Results and progressions will be posted on the board in the Results Tent situated on the lower terraces, and online at www.liveresults.co.nz ● At the end of each day, the confirmed results and draw for the following day will be posted online on the event page: Waka Ama Aotearoa NZ - Secondary School Nationals
Is there a prizegiving every day?	**No**. There will be prize givings on the following days: ● **Tuesday 16th** - morning (All W1 and W12 events). ● **Thursday 18th**- afternoon (All W6 500m events) ● **Friday 19thh** - approx midday (All W6 250m events). Please check the daily race schedule for exact times.
What prizes will we receive?	● **Te Ihu** (**Championship)** - 1st, 2nd, 3rd will receive medals ● **Te Takere** and **Te Kei** 1st, 2nd, 3rd will receive ribbons
Where are the official photos shared?	On the Waka Ama NZ social media pages Waka Ama Aotearoa NZ Facebook Waka Ama Aotearoa NZ Instagram ● If you would like hi-res versions of any photos for media purposes, please email media@wakaama.co.nz following the event. Please include identifying markers, eg the day/session/age group the race was held.

Please remember with everyone arriving together on Sunday afternoon and Monday morning, there will be lots of traffic! Please come early to avoid delays, and please follow the instructions of the Māori Wardens and the Parking team at all times.

Kia pai o koutou haerenga ki Tikitapu!