PĀNUI 1



Waka Ama
Sprint Nationals

Saturday 16 - Saturday 23 January 2027

Lake Karaapiro, Cambridge

waka ama
Aotearoa New Zealand

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KEY INFORMATION AND DATES

Wednesday 14 October 2026	• **ENTRIES OPEN** • Pānui 1 released

Sunday 22 November	• **W6 AND W12 ENTRIES CLOSE**
	  ○ No paddler names are required at this time.
	  ○ Changes may occur up to 12 noon of the day prior to racing but will incur the following:
	  ▪ Any teams added after 22nd November, 2026 will be waitlisted for lanes and charged a $50 penalty
	  ▪ Any teams withdrawn after 22 November, 2026 will be charged a $50 penalty
	  ○ Medical or special exemptions on application to events@wakaama.co.nz

Monday 30 November	• **REGISTER CLUB COORDINATORS via online Google Form** ○ Responsible for processing withdrawals, protests, collecting race schedules and communicating with officials during the event.
Friday 4 December	• Pānui 2 released
Sunday 13 December	• **Regions to enter W1 qualifiers and W12 regional team names**

Wednesday 6 January 2027	• **PADDLER ROSTERS CLOSE**
	  ○ There must be enough people on your roster in the right age groups, to fill all the crews you have entered
	  ○ Additions or changes to club rosters after January 6th will incur a $50 late penalty fee **per paddler**

Wednesday 6 January	• **CLUBS/TEAMS WILL BE INVOICED** • ***IMPORTANT: Once invoices are generated and sent to clubs there are no refunds on entry fees invoiced. Any teams that withdraw after January 6th will be invoiced the full entry amount plus the $50 penalty fee***
Friday 8 January	• **ID Cards must be ordered.** ○ Any ID Card applications received after this date will cost $17 each, including those ordered at the venue.
Monday 11 January	• Race-week Pānui Released • **ONLINE ZOOM MANAGER'S MEETING - 7PM**

Wednesday 13 January	• **PAYMENT FOR ALL ENTRIES IS DUE**
	  ○ Payments can be made by Internet Banking.
	  ○ No payment, no racing

Friday 15 January	• **ROSTER CHANGES CLOSED**
Saturday 16 January	• **PŌWHIRI Saturday Morning 9:30 am.** Racing will start mid-morning for Taitamariki paddlers.

EVENT DETAILS

Classes: W1, W6, W12

Course: 500m straight course for W1, W6 and W12 500m
250m course for turn races - W6 500m, 1000m and 1500m events
250m Course for Regional W1 Dash
Half lanes for all straight races

Categories: **Men and Women only**
The Taitamariki boys and Adaptive W6 divisions are permitted to have mixed-gender crews.

Canoes: W6/W12 – Moana Nui Mahi Mahi
W1 - Any type, rudderless, weighted up to a minimum weight of **14kgs (Including ama and kiato)**

International Competitors: International teams may be invited at the Race Directors' discretion. International teams will only be allowed to race in an outside lane and will not medal.

Please contact events@wakaama.co.nz if you have any questions.

RACE RULES

The race rules can be found here: Waka Ama NZ Race Rules

EVENT ELIGIBILITY

- **Only clubs recognised as financial and constitutional members of Waka Ama Aotearoa NZ are eligible to enter.**
- All paddlers must be affiliated and verified members of their club to paddle at Nationals.
- Paddlers can only paddle for one club at Sprint Nationals.
- All paddlers must have a current Waka Ama Aotearoa NZ ID card.
- Non-medalling International teams are by invitation from Waka Ama Aotearoa NZ only.
- **Each paddler can only race in one age group/division per event.** (For the definition of "event" 1000m and 1500m are defined at the same event.)
    - This rule applies to W1 Categories also.

Minimum Age for Taitamariki paddlers

On the next page, please see the copy of the korero shared with all clubs this week regarding an update on the minimum age of Taitamariki paddlers at Sprint Nationals 2027.

Kia ora koutou,

We have received feedback and suggestions from our membership regarding the proposed changes to the minimum age requirements for the Taitamariki division at our National Championships from 2027.

The changes previously circulated proposed increasing the minimum age from 5 years (turning 6 in the year of competition) to 7 years (turning 8 in the year of competition), effective from 2027.

We recognise that this change would negatively impact tamariki who competed at Nationals in 2026, particularly those who turned 6 this year, as they would no longer be eligible to compete in 2027.

After considering this feedback, we have decided to introduce the new minimum age requirement gradually over two years.

The revised minimum age requirements will be:

- 2027 Nationals: Minimum age of 6 years (turning 7 in the year of competition).
- 2028 Nationals onwards: Minimum age of 7 years (turning 8 in the year of competition).

This staggered approach will ensure that tamariki who have already begun their paddling journey at Nationals can continue to participate, while allowing us to progressively implement the new age requirements.

We appreciate the feedback received from our waka ama whānau and thank everyone who has contributed to this discussion.

Our priority is to ensure that our tamariki continue to have positive, inclusive and enjoyable experiences in waka ama, supporting their participation and development in our sport.

Ngā mihi nui,

International Eligibility (as per the WAANZ race rules):

21 Eligibility

21.1 Residency: To be eligible to compete at a National Championship, competitors must be a New Zealand citizen, or have been a continuous resident in New Zealand for a minimum of three (3) months prior to the event, or be from a country with Domestic Status; namely the Cook Islands, Niue and Tokelau. Domestic Status Competitors – Entry Limits and Conditions:

a. The number of entries from countries with Domestic Status (Cook Islands, Niue, Tokelau) may be limited at the discretion of the Organising Committee.

b. For individual events (e.g., W1), a maximum of two (2) eligible competitors per age division from each Domestic Status country may be entered.

c. If more than two competitors from the same country wish to enter an age division, it is the responsibility of that country federation to determine and nominate their top two paddlers.

d. Additional competitors may be permitted as international entries, space permitting, and are not eligible for medals.

e. For team events (e.g., W6), one team per division may be entered under a designated Domestic Status Club (e.g., “Cook Islands Resident Club”). These teams must be clearly identified as separate from New Zealand-based clubs. Eligibility for Domestic Status entries:

f. Competitors must provide proof of current residency in the respective country (e.g., passport with residency stamp, school principal or employer letter, utility bill, or verification from a recognised local authority such as CICA).

g. Competitors and teams from Domestic Status countries:

- Are eligible for medals.
- Are not eligible to qualify for the New Zealand quota for World Sprint or Distance Championships.

EVENT SCHEDULE

This is a DRAFT schedule, and will be confirmed once the online entries close.

Date	Racing Day	Racing information, Meetings & Prize giving
Monday 11 January		**7pm Online Zoom Race briefing for ALL Team Managers**
Thursday 14 January		**W6 Waka drop off between 4 - 7pm only**
Friday 15 January	**0**	**W6 Waka drop off between 9am - 12pm only** ****All W6 waka need to be on-site by 12pm Friday**
Saturday 16 January	**DAY 1**	**Pōwhiri - 9.30am** Taitamariki racing
Sunday 17 January	**DAY 2**	Taitamariki / Intermediate racing **Taitamariki Prizegiving**
Monday 18 January	**DAY 3**	Intermediate / J16 racing **Intermediate Prizegiving**
Tuesday 19 January	**DAY 4**	Intermediate W1 / J16 racing **Intermediate W1 and J16 Prizegiving**
Wednesday 20 January	**DAY 5**	J16, J19, Adaptive, Adult W1 racing **Prizegiving**
Thursday 21 January	**DAY 6**	J19 and all adult W6 & W12 **Regional W12 and W1 Dash races** **Prizegiving**
Friday 22 January	**DAY 7**	J19 and all adult W6 & W12 **Corporate Challenge** **Prizegiving**
Saturday 23 January	**DAY 8**	J19, adult, Adaptive W6 racing - FINALS **Prizegiving**

CLUB/REGIONAL COORDINATORS

All Regions and clubs must register a coordinator(s) for the event. To ensure that messages, schedule changes, or any other issue is dealt with urgently, it is important to be able to communicate to Region and Club representatives directly. This will also prevent delays and/or disappointments. **For 2027, we will be creating a WhatsApp group for Coordinators**, so please register your club/region's details on this Google form - Club/Regional Coordinators Form **by November 30th, 2026**

ONLINE ENTRIES - ARE OPEN

Registrations are to be completed online via the Waka Ama Aotearoa NZ Members area
All entries must be submitted before the corresponding deadlines:

- Club reps will enter all of their own W6 and W12 teams **by November 22nd.**
- Club Reps must email their Adaptive W1 and W6 teams; and any combined club W12 entries to their Regional Reps who will enter those teams/paddlers **before November 22nd.**
- Regions will enter all their W1 Quota qualifier names **by December 13th**
- Regions will enter their Regional Men/Women W12 & W1 Dash names **by December 13th**
- New club/regional reps can obtain a login & password by emailing events@wakaama.co.nz
- We are happy to help you through the entry process if it is new to you. Please reach out early!
- Here is the list of the current club reps https://www.wakaama.co.nz/clubs/reps

REMEMBER to check all your club team entries before 22 November to avoid paying late fees for any changes made after this date.

RACE DIVISIONS

As per the race rules, paddlers compete in divisions based on their age. Age is taken as reaching a specified age in the year of competition (year of competition is from 1 January to 31 December).

Division	Minimum age Age paddlers can turn in the year of competition	Maximum age Age paddlers can turn in the year of competition
Taitamariki	7	10
Intermediate	7	13
Junior 16	11	16
Junior 19	14	19
Under 23	16	23
Premier	14	none
Master	40	none
Senior Master	50	none
Golden Master	60	none
Master 70	70	none
Master 75	75	none
Master 80	80	none

ENTRY FEES

DIVISION	AGE	COST
Taitamariki	7– 10	$25
Intermediate	11 – 13	$45
Junior 16	14 – 16	$65
Junior 19	17 – 19	$65
Under 23 (W1 ONLY)	20 – 23	$90
Premier	24 and over	$90
Master	40 and over	$90
Senior Master	50 and over	$90
Golden Master	60 and over	$90
Master 70	70+	$35
Master 75	75+	$35
Master 80	80+	$35
Adaptive W6 only*	N/A	$35

Entry Fees are invoiced per paddler by age, no matter how many events they compete in. Entry Fees are non-refundable. If a paddler is withdrawn, their entry fee may be transferred to a replacement paddler, and applicable late/change fees added. Any outstanding amount must be paid prior to racing. Fees are only applicable to this National Club Sprint event and may not be carried over.

***Adaptive W6 only** the fee is $35.00. This relates to Adaptive W6 paddlers, and anyone else in that crew that is only racing in that event**.** If paddlers are doing **both** Adaptive W6, and any other event including Adaptive W1, and/or club W12/W6/W1 racing - the full entry fee will apply.

Paddlers only pay the entry fee of the age category they are currently in. **'Age is taken as reaching the specified age in the year of competition'.**
REGATTA YEAR minus YEAR OF BIRTH = RACE AGE, eg 2027 minus 2012 = 15.
NB. If you are turning 17 in 2027 you are a J19 paddler – Not a J16 paddler.

Please see our Race Division Checker, if you wish to check the age category of a paddler. https://wakaama.co.nz/agedivisionchecker

W12 COMBINED CREWS

In principle, National Championships are club-based events. As a result, W6 crews shall be made up of competitors from one club. However, W12 crews can be made up of competitors from up to two clubs from the **same region** in any of the following divisions:

- Taitamariki
- Intermediate
- Senior Master
- Golden Master
- Master 70
- Master 75
- Master 80

This rule **only applies** where a club does not have sufficient paddlers to form their own, stand-alone, W12 crews in those age categories.

A W12 crew made up of 2 clubs may be a combination of any number of paddlers from those two clubs. They must satisfy all other rules as specified in the Race Rules. These teams will need to be entered online by the regional reps, including paddler names.

TAITAMARIKI RACING - Saturday 16th & Sunday 17th January

In 2027, the minimum age for Taitamariki competitors at the Waka Ama Sprint Nationals will be 6 years old (turning 7 within the year of competition).

All Taitamariki racing will be held on a 250m course. The following events will be held for Taitamariki:

- W6 250m
- W12 250m

Taitamariki racing will progress from heats to semis: Te Ihu, Te Takere, Te Kei and Te Hiwi with a final being held in each division. Each W6 and W12 taitamariki team is guaranteed 2 races each.

Taitamariki Prizegiving for all events will be held on Sunday 17th January at the conclusion of the racing.

Note: Te Ihu Finals will be acknowledged with medals. Te Takere, Te Kei and Te Hiwa will be acknowledged with ribbons

INTERMEDIATE RACING - Sunday 17th & Monday 18th January

The following events will be held for Intermediates:

- W6 500m
- W6 500m (1 turn)
- W12 500m
- W1 500m **(For the Regional qualifiers, this event will be held on Tuesday January 19th)**

Intermediate teams will receive time penalties for infractions in the heats, which may allow them to progress instead of being disqualified automatically. In Semi-Finals and Finals regular infractions will remain.

ADAPTIVE W1 RACING - Wednesday 20th January

Adaptive W1 racing will take place on the same day as all other W1 events.

To comply with the International Va'a Rules, adaptive races will be run by the classifications (VL1, VL1A, VL2, VL3, VL4). If you are unsure if you are classified, or do not know your classification, please contact events@wakaama.co.nz Please send all club entries to your regional reps to be entered.

- All adaptive W1 paddlers must be regular paddlers and affiliated to a WAANZ club.

ADAPTIVE W6 RACING - Saturday 23rd January

The following events will be held for Regional or Club based Adaptive W6 Crews:

- W6 500m
- W6 500m (1 turn)

Each team must be made up of a minimum of 3 adaptive paddlers. Where possible clubs/regions should try to make up teams full of adaptive paddlers.

Teams can represent a Club or a Region. If you have adaptive paddlers in your club, make up a team with other club members and enter them! Contact events@wakaama.co.nz if you have questions.

REGIONAL W1 250m DASH - Thursday 21st January

Each region can enter a maximum of 2 paddlers in each category. There will be one race only for each category, e.g. no heats.

  - Open Men (2 paddlers per region)
  - Open Women (2 paddlers per region)
  - J19 Men (2 paddlers per region)
  - J19 women (2 paddlers per region)
- Straight finals
- The lanes will be split, to accommodate the 12 paddlers in one race.
- Medals will be awarded for each event

REGIONAL W12 - Thursday 21st January

Each region can enter 1 team in each category

  - 1 x Regional Men's W12 team
  - 1 x Regional Women's W12 team
- Straight finals
- Medals will be awarded for each event
- The team can be made up of any age paddlers (14+ upwards) from that region.
- Paddlers will be selected as per the criteria set in each region. Criteria can be found in the pānui on each area's Regionals page.

TAITAMARIKI AND INTERMEDIATE LIFEJACKETS

It is compulsory for Taitamariki & Intermediate paddlers to wear Maritime NZ-approved PFDs/life jackets while competing at the Waka Ama Sprint Nationals.

Inflatable PFD/life jackets are prohibited for our Taitamariki and Intermediates.

ID CARDS



Cost is $7.00 (for new and replacement cards)**

- All paddlers must have a bar-coded ID card to be able to compete.
- For new or replacement cards: Club reps must complete an application online using their login & password. Before adding a new member to your club, please search the database for the paddler you are registering in case they already have an ID number.
- Photos and verification documents can be uploaded onto the Member's profile. If you experience any issues, please email admin@wakaama.co.nz

****Any orders received after January 8th 2027, and at the venue will cost $17 each**

***ID CARD TIP:* To avoid the last-minute rush for club administrators, you should start to collect new paddler verification documents and photos now, and do a few each week. It will save a lot of work the week prior to Christmas when everyone is hectic or away and not able to access documents! And it will help our office immensely!**

AIR TAHITI NUI PARTNERSHIP

Thanks to our Partners Air Tahiti Nui, we will again have some tickets to give away at the 2027 Waka Ama Sprint Nationals.

Stay tuned for more information about how you can be involved in this giveaway!

For more info about Air Tahiti Nui please visit their website here and follow Air Tahiti Nui on Facebook and Instagram

2027 CORPORATE CHALLENGE - Friday 22nd January

If your workplace is interested in competing in the Corporate Challenge at the 2027 Sprint Nationals, then please contact events@wakama.co.nz for a link to the entry form. This is a great opportunity for workplace fitness, kotahitanga and a chance to win your own gold medal!



Entries are limited to the first 20 community teams that register and pay before December 1st, 2026.
If you have any further questions, please email us at events@wakama.co.nz

W1 ENTRIES AND QUOTA

Entry Fees:
If you are entering W1 only, the full fee is payable for your age category. There is no extra fee for entering the W1 events if you are also paddling W6/W12 for your club/region.

Quota:
To manage the W1 events, it is necessary to limit entries. Therefore, a set number of heats for each category have been confirmed. Regions are allocated 4 entries for each race division, plus an extra quota for having finalists in the previous year's Nationals. See the next page for the 2027 W1 Quotas.

Should a region's quota be unfilled based on their qualifying criteria, then paddlers on the waitlist in their region will get the first option to take the spot. Should the region have no waitlisted paddlers in that age division, then all other waitlisted paddlers in that category across other regions will be randomly drawn for available spots.

Please note: Whilst there is a regional quota for W1, paddlers are representing their club within that region. Paddlers may only paddle for 1 club at the national championship.

W1 racing contributes toward the club points for the Club Points Trophy

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2027 WAKA AMA SPRINT NATIONALS

REGIONAL W1 QUOTA

RACE DIVISION	TTPCA	AROCA	TPOTI	TUOTR	HOE TONGA	TWOA
Int Men	6	10	7	5	4	4
Int Women	6	8	5	8	5	4
J16 Men	5	9	8	6	4	4
J16 Women	5	7	6	9	5	4
J19 Men	5	10	6	7	4	4
J19 Women	5	5	9	9	4	4
U23 Men	4	9	6	9	4	4
U23 Women	4	9	4	11	4	4
Premier Men	6	11	7	4	4	4
Premier Women	5	7	7	9	4	4
Master Men	6	10	6	5	5	4
Master Women	4	8	8	8	4	4
Snr Master Men	7	5	7	5	5	7
Snr Master Women	8	5	7	7	4	5
Gld Master Men	9	6	9	4	4	4
Gld Master Women	7	4	8	6	7	4
70+ Men	8	7	9	4	4	4
70+ Women	7	8	5	6	4	5
75+ Men	7	4	7	7	4	4
75+ Women	4	6	4	5	5	5
80+ Men	4	4	6	4	5	4
80+ Women	4	4	4	4	4	4

ACCOMMODATION

A reminder to all clubs and regions that you need to arrange your own accommodation and transport for event days. If you wish to camp on-site, you can book directly through the Lake Karaapiro website - Mighty River Domain Camping. For other accommodation options, look at Destination Cambridge.

PHOTOS AND IMAGES

Any official photos and images that are taken during the event remain the property of Waka Ama Aotearoa NZ. **By entering the event, individuals, clubs and regions accept that their photo or image may be taken and used for promotional purposes by Waka Ama Aotearoa NZ.** All images will be made available for competitors to access free of charge on our Facebook page. www.facebook.com/wakaamanewzealand
If you have any queries or concerns regarding photos or images, please contact media@wakaama.co.nz

VENDORS

There is an opportunity for organisations to attend as vendors/promoters/health providers at the 2027 Waka Ama Sprint Nationals.

Please contact events@wakaama.co.nz describing your business or service under one of the 3 headings below, and we will send you the correct Application Form:

- **Retail Vendors, and Promotional/Education organisations**
- **Food Vendors**
- **Health providers**, which are located in the dedicated **Hauora Hub**

All information regarding site sizes, fees, power connections, and timelines, can be found in the application forms. Any further queries can be directed to events@wakaama.co.nz

KAITŪAO/VOLUNTEER

Sprint Nationals cannot be run without the manaakitanga from our loyal Kaitūao. With the extra day of racing involved, the volunteering days have been split into two groups of 4 days (Junior race days and Senior race days). If you would like to apply to join the volunteer whanau at the 2027 event, please complete the Kaitūao Application form. For any further information, contact events@wakaama.co.nz

PARKING – WEEK-LONG PASSES

Car parking will be free for the first day of racing (Saturday 16th January). From Sunday onwards, parking will be $5 per vehicle, per day.

Week-long Parking passes can be pre-purchased for $30. Week-long passes must be displayed on the vehicle dashboard for clear viewing, and must include the vehicle registration number. Passes can be purchased online from October 20th 2026 via this link: https://waka-ama-nz-shop.myshopify.com/

The last chance to purchase a week-long pass will be from the Event Admin area on Friday 15th and Saturday 16th January. Parking passes will not be available for purchase after Saturday. Daily charges will need to be paid as you enter through the gate.

BIOSECURITY INFORMATION

As kaitiaki of our roto and awa we will continue to follow the **Check, Clean, Dry** steps for our Waka Ama events, to ensure we do not spread the freshwater clams or any other invasive species in our waterways. For more information on the clam, please watch this 2026 Waka Ama video and visit the Ministry for Primary Industries website

All waka, hoe, life jackets/PFDs, clothing and footwear will need to be checked before leaving Lake Karaapiro. There will be high pressure wash stations set up for all W1 and W6 waka, ama and kiato in the loading bay area - **ALL waka must be washed, before they will be released from the area**. Please do your part and follow the instructions of the Kaitūao. In addition, there will be dunking bins for life jackets/PFDs, clothing, and footwear along the exit pathway, after each race. Please follow the instructions of the Kaitūao situated at that station.

