

PĀNUI 1



Waka Ama Sprint Nationals

Sunday 11 - Saturday 17 January 2026

Lake Karāpiro, Cambridge



waka ama
Aotearoa New Zealand

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KEY INFORMATION AND DATES

Wednesday 1 October 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <u>ENTRIES OPEN</u> ● Pānui 1 released
Sunday 30 November 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <u>REGISTER CLUB COORDINATORS</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Responsible for processing withdrawals, protests, collecting race schedules and communicating with officials during events.
Monday 1 December 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pānui 2 released
Sunday 14 December 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <u>ENTRIES CLOSE</u>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Changes may occur up to 12 noon of the day prior to racing but will incur the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Any <u>teams added</u> after 14 December, 2025 will be waitlisted for lanes and charged a \$50 penalty ○ Any <u>teams withdrawn</u> after 14 December, 2025 will be charged a \$50 penalty
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Medical or special exemptions on application to events@wakaama.co.nz
Friday 2 January 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <u>PADDLER ROSTERS CLOSE</u>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● There must be enough people on your roster to fill the crews you have entered
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <u>Additions or changes</u> to the paddler roster after 2 January incur a \$50 late penalty fee per paddler
Friday 2 January 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <u>CLUBS/TEAMS WILL BE INVOICED</u>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>IMPORTANT: Once invoices are generated and sent to clubs there are no refunds on entry fees invoiced. Any teams that withdraw after the 5th of January will be invoiced the full entry amount plus the \$50 penalty fee</i>
Friday 2 January 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <u>ID Cards must be ordered.</u> ● Any ID Card applications received after this date will cost \$17 each, including those ordered at the venue.
Monday 5 January 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pānui 3 Released
Wednesday 7 January 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <u>PAYMENT FOR ENTRY IS DUE</u> (Payments can be made by Internet Banking or Cash) – No cheque payments.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● No payment, no racing
Thursday 8 January 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <u>ONLINE ZOOM MANAGER'S MEETING - 7PM</u>
Saturday 10 January 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <u>ROSTER CHANGES CLOSED</u>
Sunday 11 January 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <u>PŌWHIRI</u> Sunday Morning 8:30 am. Racing will start Sunday 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 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 mens 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.

EVENT ELIGIBILITY

- Only clubs recognised as financial and constitutional members of Waka Ama NZ are eligible to enter.
- All paddlers must have a current Waka Ama NZ ID card.
- Non-medalling International teams are by invitation from Waka Ama 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.

International Eligibility (as per the 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 from Domestic Status; namely Cook Islands, Niue and Tokelau.

For further clarification please contact events@wakaama.co.nz

RACE RULES

The race rules can be found here: [Waka Ama NZ Race Rules](#)

Please note: *The race rules are currently under review. Any updates or amendments will be published on the Waka Ama website and shared in upcoming pānui. Further details on how these changes will apply to the 2026 Sprint Nationals will be provided in Pānui 2.*

EVENT SCHEDULE

This is a draft race schedule; it will be confirmed once the online entries close. Please note ALL Manager's meetings will be held inside the Don Rowlands Centre.

Date	Racing Day	Racing information and Managers meetings
7pm Thursday 8 January	0	Online Zoom Race briefing for ALL Team Managers
Friday 9 January	0	W6 Waka drop off from 12pm
Saturday 10 January	0	Race briefing (if required) for ALL Team Managers - who couldn't attend the Zoom hui 6pm - TBC
Sunday 11 January	DAY 1	Pōwhiri - morning Taitamariki racing
Monday 12 January	DAY 2	Taitamariki / Intermediate / J16 racing Taitamariki Prizegiving
Tuesday 13 January	DAY 3	Intermediate / J16 racing Prizegiving Race Briefing for all J19 / Adult W1 paddlers - 6pm
Wednesday 14 January	DAY 4	W1 racing Prizegiving Race briefing (if required) for ALL Team Managers - who couldn't attend the Zoom hui 6pm - TBC
Thursday 15 January	DAY 5	J19 and all adult W6 & W12 Regional W12 and W1 races Prizegiving
Friday 16 January	DAY 6	J19 and all adult W6 & W12 Corporate Challenge Racing Prizegiving
Saturday 17 January	DAY 7	J19 and all adult W6 racing - FINALS Prizegiving

CLUB/REGIONAL COORDINATORS

All Regions and clubs must register a coordinator for this event. To ensure that messages, correction of entries 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 2026, we will be creating a WhatsApp group for the Coordinators**, so please register your club/region's details on this Google form - [Club/Regional Coordinators Form](#) **by November 30th, 2025**

ONLINE ENTRIES - OPEN Monday 1st October 2025

Registrations are to be completed online via the Waka Ama NZ website. www.wakaama.co.nz

- Club reps will register W6 and W12 entries.
- Regional Reps will need to register W1, Adaptive entries, and combined club W12 entries
- Regional Reps will need to register Premier Men/Women Regional W1 and W12 entries
- New 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.
- Here is the list of the current club reps <https://www.wakaama.co.nz/clubs/reps>

REMEMBER - to please check all your club entries before 13 December 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	6	10
Intermediate	6	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
Adaptive W6 only*	N/A	\$35
Taitamariki	6 – 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

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 fee may be transferred to a replacement paddler. 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.

*For **Adaptive W6 only** the fee is \$35.00. This relates to Adaptive W6 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 W12/W6/W1 racing for the club or region - 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 2026 minus 2010 = 15.

NB. If you are turning 17 in 2026 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 crews will need to be entered online by the region, including paddler names.

TAITAMARIKI RACING - Sunday 11th & Monday 12th January

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 Championship, Cup, Plate and Bowl divisions. With a final being held in each division. All teams that entered the heats will progress to either the Championship, Cup, Plate or Bowl division.

Note: Championship Finals will be acknowledged with medals. Cup, Plate and Bowl finals will be acknowledged by ribbons

INTERMEDIATE RACING - Monday 12th & Tuesday 13th January

The following events will be held for Intermediates:

- W6 500m
- W6 500m (1 turn)
- W12 500m
- W1 500m - **the W1 events will be held on Wednesday January 14th**

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 W6 RACING - Saturday 17th 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 or region that may wish to take up this opportunity, please inform them.

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

ADAPTIVE W1 RACING - Wednesday 14th January

Adaptive W1 racing will take place on the same day as the J19/Adult 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 submit all club entries to your region representatives to be entered. All adaptive paddlers must be affiliated to a WANZ affiliated club.

REGIONAL W1 250m DASH - Thursday 15th January

Please note: As in 2025 this race will be run on Thursday the same day as the Regional W12 event.

Each region can enter 2 paddlers in each category. There will be one race for each category:

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

REGIONAL W12 - Thursday 15th January

This prestigious race is a straight out battle of the regions. Each region can enter 1 team in each category

- 1 x Regional Men's W12 race
- 1 x Regional Women's W12 race
- Straight final
- Medals will be awarded for each event
- The team can be made up of any age paddlers (14+ upwards) from that region.
- The region can choose how the paddlers are selected to form the fastest W12 crew that the region can muster!

TAITAMARIKI AND INTERMEDIATE LIFEJACKETS

It is compulsory for Taitamariki & Intermediate paddlers to wear Maritime NZ approved PFDs/life jackets, while competing at the 2026 Sprint Nationals.

As in previous years, **inflatable PFD/life jackets are prohibited** for our Taitamariki and Intermediates, as generally these jackets are made for adult sizes only once inflated. The safety of our Taitamariki and Intermediates is of the utmost importance.

ID CARDS

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

- All paddlers must have a bar-coded ID card to be able to race.
- For new or replacement cards: Club reps must complete an application online using their login & password. Before you create a new ID, please search the database for the paddler you are registering in case they already have an ID number.
- Photos and verification documents can be scanned and emailed to admin@wakaama.co.nz



****Orders received after the 2nd of January 2026, and at the venue will cost \$17**

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 you 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

Waka Ama Aotearoa NZ is excited to announce the partnership with Air Tahiti Nui will continue into 2026. Air Tahiti Nui, has a long-established history of supporting the growth of Va'a Polynesian outrigger canoe racing in the Islands of Tahiti.

As part of this partnership, the airline will serve as the preferred airline of Waka Ama Aotearoa NZ and feature at the four major events, working collaboratively with Waka Ama Aotearoa NZ to further develop the sport.



At the 2026 Waka Ama Sprint Nationals, we will again have some tickets to Tahiti to give away. Stay tuned for more information about this exciting opportunity!

For more info about this partnership and Air Tahiti Nui please visit the Air Tahiti Nui Website [here](#) and follow Air Tahiti Nui on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#)

2026 CORPORATE CHALLENGE - Friday 16th January

If you and your workplace are interested in competing in the Corporate Challenge race at Sprint Nationals in 2026, then please contact events@wakama.co.nz to be sent 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 teams that register and pay before December 20th, 2025. 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 2026 W1 Quotas.

Should a region's quota be unfilled, paddlers on the waitlist in their region will get the first option to take up a spot. Should the region have no waitlisted paddlers, then all other waitlisted paddlers in that category across other regions will be ranked by waitlisting and then randomly drawn for available space.

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

2026 WAKA AMA SPRINT NATIONALS

REGIONAL W1 QUOTA

RACE DIVISION	TTPCA	AROCA	TPOTI	TUOTR	HOE TONGA	TWOA
Int Men	6	10	5	7	4	4
Int Women	6	8	6	7	5	4
J16 Men	8	8	7	5	4	4
J16 Women	7	6	5	10	4	4
J19 Men	5	9	8	6	4	4
J19 Women	5	8	6	8	5	4
Open 23 Men	4	12	5	7	4	4
Open 23 Women	5	5	5	8	5	4
Premier Men	6	9	8	4	5	4
Premier Women	5	6	7	9	4	5
Master Men	6	11	6	5	4	4
Master Women	5	5	11	7	4	4
Snr Master Men	5	8	8	5	4	6
Snr Master Women	7	4	10	6	5	4
Gld Master Men	8	5	9	5	4	5
Gld Master Women	9	7	6	6	4	4
70+ Men	6	5	6	4	4	4
70+ Women	7	8	5	5	4	4
75+ Men	9	4	5	4	4	4
75+ Women	4	5	4	5	7	4
80+ Men	4	4	6	4	6	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 for event days. If you wish to camp on-site, you are now able to book directly through the Lake Karāpiro website - [Mighty River Domain Camping](#)

Some other accommodation options can be found on the [Destination Cambridge](#) website

PHOTOS AND IMAGES

Any official photos and images that are taken during the event remain the property of Waka Ama 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 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 events@wakaama.co.nz

VENDORS

There is an opportunity for organisations to attend as vendors/promoters at the 2026 Waka Ama Sprint Nationals. Please click on the correct link below to complete an Application Form:

- Interested Retail Vendors, and Promotional/Health/Education organisations, please complete the [Retail/Promo Vendor Application Form](#)
- Interested Food Vendors please complete the [Food Vendor Application Form](#)
- Interested Health providers keen to be involved in the new Hauora Hub, please register [here](#)

All information is present in the form, any further queries can be directed to events@wakaama.co.nz

KAITŪAO

Kaitūao (Volunteer) application forms will be sent over the next week. If you would like to volunteer at the 2026 Sprint Nationals, please email events@wakama.co.nz to be added to the mail-out database.

PARKING – WEEK-LONG PASSES

Car parking will be free for the first day of racing (Sunday 11th January). From Monday onwards, parking will be \$5 per vehicle, per day.

Week-long Parking passes are available to pre-purchase for \$25. Week-long passes must be displayed on the vehicle dashboard for clear viewing, and must include the vehicle registration number. Passes will be available for purchase from the admin desk at the Don Rowlands Centre, and online from October 20th at the Waka Ama Online Shop <https://waka-ama-nz-shop.myshopify.com/> (until January 10th).

The last chance to purchase a week-long pass will be directly from the Admin area on Sunday January 11th. Parking passes will not be available for purchase after Sunday. Daily charges will incur 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 visit the [Ministry for Primary Industries website](#)

All waka, hoe, life jackets/PFDs, clothing and footwear will need to be checked before leaving Lake Karāpiro. 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 Kaitiāo. In addition, there will again be special dunking bins for life jackets/PFDs, clothing, and footwear along the exit pathway, after each race. Please follow the instructions of the Kaitiāo situated at that station.



FRESHWATER GOLD CLAM INFO SHEET WAKA AMA

As kaitiaki of our roto and awa we are emphasising the importance of following the new Check Clean Dry steps for our Waka Ama whānau to ensure we do not spread gold clams or any other invasive species in our waterways.

Before you move

- from Lake Maraetai (Mangakino) to anywhere upstream; OR
- from any part of the Waikato River and lakes to any other lake, river or estuary; OR
- between any lake, river or estuary in the North Island; OR
- when going from the North Island to the South Island

CHECK - for what is visible

- CHECK and flick off any visible matter like weed, mud or adult clams at the site.

CLEAN - for what is not visible

- Blast your waka inside and out with tap water, including the ama and kiato, beside the waterway or at home - NOT into a stormwater drain.
- Be sure to wash out any nooks and crevices.
- Then drain it, including removing the bungs.
- Use one of the treatments (below) for absorbent materials that have been in the river or lake water and can stay wet longer - lifejackets, canvas sprayskirts, removable seats, dry bags, booties, straps/ratchets and ropes.

TREATMENTS:

1. Soak in hot tap water (above 55°C for at least 5 minutes); or
2. Soak in diluted household bleach (10%, or 1 to 10 ratio) for an hour; or
3. Freeze until solid (overnight)

DRY - to be sure

- DRY areas inside the waka where water has pooled with an old towel.
- Then leave to dry inside and out.
- Leave waka and gear to completely dry for 2 days.

 [CLICK HERE FOR MORE INFORMATION](#)