

RACE INFORMATION



Te Wānanga
o Aotearoa

A photograph showing several people in a red and green waka (canoe) on a river, rowing in a race. The water is greenish-blue, and there are trees in the background.

**REGIONAL
SECONDARY SCHOOL
WAKA AMA SPRINTS**

MARCH 7, 2026 HENLEY LAKE, MASTERTON

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Introduction

Hoe Tonga Pacifica Waka Ama Association, in association with College Sport Wellington, is pleased to offer secondary school students the opportunity to participate in our region's Secondary School Waka Ama Sprint Champs. Following the success of the event held in Porirua last year, and the growing number of participants each year, the event will return to Henley Lake, Wairarapa for 2026.

We are excited to introduce a J16 novice division to the 2026 event, to encourage the participation of students who are new to Waka Ama and would like to give it a go. Teams in this division are permitted one non-paddling steerer to support their new paddlers.

We will once again also have a year 7/8 division for W6 races. This will open up entries to schools with year 7/8 students that wish to partake in the event. This division will act as a bridging division.

We recognise the effort schools undertake to ensure all students are given the opportunity to participate in sport at any level and we believe Waka Ama delivers an experience of a lifetime. We wish to acknowledge those involved in delivering programmes to students, particularly clubs who provide access to equipment and coaching, and of course the many parents and teachers who offer their support and guidance.

It is our hope that students enjoy this unique experience and consider joining one of the 16 clubs within our region to further develop their skills and engage in the many different aspects of Waka Ama. Waka Ama provides individuals with the opportunity to develop connections to our community, develop leadership skills and adopt a healthier lifestyle, enriching their hauora or wellbeing.

Our Secondary Schools regatta has increased in paddler numbers every year and its success is largely due to our team of dedicated volunteers. Hoe Tonga invites you and your supporters to be part of this success while enjoying all the excitement waka ama brings to our community.



Club contacts

Hoe Tonga Pacifica Waka Ama Association (Hoe Tonga) is the organisation representing Waka Ama (Outrigger Canoeing) in the lower North Island. The region comprises Wellington, Porirua, Hutt Valley, Horowhenua, Manawatu, Wairarapa and Whanganui.

There are a total of 16 clubs located within the Hoe Tonga region with key contacts listed below. Sports Coordinators and schools will need to make arrangements with these clubs to assist with or provide training. Some schools already have existing relationships with clubs in their area and we encourage you to continue with relevant arrangements.

All paddlers are required to have experienced at least one capsize drill during training, and be regarded as sufficiently competent by Sports Coordinators or team managers prior to competing at the regatta.

Club	Contact	Email
PORIRUA		
Hawaikinui Tuarua Waka Ama Club	Joe Ropeti	hawaikinuiwakaama@gmail.com
Mana Pasifika Outrigger Canoe Club	Dennis Ngatai	d2ngatai@gmail.com
Porirua Canoe Kayak Club	Joan Nathu	poriruacanoekayakclub@gmail.com
TOA Waka Ama Club	Trini Ropata-Tawhiri	toawakaama@gmail.com
LOWER HUTT		
Hikoikoi Waka Ama Club	Jeremy Borgman	hikoikoiwakaama@gmail.com
Kokiri Marae Tai Patu Waka Ama	John Kingi	john@kokiri-hauora.org.nz
WELLINGTON		
Tai Tonga 41 Outrigger Canoe Club	Kylie Grigg	taitonga41@gmail.com
Tu Nui a Te Ika Outrigger Canoe Club	Roimata Tauroa	tunuiwakaama@gmail.com
MASTERTON		
Wairarapa Waka Ama Canoe Club	Kath Rimene	wairarapawakaama@outlook.com
WHANGANUI		
Ratana Paa Kaihoe Trust	Anna Te Rei	ratanapakaihoe@gmail.com
River City Waka Ama Club	Rachel Kingi	rivercitywakaama@gmail.com
Tai Awa Waka Ama Manatōpū	Amiria Paranihi	taiawa.wakaama@gmail.com
Te Ringa Miti Tai Heke Whanganui Waka Ama Club	Gill Potaka-Osborne	trmth.wakaama@gmail.com
Te Whanganui River Outrigger Canoe Club	Peter Wilson	wroccnz@gmail.com
OTAKI		
Otaki Waka Hoe	Tutere Henare	otakiwakahoe@gmail.com
Te Au Ki Te Tonga Waka Sport	Osheanya Kopa	teaukitetonga.wakasport@hotmail.com

Key information

Organiser:	Hoe Tonga Pacifica Waka Ama Association hoetonga@gmail.com
Venue:	Henley Lake, Masterton
Date:	Saturday 7 March 2026
Teams Arrive:	7am - 7:30am -Set up Marquees
Registration opens:	8am
Race briefing:	8.30am
Race No.1:	W1's (as indicated on race schedule) Published once College Sport Wellington team registrations close
Finish Time:	5pm (finish time estimate only)

Categories and age groups

Category	Age Groups	Comment
W1 250m	Girls and Boys J16 and J19	Students must be competent to paddle a rudderless W1 in a range of conditions.
W6 250m	Girls and Boys Intermediate, J16 and J19	Raced in a straight line
W6 250m Novice	Girls and Boys, J16 only	One non-paddling steerer is permitted to support new paddlers
W6 500m	Girls and Boys Intermediate, J16 and J19	Raced with one turn on a 250m course

Eligibility

Competitors must be under 16 years old on 1 January of the year of race to enter as a J16 or be under 19 years old on 1 January to enter as J19. **The intermediate grade will only be open to those students in year 7 or 8 in their respective schools.**

Competitors may only compete for the school at which they are enrolled and attend full time.

A student may only paddle for one crew in any one race/event, ie Yr7/8 or J16 or J19. W6 teams must only comprise students from the same school.

Please note that there are no formal mixed divisions. While composite (mixed) teams may be entered in the Boys division, these teams **are not eligible for prizes or progression to champ finals.**

Teams entered in the J16 Novice division are **not eligible for prizes** as this is a participatory division.

Entries

The entry cost is \$25+GST per paddler. Paddlers competing in W1 and W6 races only pay one fee.

Entries will close on **Thursday 26 February 2026**.

This is to allow for the preparation of the race schedule and lane draw. After this date, we are unable to accept any late entries and no entries will be accepted on the day.

Entries for J16 and J19 divisions are to be made online by school representatives (Sports Coordinators) **through their own registration pages via SPORTY**. This is a password protected site. School Sports Coordinators will need to manage this along with the CSW regulations <https://www.collegesport.org.nz/sports-1/bylaws>. Any school in Whanganui, Wairarapa and Manawatu wishing to enter will need to contact College Sport Wellington to process their entry.

Entries for year 7/8 division are to be made manually via the entry form at the end of this information pack and emailed to hoetonga@gmail.com.

Any enquiries regarding entries should be directed to College Sport Wellington Code Manager of Waka Ama: David Fa'atafa david@collegesport.org.nz.

NOTE: Each school will be invoiced by College Sport Wellington for J19 and J16 entries after the event. Each school with year 7/8 entries will be invoiced by Hoe Tonga Pacifica Waka Ama Association. Schools will be invoiced for registered teams and individuals competing in W1 that are not in a team. Invoices, which may not be sent out until after the event, are based on those teams and paddlers registered as at **Thursday 26 February 2026**.

Race schedule and lane draw

Unless otherwise notified, the race schedule and lane draw will be published by 8pm on Thursday 5th March 2026 at www.hoetonga.co.nz, on the [Hoe Tonga Facebook Page](#) and distributed by College Sport Wellington to Sport Coordinators.

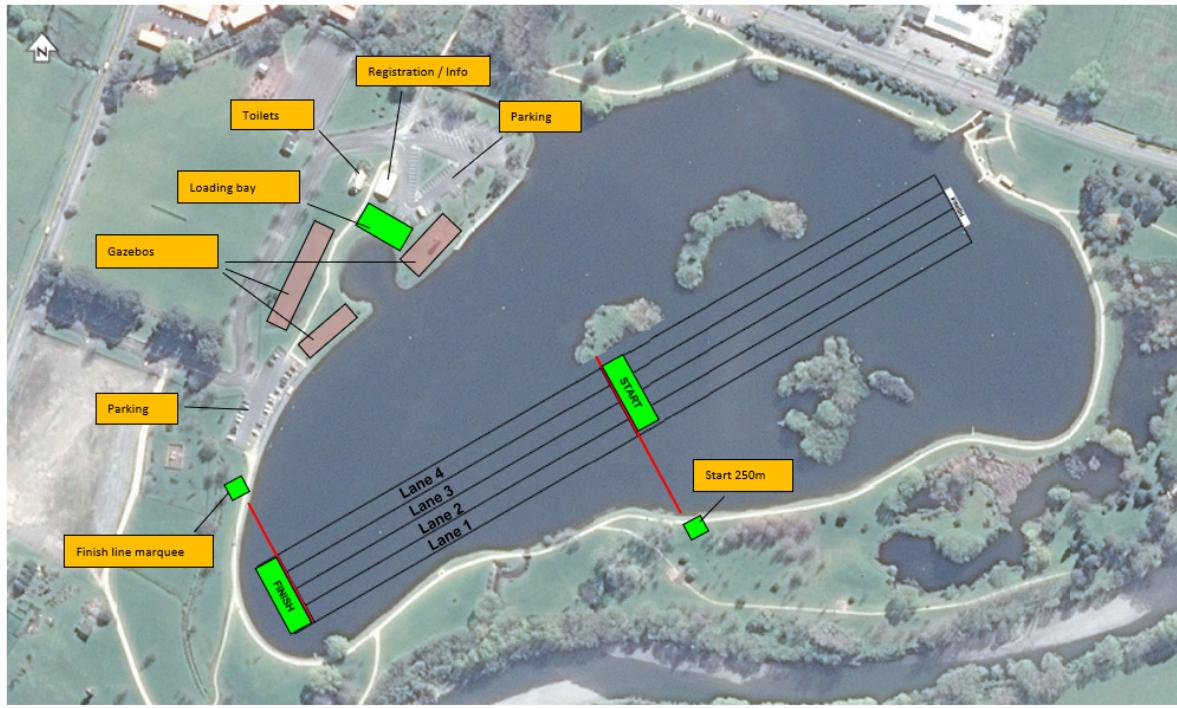
Races may be combined at the discretion of Hoe Tonga.

Key dates

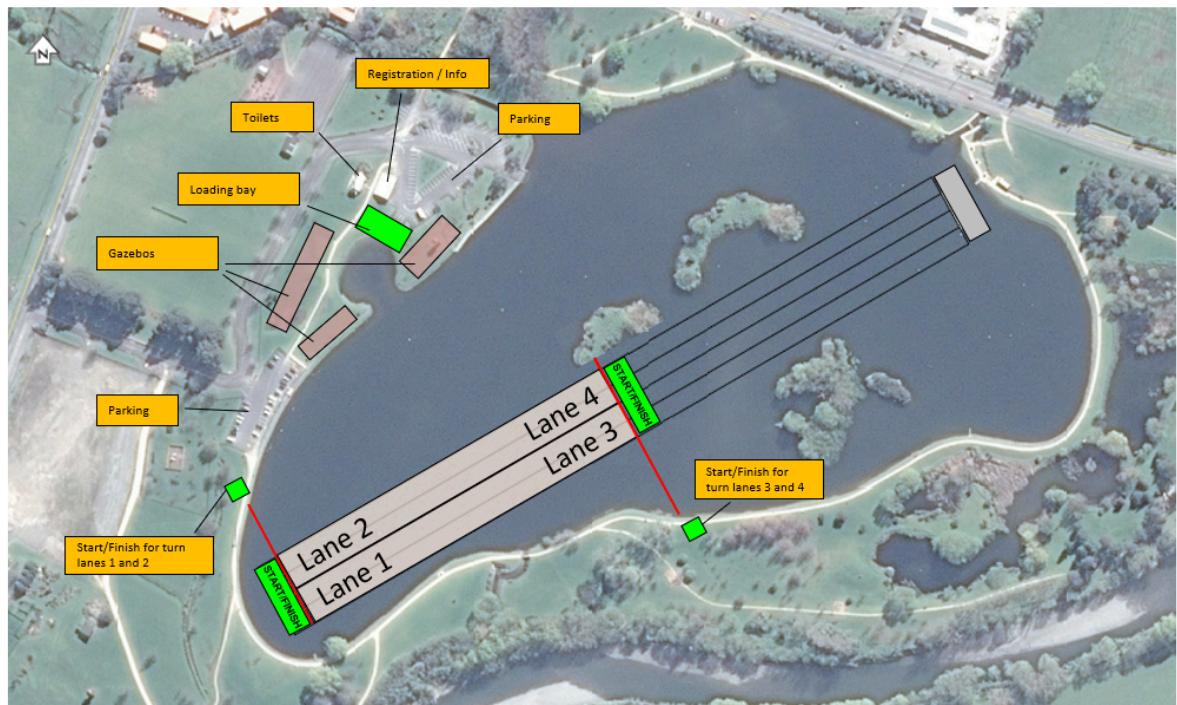
Date	What	Notes
26/02/2025	Entries close (midnight)	
05/03/2025	Race schedule and lane draw published	refer to www.hoetonga.co.nz or Hoe Tonga Facebook page
06/03/2025	ALL Safety Waivers to be completed and sent to hoetonga@gmail.com	Teams are responsible to print, complete and register prior to racing
07/03/2025	Race day	

Event area and race course

Course layout (250m straight races)



Course layout (turn races)



Fundraising

Teams are invited to bring refreshments and food. Organisers will endeavour to have a coffee cart and food stalls along with our DJ on site for the day. However, every year Hoe Tonga receives requests from schools that wish to have stalls on site for fundraising.

If your school wishes to have a stall, your Sports Coordinator must make a request to do so by contacting hoetonga@gmail.com before **March 1st 2026**. This is to avoid competing activities and duplication. Please note that each school is responsible for any food stall permits required by the Masterton District Council.

Waste minimisation

Hoe Tonga will provide rubbish bins for the day, please use them. If you see litter, especially plastic wrappers and the like, please pick it up (even if it's not yours) to avoid this reaching our water ways and ultimately becoming micro-plastics.

Please bring your refillable bottles.

Note that recycling bins will not be offered due to the cost involved with staffing bins to avoid contamination. However, we encourage competitors and supporters to take recyclable items (eg plastic bottles, cans) home for recycling via your local collection services.

COVID-19

We encourage best practice hygiene, ie wash your hands, utilise sanitiser. If you feel unwell with relevant symptoms, please do not attend this event. We will have sanitiser at the registration desk.

Rules and regulations

[Waka Ama New Zealand race rules](#), School Sport New Zealand bylaws, and <https://www.collegesport.org.nz/sports-1/regulations-1> apply to schools entering this event.

Code of conduct

Schools are responsible for the behaviour of their students on and off the water. Supervisory staff and support adults will ensure that all race rules are observed and that their students display a good sportsperson attitude when competing.

Canoes

Hoe Tonga Pacifica Waka Ama Association will arrange the supply of W6 Mahi Mahi for all teams specifically for this event with its affiliated clubs.

Any team causing damage to any W6 during this event will incur the cost of the repairs, which will be charged to the team's school with potential time penalties. All contracted W6 waka are to be used solely for this competition.

Paddlers competing in W1 will be required to wear a high vis vest supplied by organisers and are to provide their own canoe.

Uniform

All paddlers must paddle in a team uniform. Team uniform on the water must include the same tops.

While not essential, it is recommended that teams also wear the same shorts, skirts or lavalava. These should be standardised for the whole team.

Hats and sunglasses are permitted if individual paddlers wish to wear them.

Appropriate additional items of uniform may be worn in line with weather conditions. These items must be worn underneath their race uniform.

Progressions and finals

Progressions to finals are based on a team's time posted in the heats. Normally racing will feature heats and finals.

Should there be any withdrawals, the Race Director may eliminate a heat and place competitors in other heats.

Safety

Approved Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs) are compulsory and must be worn by ALL competitors. Schools must provide their own team PFDs. Note that correct sizing is an important part of safety. **Waist type belts/ tubes are not approved.**

There will be two support boats monitoring racing. In case of adverse weather conditions on race day or any other matters that could compromise paddler safety, the Race Director retains the right to stop, postpone and/or cancel races on the day. Organisers may be unable to refund fees in this case.

Paddles

Paddles must be a single blade, and may be any size or shape, and constructed from any material. Organisers will NOT provide paddles.

Pre-race guidance

Paddlers are to follow officials' instructions at all times.

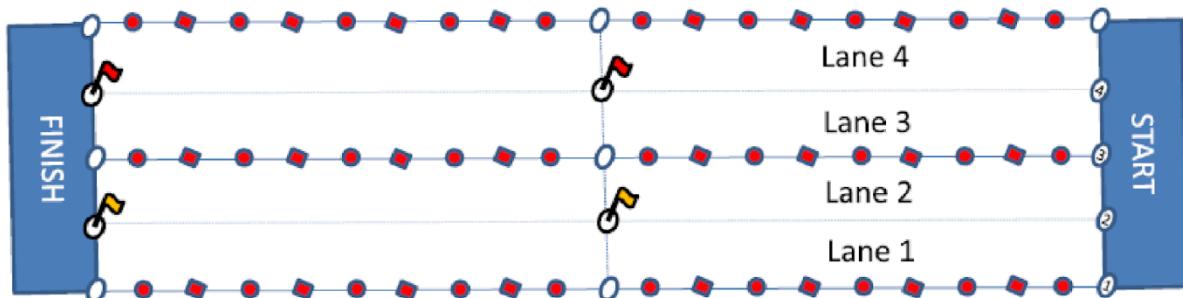
When races are called, teams/paddlers are to assemble at the loading bay. Paddlers must not load into canoes without going through the loading bay.

Loading bay officials will advise paddlers when to load. W6 will be allocated to lanes and teams by the officials in the loading bay.

Once on the water, teams are to paddle directly to the start. Teams are to wait on the water in the vicinity of the start area for their race.

Race course for 250m events

For straight races over 250m, the race course consists of four lanes. Each lane is 13.5m wide. It applies to W1 and W6 races.

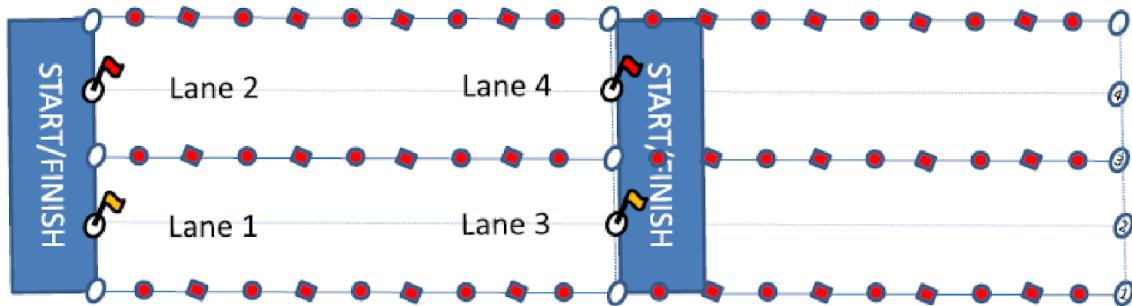


Race course for turn events

For turn races over 500m, the race course consists of four lanes. Each lane is 27m wide.

As the lake's small size only allows for two turn lanes in a conventional race course layout, races with more than two entries will be run in the pursuit format. This means that two teams will start at one end of the 250m course, and the two other teams will start at the other end of the 250m course, at the same time. Therefore, at any time, there may be two teams racing within the same lane, pursuing each other. The format is similar to cycling pursuit races. Lane numbers for turn races are marked on the turn flag buoys as T1, T2, T3 and T4. By way of example, the turn flag buoy marked T2 will indicate the start location for Lane 2 for turn races.

Please consider the race course layout below, for lane numbering and respective start locations.



In any race involving turns, the canoe must turn counter-clockwise around the flag but may start or finish with the flag on either side so long as they are within their designated lane.

When a race is in progress, paddlers that are not racing are not permitted to be on the course.

Starts

Competitors must be present at the start line for their event as shown on the programme. Starting signals shall be given regardless of absentees. The start procedure is as follows:

- Raising the white flag: Teams must position their canoes approximately 10m from the actual start line.
- Raising of the red flag: Teams must move to their starting position but remain behind the start line.
- Raising of the green flag indicates the start of the race.
- Raising of the black flag (while the red flag is raised) indicates that at least one canoe has moved over the start line. All teams should check, and if necessary, correct their positions. The black flag will be lowered as soon as all canoes have moved back behind the start line. If the green flag is raised while the black flag is still up, at least one team has incurred a start infringement.

Disqualification and time penalties

Disqualification or time penalties will occur for any fault that is made before, during or after any race. This includes any breach of the Race Rules. The following provisions are cause for an infringement:

- Misconduct or bad behaviour.
- Competing for more than one school in an event will disqualify both crews.
- Paddling at any time during a race outside the assigned lane.
- Starting or finishing outside the assigned lane.
- Paddling in a non-seated position (standing in a canoe at any time)
- Crossing the start line at any time before the raising of the green flag.
- Not rounding the flags in a counter clockwise direction.
- Not rounding the turn flag with the entire waka including the ama.

- Failing to complete a turn within the designated lane and buoys.
- Not following the starting rules.
- Damage caused to W6 waka.
- Completing a race with fewer than 6 paddlers (W6).
- Paddling without the correct uniform.

Volunteer information

Each school is required to provide **two adult volunteers** to assist in the running of this regatta.

Volunteers commit to assisting for a minimum of half a day, so it is preferred that the same person carries out this role for this duration of time. Hoe Tonga will provide team leaders for key areas, who will guide volunteers at each station.

All volunteers will receive a lunch pack and drinks during the day.

Hoe Tonga requires volunteers in the following areas:

- Finish line (results, spotters, time keeping)
- Loading bay (marshalling, helping paddlers in and out of waka, bailing water out of canoes)

Volunteers may be allocated to areas outside of their preference if required.

All volunteers will be sent an email invitation to a hui held the week before the event which they are encouraged to attend. Information about the differing voluntary roles and areas will be discussed, along with further important details about the event.

Hoe Tonga wishes to thank all those who give up their time willingly to help make this event a success. We hope you enjoy this day as we look forward to some exciting racing.

College Sport Wellington are making it easier for schools to get involved and will require Sports Coordinators to register your two volunteers online in order for your entry to be processed.

If you have others in your community who are available and keen to assist, please email Hoe Tonga (hoetonga@gmail.com) with their name, preferred volunteer area, and contact details.

Waiver - Regional Secondary School Sprints

NOTE: To be completed and sent to hoetonga@gmail.com by 6 March 2026.

Teams are responsible for printing, completing and providing prior to racing.

Date _____ School _____

W6 Team / W1 Paddler Name _____

Category entered _____

Team Manager _____ Phone _____

I declare that:

1. The accepted entry will not be transferred to another entrant.
2. In the event of any "act of God" conditions causing a cancellation of the event, entry fees are not transferable or refundable.
3. I acknowledge that there are risks involved with Waka Ama and fully realise the dangers of participating in an event such as this and fully assume the risks associated with such participation and my wellbeing during the event.
4. I understand and agree that situations may arise during the event, which may be beyond the immediate control of officials or organisers, and I must continually participate in a manner that does not endanger either myself or others.
5. Neither the organisers, the sponsors nor other parties associated with the event shall have any responsibility, financial or otherwise, for any risk incident that might arise, whether or not by negligence, from any direct or indirect loss, injury or death that might be sustained by me or any other party directly or indirectly associated with me, from my intended or actual participation in the event or its related activities.
6. I authorise my name, voice, picture and information on this entry form to be used without payment to me in any broadcast, telecast, promotion, advertising, or any other way pursuant to the Privacy Act 1993.
7. I agree to comply with the rules, regulations and event instructions of Hoe Tonga Waka Ama Association.
8. I consent to receiving medical treatment, which may be advisable in the event of illness or injuries suffered during the event.
9. I confirm that I will wear a personal flotation device during the race.

If Competitor is under 18, the Waiver must be signed by a parent, guardian or teacher.

Paddler's full name	Date of birth	Medical conditions	Signature	Parent/ guardian/ teacher signature if under 18

Year 7/8 Event Registration Form

NOTE: To be completed and sent to hoetonga@gmail.com by 6 March 2026.

Teams are responsible for printing, completing and providing prior to racing.

School: _____

Sports Coordinator / Teacher: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Team Name 1: _____ Division: Int Boys / Int Girls

Team Name 2: _____ Division: Int Boys / Int Girls

Team Name 3: _____ Division: Int Boys / Int Girls

Alternative School Contact: _____

Phone: _____

Fill in below if applicable

Waka Ama Club (club school is working with): _____

Club Contact: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Note: Please also complete the Paddler Roster for each team, see next page.

Year 7/8 Paddler roster

Please include the full name of each participant and their date of birth.

NOTE: To be completed and sent to hoetonga@gmail.com by 6 March 2026. Teams are responsible for printing, completing and providing prior to racing.

Team 1

Paddler 1:	Date of Birth:
Paddler 2:	Date of Birth:
Paddler 3:	Date of Birth:
Paddler 4:	Date of Birth:
Paddler 5:	Date of Birth:
Paddler 6:	Date of Birth:

Team 2

Paddler 1:	Date of Birth:
Paddler 2:	Date of Birth:
Paddler 3:	Date of Birth:
Paddler 4:	Date of Birth:
Paddler 5:	Date of Birth:
Paddler 6:	Date of Birth:

Team 3

Paddler 1:	Date of Birth:
Paddler 2:	Date of Birth:
Paddler 3:	Date of Birth:
Paddler 4:	Date of Birth:
Paddler 5:	Date of Birth:
Paddler 6:	Date of Birth: