



Hoe Tonga Pacifica Waka Ama Association

Regional Sprint Championships

Saturday 5 – Sunday 6 December 2026

Henley Lake, Masterton

Pānui 1

EVENT SUMMARY

The Hoe Tonga Waka Ama Association Regional Sprint Championships is our premier annual waka ama sprint race event. This is used to determine our regional champions and as a qualifying event for our W1 paddlers for the National Waka Ama Sprint Championships in January 2027.

KEY DATES

- **Saturday 5th December: W6 races**
- **Sunday 6th December: W1 races**
- **Entries open on Friday 30 October**
- **All entries close on Friday 27 November at 11.59pm**
 - No entries on the day, no exceptions
- **Rosters close on Sunday 29 November 11.59pm**
 - Rosters must be completed by close date, no exceptions
- The schedule and lane draw will be made available by Thursday before race day on www.hoetonga.co.nz and our [Hoe Tonga Facebook page](#)
- If the event, or any one of the two days of racing is postponed due to adverse weather conditions, Hoe Tonga will advise paddlers via www.hoetonga.co.nz on Friday by 1pm

Race Categories & Age Division

All age divisions are based on the Waka Ama NZ Race Rules: <https://www.wakaama.co.nz/pages/read/1005147>

WAKA	DISTANCE	DIVISIONS	GENDER
W1	250m	J19, Open	Men & Women
W1	500m	Adaptive, Intermediate, J16, J19, U23, Open, Master, Senior Master, Golden Master, M70, M75, M80	Men & Women
W6	250m	Taitamariki	Boys & Girls
W6	500m	Intermediate, J16, J19, Open, Master, Senior Master, Golden Master*	Men & Women
W6	1000m	J16, J19, Master, Senior Master, Golden Master	Men & Women
W6	1500m	Open	Men & Women

*M70/M75/M80 W6 races will be included with Golden Master

FEES

PER PERSON BY AGE DIVISION (charged one fee according to age on race day)

Age Division	Cost
Taitamariki	\$5
Intermediate, J16, J19	\$20
Senior (U23+)	\$30

*For example, if I am 7 on race day, I will pay the Taitamariki division fee of \$5

ONLINE ENTRIES

- All entries to be completed by your club admin using the Waka Ama NZ online entry system
- In order to obtain a list of people that can make online entries for your club, go to <https://www.wakaama.co.nz/clubs/regs>
- Club reps: To enter your paddlers, please go to the 'Members Area Login' at <https://www.wakaama.co.nz/members-area/>. If your club needs access for other people, please contact admin@wakaama.co.nz
- Entries can be viewed here [Hoe Tonga Pacifica Regional Sprint Champs \(2 days\) \(Sanctioned\)](#)

The entry process has two parts:

All entries close on Friday 27 November at 11.59pm

- No entries on the day, no exceptions
- All entries have to be confirmed in the online entry system
- Late entries may be permitted only if workload allows but will incur a late fee of \$25 per entry and are subject to lane availability
- *Note that any late entries must be authorised, via an email, by an executive officer of the respective club*

Roster close on Sunday 29 November 11.59pm before race day

- Rosters must be completed by close date, no exceptions
- Clubs have to confirm all paddlers that race in each W6 team. In order to assign paddlers to each team, **all paddlers must be affiliated and verified**
- A late fee applies to each entry with an incomplete roster after the closing date - \$25 for 19 & under, \$50 for 20+. Only WAANZ can change your roster after the deadline, not Hoe Tonga
 - *Note that a team will not be able to compete on race day if their roster is incomplete*
- Each team must have a unique name; clubs must NOT use numbers in team names when making entries
- The event is open for entries from clubs outside the region, albeit they are **NOT** eligible for medals or prizes. In W1 events, entries from outside the region may be limited, please contact Hoe Tonga if you intend to enter
- Clubs will be invoiced by Hoe Tonga once rosters close, to ensure all late entries and withdrawals can be processed correctly. Cash payments are not accepted
- There will be no refunds or entry fee reduction for withdrawals of entries or no-shows for each category after the specified entry close dates
- Unless otherwise stated, teams and paddlers can only race in one division per event. For example, a Junior 19 could race in Premier W1 500m or Junior 19 W1 500m, but not both.
 - *Note that an exemption to this policy applies to the W6 Premier 500m events (men and women). Other divisions are eligible to enter this event also, as it is used for selection of the Regional W12 team to compete at Nationals*

INDIVIDUAL & TEAM WAIVERS

- All paddlers must sign the online waiver once the individual or team roster is complete
- To do this, find and select your name in the WAANZ online entries system and fill out the form. Under 18 paddlers require a parent or guardian signature

CONTACT INFORMATION

- All enquiries please email: hoetonga@gmail.com
- Facebook: <https://www.Facebook.com/HoeTonga>
- Website: <https://www.hoetonga.co.nz>

SAFETY

- There will be two support boats monitoring racing. One of these will be the flag boat, and one will be a roaming boat.
- Taitamariki and intermediate paddlers must wear life jackets.
- Paddlers that are not able to swim at least 50m must also wear life jackets. This also applies to adult paddlers.
- Clubs must ensure that the paddlers they enter are sufficiently capable to participate in their events and handle reasonably difficult conditions (e.g. strong wind gusts). Note that while support boats will rescue paddlers, they will NOT assist paddlers in lining up (which can be difficult for novice paddlers, especially in W1, if winds are stronger than 10-15knots). If paddlers are not able to line up within a reasonable time frame, the race will be run without them and they will be disqualified.
- In case of severe weather conditions on race day, the race director retains the right to stop, postpone and/or cancel races on race day. Note that organisers may be unable to refund race fees in this case.
- Spectators **MUST NOT** fly private drones at the event venue unless the user has both the authorisation of the event organiser and complies with local council bylaws and aviation rules.

Event area

- Clubs are encouraged to provide shelter (sun, rain) for their paddlers. Please observe the event area layout and keep club tents and gazebos clear from areas that are clearly marked for official use (see event area layout as shown at the end of this document).
- Alcohol and/or drugs are not permitted on site.
- Team managers, clubs please ensure you have thought about your paddlers kai and refreshments, shelter and weather conditions.
- We will have a coffee cart on site that will also have kai available for purchase.

Canoe use

- We are grateful to the clubs that have made their W6 available for this event. Paddlers are advised to treat the equipment with utmost care and respect.

Arrival of paddlers on race day

- Team managers or club representatives are to make their way to the information and registration stand to sign-in their teams/paddlers, and/or to advise of withdrawals.
- Team managers or club representatives must provide signed waiver forms for all their paddlers. This must be completed before their paddlers are permitted to race. The waiver forms should match the paddlers on the roster for each entry.
- All documents, waivers and race information will be made available online for paddlers and managers to download prior to race day.
- Paddlers (and/or club reps) to become familiar with the race course layout, the event area, race schedule and lane draw (available online)

Pre-race guidance

- Paddlers are to follow officials' instructions at all times.
- When their race is called, 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. Note that for the W6 events, a shared canoe pool is used. W6 will be allocated to lanes and teams by officials in the loading bay.
- Once on the water, paddlers are to paddle directly up to the start line.

Racing

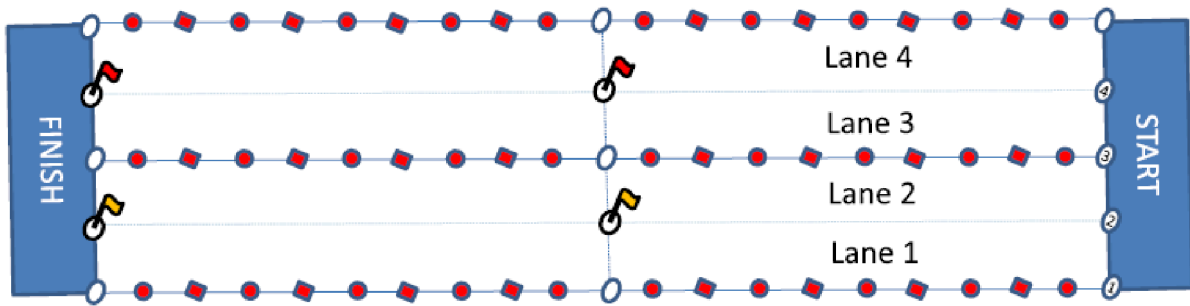
- Waka Ama Aotearoa New Zealand race rules apply; they can be found at <https://www.wakaama.co.nz/pages/read/1005147>
- As a minimum, two entries are needed per division for the race to be run.
- If there are fewer than three entries, the race may be combined with another race. In this case, entries will be clearly marked as from another division. This may mean that teams from the affected division have to race a different distance (e.g. if Masters are combined with Premier, then the Masters team(s) have to race 1500m in their turn races.) Note that organisers are unable to contact affected teams individually – please read the lane draw to avoid surprises.
- Protests: to be made **to registration** by a nominated club representative within 15 minutes of the respective event with a completed form. **Do not approach the finish line caravan in any circumstance.**
- Penalties: All offences will incur a 10 second time penalty which will be added to the final time instead of applying a disqualification. See Waka Ama New Zealand race rules for details.
- Races may be combined or shortened at the sole discretion of the organising committee or the race director.

Progression

- Placings will be determined on times. Races may have combined grades if there is space.
- The W6 events will feature heats and finals, progression will be based strictly on time, due to the limited number of lanes available, and due to the large number of races. Placings do not determine progression (e.g. a first place in a heat does not necessarily guarantee progression).
- Event organisers will endeavour to offer further B and C Finals, depending on the number of entries in the heats, and time available.

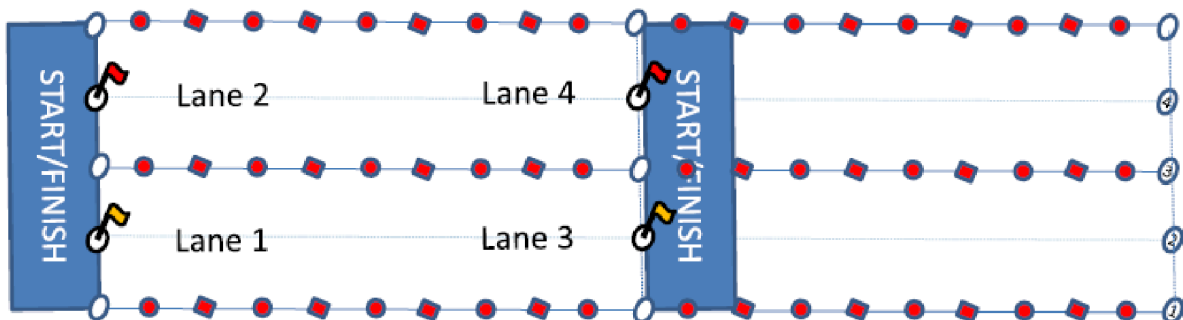
Race course for 250m and 500m events

- For straight races over 250m and 500m, the race course consists of four lanes. Each lane is 13.5m wide.



Race course for turn events

- For turn races over 1000m and 1500m, the race course consists of four lanes. Each lane is 27m wide. This is slightly narrower than at the Waka Ama Nationals.
- 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.
- In the unlikely event that a team catches up to the other team, the team being chased down must give way or it will be disqualified automatically (or a time penalty will be applied). Note that this situation is very unlikely, only a couple of such situations have arisen during the last few years.



W6 events

- All W6 races will take place on Saturday 5th December
- Distance: 250m/500m and 1000m/1500m
- Divisions: Taitamariki to Master 80
- There will be **no W12 races**

W1 Events

- All W1 races will take place on 6th December
- Distance: 250 and 500m

- Divisions: Intermediate to Master 80
- The event will also feature additional 250m sprint (dash) races for the J19 and Premier division. These races are open to paddlers of other age classes, as long as they meet the requirements as per Waka Ama New Zealand rules.

Selection and qualification for W1 at Nationals

- Please read the selection policy, available on the Hoe Tonga website.

W1 requirements

- Paddlers must arrange for their own W1. Paddlers should NOT assume that they will be able to use other paddlers' W1 on race day.
- All W1 used for the event are subject to be weighed before racing commences. In this case, weighing of W1 will take place between 7.30am and 8.30am. Late arrivals may not be accepted. Paddlers are to arrange for their own weights should they be required.
- Weighed W1 will be tagged and checked when going through the loading bay.
- **All W1 must have lane number holders**, as per Waka Ama New Zealand race rules. Paddlers must bring their own number holders as there is no guarantee that the event organiser will have any extra available.
- A good idea to bring along some duct tape as well to secure number holders

HOE TONGA PACIFICA WAKA AMA ASSOCIATION			
W1 QUOTA FOR 2027 NATIONAL SPRINTS			
DIVISION	QUOTA	DIVISION	QUOTA
Int Men	4	Master Women	4
Int Women	5	Snr Master Men	5
J16 Men	4	Snr Master Women	4
J16 Women	5	Gld Master Men	4
J19 Men	4	Gld Master Women	7
J19 Women	4	70+ Men	4
U23 Men	4	70+ Women	4
U23 Women	4	75+ Men	4
Premier Men	4	75+ Women	5
Premier Women	4	80+ Men	5
Master Men	5	80+ Women	4

Selection for Regional W12 at National Sprint Championship

- National Sprint Championships feature a regional Premier W12 race, for both men and women. (This is in addition to the club W12 races.) Please read the selection policy, available on the Hoe Tonga website.

Prize-giving and club trophies

- A formal prize-giving ceremony will take place after each day of racing, commencing approximately 20 minutes after racing has finished.
- Hoe Tonga Board will have taitamariki prizegiving at midday during the kai break, as we recognise our juniors will have had a big day.
- We invite competitors and clubs to assist in packing and cleaning up, to enable an on-time start for the prize-giving. Competitors must be present to receive their prize.
- Gold, silver and bronze ribbons will only be presented to taitamariki through to J19 paddlers who placed 1st, 2nd and 3rd in Champ Final races.
- Hoe Tonga will award two club trophies (photo below) after the final day of racing.
- The first taonga recognises a club's paddling excellence and achievement throughout the event. Points will be accumulated throughout the event from all finals and the club with the most points at the end of the event will be awarded this honour.
- The "Club Excellence Award" will be awarded on points accumulated over race finals (including W6, W12 and W1 races) throughout the event as follows:

1st - 4 points	2nd - 3 points	3rd - 2 points	4th - 1 points
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DQs do not count for points.
- The second taonga is the "James Hapeta Club Spirit Award", named in honour of James Hapeta. It is chosen by key officials at the event. They will take into consideration the club's actions throughout the event (e.g. acting with integrity, wearing correct uniform, assisting where needed, keeping the event area clean, volunteering, etc).



Event area and race course layout for straight races (250m, 500m)

