

Barracuda Cambridge to Hamilton Paddle Race – 22nd September 2024

Beautiful weather, with low river flow, greeted nearly 300 paddlers at the 2024 Cambridge to Hamilton Paddle race on Sunday 22nd September. The 25km race, starting in Cambridge, featured staggered starts for stand-up paddle boards, kayaks, ocean skis, club skis, single and double wakas, plus 9 of the large 6-person waka.

The fastest times for individual male and female paddlers were Gene Prato, male ocean ski, in a time of 1hr 36m, and Danielle Richard, female K1 kayak, less than 2 minutes behind the Gene. The racing through all divisions was very close with some fast times.

The 11 km race started at the Narrows boat ramp. We had a very large field for our new Waikato River Authority (WRA) Rangatahi Paddle Race. The WRA sponsorship provided free entry for juniors (under 18 years old) including the provision of a boat and gear if required. With rangatahi divisions for kayaks, wakas and stand-up paddle boards, more than 40 rangatahi participated in the event - getting out on the water experiencing our amazing Awa.

Another highlight for all competitors was paddling under the stunning new Te Ara Pekapeka bridge for the first time. With the finish line at the Grantham St boat ramp in central Hamilton, a huge crowd was there to greet our happy and tired paddlers! Overall, an amazing day for spectators and paddlers.

Richard Clark, Race Director

This event would not have been possible without the support of our loyal and generous sponsors, who provide funding and prizes for the event. A list of our significant sponsors is below:

- Waikato River Authority
- Hamilton City Council
- Barracuda Kayaks
- Perry Foundation
- Trek n Travel
- Mission Kayaks
- Surf Life Saving NZ

