



- Saturday 29th October – K4 and OC6 Club Racing
- Sunday 30th October – 4 Bridges (13km) and 2 Bridges (4km)
- Open to all man-powered water craft – e.g. kayaks, rowing boats, Waka Ama, Surf Skis
- \$20 - \$35 entry fee (per person per event)
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Whanganui River Challenge 2011

Now in its third year, the Whanganui River Challenge 2011 is shaping up to the best yet. To be held on the **29th and 30th of October 2011** to coincide with ideal tide conditions and formerly named the 4 Bridges River Race, this iconic river event attracts competitors from all over the country in a multitude of craft including kayaks (single and double), ocean skis, rowing doubles and quads, waka ama OC1/OC6, surf skis, surf lifesaving canoes, outriggers, and open Canadian canoes.

With over 120 competitors racing over two days we believe this event has huge potential to put Wanganui on the sporting map and we are developing plans to increase the number of competitors on the water and spectators on the bank and further cement this in the 'must do' category of national sporting events.

The main event on Sunday entails racing of man-powered water craft of all types around a 13km course that encompasses the four bridges within the city boundaries. There is also a shorter, two bridges course of 4km. Both races start and finish alongside the newly developed Whanganui Riverfront and with fantastic vehicle, bicycle and foot access along its length, it is the ideal spectator race with plenty of great vantage points.

In addition to Sunday racing, a second day of competition has been scheduled on the Saturday for teams – Outrigger OC6 and K4 over a 5000m course. Eight exciting races in 40 minute intervals are planned.

Crafts, although racing in a mass field, do compete within various categories, thus allowing multiple winners to be recognised. Times are also recorded, thereby allowing personal bests to be targeted by competitors for future events.

Event owner, Wanganui Multisport and Triathlon Club, has organised very successful River Race events over the past two years attracting competitors throughout the lower North Island to compete in a variety of paddle and oared craft.

The event has been and continues to be driven by Aaron Cox, a previous New Zealand kayak representative and World Championship title holder. Previous 13km winner Adam Fraser attests "Aaron has done a great job organising this. It was the workout I was looking for. I'll be back next year for sure."

In 2011 and going forward, the Club has partnered with the Wanganui Events Trust in the planning, delivery and future development of this event. WET is a not for profit charitable trust whose purpose is

to promote participation in sport and recreation for all people in or visiting Wanganui.

The course for the Whanganui River Challenge highlights several unique features:

- It encompasses the four city bridges and includes Corliss (Rabbit) Island as the bottom turn.
- It is situated in beautiful downtown Wanganui close to the city centre with ample parking, great riverside access and excellent viewing points.
- Each of the two courses is a one loop lap which for the entirety of the racing can be viewed from the road or riverside walkways beside the Whanganui River.
- The event course is suitable for any paddle or oar craft to compete in, due to its location on flat water. Timing has carefully planned around tidal conditions.
- The width of the River allows a vast number and type of craft to be accommodated.
- The event is open to all. No trials or pre-event selection required to race against the best or better your own personal best.

The success of 2009 and 2010 events has been recognised through media, both locally and nationally. Copies of newspaper articles are available – please advise if you would like files emailed.

With your support this event has the potential to become the biggest paddle/oared event in New Zealand. Very few events in New Zealand provide the opportunity of hosting such a variety of craft on the water collectively competing over the same course. The future is looking bright! We plan to build on the event each year with added spectator features such as food and refreshment options lining the riverfront, live entertainment, and additional short and long course races.

What makes this event special and unique... a brief history of the Whanganui River

Long, wide and slow flowing rivers have great difficulty avoiding interesting histories. This is what the Rhine, Nile and Whanganui Rivers have in common. According to Maori folklore Mount Taranaki started the story when he fled from an enraged Tongariro, who was fairly upset over Taranaki's desires for his wife Pihanga. The trench he left as he headed to the coast filled with water and subsequently became an ideal site for a River Challenge event, amongst other things. The Tangata Whenua were the first canoeists to start training on-site.

Maori were attracted to the Whanganui River in its sheltered fertile valley with an abundant food supply. Flowing 290 kilometers, the river starts high up on Mt Tongariro in the centre of the North Island, moving down towards Wanganui via Taumarunui before it reaches the beautiful Tasman Sea on the west coast.

Once increased numbers of European settlers arrived in the country, the area around the mouth of the Whanganui River became a logical site for the establishment of a new town. By 1860 a population of approximately 2000 had settled in Wanganui.

Today Wanganui and the Whanganui River provide a home for a multitude of lifestyle activities for locals and tourists. Over the last 1000 years or so, blood, sweat and tears have been poured into the Whanganui. Continuing a tradition, over a hundred water sports athletes are going to add to that pool over the **29th and 30th of October 2011**.

** Please find attached entry form, course map and DLE flyer for printing – printed copies can be posted. Please advise postal address and quantity.*