



Environment Waikato

Another success this year was the increase in popularity of Waka ama again, with membership doubling to 18 paid-up members in 2005. Whilst most enjoyed just being on the river some were wanting to push themselves a little harder. As such EW was able to compete in two 16k WDBA River races, and could have competed in a third but for a lack of waka! At the peak of summer we were able to get three waka training on the river and enjoy having a bit of friendly rivalry between waka, but as the temperature

cooled so did the keenness for morning trainings. Only the hardy were out there during the winter months - the fog, the frosts, barefoot through the snow... The enthusiasm has continued through to the 2006 season, with a regular group making the most of the training opportunities in a beautiful setting. If you are keen to get involved new paddlers are always welcome.

~ Paul



Waka Ama Nationals - Lake Karapiro - January 2006

After early mornings and long afternoons of training, it was finally Nationals time for our crew of fabulous wahine - Team Ahurangi. With the added tension of reps for the Worlds games scattered throughout crews, we knew we were up against steep competition. There was lots of eyeballing to see who was looking buff and up for it, but the atmosphere was friendly. We teamed up with WDBA senior masters women for a double hull 500 metres dash and scored a bronze medal - not bad for a bunch of old(er) women. Our main focus though was the master womens 1000m with three turns to negotiate. Up against a large field it was hard to know if we had done enough to get into the final, but we were focused and sailed through our heat and semi. Our goal was to get on to the podium, and with all the cold mornings endured replaying in my mind, there was no way we were getting off that course without a medal. After starting behind we made up and held water to come in with a bronze placing. We had also made it to the final of the 500m straight sprint, we gave what we could and came in 5th place.

~ Ros



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