

Race Day Briefing for Teachers, Caregivers, and Competitors for 2026



Let's make sure everyone is prepared and ready to race!

Well done for signing up to Puzzling World Junior Challenge! Before you know it race day will be here and you will be on the start line. I am sure you will have lots of questions about what equipment you will need, what you will do on the day and how the day will run.

I hope most of your questions will be answered below and if you are unsure on anything then please ask a teacher, parent or friend who has been involved in the race in previous years.

Event Schedule

Please find the event schedule on the Junior Page of the Challenge Wanaka website <https://challenge-wanaka.com/races/junior/>

Race Packs

Local Students

These will be giving to you at school.

Out of Region

You can collect these from the registration tent on Wednesday 18th February between 4-7pm or Thursday morning between 7.30am-8.00am.

Transportation of Bikes to Pembroke Park

Local Students

Bikes need to be taken to Pembroke Park and racked in the transition area on Wednesday 18th February between 4-7pm. All bikes MUST have the student's MTB race plate number cable tied to the front of the handlebars before they are dropped off at the bike transition.

Out of Region Students

Bikes need to be taken to Pembroke Park and racked in the transition area on Wednesday 18th February between the times of 4pm and 7pm. If you are unable to make this time you can also rack your bike on Thursday morning between 7.30am-8.30am. All bikes MUST have the student's MTB race plate number cable tied to the front of the handlebars before they are dropped off at the bike transition.

Timing Chips - Year 5 and Year 6

You acknowledge that:

If the transponder fails, you may not receive a time record and will have no claim against the Organiser or be entitled to a refund of your entry fee. You must pay \$150 for any transponder that is not returned to the correct Event official.

Local Students

Your School will hand out your Timing Chip on race day before your race.

Out of Region Students

You can collect your Timing Chip on race day at the registration tent. Failure to do so will result in the participant not having a recorded time.

Parking

We encourage you to ride your bike to the park to help with congestion or park your car a few streets away and walk. We will be providing some additional parking in the Rugby Club.

Race format

Children will compete in year group waves, two minutes apart with waves. This ensures that the swim is safe, and they can move easily through the Transition area while allowing the event to run smoothly without congestion.

Official Event Briefing

Briefing for each event will be held 10mins before the start time of each event by the Start Marshall on the beach at the swim start.

Designated School Areas beside finish area

- Each local school will have an area where you can put your gazebos.
- Out of Region students and home-schooled students will have a dedicated area which is also in the school area. If you are a large Out of Region group, please bring your own gazebo and contact a member of staff on the day and we can designate you an area.
- Teachers and parents will be responsible for keeping students/children in year groups and getting them to the start line on time.
- No caregivers will be allowed in the school corrals and recovery tent.

Equipment

Helmets – Are Compulsory

All children need to bring their helmet with them to school/to the event on race day.

- Years 4-5-6 children need to place their helmets and their running shoes (if they are not wearing them for the swim) with their bike in the transition area as they make their way to the swim start.
- Year 3-2-1 children wear their helmets during the first run.

Shoes

- All races are required to wear closed footwear on the bike and run leg. Any child who is not wearing closed footwear on the bike or run leg will be asked to stop racing.
- Having laces that are undone is a safety risk and for this reason Marshals will ask children to stop to tie their shoelaces (and assist them) before allowing them to continue to bike or run. Please check laces before racing.

We recommend that competitors swim without shoes during the swim leg.

Transition Familiarisation

- **Year 3-2-1** will walk past the bike transition area as they are walked to the start line of the duathlon, so they know where they are heading when they run through transition to collect their bike.
- **Year 4-5-6** will walk past the bike transition area (place their shoes and any extra gear) as they walked to the start line of the swim, so they know where they are heading when they run through transition to collect their bike.

Swim Leg Information (YEAR 4,5 and 6)

If you are not a strong swimmer, then please don't worry you can still compete in the race. Participants who are non-swimmers have the option to walk along the shoreline. If you choose this option, all non-swimmers will need to wait until the last swimmer is out of the water before they can continue with the race. You also have time to improve your swimming over the summer months and challenge yourself to see if you can swim the distance without putting your feet on the bottom.

- The swim leg of the race will be along the lake front opposite Pembroke Park.
- Children will swim out to the first buoy, across (parallel to the lake shore) and back into the exit chute.
- Please ensure your child is able to swim the entire distance (see non-swimming option below)
- Non-swimmers will be allowed to walk along the shoreline and exit with the last swimmer of their start wave.

- **Swim Safety** – We will have marshals out in the water with pool noodles, kayaks and stand-up paddleboards to support and regulate each wave of children.
- **Biosecurity** - clean check dry gear before and after event (to prevent spread of pests between waterways) – especially if wearing wetsuit, shoes in the water or a life jacket.

Bike Information

Each year group will have a designated transition area where their bikes are racked and will bike the distance specified for their age group.

- Swimmers/runners will enter the transition area (as illustrated in the course map) and locate their bike, which will be in numbered sections within each age category.
- Helmets are compulsory for the bike leg and marshals will be checking helmets are secured when children exit the transition.

Run Information

- Year 1-3 children will run a shortened course for both the run legs of their duathlon.
- Year 4-5-6 children will enter the transition area, rack their bikes, and continue to exit onto the run course which will take them to the finish line.

Finish Area

Once competitors have crossed the finish line and received their participation medal. 'Local Students' will be collected by their school in a designated area inside the Recovery Tent. 'Out of Region' students will have an area to muster where their caregivers can collect them. Please wait outside the recovery tent. Once your child has arrived, we can send them out to you.

Can all 'local caregivers' please stay outside of the Recovery Tent to allow the schools and marshals space to organise the children.

Drinking Water

You will need a drink bottle at the end of the race which is full. There will be drinking water in the school area where you can refill your drink bottle.

Local Student

Your teachers will collect these and make sure they are at the end finish line.

Out of Region Students

Your Parents can be waiting outside the recovery tent with your drink bottle ready to use.

Headphones

No headphones are to be use during any leg of a race.

Withdraws

In the case of withdrawal of an individual the organisers must be notified by the quickest possible means. Any individual that does not complete a leg of the race is automatically disqualified but may continue to finish the race.

In an Emergency and During the Race

Follow instructions of Challenge Wanaka staff and marshals.

Road information

Roads are closed but there may be emergency or event vehicles on road. Follow road rules, stay left.

Spectators and Caregivers

Please help us by:

- Please only cross the course at the designated areas when the marshal allows it.
- We know it is important for you to see your child's race however please do not jump over fences, cones or barriers to watch your child.
- Please stay out of the 'Transition Area' (bike racking area) this can get very busy, and we need to organise the children and ensure safety. We will have marshals in the area during the race to help children find their bikes and ensure they have their helmets fitted correctly. This area will be opened after each age category to retrieve your child's bike.
- At the end of the race please refrain from entering the 'Finishing/Recovery Tent'. This is an area for teachers and students only. The schools need to collect their students and ensure they are safe. It can be stressful for teachers to ensure they keep their students together when we have so many for different schools and members of the public at the event. You will be able to watch them come down to the finish line and cheer them on.
- 'Out of Region' caregivers please wait outside the recovery tent. Once your child has arrived, we can send them out to you.

Event Information – make sure you read all the information provided.

It is important that you read all the 'Event Information' which can be found on the Junior Page of the Challenge Wanaka website <https://challenge-wanaka.com/races/junior/>

Thanks for reading and we look forward to seeing you on race day!