

NEWS

Mountainboarders 'go big' at Waihi

By JILL CLEAVE

Adrenaline junkies have a new attraction in Waihi with the opening of the DirtBoard Waihi mountainboard track just off Waitete Rd, Waihi.

DirtBoard Waihi completed its first Boarder-x event, on January 7 and 8, with riders from as far away as Christchurch competing.

Organiser Viv Barakat said the competition was part of a North Island road trip to promote the sport.

"We had some great racing with a real mix of abilities and ages taking part," he said.

Mountainboards are a cross between a skateboard and a snow board with four pneumatic wheels and an axle and suspension system designed to be ridden over grass and dirt.

There are three types of competitive mountainboard, also known as all-terrain boarding. They are racing: Boarder-X where three to four riders at a time attempt to get to the bottom of the track first over a series of rolling mounds and around berms; big-air which is all about style and "going-big" over a large jump – and of course being able to land it and slopestyle where riders take turns to link a series of jumps, spins and other tricks with points awarded for style and jump height.

Barakat said a practice day was held on Wednesday to try out the track and the new big-air jump.

"There were a few good spills but they only led to minor grazes," he said.

The road trip then headed off for competitions in Rotorua, Hawke's Bay and Taupo collecting video footage and photos along the way to promote this developing sport.



SKY HIGH: A competitor gets airborne at Waihi's mountainboard track.



GRAB ON: A rider pulls a trick. Photos: SUPPLIED



UP AND OVER: Riders go over a berm on their mountainboards.



TIGHT RACING: Competitors round a bend in a race at Waihi's mountainboard track.