

NEWS

# Boarders hit the dirt for track's first competition



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**ON A HIGH:** Taupo's Luke Stevens, 20, gets airborne at the Dirtboard Waihi track on Thursday.

THE recently-opened Dirtboard Waihi track above Colebrook Rd saw its first competition last Thursday, as 18 riders gathered for downhill boarder-cross racing.

Mountain boarders lined up three or four at a time for the 200m descent, with 20-year-old Aucklander Ben Toulmin outgunning his rivals to win the Dirtboard Waihi Trophy.

The event was very low-key but offered some good riding, says organiser and track founder Viv Barakat.

Mountain boarding — which resembles riding an oversize off-road skateboard but feels most like snowboarding, says Mr Barakat — is an emerging sport in New Zealand; and the contest was part of a “road trip” organised by a

group of Kiwi enthusiasts who went on to ride in Rotorua, Taupo and Gisborne.

The Waihi action included a free-ride day the previous day, making optimum use of a big-air jump to one side of the track which some of the competitors helped build.

The track is on private farmland and is open to small groups by arrangement.