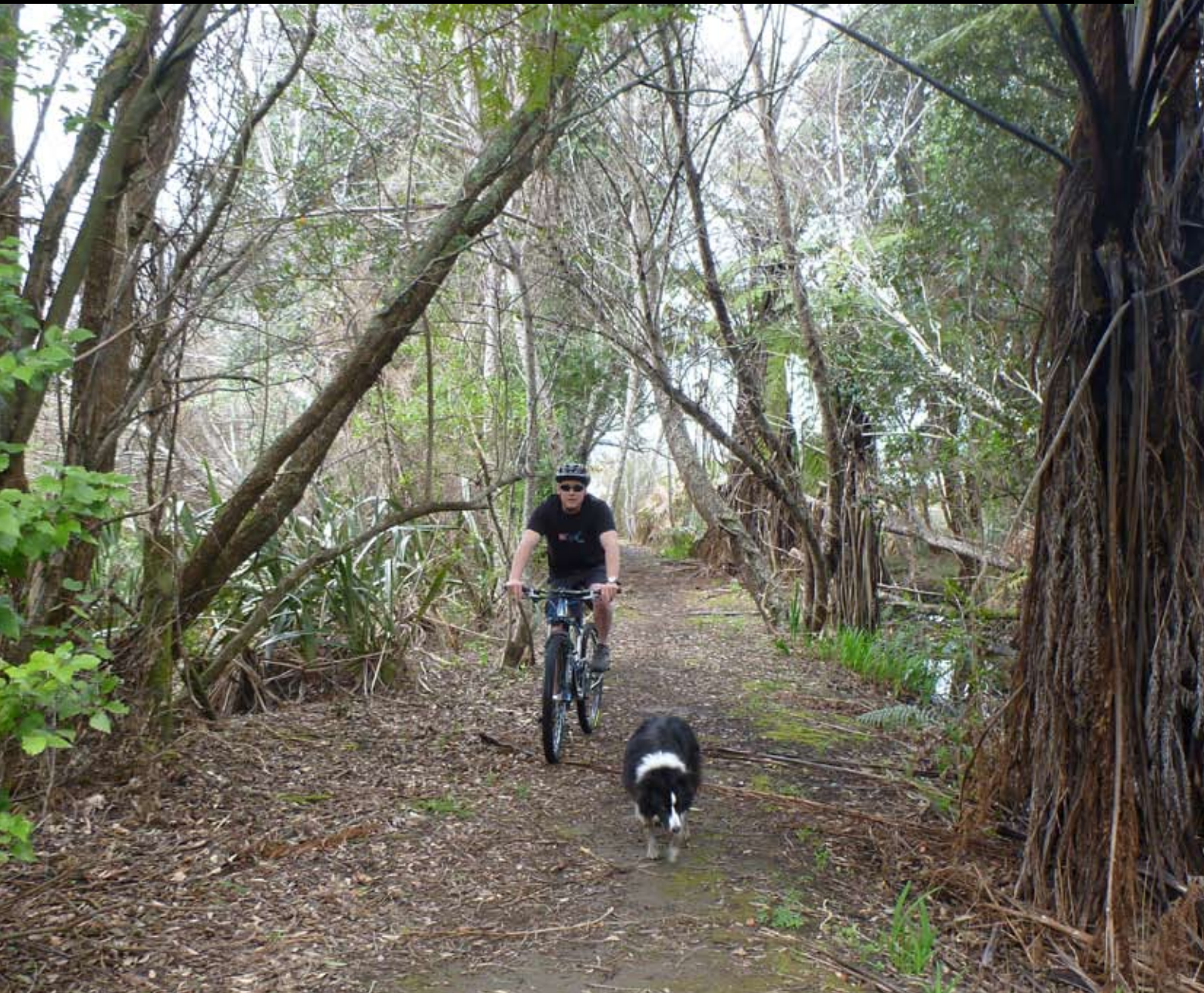


# City Cycling for the Kaimai Classic

By Estelle Leyshon



**After supporting others and watching the Kaimai Classic in May I thought that next year Canoe & Kayak Bay of Plenty should enter as a team.**

The Kaimai Classic is the signature multisport event for elite and casual athletes in the Bay of Plenty region. Its spectacular 67 km course can be tackled by individuals or teams. Huge on community spirit and enjoying massive spectator support, everyone crosses the finish line in Te Puna.

The event includes:

- 5 km Off-Road Run. A stunning collection of trails inside McLaren Falls Park
- 17 km Mountain Bike. Varied terrain alongside the picturesque Ruahihi Canal
- 11 km Kayak. Safe and scenic paddle down the Wairoa River
- 23 km Road Bike. Predominantly a flat blat through the streets of Te Puna
- 11 km Road Run. Testing finale through the Te Puna countryside





In putting the team together we discussed who would do which part. Dave's background in K1 racing makes him the obvious choice for the kayak section. His technique for marathon racing is best. Dan has a background in running competitively so he is an obvious choice for one of the running sections. We'd heard the off-road 5 k run was really tough. It had steep scramble sections. I knew I wouldn't cope and would put the team way behind right at the beginning.

So we still have the 5 k Run, the 17 km Mountain Bike Ride, the 23 km Road Bike Ride and the final Road Run to fill. Some of us are still weighing up the road or mountain biking. I've done a bit of running but I also enjoy cycling, particularly if the dogs can run with me. I decided to

build up my fitness and then choose.

Dave and I have found some really great places for biking and running. My favourite, because the dogs are allowed, is the Waikareao Walkway. It is quite flat, 9.5 km long through bush, open grassland and along wooden walkways through the Waikareao Estuary's mangroves. It's beautiful, 5 minutes from Tauranga's CBD, but it feels a world away, a great place to lose a few pounds and build stamina. With variation of vegetation in stunning surroundings, the estuary teeming with life, tuis and kingfishers in the trees, herons and schools of leaping fish in the channels it's impossible to become bored.

Dave drools over bikes. Obsession Cycles, kindly let us try them out. So he's happy, I'm enjoying getting fitter and we'll be ready to play our parts with the Canoe & Kayak Bay of Plenty team.



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