

# Avantidrome - Cambridge

*By Gaylene Dovaston*

Those of us travelling from Tauranga set off at 10 o'clock from the Greerton Marist Clubrooms in Oropi Road. We had an easy enough ride, although a bit foggy at the top of the Kaimai's. We turned left at the bottom of the Kaimai's and headed to Tirau to meet up with other members from the Waikato. Meeting point, the Enchanted Cafe, for our morning tea/brunch stop. We had enough time for a wander up the main street, before departing for the Velodrome. We did a



little back track to leave Tirau, and exited stage right onto SH1 safely using the roundabout, rather than trying to cross a very busy road in the middle of the town. We turned left again, and over the **Maungatautari Road Bridge** through the Karapiro back country and Cambridge and out to the Velodrome.



*Anna and Kirsty*

Our guides Anna and Kirsty led us up the 3 flights of stairs to the viewing area of the stadium, where they were full of interesting information about the Velodrome. Built in 2014 on land that was previously owned by Saint Peters School and sold for a whole DOLLAR, ensuring life time use of the facilities by the school. The facilities are many and varied. There are meeting rooms that can be hired, permanent offices, a bike shop and a Café. In the centre of the track there is a public gym. An area where trikes are used for rehabilitation exercise and fun... Not to mention the track itself! We were lucky enough to be there when some athletes were training. Callum Saunders stopped and talked to us after a stint on the track, he is in the NZ Olympic team training to compete in a sprint race called the Keirin Race.



*Callum Saunders*

One item that caused much discussion was the WHEEL. The black wheels are made in NZ, are really light and worth.....\$15000 EACH..... and no they are not gold plated!

Quite fascinating to watch, the speeds managed by the athletes was amazing. The steepness of the track, as seen on TV, NOTHING to seeing it in person. The track is made from Siberian Spruce, a very slow growing tree, which because of its slow growth, doesn't splinter, a bonus for those unlucky enough to fall off their bike.

One other interesting fact was the colour of the clothing worn by the cyclists...Black 'SKINS' are worn by NZ team members. White skins by a NZ Champion.

Blue and White skins by the NZ Development team. The most prestigious jersey is white with the RAINBOW colours around the middle, and may only be worn by a WORLD Champion. As we left the arena, the exit tunnel is also the NZ Cycling hall of fame, pictures of all New Zealand's Cycling World Champions displayed.

Noel suggested Karapiro/Taotoroa Roads as a 'Drivers Detour'.



Turning left at the Mobil Station on SH1 coming out on SH29 the Tauranga/Matamata Road. A very scenic detour and not too much traffic.

Anyone who missed out should know, you can visit, have a look around and use the facilities. It was a very interesting place to visit.

Our thanks and appreciation to Noel & Wendy for organising this run.

*Gaylene*

