

## Latham Takes out Taupo

Perfect conditions in Taupo on Saturday saw Peter Latham smash his 2005 course record by three minutes to take out the Avanti Classic Race in 3:43:27 at the Wattyl Lake Taupo Cycle Challenge. With a \$14,000 prize pool and \$5000 for first place the race attracted a strong field that worked together to set a world class time over a difficult course. An early break at Kuratau split the field of 105 and a lead bunch of 7 dominated from Hatepe with a tactical team battle ending in a sprint finish of five.



The track speed of Latham and Sam Bewley came through at the end with a determined Gordon McCauley beating his 2007 long course record to take second. Also in the top five were Aaron Strong and National Points Series leader Jeremy Yates. Under 19 rider Tom Findlay placed 6th.

Catherine Cheatley dominated the Women's Hotdog Street Race in her first race since the Beijing Olympics with Marina Duvnjak second and Rachel Mercer in third.

The inaugural Huka XL Mountainbike Race saw a close battle with three riders posting 3:38 with Tim Wilding first, Mike Northcott second and Stuart Houltham in third. Annika Small took out the women's race followed by Roz Reekie -May and Monique Avery.

The day's racing was kickstarted by an exciting men's criterium around central Taupo on Friday night with Westley Gough taking first place over Gordon McCauley and Justin Kerr.

Over 10,800 riders participated in the Cycle Challenge in noncompetitive Solo or Relay rides around the lake, including Buck Shelford, Caroline Evers-Swindell and Alison Roe. Two hundred riders participated in the new 70 km mountainbike challenges through the Wairakei Forest. Thirty two "zipper kids" who have undergone major heart surgery rode the last 5km of the course accompanied by Heart Children NZ ambassadors Bevan Docherty, Monty Betham and Sonia Waddell.

The event raised \$96,000 for Heart Children NZ and any other proceeds from the volunteer-run event are distributed among community groups.

## Race results

### Avanti Classic Race \$5000 first place

1. Peter Latham 3:43:27
2. Gordon McCauley 3:43:27
3. Jeremy Yates 3:43:27
4. Sam Bewley 3:43:27
5. Aaron Strong 3:43:27
6. Tom Findlay 3:43:29
7. Hamish Bond 3:43:30
8. Eliot Crowther 3:43:30
9. Jeremy Vennell 3:43:44
10. Eric Drower 3:44:14

Scenic Cellars Women's Hotdog Street Race \$1500 first place

1. Catherine Cheatley
2. Marina Duvnjak
3. Rachel Mercer

Contact Huka XL MTB Race - Men \$1500 first place

1. Tim Wilding 3:38:24
2. Mike Northcott 3:38:40
3. Stuart Houltham 3:38:32

Contact Huka XL MTB race - Women \$1500 first place

1. Annika Small 4:17:00
2. Roz Reekie May 4:28:54
3. Monique Avery 4:41:54

Body Fuel - Top Gear Men's Criterium Street Race - \$1000 first place

1. Westley Gough
2. Gordon McCauley
3. Justin Kerr

**Photo - Peter Latham wins Classic - Adrian Cartwright photographer**