

## All Ages, All Abilities, All Amazing at the Porirua Grand Traverse

The Porirua Grand Traverse moves into its third decade amid challenging conditions this weekend.

Established in 2006, the Porirua Grand Traverse has become a highlight of the central NSZ endurance scene. Catering for everyone from weekend runners and walkers to schools and skilled endurance enthusiasts, this multi-faceted endurance event around the region's hills, harbour, forests and coastlines was established as the showcase Porirua's superb outdoor resource.

Based this year from the new Kai Tahu food hall, the traditional multisport race involves a 12k kayak, 32k mountain bike and 21k mountain run. In recent years the introduction of the Arena Fitness 10k Fun Run/Walk provided an intro to endurance sport that is no less spectacular and perfect for families, schools and recreational fitness enthusiasts. In 2023 the event also introduced the FS Cycles 12k Fun Bike, aimed at getting more kids and families onto the purpose-built mountain bike trails on Porirua's Rangituhi Trail Park.

Held annually in April, almost 900 entrants from all ends of New Zealand will line up in tough weather conditions on Sunday with a cyclone forecast to move down the North Island.

"At the moment the forecast is looking like the worst will hit at the end of the day, so we're hoping to run the event as planned," says event manager, Michael Jacques.



Ryan Tait

"It's amazing," says Jacques, "that so many people are keen despite the conditions. "This event is a non-profit Trust organised by a keen group of people who work hard to put on a great community event for more than 20 years. So, it's great that people embrace it."

This won't be the first time that the wider region illustrates its appreciation of the Porirua Grand Traverse. In 2019 they were awarded the Wellington Region Community Award for sport and recreation.

Even more confirmation can be seen in the return of 2024 winner, Ryan Tait, who as a Porirua native always enjoys local favouritism. But he'll be pushed hard by Gisborne farmer, Karl Macpherson, who was a close third place in Lower Hutt's prestigious Fine Signs Crazyman last December.

With Porirua's four-time winner, Deb Lynch, not entered in 2026 the women's race is wide open for a new champion. The most likely candidate will be Timaru's Zoe McClure, who broke through in 2025 with second at both the PGT and Crazyman. But she'll need to watch for well performed trail runner, Christie Hagen, and top mountain biker, Emma Bateup, both of whom are trying their hand at multisport for the first time.

While the Porirua Grand Traverse attracts some of the country's best endurance athletes, first and foremost the event is a great community occasion.

"We started the PGT to showcase Porirua's awesome outdoors and to encourage locals to explore their own backyard more," says Jacques. "But behind the scenes, the event also requires significant community support from Council to Whitireia Polytech, to local sponsors, to more than 100 volunteers. So, at the same time the event promotes Porirua and benefits from Porirua."

With a fun run, fun bike, multisport and duathlon races, paddling races, mountain biking, mountain running... the Porirua Grand Traverse really is an event for everyone. "Our motto says it all," says Jacques. "All ages, all abilities, all amazing."

The 2026 Porirua Grand Traverse is scheduled for Sunday April 12th. For full information and online entry visit: [www.poriruagrandtraverse.co.nz](http://www.poriruagrandtraverse.co.nz).

