

# BMX riders relish chance to compete at worlds



Scott Eade

**D**espite hours of training, both on and off their bikes, five Southland teenagers are still managing to keep up with their school work as they prepare to take on the BMX world.

Summer Lucas, from Southland Girls' High School, Ryan Grantham, from James Hargest College, Callum Holloway, from Southland Boys' High School, along with Harlam Heydon and Josef Winders, from Verdon College, will compete in the UCI BMX World Championships in Auckland from July 24 to 28.

#### World's their stage:

Southlanders Summer Lucas, 15, Callum Holloway, 13, Ryan Grantham, 13, and Harlam Heydon, 15, are preparing to take on the world's best BMX riders this month in Auckland.

Photo: JOHN HAWKINS/FAIRFAX NZ 628154903

The teenagers have found that preparing for such a big event requires large amounts of time for both training and competing.

Callum Holloway also has to find the time to juggle playing hockey and rugby for his school, while completing his school work. "I have BMX and hockey on Monday, rugby Tuesdays [and] Thursdays, Wednesdays I have BMX, Fridays I have hockey practice and I play rugby and ride on the weekends."

The 13-year-old said he was still able to cope with school work that he needed to do.

"I manage it," he said.

Ryan Grantham said he managed to get his school work done after his sporting commitments for the day were completed.

"I just do everything at night-time after trainings," Grantham said.

The group has been training for the world championships since the nationals were completed back in March.

Apart from Summer Lucas, who has previously attended a world championship event, this will be the first time the rest of the teenagers will get to wear the silver fern.

Grantham said he had a combination of both nerves and excitement as he headed into his first

world championships. "I'm not nervous at the moment, but as the time comes I will," Grantham said.

Lucas, who at just 15 will be one of the senior members of the Southland contingent, was confident she could improve on her ninth placing at the 2009 event.

"I want to make it into the finals, last time I didn't make it into finals, so my goal is to get into the top eight," she said.

Holloway tries to stay realistic about his chances.

"I don't really know what to expect so I'm just going to see the list [of competitors] and go from there," he said.

Adding to the excitement was the fact they would be competing indoors at Auckland's Vector Arena.

The advantage of competing indoors was the fact that there would be no weather to worry about as they planned a strategy for their races.

"It [the wind] can slow you down and make you crash," Lucas said.

Former Southland Girls' High School student Nardia Mclachlan, 17, would also be competing for Southland at the championships.

Mclachlan recently moved to live in Australia but would still race under the Southland BMX club banner.