

# Race takes speeding soap box to US

Soapbox racing talent has a new name.

Dylan Smith of Orewa College scooped a double win when he won the Whangaparaoa Rotary Soap Box Derby on Saturday, and promptly went on to nab first at the national finals on Sunday at the same Stanmore Bay track.

He will now compete at the All-American Soap Box Derby World Championship in Akron, Ohio, on July 27.

About 1000 spectators cheered on drivers at Stanmore Bay's Brightside Rd, with Hibiscus Coast races on Saturday, and the national finals on Sunday.

Saturday's event drew

 our e-edition  
has more

Go to [rodneymtimes.co.nz](http://rodneymtimes.co.nz) and click on latest edition for more soap box derby photos.

about 16 trolleys and multiple drivers with Orewa College students Dylan Smith and Danielle Foote first and second respectively.

MacKenzie Brock of Silverdale's Stella Maris Catholic Primary School was third.

Dylan won Sunday's national final, with Andrew Jantke of Meadowbank School coming second, and Danielle



**Ready to roll:** Soap box derby contestants from Auckland at the start of the national competition on Sunday in Stanmore Bay.

Photo: COLIN LUNT

Foote of Orewa College third.

"The competitions went very well," New Zealand race director Terry Clarkson says.



**High skill:** Master Class races on Saturday are fast, with carts more aerodynamic and lower than their usual counterparts. Drivers have only a small viewing zone too.

Photo: CARALISE TRAYES



**Brakes on:** Stopping before the finish line barriers was a challenge for some drivers, causing some serious smoke from brakes.

Photo: CARALISE TRAYES



**Deep concentration:** Whangaparaoa College principal James Thomas has only the finishing line in mind as he races down Brightside Rd.

Photo: JILL GUILLEMIN



**Major crash:** Wainui Primary School driver Caitlin Cornelius tangles with Whangaparaoa Primary School driver Preston Heatlie, who drives up the side of the barriers. Neither driver was hurt but their carts need major repair.

Photo: CARALISE TRAYES

**Super Carts, right:** For the first time Super Carts are introduced, allowing children with special needs to enjoy a ride down the track with help from an experienced driver. Fairlane Welsh, 13, of Massey, here takes care of Finn Linton, 10, of Riverhead. "It was really fast and fun. I would do it again," Finn says. "I kept my eyes open the whole time."

Photo: CARALISE TRAYES



**First time:** ATC Training Corp Squad 5 is competing for the first time in the races. Usually they help with security and event management. One of the team's drivers, Jennifer Pearce, is in the top six in Saturday's competition and competed in the nationals on Sunday. "It was really fun but I was a bit nervous about racing," Jennifer says.

Photo: CARALISE TRAYES





**On a roll:** The Kensington Park trolley heads down the line.



**Steady run:** Manly Fire Blazers' driver Paige Robinson keeps her eye on the prize.  
Photos: CARALISE TRAYES



**Can't stop:** Drivers, including some of the skilled Master Class crew, found it hard to stop completely before the barriers at the end.

# Derby winner now off to race in US

Two days of derby racing are done and dusted, but for one winner it is just the beginning.

Dylan Smith from Orewa College won both the Whangaparaoa Rotary Soap Box Derby Stanmore Bay competition and the nationals held the following day on the same track.

He will travel to Ohio in the United States to compete in an international event.

Around 16 teams of students and community groups raced down a stretch of hill on Brightside Rd last weekend for the Stanmore Bay region competition.

There were a few crashes on the day, organisers say the most they have ever recorded. Thankfully, there were no serious injuries.

The worst crash happened when Wainui Primary School driver Caitlin Cornelius lost control and ploughed into Whangaparaoa Primary School driver Preston Heatlie. Both cars came to a standstill and neither driver was seriously injured.



**Starting strong:**

Left, Whangaparaoa Primary School driver Seith Bennet is ready on the starting block.

**Top finish:**

Below, winners of the Stanmore Bay regional competition on Saturday were Dylan Smith from Orewa College, 1, Danielle Foote from Orewa College, 2, and MacKenzie Brock from Stella Maris, 3.



Other drivers at times struggled to brake in time before hitting the hay bales and blockades at the end of the run.

The competition intensity showed in the sheer concentration on drivers' faces.

A Super Cart section also brought delight to children with special needs who had a chance to race down the track in an especially designed trolley with an experienced driver.

Visitor numbers were slightly down this year, organisers say possibly due to last weekend being Easter and families wanting a quiet one.

The national event was on Sunday at the same location and started with a parade at 9am.

Races were close but first place went to Dylan, second to Andrew Jantke from Meadowbank School, and third to Danielle Foote of Orewa College, who also placed second in the Stanmore Bay region.



**Getting ready:** Brandon Prince of Birkenhead prepares for take-off at the national competitions on Sunday. Photo: JILL GUILLEMIN



**Fully focused:** Whangaparaoa Primary School driver Rourke Guppy is all concentration.



**Strategic moves:** Rodney MP Mark Mitchell swaps racing tips and techniques with Whangaparaoa College principal James Thomas before the race. Photo: JILL GUILLEMIN



**Good one:** Super Cart driver Matthew Fishlock with passenger Sionann Murphy of Sunnynook enjoy a ride down the hill. Sionann had been looking forward to her ride since she first heard she could go in a cart. "I went really fast. Faster than I expected. It was a bit freaky, but really fun," Sionann says.