



Olympic BMX rider Sarah Walker leads school pupils out onto the new Otane School BMX bike track.
PHOTOS / WARREN BUCKLAND

Walker pedals in for track launch

Olympian brings new bikes along with her

Olympian BMX rider Sarah Walker surprised pupils at a small Central Hawke's Bay school on Thursday when she arrived to help them celebrate the opening of their new bike and fitness track.

Then she surprised them again by unveiling 30 donated bikes for the pupils to use.

The track had been planned and designed by the students at Otane School, who also fundraised for the project. They wrote to Central Hawke's Bay District Council, gaining help from the council and Downer to push the project from concept to completion, collaborating all the time with the pupils.

Principal Rachel Kingi said she only wrote one grant application

and that was to KidsCan, for a \$20,000 Cadbury Sports Grant.

"I had tears in my eyes when I found that grant had been unanimously awarded, for the entire amount. That's when we knew our bike and fitness track was really going to happen."

Speaking at the opening, Walker told the pupils she decided while watching the Olympics at age 8 that she wanted to be an Olympian. She spoke of achieving that goal then setting a new goal... to win a medal, and achieving that with a silver at the 2012 Olympics in London.

She told the pupils she is now training six days a week towards the Tokyo Olympics.

She then told the pupils she had

brought her bike and helmet with her and was looking forward to riding with them on the new track.

The KidsCan grant programme has been funded by 100 per cent of Cadbury's proceeds from the sale of the special-edition Cadbury Dairy Milk Chocolate Blocks. The sports grants are the second phase of the Cadbury Donate Your Kit initiative, in partnership with KidsCan. The first phase saw more than 45,000 pieces of new and used sports gear donated by the public and Cadbury, which is being distributed to KidsCan partner schools.

An Olympic-sized hug for Rylan Kupa-Phillips, from special guest Sarah Walker.

