

Wooden bike a feat of technology



PEDAL POWER: German Eslava displays his wooden Geros racing bicycle at the Eurobike show in Germany.

BY JOHN IRELAND
john.ireland@hbftoday.co.nz

German Eslava calls it “a beautiful madness” and it’s difficult to disagree. After all, he’s designed and built a wooden racing bike that he expects will be ridden only rarely, if at all.

“It’s a functional piece of art that costs a huge amount of money,” he says of the \$15,000 price tag. “At the end of the day, this is a luxury item, to ride once to go for a coffee.”

Which begs the question: why build the Geros bike in the first place? The answer — because he could. A retired bicycle engineer, German and his wife, Rosanna, moved to New Zealand three years ago. While it’s obvious a small country cannot match the technology output of the world’s superpowers, Kiwis are surrounded by something even more valuable — an abundance of forests.

“We have special types of timber that don’t exist anywhere else in the world,” says German. “The top of that is kauri.”

Once he’d sourced a supply of recycled kauri, the challenge then became one of producing the parts, based on German’s computer-generated design.

For that, he called on the expertise of Jeff Young from Fusion-Joinery Co in Onekawa for the joinery. The precise computer numerical control (CNC) cutting was accomplished by Brendon Trower of Tru-Tech Fibreglass, also in Onekawa.

“Doing CNC cutting of timber is very difficult,” German says of the 150 minutes it takes just for the routing. “It’s all based on

experience.”

The idea, he says, was to construct the “best of the best” racing bike, “to produce something here that is the top of the line in the world, technologically”.

A year later, and with the finished product in hand, German headed to the Eurobike exhibition in Friedrichshafen, Germany.

The event is the biggest bike show in the world and provided the perfect environment for showcasing the Geros.

“I wanted to see how people looked at it,” says German. “The first impression? No one believed it was timber. That was a big shock. They thought it was painted carbon.”

There are rules to be adhered to when building an official racing bike, perhaps none more important than keeping to the minimum weight of 6.8kg.

“Making a bike out of timber at that weight is normally not possible,” says German. “Unless you do what I did — you use the top of technology.”

Next up is a bike show in Taipei in March. German hopes to emerge from that event with enough orders to start the manufacturing process, one he estimates can produce 50 Geros models a year. A financial return would be ideal, but what German would really like to see happen is a Geros doing laps in the velodrome proposed for Park Island.

“I would like a race in a Napier velodrome with a bicycle made in Napier,” he says. “That’s my little dream.”

“At the end of the day, this is a luxury item, to ride once to go for a coffee.”

GERMAN ESLAVA
Designer

ODERINGS
GARDEN CENTRES

Growing together since 1929

GROWN IN THE BAY

~~5.59~~
4.59
6 PACK

Impatiens Butterfly Mixed
Perennial New Guinea Impatiens. Will grow superbly in pots or the garden. Bright, sparkling, large flowers most of the year.

GROWN IN THE BAY

~~3.19~~
2.49
4 PACK

Spring Vegetables
Grow your own great tasting, healthy veggies and save. Cabbage, broccoli, spinach, lettuces and many more.

GROWN IN THE BAY

~~8.99~~
4.99
EACH

Tomato Sweet Treats
Large cocktail type tomato with a sweet superb flavour. Huge cropper for the glasshouse, garden or pots.

GROWN IN THE BAY

~~17.99~~
13.99
40 PLANTS
Includes \$2 box deposit

Petunia Box Lots 40 plants
Massive range of these great value box lots. 40 chunky, healthy plants per box, just waiting to flower at your place.

GROWN IN THE BAY

~~34.99~~
29.99
EACH

Willow Obelisk 1.8m
Perfect for all climbing plants especially Beans, Peas and Sweet Peas. Great natural look.

Head in-store or visit
oderings.co.nz

Like us on Facebook

Open 7 Days, 8am - 5.30pm

Specials valid until 04.11.15 or while stocks last. We cannot sell or redeem Go Gardening gift vouchers. Other vouchers - Yes.

Napier
11 Allen Road
(06) 844 8105

Havelock North
57 Brookvale Road
(06) 877 3051

NAPIER HASTINGS EXPRESSWAY

Oderings Garden Centre

English National Opera Company presents

CARMEN

Music by Georges Bizet

1.30PM SUNDAY 1 NOVEMBER
CENTURY THEATRE, NAPIER

TICKETS FROM **MTG HAWKE'S BAY**
1 TENNYSON STREET, NAPIER T.835 7781
(M) ADULTS \$16, CONCESSIONS \$14 (INCLUDES TICKETING FEE)