

How to Survive Karapoti On Your Cyclocross Bike

So, you want to take your cyclocross bike around Karapoti? We won't try to talk you out of it, so Karapoti stalwart Kim Hurst has some tips to help you survive.

Wear Gloves

Riding a 'cross bike around Karapoti will give your upper body more of a workout compared to riding your MTB. Definitely wear gloves for some extra cushioning. Find some thicker bar tape or consider double wrapping your bars to be kind to those contact points! Try not to overgrip the bars to reduce your arm fatigue and help you go the distance.

Pump It Up

Run a higher tyre pressure than usual. Karapoti is prime snakebite terrain and narrower tyres make this a higher risk. Run a tubeless set up if you can. Cushcore now do a gravel specific option if you want belt and braces. If you can't go tubeless then definitely avoid running lightweight tubes and go for tyres with some sidewall protection if your budget allows - Maxxis do some great options.

Consider Your Gearing

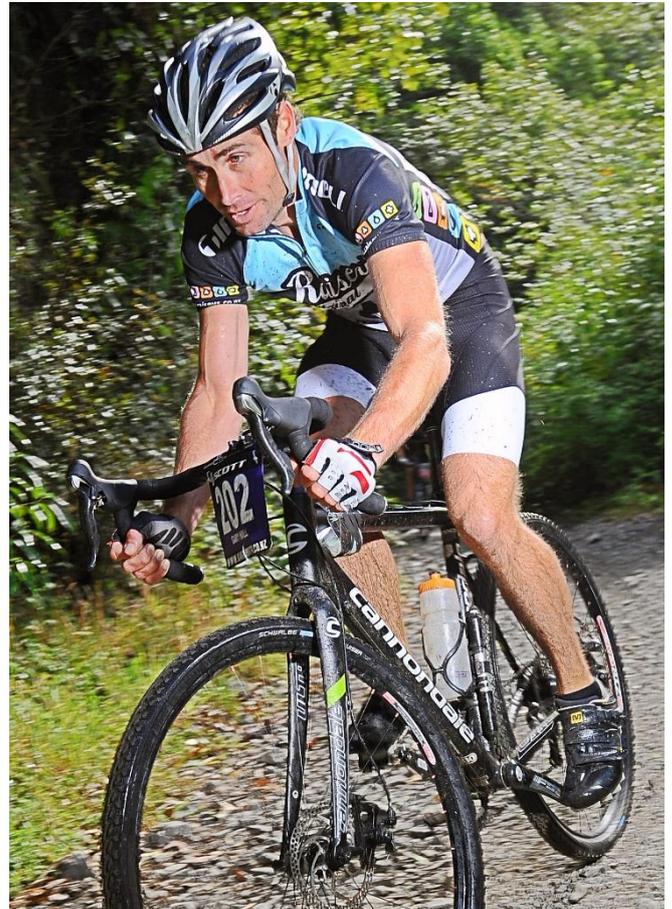
The gearing you need for Karapoti is different to the gearing you need for your average Huttcross race. Check what your rear mech can accommodate and run a wider range cassette if you can. Consider getting a smaller chainring up front, particularly if you are running 1x. Your CX bike is probably lighter than your MTB so you might surprise yourself with how many of the climbs you can ride up.

Stay Smooth

You want to get your cyclocross bike around in one piece. Look for the smoothest lines rather than the fastest lines. Dial the speed back a bit on the descents. You'll have less traction on those loose corners than on your MTB and the CX bike will be less forgiving if you get it wrong.

Be Prepared to Run

You are undoubtedly going to end up running (or walking) more sections on your cyclocross bike than your MTB. Luckily, your 'cross bike is perfect for carrying! Be prepared to run or walk the very steep climbs and chunks of the rough stuff like the Rock Garden. Go for shoes with a bit more grip rather than your best carbon soled race shoes on K-Day.



Carry Extra Spares

Taking a cyclocross bike around Karapoti is definitely higher risk for mechanicals. Add a tyre boot to your spares list in case you suffer a torn sidewall and carry an extra tube or some instant patches.

Carry Extra Nutrition

This is not going to be your fastest Karapoti. Adjust the amount of fluids, gels, bars, or whatever your chosen calorie source is to cater for the extra time you'll be out there.

IF you want some inspiration to go fast then here are the current Karapoti CX Course Records to take a stab at:

20km Challenge	Jeff Abbot	1:25:57 (2019)
50km Classic	Gary Hall	2:34:27 (2014)
	Kim Hurst	3:14:48 (2020)

Keep the CX Bike Vibe Going All Winter Long

Huttcross run club racing all winter long and this year are hosting Aotearoa Crossfest and NZ CX National Championships!

Head to www.huttcross.co.nz for all the details and become a member to support New Zealand's biggest CX club!

