



NEW DIRECTIONS: Former downhill champion Vanessa Quin has taken up track cycling and will compete in next week's Oceania track cycling championships in Invercargill.

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Quin tracking into championships

New bike built by Jeff Anderson in Rotorua

Cycling
By Jamie Troughton

It's been a long time since Vanessa Quin got this excited about a new bike.

The last occasion was when Quin took delivery of her baby blue Intense, which helped her win the world downhill mountain biking championship in 2004.

But that was another career ago. Now the 35-year-old Tauranga mum has just got a brand-new Jeffson, hand-built by Rotorua bike guru Jeff Anderson, which she hopes will boost her chances in next week's Oceania track cycling championships in Invercargill.

"I've been riding road and track bikes for the last couple of years after Jay was born but I've really struggled to get access to information on what makes a good track bike," Quin said.

"The downhill scene was like the Formula One of cycling and all that info was easily accessible and happily shared but now I need all the help I can get in the track scene. Normally you'd have to go shopping in Italy for a top track bike but I was stoked to discover that one of the best manufacturers anywhere



Jeff Anderson

around was right here in Rotorua."

Incredibly, this is her third distinct career on two wheels. She started as a national title-winning BMXer, before crossing over into the headlong lunacy of downhill. Motherhood took away those adrenaline-fuelled ambitions but Quin's explosive power seems naturally suited for the track. She has now coached by Auckland's Damian Wiseman and collected her first national title earlier this year, albeit in the team sprint.

Anderson took a couple of weeks to put together the custom-built steel frame for Quin, matching the stiffness and responsiveness of the best carbon-fibre frames around.

"It's been a really satisfying project because of the instant reward," Anderson said. "As soon as Vanessa jumped on the bike, her eyes lit up and she reckoned it just felt perfect. She's a pretty amazing competitor and she'll do the bike proud."

Building dazzling frames is something Anderson's been doing for more than two decades, ever since Karen Holliday won world championship gold in the

points race on a Jeffson bike in Japan in 1990. Since then, he's branched out into BMX frames, mountainbike frames and single-speed frames. He even built a tandem bike which won Paralympic silver and built one of Rotorua star Sam Bewley's early track bikes, helping him burst onto the national scene.

Quin isn't so much bursting on to the national scene as returning from a hiatus. She admits she'll need every shaved second she can grab in her specialist sprint events.

"It's so exciting to race sprint because you're pitting yourself against women who have been doing it for a long time.

"I've left my run at it a little late but I'm learning at every event and I just hope I'm a fast-enough learner."