



26 November 2013

Embargo applies until 5.30pm Tuesday 26th November 2013 – launch event is at 5pm this evening at Millbrook Resort

Free to use editorial image attached, credit: www.danchildsphotography.com

Caption: Queenstown resident and multisport legend Steve Gurney jogs part of the Queenstown International Marathon course with Coronet Peak in the distance.

For release from Queenstown International Marathon, for further information visit www.queenstown-marathon.co.nz

QUEENSTOWN MARATHON FESTIVAL SET TO EXCITE THE RUNNING WORLD

One of the world's most stunning locations will play host to one of the worlds most scenic marathons with the launch today of the Queenstown International Marathon, set for November 2014.

The event will be delivered by Upsolut Sports Oceania Ltd, an event company with a reputation for world class events in New Zealand, with the ITU World Triathlon Championships already under their belts; CEO Dave Beeche says the Queenstown International Marathon will quickly become a 'bucket list' event for people all over the world.

"We have been working on this for some time, recognising the gap in the market for an international running festival of this kind in Queenstown. Imagine the view as you take part, capturing the grandeur of the awe inspiring mountains, pristine lakes and stunning countryside in an almost dead flat marathon on a mix of hard packed trails and roads. International visitors are going to love this, and I know Kiwis are going to want to come and take part in the variety of events during the festival."

And there are options in the weekend long festival set for Saturday 22 November 2014, with the full Marathon, a half marathon, a 10km event and a 3km kids fun run to keep the whole family involved.

Set between the backdrop of the world renowned Crown and Remarkables mountain ranges and taking in the best highlights of the Queenstown Lakes region including Millbrook Resort, Arrowtown, Lake Hayes, Shotover River, Lake Wakatipu, Queenstown Gardens and finishing in the heart of Queenstown itself where the bars

and restaurants await for the post race celebrations as people look for the complete Destination Queenstown experience!

Tourism New Zealand's Chief Executive Kevin Bowler welcomes the announcement, saying it has the potential to become an iconic event.

"Set in the stunningly beautiful backdrop of Queenstown, the running festival is sure to attract significant interest from the world's running community. It offers another fantastic opportunity to engage with special interest travellers - encouraging them to visit New Zealand and partake in a truly unique experience."

Multiple world multi-sport champion Steve Gurney has long been an advocate for New Zealand's natural beauty and the hosting of multi-sport events in the midst of our greatest tourism resource makes complete sense to the 50 year old who has been resident in Queenstown post the Christchurch earthquakes.

"I have always known what a stunning piece of the world this is but appreciate it even more since I moved down here after losing my home in Christchurch. I love this new event and the thinking behind it, I have no doubt it will quickly become a very special event, popular with serious runners, social joggers and their families as they enjoy Queenstown while they are here."

Queenstown Lakes District Mayor Vanessa van Uden can think of no better event to show off the region's unique landscape.

"It's exciting to add the Queenstown International Marathon to the diverse programme of events on offer in the Queenstown Lakes District. What better way to showcase the wonderful scenery than as a backdrop to this premier event."

Participants in the event will be further encouraged knowing that they not only are utilising sections of the flat and easy Queenstown Bike Trails in the Marathon, but assisting the Queenstown Trails Trust charged with growing and maintaining the trails network that attract thousands of visitors every year.

Mandy Kennedy, Chief Executive Officer of Queenstown Trails Trust is hugely appreciative at being chosen as the official charity.

"The Queenstown Trails Trust is delighted to be the chosen Charity for the new Queenstown International Marathon. The Queenstown Trail will be showcased as part of the marathon route through local and international media coverage of the event and of course to the national and international entrants we believe it will attract. Thanks to the generosity of the Queenstown International Marathon the Trust will receive \$10 from every entrant which will help us continue to develop and maintain our network of Trails throughout the wider Queenstown area."

The final word is left for the irrepressible Gurney though; with more than a hint the 9-time Coast to Coast winning legend is considering an active role in the weekend.

“In a world full of marathons, the Queenstown International Marathon will have character; it is an incredible course with so much packed trail running on a gradual downhill from Millbrook to Queenstown, the biggest danger will be people stopping on course to take in the views. My competitive days are behind me now but I am going to be involved in this event in some way shape or form, even if I have to walk, I will be there.”

ENDS

- *Free to use editorial images from the launch in Queenstown today are available upon reply to this email*
- *Free to publish course map is attached to this email*
- *Vision is available for television networks, including interviews with Steve Gurney and Dave Beeche, please reply to this email for further details*
- *For all course maps and event information, please visit www.queenstown-marathon.co.nz*

Supporting information:

- Queenstown International Marathon is a running festival in Queenstown on Saturday 22 November 2014, racing on the Saturday affords the rest of the weekend for a Queenstown Destination experience
- The event will cater for all abilities and ages, with events from the full marathon, a half marathon, 10km event and 3km kids fun run.
- The course is mainly flat and easy, taking in hard packed trails for 60% of the running and roads for 40%
- The views will be amongst the most scenic in the world, with a glance up to the Crown and Remarkables mountain ranges, a glance down at Lake Hayes and Lake Wakatipu and across to Arrowtown and the Arrow River. The marathon will take participants over the old Shotover Bridge and into Queenstown Gardens on an inspiring journey from Millbrook Resort to the heart of Queenstown, finishing at the Recreational Grounds.
- The spring season promises great temperatures and weather conditions, showing off the Queenstown Lakes District to all visitors and participants.
- The official charity is the Queenstown Trails Trust, with proceeds from every entry going directly to assist in the creation of and maintenance of the Queenstown Trail network.

- The event website is now live (from 5pm), posting information about course maps, event schedule, entry details etc www.queenstown-marathon.co.nz

For further information, contact:

Dave Beeche
CEO
Upsolut Sports Oceania
021 708 721