



**Media release Motatapu Off-Road Sporting Event  
February 27 2015**

**Iconic Motatapu Off-Road Sporting Event smashes records with highest number of entries  
in race history**

The iconic Motatapu Off-Road Sporting Event, held annually in Queenstown and Wanaka, roars into action next weekend (**Saturday March 7**) boasting the highest number of competitors in the event's eleven year history.

The mammoth event has gained iconic status in Australasia and is known as THE bucket-list off-road event for both elite athletes and weekend warriors.

Traversing the Motatapu, Soho and Glencoe stations, a record breaking field of 4,567 competitors across five events will take to the high country of the Southern Lakes, hiking, biking, running, walking and swimming their way to the finish line.

Known for its challenging-yet achievable course, the event snakes its way through stunning high country terrain only accessible to the public one day a year for the Motatapu event, making it even more unique.

Owned by Queenstown Trails Trust and delivered for the first time by international sports event company Lagardère Unlimited Oceania, funds gained from the Motatapu race go towards the ongoing maintenance and development of trails within the Wakatipu Basin.

Overall competitor numbers have increased by 11% since 2014, with marked increases in international competitors (74% growth) and Auckland which has seen a 35% soar in numbers.

A re-jig of start times and a revamped marketing strategy targeting key markets in Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch and Australia, enabled organisers to grow participation.

Attracting athletes from as far afield as Canada, USA, Australia and Papeete, the event still maintains a close local following with a large number of Cantabrians taking part and those closer to home in Wanaka, Gore, Queenstown and Arrowtown.

Lagardère Unlimited Oceania CEO Dave Beeche said "the friendly camaraderie and mix of elite athletes with every day weekend warriors makes the Motatapu a must-do race for many".

"It really is like no other in Australasia. The terrain, the scenery, the friendliness, mix of competitors, finish line atmosphere and dedicated volunteers that come back year after year, make Motatapu the iconic race it is.

"The current economic benefit to Wanaka, Arrowtown and Queenstown is high and with an average length of stay per competitor of 3.3 days (plus an average support crew of 1.24



People accompanying them) the event has the potential to impact on the region even more significantly in years to come," said Mr Beeche.

"We look forward to delivering a successful event next weekend for our first race and to the exciting developments next year's event may bring," he added.

The addition of the new solo category has increased the overall Torpedo7 51km Adventure Run event by 34% attracting a phenomenal 41 in the solo and 25 teams of two in the team leg.

The popular XTERRA UDC Finance Triathlon has also attracted a strong field of athletes again this year with a total of 44 teams (125 competitors) and 116 individuals tackling the course.

Christchurch's Sam Anderson, age 12, is the second youngest competitor and will compete in the 47km Speight's Mountain Bike event. The youth received special permission from race organisers to compete, having completed significant supervised training in order to take part.

The Speight's Mountain Bike event has seen an increase of 24% with 2,843 bikers of all levels set to tackle the stunning course through some of New Zealand's back country.

The Icebreaker Off-Road Marathon and Arrowtown.com 15km Miners Trail maintained healthy entry numbers with a slight increase on last year, attracting 721 and 671 entries respectively.

The youngest competitor of the whole Motatapu event is 11-year-old Angus Williamson from Auckland, competing in the Arrowtown.com 15km Miners Trail.

82 year-old John Falconer from Gore, Southland will make his mark in the Icebreaker Off-Road Marathon, taking over the title of oldest competitor from previous holder, Arrowtown Max McDermid who entered the event for the last five years

Mr McDermid passed away late last year and in recognition of his love and passion for the event, organisers have named the oldest finisher trophy after him, the Max McDermid Memorial Trophy.

Queenstown Trails Trust CEO Mandy Kennedy said it was "incredible" to see how far the event had come in just 11 years.

"Around 1,300 competitors entered the first Motatapu back in 2005 across the marathon and mountain bike events only. To see such growth in both the amount of events and number of athletes is a great achievement," said Ms Kennedy.

"With the passionate and experienced team from Lagardère Unlimited Oceania on-board we'll continue to enhance and deliver the very best event that we can year-on-year for our competitors."

"It's hard to explain how the Motatapu takes a hold of you - as organisers, competitors, volunteers (or vollies as we call them) and of course spectators.

"Competitors see the Motatapu as a bucket-list or personal challenge and are usually coaxed along by friends and drawn by the spectacular scenery. It really is a unique sporting event and we're excited for Saturday's 11th outing," Ms Kennedy said.



Another tweak for this year is the movement of the finish line to Wilcox Green, Arrowtown to enable larger space for athletes as well as spectators wanting to enjoy the carnival atmosphere.

In keeping with the fun nature of the Motatapu, the finish line will be lively and buzzing with friends and family on hand to cheer and whoop competitors over the line. Expect awesome music, MC's keeping spectators up to date with race happenings and a big screen with live footage from the course, food and drink vendors and stalls from race partners.

For more details on course terrain visit [www.motatapu.com](http://www.motatapu.com)

### **Motatapu Off-Road Sporting Event**

#### **Fast Facts**

- **Saturday March 7 (reserve day Sunday March 8)**
- **Starts: Glendhu Bay, Wanaka**
- **Finishes: Wilcox Green, Arrowtown**
- **Five events: Speight's Mountain Bike, Torpedo7 Adventure Run, XTERRA UDC Finance Triathlon, Icebreaker Off Road Marathon and Arrowtown.com Miners Trail**
- **4,567 competitors, up 11% on 2014**
- **Youngest is 11**
- **Oldest is 82**

**ENDS**

#### **Picture captions:**

**1/ The 2014 Motatapu was the 10th anniversary year (Credit Jim Pollard)**

**2/ The course through Motatapu Station is only open to the public once a year on race day (Credit Jim Pollard)**

**3/ The Motatapu is an iconic event on many people's bucket-list (credit Marty Anderson)**

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#### **Event details:**

##### **Saturday March 7**

##### **Start times Glendhu Bay, Wanaka**

6:00am Torpedo7 Adventure Run Starts Glendhu Bay, Lake Wanaka

7:30am XTERRA UDC Finance Triathlon Starts Glendhu Bay, Lake Wanaka

8:00am - 9:15am Speight's Mountain Bike Starts Glendhu Bay, Lake Wanaka

10:30am Icebreaker Off-Road Marathon Starts Motatapu Station, Wanaka

12:00pm (Midday) Arrowtown.com Miners Trail Starts Wilcox Green, Arrowtown

**Note : access to start line for marathon is restricted**



Buses will depart Lone Star, Wanaka, at 9:00am sharp and transport competitors only to the start line. Pre-arranged buses from Queenstown and Arrowtown will drop competitors directly at the start-line.

Media may gain access to Lone Star and start-line by pre-arrangement.

**Predicted finish times:**

**Wilcox Green, Arrowtown**

**Speight's Mountain Bike**

9.45am 1st Male Finisher

10am 1st Female Finisher

**XTERRA UDC Finance Triathlon**

11.15am 1st male finisher

11.45am 1st male finisher

**Torpedo7 Adventure Run**

1pm 1st finisher

**Icebreaker Off-Road Marathon**

13.15pm 1st Male Finisher

13.45pm 1st Female Finisher

**Arrowtown.com Miners Trail**

13.15pm 1st Male Finisher

13.30pm 1st Female Finisher

**Prize Giving Ceremonies**

**Finish line (note new finish line at Wilcox Green)**

2:00pm Speight's Mountain Bike Prize Giving Wilcox Green, Arrowtown

3:15pm XTERRA UDC Finance Triathlon Prize Giving Wilcox Green, Arrowtown

4:00pm Arrowtown.com Miners Trail Prize Giving Wilcox Green, Arrowtown

5:00pm Icebreaker Off Road Marathon Prize Giving Wilcox Green, Arrowtown

6:00pm Torpedo7 Adventure Run Prize Giving Wilcox Green, Arrowtown

If severe weather is forecast for the scheduled Saturday event day, the event will be postponed to the Sunday (reserve day) and the event timing will remain the same. If so, this will be notified on the Motatapu website, Facebook and The Hits radio announcements.

**For media only:**

**Friday March 6** from 5:00pm at Lone Star Wanaka will present a great opportunity for photo opportunities and interviews pre-race day. Media access by appointment only, please advise if access required and interviews via accreditation form.



### **Saturday March 7**

Race-day media releases on each of the five events will be sent on race day with available imagery once the first three competitors (male and female) have crossed the finish line.

High resolution video footage will be available to download after 5:00pm on race day. A URL will be provided within the media releases on the day.

### **About Motatapu Off-Road Sporting Event**

The inaugural Motatapu was held in 2005, offering a mountain bike or marathon option, and attracted 1,300 participants.

Now over 4,500 people take part in five different events, all held on the same day. Event options are the Speight's Summit Mountain Bike, Icebreaker Off-Road Marathon, Arrowtown.com Miner's Trail, XTERRA UDC Finance Triathlon and team and solo Torpedo7 Adventure Run.

Last year the Motatapu celebrated 10 successful years and is widely regarded as one of the best multi-sport events in New Zealand, if not Australasia. Every year competitors from all corners of the world compete in the event from world-class athletes to first timers who train specifically for the event.

Late last year the Queenstown Trails Trust appointed major sporting event specialist Lagardère Unlimited Oceania to manage the annual Motatapu event.

Motatapu has a reputation as being "the bucket list race" situated amid some of the most stunning scenery in the world, which is only accessed once a day on race-day.

All nett profits from the event go to the Queenstown Trails Trust towards the ongoing maintenance and development of trails within the Wakatipu Basin

**For details of the course routes visit [www.motatapu.com](http://www.motatapu.com)**

