



Ready to go . . . 2011 New World Wakatipu Trail Blazer organisers (from left) Malcolm Blakely, Pascale Lorre, Queenstown Trails Trust chief executive Kaye Parker, Paul Gill, New World Wakatipu owners John Thompson and Nicola Thompson, and Geoff Hunt on part of the course for the event, being held tonight. Absent are Alan Nelson and Jenny McLeod.

PHOTO: TRACEY ROXBURGH

Trail Blazer entries flood in

By TRACEY ROXBURGH

THE course has been marked, the volunteers are ready, the entries are flooding in and the weather forecast is promising for the 2011 New World Wakatipu Trail Blazer, being held tonight.

Queenstown Trails Trust chief executive Kaye Parker said she was hoping to attract at least 400 entrants for the event, which begins at Jacks Point and traverses primarily private land to the finish line at Jardine Park, with money raised going toward the \$500,000 funding remaining to complete the 90km Queenstown Trail ahead of the September 2012 deadline.

Yesterday, Mrs Parker said the fund-raising target had become a "moving feast" after being notified by Queenstown solicitor Graeme Todd an "anonymous donor" would match any fund-raising up to \$150,000, dollar for dollar.

"I'm just going for everything. "New World is the title sponsor, but we've had so many gold and platinum sponsors —

At a glance

- ▶ Registrations for tonight's 2011 New World Wakatipu Trail Blazer will open at Jacks Point from 4pm.
- ▶ It is still possible to enter several competitive events, while those entering for recreation can register up to 5.45pm, before the safety briefing for the event.
- ▶ The event begins at 6pm sharp with cyclists covering a

- 15km track, through private farmland, the existing trail and one new section, before finishing at Jardine Park.
- ▶ Runners and walkers will set off at the same time over a 7.5km track, also covering private farmland.
- ▶ Anyone wishing to register was asked to bring \$20 cash, which would also cover a 12-month Friendship

- membership for the Queenstown Trails Trust.
- Existing members will receive a 12-month membership extension.
- Prizes for category winners will be announced at Jardine Park. There will also be an award for the most outrageous costume, and a prize draw for all participants.

more people than ever. Even in these tough times, people have really [dug deep]."

Mrs Parker said she'd also received substantial donations from people who were unable to take part in the Trail Blazer but still wanted to support the trust.

New World had come on board for the second year, providing financial assistance and practical support.

"As title sponsors, I can't believe they always ask for the tough jobs . . . and always work rather than participate, which is

really remarkable from our point of view," Mrs Parker said.

New World Wakatipu owners John and Nicola Thompson told the *Queenstown Times* it was important to support the trust's work, which would benefit all sections of the community once it was complete.

"It's a community event that's about participation — it's about families and it's about our consumers, really," Mrs Thompson said.

"It's targeting all of those people in the community who

was scheduled for Jardine Park, with New World helping to provide sustenance for hungry entrants and supporters, while Gibbston Valley Wines had provided for those in need of a well-earned drink and Remarkable Audio would be on hand to provide entertainment.

Pascale Lorre, one of the organising committee, said registrations would be open from 4pm at Jacks Point and encouraged those who had not yet registered to "support the place you live".

"We all go on these tracks, whether you're a walker or a runner, a mum pushing a buggy, a dog lover, or you like to have a stroll and enjoy the scenery . . . it's almost a mandatory thing, just to support the place you live."

After all entrants had crossed the finish line tonight, Mrs Parker said she would be able to reveal the grand total for the fundraising — with a view to giving the community a reason to continue the party at Jardine Park.

are going to get such a good asset out of it that will be here for [everyone] to enjoy."

Mr Thompson said commercially the event fitted well with New World's "healthy choices" philosophy, encouraging residents to make healthy food choices and lead balanced lifestyles.

It would also become a phenomenal community asset, which would draw visitors to the town, boosting the Wakatipu's economy.

Following the event, a party