

'Lonely Planet' lauds bike park

It's downhill demon season time again

PAUL TAYLOR

DOWNHILL demons are gearing up for the re-opening of the Queenstown Bike Park which is being lauded in *Lonely Planet*.

The only gondola-accessed park in the southern hemisphere has furthered Queenstown's burgeoning reputation as a biking mecca according to the latest edition of travel guide *Lonely Planet New Zealand*.

Lonely Planet authors listed

mountain biking in Queenstown as the top new activity to try in NZ in the latest edition, published on Monday.

"With the opening of the Queenstown Bike Park, the region is now firmly established as an international focus for the sport," the popular guide says.

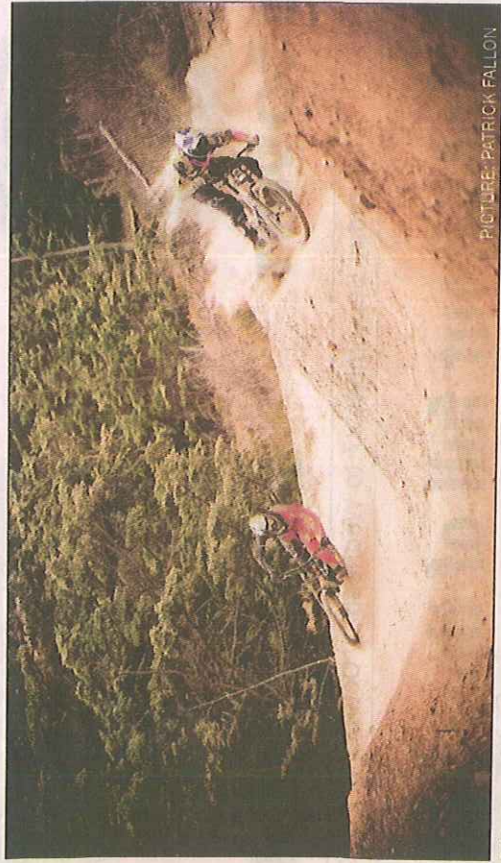
The park opens on Saturday, but many die-hard bikers have already been out riding the numerous trails around Queenstown in recent weeks - and some have been all winter.

Trail builder Nathan

Greenwood, of maintenance firm Phat Lines, says: "The trails are looking awesome, never better."

The bike park, with 13 tracks on Bob's Peak beneath the Skyline complex, is also a popular training destination with professional riders.

A season pass, lasting till April 29 and giving riders gondola-access to the top, costs \$629 for adults and \$329 for a child. A day pass is \$75 for an adult and \$45 for a child.



PICTURE: PATRICK FALLON

Bike mecca: Pro riders Wyn Masters (left) and Brook Macdonald in Queenstown